
Director General for Regulation

Glyn Jones
Chief Statistician
Welsh Government
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

22 March 2018

Dear Glyn

Thank you for your correspondence requesting an exemption for the 9:30 release time for the following publications relating to Wales:

- Mid-year population estimates
- Electoral roll statistics
- National population projections

This is to allow you to publish key statistics for Wales on the same day as the Office for National Statistics (ONS) release its related publications, which will improve the value of these statistics for users. You consider you will be able to carry out adequate quality assurance in time for a 12:30pm publication, three hours after you get access to the data at the time of the ONS release at 9:30am. I am content to agree with your proposal as the best way to meet user needs in the short term. I think this approach will improve the user experience making the stats as timely as possible and maximising coherence. This exemption will also continue to apply to a range of economic statistics¹.

In the medium term I would encourage statisticians in Welsh Government to continue discussions with ONS to work towards a solution which allows publication at 9:30am. In particular, the Code of Practice for Statistics allows for the sharing of data in advance of release in specific circumstances and I would consider that sharing of the data with statistical professionals in Welsh Government to allow for publication would be consistent with T3.3 in the Code of Practice for Statistics.

Access to statistics before their public release should be limited to those involved in the production of the statistics and the preparation of the release, and for quality assurance and operational purposes.

¹ This includes the following publications: Research and development (R&D) expenditure – Gross expenditure; Research and development (R&D) expenditure – Business Enterprise expenditure; Key economic statistics Labour Market Headline; Sub-regional Productivity; Family Spending; Business Demography; Regional gross value added (GVA) and sub-regional gross value added; Annual survey of hours and earnings; Business register and employment survey (BRES); and Regional gross disposable household income.

I am copying this letter to Iain Bell, Deputy National Statistician, and would welcome his cooperation on this issue.

Your sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ed Humpherson', with a stylized, cursive script.

Ed Humpherson

Director General for Regulation