

BREACH OF THE CODE OF PRACTICE FOR OFFICIAL STATISTICS

This document reports a breach of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, or the relevant Pre-release Access to Official Statistics Orders, to which the Code applies as if it included these orders.

1. Background information

Name of Statistical Output (including weblink to the relevant output or 'landing page')

Academic achievement and entitlement to free school meals in Wales, 2014
www.wales.gov.uk/statistics-and-research/academic-achievement-free-school-meals/?lang=en

Name of Producer Organisation

Welsh Government

Name and contact details of the statistical Head of Profession (Lead Official in an Arm's Length Body) submitting this report, and date of report

Glyn Jones, Chief Statistician
Welsh Government, CP2, Cathays Park, Cardiff, CF10 3NQ.
Email: glyn.jones@wales.gsi.gov.uk
Phone: 029 2082 6691

2. Circumstances of breach

Relevant Principle/Protocol and Practice

Protocol 2, Release Practice 7.

Subject to compliance with the rules and principles on pre-release access set out in legislation¹, limit access before public release to those people essential for production and publication, and for quality assurance and operational purposes. Publish records of those who have access prior to release.

¹ [The Pre-release Access to Official Statistics \(Wales\) Order 2009](#) sets out the rules and principles relating to the granting of pre-release access to wholly Welsh devolved statistics.

Date of occurrence

21 January 2015

Nature of breach (including links with previous breaches, if any)

In accordance with the Pre-release Access to Official Statistics (Wales) Order 2009, a Ministerial Briefing, containing a secure pre-release copy of the Statistical Bulletin *Academic achievement and entitlement to free school meals in Wales, 2014*, was sent to the pre-release recipient list at 09:33 on 21 January 2015. At 12:30 on 21 January a Welsh Government policy official, who was a recipient of the pre-release Ministerial Briefing, sent an email to their team which summarised some key findings from the statistical bulletin. Recipients of this email included officials who were not on the original pre-release recipient list. They were able to see the key findings within the email but not the full statistical bulletin which was stored in the secure location.

Reasons for breach

The official misread the publication date of the Statistical Bulletin, thinking it had already been published on the morning of 21 January, rather than a week later on 28 January 2015. This was despite the publication date being clearly stated both in the bulletin and in the covering e-mail. The covering e-mail also clearly marked the bulletin as “official sensitive – statistics”.

3. Reactions and impact (both within the producer body and outside)

This was a contained, internal event. Shortly after the email was sent in error, a recipient of that email identified a breach had occurred and notified the sender of this fact. The official who sent the email immediately spoke face-to-face with all recipients of the e-mail to ensure that it was deleted, not printed and had not been passed on to anyone else. The subject statistician was officially notified of the breach at 15:42 on the same afternoon.

The breach was contained within one policy team within Welsh Government and the official who inadvertently caused the breach, provided written confirmation to the subject statistician stating that the email recipients had not circulated the email and all electronic copies had been securely deleted.

4. Corrective actions taken to prevent reoccurrence of such a breach (include short-term actions, and long-term changes made to procedures)

Short-term

The policy official responsible for the breach was reminded of the rules surrounding pre-release access to official statistics and their responsibilities as a pre-release recipient.

Long-term

An email was sent to all statistical staff in Welsh Government, reminding them of the importance of using the wording in our pre-release email template, ensuring it is abundantly clear to recipients when the statistics are being published and the rules by which pre-release recipients must abide.

5. Links to published statements about this breach

Once published, a link to the breach report will be put on the relevant page of the Welsh Government website (see link in Section 1).