

# Monitoring Review

Monitoring Review 5/14  
July 2014

## ***Progress with the Implementation of Authority Recommendations in Monitoring Reports***

### **Introduction**

This is the third in a series of progress updates, describing the ways in which the Authority's recommendations set out in a range of *Monitoring Reports* and *Monitoring Briefs* are being taken forward, and follows the *Monitoring Update*<sup>1</sup> published in January 2012 and second *Monitoring Update*<sup>2</sup> published in January 2013.

We are currently reviewing how best to report progress with implementing the recommendations in monitoring reports. We propose to move towards reporting progress as it happens, rather than in an annual update.

Below are progress updates on the recommendations set out in the Authority's reports on:

- [Statistics relating to transfers from the Asset Purchase Fund Facility](#)
- [School-Level Examination Statistics](#)
- [The Robustness of the International Passenger Survey](#)
- [Real Terms Health Expenditure in England](#)
- [Statistics relating to the DWP Work Programme and Pre-Work Programme](#)
- [Accessibility of official statistics on health](#)
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- [Official statistics and the Voluntary Sector](#)
- [Creating official statistics from administrative data](#)
- [Statistics for Parliamentary Constituencies](#)
- [The accessibility and coherence of statistics about climate change](#)
- [Review of an error in the published estimates of Output in Construction](#)
- [Immigration Statistics](#)
- [The demand for, and feasibility of, a UK-wide index of multiple deprivation](#)
- [Improving the reporting of road casualties](#)
- [Communicating Inflation](#)
- [Strengthening User Engagement](#)
- [Overcoming Barriers to Trust in Crime Statistics](#)
- [Scotland's Major Population Surveys](#)
- [Pre-Release Access to Official Statistics: A Review of the Statutory Arrangements](#)
- [Migration Statistics: the way ahead?](#)
- [Gender Pay Gap](#)
- [Volatility of the Retail Sales Index](#)

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/monitoring/monitoring-reviews/monitoring-brief-1-2012---monitoring-update---january-2012.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/monitoring/monitoring-reviews/monitoring-review-1-2013---monitoring-update---january-2013.pdf>

## ***Statistics Relating to Transfers from the Asset Purchase Facility Fund***

### **Monitoring Update – July 2014:**

The Authority published *Statistics Relating to Transfers from the Asset Purchase Facility Fund* in June 2013.

The review was prompted by concerns expressed to the UK Statistics Authority about the way a change in cash management arrangements between the Bank of England and HM Treasury has been reflected in the fiscal measure ‘PSNBex’ – Public Sector Net Borrowing excluding the temporary effects of financial interventions. The change relates the cash held in the Bank of England Asset Purchase Facility Fund (BEAPFF).

### **Summary of progress against recommendations or advice:**

The Report did not specifically make recommendations; rather it drew a number of conclusions and presented them as advice. For the purpose of this exercise, we have treated this advice as recommendations. The conclusions were presented under the four headings: guidance; communication; governance; and, the decision.

### **General progress**

ONS established a Review of Public Sector Finances in May 2013 which takes forward implementation of the recommendations of the Statistics Authority Review of the Asset Purchase Facility. This has focused on two key areas:

- Improving the presentation of the statistics to ensure they are well presented and easily understood;
- Reviewing the methodology and guidance which underpins the “ex-measures” of Public Sector Net Debt and Borrowing which were developed in response to the financial crisis to ensure they remain robust, statistically coherent and future-proofed.

The document ‘Consultation on proposals from the 2013 Review of Public Sector Finance Statistics’<sup>3</sup> was published on the ONS’ website on 17 December 2013. A Consultation Response<sup>4</sup> was published in February 2014. This response article provides a summary of the consultation responses received and explains both how ONS will be taking forward the comments received and how ONS proposes to implement the Review outcomes. By way of summary, the main improvements to be implemented include:

#### Presentation of statistics

- New presentational framework (with both numerical values and series identifiers) to be published showing visually the link between the different public sector finance measures;
- New tables to be published showing the impact of one-off factors, government interventions in the financial sector and the asset purchase facility.

#### Fiscal measures

- New ‘ex-measures’ that only exclude the debt and borrowing of the public sector banks are to be introduced in September 2014 (alongside the ESA10 changes) with statistics available on both the new and old basis during the period June 2014 to April 2015.

#### Supporting documentation

- A user guide and glossary to be produced to assist users in interpreting statistics;
- Summary notes to be published which set the public sector finance statistics in context;

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/about-ons/get-involved/consultations/consultations/consultation-on-proposals-from-the-review-of-public-sector-finance-statistics/index.html>

<sup>4</sup> Also accessed through link in footnote 1.

- Annual information on alternative measures of debt to be published in an ONS article.

### **Specific Progress**

#### **Guidance**

**Recommendation 1: In March 2010, ONS published a paper with the title ‘Public sector finances excluding financial interventions’ which set out the criteria, definitions and principles underpinning the ‘ex measures’ in the public sector finances statistics. The 2010 Guidance was considered to be out of date following decisions made by the Public Sector Finances Technical Advisory Group (PSFTAG) committee in 2012. The Statistics Authority recommends that ONS updates the guidance following any changes in definition, and clearly labels the updated version with the date of the latest revision.**

#### Completed

Through the Review of the Public Sector Finances (see above) and the related consultation, ONS has resolved these issues on guidance as the new ‘ex measure’ does away with the concepts of underlying or temporary measures, and simply excludes the public sector banks and their transactions with the private sector.

#### **Communication**

**Recommendation 2: The review team had some concerns about whether various matters (the statistical arguments underlying the decision itself; the fact that alternative arguments were considered and the reasons for rejecting them; and the changes to governance and guidance) were adequately communicated externally. The Statistics Authority pointed out the importance of explaining fully to users the processes and principles underpinning important decisions.**

#### Completed

ONS has produced a range of methodological articles since June 2013 which set out in detail forthcoming developments in Public Sector Finance Statistics<sup>5</sup>. These articles cover ‘Clarifying how Public Sector Finances classification decisions are made’ alongside the impact of the conversion to ESA 2010 and the consultation response.

In June 2013, ONS published an article which described to users the work it was doing to align Public Sector Finance data with National Accounts data<sup>6</sup>. This is one of a suite of articles ONS has published notifying users of developments in the public sector finances.

The Statistics Authority are satisfied that the range of documentation and advice available on the ONS methodology web pages, together with the consultation process mentioned above, addresses the needs of users, and provides users with important information in advance of forthcoming changes and the processes and principles underpinning important decisions.

#### **Governance**

**Recommendation 3: The Statistics Authority saw no strong case to support the current composition and voting arrangements of PSFTAG. The Statistics Authority recommended that ONS ought to take undivided responsibility for definitional and methodological**

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/method-quality/specific/economy/public-sector-statistics/index.html>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/method-quality/specific/economy/public-sector-finances/improving-government-statistics---aligning-psf---na.pdf>

**decisions, seeking advice from experts through whatever ad-hoc or permanent committees are seen by ONS to be appropriate about the decision.**

#### Completed

In August 2013, ONS published a paper 'Clarifying how Public Sector Finances classification decisions are made'<sup>7</sup> setting out revised arrangements for decision making by PSFTAG.

This note makes it clear that all classification decisions which relate to the Public Sector Finances are ultimately the responsibility of the ONS Executive Director responsible for National Accounts and Public Sector Finances. The ONS Executive Director is supported in their decision making role by the advice of two groups: The National Accounts Classification Committee (NACC); and, PSFTAG.

PSFTAG has been restructured to reflect the new governance arrangements. Further details are set out below:

Prior to this re-structuring, PSFTAG reached decisions by majority vote with membership made up of two voting representatives from ONS, two from HM Treasury and one from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). A Bank of England representative could also attend the group but they did not have a vote.

The new PSFTAG has a core membership of seven, two members from HMT and five from ONS, including the Chair who is a senior member of staff in the ONS Directorate responsible for the Public Sector Finances. The Chair can appoint ONS and HMT members with the necessary expertise, but a majority of ONS members should be maintained. The Chair can also appoint external experts to join PSFTAG for a particular case where their expertise will be helpful in interpreting statistical guidance and accountancy concepts.

The Chair of PSFTAG will consider the discussions of PSFTAG and the consensus reached in arriving at a final decision which will be published on the ONS website. If PSFTAG do not reach a consensus and/or the decision is likely to be one attracting considerable user interest, then the Chair will brief the ONS Executive Director responsible for National Accounts on the PSFTAG discussions and a final classification decision will be made by the Executive Director.

#### ***Decision***

**Recommendation 4: The review team concluded that the decision to treat the flows of money from the Bank of England's Asset Purchase Facility Fund (BEAPFF) to the Treasury as permanent was made after diligent and professional consideration by the PSFTAG committee and senior managers. However, the review team concluded that the transfers should be treated as temporary based on the published guidance, and felt that this conclusion is one which many users are likely to have drawn.**

**Given the very real difficulties in establishing a robust and clear definition of the 'ex' measures, the review team concluded that any change to the PSF statistics should be preceded by a wider review of the statistical definition of PSNB ex and PSND ex to ensure that the treatment of the various financial interventions is as coherent and reasonable as possible in the short term, and that the longer term viability and relevance of the 'ex' measures is taken into account.**

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/method-quality/specific/economy/public-sector-finances/index.html>

### Completed

ONS has just completed a user Consultation on proposals from the 2013 Review of Public Sector Finance Statistics (see Recommendation 1 above). New 'ex-measures' that only exclude the debt and borrowing of the public sector banks are to be introduced in September 2014 (alongside the ESA10 changes) with statistics available on both the new and old basis during the period June 2014 to April 2015. This will allow users to compare statistical outturn data with fiscal forecast data for the period when the forecast will still be on the basis of ESA95 and the old measure.

ONS will publish the new table on the flows and stocks associated with the Asset Purchase Facility Fund (table PSFB16 in the consultation). It will also produce a note for users to explain how the Asset Purchase Facility activities impact on the fiscal aggregates measures.

## ***School-Level Examination Statistics***

### **Monitoring Update – July 2014:**

The Authority published *School-Level Examination Statistics* in August 2013.<sup>8</sup>

The review explored the presentation and accessibility of school-level examination statistics, or attainment statistics, and considered best practice in the light of the likely and potential use of the statistics by government, academia, the media and the general public. The review drew some conclusions about the way in which results for individual schools are currently published by the UK administrations.

### **Summary of progress against recommendations:**

The Minister of State for Schools sent a letter to the UKSA in September 2013 stating the DfE will carry out a review of pre-release arrangements for these statistics and agreeing with the recommendation that the school-level performance tables should be put forward for assessment. It has been agreed with DfE that this assessment will begin in February 2014 and is expected to be published in August 2014.

The report set out the following recommendations:

**Recommendation 1: The manner of publication of the school-level statistic has, for many years, been treated as a matter of local political preference rather than professional statistical standards and this now needs to be rectified in line with the principles and protocols of the *Code of Practice for Official Statistics*.**

**Recommendation 2: The devolved administrations should make any changes needed to their processes so that school-level statistics can be published as official statistics, under the management of the relevant head of profession for statistics.**

**Recommendation 3: DfE and the devolved administrations should produce clearer guidance to help users understand the limitations of the statistics, particularly when making comparisons between schools.**

**Recommendation 4: The devolved administrations should consult users about how they might best support informed comparisons between schools, and produce appropriate guidance to support user interpretation.**

**Recommendation 5: DfE should review the arrangements it has in place for pre-release access of its school-level statistics to the media, and publish and explain the lists of the individual organisations that are granted pre-release access.**

**Recommendation 6: The Authority will seek DfE's agreement that the school-level statistics in England should be put forward for assessment against the Code of Practice as soon as practicable.**

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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/reports---correspondence/correspondence/letter-from-sir-andrew-dilnot-to-rt-hon--david-laws-mp.pdf>

## ***The Robustness of the International Passenger Survey***

### **Monitoring Update – July 2014:**

The Authority published *The Robustness of the International Passenger Survey* in June 2013.<sup>9</sup>

This review considered the International Passenger Survey and the suitability of its use for producing official statistics. It considered concerns about the robustness of the survey statistics in relation to the different purposes for which they are used; and about whether the strengths and limitations of the statistics are currently explained sufficiently clearly when they are published. This Review examined these points, the views of users and the steps being taken by ONS to address the limitations of the survey. It concluded that the IPS statistics are, in broad terms, sufficient at the level of UK aggregates to meet a range of user needs. However, it noted that there is a consensus among users that the survey does not provide sufficient robustness to meet some important needs for more local migration data; for example, at the local authority level or for smaller areas.

ONS provided an update of progress against the recommendations. ONS told us that it has drafted a response to the recommendations of the report and intends to publish this response. The response aims to balance these recommendations with the outcomes of the PASC report<sup>10</sup> and Assessment Report 267<sup>11</sup> and has yet to be finalised. The Home Office has provided an update on progress against recommendation 6.

### **Summary of progress against recommendations:**

**Recommendation 1: ONS should continue the enhancements to the presentation and commentary accompanying the migration statistics, providing a clear statement of the uncertainty around the estimates and supporting appropriate interpretation of the trends.**

#### Ongoing

ONS told us that it has added further analysis of time series trends in Section 1 of the November Migration Statistics Quarterly Report (MSQR) and included a note on revisions to the migration component of change. This information on revisions has also been included within MSQR 'Information for Users', and a separate note covering this and the Long Term International Migration quality work has been published on the Population and Migration theme pages on the ONS site. A section has been added to MSQR to make clear the difference between provisional and final IPS-based and LTIM estimates. Further information on non-sampling errors has been added to the QMI and IPS nugget; ONS are reviewing the IPS sample in 2014 and aim to re-optimize it for 2016. The review will consider potential sources of bias arising from non-sampling errors.

ONS intend to include information describing the IPS samples in a paper to be released to coincide with the publication of the 2013 annual Overseas Travel and Tourism release "Travel Trends, 2013" in April 2014. The Statistical Products Working Group is working to develop approaches to expressing the uncertainty of survey based estimates. It will aim to describe uncertainty prominently in statistical bulletins and a consistent approach across all ONS survey-based outputs.

**Recommendation 2: ONS should review and extend the supporting information about the quality of the IPS-based statistics, and provide a fuller and more coherent explanation of the strengths and limitations in relation to different uses of the data.**

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/monitoring/monitoring-reviews/monitoring-review-4-2013---the-robustness-of-the-international-passenger-survey.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmpublicadm/523/52302.htm>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment-reports/assessment-report-267---migration-statistics.pdf>

### Ongoing

The IPS methodology web page has been revised to provide easier access to all IPS methodology documents. ONS will review the links to *IPS QMI* and other IPS methodology documents and additional links will be added as necessary to the next release of *Travel Trends*, due for publication in April 2014. ONS told us they have improved the consistency of the methodology information and background notes provided in the monthly and quarterly *Overseas Travel and Tourism* releases and will review these again to ensure that any further revisions made in *Travel Trends* are incorporated.

Information about the quality of IPS in relation to use for producing balance of payments statistics will be included in the 2013 annual Overseas Travel and Tourism release "Travel Trends, 2013" in April 2014. The IPS Nugget now includes key measures of IPS quality (e.g. response rates, sample size). The statistical bulletin includes links to the Nugget. Links to the Nugget have been added to all other supporting documentation.

Inconsistencies between the LTIM estimates and the migration component of the population estimates have been made clearer in MSQR and on the migration subject page. A comparison of the mid-year estimate components of change and the LTIM estimates is provided in the FAQs document. Further work on this area is being considered as part of the response to Assessment Report 267.

ONS are preparing a paper on the research undertaken, and further plans, to investigate the imbalance between those arriving and those departing. It intends to publish this paper by the end of March 2014.

**Recommendation 3: The Statistics Authority and National Statistician should encourage other government departments to extend the range and accessibility of information about the characteristics and circumstances of migrants living in the UK.**

### Ongoing

The ONS told us that it works closely with the Home Office to make good use of available data sources that provide a greater range of information of migration. DWP are members of the Migration Reporting Working Group and have recently changed their publication timetable so that timely indications of Bulgarian and Romanian immigration will become available. At the working level, other government departments are engaged in the aim of providing meaningful data on migration.

**Recommendation 4: ONS should make further improvements to the estimation of international migration statistics, including a greater use international migration data collected by other countries to better understand the patterns of migration to/from the UK.**

### Ongoing

ONS has worked via Eurostat with other EU countries to compare flows data. Eurostat acknowledge that emigration data from the majority of EU countries is not of comparable quality to the UK (since people do not de-register from administrative systems when they emigrate and there are no border surveys). Definitional differences between countries' statistical systems mean that estimates are difficult to compare but there is value in examining trends between countries.

**Recommendation 5: ONS should provide regular updates for users on the development plans and their progress.**

### Ongoing

This issue was also raised by Assessment Report 267. ONS intend to address this within the response to the assessment and as part of the Population Statistics strategy.

### **Recommendation 6: Home Office should keep users informed about the likely nature of its statistical outputs from the e-Borders system and the timescale for their release.**

### Ongoing

The Home Office told us that it had presented the current plans for the use of e-borders as part of a presentation at this year's Migration Statistics User Forum. The slides have been published<sup>12</sup> to set out the current position and circulated via mailing lists. However, there are no specific plans or milestones, pending other investigations of the data quality and coverage, and expected improvements to coverage in the next few years. Further evidence has also been provided to PASC<sup>13</sup>. The Home Office intends to present the plan as it develops in future editions of the HO Statistical Work Programme<sup>14</sup>.

Home Office statistical outputs in relation to e-Borders rely on the roll-out of operational systems; these are currently under review. The Home Office liaise with e-Borders staff through their Entry and Exit Working Group (EEWG). Through the EEWG, it has provided a large extract of data to ONS (covering more than 3 years), allowing ONS to continue with their analysis of the possible uses of e-Borders data.

### **Recommendation 7: ONS should investigate the feasibility of producing estimates that separate long-term migrants into those who might be regarded as 'non-permanent' (such as those planning to stay for less than five years) and 'permanent' migrants, in consultation with users.**

### Ongoing

ONS referred to data on intended length of stay in the FAQs supporting the November 2013 MSQR but acknowledges that further work is possible. In addition, ONS:

- published length of stay statistics for former students to the UK;
- are consulting on country groups with the intention of aligning these in future to create improved coherence between HO and ONS statistics;
- intend to make more use of the 'Migrant Journey' report to provide context to the statistics;
- will investigate the creation of a 'short story' on migrant length of stay, including circular migrants.

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<sup>12</sup> [https://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/cgi-bin/filearea.cgi?LMGT1=MIGRATION-STATS&X=5DA8154274EA717A59&Y=&a=get&f=/Presentations\\_from\\_the\\_17\\_September\\_2013\\_conference.htm](https://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/cgi-bin/filearea.cgi?LMGT1=MIGRATION-STATS&X=5DA8154274EA717A59&Y=&a=get&f=/Presentations_from_the_17_September_2013_conference.htm)

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmpubadm/c1010-i/c101001.htm>.

<sup>14</sup> Current edition: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/home-office-statistical-work-programme-2013-to-2014>

## ***Real Terms Estimates for Health Expenditure in England over the Spending Review Period, 2010-11 to 2014-15***

### **Monitoring Update – July 2014:**

The Authority published *Real Terms Estimates for Health Expenditure in England over the Spending Review Period, 2010-11 to 2014-15* in June 2013.

This Brief investigated the accuracy of statements made by the Secretary of State for Health in England and the Shadow Secretary about whether NHS spending in real-terms was increasing or falling over the previous two years. The reviews identified a number of issues relating to the timing of published figures and the definition of health as a function of government.

### **Summary of progress against recommendations or advice:**

The Report did not specifically make recommendations, rather it drew a number of conclusions and presented them as advice. For the purpose of this exercise, we have treated this advice as recommendations.

### **Recommendation 1: Historic GDP deflators and forecasts should be preserved on the web to allow users to carry out retrospective analysis.**

#### Complete

Since January 2014, HM Treasury now retains earlier versions of the GDP deflators for retrospective analysis.

HM Treasury and ONS have been working jointly to improve the availability and clarity of the GDP figures and the associated deflators. It is now clear that the figures that HM Treasury publishes on GDP deflators are derived directly from the first release of the statistics by ONS. In addition, ONS has added time series data on GDP deflators in order to minimise any additional calculations that need to be carried out by HM Treasury.

HM Treasury has also developed a GDP host page to provide guidance on GDP deflators and also store historic deflators to allow users to carry out retrospective analysis.

### **Recommendation 2: There is scope to provide additional information and explanation in chapter 3 of PESA to improve transparency.**

#### Complete

Chapter 3 pulls together a commentary on policy changes that have been introduced over the previous year. This is likely to include changes introduced via the Autumn Statement, the Budget and the Parliamentary Supply process. This will also include relevant classifications decisions and machinery of government changes that have impacted upon the numbers. Where possible the changes will continue to be quantified to allow users to understand the impact. This work will cover all the time periods in PESA and where possible reference the changes in the associated table.

**Recommendation 3: The treatment of depreciation in Chapter 3 of PESA is sometimes confusing. It is excluded from total DEL, but is included in department's resource DEL budgets. HM Treasury has indicated that it intends to add a table showing RDEL excluding depreciation which will tie in with the presentation elsewhere in PESA.**

Complete

Resource DEL is now presented as excluding depreciation as suggested.

## **Statistics Relating to the DWP Work Programme and Pre-Work Programme**

### **Monitoring Update – July 2014:**

The Authority published *Interim report on statistics about Welfare to Work schemes* in November 2012<sup>15</sup> and *Final Report on Statistics Relating to the DWP Work Programme and Pre-Work Programme* in May 2013.<sup>16</sup>

In 2011, the DWP introduced a range of new schemes with the aim of helping unemployed people to gain sustained employment. Among these schemes, the Work Programme, aimed at the long term unemployed, is the one with the greatest number of places with other schemes grouped together within the Pre-Work Programme. The Programmes are supported and monitored by a range of official statistics. The *Interim report* considered whether the statistics met the needs of Parliament and the public and whether more could be done to ensure full compliance with the *Code of Practice for Official Statistics*. The *Final Report* extended the review to incorporate the Authority's evaluation of the first release of outcome statistics for the Work Programme.

An update on progress has been provided for the eight recommendations. DWP has taken steps to address the range of recommendations and have sought an assessment of the statistics; work on the assessment began in January 2014 and will allow a full investigation of these areas against the *Code*.

### **Summary of progress against recommendations:**

**Recommendation 1: The needs of users, the use made of the statistics and the types of decisions they inform should be investigated and documented, as required by the Code of Practice.**

#### Ongoing

See below.

**Recommendation 2: Information about users' experience of these statistics should be gathered and published, specifically in relation to data quality and the format of reports.**

#### Ongoing

A combined response on progress has been reported to cover recommendations 1 and 2.

Work Programme: DWP told us it intends to look at ways to improve the statistics in light of feedback from user's experiences. It has worked with DWP policy, strategy and press office colleagues and select users outside of DWP to understand their use of the statistics and enhance the statistical releases. A public consultation took place which was expected to provide more information. Users identified via the consultation and 'Welfare and benefits' community at [www.statsusernet.org.uk](http://www.statsusernet.org.uk) will also be engaged via a questionnaire to find out more about the uses and what they think about our statistics.

Pre-Work Programme: DWP told us the statistics are subject to a range of internal and external quality assurance exercises and the accessibility and presentation of the statistics has been updated to aid in their use and interpretation by external stakeholders. DWP told us they continue to consult with these stakeholders, on at least a quarterly basis, to provide an opportunity for feedback and comments on the statistical outputs as well as policy matters.

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/monitoring/monitoring-reviews/monitoring-review-8-2012---interim-report-on-statistics-about-welfare-to-work-schemes.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/reports---correspondence/correspondence/work-programme-statistics.pdf>

**Recommendation 3: The extent of revisions should be made clear at the time the statistics are released.**

Ongoing

The full historical statistical series is refreshed with each release; the background information note details the extent of the revisions. Changes in key figures, such as the Business Plan transparency indicator and performance against minimum contractual levels are footnoted within the Statistical Summary.

**Recommendation 4: Users should be informed about the quality of the statistical outputs, including estimates of the main sources of bias and other errors, and other aspects of the European Statistical System definition of quality.**

Ongoing

A background note provides information on the quality assurance, accuracy and reasons for choice behind the statistics. Footnotes are applied when DWP are aware of specific anomalies and notes are placed on the Work Programme Statistics landing page at the time of the release.

**Recommendation 5: The releases should be reviewed to consider how each meets users' requirements, and how their coherence with other relevant statistics can be enhanced.**

Ongoing

The Employment Programme Support Official Statistics webpage brings together information on the statistical releases, research reports and ad-hoc analyses. The Work Programme statistics include contextual comparisons with statistics on the benefits from which claimants were referred. DWP are currently considering the responses from the public consultation describing proposed changes to some Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Official Statistics over the period 2013 to 2017. These proposals would combine a number of existing series, to bring benefits, tax credits, Housing Benefit, sanctions, hardship, employment programmes all together in one unified customer database and gradually transferring statistical publications to a new dissemination tool called Stat-Xplore. This is a longer term piece of work. It is hoped that the scope of the database will offer advantages in terms of coherence. DWP have sought to include links to pre-WP-related ad hoc releases are on the main landing page, although further work is needed on this.

**Recommendation 6: DWP statisticians should do more to prepare and disseminate commentary and analysis that aid user interpretation and make statistics available in as much detail as is reliable and practicable.**

Ongoing

Work Programme: DWP statisticians have worked with the National Statistician's Good Practice Team on the presentation and commentary in the Statistical Summary. The September release was updated as a result and presented in a revised layout to aid interpretation and understanding. The amount of detailed statistical data released via Google Public Data explorer has been increased and this has received positive feedback from users. The open consultation sought views on the overall presentation, content and breakdowns available in the statistics.

Pre-Work Programme: DWP have published impact analyses of Work Experience and Mandatory Work Activity using propensity score matching to compare the benefit and employment outcomes of those referred to and participating in the provision to a matched comparison group. Links to this work are included in the official statistics releases to aid user interpretation.

**Recommendation 7: The Pre-Work Programme statistics should be made available in forms that enable and encourage analysis and re-use.**

Pre-Work Programme: DWP statisticians have worked with the Good Practice Team on the presentation of the Pre-Work Programme statistics. The order and wording in the official statistics has been revised to make the releases clearer and easier to understand. This has been implemented for the November 2013 report and subsequent publications. Tables for future publications will be released in Excel format to allow users to engage with the statistics.

**Recommendation 8: The approach to the labelling of ad hoc statistical releases should be reviewed to ensure that all statistics are released in line with the Code of Practice**

Ongoing

DWP has carried out work to improve this area and received positive feedback from the National Statistician who expressed the view that the DWP's ad-hoc release website was a good innovation and a valuable aid to the transparency of public debate.

## ***Accessibility of official statistics on health***

### **Monitoring Update – July 2014:**

The Authority published *Accessibility of official statistics on Health* in October 2012.<sup>17</sup>

The review looked at the accessibility of official health statistics for the four UK administrations. In particular it looked at how practicable it was to identify the statistics relevant to an issue or decision, locate them, access useful information about the quality of the statistics, and understand the coherence and completeness of the picture the statistics present. It also looked at whether the dialogue between bodies that produce health statistics and the people who use them is effective in ensuring that any weaknesses are recognised and addressed. The review concluded that there was a strong case for some specific but important changes in the way that health statistics are compiled and presented.

An update on progress has been provided by the GSS Theme Group on Health and Social Care (The Group). This included Group colleagues in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

### **Summary of progress against recommendations:**

**Recommendation 1: There are some 22 organisations in the UK that are recognised as producers of official statistics relating to health, and a further 21 public bodies that publish relevant statistics but which are not currently recognised as producers of official statistics. We would propose that the provisions of the Statistics and Registration Service Act that allow non-Crown bodies to be identified as producers of official statistics be used to extend the scope of official statistics to include many of these further organisations. This would help to clarify and enforce the appropriate professional standards, and improve the accessibility of these statistics.**

#### Ongoing

Work is progressing across the UK to bring the range of public bodies which produce relevant health and social care statistics into the scope of Official Statistics. Many of the English bodies mentioned in the report were Public Health Observatories. On the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013, these were incorporated into Public Health England (PHE). PHE is an executive agency of the Department of Health and thus under the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007, their public domain statistics are deemed to be official statistics.

Other developments include:

- PHE has taken responsibility for statistical functions previously carried out by the Health Protection Agency (HPA) and National Treatment Agency for Substance Misuse (NTA);
- The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority, the NHS Commissioning Board (NHS England) and the NHS Litigation Authority were added to the Official Statistics Order 2013;
- The Care Inspectorate, NHS 24, Scottish Ambulance Service and the Scottish Social Services Council were added to the Official Statistics (Scotland) Amendment Order 2012; and

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<sup>17</sup> <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/reports---correspondence/correspondence/letter-from-andrew-dilnot-to-nick-hurd-03052012.pdf>

- Public Health Wales and the NHS Wales Informatics Service have been added to the Official Statistics Order (Wales) 2013 (or by use of existing powers brought into Official Statistics).

**Recommendation 2: It would be helpful to review the coherence of statistical releases (and other statistical publications and websites) about health, both within each administration and across the UK. Is the information being packaged in a way that best meets the needs of users?**

#### Ongoing

The Group told us that decisions on the release of statistical products such as timing, content, and presentation, are made by the producer organisations in response to their user needs. The Group is aware of a very small number of products where publication dates across some of the countries of the UK are co-ordinated, but this is not common practice. The GSS Theme Group would be happy to work with colleagues across the wider GSS as they further develop the publication hub. The Group, through its routine meetings and discussions, will also offer an opportunity for producer organisations to share ideas on how to maximise the impact and benefit of statistical publications across Health and Social Care

In Scotland work is being progressed by publicly funded organisations involved in the collection, analysis, or publication of information and intelligence across the Health and Social Care theme. This work (labelled as the National Information and Intelligence Framework) is broader than Official Statistics, but aims to contribute to the improvement in the quality, coverage, efficiency and relevance of statistical work in Scotland.

**Recommendation 3: We think that there is a need for a published list of statistical indicators on health and health services required for the UK as a whole (that is, not on separate bases for England and each of the devolved administrations). Such a published list would need to include information about the extent to which the UK indicators are available now.**

#### Ongoing

The GSS Theme Group has contributed to initial work – promoted by the National Statistician – which is assessing the comparability of statistics across the UK. Within the Health and Social Care Theme there are a small number of statistics which are able to be produced at a UK level – either through collection and analysis at the UK level or by combining data gathered across the separate administrations. However, there is no strong drive within individual administrations to build a UK level framework.

The Group has had some discussions with colleagues in ONS who are compiling a Compendium of UK Statistics to support the Scottish Independence referendum. The issues on comparability and relevance to individual country level policies are an issue within this.

**Recommendation 4: A web-based directory of health statistics would help answer questions such as *who produces what? where is it?*; and *am I comparing like with like?* It could identify and provide links to the available statistics, their geographical coverage and length of time series, and provide access to information about quality and uses, methods, and sources.**

### Ongoing

The Group believes this would be better addressed through the development of the Publication Hub, and the work of individual producers to improve the presentation of their products, the meta-data accompanying products and data, and the functionality of tools.

Relevant work in place or in progress includes:

- The replacement of the Health and Social Care Information Centre's Indicator Portal with a new tool which will increase coverage, improve functionality and access to data;
- The publication by HSCIC of an updated guide to information sources for journalists;
- The improvement in the range of data and analytical tools available through the PHE Data and Knowledge Gateway;
- The Scottish Government is starting work to improve its presentation of social care data on its website;
- Public Health and Intelligence (NHS Scotland) is currently initiating a review of its website and the way in which information is disseminated to users; and
- The Welsh Government has recently re-launched its Statistics for Wales website which provides an easy to use catalogue of statistical outputs for Wales. This is in addition to the new StatsWales interactive website allowing users to download and manipulate data directly.
- Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) is currently leading in the development of the new Health Statistics website for the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety Northern Ireland (DHSSPSNI).

**Recommendation 5: It would be helpful to have an easily understood and widely used framework of concepts, categories, and terminology. This would help those wishing to compare statistics on a particular topic to find the relevant statistics. It might also help the producers of official health statistics to identify gaps in coverage.**

### Ongoing

Some products are in place that address some of this issue: The NHS Data Dictionary (England); The NHS Data Dictionary (Wales); and The NHS Data Dictionary (Scotland) and The Northern Ireland Data Dictionary..

**Recommendation 6: We see a good case for a regular and relatively comprehensive statistical analysis of health in the UK that would paint a picture of the nation's health and health services for a broad audience.**

### Ongoing

The ONS work on the Compendium of UK Statistics will provide users with a presentation of statistics across the UK.

**Recommendation 7: There is a need for high quality information from private sector suppliers of healthcare, produced to NHS standards where it relates to NHS patients. This could be added to the relevant statistical releases that already exist.**

### Ongoing

In England, the Health and Social Care Act of 2012 conferred on the HSCIC powers to require independent sector providers to submit data, where they are providing public services. In Scotland, for hospital activity, NHS Boards are required to submit national returns for NHS patients treated in private institutions. In Wales the view is that the (small) number of private sector suppliers means that this is not a major concern. Within Northern Ireland the numbers of patients treated within the private (independent) sector are to be published for the first time in the Annual Hospital Statistics publications on 7 August 2014.

## ***Public availability of official statistics – three ONS datasets***

### **Monitoring Update – July 2014:**

The Authority published *Public availability of official statistics – three ONS datasets* in September 2012.<sup>18</sup>

The review explored the public availability of the low level data used in the production of some of ONS's statistics. It looked at the range of data that are published, and the formats in which they are published. The review responded to concerns raised with the Statistics Authority about whether ONS is currently able to comply fully with some elements of the *Code of Practice for Official Statistics*, and the Government's Open Data policy.

There were three recommendations in the report. An update on progress has been provided for recommendation 1, 2 and 3.

### **Summary of progress against recommendations:**

**Recommendation 1: More active dialogue between ONS and those users who require detailed data. In addition to arrangements already in place, ONS could be more proactive in developing an in-depth understanding of the purposes for which users want the low-level data; this should help them to address those needs more effectively. More active dialogue would also help users to understand both the constraints on ONS in terms of the various legal, ethical and practical obstacles to publishing further low level data, and some of the technical issues.**

#### Ongoing

ONS's Web Data Access (WDA) project team has launched a beta version of the Data Explorer and Open Application Programming Interface (API)<sup>19</sup>. ONS says that these tools will enable users to access, use and customise data more effectively. Data Explorer should make it easier for users to find, view and download data. Open API means data can be directly used by other applications. There are 140 2011 Census Quick Statistics datasets at local authority and Parliamentary Constituency level available. ONS says that further datasets will be loaded and made available over the next few months and that external users are being contacted gradually.

**Recommendation 2: Balancing confidentiality and utility. Specifically in relation to consumer prices data, ONS could more clearly recognise the user requirement for individual prices and investigate data suppliers' views about publishing these prices, balancing the fact that these data are by definition available to consumers with the need to provide assurances about confidentiality to data suppliers. Because of the wide relevance of this issue – the boundary between confidentiality and utility - in other fields of official statistics, we would encourage ONS also to lead discussions about it with other producers of official statistics, and other stakeholders.**

#### Ongoing

Regarding the CPI developments noted in recommendations 2 and 3, it was established during the CPI assessment that the statistics team had not been auctioned to address the recommendations of the monitoring report. The team said they would look to see what they could do but it was agreed that other priorities could be focussed on; namely the reviews commissioned by the

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/reports---correspondence/correspondence/letter-from-andrew-dilnot-to-nick-hurd-03052012.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/census/2011/census-data/ons-data-explorer--beta-/index.html>

Authority. The published work programme<sup>20</sup> shows that the CPI team is progressing system rewrites during 2014.

**Recommendation 3: More flexible IT systems. Technological limitations are preventing teams in ONS from making available larger sets of non-disclosive low level data for users to manipulate; and are also impeding the implementation of appropriate corporate technical approaches to disclosure control. ONS's website does not currently provide enough functionality for users of low level data; and ONS is currently working to address this. In future we would hope to see the production of 'open datasets' as part of regular statistical developments. When resources permit we would also like to see the development of better processes for secondary disclosure testing for ABS data and a review of the coding of geographies for CPI.**

Ongoing

See update for recommendation 2.

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<sup>20</sup> <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/user-guidance/prices/cpi-and-rpi/work-programme-for-consumer-price-statistics.pdf>

## ***Official statistics and the Voluntary Sector***

### **Monitoring Update – July 2014:**

The Authority published *Official statistics and the Voluntary Sector* in May 2012.<sup>21</sup>

The Brief explored how the voluntary sector uses official statistics, and how it engages with bodies that produce them. The statistical needs of the voluntary sector are relatively under-researched compared with those of, for example, central and local government, or the business sector. The Brief drew some conclusions about the adequacy of the statistical information publicly available about the voluntary sector itself.

There were three recommendations in the report. An update on progress has been provided for all three.

### **Summary of progress against recommendations:**

**Recommendation 1: The use, and potential use, of official statistics by the voluntary sector would be enhanced by closer engagement between representatives of the sector and producers of official statistics, in order to:**

- i. develop a fuller understanding of the sector's needs;**
- ii. ensure that statistics are presented in ways that make them accessible; and**
- iii. identify significant unmet needs and develop plans to address these.**

#### Ongoing

Following the open meeting in January 2013 bringing together the voluntary sector and producers of official statistics (organised by the NSO, The National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) and the Royal Statistical Society (RSS)), the RSS set up a specific group for the sector on StatsUserNet, entitled 'Voluntary Sector Use of Statistics'. Attendees were invited to join and presentations from the meeting were posted on the site along with a summary note.

The group currently has 64 members and provides a forum for producers and users on particular issues and formal consultations, for example the Beyond 2011 consultation. ONS and DCLG have been the most active producer members, using the network to publicise consultations and the DCLG User Engagement Day in November 2013.

The Data Navigator project identified three key statistical areas of relevance to the Voluntary Sector: statistics about the sector; statistics of use to the sector; and statistics generated by the sector from data collected about its clients, beneficiaries and others.

The ONS Beyond 2011 Programme Team and RSS Statistics User Forum organised two events aimed at the Voluntary Sector and Equality and Diversity Statistics users at the end of 2013 in London and Manchester. Results of the Data Navigator project were presented by NCVO and RSS, and were well received.

**Recommendation 2: The Government may further need to review the existing statistics about the voluntary sector; to identify gaps in the evidence base and to make plans to address these gaps.**

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<sup>21</sup> <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/reports---correspondence/correspondence/letter-from-andrew-dilnot-to-nick-hurd-03052012.pdf>

### Ongoing

During summer 2013, the Third Sector Research Centre (TSRC), NCVO and RSS undertook a small project funded by ESRC on Navigating the Voluntary Sector Data Landscape<sup>22</sup>. The project aim was to give an overview of the voluntary sector's use of and attitude to data, based on surveys and interviews with organisations, and some desk research. The sector was also consulted through two events. One was to an invited audience at the beginning of the project in June, to help scope the key issues. The second, an open meeting towards the end of the project in September, explored the findings and discussed a series of possible recommendations. The findings provided insights into the kinds of data that voluntary organisations use, the challenges they experience in accessing and analysing data, and their views on the kind of guidance and support they would find useful. The project looked at the availability and utility of datasets, capacity building issues and barriers, and carried out a small scale looking at the use of data in voluntary sector organisations.

A related programme is being run in Scotland, funded by the Advanced Quantitative Methods Network (AQMeN)<sup>23</sup>. It is delivering a series of workshops to voluntary sector practitioners around the topic of accessing and using datasets.

### **Recommendation 3:**

**It is likely that the amount of data being released by the voluntary and community sector will increase. The Authority considers that the Government should take steps to ensure that sufficient information is made available by such organisations that a coherent national picture can be produced, and that the activities and outcomes of voluntary sector organisations can be compared with those of other organisations.**

### Ongoing

The annual NCVO Civil Society Almanac, based mainly on data about registered charities drawn from Charity Commission records, continues to provide an overview of the activities and outcomes of the sector that can be obtained from charities' annual accounts.

The method and data sources used to produce estimates of the Non-profit Institutions Serving Household (NPISH) sector in the National Accounts are in the process of being revised by ONS. The new method will provide more accurate and up-to-date estimates for the National Accounts, using financial administrative data from regulators of NPISH organisations (trade unions, political parties, universities) together with financial data extracted from the accounts of charities by NCVO and TSRC. The new figures are expected to be in use from Blue Book 2014, with NPISH available separately to the rest of the household sector for the first time from Blue Book 2016.

<sup>22</sup> <http://data.ncvo.org.uk/datastore/navigating-the-voluntary-sector-data-landscape/>

<sup>23</sup> <http://aqmen.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2.%20Rutherford%2C%20Harper%2C%20Meikleham%20%26%20Hope.pdf>

## ***Creating official statistics from administrative data***

### **Monitoring Update – July 2014:**

The Authority published *Creating official statistics from administrative data* in March 2012.<sup>24</sup>

This Brief reviewed whether the statistical service had sufficient access to, and influence over, the administrative data sources from which official statistics are increasingly drawn. It looked at some of the statistical implications of the Government's Open Data policy and concluded that, in order to ensure quality and maximise value, some further steps needed to be taken - both to improve access for statistical purposes and to build confidence that appropriate security arrangements exist to protect confidential information about individuals and businesses.

An update on progress has been provided for recommendations 1, 2, 3 and 4.

### **Summary of progress against recommendations:**

**Recommendation 1: A more systematic and thorough process is required for identifying administrative databases that have potential to be used to produce official statistics. The proposed Public Sector Information Inventory should be used to identify administrative sources that have the potential to be used for statistical purposes.**

#### Ongoing

The government have established the National Information Infrastructure (NII) in response to the Shakespeare Review of June 2013. This includes identifying and maintaining an inventory of data held by government. This is currently in the early stages with departments and their arms length bodies expected to ensure that their list of unpublished datasets are comprehensive by March 2014.

**Recommendation 2: Ways need to be found to simplify the process of giving statisticians access to administrative data held in organisations other than the one that the statistician happens to work in. Public bodies that control administrative data should be required to publish plans to remove barriers to data sharing for statistical purposes.**

#### Ongoing

The Government Statistical Service (GSS) Data Strategy has now been published with its implementation expected to be taken forward shortly. Part of this implementation will include a focus on ensuring that the GSS are fully aware of any potentially useful datasets and how they could be accessed.

**Recommendation 3: Administrative data are simply a by-product of administrative processes and may not exactly match the needs of the statistician or the user of statistics. There is a need for more central guidance to bodies that produce statistics from administrative data about auditing and ensuring the quality of those data.**

#### Ongoing

The National Statisticians Office is working with others towards publishing guidance for statisticians who use administrative data in the production of official statistics.

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<sup>24</sup> <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/reports---correspondence/correspondence/letter-from-sir-michael-scholar-to-rt-hon-francis-maude---administrative-data---16032012.pdf>

**Recommendation 4: The utility of administrative data as sources of statistics can be limited by, for example, inconsistencies in the data held by organisations responsible for similar types of administration, and by changes over time that result as, for example, definitions or eligibility rules change. There is a need to review the implications for official statistics of the current use of different standards, definitions and classifications in administrative systems.**

Ongoing

As part of the implementation of the GSS data strategy, there is an intention to identify current administrative data sources, their owners and related measures. Once this is complete the GSS will be able to better influence harmonisation of these data sources.

**Recommendation 5: Some people believe that data sharing runs counter to civil liberties and personal privacy. There would be value in a public debate, perhaps in the context of ONS' Beyond 2011 Programme, led by an authoritative and independent figure, about the appropriate safeguards for the sharing of administrative data for statistical purposes.**

Ongoing

No progress reported to date.

## ***Statistics for Parliamentary Constituencies***

### **Monitoring Update – July 2014:**

The Authority published *Statistics for Parliamentary Constituencies* in March 2012.<sup>25</sup>

The Office for National Statistics and the National Statistician's Office have reported that they are continuing to engage with departments on the recommendations and conclusion set out in this Monitoring Brief. Further information about progress is set out against each of the recommendations set out the Monitoring Brief:

**Recommendation 1: Government departments and other producers of official statistics should, subject to the resource implications being manageable, aim to accommodate the production and publication of constituency statistics along the lines proposed in this Monitoring Brief.**

#### Ongoing

Government departments and other producers of official statistics have told us that they remain keen to accommodate the production and publication of official statistics for all geographic levels for which there is a required use. Dialogue with the House of Commons Library is ongoing to identify priorities for new constituency level statistics. ONS will work with government departments to facilitate publication of new constituency level data for which there is demand, where possible, in time to inform debate leading up to the 2015 General Election.

**Recommendation 2: There would be virtue in a common approach across the various producers of official statistics in the UK - in practice this would mean an agreed set of criteria and processes for the production of constituency level estimates.**

#### Ongoing

A new web portal was launched in December 2013. Guidance to help users of official statistics to produce custom data for parliamentary constituency geographies, where data are not routinely published at this level, is planned and will be added to the portal in due course. This work will be supported by departments and the devolved administrations.

**Recommendation 3: Statistical offices in government departments should aim to consult the House of Commons Library to ensure that the statistical needs of Members of Parliament are understood and taken into account; and establish an appropriate provider-user dialogue with parliamentary, political, media and special interest bodies most likely to value constituency level estimates.**

#### Ongoing

It is expected that all departments should periodically consult users, including the House of Commons Library, on the production of statistics and the development of analytical work programmes.

**Recommendation 4: It would be helpful if producers of official statistics were publicly to set out their plans for the provision of Westminster parliamentary constituency statistics on the new boundary basis, following completion of the current round of boundary reviews.**

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<sup>25</sup> <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/monitoring/monitoring-reviews/index.html>

### Ongoing

It was announced in January 2013 that work on the 2013 Boundary Review had ceased. Once the next Boundary Review is announced, the Statistics Authority will want to see producers of official statistics setting out their plans for the provision of statistics on whatever new boundary basis the Review recommends.

**Recommendation 5: The publication of plans for the release of recalibrated 2011 Census data using the new parliamentary constituency geography should be arranged as soon as possible after the finalisation of the boundary review process.**

### Ongoing

It was announced in January 2013 that work on the 2013 Boundary Review had ceased. If a future Review makes recommendations before the next Census, the Statistics Authority will want to see re-calibrated 2011 Census data on the proposed new boundary basis being produced and published as quickly as practicable. ONS published Census data for the existing parliamentary constituency areas throughout 2013.

**Recommendation 6: There is, we believe, a strong case for production by ONS of a statistical compendium publication to bring together a wide range of constituency statistics to assist parliamentary candidates, voters and researchers; however the associated benefits and costs would need to be examined in more detail first.**

### Partially Completed

A new web portal was launched in December 2013. This includes a data catalogue with summary information for all official statistics datasets available for Westminster parliamentary constituency areas; explanation of the relevant geography information including look-up tables; and a guide to the parliamentary system in Westminster and the devolved parliaments. In February 2014 interactive mapping functionality was added to the portal. The small number of headline official statistics for each Westminster parliamentary constituency area currently featured will be added to in the run up the next General Election. Future plans for the portal also include guidance for users in producing custom tables for parliamentary constituency areas where data are not routinely produced at this level.

**Recommendation 7: The timing of the publication of constituency level figures for the number of registered electors should be reviewed to try to get both the reference date and timing of publication closer to election times.**

### Ongoing

ONS is assessing the feasibility of improving the timeliness of electoral statistics. An initial review has taken place. Further evaluation work to consider whether any changes to the current timings can be made will be undertaken once the impact of the introduction of Individual Electoral Registration in 2014 on local authority processes is known. This will require discussion between ONS, Cabinet Office, local authorities and the devolved administrations.

**Recommendation 8: A user-guide describing what official statistics are available at all local geographies (including parliamentary constituency level) would be of wide value. It could indicate not only whether statistics are available but also the latest date for which they have been produced, and plans for future availability and dissemination.**

### Completed

A data catalogue has been produced and is published on the ONS website. The catalogue includes the dataset name, where to find it, the departmental owner(s), definitional and coverage information, the update cycle, and the date of the latest and next release. Over 400 datasets, including the 2011 Census releases, are included in the catalogue. Early feedback has been positive.

**Recommendation 9: The current proposals for new parliamentary constituency boundaries may involve constituencies crossing the boundaries of larger administrative units such as counties, and that this may have implications for the practicability of producing constituency data in some cases. Where these boundary changes present new problems in this regard, this should be explained publicly by the relevant producer body.**

### Ongoing

Information about this is now routinely included as metadata published alongside National Statistics datasets.

## ***The accessibility and coherence of statistics about climate change***

### **Monitoring Update – July 2014:**

The Authority published *The accessibility and coherence of statistics about climate change* in October 2011.<sup>26</sup>

The Brief reviewed the extent to which official statistics relating to climate change are coherent and accessible. In recent years there has been increasing acceptance that economic and social pressures have contributed to climate change and that it poses significant risks to the environment. The availability of relevant statistical data is vital to the development of policy. This review concluded that, as far as the Authority can tell and in broad terms, government has access to sufficient statistical evidence on the topic. But, especially in the light of public uncertainty about the part that human activities play in driving climate change, it is important that the statistical evidence and advice is presented in a form that is widely accessible and understandable.

Progress has been reported for recommendations 1 to 5, and recommendation 2 is considered to be complete.

### **Summary of further progress against recommendations:**

**Recommendation 1: We note that whilst all official statistics are expected to be produced and released according to the requirements of the *Code of Practice for Official Statistics* – and are liable to formal assessment against the standards of that Code – there are many scientific (or broader research) data sets used in this field about which there is little in the way of standardised information on quality readily available. Given that the official statistics and other data are often presented and used together, it would be helpful if more information could be compiled centrally on the quality of the data that fall outside official statistics.**

#### Ongoing

The re-assessment of DECC outputs in December 2013 included a number of high profile official statistics which are being assessed for the first time. DECC has made improvements to the range of quality information published alongside its National Statistics.

**Recommendation 2: There is currently no main ‘climate change information’ internet site. We think users of the statistics would benefit from a portal that brought together statistics about climate change, with links to available data sources and to the information documented and collected in response to the government’s current climate change risk assessment.**

#### Complete

The .gov.uk website for DECC has a climate change landing page<sup>27</sup>. A link to the statistics is included at the bottom of this page.

The Defra climate change adaptation page on .gov.uk<sup>28</sup> also has a range of links to other sources of information on climate change.

<sup>26</sup> <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/monitoring/monitoring-briefs/monitoring-brief-7-2011---accessibility-and-coherence-of-statistics-about-climate-change.pdf>

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/topics/climate-change>

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/adapting-to-climate-change>

DECC recently participated in a UNECE taskforce on climate change statistics, which made some recommendations about how national statistics offices could improve access to climate related statistics produced by other organisations. DECC will be considering the taskforce's recommendations over the next year.

**Recommendation 3: We see potential for the use of interactive maps to illustrate aspects of climate change for the general public and non-specialist user.**

Ongoing

Some interactive maps relating to climate change are available:

- An interactive map of Local Authority CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, and maps of other GHG gases and air pollutants, is published on the National Atmospheric Inventory website.<sup>29</sup>
- Government has supported some initiatives which include interactive maps, such as Climate Local<sup>30</sup> and Climate UK<sup>31</sup>
- Interactive maps are available on the UK Climate Projections website<sup>32</sup>

**Recommendation 4: There is a need for an intuitive framework for statistics about climate change that could be used as the basis for reviewing the statistical evidence base, and for the presentation of these and related official statistics. The Framework for Developing Environmental Statistics<sup>33</sup> produced by Statistics Canada and work carried out by the United Nations Statistical Commission<sup>34</sup> are relevant.**

Ongoing

The Committee on Climate Change indicate in their corporate plan<sup>35</sup> that the Adaptation Sub Committee is planning to consult on indicators used for monitoring and evaluating the level of progress.

**Recommendation 5: Despite the importance of the subject to government and society, there is no regular, freestanding statistical report about climate change, covering both adaptation and mitigation, aimed at the non-specialist audience.**

Ongoing

The EEA State of the Environment Report due to be published in 2015 will include information on both climate change adaptation and mitigation.

<sup>29</sup> <http://naei.defra.gov.uk/data/local-authority-co2-map>

<sup>30</sup> <http://www.local.gov.uk/climate-local>

<sup>31</sup> <http://climateuk.net/>

<sup>32</sup> <http://ukclimateprojections.metoffice.gov.uk/21708>

<sup>33</sup> [http://unstats.un.org/unsd/environment/fdes.htm/FDES\\_Canada\\_Paper.pdf](http://unstats.un.org/unsd/environment/fdes.htm/FDES_Canada_Paper.pdf)

<sup>34</sup> <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/environment/fdes.htm>

<sup>35</sup> <http://www.theccc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/CCC-Corporate-Plan-2014-17-FINAL.pdf>

## ***Review of an error in the published estimates of Output in Construction***

### **Monitoring Update – July 2014:**

The Authority published *Review of an error in the published estimates of Output in Construction* in September 2011.<sup>36</sup>

This Statement followed an error in the Statistical Bulletin on Output in Construction published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) on 12 August 2011, and covered how this error occurred and how the episode was handled. The review comprised a brief account of the facts and a set of observations intended to help avoid similar occurrences in the future.

Recommendations 2, 3, and 6 were noted as complete in the Monitoring Update in January 2013. An update on progress has been provided for the four remaining recommendations; recommendations 5 and 7 have now been completed.

### **Summary of further progress against recommendations:**

**Recommendation 1: ONS needs to be confident that fully robust quality assurance procedures are universally in place across the department, with this process documented and formally signed off in each case.**

#### Ongoing

ONS told us that construction statistics will be included as part of a pilot to implement quality assurance plans for all outputs.

**Recommendation 4: Further progress in moving away from out-dated spreadsheet technology to more robust processes must be given high priority.**

#### Ongoing

A test was conducted with the SAS and excel systems in parallel. This found that the risk of manual error remained, and that the SAS system did not remove any points of failure. ONS has subsequently built a system within CORD; this is viewed as being free of these risks and ONS is currently parallel running the system against the legacy systems and producing the same numbers. It intends to run this as the live system by the end of March.

**Recommendation 5: There appears to have been insufficient staff available, and weakness in terms of staff experience in the specific field of construction statistics, responsibility for which was transferred relatively recently to ONS. This is an issue for ONS management to tackle as a matter of urgency.**

#### Complete

ONS told us that skilled Research, Analysis and Production staff have been recruited along with staff with National Accounts knowledge. There is still a natural turnover of staff but this has strengthened the resources available.

**Recommendation 7: Once a statistical Bulletin has been placed on the website, it should be possible for users to refer back to the document (both the statistics and commentary) in its original form, regardless of whether changes were subsequently needed; and that where there is an error that has to be corrected, the correction should be clearly marked, so that there is a clear audit trail.**

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<sup>36</sup> <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/news/statement---authority-s-review---construction-statistics.pdf>

Complete

This has been covered by ONS's corrections policy.

## *Immigration Statistics*

### Monitoring Update – July 2014

The Authority published *Immigration Statistics* in July 2011<sup>37</sup>.

A number of reports from the Home Affairs Committee in recent years have included observations about the limitations of official UK migration statistics, and criticised some of the ways in which the statistics were used in public debate. In July 2011 the UK Statistics Authority reviewed the position for these statistics and the prospects for improvement.

Our main conclusion was that whilst Parliament, Government and the public all demand a comprehensive statistical picture of immigration and emigration, this is not, in practice, deliverable without the systematic recording of people entering and leaving the UK. Such systematic recording is not something that statistical offices can establish for themselves. It would require Parliament and Government to put the necessary framework of legislation and administration in place. To the extent that such administrative recording is not put in place, there is no alternative statistical solution that will deliver comprehensive, integrated and reliable data. However, our report made some suggestions to improve communication of what is produced.

Recommendations 2 and 3 were noted as complete in the Monitoring Update in January 2013. Further progress has been made on recommendation 1.

#### Summary of further progress against recommendations:

**Recommendation 1: In line with the recommendation in the Authority's report on migration statistics and with the Select Committee's call for the use of a consistent definition of migration, it would be helpful if ONS, Home Office and DWP were to adopt a conceptual framework for migration statistics and encourage its use across government and by the broader user community. The framework would indicate how the different existing statistics relate to each other and to the process of migration more generally. It should also make clear the strengths and limitations of each set of statistics and guide users on the preferred statistic for different uses.**

#### Ongoing

ONS published a conceptual framework for UK population and migration statistics in collaboration with Southampton University and University of Leeds<sup>38</sup>. ONS told us that the framework will underpin its development of population and migration statistics in the future.

We reported in the second Monitoring Update that ONS had released a user guide alongside *Migration Statistics Quarterly Report* (the joint release of migration statistics for ONS, the Home Office and DWP). This gives advice about comparing the different statistics on migration, and background information about the individual sources. The Home Office has also explicitly stated the strengths and weaknesses of different sources in the user guide that accompanies *Immigration Statistics*.

<sup>37</sup> <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/reports---correspondence/correspondence/letter-from-sir-michael-scholar-to-rt-hon-keith-vaz-mp-11072011.pdf>

<sup>38</sup> <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/method-quality/imps/latest-news/conceptual-framework/index.html>

## ***The demand for, and feasibility of, a UK-wide index of multiple deprivation***

### **Monitoring Update – July 2014:**

The Authority published *The demand for, and feasibility of, a UK-wide index of multiple deprivation* in July 2011.<sup>39</sup>

Each of the four UK administrations produces an index of multiple deprivation (IMD) – a ranking of small areas from the most to the least deprived, based on a range of statistical data about domains such as income, employment, health, housing, education, access to services, and crime. These IMDs are intended for use in relation to each administration. However, there is no corresponding IMD covering the UK as a whole, so areas in different countries of the UK cannot be compared.

This Brief reported the UK Statistics Authority's views about the demand for, and feasibility of producing, a UK-wide index of multiple deprivation. The Statistics Authority recognised that the existing IMDs are used in each administration, but noted that there was some user interest in a UK-wide index and that the UK Government itself might wish to draw on published information in order to compare different areas within the UK.

Recommendations 1 and 2 were noted as complete in the Monitoring Update in January 2013 and progress is being made towards recommendation 3.

### **Summary of further progress against recommendations:**

**Recommendation 3: The Welsh Government, the Scottish Government and NISRA should consult users about the demand for more comparable statistical information on multiple deprivation – including a 'poverty index' – in the UK, and publish the results**

#### Ongoing

The Welsh Government told us that the next Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation will be published in late 2014. A publication consultation on the Proposed Indicators for the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2014<sup>40</sup> was launched on 28 November 2013 and will run until 27 February 2014. The consultation did not include explicit references or questions on UK comparability. Users have been given the opportunity to raise additional issues as part of the consultation.

We reported in the first Monitoring Update that the Scottish Government had carried out a consultation between July and September 2011 exploring the best timing for the next update of the Scottish IMD. This included asking users about the demand for related outputs including a UK-wide Index and Poverty Index. A summary report outlining the findings from the Scottish Government consultation has been published<sup>41</sup>.

We reported in the second Monitoring Update that the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) had decided that any consultation would have to take place after the publication of the detailed NI Census 2011 results due in 2013 and in line with the review of Local Government Districts in NI which is currently planned for 2014/15. The issue of UK comparability may be considered at that time.

<sup>39</sup> <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/monitoring/monitoring-briefs/monitoring-brief-6-2011---indices-of-multiple-deprivation.pdf>

<sup>40</sup> <http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/statistics/proposed-indicators-wimd-2014/?lang=en>

<sup>41</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/SIMD/ConsultationResp211>

## *Improving the reporting of road casualties*

### **Monitoring Update – July 2014:**

The Authority published *Improving the reporting of road casualties* in January 2011.<sup>42</sup>

In March 2010 the House of Commons Transport Committee invited the UK Statistics Authority to investigate the extent to which the Department for Transport had sought an explanation for the divergence between the number of people killed in road traffic accidents and those seriously injured. In its report to the Transport Committee, the Statistics Authority made a number of suggestions to improve the published statistics.

Recommendations 1, 2, and 3 were noted as complete in the Monitoring Update in January 2013. Updates on progress have been provided for recommendations 4 and 5. Recommendation 4 has been noted as closed as the pilots are now ongoing and mobile data collection does not form a core part of the CRASH specification. Recommendation 5 remains ongoing.

### **Summary of further progress against recommendations:**

**Recommendation 4: Consideration should be given to the type of information that might be gleaned from the pilots of the new police system for recording details of accidents using mobile devices at the accident scene, to help estimate the effects of the discontinuities that are likely to arise in the reported road casualties statistics when the new technology is introduced across the country.**

#### Complete

The CRASH system went live in early October 2012 and was piloted by two police forces. South Yorkshire ceased their use of CRASH after a short period as it lacks analytical functionality they require. This has left only Surrey as the CRASH pilot force. The data coming from Surrey Police Force has continued to require validation and corrections made to the data by Surrey County Council. In practice, therefore, the introduction of CRASH has made very little difference to the data quality and quantities logged by Surrey Police.

The pilots have highlighted a number of problems and issues with CRASH. All of these problems have been addressed through subsequent releases or are being included in the next major release of the software.

DfT expect to add two new additional forces as pilots during 2014. At this stage, with three forces, there should be enough data from enough different forces to assess what effect CRASH has had on the data.

It should be noted that the CRASH system does not include a mobile device data collection capability as part of its core specification. As yet, no force has been using mobile devices with CRASH.

**Recommendation 5: DfT should work with the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), the Home Office, and police forces to develop a strategy for communicating to police forces the use and value of road casualty data and the importance of the quality of the data that police officers gather.**

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<sup>42</sup> <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/monitoring/monitoring-briefs/monitoring-brief-1-2011---proposals-to-improve-the-reporting-of-road-casualties.pdf>

### Ongoing

Most of the work over this year has been dealing with the problems and issues falling out of the pilot (i.e. identifying and fixing bugs, and identifying new requirements or improvements that will make CRASH easier and quicker to use). The project team now intend to roll out CRASH to all forces in England & Wales, even if the force does not intend to use the system to enter data. It is expected that this will allow forces to use data from other forces – for example, as a source of intelligence, and to see if other forces are experiencing similar road safety problems as they are. This will help disseminate the benefits of the system across all forces.

## ***Communicating Inflation***

### **Monitoring Update – July 2014:**

The Authority published *Communicating Inflation* in December 2010.<sup>43</sup>

This considered issues raised in public debate about official statistics on inflation. It identified two distinct uses that are made of the measures and considered the need to respond further to these. Aspects of the way in which the official measures of inflation are communicated were also considered.

Further progress has been made on recommendations 1, 3 and 8. There has been no further change to recommendations 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7, which had been completed by the first Monitoring Update.

### **Summary of further progress against recommendations:**

#### ***General Comment***

ONS has made a lot of positive changes to the communication of inflation since this review was completed. For example, ONS has made a number of improvements to the format and content of the statistical bulletin using feedback it has gained plus advice from the authority's Best Practice Team. ONS has also developed a range of 'Inflation Mythbuster' products, including a live action video, to help users better understand price statistics and to dispel commonly held misconceptions. These products have received positive feedback from users and the RSS.

#### ***Specific Comments***

#### **Recommendation 1: Take forward the matters raised in the Assessment Report, including:**

- a) establish an up-to-date official position on regional indicators; and**
- b) consult on the demand for indices for different household types.**

#### Ongoing

1 a) ONS published an updated position in October 2013 as part of the Work Programme for Consumer Price Statistics<sup>44</sup>.

This issue was addressed in the public consultation on the ONS strategy for consumer price statistics held during summer 2012, alongside the consultation on CPIH. An up to date official position on regional consumer price indices is not yet available. ONS will develop its position on regional indicators in line with the conclusions of the Johnson review.

1 b) The Johnson review is likely to take a view on this issue and the potential for indices for different household types. ONS has been undertaking analysis to enable the review to develop its position on these issues. The ONS position on these subjects will develop in line with the conclusions of the Johnson review.

<sup>43</sup> <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/monitoring/monitoring-briefs/monitoring-brief-7-2010--communicating-inflation.pdf>

<sup>44</sup> <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/user-guidance/prices/cpi-and-rpi/index.html>

**Recommendation 3: In the context of this analysis, consult users on whether the current proposals for improving the CPI while maintaining the RPI represent a suitable approach to developing improved measures of inflation, while continuing to meet users' needs for existing measures.**

Complete

ONS consulted on this as part of the aforementioned consumer price strategy consultation. Since then, the National Statistician has launched a consultation on options for change to the RPI. ONS launched the new CPIH and RPIJ measures in March 2013.

**Recommendation 8: Evaluate how effective the 'personal inflation calculator' has been in addressing perceptions of inflation. Also, consider, with users, whether there are any lessons for the UK from the German index of perceptions of inflation that might supplement the work that ONS has already carried out on the way in which inflation is perceived.**

Complete

A personal inflation calculator is available on the ONS website. An article on perceptions of inflation and the effectiveness of the personal inflation calculator (PIC) was published in 2012. The article concluded that the German index of perceived inflation was based on unproven hypotheses that were not suitable for implementation in the UK at present. In terms of the PIC, the article concluded that it was still useful and that ONS should continue to publish it.

As mentioned above, ONS has developed a range of 'Inflation Mythbuster' products. The Prices Development team has also been looking at updating the PIC. The Statistics Authority can confirm that there has been considerable progress made in this area and that this work will be completed once the outcomes of the Johnson review are known.

## ***Strengthening User Engagement***

### **Monitoring Update – July 2014:**

The Authority published *Strengthening User Engagement* in June 2010.<sup>45</sup>

This report highlights the importance that the Authority attaches to effective user engagement as a precursor to realising the value of official statistics, and made recommendations aimed at strengthening the user voice. It looked at ways of enhancing communication between producers of official statistics and users with the aim of guiding the future development of the statistical service and helping users to engage with it and make the maximum possible use of it.

Further progress is being made on recommendations 1, 2 and 6, though they remain ongoing. There has been no further update to recommendation 4. Recommendation 3 had been completed by the time of the last update. Recommendation 5 was noted as complete in the Monitoring Update in January 2013.

### **Summary of further progress against recommendations:**

These recommendations are:

**Recommendation 1: All the bodies that produce official statistics should take steps to enhance their compliance with the Code of Practice, particularly in three areas:**

- a. those aspects of the Code that relate to understanding the use and potential use of official statistics;**
- b. the publication of the documentation required by the Code;**
- c. ensuring that the commentary that accompanies official statistics helps the users understand and make effective use of the statistics**

**The Statistics Authority will consider with the National Statistician whether further guidance is needed on how to meet these requirements.**

**Recommendation 2: ONS should give priority to improving the navigability and accessibility of its website, and should publish its plans for doing so.**

**Recommendation 6: All government departments and other producer bodies should work actively with the RSS Statistics User Forum (SUF) (and other user group structures), to help user groups represent the interests and priorities of their members.**

There is evidence that a few departments regularly use the RSS Statistics User Forum and exchange correspondence on the StatsUserNet.

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<sup>45</sup> <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/reports---correspondence/reports/strengthening-user-engagement--final-report.pdf>

## ***Overcoming Barriers to Trust in Crime Statistics - England and Wales***

### **Monitoring Update – July 2014:**

The Authority published *Overcoming Barriers to Trust in Crime Statistics - England and Wales* in May 2010.<sup>46</sup>

Distrust of crime statistics has been a recurring theme, with three major reviews in the previous ten years. The Authority's review aimed to identify the barriers to trust, examine the steps taken to overcome those barriers and to make appropriate recommendations.

There has been no change in the status of progress against the recommendations. Further work has taken place for parts of recommendations 3, 4 and 5.

### **Summary of further progress against recommendations:**

**Recommendation 3: The National Statistician, in conjunction with relevant government departments and the Welsh Assembly Government, should draw up proposals for the development of statistical publications on crime and the criminal justice system in England and Wales, and consult users inside and outside government. The aims should be to:**

- i) make the publications as relevant as possible to the likely uses of the statistics**
- ii) make it easier for the non-expert to understand the flow of offences and offenders through the criminal justice system.**

#### Ongoing

ONS working with the Home Office and Ministry of Justice have agreed to produce an annual output which brings together data from across the crime and criminal justice systems on a particular topic. The first of these was an *Overview of Sexual Offending in England and Wales* published in January 2013, and the second an *Overview of Hate Crime in England and Wales* was published in December 2013.

**Recommendation 4: The National Statistician, the Home Office and the Ministry of Justice should produce the following:**

- ii) a free-standing guide that explains the strengths and limitations of different types of crime data, the circumstances in which it would be appropriate to use one source rather than another, and the kinds of judgement that need to be made when no single source is ideal**
- iii) guidelines on the presentation and use of crime and criminal justice statistics in government documents and statements**

#### ii) Ongoing

There is now an updated, free-standing user guide to crime statistics (covering police recorded crime and the Crime Survey for England and Wales) and an overview publication (*Trends in Crime; a short story*) that accompanied the regular statistical output in July 2012.

ONS is reviewing its metadata in the context of further requirements arising from the Statistics Authority assessment of crime statistics in January 2014. An Action Plan has been developed to make further improvements over the next 12 months

#### iii) Complete

The Home Office had developed guidance on the presentation of statistics in press releases and Ministerial statements, and the Ministry of Justice has since adopted this. A guide for Police and

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<sup>46</sup> <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/reports---correspondence/reports/overcoming-barriers-to-trust-in-crime-statistics--england-and-wales.pdf>

Crime Commissioners and their staff was held in January 2014 to give an overview of the data available and advice on using these data.

**Recommendation 5: The Home Office, in conjunction with the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA), HM Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC), Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), the Ministry of Justice and other relevant parties, should:**

- i) review the local data on crime and criminal justice that are becoming available across a variety of government websites and consider whether there are opportunities to consolidate, share best practice, and provide more comprehensive and consistent metadata (for example, definitions, explanations of how the data are derived, and discussion of strengths and limitations)**

Ongoing

Criminal justices outcomes have now been added to the crime mapping website.

## Scotland's Major Population Surveys

### Monitoring Update – July 2014:

The Authority published *Scotland's Major Population Surveys* in March 2010.<sup>47</sup>

In 2009 the UK Statistics Authority assessed four major population surveys carried out by the Scottish Government: the Scottish Health Survey; the Scottish House Condition Survey; the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey; and the Scottish Household Survey. The purpose of this Monitoring Brief was to summarise the main areas of good practice and areas for improvement which the Authority identified during the assessments.

Updates on progress have been provided for recommendation 1. There had been no further update to recommendation 2 and this is now considered to be closed. Recommendation 3 was noted as having been completed in the Monitoring Update in January 2012 and Recommendation 4 in the Monitoring Update in January 2013.

### Summary of further progress against recommendations:

**Recommendation 1: The Scottish Health Survey website included pages listing uses and user views. The findings of user consultations and plans for future user engagement are available on the website. The Authority regards this as good practice which should be adopted by other surveys.**

#### Ongoing

##### *Scottish Health Survey*

The Scottish Health Survey has not been conducted since the last Monitoring Update in January 2013. The website still provides links to a range of research<sup>48</sup> using data from the Scottish Health Survey.

##### *Scottish House Conditions Survey*

There has not been an updated publication since the last Monitoring Update. There is some information about the uses made of the data in terms of research papers accessible using the link<sup>49</sup>.

##### *Scottish Crime and Justice Survey*

The Scottish Government provides little information about the users and uses made of this survey directly on its website. There is a reference to a user consultation exercise carried out in 2010 but the website has not been updated with any information. There is an area on the website that provides users with details of ad-hoc requests for information or analysis<sup>50</sup>, but this is empty.

##### *Scottish Household Survey*

The Scottish Household Survey is used extensively for a number of research purposes. The Scottish Government provide a webpage which provides details of the main uses<sup>51</sup> it is aware of. This provides details of Special Focus Reports, Policy Monitoring and Other Research.

<sup>47</sup> <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/monitoring/monitoring-briefs/monitoring---assessment-note-3-2010---scotland-s-major-population-surveys.pdf>

<sup>48</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Health/scottish-health-survey/Publications>

<sup>49</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/SHCS/Downloads>

<sup>50</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/crime-and-justice-survey/DataAccess/AdHocs>

<sup>51</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/16002/PublicationOther>

## ***Pre-Release Access to Official Statistics - A Review of the Statutory Arrangements***

### **Monitoring Update – July 2014:**

The Authority published *Pre-Release Access to Official Statistics - A Review of the Statutory Arrangements* in March 2010.<sup>52</sup>

This report followed the Authority's independent review of the statutory arrangements for Pre-Release Access (PRA) to official statistics in the four UK administrations. The report allowed the Authority to put on record its considered views on the rules that should govern PRA to statistical reports.

The four administrations have subsequently carried out their own reviews of how PRA arrangements have worked since the various Orders came into effect. The statutory system for PRA across the four UK administrations remains unchanged.

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<sup>52</sup> <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/reports---correspondence/reports/pre--release-access-to-official-statistics--a-review-of-the-statutory-arrangements.pdf>

## ***Migration Statistics: The Way Ahead?***

### **Monitoring Update – July 2014:**

The Authority published *Migration Statistics: The Way Ahead?* in July 2009.<sup>53</sup>

The report reviewed progress in implementing plans to improve UK migration statistics. It concluded that the cross-government programme was doing much useful work to deliver specific improvements in the short to medium term. However, the longer term goal – for high quality migration statistics derived from an integrated statistical system that draws on administrative and survey/census data – would take some considerable time to realise, perhaps decades. The review also highlighted the importance of maintaining a national address register beyond the 2011 Census.

Further to the Monitoring Update of January 2013, progress has been made on Recommendation 2 and this is now complete. Recommendations 3 and 6 have been superseded by subsequent monitoring work. The work in response to recommendation 2 shows positive steps being made in this area. We would encourage ONS to consider how this is best communicated to users and to explore the opportunities for presenting the work plan and developments through its website. This will also be considered in the response to the recent reassessment of Migration Statistics<sup>54</sup>.

ONS has now completed the Migration Statistics Improvement Programme, incorporating an action plan to address the review's recommendations, and published its final report<sup>55</sup>.

### **Summary of further progress against recommendations:**

**Recommendation 2: We recommend that ONS flag those local authority population estimates where there are higher levels of uncertainty, indicating the reason for the uncertainty.**

#### Complete

ONS published the first set of uncertainty measures for the mid-2002 to mid-2010 mid-year population estimates series<sup>56</sup> in November 2012 following the research reports published in March 2012 on Quality Indicators<sup>57</sup> (QIs) and Plausibility Indicators<sup>58</sup>.

ONS developed the QIs over a number of years, collaborating with Southampton Statistical Science Research Unit (S3RI). The approach uses observed data to simulate a range of possible values that can be rolled forward across the 10 year inter-censal period. The QIs give an overall uncertainty measure (percentage of the population in hard to measure sub-groups), and what proportion of this is attributable to the 2001 Census, international migration, and internal migration, for each year in the inter-censal period. The further away from the census base, the more uncertainty. These are then combined into a composite measure of uncertainty for the mid-year population estimates series. However, as it estimates uncertainty arising only from these three components, it represents a conservative measure of the total uncertainty in the estimates.

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<sup>53</sup> <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/reports---correspondence/reports/authority-report-4--migration-statistics-the-way-ahead.pdf>

<sup>54</sup> <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment/assessment-reports/assessment-report-267---migration-statistics.pdf>

<sup>55</sup> <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/method-quality/imps/latest-publications/index.html>

<sup>56</sup> <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/method-quality/imps/latest-news/uncertainty-in-la-mypes/index.html>

<sup>57</sup> <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/method-quality/imps/latest-news/uncertainty-in-la-mypes/index.html>

<sup>58</sup> <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/method-quality/imps/latest-news/using-administrative-data-to-set-plausibility-ranges/index.html>

ONS is now updating the uncertainty modelling to take into account the new 2011 Census estimates and changes in the mid-year estimates methodology. It intends to publish these new measures alongside the mid-2013 population estimates in summer 2014.

ONS is planning to publish a research paper on the plausibility range work by the end of March. It will look at how the plausibility ranges perform when compared with the mid-year estimates rolled forward from 2001 to 2011 and with the 2011 Census data. ONS is also looking at including the known uncertainty in the population numbers resulting from the Census estimation. The plausibility measures are based on the uncertainty observed in areas of high population turnover, for example, in areas with high student populations or high levels of international migration. ONS used the available administrative data sources to explore the quality of these and the relationships between them, and to identify ways in which they can be combined to give upper and lower limits within which the population estimates could reasonably be expected to fall.

ONS is also developing two new quality assurance tools that it will release alongside the mid-year population estimates. The first is a simple comparator tool that enables users to compare the underlying administrative data, as well as providing easy access to the metadata about the limitations of the comparisons. The second is currently experimental and provides an indication based on the likelihood of components contributing error to the mid-year estimates.

**Recommendation 3: We recommend, as soon as practicable, the release of information to clarify how e-Borders data might be used in the estimation of migration statistics.**

Superseded

This has been superseded by recommendation 6 in *The Robustness of the International Passenger Survey*. An update on progress has been provided against that recommendation.

**Recommendation 6: We recommend that ONS, Home Office and the Department for Work and Pensions adopt a ‘conceptual framework’ in their releases of migration statistics, to enable users to understand how the different sets of figures relate to each other and to the process of migration more generally.**

Superseded

This has been superseded by recommendation 1 in *Immigration Statistics*. An update on progress has been provided against that recommendation.

## ***Gender Pay Gap***

### **Monitoring Update – July 2014:**

The Authority published *Gender Pay Gap* in June 2009.<sup>59</sup>

This discussed two different interpretations, from the Government Equalities Office and from the Office for National Statistics, of statistics on the difference between the earnings of women compared with men.

No further update. The recommendations were noted as complete in the Monitoring Update of January 2012.

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<sup>59</sup><http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/monitoring/monitoring-briefs/monitoring---assessment-note-4-2009--gender-pay-gap.pdf>

### ***Volatility of the Retail Sales Index***

#### **Monitoring Update – July 2014:**

The Authority published *Volatility of the Retail Sales Index* in October 2008.<sup>60</sup>

This followed discussion in the media and elsewhere of unexpectedly large estimates of month-on-month changes for the volume of retail sales in Great Britain in May and June 2008. It provided two recommendations for improving the reporting of the results of the ONS surveys, both of which took account of the fact that all such figures derived from sample surveys are estimates.

No further update. The recommendations were noted as complete in the Monitoring Update of January 2012.

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<sup>60</sup> <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/monitoring/monitoring-briefs/volatility-of-the-retail-sales-index.pdf>