

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')

Quarterly Personnel Report
This is a National Statistic.

Link to publication:

<http://www.dasa.mod.uk/applications/newWeb/www/index.php?page=67&pubType=1&thiscontent=560&date=2013-05-16>

Name of Producer Organisation

Ministry of Defence (MoD) – Defence Statistics Tri Service

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

Simon Mahony, Head of Profession (HoP) for Statistics

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Breach report completed on 16 May 2013.

2. Circumstances of breach

Relevant Principle/Protocol and Practice

Protocol 2: Release Practices; Practice 7

Date of occurrence

The breach was discovered on Wednesday 15 May 2013.

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

Defence Statistics Tri Service provided pre release access to named postholders on 15 May 2013.

Defence Media Centre, used figures (top level, number of personnel and number of Officers) from that publication to draft a response to a Freedom of Information request by a media outlet.

Defence Media Centre then circulated the draft response for the request to individuals not on the pre release access list.

The figures were not made available externally to the department.

Reasons for breach

Defence Media Centre were not aware that these figures should not be made available internally before 09:30 on Thursday 16 May 2013.

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

Defence Media Centre were informed on 15 May 2013 that a breach had occurred. We are not aware that any wider use has been made of the figures – either internally or externally.

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

The HoP was informed there had been a breach on 15 May 2013. Action was taken immediately to inform Defence Media Centre and prevent any wider circulation on the figures.

The HoP has reviewed the text sent with the email explaining the Code of Practice and what rules people have to follow, and has decided the text is appropriate.

Contact was made with the UK Statistics Authority on 15 May 2013 giving the broad outline of the breach.

The HoP for Statistics takes responsibility for the following action:

- The Code of Practice for Official Statistics will be re-emphasised to Defence Media Centre and a copy of the breach report will be copied to the Director of Defence Media Centre to prevent any further breaches.
- Face to face or verbal briefings will be organised for individuals on pre-release access lists, to explain the Code of Practice. These will take place for all publications released from 1 July 2013. Ahead of each release, the responsible statistician will update and confirm the pre-release access list. They will then ensure that all individuals on the pre-release access list receive a briefing on their responsibilities under the Code of Practice before receiving the relevant statistics.

5. Links to published statements about this breach

When the breach report is published on the UK Statistics Authority website we will link to it from our website <http://www.dasa.mod.uk>