

BREACH OF THE CODE OF PRACTICE FOR OFFICIAL STATISTICS

A breach of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics occurs where one or more provisions of the Code were not followed in situations where an exemption or exception had not been approved by the UK Statistics Authority's Head of Assessment, as required in paragraph (xii) of the Code's preamble. Rules on pre-release access to statistics are covered in the relevant Pre-Release Access to Official Statistics Orders; the Code applies as if it includes these orders.

1 Background Information

Name of Statistical Output (including web link if relevant)

Labour Market Statistics - October 2012
<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/lms/labour-market-statistics/october-2012/index.html>

Regional Labour Market Statistics - October 2012
<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/subnational-labour/regional-labour-market-statistics/october-2012/index.html>

Name of Producer Organisation

Office for National Statistics (ONS)

Name and contact details of person submitting this report, and date of report

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24 October 2012

2 Circumstances of Breach

Relevant Principle/Protocol and Practice

Protocol 2 release practices/Practice 4 issue releases at 09:30

Date of occurrence

17 October 2012

Nature of breach

Releases not published at 09.30 to ONS website

Reasons for breach

This release is published late every month due to its size (the number of content items). The situation was exacerbated this month by the number of items generated by the Labour Market Statistics release (which is usually over 90 individual items) being higher than usual due to a manual error that caused the replication of items in the publishing queue. These earlier versions took priority in the publishing queue thus further delaying publication of the latest items. The release was therefore delayed due to the sheer volume of items being published at 09:30.

The Regional Labour Market Statistics release was not published until after the Labour Market Statistics release had completed the publishing process.

The Labour Market Statistics release impacted on the Regional Labour Market Statistics publishing times. This release was therefore delayed due to the sheer volume of items being published at 09:30.

Labour Market

Statistical Bulletin published at 09:32:46

Regional Labour Market

Statistical Bulletin published at 09:36:27

3 Reactions and Impact

No customer reaction reported by Customer Contact Centre, Media Relations Office or Social Media team. Labour Market Division were aware that a local newspaper was inconvenienced by the delay in publication of the regional release. The Media Office verbally apologised to the person from the newspaper.

4 Corrective Actions Taken (include short-term actions, and long-term changes made to procedures)

The publishing time of the Regional Labour Market Statistics release was impacted by a replication error in relation to the Labour Market Statistics release.

The reason why items were replicated in the publishing queue has been fully investigated and was due to a manual error. The publishing procedure for Labour Market Statistics has been reviewed and modified to ensure that website content is created in line with ONS internal guidance.

The Labour Market Division desk instructions have been thoroughly reviewed and updated where appropriate. Appropriate desk training has been provided to the relevant staff so that they are fully aware of the correct procedures. In particular, the publishing queue will now be checked every month on the day before publication and the publishing team will be alerted immediately if any problems are discovered.