
Director General for Regulation

5 October 2015

Roger Halliday
Chief Statistician
Scottish Government
Room 2W.02
St Andrews House
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

Dear Roger,

**STATISTICS ON DOMESTIC ABUSE RECORDED BY THE POLICE IN
SCOTLAND AND FIREARM CERTIFICATES, SCOTLAND**

Thank you for your letter of 16 September, and the subsequent detailed information that you sent to my team, setting out the situation regarding your statistics on domestic abuse recorded by the police in Scotland, and on the number of firearm certificates. I am grateful to you for consulting with us in this proactive and constructive way, and for reflecting yourself on the meaning of National Statistics status in the light of questions over data quality.

Your letter invited me to consider whether it would be more appropriate for these statistics to be published without National Statistics status. Designation of official statistics as National Statistics shows that the statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value. I agree with you that because of the uncertainties around the quality of the data in each of these situations, these statistics should not be published as National Statistics.

When you next publish each of these sets of statistics, I would encourage you to clearly explain the nature and extent of the data quality issues, and the impact that each of these has on the statistics, in order that users can be fully informed about issues that may affect their use of the statistics. You should also ensure that the National Statistics status of these statistics is made clear in the publications, and that you fully explain the reasons for the removal of National Statistics status from them.

I would appreciate updates from you as you work to improve these statistics. I would also appreciate updates as your plans for Police Scotland to be listed as a producer of official statistics develop, along with your thoughts about when you would expect it to be appropriate to have these statistics formally re-assessed against the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

I am copying this letter to John Pullinger, the National Statistician.

Yours sincerely,



Ed Humpherson