

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')

Criminal Justice Social Work Statistics in Scotland: 2014-15
<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2016/03/5682>

Name of Producer Organisation

The Scottish Government

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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Thursday 24 March 2016

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

Thursday 24 March 2016

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

Publication occurred at 11:40, 2 hours and 10 minutes later than planned.

Reasons for breach

Just before publication was due to occur, we spotted that the wrong attachments (comprising of PDF and Excel files for a similar named publication which had gone out two days earlier) were about to be uploaded. Our web team attempted to upload the correct PDF file alongside the HTML version but, when this failed, they asked the publishers to recreate the PDF. Several unsuccessful attempts were made by the web team to load up the PDF file over a period of approximately 60-90 minutes. Although this was eventually successful, the web address of the publication was, as a result, changed on three different occasions.

During the delay, we were in constant contact with both the web team and the publishers for updates on progress, ensuring the delay was no longer than necessary.

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

No complaints about the delay to the publication going live were received.

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

After this occurred, we issued a note to all members of our Division in order to highlight there are a number of checks which can be made in advance prior to the publication going live. These checks essentially involve using the link in the web registration form (submitted before publication) to check that the publication appears as expected.

The matter was discussed further at our statisticians' monthly meeting in early April. As a result, we have identified key timescales in the run up to publication which need to be met in order to prevent late publication. These have been incorporated into a timetable which, once it has been fully agreed, will be incorporated into our Publication Procedures Instruction Document.