

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')

Network Rail Monitor Key Statistics: <http://dataportal.orr.gov.uk/browsereports/3>

Name of Producer Organisation

Office of Rail Regulation (ORR)

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

Protocol 2, release practices. Practice 7

Date of occurrence

Tuesday 4 June 2013

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

The pre-release email for the 2012-13 Q4 Network Rail Monitor Key Statistics was sent 48 hours in advance of publication date of Thursday 6 June 2013 rather than the 24 hours stipulated in pre-release rules. Pre-release rules were therefore breached. The breach was identified by a member of the Information and analysis team approximately 2 hours after the pre-release email was sent.

Reasons for breach

The Network Rail Monitor Key Statistics Reports are released to approximately coincide with the publication of the Network Rail Monitor, a policy document which sets out how ORR think

Network Rail is doing in delivering its obligations to its customers and funders, and highlights any areas of concern. The date of publication of the Network Rail Monitor is not static, but the date of publication of the accompanying Network Rail Monitor Key Statistics is announced at least 4 weeks in advance in line with the Code of Practice, ensuring the statistics are released in advance or on the same day as the Monitor document. The publication date of the 2012-13 Q4 monitor was moved in the week preceding publication with some resultant communication lost on the publication date of the Network Rail Monitor Key Statistics. Consequently the pre-release email was mistakenly sent out 24 hours early.

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

As soon as we discovered the breach an email was sent to those who received the pre-release requesting that the email be deleted and the accompanying data also deleted. There has been no impact or any reactions from anyone.

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

Greater clarity on the publication schedule of the Network Rail Monitor Key Statistics which can change in the weeks preceding publication will be ensured. This has begun and will be on-going with changes to the publication schedule highlighted to those involved in the publication process.

Longer term (by September 2013) the publication process of statistics by ORR is being changed so that the end to end process is within one team, rather than the current situation where publication and pre-release distribution is undertaken by different teams. This will provide even greater clarity on the publication schedule, particularly for statistics with movable publication dates.