

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY
Committee for Official Statistics

Minutes

Meeting of Thursday 21 March 2013
Board Room, Drummond Gate, London

Present

Members

Professor David Rhind (Chair)
Mr Richard Alldritt
Dr Colette Bowe
Dr Norman Caven
Mr Partha Dasgupta
Mr Andrew Dilnot
Professor David Hand
Ms Jil Matheson

Secretariat

Mr Rob Bumpstead
Mr Joe Cuddeford

Other Attendees

Mr Tim Andrews
Dr Andy Sutherland (for items 1 to 3)

Apologies

None

Declarations of Interest

None

1. Apologies, Minutes and Matters Arising

- 1.1 The minutes of the previous meeting on 24 January 2013 were agreed as a correct record.
- 1.2 Progress with actions was reviewed, with the following updates provided at the meeting:
 - i. a paper about the future of the Publication Hub, which had been scheduled for this meeting, would now be considered in May as there was little progress to report. The Committee heard that the transfer of departmental websites to the single government web domain was the Government Digital Service's current priority, and this took precedence over the Publication Hub;
 - ii. the Head of Assessment reported that there were no plans to revise the Written Evidence for Assessment (WEfA) form;
 - iii. the National Statistician would not be publishing the new Annual Assurance Reports (AARs) but some departments might choose to do this for their own AARs. The meeting heard that the function of AARs was one of accountability to the National Statistician, rather than assurance to the Assessment process. In these circumstances some duplication was unavoidable and Heads of Profession should be made aware of the situation;
 - iv. discussions about issues related to statistics for the Scottish referendum were ongoing and consideration of a Monitoring Review on this topic would continue at the Assessment Committee later that day; and
 - v. a paper about arm's length bodies would be considered in May.
- 1.3 The meeting considered the way that the Authority engages with key stakeholders outside the civil service. The Committee for Official Statistics (COS) seminar that had been held earlier that day was one way of gaining input from outside. The Committee looked forward to meeting representatives from the Royal Statistical Society in May.

2. Recruitment, Competences and Career Development of Statisticians in the Government Statistical Service [SA(COS)(13)08]

- 2.1 Dr Sutherland provided a summary of the current position and issues regarding recruitment, competences and career development of statisticians in the Government Statistical Service (GSS).
- 2.2 The following points were made in the discussion:
 - i. in a context of scarce resources, it was important to consider how the workforce of the future would need to be different. At present it was unclear what these needs were;
 - ii. it was important to maintain skill development and technical knowledge; of at least equal importance was the need to develop skills in building influence, credibility, networking, consultancy and making an impact; and
 - iii. it was important for non statistical staff to be required to have or develop basic statistical competence.
- 2.3 The meeting thanked Dr Sutherland for his update and asked to be kept informed of developments.

3. Statistics in the Health and Social Care Information Centre [SA(COS)(13)09]

- 3.1 Dr Sutherland provided a summary of the statistical work in the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC).
- 3.2 The HSCIC was due to subsume significant functions and budget from the Department of Health in April 2013 as a result of wider reforms to health policy. Benefits of the new arrangements would include better access and control over administrative data systems. It

would be important to ensure that the professional statistical elements of the organisation remained influential within the larger department. The National Statistician would meet with the new Chief Executive of the HSCIC once appointed. The Authority Chair might also meet with the new Chief Executive at a suitable opportunity.

3.3 The meeting thanked Dr Sutherland for his update and asked to be kept informed of developments.

4. Activities of the Government Statistical Service [SA(COS)(13)10]

4.1 Ms Matheson introduced a paper which provided an update of GSS activities for January and February 2013. The meeting noted the update.

5. Draft Monitoring Review: School Level Examination Results Statistics [SA(COS)(13)11]

5.1 Mr Alldritt introduced a draft monitoring review about the presentation and accessibility of school level examination results statistics.

5.2 The Committee discussed the issues raised in the draft report about the public availability of school level examination result statistics. The Committee agreed that it was grounds for concern that different policy judgements about the utility and value of existing data should determine the public accessibility of those statistics. It was agreed that, as a matter of principle, if data was collected by Government then it should be put in the public domain in an accessible format, subject to the usual confidentiality considerations. It was suggested that the conclusions of the monitoring review could be strengthened in this regard.

5.3 The way in which the statistics should be put into the public domain was an important consideration. Examination results statistics were not in themselves measures of the performance of a school. Such limitations of the statistics should be properly communicated.

5.4 A further issue worthy of scrutiny was the need for, and methodology of, school level measures of performance (including, but going beyond, exams results). This issue was perhaps beyond the scope of the present monitoring review. It was suggested that the monitoring review could recommend further work here.

5.5 It was agreed that the monitoring review should be checked for consistency with the earlier assessment of school statistics published in 2010.

Action: Head of Assessment to revise the draft monitoring review about school level examination result statistics in light of the Committee's comments.

6. The GSS Inter-Administration Committee [SA(COS)(13)12]

6.1 Mr Andrews provided an overview of the work of the GSS Inter Administration Committee (IAC) for 2012/13. The meeting heard that the work of the Committee in this period had included reconciling differences in the definitions of young people not in employment, education or training, and setting up a task-force to look at statistics to inform the debate about Scottish independence. The Committee asked to be kept informed of the outcome of this work, in particular the task-force to look at Scottish independence.

Action: National Statistician's Office to provide an update on the outcome of work undertaken by the IAC, in particular the task-force to look at Scottish independence.

6.2 The meeting heard that the IAC was a coordinating committee rather than a strategic committee. It was suggested that the IAC should consider including a reference to the

Authority's statement of strategy in its Inter Administration Working Agreement (IAWA) at the next annual review.

Action: National Statistician's Office to notify the IAC about the suggestion from COS that the next update of the IAWA might include reference to the Authority's new statement of strategy and provide an update to COS.

7. Good Practice team [SA(COS)(13)13]

7.1 Mr Andrews provided an update on progress during the first five months of the Good Practice Team (GPT).

7.2 The meeting heard that the pace of improvements had accelerated. There had been numerous specific benefits and also evidence of wider effects in terms of building relationships. It was agreed that the leaders of the GPT could be invited to the Authority Board to speak about their experience.

Action: Secretariat to invite the leaders of the GPT to provide an update to the Authority Board.

8. Cuts to official statistics [SA(COS)(13)14]

8.1 Ms Matheson introduced a paper which provided an update on plans by producers of official statistics for ceasing the production of statistics, and on public consultations relating to statistics. The paper also included staffing statistics in the Government Statistician Group (GSG).

8.2 The meeting considered the update and agreed that there were no candidates for further investigation in this update.

9. Statistical Expenditure Reports [SA(COS)(13)15]

9.1 Mr Alldritt introduced a draft Statistical Expenditure Report (SER) about the discontinuation of regional statistics previously published by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). An earlier draft had been considered at the Authority Board meeting in March.

9.2 The Committee agreed that the SER should be published on the Authority website, subject to some agreed amendments. The report would also be sent to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

Action: Head of Assessment to make agreed amendments to the SER and arrange for publication. Head of Assessment to provide a draft letter for the Authority Chair to send to the Secretary of State for Communities.

10. Review of Risks for the GSS and National Statistician's Office [SA(COS)(13)16]

10.1 Mr Andrews introduced a paper which provided details of the high-level risks for the NSO and the GSS.

10.2 The Committee discussed the risk appetite for the NSO and the GSS and agreed that this should be further considered when the Committee considered the risk register again in six months time.

11. Any other business

There was no other business. The Committee would meet next on 16 May at 10:30 in London.

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY
Committee for Official Statistics

Agenda

Thursday 21 March 2013
Board Room, Drummond Gate, London, 13:15 to 16:00

Chair: Professor David Rhind
Apologies:

Seminar – 13:15 to 14:30

1	How can the Authority and Government Statistical Service help the media to enhance coverage and understanding of statistical issues?	Discussion Mr Michael Blastland Mr David Walker
---	--	---

Usual business – 14:30 to 16:00

2	Apologies, Minutes and Matters Arising	Meeting of 131112
3	Recruitment, Competences and Career Development of Statisticians in the Government Statistical Service	SA(COS)(13)08 Mr Andy Sutherland
4	Statistics in the Health and Social Care Information Centre	SA(COS)(13)09 Mr Andy Sutherland
5	Activities of the Government Statistical Service	SA(COS)(13)10 Ms Jil Matheson
6	Draft Monitoring Review: School level examination result statistics	SA(COS)(13)11 Mr Richard Alldritt
7	The GSS Inter-Administration Committee	SA(COS)(13)12 Mr Tim Andrews
8	Good Practice Team	SA(COS)(13)13 Mr Tim Andrews
9	Statistical Expenditure: i. Cuts to official statistics	SA(COS)(13)14 Ms Jil Matheson
10	ii. Statistical expenditure report: Regional statistics	SA(COS)(13)15 Mr Richard Alldritt
11	Review of risks for the GSS and National Statistician's Office	SA(COS)(13)16 Mr Tim Andrews
12	Any other business	

Next Meeting: Thursday 16 May 2013, London, 10:30 to 13:00

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Committee for Official Statistics Seminar

“How can the UK Statistics Authority and the Government Statistical Service help the media to enhance coverage and understanding of statistical issues?”

**Seminar of Thursday 21 March 2013
Board Room, Drummond Gate, London**

Present

Members

Professor David Rhind (Chair)
Mr Richard Alldritt
Dr Norman Caven
Mr Partha Dasgupta
Mr Andrew Dilnot
Dame Moira Gibb
Professor David Hand
Dr David Levy
Ms Jil Matheson
Professor Sir Adrian Smith
Mr Glen Watson

Invited speakers

Mr Michael Blastland
Mr David Walker

Secretariat

Mr Robert Bumpstead
Mr Joe Cuddeford

Other Attendees

Mr Tim Andrews
Mr Iain Bell
Ms Laura Dewis
Ms Penny Hallett

Apologies

Dr Colette Bowe

Presentation from Michael Blastland

- Statisticians should be there for journalists at the right time i.e. when the story broke.
- To be relevant, statisticians must anticipate and respond to issues of public interest and engage in a professional way in debate.
- Sometimes there are multiple and disparate data sets pertaining to a single subject. There is a need for disparate sources to be collated and interpreted by statisticians.
- Vision for a page of the ONS website: a chart that shows long term trends, can be blown up to full screen and interrogated; a 'personal view' from a statistician answering questions like 'is it a big number?', 'should we be worried or pleased?'
- We need more data scientists capable of understanding both technical aspects and domain context, with an applied bent and good communication skills.

Presentation from David Walker

- The published role of COS is to provide oversight for the statistical service in its entirety, *including the dissemination of statistics*.
- Universality vs. selectivity in dissemination is an issue which must be addressed. Audiences are layered and mutually inaudible.
- Newspaper circulation is in decline, but print media remain central in agenda setting.
- Be aware of press partisanship; the print media in UK are unique in their combativeness.
- Accept segmentation and focus on key opinion formers (such as Chris Giles, Tony Travers, and Think Tanks).
- Be active in correcting errors in press reporting.

Points made in the discussion

- Irrelevance is a risk. Time should be invested in those that matter, but there is also a democratic purpose to what we do.
- The opinion formers of the future also matter and we should try to identify them.
- Data is nothing if it doesn't tell a story. The reason data is collected is to tell us what is going on.
- We have to look outside more and identify who can help us get our message across.
- Writing letters to editors may not always be the right way to handle errors in reporting.
- When interpreting data it is easy to choose messages that others have already made in the public debate. But it is more interesting to the media and the population alike if the message is a new story.
- Explanation of financial statistics is done well by the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) and Full Fact performs a useful role more generally. But some areas are not well covered, for example health statistics.
- The Government Statistical Service is decentralised and devolved and there may therefore be a collating role for ONS.
- One barrier is the difficulty for statisticians in framing the right questions to ask of the data.
- An example of dissemination working well is the way that the statisticians in the Ministry of Justice responded to the need for statistics on the 2011 riots.
- Many of the key stakeholders and opinion formers are located in London. Local press also plays a role but is in decline. Reuters and the Press Association (in London) provide material to many local and national press outlets. Focusing on the London-based media was therefore wise.
- ONS field staff could become very effective ambassadors.

- There may be a need for a more focussed communication strategy. Should the goal be to be seen as an authoritative, trustworthy source exploited by key influencers; or is the aim to make more information available to the widest possible audience?

Chair's Summary

What are we trying to prioritise?

- increase trust in statistics,
- foster better decision making? (the two are not contradictory)

Who can help us? Better relationships needed with a small number of key players, largely in London. Accessibility. Have a story. Anticipate and have something ready. Be cross cutting wherever appropriate and not simply departmentally focused. "Being irrelevant is a big risk".

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY
COMMITTEE FOR OFFICIAL STATISTICS

SA(COS)(13)08

Recruitment, Competences and Career Development of Statisticians in the Government Statistical Service

Purpose

1. Further to the discussion at the Committee on 11 September, this paper summarises the current position and issues regarding recruitment, competences and career development of statisticians in the Government Statistical Service (GSS).

Recommendations

2. Members of the Committee are invited to note and comment on the position and issues described below.

Discussion

3. Led by the National Statistician, the GSS is the diverse community of people engaged in the provision of official statistics, analysis, advice and support. This encompasses a number of professional groups, including the Government Statistician Group (GSG), whose recruitment and professional development ensures high levels of statistical competence in relation to official statistics. Heads of Profession (HoPs) have professional responsibility for their GSG staff; the position with wider GSS staff varies between departments. The GSS community is distributed across UK government bodies and the devolved administrations of Scotland and Wales, and is part of a wider community of public servants providing high quality information, analysis and advice to decision-makers for the public good. The GSS works closely with the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency to ensure, as far as possible, the coherence and compatibility of statistical activities.
4. The GSG has around 1,500 members, ranging in seniority from the National Statistician, who is of Civil Service Permanent Secretary grade, to Statistical Officers (Civil Service Executive Officer (EO) equivalent), who are at basic graduate entry level. The grade profile is shown in **Annex A**, together with approximate current information on vacancies.
5. The GSG has an agreed competence framework, covering the areas of collection, analysis, dissemination and professional issues, at various levels. It has recently been updated to better reflect the current Authority *Code of Practice*, the increased use of web-based dissemination methods, and to be more specific about the statistical techniques which GSG members should understand.
6. GSG members are recruited and promoted according to guidance which sets out process requirements and makes reference both to the competence framework, and to the GSS Continuing Professional Development (CPD) policy. The latter requires members to undertake 60 to 100 hours of CPD per year, averaged over a five year period, of which at least half should be statistical. The recruitment and promotion guidance is currently in the final stages of revision to reflect the new competence framework and to tighten up certain aspects of process. A framework of learning and development is advertised through the GSS to support CPD. The technical skills aspects of this are being augmented to support introduction of the new recruitment and promotion guidance.

7. The current GSS People Strategy aims to:
 - i. clearly articulate the benefits of GSS and GSG membership;
 - ii. identify and articulate the GSS skills needed for the future;
 - iii. develop existing GSS people to enhance and expand their skills;
 - iv. make the GSS a first choice employer for graduates with statistical and data management skills; and
 - v. allow the GSS to be recognised, inside and outside Government, as an essential part of the debate and decision making process.
8. The People Strategy supports the GSS strategy, in particular the move to relatively higher emphasis on analysis and dissemination. The GSS strategy is currently under review and the People Strategy will be reviewed thereafter.
9. Most, but not all, GSS staff are Civil Servants, and both they and the statistics profession within Government are affected by the Civil Service Reform process. The Civil Service Capability Plan is still being finalised, but the agreed elements required of professions are:
 - i. to have their own competence framework;
 - ii. to recruit in accordance with standards and rules, linked to that framework;
 - iii. to have a comprehensive learning and development programme linked to a CPD process; and
 - iv. to have a means of identifying and managing talent.
10. At present the GSG has the first three of these elements. The final element requires development, and work is beginning on this.

Issues

11. *Building influence.* The National Statistician is keen that our statistics have impact and our statisticians have influence. Recent work done by the GSS People Committee shows that, in order to increase its influence, GSS staff need to build their credibility with policy customers, gain experience in a wide range of roles, and that HoPs need actively to manage the process of their so doing. A summary of areas identified in this work is at **Annex B**.
12. *Building experience.* GSG staff are encouraged to build their career by moving around Government, to broaden their experience and develop their skills. Movement has been less in recent years due to recruitment restrictions. Current work involves both publicising examples of the value of movement, and encouraging it in a managed way through some regional GSS groups.
13. *Building skills and knowledge.* Skills development and training sometimes have a lower profile in times of financial and workload pressure. A combination of pressure on HoPs through the National Statistician's requirement that they assure the CPD process, and staff through the requirements of the forthcoming recruitment and promotion guidance, coupled with provision of and easier access to training materials linked to these requirements aims to help. A GSG mentoring scheme is being developed for piloting.
14. *Talent management at Senior Civil Servant level.* This area needs development, in light both of the requirements of Civil Service Reform, and the decline over many years in the numbers of such posts, particularly at higher levels. Presently such management exists in some departments, including Office for National Statistics (ONS).
15. *Recruitment and vacancies.* The current vacancy position is at Annex A. Recent recruitment rounds coordinated by the National Statisticians Office (NSO) have resulted

in a good response, meaning that most demand at Statistical Officer level will, for the present, be met. There has also been an increase in good candidates for Government fast stream Assistant Statisticians. There remain a number of higher level vacancies; past experience suggests that these are more likely to be filled by specific local advertising or through promotion than by running central campaigns.

16. *Development of the wider GSS, outside the GSG.* There remains a need for further work in this area, including continued basic training on the appreciation of statistical concepts, and the definition, recognition and development of the different and often high level specialist skills possessed by some in this group. There are on-going debates about the extent to which some skills (for example in database manipulation) should form part of the statistician competence framework, or should form part of wider training for some statisticians or for the wider group; these will be taken forward as part of the next revision of the GSG competence framework.
17. *Working with others.* The GSS continues to work with the other analytical professions formally, through the Departmental Directors of Analysis network, which is chaired by the National Statistician, through liaison between the National Statistician's Office capability team and their opposite numbers in other Government professions, and through departments at working and HoP level. There is engagement with the Royal Statistical Society, both at strategic level and individual level - a number of GSG members are also fellows of the RSS, including some Chartered Statisticians, and development of an RSS validated award suitable for GSS members ('GovStat') continues to be discussed.

Summary

18. The profession in Government is active and continues to develop. Work continues to be needed to sustain progress, and more work will be needed especially around talent management, and the facilitation of movement.

Andy Sutherland, Chair of the GSS People Committee, 12 March 2013

List of Annexes

Annex A Grade profile of staff and vacancies in the GSG

Annex B Improving the influence of the GSS

Annex A Grade profile of staff and vacancies in the GSG (as at early 2013).

Grade	Headcount	Vacancies
Statistical Officer	220	0
Higher Statistical Officer	322	14
Senior Statistical Officer	213	5
Assistant Statistician	135	20
Grade 7	439	7
Grade 6	101	0
Senior Civil Servant	48	1
Total	1478	47

Notes: Vacancy figures are very approximate being derived from a mixture of approximate quantitative returns from Heads of Profession and other intelligence, and may in some circumstances reflect staff who have not yet taken up post.

Annex B Improving the influence of the GSS

Work presented to GSS Heads of Profession at the end of 2011 emphasised the areas which needed to be developed to improve the influence of the profession on decision making in Government.

Mindset:

- Doing more than just crunching the numbers
- Developing a better understanding of customers' perspectives – helping to solve problems and share ownership of them, not just providing what is requested
- Taking opportunities to add value (e.g. exploiting the transparency agenda and better data linkage)
- Building strong networks with policy leads and other analysts
- Developing better communication, management and “consultancy” skills

Skills

- Gaining a wide range of knowledge about policy subjects, not just the data
- Recognising the value of moving around and undertaking non-statistician posts in wider departmental and external roles

GSS/Departmental Leadership:

- Providing staff with greater exposure to customers
- Talent spotting: providing a broader post-fast stream training and development programme for those wishing to progress – learn from Government Economic Service (GES) and Government Operational Research Service (GORS)
Applying the Code in a proportionate way – pushing to help policy without breaching
- Recognising the impact of organisational design (centralisation of statisticians vs. out-bedding).

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

COMMITTEE FOR OFFICIAL STATISTICS

SA(COS)(13)09

Statistics in the Health and Social Care Information Centre

Purpose

1. This paper provides information to the Committee for Official Statistics (COS) about the statistical work in the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC) and associated issues.

Recommendations

2. Members of the Committee are invited to note and comment on the summary below.

Discussion

3. The HSCIC is an arm's length body of the Department of Health. It has a budget of around £50 million and employs around 500 staff, including around 100 professional statistical members of the GSS. Under the Health and Social Care Act, 2012, from April 2013 the HSCIC will become an Executive Non-Departmental Public Body. It will then include substantial parts of the present Department of Health Information Department, and some regional functions. Its revenue budget will be in excess of £500 million, and it will have around 2,000 staff. The statistician complement will remain unchanged.
4. The functions of the new HSCIC will include:
 - i. maintaining national information systems and services used across the health and care system;
 - ii. managing and processing data collections;
 - iii. calculating national indicators such as those used in outcomes frameworks;
 - iv. publishing, analysing and improving the use of data, indicators and reports;
 - v. acting as a national 'safe haven' for confidential data, and as a repository for health and social care data;
 - vi. providing leadership and guidance on use of administrative data; and
 - vii. working on data quality, information standards and information and statistical governance to support system-wide collaboration.
5. The HSCIC will have powers to require information from providers of health and care services.

Statistics

6. HSCIC publishes around 170 sets of national or official statistics each year. Key topic areas include hospital activity and treatment, mental health, social care, primary care, lifestyles (e.g. smoking, drinking), workforce, as well as clinical audits, and the production and assurance of indicators more generally. It has its own press team, which aims to raise the profile of the statistics within the constraints of the Code, as a counter to potentially more politicised interpretations.
7. Some HSCIC statistics are very high profile; figures on obesity regularly generate much press and professional interest, and our recent introduction of the Summary Hospital-level Mortality Indicator has required us to engage in much technical and wider debate. The Francis review, following the events at Mid-Staffordshire Hospital, included discussion of mortality indicators and the importance of information in supporting the way organisations and professions work together in the interests of patients and the public.

8. In delivering its functions, the HSCIC works closely with other health and care bodies both local and national, and also with professional networks such as the GSS. Customers include national and local health and care bodies, other Government Departments, Parliament, researchers, international bodies and, increasingly, patients and the public. Its reports, publications and other releases of data are used by the NHS and social services to help them run more effectively, and by a wide range of users for secondary purposes such as policy development, research, accountability and transparency.

Issues and Challenges

Demand

9. There is demand for data and linked data at increasing levels of granularity. This increases pressure on teams and increases the complexity of assessment of disclosure risk. HSCIC operates a standard risk assessment process, with a data release panel to judge more complex cases. Issues around practicalities and disclosure control take time to consider and resolve - for example we now oversee publication of a monthly extract of prescribing data for every GP practice at drug presentation level. The file each month exceeds 10 million rows of data and 1.3 gigabytes.

Quality

10. HSCIC will have a statutory role around assessment of information collected against the data standards in place in the health and care system. We are starting to work in this area and published our first report on "The quality of nationally submitted Health and Social Care Data" last year as Experimental Official Statistics. Our statistical reports include standard GSS quality templates. We rely heavily however on administrative sources of data. This brings both greater frequency and volume of data, but issues of lack of control of definitions, non-random incompleteness, mis-recording and failure to observe data standards.
11. HSCIC operates a "pipeline" process to quality assure the construction and methodology of proposed indicators on behalf of the health and care system. This deals with many challenges including coherence of different indicators, approaches to standardisation, the impact of poor source data, and balancing continuity of existing published indicators with the need to make methodological improvements.

Governance

12. The value of the Code of Practice, arguing for releasing information as official statistics, needs constant reiteration, when the pressure is for timeliness, and stakeholder pressure is to "get data out" in order to meet announced deadlines and user need. There is often a need to apply the Code in a proportionate manner, to discourage the temptation to work round, rather than with it. HSCIC aims to produce regular, appropriately pitched and timely releases with minimal commentary (but accompanied by metadata and data quality statements), with more detailed and analytical annual releases.

Organisational confidence

13. Health is a pressured, high profile and extremely political environment. It is important that the organisation is seen to have an independent, apolitical voice. Press notices associated with our publications and other liaison work, including through social media, are a key way of bringing our independent views to the notice of the wider world. Increased organisational maturity and confidence, and the powers in the Act, will both ease the development and publication of new figures and ease the process of stopping less used areas of work in response to budget pressures.

14. The organisation is committed to learning from its mistakes, and has an established process of incident reporting and handling, followed by identification of root causes and promulgation of lessons learned, through a network of business improvement champions.

Skills

15. The organisation operates a process of personal development reviews and performance discussion, with each member of staff having a personal development plan reviewed every six months. The HoP tries hard to maintain involvement with the GSS more widely, and to engage statistical staff in that, through regular meetings and the provision of training and development opportunities, to offset the occasional issues caused by staff not being civil servants. Statistical staff have recently benefited from GSS training and conferences in the North, making such events more accessible within the constraints of time and budget.

Andy Sutherland, Head of Profession, HSCIC, March 2013

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

COMMITTEE FOR OFFICIAL STATISTICS

SA(COS)(13)10

Activities of the Government Statistical Service January 2013 to February 2013

Purpose

1. This paper provides the Committee for Official Statistics (COS) with an update of Government Statistical Service (GSS) activities for January and February 2013.

Recommendations

2. Members of the Committee are invited to note the summary.

Discussion

Raising Professional Standards

4. The updated Recruitment and Promotion Guidance is being finalised for Heads of Professions to ratify at their meeting on 26 March.
5. Two separate task and finish groups have been established to develop a pilot mentoring scheme for junior statisticians and to review the mandatory Statistical Foundations Course (delivered by ONS Methodology).
6. The GSS People Strategy will be reviewed in light of the imminent launch of the Civil Service Capability Plan. It will help focus the Work Programme for 2013/14 on key deliverables to meet the demands of the plan. The work that we have done recently to refresh the Competence Framework and recruitment, promotion and Continuing Professional Development policies puts us in a good position to meet the formal requirements of the 'Strengthening Profession' strand of the Capability Plan. There is lots more to be done however on talent management and influencing, especially at senior levels.

GSG Fast Stream Recruitment

7. Round 1 of the 2013 Fast Stream recruitment programme produced around 20 successful candidates, which is half of the number bid for by Heads of Profession (HoPs). Work is underway for Round 2 and a short video for YouTube featuring the National Statistician has been created to promote the scheme. The National Statistician is hosting an online Facebook chat session on 13 March, where potential applicants to our recruitment schemes will have the opportunity to pose their questions directly to the National Statistician (NS). Work is also in hand to boost the university liaison channel to increase marketing potential.

Statistical Officer Recruitment

8. Statistical Officer recruitment has been very successful. A total of 43 candidates have been recruited from the last round and the majority have now been allocated to departments. No further rounds are planned for the present. We await updates from HoPs regarding any possible staffing restrictions for 2013/14 following recent budget announcements.

Reform of European Statistical Law

9. The UK has secured amendments in Council which ensure devolved and decentralised statistical systems are recognised and protected, yet at the same time the statutory role of the Head of the National Statistical Institute (NSI) is significant and strengthened. The means of ensuring cross-EU compliance with the European Statistics Code of Practice is still being negotiated.
10. Following the Authority Board's consideration of the issue in December, the UK is continuing to support compulsory Commitments on Confidence signed by governments. These oblige the development at the national level of the necessary means to ensure compliance (i.e. the current UK system should suffice) with oversight by the European Statistics Governance Advisory Board (ESGAB), rather than the Commission. There is a lot of resistance to the overall concept in other Member States.
11. In addition, an amendment is being considered that secures national flexibility in enacting a right to access to administrative data. However, the European Parliament is expected to pull negotiations in the direction of more robust legal requirements.

UK Compliance with EU Regulations

12. In December 2012 the Commission contacted the UK Government about their intention to commence infraction proceedings with respect to our failure to supply data according to National Accounts legislation. ONS are working on a solution to avert further escalation. The recently strengthened process for managing and monitoring GSS compliance will be further reviewed in light of this possibly more assertive approach of the Commission to compliance with key economic data regulations. A separate paper on the 'UK's readiness to deal with the European Statistical Programme (2013 – 2017)' will be brought to a future meeting of COS. The paper will include an update on the UK's Compliance with EU regulations.

United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) meeting

13. The annual Commission meeting took place at the end of February. Discussions focussed on the responses of the global statistical system to developments in:
 - i. the implementation of the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics;
 - ii. National Accounts; Environmental-economic accounting;
 - iii. Environment statistics; International trade statistics;
 - iv. Agricultural statistics;
 - v. International Comparison Programme;
 - vi. Gender statistics;
 - vii. Crime statistics;
 - viii. Health statistics;
 - ix. Coordination of statistical activities in the United Nations system;
 - x. Regional statistical development in Africa;
 - xi. developing a statistical-spatial framework in national statistical systems; and,
 - xii. Rio +20 and new sustainable development goals will also be discussed.

The meeting concluded on 1 March 2013 but the report is not yet available.

Quality assurance across the GSS

14. As part of the initiative to drive forward quality assurance, a presentation was delivered to the GSS Statistical Policy and Standards Committee at the end of January. The presentation aimed to promote risk assessment of outputs and encourage the implementation of regular quality reviews using a risk based, proportionate approach.

15. ONS use a number of tools to help with quality assurance such as risk assessment templates and a Quality Methods and Harmonisation Tool (QMHT) module. The wider GSS would benefit from the use of these tools so the template and a more user-friendly, refined version of the QMHT module will be shared.
16. As previously reported to the Committee, each Head of Profession has been asked to submit an Annual Assurance Report (AAR) to the National Statistician. NSO will analyse information in these reports to identify a baseline for current GSS quality review processes. NSO will continue and further promote, monitor and support this initiative over the coming months.

GSS Strategy

17. The GSS strategy, called Building the Community, will launch on 18 March. The strategy will be published on the GSS intranet and on the National Statistician's pages of the Authority website.
18. The implementation plan for the GSS strategy will also be published on 18 March. It sets out the steps that need to be taken over the coming year to begin implementing the strategy.
19. Statistical Heads of Profession are being provided with tools to help communicate the strategy within their departments. Within ONS, events will be held in April to explain how the Authority, GSS and ONS strategies will guide the work over the coming years.

Tim Andrews, National Statistician's Office, 11 March 2013

SA(COS)(13)11 – Monitoring Review – School Level Examination Results

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(COS)(13)11

Monitoring Review – School Level Examination Results

This document will be published on the UK Statistics Authority website in due course.

The document will be available at:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/monitoring/monitoring-reviews/index.html>

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY
COMMITTEE FOR OFFICIAL STATISTICS

SA(COS)(13)12

The GSS Inter Administration Committee

Purpose

1. This note provides an overview of the Government Statistical Service (GSS) Inter Administration Committee for 2012/13.

Recommendations

2. Members of the Committee are invited to note the contents of this paper.

Discussion

3. The *Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007* presented an opportunity to review existing GSS operations and to develop more effective governance and planning mechanisms for the UK's official statistics system. The Authority Board decided at its meeting on 21 February 2008 not to create its own sub-committee on devolved administration matters. It felt that this aspect of the Authority's operations should be considered by the full Board of the Authority. To support the Authority's goals, the National Statistician established the Inter Administration Committee (IAC) as part of the new governance arrangements for the GSS, to develop a systematic mechanism for addressing inter administration issues.
4. At its meeting of 20 October 2008 the IAC undertook to replace the Concordat on statistics, which formed part of the Memorandum of Understanding between the UK Government, Scottish Ministers, Welsh Ministers and the Northern Ireland Executive Committee, with a new Inter Administration Working Agreement (IAWA). The Memorandum of Understanding, most recently revised in September 2012, sets out the principles that underpin relations between the UK Government and the devolved administrations.
5. The operation of the IAWA is required to be reviewed annually. IAC undertook this review at its meeting on 11 February 2013 and approved a number of changes that include, in particular, an amendment to paragraph 4.6 and new Annex 1 that reference the adoption of principles and practices for handling European statistical issues. This latest version is at **Annex A**. It will be published on the National Statistician's pages of the Authority's website shortly.
6. The IAC is chaired by the National Statistician, with membership comprised of the Chief Statisticians of the three devolved administrations and other senior members of the GSS. Statistical Heads of Profession and Theme Leaders are invited to attend as issues dictate. Its terms of reference are at **Annex B** and were also reviewed at IAC's meeting of 11 February. IAC decided that it would formally review the terms of reference each year at the same time as the IAWA.
7. Since 2010 the IAC has strengthened its links with Theme Leaders following general concerns about harmonisation and comparability across the four administrations and how best to respond to the Authority's initiative to improve compliance with Principle 4 Practice 6 of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics that deals with comparability. Hence, the IAC receives an annual report from each Theme Leader and invites two or three Theme Leaders to each meeting to discuss the work of their respective Themes.

8. The IAC plays a key role in ensuring that the devolved administrations are involved in any international changes such as the current changes being proposed to EU Regulation 223/2009 (European Statistical Law), allowing members to explore any impact at an early stage.
9. The IAC has often considered issues around standardisation that have been identified by the devolved administrations. In many instances this leads to an agreed solution and enhances working relationships.

Tim Andrews, National Statistician's Office, 11 March 2013

List of Annexes

Annex A Inter Administration Working Agreement

Annex B Terms of Reference for the Inter Administration Committee

SA(COS)(13)12 – The GSS Inter-Administration Committee

Annexes A Inter Administration Working Agreement

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

The document is available at :

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/about-the-authority/uk-statistical-system/history/key-historical-documents/inter-administration-working-agreement-on-statistics---revised-may-2012.doc>

Annex B Terms of Reference for the Inter Administration Committee

Purpose

1. The Committee works within the context of an Inter Administration Working Agreement between the UK Statistics Authority and each of the Devolved Administrations, which outlines the ways in which the four nations work together and cooperate on statistical matters.

Role

2. The Committee's responsibilities include the following:
 - i. develop and promote a set of principles that will contribute to coherent, comparable and comprehensive 4 Nation statistics, taking due account of user needs, accessibility and metadata to assess comparability;
 - ii. promote policies, strategies and standards which facilitate the production of coherent and harmonised statistics across the administrations;
 - iii. consider and resolve inter administration issues that have not been able to be resolved elsewhere;
 - iv. liaise with, and support the work of, other GSS committees;
 - v. consider UK government statistics needed for devolved purposes in reserved policy areas, and devolved statistics needed for UK purposes. This could include cost sharing practices;
 - vi. strengthen the user voice (with an emphasis on those users requiring UK-wide and international statistics);
 - vii. share and promote good statistical practice across administrations;
 - viii. strengthen the links between Theme Leaders and the Committee, especially in respect of issues relating to comparability of statistics and the extent to which the devolved administrations are collaborating with Theme activities;
 - ix. identify international issues including meeting international requirements and arrangements for moving forward issues that would benefit sub UK international comparisons;
 - x. raise issues with the UK Statistics Authority and/or Ministers as appropriate.

Membership

3. Membership of the Committee consists of:
 - National Statistician - Chair
 - Chief Statisticians in Devolved Administrations
 - Director General for Statistics, ONS
 - Deputy Director (Delivery), National Statistician's Office
 - ONS Director with stakeholder responsibility for DAs
 - Statistical Heads of Profession for Statistics or Theme Leaders by invitation
4. The secretariat is provided by the National Statistician's Office (Delivery).

Meetings

5. The Committee meets quarterly.

Review

6. These terms of reference are to be reviewed annually.

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

COMMITTEE FOR OFFICIAL STATISTICS

SA(COS)(13)13

Progress Update: The first five months of the Good Practice Team

Purpose

1. To provide a summary update to the Committee for Official Statistics (COS) on progress during the first five months of the Good Practice Team (GPT).

Recommendations

2. Members of COS are invited to consider and comment on this update.

Discussion

3. The GPT pilot began on 1 October 2012 aiming to promote good practice across the GSS, with a focus on communicating statistics and engaging users. Since the update provided in January 2013, the team has continued to work closely with departments, and has taken forward a number of wider initiatives aimed at engaging the Government Statistical Service (GSS) and building capability.

Work with departments

4. The GPT has so far worked with 11 departments, offering support on commentary and user engagement.
5. The team has worked to improve a range of statistical releases. The Good Practice User Reference Panel, established by the GPT, has reviewed the progress on a selection of these. Feedback on the changes made was very positive, and the group also provided ideas for further improvement. The impact of changes has also been evident in improved media coverage for particular publications.
6. Progress on user engagement was initially slower, but there have been some encouraging recent developments, including producers making use of StatsUserNet, establishing user groups, and making direct contact with users.
7. The team has begun reporting to Heads of Profession in departments, summarising progress, making recommendations and asking for feedback. The report to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) has been followed up by a meeting with the Head of Profession (HoP), who was very positive about the value of the team's input and about taking forward the recommendations.
8. Recent highlights from work in departments include the following.
 - i. Work with HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) has yielded two improved releases on Trusts and Property Transactions, and practical steps to improving user engagement. The department's outputs have been reviewed more broadly, and recommendations have been made to the HoP on broader areas such as web dissemination and house style.
 - ii. Defra have begun work on establishing an agriculture statistics user group. The report to the HoP also contained wider recommendations, for example on use of social media and embedding good practice.

- iii. The Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) has improved its English Business Survey release, following GPT input. The User Reference Panel has considered the revised release and provided positive comments and ideas for further improvements.
- iv. At GPT's suggestion, the HoP assistant at the Ministry for Defence (MOD) has held meetings with all branch heads to discuss user engagement, ahead of refreshing and implementing its user engagement strategy. It is running a session on user engagement at its annual statistician's event.

Other initiatives

- 9. The team has identified and progressed other initiatives to leverage improvements to commentary and user engagement. Some highlights include:
 - 10. Engaging the GSS and users
 - i. The Assistant Statistician/Statistical Officer Working Group established by the GPT comprises 15 staff from nine departments, and has been very successful at engaging junior statisticians in taking forward improvements to commentary. Members of the group have enthusiastically peer reviewed each other's outputs, and produced plans on how to take forward recommendations in consultation with their managers and in some cases their Heads of Profession.
 - ii. The team arranged for a joint message from Andrew Dilnot, Jil Matheson and Richard Alldritt to go to all Heads of Profession, to be cascaded to all GSS staff, emphasising the importance of, and need for, good commentary. The aim is to ensure that everyone in the GSS recognises that the message from the top is consistent and gives a remit to take steps to improve.
 - iii. The team is coordinating follow-up to the voluntary sector engagement event which it co-organised, and has set up a discussion with the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) to follow-up actions.
 - iv. The GPT attended the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) annual conference to present on good communication and user engagement. The session was well-received and prompted some good discussion.
 - 11. Training, learning and guidance.
 - i. The team designed and delivered a well-received one-day training course on user engagement and commentary, first to ONS staff as a pilot, and then to GSS staff.
 - ii. The GPT co-ordinated a lunchtime sharing seminar, held at the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), for the GSS to share examples of good practice in user engagement. The event attracted over 30 GSS staff from different departments. Feedback has been positive, and the GPT plans to arrange more of these informal events.
 - iii. Alongside development of new user engagement and presentation and dissemination pages for the new StatNet intranet site, the team has collated existing guidance and GPT material into 'resource kits' on commentary and peer review for use in departments.

Next steps

12. The team will draw on its work in the second half of the pilot period to update the emerging findings it described in its interim report. It will document these findings in a final report, to be considered by the Project Board on 16 April.

Good Practice Team, 13 March 2013

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY
COMMITTEE FOR OFFICIAL STATISTICS

SA(COS)(13)14

Update on the impact of cuts on statistics and statistical capability

Purpose

1. This paper provides an update on plans by producers of official statistics for ceasing the production of statistics, and on public consultations relating to those statistics. The paper also includes the up-to-date number for staffing statistics in the Government Statistician Group (GSG) against which reports are being benchmarked.

Recommendations

2. Members of the Committee for Official Statistics are invited to note:
 - i. the latest position on reported cuts to official statistics and further potential cuts subject to public consultation and other official statistics issues being consulted upon; and
 - ii. the current staffing numbers for the GSG.

Discussion

3. Since the last report to the Committee on 11 January 2013, there have been no notifications of cessations to the National Statistician.
4. Historical information about cessations by department up to February 2013 can be found at **Annex A**.
5. The National Statistician's Office (NSO) has discovered six new statistical consultations since the last update to the Committee. Two of these are notable:
 - i. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is consulting on 'People and households claiming Universal Credit, Personal Independence Payment and other benefits: Plans for 2013-2017'. The outcome of this consultation will shape the content and format of DWP statistics on benefits through to 2017 and beyond. This consultation describes the proposed changes to some of their official statistics over the period 2013 to 2017 that covers the introduction of new benefits and the migration of the existing stock of claimants. The scope of the consultation includes most DWP statistics produced from administrative data, i.e. data produced by the computer systems which are used for the administration of the benefits.
 - ii. The Department for Education (DfE) is seeking views on how to improve accountability for secondary schools in England. The secondary school measures will reflect the significant reforms to GCSEs, with the improved qualifications taught from 2015 and first exams taken in 2017. Although the consultation focuses on the system once the exams have changed, many proposals could be put in place earlier. The consultation asks how DfE should publish and use data about schools' performance. It also considers how the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) will use the headline measures in its work, but there are no plans to change the school inspection framework introduced in September 2012. If consequential changes are necessary to reflect accountability developments, it would be for Ofsted to make proposals and to consult on them.
6. There are currently five live statistical consultations along with one closed consultation not previously reported to the Committee (see **Annex B**). There are currently no live

consultations previously reported to COS.

Monitoring Statistical Capacity (Annexes C and D)

7. The National Statistician's Office has been updating its database of professional government statisticians and the numbers shown in the Annex reflect the latest returns from UK Government departments and agencies and the devolved administrations.
8. The new format shows the Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) numbers of staff by the major grade groups at a moment in time, and these will be updated on a quarterly basis to provide a new time series. It is not possible to create a back series on this basis. Also shown is a snapshot of the major departments' numbers split into Senior Civil Service (SCS) and non-SCS as before. More staff will be joining throughout the year as those successful in recent recruitment campaigns are able to take up posts offered.

National Statistician's Office, 11 March 2013

List of Annexes

- Annex A Cuts previously reported to COS**
- Annex B New consultations about cuts and changes to statistics**
- Annex C Government Statistician Group staffing levels by department (FTE basis)**
- Annex D Government Statistician Group by grade groups (FTE basis)**

Annex A Cuts previously reported to COS

Department	Statistics	Date of cessation
Department for Communities and Local Government	The Place Survey	July 2010
	Local Government Key Facts Card: England	November 2010
	Citizenship Survey	March 2011
	Official Statistics on Supporting People	May 2011
	Changes to DCLG Statistics – Regional Outputs	October 2012 for outputs without PRA. Outputs with PRA – throughout 2013.
Department of Culture Media and Sport	Target Group Index statistics on arts attendance	31 October 2011
Department for Education	Schools Providing Access to Extended Services Statistics	October 2010
	Parental experiences of services provided to disabled children Statistics	November 2010
	Diploma Learning England	November 2011
	School Destinations of Secondary School Pupils Resident in London Boroughs	September 2011
	Behaviour in schools	1 April 2012
Department for Health	Health Profile of England	Last publication March 2010
	Mortality Monitoring: Life Expectancy and all-age-all-cause mortality, and mortality from selected causes - overall and inequalities	Last publication October 2011
	Mortality Monitoring: Infant Mortality and inequalities	Last publication December 2011
Home Office	Statistics on post-decision reviews on asylum applications, applications for asylum support, and asylum appeals.	25 August 2011
	Basic Command Unit level recorded crime and detection statistics	April 2012
HM Revenue and Customs	Business Payment Support Service	Last publication July 2011

Ministry of Defence	RAF Pocket Brief	April 2012
	Civilian Staffing by agency, trading fund and location	February 2012
NHS Information Centre	Prescription Cost Analysis statistics	July 2012
	NHS Nursing and Midwifery Bank Staff return	September 2011
Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency	Northern Ireland Abstract of Statistics Online	16 June 2012
	Participation in full-time education and vocational training by 16 and 17 year olds in Northern Ireland	December 2012
Welsh Government	Health Visitors, District Nurses and Other Community Nurses NHS Day Care Community Psychiatric Nurses and Community Learning Disability Nurses	October 2010
	New Deal Statistics	November 2010
	Welsh Short Term Output Indices	Within weeks if that decision is made by Ministers
	Local Authority Education Expenditure	Suspended for 2010/11 year.
	Affordable housing provision – collection of information from registered social landlords	2012/13
	NHS staff vacancies	1 March 2012
Scottish Government	Children Educated outwith Schools Placing Requests Teacher and Educational Psychologists Vacancies Pre-Appeal SQA Examination Results Expenditure on Schools Budgeted School Running Costs The Independent School Census	November 2010
	Various changes to Scottish Government Surveys	2012 onwards

Department for Work and Pensions	New Deals and the Flexible New Deal programme statistics	March 2011
	Tax Benefit Model	8 June 2011
	National Insurance Number Allocations to Adult Overseas Nationals entering the UK	August 2012
	Vacancies handled by Jobcentre Plus	Autumn 2012
Office for National Statistics	Quarterly dividends inquiry	5 March 2012

Annex B New consultations about cuts and changes to statistics

This table summarises the consultations that have been notified to the National Statistician in the period 11 January to 8 March 2013 or have been discovered by the National Statistician's Office undertaking periodic trawls of departmental websites.

The list demonstrates that GSS statisticians are actively reviewing the need for continued statistics with users in order to improve efficiency, as well as responding to reductions in resources in the current public sector financial climate.

Details of consultation	Description of consultation	Consultation Ends
<p>Secondary School Accountability Consultation</p> <p>Department for Education</p>	<p>This consultation seeks views on how to improve accountability for secondary schools in England. The secondary school measures will reflect the significant reforms to GCSEs, with the improved qualifications taught from 2015 and first exams taken in 2017. Although the consultation focuses on the system once the exams have changed, many proposals could be put in place earlier. After the consultation DfE will determine which changes should be implemented in 2015 or 2016.</p> <p>The consultation asks how DfE should publish and use data about schools' performance. It considers how Ofsted will use the headline measures in its work, but there are no plans to change the school inspection framework introduced in September 2012. If consequential changes are necessary to reflect accountability developments, it would be for Ofsted to make proposals and to consult on them.</p> <p>https://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/s/secondary%20school%20accountability%20consultationdocument.pdf</p>	<p>1 May 2013</p>
<p>Statistics on people and households claiming Universal Credit, Personal Independence Payment and other benefits: Plans for 2013-2017</p> <p>DWP</p>	<p>The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) opened a statistics consultation on "People and households claiming Universal Credit, Personal Independence Payment and other benefits: Plans for 2013-2017" on 23 January 2013 that can be found at: http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/dwp_stats2013_17.pdf</p> <p>The outcome of this consultation will shape the content and format of DWP statistics on benefits through to 2017 and beyond.</p> <p>This consultation describes the proposed changes to some of their Official Statistics over the period 2013 to 2017 that covers the introduction of new benefits and the migration of the existing stock of claimants. The scope of the consultation includes most DWP statistics produced from administrative data, i.e. data produced by the computer systems which are used for the administration of the benefits. It <u>excludes</u> changes to DWP statistics produced from surveys (such as the Family Resources Survey); Fraud and Error statistics, as well as the Claimant Count produced by ONS.</p>	<p>24 April 2013</p>
<p>Consultation on the Attribution Data Set GP-Registered Populations</p>	<p>This consultation invites responses on our proposals on the future of the publication of the Attribution Data Set GP-Registered Populations (ADS) by the Health and Social Care Information Centre</p> <p>http://www.ic.nhs.uk/attributiondatasetgprepops</p>	<p>30 April 2013</p>

<p>NHS Information Centre (NHSIC)</p>	<p>This publication contains information about populations registered with GP practices at Strategic Health Authority (SHA) and Primary Care Organisation (PCO) level in five-year age bands by gender, for England and Wales.</p> <p>The data are collected in April for GP relevant populations and are scaled to ONS mid-year population estimates - based on the Census, excluding some special populations. This reconciliation is carried out as the number of patient registrations is greater than the number of people living in England and Wales according to population estimates from the ONS. There may be a number of reasons for this, e.g. people leaving the country and not notifying their GP.</p>	
<p>Consultation on the proposed changes to future annual HSCIC Ambulance services data publications.</p> <p>NHS Information Centre (HSCIC)</p> <p>Opening Date: 5 February 2013</p>	<p>The Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC) publishes annually information on Ambulance Services England with the information contained within sourced from the annual KA34 collection.</p> <p>The proposal is to stop the KA34 annual collection and use an alternative source of data for the publication, unless the consultation shows a strong reason to keep the KA34. Even if this was the case the KA34 would need to be heavily modified to eliminate any duplicate areas of data collection and to eliminate additional burden on the NHS Ambulance Trusts completing the returns.</p> <p>The aim of this consultation is to understand the impact of stopping the KA34 collection. This includes the impact on users of the loss of data items and annual published information.</p> <p>This proposal will change the content and layout to the annual report on Ambulance services.</p> <p>Section 5 of the consultation document lists the current tables highlighting the impact at an individual data item level.</p> <p>http://www.ic.nhs.uk/ambulanceconsultation</p>	<p>2 April 2013</p>
<p>Mental Health Minimum Dataset Data Quality Consultation</p> <p>NHS Information Centre (HSCIC)</p> <p>Opening date: 8 March 2013</p>	<p>A consultation to invite responses on the proposed changes to the data quality reporting which will be published for version 4.1 of the Mental Health Minimum Dataset (MHMDS).</p> <p>With MHMDS moving to version 4.1 and to support the organisational changes in the NHS from April 2013 there is a need to update the current data quality measures report. It is proposed to make changes to the existing VODIM (Valid, Other, Default, Invalid and Missing) constructions and to expand the report to include new data consistency measures. This will support more effective recording and analysis to inform work on mental health Payment by Results (PbR) and outcome measures.</p> <p>http://www.ic.nhs.uk/consultation/vodim</p>	<p>22 March 2013</p>

<p>Consultation gathering feedback from Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), clinicians and professional groups on potential additional indicators for the proposed 2014/2015 CCG Outcomes Indicator Set.</p> <p>NHS Information Centre (HSCIC)</p> <p>Opening Date: 01 February 2013</p>	<p>HSCIC are currently gathering feedback from Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), clinicians and professional groups on potential additional indicators for the proposed 2014/2015 CCG Outcomes Indicator Set.</p> <p>The feedback gathered in this exercise on the data sources, suitability and definitions will supplement the full public consultation being undertaken by NICE which will provide a broader opportunity for any interested parties, including patients and carers, to comment.</p>	<p>8 March 2013</p>
--	--	----------------------------

Annex C Government Statistician Group staffing levels by department

Department	March 2013	
	SCS (FTE)	Non-SCS (FTE)
BIS	3	58
DCLG	2	52
DECC	1	25
DEFRA	2	28
DfE	2	94
DfID	1	39
DfT	2	46
DH	1	50
NHSIC	1	85
DWP	3	169
HMRC	3	112
HO	2	25
MoD	1	64
MoJ	1	66
UKSA/ONS	20	128
SG	1	150
OTHERS	2	197
Totals	48	1388

N.B. All data reported are rounded, full time equivalent figures. Data exclude staff currently occupying non-analytical posts.

Annex D Government Statistician Group by grade group (FTE basis)

	March 2013
Statistical Officer Grades	742
Fast Stream	133
Grade 6 & 7	513
SCS1 (Deputy Directors)	40
Directors and above	8
Total	1436
Values are rounded to nearest whole number	

SA(COS)(13)15 – Statistical Expenditure Report: Regional Statistics

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(COS)(13)15

Statistical Expenditure Report: Regional Statistics

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

The document is available at:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/reports---correspondence/correspondence/regional-statistics-published-by-the-department-for-communities-and-local-government.pdf>

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

COMMITTEE FOR OFFICIAL STATISTICS

SA(COS)(13)16

Review of risks for the Government Statistical Service and National Statistician's Office

Purpose

1. This paper provides the Committee for Official Statistics (COS) with details of the high-level risks for the National Statistician's Office (NSO) and the Government Statistical Service (GSS), and how the NSO are planning to change their approach to risk management.
2. The Authority's risk management policy, which was endorsed by the Authority Board at its meeting of May 2012 [SA(12)18], states that operational risks relating to the NSO and the GSS are managed by the National Statistician and are reviewed every six months by COS.

Recommendations

3. Members of the Committee are invited to note the contents of the paper.

Discussion

NSO Risk Management

4. Currently high-level divisional risks are identified during the business planning round at the beginning of the each financial year and are included in the NSO business plan. In addition, each of the topic teams in NSO reflects on risks to their business deliverables as part of the business planning process. These risks are more operational and relate directly to the key objectives/deliverables of each topic area.
5. Following the internal Audit review of the Authority's risk management arrangements, NSO have agreed to make some changes to how risks are recorded and managed.
6. A NSO divisional risk register will be maintained to include all of the high-level NSO risks; low-level operational risks will be included on risk registers managed by the topic leads.
7. The risks identified in the NSO divisional risk register will be reviewed (and updated) in a risk workshop in late March, and as part of the 2013/14 business planning round. The likelihood, impact and exposure scores for all risks will also be reviewed.
8. All of the NSO high-level risks will be reviewed at the monthly NSO senior management meeting, irrespective of the risk score. In addition, if the score for a low-level topic specific risk increases to 16 or higher, the risk will be moved to the NSO high-level risks and monitored appropriately.
9. Each risk is assigned an owner: the National Statistician, Deputy Director Delivery (Tim Andrews) or Deputy Director Strategy (Pam Davies).

GSS Risk Management

10. The NSO also maintain a register of GSS risks all of which are necessarily high-level; these risks are managed by the NSO on behalf of the National Statistician.

11. The risks on this register are currently being reviewed (including the likelihood, impact and exposure scores) and the GSS risks will be merged into the NSO divisional risk register.
12. All GSS risks will be reviewed at the monthly NSO senior management meeting, irrespective of the risk score.

Tim Andrews, National Statistician's Office, 11 March 2013