

## 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')

Gambling participation: activities and mode of access - April 2016

(<http://www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk/Gambling-data-analysis/Gambling-participation/Gambling-participation-data/Gambling-participation-survey-data.aspx>)

Name of Producer Organisation

Gambling Commission – breach produced by Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS)

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

DCMS Head of Profession

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### 2. Circumstances of breach

Relevant Principle/Protocol and Practice

Protocol 2: Release practices - Statistical reports should be released into the public domain in an orderly manner that promotes public confidence and gives equal access to all, subject to relevant legislation

Practice 7: Subject to compliance with the rules and principles on Pre-Release Access (PRA) set out in legislation, limit access before public release to those people essential for production and publication, and for quality assurance and operational purposes. Publish records of those who have access prior to release.

Date of occurrence

25 April 2016

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

A policy lead from the DCMS Gambling policy team was provided with PRA to the Gambling Survey for the first time. They had misunderstood the terms of the PRA and forwarded the information to the whole DCMS Gambling policy team during the pre-release access period.

The Head of Profession in DCMS and lead official in Gambling Commission were immediately notified and the team members who had received the email were made immediately aware that the data should not be shared or cited. The issue was discussed with the official on PRA to ensure they fully understand their obligations in terms of pre-release requirements.

Prior to PRA being provided, the Gambling Commission lead had required a signed letter to be provided by the DCMS policy lead being given PRA and had a phone conversation to ensure understanding the DCMS policy lead understood the issues.

Reasons for breach

Human error occurred due to a misunderstanding on the requirements of the Code of Practice by the policy lead.

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

**4.**

The impact of the breach was minimal as no data or indication of figures were shared outside the policy team in DCMS.

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

The Head of Statistics has reminded colleagues to make sure all DCMS policy colleagues with PRA to statistics are fully aware of the Code of Practice – including those receiving access to other organisations' releases - and restated the importance of all correspondence continuing to include the statement explaining PRA, particularly being clear that the PRA applies to a named individual, not a team.

If there is a repeat breach within DCMS by this policy team they will no longer be given PRA to this or any other DCMS publications.