

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')

Essential Skills Qualifications: October – December 2013
<http://www.delni.gov.uk/statistical-factsheet-essential-skills-qualifications-october-december-2013.pdf>
(Official Statistics Publication)

Name of Producer Organisation

Department for Employment and Learning Northern Ireland

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

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2. Circumstances of breach

Relevant Principle/Protocol and Practice

"Code of Practice: Protocol 2: Release practices

4. Issue statistical releases at the standard time of 09:30 on a weekday, to maintain consistency and to permit time for users to understand and respond to the information during normal working hours."

Date of occurrence

30 January 2014

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

- The Department for Employment and Learning's Communications Branch is responsible for publishing online and was due to publish the factsheet at 09:30 on 30 January 2014.
- The Communications Branch received the factsheet to be published with a note stating that the

data was under strict embargo until published at 09:30 on 30 January 2014, and that this was stated in the pre-release access which had been issued.

- At 09:39 on 30 January 2014, a statistician in the producing department discovered that the publication was not online and contacted the Communications Branch.
- The factsheet had been ready to be published online at 09:30 on 30 January 2014 but due to human error, the Statistical Publications Upload Procedures were not fully implemented on this occasion - a certain process had not been followed which was required for the factsheet to be published automatically.
- The next available time that the factsheet could be published was at 10:10 on 30 January 2014, which resulted in pre-release access lasting 16 minutes longer than the 24 hour maximum permitted and the factsheet being published 40 minutes late.

Reasons for breach

- The breach was as a result of human error in the departmental communications branch failing to fully implement the Statistical Publications Upload Procedures, by not marking the publication as 'active' on the system used to upload to the department's website.

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

- No complaints are expected

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

- When the breach was noticed (09:39 on 30 January 2014), Communications Branch were contacted immediately to find out why the factsheet was not published on time. The senior statistician was alerted shortly afterwards.
- Analytical Services provided sufficient information to the Communications Branch regarding the importance of publishing the factsheet on time, and this does not need amended.
- Communications Branch acknowledged the problem that caused the breach and have amended procedures to ensure that this does not reoccur. The procedures now state that it will be the responsibility of the Internet Manager/Deputy to ensure that this procedure is carried out so that all statistical publications go live on the date and time required.

5. Links to published statements about this breach

<http://www.delni.gov.uk/october-december-2013-factsheet-breach-of-the-code-of-practice-for-official-statistics.pdf>