

BREACH OF THE CODE OF PRACTICE FOR OFFICIAL STATISTICS

This document reports a breach of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, or the relevant Pre-release Access to Official Statistics Orders, to which the Code applies as if it included these orders.

1. Background information

Name of Statistical Output (including weblink to the relevant output or 'landing page')

Dental Earnings and Expenses 2013-14, additional analysis
(<http://www.hscic.gov.uk/catalogue/PUB18376>)

Name of Producer Organisation

Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC)

Name and contact details of the statistical Head of Profession (Lead Official in an Arm's Length Body) submitting this report, and date of report

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2. Circumstances of breach

Relevant Principle/Protocol and Practice

Protocol 2 - Release practices

Practice 4 - Issue statistical releases at the standard time of 09:30 on a weekday, to maintain consistency and to permit time for users to understand and respond to the information during normal working hours.

Date of occurrence

30 October 2015

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

- HSCIC publishes its Official and National Statistics on its website and links to the publication page from gov.uk.
- Due to operational issues within the HSCIC web content management system (CMS) on 30 October 2015 the publication, Dental Earnings and Expenses - 2013-14 additional analysis, did not go live at 09:30.
- This was noticed through checking that the publication was live at 09:30 and at this point the responsible Statistician and Statistical Governance Officer liaised with the web team

contact, advising them that neither the link on the calendar nor the “additional analysis” file were live.

- The publication was confirmed as live on the HSCIC site at 10.15, which was 45 minutes late.

Reasons for breach

For unknown reasons there was a failure for the repository resources to display on the web page. The reasons for this have been investigated by corporate ICT and GOSS (supplier of the web content management system) as the internal and external suppliers respectively of the end-to-end technical solution.

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

The publication team reported the lack of a report and live link, to both the Statistical Governance team and the digital content colleague responsible for making publications live. One customer did contact with the production team to ask why the additional analysis had not been published.

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

Two separate streams of work have been established with the Digital Communications team: one involves the requirements for a new, more robust system and the other aims to find short term “quick wins” to reduce the immediate risk. However, due to the fragility of the content management system some risk will remain even after quick wins are implemented.

Update February 2016: based on systemic frailties, a quick fix of increasing the memory on the server hosting publications was implemented. This has fixed any issues around insufficient resources. HSCIC is also working on completely overhauling its online offering, with a separate piece of work commissioned regarding publication.