

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)

Road Casualties: Drinking and Driving, 2010
<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/headlines/transport2011/111201/?lang=en>

Pupils Leaving Education with No Qualifications, 2010/11
<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/headlines/schools2011/111201/?lang=en>

Name of Producer Organisation

Welsh Government (WG)

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

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2 Circumstances of Breach

Relevant Principle/Protocol and Practice

Protocol 2
"Issue statistical releases at the standard time of 09:30 on a weekday"

Date of occurrence

Thursday 1 December 2011

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

The WG website publishing queue stopped due to a technical issue therefore the two outputs detailed above did not appear online until around 14:00 when normal service was resumed.

Reasons for breach

The delay in publishing was due to a routine change to the WG website which had an unforeseen impact. Publishing was restored around 14:00 on the same day.

When considering the timing of the change, the impact and likelihood of disruption were both considered low by the corporate web team but as an added precaution the work was scheduled out of office hours. The change had a greater impact than expected and due to its nature it could not be backed out. This resulted in a temporary delay to publishing.

3 Reactions and Impact

No customers contacted us to request the data.

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

As all publishing to the WG website was delayed it wasn't possible to post a notice on the WG website explaining the problem.

The usual emails announcing publication to key users were also not distributed to avoid inconsistent levels of access.

Once it was established that the issue was not going to be resolved imminently a note was added to the outputs on the Publication Hub and the outputs were published on the StatsWales website as a temporary measure. The titles were expanded to make our customers aware of the problem and let them know the data was available on our StatsWales website. Usual recipients were emailed and the links were updated to reflect this change.

There has also been a WG corporate approach that will reduce future likelihood. As a result of this incident we have made some improvements to the publishing queue which have improved the speed at which items are processed to the live site. These settings will be retained so performance should be improved permanently.

We will add a comment on the WG website, stating that if we are unable to publish to the WG website we will publish on StatsWales as a temporary measure. This will mean that all users, not just those who access our statistics through the publication hub, will be aware of the contingency process.

5 Any other relevant supporting material (including link to published statements about this breach)

N/A