

## 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')

Health Profiles 2016 pdfs: : <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/2016-health-profiles> and <http://www.healthprofiles.info>

Name of Producer Organisation

Public Health England

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 a 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

6 September 2016

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

The publication of the Health Profiles summary pdfs was due to go live on 6 September 2016. The announcement went live on gov.uk at 09:30, but the associated website containing the actual pdfs was not made available until 11:53 on that date, a delay of 143 minutes. The breach was notified by the project team to the development team at 09:30. There was a delay in correcting the error as the colleague required to make the change was unavailable at the time of notification.

The data contained within the Health Profiles summary were produced using the health profiles online tool. The data were all available in the online tool at [www.healthprofiles.info](http://www.healthprofiles.info) in August 2016. The pdfs provide additional summary commentary which includes information on local health priorities. This summary information is only available as part of the pdf publication.

In addition, instead of users being able to download their selected Health Profile pdf when they clicked on the link 'download report', the user was returned to the 'Fingertips' homepage, which was confusing.

Reasons for breach

The Health Profiles pdfs had been generated and were loaded on to the appropriate servers ready for publication on the 6 September. On the day of release the website URL to access the Health Profile pdfs was not formed correctly due to a manual coding error in the construction of the URL for the pdfs on the live site. Users were unable to download the pdf publication.

It was not possible to test the download of the PDFs on the Fingertips test site due to the system configuration between the staging (test site) and the live site. If it had been possible to test the download on the test site then the issue could have been found and fixed before it reached the live site.

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

Notifications of the website issues were flagged up by a number of users (<5 organisations) via [healthprofiles@phe.gov.uk](mailto:healthprofiles@phe.gov.uk). Relevant health profiles pdfs were sent to each organisation who had emailed [healthprofiles@phe.gov.uk](mailto:healthprofiles@phe.gov.uk)

The Health Profile pdfs were emailed to Local Knowledge and Intelligence Service leads internally within PHE to facilitate the distribution of the Health Profiles pdfs to users locally until they could be made live via the website.

Within PHE the breach has triggered an investigation (see below).

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

An investigation has been undertaken within PHE to identify the root cause of the delay. Changes in procedures will be made to prevent reoccurrence of the same problem.

To prevent a repeat occurrence the process will be modified so that:

(i) PDFs for Health Profiles can be downloaded on the Fingertips test site (with appropriate access controls for Official Statistic profiles), prior to the scheduled release date to allow the integration between Fingertips and the pdf provider to be tested before publication.

(ii) An error page will be displayed instead of the user being redirected to the Fingertips home page. The page will state 'An error has occurred on this page please email [profilefeedback@phe.gov.uk](mailto:profilefeedback@phe.gov.uk)'. Notifications received via this web address are monitored regularly by the fingertips development team and will be acted on immediately.