

REPORTING A BREACH OF THE CODE OF PRACTICE FOR OFFICIAL STATISTICS

1. Core Information

Title and link to statistical output	Civil Partnerships in England and Wales: 2017
Name of statistical producer	Office for National Statistics
Name and contact details of person dealing with report	Nicola Haines, Elizabeth McLaren
Link to published statement about the breach (if relevant)	
Date of report	13 August 2018

2. Circumstances of breach

Relevant principle and practice	T3: Orderly Release T3.4: The circulation of statistics in their final form ahead of publication should be restricted to eligible recipients.
Date of occurrence of breach	13 August 2018
<p><i>Give an account of what has happened including roles of persons involved, dates, times etc</i></p> <p>On 13 August 2018 at 14:07 Nicola Haines (Senior Research Officer, Vital Statistics Outputs Branch) emailed three named colleagues at the Government Equalities Office (GEO) using their individual email addresses. Two are policy leads and the other an analyst. None were on the pre-release access list.</p> <p>The purpose of the email was to gain confirmation that GEO were content with the wording of two paragraphs referring to the future of civil partnerships, which had been amended at short notice. These were to be released alongside the main release: one on Facebook and the other on LinkedIn. (The main bulletin was not included in the email.) One contained two statistics and both included an indication of the nature of change; in error these were not removed prior to sending. The email was immediately recalled after being sent however it is unsure whether this was successful. The release is published on 16 August 2018.</p>	

3. Impact of the breach

<p><i>Provide details of the impact of the breach both inside the producer body and externally</i></p> <p>The three colleagues included in the email are within government and were aware that this was information prior to publication. This was also made clear in the subject and content of the email.</p> <p>The nature of the change indicated in the email would not have been a surprise to these colleagues and would not influence any actions they could take ahead of publication.</p> <p>[Added 17 August] The statistics were published on 16 August as planned and there was no indication of any problems arising from the breach.</p>

4. Corrective actions (taken or planned) to prevent re-occurrence

Describe the short-term actions made to redress the situation and the longer-term changes to procedures etc

The email was recalled; however, it is unsure whether this was successful.

A further email was sent as follows:

From: Haines, Nicola

Sent: 13 August 2018 14:12

To: [Original recipients]

Cc: Subject: Please do not pass on official sensitive figures

Apologies – please do not pass on any of the figures included in the previous email as these are official sensitive until 9.30am on Thursday 16 August and should not be made public.

Many thanks

Nicola Haines | Senior Research Officer, Health and Life Events Division, Public Policy Analysis”

The Good Practice Team and pre-release access team have been notified via email.

An out of office was received from the analyst recipient – returning 21 August 2018.

Nicola managed to speak to one policy recipient on 14/8/18 at 9.32am; He had not been in the office on 13/8/18. He agreed to delete the email and contacted the second policy recipient to ensure she deleted the email. Confirmation was received that she had deleted the email too. Nicola informed them that she had submitted a breach report.