

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')

Youth Reoffending in Northern Ireland (2011/12 Cohort)

<http://www.dojni.gov.uk/index/statistics-research/stats-research-publications/reoffending-stats-and-research/r-s-bulletin-19-2014-youth-reoffending-in-northern-ireland-2011-12-cohort.htm>

Name of Producer Organisation

Department of Justice for Northern Ireland

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, Practice 7

Date of occurrence

18 December 2014

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

It was formally established on 11 March 2015 that contrary to Protocol 2, Practice 7 of the

Code a party not on the pre-release access list for the publication 'Youth Reoffending in Northern Ireland (2011/12 Cohort)' had been given access to it in the 24 hour period to publication (i.e. on 18 December 2014) by a recipient in the same business area properly in receipt of pre-release access. There was no evidence of onward transmission outside the immediate confines of the business area involved, nor of further impact. On formal establishment that a breach had indeed occurred the matter was immediately reported to the Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency and relevant procedures for web notification put in place.

Reasons for breach

The breach was due to the actions of a recipient on the pre-release list acting without due awareness of or attention to the stipulations for pre-release access. These had been explicitly set out in material accompanying pre-release access.

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

None identified. There was no evidence of onward transmission outside the immediate confines of the business area involved, nor of further impact.

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

The Senior Statistician has met with the relevant official to discuss and to clarify regarding compliance with the set procedures.

The Senior Statistician was already undertaking a series of sessions with relevant business areas across the Department of Justice to remind them of their responsibilities under official statistics and pre-release access and the content of these sessions includes appropriate briefing on the specific point involved in this breach together with related issues. In consequence all relevant business areas included in pre-release access for any of Analytical Services Group publications should have received such briefing within the next few months.

Current documentation sent as part of the pre-release process includes the relevant stipulations but in this instance clearly did not meet requirements since a breach did occur. In consequence it would be intended that recipients of pre-release access in the next publication cycle of each publication should be sent an email separately from the Senior Statistician which identifies this specific issue as a matter of concern, reiterates the need to adhere to the pre-release conditions, not least within individual business units.

5. Links to published statements about this breach

<http://www.dojni.gov.uk/index/statistics-research/stats-research-publications/reoffending-stats-and-research/r-s-bulletin-19-2014-youth-reoffending-in-northern-ireland-2011-12-cohort.htm>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/youth-reoffending-in-northern-ireland-2011-12-cohort>

6. Any other relevant supporting material

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