

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Minutes

Meeting of Friday 19 June 2009

Board Room, Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency, Belfast

Present

UK Statistics Authority

Sir Michael Scholar (Chair)

Mr Richard Alldritt

Mr Partha Dasgupta

Dame Karen Dunnell

Ms Moira Gibb

Mr Steve Newman

Professor Steve Nickell

Professor David Rhind

Secretariat

Mr Robert Bumpstead

Mr Mervyn Stevens

Apologies

Professor Sir Roger Jowell (Deputy Chair, Official Statistics)

Lord Rowe-Beard (Deputy Chair, ONS)

Other Attendees

Mr. Richard Laux (Monitoring and Assessment, UK Statistics Authority) (items 7 to 12)

Minutes of the UK Statistics Authority Meeting 19 June 2009

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1. Apologies

- 1.1 Apologies had been received from Professor Sir Roger Jowell and Lord Rowe-Beedoe.

2. Declarations of Interest

- 2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes and Matters arising from the Previous Meeting

- 3.1 The minutes of the previous meeting held on 15 May 2009 were accepted as a true and fair account.

4. Reports from Committee Chairs

Audit Committee

- 4.1 Professor Rhind reported on the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 28 May, 2009. The Committee had considered draft revised Terms of Reference to reflect the Audit Committee's assumption of the responsibilities of the former Risk Committee. The role that the Committee for Official Statistics (COS) might have in providing a level of assurance in respect of the Government Statistical Service (GSS) had also been considered.
- 4.2 The meeting had received the Internal Audit Annual Report for 2008/09 and an update from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) on the progress with business continuity planning. The Audit Committee would meet on 23 June, 2009 to consider the Authority's Annual Report and Accounts for 2008/09.
- 4.3 The Authority Board noted the Annual Report of the Audit Committee for 2008/09.

Office for National Statistics (ONS) Board

- 4.4 Mr Dasgupta reported on the meeting of the ONS Board held on 8 June, 2009. The Board had received a presentation on change activities taking place at ONS and had considered issues including the ONS property estate, the results of a recent staff survey and financial planning. The meeting had received a progress report on the National Account Modernisation Programme and considered the early release of ONS Labour Market Statistics in May.
- 4.5 Lord Rowe-Beedoe had reported on the debate in the House of Lords on 1 June, 2009 on building trust in Official Statistics.

Remuneration Committee

- 4.6 The Chair reported on the meetings of the Remuneration Committee held on 15 May and 2 June, 2009. The Committee had considered the scope of the *Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007* with regard to employment issues and agreed that this needed clarification. The levels of remuneration for the members of the Senior Civil Service employed by the Authority had been approved.

Committee for Official Statistics (COS)

- 4.7 The Chair reported on the meeting of the Committee for Official Statistics held on 19 May, 2009. The meeting had received reports from the Head of the Government Statistical Service (GSS) and the Head of Assessment. Proposals for the streamlining of the assessment process and a protocol on the production of Monitoring and Assessment Notes had been considered.

Assessment Committee

4.8 The Chair reported that the Assessment Committee had met on 19 May and 8 June, 2009. The recommendations of the Committee were for consideration by the Authority later in the meeting.

5. The Monitoring Function

5.1 The meeting discussed future arrangements for the Authority's monitoring function. The National Statistician and the Head of Assessment were invited to submit their views on this matter for consideration at the next meeting.

6. Migration Statistics Monitoring Review [SA(09)30]

6.1 Mr Alldritt presented a final draft of the monitoring report *Migration Statistics: the Way Ahead* which it was proposed should be published, subject to approval by the Authority, on 9 July, 2009.

6.2 In approving the publication of this monitoring report the meeting agreed that the Chair should write to the Government regarding the Authority's views on the need for the development of a national address register if there were to be significant improvements in counting the population.

7. Management Information, Research and Official Statistics: Progress Report [SA(09)31]

7.1 The National Statistician reported that guidance on the use of management information and research data for the GSS would be published early in the following week. The Authority noted progress and requested that this be copied to the Authority for information.

7.2 The Authority reconfirmed its request that the GSS task force on the use of management information consider the Authority's own proposals about when the Authority might make comment about the use of management information and statistics in policy documents, and provide a written response for consideration at the next meeting.

8. Progress Report on the Assessment Programme [SA(09)32]

8.1 Mr Laux reported on progress with the assessment programme. The written evidence for all of the initial phase of assessments had been received. The first four assessment reports had been considered by the Assessment Committee and submitted to the Authority Board for approval. A further five assessment reports would be submitted to the next meeting of the Authority in July, with the remainder being submitted to the September meeting.

8.2 Plans for the assessment of the forthcoming *Wealth in Britain* statistical publication were proceeding and it was agreed that an interim view on compliance with the *Code of Practice* should be provided to the National Statistician in due course.

8.3 The Monitoring and Assessment Team were working with Heads of Professions to identify statistics for possible assessment during the summer and autumn of 2009. From early 2010 the intention was to make the process of assessment more efficient by dealing with some related sets of statistics in one assessment exercise and by assessing some simpler sets of statistics more quickly.

8.4 The meeting was pleased to note progress and confirmed that a monthly progress report should continue to be produced for the Authority in its current form.

- 9. Assessment Report 1: Statistics from the National Drug Treatment Monitoring System [SA(09)33]**
 - 9.1 The Chair presented the recommendation from the Assessment Committee that the Assessment report on these statistics be published. The meeting discussed the findings and recommendations and agreed that the report should be published and that the designation of these statistics as National Statistics be confirmed.

- 10. Assessment Report 2: Recorded Crime in Scotland [SA(09)34]**
 - 10.1 The Chair presented the recommendation from the Assessment Committee that the Assessment report on these statistics be published. The meeting discussed the findings and recommendations and agreed that the report should be published and that the designation of these statistics as National Statistics be confirmed.

- 11. Assessment Report 3: Enrolments at Schools and in Pre-funded School Education in Northern Ireland [SA(09)35]**
 - 11.1 The Chair presented the recommendation from the Assessment Committee that the Assessment report on these statistics be published. The meeting discussed the findings and recommendations and agreed that the report should be published and that the designation of these statistics as National Statistics be confirmed.

- 12. Assessment Report 4: Road Casualty Statistics [SA(09)36]**
 - 12.1 Mr Alldritt asked that consideration of this report be deferred pending further consideration of some aspects of the criteria for designation. It was agreed that the report would be considered at the next meeting.

- 13. Any other business**
 - 13.1 The meeting noted and endorsed the letter from the Chair dated 11 June, 2009 to Ms Harriet Harman MP, Minister for Equality and Women regarding the press notice issued by the Government Equalities Office on 27 April, 2009 about the gender pay gap.

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Agenda

Friday, 19th June, 2009
Northern Ireland Statistics Research Agency,
Board Room, Belfast. 11:00 - 15:00

Chair: Sir Michael Scholar
Apologies: Professor Sir Roger Jowell, Lord Rowe-Beddoe

1	Minutes and matters arising from previous meeting Declarations of interest	Meeting of 150509
2	Reports from Committee Chairs <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Audit Committee● ONS Board● Remuneration Committee● Committee for Official Statistics and Assessment Committee	Prof. David Rhind Sir Michael Scholar Prof. Sir Roger Jowell
3	The Monitoring Function	Sir Michael Scholar Oral Report
4	Migration Statistics Monitoring Review	SA(09)30 Mr Richard Alldritt
5	Management Information, Research and Official Statistics: Progress Report	SA(09)31 Secretariat
6	Progress Report on the Assessment Programme	SA(09)32 Mr Richard Laux
	Assessment Reports	Mr Richard Alldritt and Mr Richard Laux
7	AR 1: Statistics from the National Drug Treatment Monitoring System	SA(09)33
8	AR 2: Recorded Crime in Scotland	SA(09)34
9	AR 3: Enrolments at Schools and in Pre-funded School Education in Northern Ireland	SA(09)35
10	AR 4: Road Casualty Statistics	SA(09)36
11	Any other business	.

Next Meeting: Friday, 17th July 2009
Statistics House, Tredegar Park, Newport 11:15 - 15:00

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(09)30

Migration Statistics Monitoring Review

Purpose

1. This paper accompanies the report *Migration Statistics: the Way Ahead*, sent under separate cover, to mark the publication of the monitoring review into improvements in migration statistics.

Timing

2. The report is to be published on 9 July in hard copy and on-line at:
<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/reports---correspondence/reports/authority-report-4--migration-statistics-the-way-ahead.pdf>

Recommendations

3. Members of the Authority Board are invited to:
 - approve publication of the monitoring review;
 - note the recommendations within the report which in particular identifies a number of ways in which the improvement programme can be made more transparent to users (paragraph 8), and;
 - note the commitment made within the report on behalf of the Authority to pursue discussions at a high level of government on matters such as the future of the Census, with a view to improving migration statistics.

Discussion

4. The report is the culmination of a review into improvements being made to migration statistics through the Migration Statistics Improvement Programme and led by Office for National Statistics (ONS). The review was conducted over a period of 120 days from mid September 2008. The project board was chaired by Professor David Rhind and included experts from ONS, Communities and Local Government (CLG), the General Register Office (GRO) Scotland and the Local Government Association (LGA).
5. The monitoring review involved a series of interviews with a range of users, and a review of published and unpublished material from the cross-government improvement programme. An interim report was published in April 2009 (circulated to the Authority Board on 10 April), followed by an open meeting to discuss the emerging findings. The feedback from the meeting was fed into the preparation of the final report, together with a commissioned review of migration statistics literature prepared by the University of Leeds.
6. The review concludes that much useful work is being done by the cross-government programme to deliver moderate improvements in the short to medium term. However, the longer term goal – for high quality migration statistics derived from an integrated statistical system that draws on administrative and survey/census data – will take some considerable time to realise, perhaps decades.
7. The recommendations in the interim report were reviewed in the light of feedback received and from a consideration of the full range of evidence gathered, to present a final list that focused on the major issues identified. ONS has already taken steps in a number of areas raised in the interim report. The final recommendations are given below (please note that the second recommendation has a slight rewording compared with the hard copy version sent previously).

SA(09)30 - Migration Statistics Monitoring Review

8. We recommend:
 - i. that ONS's quality assurance methodology is made clear to users and that a phase of quality assurance involving local government experts occurs before the final version of the estimates is released;
 - ii. that ONS flag those local authority estimates where there are higher levels of uncertainty to give users some indication of quality - perhaps through the judgment of experts;
 - iii. as soon as practicable, the release of information to clarify how e-Borders data might be used in the estimation of migration statistics;
 - iv. the on-line release of project papers which, together with details of investigations currently underway and their progress, would give users a better understanding of progress;
 - v. that each department involved in the Programme provides the programme board with details of the work being undertaken, together with the associated expenditure, and update this every six months, and;
 - vi. that ONS, Home Office and the Department for Work and Pensions adopt a 'conceptual framework' in their releases of migration statistics, to enable users to understand how the different sets of figures relate to each other and to the process of migration more generally.

9. In addition, a commitment is also proposed that:
 - the Statistics Authority will pursue discussions at a high level in government on matters such as the future of the Census beyond 2011, the longer term maintenance of a national address register, and related developments (such as the statistical case for a population register) with a view to improving migration statistics.

10. The re-assessment of the ONS international and internal migration statistics is currently underway. The Assessment Team expects to publish the results of the assessment in September 2009.

11. An Announcement will be released on the Authority website on 9 July at 10am, to highlight the release of the report. Media handling will be co-ordinated by Authority staff in conjunction with Central Office of Information. The report may attract some media attention given the general interest in migration and concerns expressed publicly by some users over the quality of migration and population estimates.

Penny Babb, Monitoring and Assessment Team, July 2009

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(09)31

Management Information, Research and Official Statistics: Progress Report

Purpose

1. The note provides a summary of progress since the Authority Board first discussed the issues of Management Information, Research and Official Statistics and when the Authority should make interventions in relation to these, in December 2008.
2. The National Statistician will provide an oral update at the meeting in respect of progress relating to the actions agreed at the last Authority Board meeting (see paragraph 10).

Timing

3. Pressing. Seven months have now elapsed since the Authority first identified the need to agree and publish a statement setting out its understanding of its remit in relation to Official Statistics and when it might make interventions in these matters.

Recommendations

4. Members of the Authority are invited to agree that a deadline for completion of this work be set for the July meeting, after which the Authority will publish its statement.

Discussion

5. Following the Authority's intervention in December 2008 about the Home Office's fact sheet about knife crime, the Board agreed that a statement setting out the Authority's locus in respect of intervening in matters of Official Statistics should be published. The value of such a statement would partly be in providing context and justification for Authority comment in relation to matters that are not covered in the *Code of Practice*, including the treatment of statistics that departments do not regard as Official Statistics, and the use of Official Statistics in departmental policy documents and political statements. The hazard in not having such a statement is that we may leave ourselves open to the charge that these things are beyond the *Code* and, by inference, that it was inappropriate for the Authority to comment.
6. It was agreed that this position should be developed alongside guidance being formulated by the National Statistician's task force in respect of Management Information. In his letter of 16 January, the Cabinet Secretary also referred to this work. Subsequently, the task force conducting the work expended its remit to also consider questions of government research.
7. A draft Authority policy statement was first considered at the meeting of 20 February 2009 [**SA(09)08**] *Management Information and Policy Documents* (presented for information at **Annex A**). The Board agreed to defer approval of this document until the work of the GSS task force was complete.
8. At the meeting of 15 May the Board considered a paper presented by Mr David Frazer, Head of Profession (HOP) at the Department for Work and Pensions, and leader of the Government Statistical Service (GSS) task force, *Use of Management Information in Official Statistics* [**SA(09)22**]. The paper set out the draft recommendations of the GSS task force on the use of management and related information to produce Official Statistics. The paper included draft guidance from the National Statistician intended for all staff in the public service who worked with

management and similar forms of information.

9. The Authority Board considered these proposals, including whether the regularity of a release or its geographical coverage ought to be factors used to help discern what should be treated as Official Statistics. In particular, the Board was concerned that these factors should not too much narrow the scope of what might reasonably be considered Official Statistics.
10. It was agreed that:
 - i. the guidance would be reviewed in light of the meeting's deliberations and then issued to Heads of Profession (HoPs);
 - ii. the GSS task force was invited to further consider the Authority's own proposals about when it might make comment on the use of management information and statistics, and provide comment to the next Authority Board meeting, and;
 - iii. the companion piece of work addressing the distinction between government research and Official Statistics had yet to reach a conclusion, but would soon be presented to the Authority Board.
11. The National Statistician will provide an oral report in respect to these actions.

Secretariat, UK Statistics Authority, June 2009

List of Annexes

Annex A SA(09)08 *Management Information and Policy Documents*

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(09)08

***Statistics Authority Comment on Management Information
and the use of Statistics in Policy Documents***

Purpose

1. This paper builds on an earlier paper [SA(09)03] discussed at the January meeting of the Authority Board. The Annex is a draft document for the Authority's website on the circumstances under which the Authority would expect to comment on a) the public use of 'management information', defined as any numerical data that government departments etc. do not regard as being Official Statistics, and b) the use of statistics in policy documents, defined as any document or statement that is not a statistical report. It is best to address these issues together as the statistics that appear in policy documents are often an undifferentiated mix of Official Statistics and management information.

Timing

2. It would be helpful to have a statement, or document, on the website as soon as we can so that we can point members of the Government Statistical Service (GSS), and others who want to know what our role is, to it.

Recommendations

3. Authority members are invited to comment on the criteria and arguments set out in the Annex A1. A final decision on the text of this document will need to await work in this area being undertaken by a GSS working group – as mentioned in the letter of 16 January from Sir Gus O'Donnell to the chair of the Public Administration Committee.

Discussion

4. The *Code of Practice* applies to the production, management and dissemination of Official Statistics. It contains very little of direct relevance to the public use of statistics after publication, or about good practice in relation to statistical data (management information) which departments etc. do not regard as being Official Statistics.
5. The Authority's broad role as set out in the *Statistics and Registration Service Act* requires it to consider the question of whether management information should instead be treated as Official Statistics. There is also an expectation, reflected in general terms in our own *Code* and in international ones, that the GSS or the Authority will comment on any misuse of statistics after publication. Thus we need to consider, and make clear, the circumstances under which we will do so.
6. Implicit in whatever position we take on such matters will be certain principles of good practice for producers of statistics that might eventually be turned into a small number of imperative statements in the style of the *Code of Practice* and, subject to consultation, ultimately included as a further Protocol to the *Code*. However, this is for consideration in the longer term. The more pressing need is to set out the criteria that the Authority will use in deciding whether to make public comment.
7. The Board considered at its January meeting the merits of some form of consultation on our position on these points. One option would be to publish a

document on the lines proposed as soon as we can but also invite comments. One area that is likely to attract some comment is the position we are taking on the statistical results of 'research'. The draft takes the line that statistics from research work should be treated as Official Statistics unless it has been agreed with the National Statistician or the Statistics Authority that they should not be, or it is self-evident that the results are not the sort of information that Parliament or the public would regard as 'statistics'. To make this viable in practice we would need to put in place a process for securing such agreement.

8. One example which illustrates why this is important relates to special aggregations of raw statistical data – that is material which will be aggregated in a different way to create Official Statistics, for example crime data held by the police. As in the recent knife crime case, the department may prepare special aggregations of some raw data as a piece of research and then publish those figures without regard to the *Code of Practice*. Our position is that such special aggregation should normally be treated as Official Statistics. This view is unlikely to be seen as controversial outside government but is more controversial inside government, where the boundary around 'statistics' has historically been driven more by whether the figures are part of the regular production of statistics, than by considerations of whether statistical principles should be observed. Our position thus threatens long accepted demarcation lines around research work and statistics.

Richard Alldritt, Head of Assessment, February 2009

List of Annexes

Annex A1 - Draft Document for the Authority's Website

Annex A1 - Draft Document for the Authority's Website

This document has been published on the UK Statistics Authority website.

To see the document go to:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/news/statement---management-information--research-data--and-the-use-of-statistics-in-policy-documents--22-july-2009.pdf>

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(09)32

Progress Report on the Assessment Programme

Purpose

1. This paper describes a number of issues relating to the Assessment Programme - the current state, and proposals for the coming months.

Timing

2. For consideration by the Authority Board at its June 2009 meeting.

Recommendations

3. The Authority Board is invited to:
 - i. note progress to date of the Assessment Programme (paragraph 4 below, and **Annex A**);
 - ii. consider and agree proposals for designating new statistical products (paragraphs 5-9, and **Annex B**), and;
 - iii. note and agree emerging plans for the next phase of assessment activity, including plans for seeking input - over the next few weeks - from statistical Heads of Profession (HoPs) (paragraphs 10-19, and **Annexes C, D and E**).

Discussion

Progress Report

4. A detailed progress chart for assessment is attached at **Annex A**.

4.1 *Highlights*

- i. WEfAs (Written Evidence for Assessments) have now been returned for each of the initial assessments (14 WEfAs in total);
- ii. reports for four assessments have been discussed by the Assessment Committee and are presented to this meeting of the Authority Board to approve for publication, and;
- iii. the Assessment Committee is expected to clear about five more draft reports by early July (by correspondence), for Authority Board approval at its 17 July meeting. The remaining assessments should be ready for approval by the Authority Board at its next meeting, in September 2009.

4.2 *Staffing*

- i. Dave Hobbs (Grade 7) left the Monitoring and Assessment Team at the end of May to return to the Office for National Statistics (ONS) to take up a relocating post in National Accounts classifications;
- ii. Ed Swires-Hennessy is due to join the team, part-time, from 1 July;
- iii. further Grade 7 interviews took place in Newport on 9 June, with candidates awaiting notification, and;
- iv. Philip Grigor (Grade 7) and Ruth Naylor (HEO) are due to join the Edinburgh office in the next month or so.

SA(09)32 - Progress Report on the Assessment Programme

Designation of New Statistical Outputs

5. Many of the Authority's assessments will relate to new products. The first such assessment - *Wealth in Great Britain; Main results from the Household Assets Survey 2006-2008* - is already underway (the first outputs are due to be published in Autumn 2009).
6. Some practices in the *Code* relate to the presentation of statistics - for example, the frankness of commentary about the statistics, and the way that their presentation meets users' needs. Such elements may be difficult to assess against the *Code* before the first publication of the statistics. Drafts of reports under development will sometimes be available for reference; but sometimes not.
7. There are clear presentational and operational benefits in having such outputs designated as National Statistics (NS) from the outset. However, we need to ensure that we meet our obligation to Parliament, users and the public at large of a suitably rigorous assessment prior to designating Official Statistics as NS.
8. We propose that the NS designation be granted for new statistical outputs when the evidence available to the Authority at the time of the assessment is sufficient to infer that the environment in which the statistics are produced is consistent with the *Code*, and that the statistics will, in our judgement, themselves meet the *Code*'s requirements.
9. This introduces some risk, in that the Authority would be granting NS designation on the basis of less complete evidence than would be available for an assessment of an established set of statistics. We consider that a transparent statement of what we mean by 'designation', in this context, would minimise that risk. A proposed statement to cover such designations is shown in **Annex B**.

Plans for the Next Phase of Assessment

10. For convenience, we consider the Assessment Programme in three phases:
 - i. Phase 1 - completion and publication of the initial assessments;
 - ii. Phase 2 - an interim phase beginning soon so that we can make increasingly rapid progress while procedures are rationalised for Phase 3, and;
 - iii. Phase 3 - the programme proper, which will include development of a 'fasttrack' process, formal grouping and prioritisation of outputs.
11. An overview of the programme is presented below, with more detailed provisional plans in **Annex C**. Some of the developments described in this section are early advances following paper [SA(COS)(09)12], which was presented to the May meeting of the Committee for Official Statistics. As discussed there, we will bring a comprehensive paper describing streamlining of the assessment process to the July Authority Board meeting.

Phase 1

12. We expect all remaining initial assessment reports to be presented to the Authority at either its July 2009 or September 2009 meeting (as per paragraph 4).

Phase 2

13. Phase 2 is an interim phase. The remaining 'initial' assessments will be completed over the Summer, while the foundations of the long-term programme are developed. Phase 2 will incorporate some learning from the initial tranche of assessments. This will include a revised WEfA. We will also continue to develop our thinking about grouping (of sets of statistics) and prioritisation - initial ideas are shown at **Annexes D and E**. This would be with a view to publishing a range of assessment reports of groups of statistics from October 2009 onwards.

SA(09)32 - Progress Report on the Assessment Programme

14. Subject to the Authority Board's agreement, we will discuss and agree precise details with relevant producer bodies. To give an indication of our thinking, we anticipate Phase 2 including:
 - i. the Department of Energy and Climate Change's NS outputs (15 outputs);
 - ii. a group of ONS statistics, possibly outputs from the Financial Inquiries (6 NS outputs);
 - iii. three Scottish Government *Section 12/16* requests, plus associated related outputs (possibly 4 in total);
 - iv. other *Section 12/16* requests - Wealth in Great Britain (underway), Average Weekly Earnings, Race and the Criminal Justice System, National Child Measurement Programme (4 outputs);
 - v. some groups from Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, to be advised by them (c20 outputs?);
 - vi. Labour Market statistical outputs across the four countries (c30 NS outputs?);
 - vii. all of the outputs from a relatively small department, such as the Ministry of Justice (c15 NS outputs?), and;
 - viii. Education (20-25 NS products based around exam results/school attendance across the 4 countries).
15. We expect this to produce between 20 and 30 assessment reports. The list of assessments is subject to agreement with the relevant statistical HoPs (who we would ask to forego the anticipated three-month notice period) and may therefore be replaced by alternative outputs. We will bring a more considered list to the July meeting of the Authority Board.

Phase 3

16. Work is underway to establish the ongoing Assessment Programme, which includes streamlining it. The main elements this involves are:
 - i. separating the existing WEfA into two - to cover separately organisational and output-specific aspects of *Code* compliance - and asking all GSS producer bodies to complete and publish their organisational WEfA by December 2009;
 - ii. subject to the Authority Board's agreement, we will have preliminary discussions with selected HoPs about our draft guidelines for grouping and prioritising (**Annexes D and E**) from 22 June, with a view to discussing proposals at the HoPs's meeting on 6 July, and rationalising them shortly afterwards;
 - iii. asking HoPs to propose groups of outputs and to provide us with information about their perceived levels of importance and concern for each group, according to the agreed guidelines;
 - iv. in-house work by the Monitoring and Assessment Team to determine groups, priorities and hence a draft work programme from the Autumn, and;
 - v. in-house development of a 'fasttrack' procedure, to enable us to sweep up relatively large numbers of 'low risk/low concern' NS outputs quickly.
17. Again, we will update the July meeting of the Authority Board with progress.

Summary of Number of Assessments

18. We expect to have completed, cumulatively:
 - i. by the end of Phase 1, assessments of approximately 20 NS outputs, and;
 - ii. by the end of Phase 2 (December 2009) assessments of about 120 outputs (subject to confirmation).

SA(09)32 - Progress Report on the Assessment Programme

19. In addition, we will be well underway with Phase 3 by the end of 2009, including the aim to complete all the 'fasttrack' assessments (the indicative number of which might be around 400) by summer 2011.

Mark Pont, Monitoring and Assessment Team, 11 June 2009

List of Annexes

Annex A Detailed assessment progress chart

Annex B Proposed text to accompany designation of new statistical outputs

Annex C Indicative timeline for the next steps of the ongoing assessment programme

Annex D First thoughts on guidelines for grouping statistical outputs for assessment

Annex E Draft rules for identifying level of priority and concern for statistical outputs

Annex A Detailed Assessment Progress Chart as at 11 June 2009

Assessment	Assessment Specification Letter sent	Initial meeting	Written Evidence Of Assessment and others back	Comments returned from users	Follow up meeting	Draft report	Report to Assessment Committee	Report to Authority Board
National Drug Treatment Monitoring System Statistics	y	9/2/09	13/3/09	20/3/09	8/4/09	24/4/09	19/5/09	19/6/09
Recorded Crime in Scotland	y	27/3/09	1/5/09	24/4/09	28/5/09	29/5/09	8/6/09	19/6/09
Enrolments at Schools and in Funded Pre-School Education in NI	y	1/4/09	7/5/09	8/5/09	29/5/09	1/6/09	8/6/09	19/6/09
Road Casualty Statistics	y	10/3/09	21/5/09	15/5/09	by email	22/5/09	8/6/09	19/6/09
Road Freight Statistics	y	2/4/09	3/6/09 (draft)	13/5/09	11/6/09	19/6/09	26/6/09	17/7/09
Energy Sector Indicators	y	27/4/09	15/5/09	15/5/09	11/6/09	19/6/09	26/6/09	17/7/09
Migration Statistics	y	17/4/09	27/5/09	29/5/09	15/6/09	26/6/09	1/7/09	17/7/09
Prison Population Projections	y	27/4/09	28/5/09	22/5/09	22/6/09	26/6/09	1/7/09	17/7/09
Statistics on International Development	y	28/4/09	1/6/09	29/5/09	23/6/09	26/6/09	3/7/09	17/7/09
ODA/GNI ratio	y	28/4/09	1/6/09	29/5/09	23/6/09	26/6/09	3/7/09	17/7/09
Children looked after by local authorities (England)	y	14/4/09	22/5/09 (draft)	11/5/09				
Children looked after by local authorities (Wales)	y	24/4/09	28/5/09	11/5/09				
Children looked after by local authorities (Northern Ireland)	y	1/4/09	8/6/09	11/5/09				
Children looked after by local authorities (Scotland)	y	27/3/09	1/5/09	11/5/09	24/6/09			
Wealth in Great Britain	y	14/5/09	13/7/09			7/9/09 tbc	14/9/09 tbc	16/10/09 tbc
Race and the Criminal Justice System		22/6/09						
Scottish Health Survey		24/6/09						
Scottish Crime and Justice Survey		24/6/09						
Scottish House Condition Survey		24/6/09						
Fuel Poverty Statistics		24/6/09						
Emissions of carbon dioxide for local authority areas					request deferred			
Average Weekly Earnings					assessment deferred			
					awaiting request – expected June/July 2009			

(shading indicates actual dates)

Annex B Proposed Text to accompany designation of New Statistical Outputs

"In accordance with section 12 of the *Statistics and Registration Service Act 2008*, this assessment report has been prepared before the set of statistics to which it relates have been published for the first time. Because of that, it has not been possible to assess compliance with all aspects of the *Code of Practice for Official Statistics*: for example, we have not been able fully to establish the views of users.

However, we regard the evidence available as sufficient to conclude that the environment in which the statistics are produced is consistent with the *Code*, and that the statistics meet most requirements of the *Code*. On this basis we are content that this set of statistics should be designated as National Statistics. We will consider compliance with the outstanding aspects of the *Code* as soon as possible and amend the report if necessary."

Annex C Indicative Timeline for the next steps of the ongoing Assessment Programme

Phase	Activity	Deliverables	Target date for deliverable
Phase 1 Jul-Sep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete initial tranche of assessments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First publication of (eg) 4 initial assessments 	June
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish remaining initial assessments 	July-Sep
Phase 2 Jul-Sep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce prioritisation and grouping criteria Rationalise full WEfA Produce WEfA guidance for Departments, including a 'good example' WEfA Identify NSs to assess over summer months, through grouped exercises, and agree with HoPs Review user consultation strategy and process Carry out phase 2 assessments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish v1.1 Section WEfA, for use in next set of assessments, including guidance Publish prioritisation and grouping criteria Publish plan for phase 2 	June
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out phase 2 assessments 	July
Oct-Dec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out phase 2 assessments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish phase 2 assessments 	July
Phase 3 Jul - Sep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop prototype organisational and section WEfAs Finalise v2 Section WEfA and v1 Organisational WEfA HoPs define groups and suggest priorities Develop and agree "fasttrack" procedures and programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish details of streamlined assessment process, including programme for remainder of 2009/10 Publish new Organisational WEfA, for completion by December 2009 Publish new Section WEfA 	July
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish split WEfA guidance for Departments (enhanced from WEfA v1.1 guidance) Publish assessment programme for 2010/11 (including fasttrack process and programme) 	Sep
Oct-Dec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuing engagement with HoPs to ensure buy-in - prioritisation, grouping, split WEfA etc Review our detailed assessment guidance Develop programme for 2010/11 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish first phase 3 assessments 	Sep
Jan-Mar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further development of programme for 2010/11 onwards 		Oct
			Jan 2010

Annex D First Thoughts on Guidelines for Grouping Statistical Outputs for Assessment

In order to maximise the efficiency of assessment, the Monitoring and Assessment Team proposes to group statistical outputs where there is a sufficient degree of commonality between them. This note provides some guidance for the grouping of statistics. The Monitoring and Assessment Team will take account of statistical Heads of Professions' (HoP) views to determine which outputs will be grouped together. This approach is in line with the Principles and Procedures for Assessment, which were published, following consultation, alongside the *Code of Practice* on 6 January 2009. These say that "In the interests of efficiency, the Authority may group together ('bundle') related statistics, or statistics with common features, for the purposes of assessment."

HoPs will be asked to suggest ways their statistics may be grouped, taking into account factors such as the following:

- i. commonality of topic;
- ii. commonality of users and uses of the statistics;
- iii. homogeneity of methods, data collection and production processes, and;
- iv. the extent to which the statistics are produced by the same statistician/analytical team

In general, we expect groups to consist of typically between 3 and 8 outputs. It won't be possible to form sensible groups in all cases, which means some statistics will be assessed alone. Similarly, it may be sensible to have some larger groups, or to assess several groups together. A particular case of this might be where we assess the same broad group of statistics in each of the four countries in parallel.

Annex E Draft Rules for Identifying Level of Priority and Concern for Statistical Outputs

Introduction

This note describes the way that the Monitoring and Assessment Team will ask statistical Heads of Profession (HoPs) to rate the importance of their statistical products and the level of concern about them. The Monitoring and Assessment Team will use this information to help prioritise groups of outputs for assessment. This approach is in line with the Principles and Procedures for Assessment, which were published, following consultation, alongside the *Code of Practice* on 6 January 2009. These say that the assessment programme will be "Risk-based - prioritising those areas of statistical activity which are considered to present a risk to the quality and reputation of Official Statistics"

HoPs' Assessment of Importance and Concern

HoPs will be asked to consider two issues for each group: (i) its importance as a National Statistic, and (ii) the extent to which they have concerns about quality or other aspects. This approach mirrors that used by the Monitoring and Assessment Team in Autumn 2008 to identify Official Statistics that should be put forward for designation as National Statistics. In addressing these issues, HoPs will be asked to take the following factors into account:

Importance (high, medium, low)

- i. whether the group of statistics is the subject of a section 16 letter;
- ii. whether the group of statistics is used as an indicator in economic or social policy making and the potential impact on decision-making of poor quality statistics;
- iii. whether the group of statistics is used in allocating public resources, or other significant operational decision making by the department or an agency;
- iv. whether the group of statistics has been used in setting or calibrating any Public Service Agreement (or related) targets; or whether it is used in measuring progress against such targets;
- v. whether the publication of the group of statistics typically generates media reporting;
- vi. whether the group of statistics illustrates a topic that might be considered of significant public interest, or;
- vii. whether the statistical product contains new data or analysis.

Concern (serious, medium, minimal)

- i. whether the HoP is aware of any users' (including ministers') reservations about the quality of the statistics or its production/governance arrangements;
- ii. whether the statistics have been the subject of media (including the specialist media) concern or speculation;
- iii. whether the statistics have been the subject of a recent breach of the *Code of Practice*;
- iv. whether there are any known issues of coherence, quality, understandability etc.;
- v. whether the HoP has their own concerns or doubts about any aspects of the statistics;
- vi. the age of the systems used to produce the statistics;
- vii. whether the production of the statistics has been affected by relocation or other staffing factors;
- viii. whether the statistics are produced from survey or administrative data, and the quality of the input data, or;
- ix. the extent to which the statistics may be open to abuse, for example gaming (where favourable responses may be made in order for data to appear more positive, particularly when data are used to determine whether targets have been met).

Prioritisation by the Monitoring and Assessment Team

In deciding priorities, the Monitoring and Assessment Team will also take account of other factors, such as:

- i. the ease and appropriateness of grouping statistics together for assessments;
- ii. our timetabling including the need to maintain a balanced programme, and availability/timing of particular expertise to undertake the assessment;
- iii. other developments in the producer body, for example organisational reviews, and;
- iv. the Authority's own views on the quality of the statistics, including whether the statistic has been the subject of complaints or comment to the Authority.

Assessment Report - Statistics from the National Drug Treatment Monitoring System

This document has been published on the UK Statistics Authority website.

To see the document go to:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment-reports/assessment-report-1---national-drug-treatment-monitoring-system--24-june-2009.pdf>

Assessment Report - Recorded Crime in Scotland

This document has been published on the UK Statistics Authority website.

To see the document go to:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment-reports/assessment-report-2---recorded-crime-in-scotland--24-february-2009.pdf>

***Assessment Report - Enrolments at Schools and Funded Pre-School
Education in Northern Ireland***

This document has been published on the UK Statistics Authority website.

To see the document go to:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment-reports/assessment-report-3---enrolments-northern-ireland--24-june-2009.pdf>

Assessment Report - Road Casualty Statistics in Great Britain

This document has been published on the UK Statistics Authority website.

To see the document go to:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment-reports/assessment-report-4---road-casualty-statistics--27-july-2009.pdf>