

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')

Private Sector Employment Indicator, Quarter 4 2013
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/private-sector-employment-indicator>

Name of Producer Organisation

Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS)

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

1. Protocol 2 – Release Practices, Practices 7 and 8
2. Paragraphs 2 and 6(1) of the Schedule to The Pre-release Access (PRA) to Official Statistics Order 2008

Date of occurrence

22 April 2014

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

Certain BIS ministers and officials have pre-release access (PRA) to the Private Sector Employment Indicator, including:

- Secretary of State and other ministers
- Special Advisors to ministers
- Permanent Secretary and other Senior Civil Servants

The pre-release materials were due to be circulated to those on the PRA list at 09:30 on Wednesday 23 April 2014. The person responsible for distributing these materials sent it out at 19:19 on Tuesday 22 April 2014.

The breach was discovered by the Chief Statistician in BIS, at 23:25 on Tuesday 22 April. It was discovered as the Chief Statistician is on the PRA list.

Reasons for breach

Human error. The person who sent the materials to those on the pre-release access list made a mistake. They knew that they were working with Experimental Official Statistics, but were unaware that these were equally covered by the Code of Practice for Official Statistics as well as Official or National statistics.

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

The person responsible has been reminded that Experimental Official Statistics are covered by the Code of Practice. They have re-read the relevant sections of the code. Other relevant staff in BIS have also been reminded that Experiment Statistics are covered by the Code.