
John Pullinger CB CStat | National StatisticianSir Andrew Dilnot CBE
Chair, UK Statistics Authority
1 Drummond Gate,
London
SW1V 2QQ

12 November 2014

Dear Andrew,

Estimates of expenditure for UK residents' visits abroad and overseas residents' visits to the UK

I am writing to inform you that ONS has suspended the publication of expenditure estimates for UK residents' visits abroad and overseas residents' visits to the UK within the September 2014 Overseas Travel and Tourism release to be published tomorrow, 13 November 2014. Internal quality assurance identified a system error in the calculation of the expenditure estimates between January 2014 and September 2014. Data on the number of visits are not affected.

Initial work suggests the necessary upwards corrections will be just under £1 billion in September. In line with tourist patterns, the corrections will be highest in the summer months and lower earlier in the year.

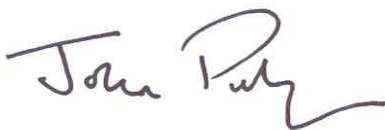
As a result of these findings, I recommend that the Authority considers suspending the National Statistics designation for these two series until the errors have been corrected, which we expect to do ahead of the next release in December 2014. We will add a note to releases in this series published so far this year to this effect.

Further, these data feed into the UK Trade release as imports and exports of services. The UK Trade release is likely to also need to be revised once the errors are corrected, which is expected to be in time for the release of the October UK Trade estimates on 10 December 2014. The underlying data also contribute to the calculation of the Balance of Payments and Household Expenditure estimates, however the impact here is considered not material.

In light of this, I also recommend that the Authority considers the National Statistics status of series impacted by this, in particular the relevant series in the monthly UK Trade release, until the errors are corrected. We will add a note to this effect to the published monthly UK Trade releases which are affected.

I am copying this letter to the Director General for Regulation, Ed Humpherson.

Yours sincerely,

**John Pullinger**