

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Committee for Official Statistics

Minutes

Wednesday 6 April 2011

Present

Members

Professor Sir Roger Jowell (Chair)
Mr Richard Alldritt
Dr Colette Bowe
Professor Angela Dale
Professor David Hand
Mr Duncan Macniven
Ms Jil Matheson
Professor David Rhind

Other Attendees

Mr Jason Bradbury (items 4 and 5)
Mr Richard Laux (to item 6)
Mr Graham Jenkinson (item 7)
Mr Mick Johnston (item 4)

Secretariat

Mr Rob Bumpstead
Mr Joe Cuddeford

Apologies

Sir Michael Scholar

Declarations of Interest

None

1 Apologies, Minutes and Matters Arising

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on 4 February 2011 were agreed as a correct record.

2 Update on actions

Mr Bumpstead provided an oral update on actions. The actions in relation to monitoring reductions in statistical expenditure were progressing as agreed, three statistical expenditure reports were in preparation and a monitoring brief about migration statistics was also in production.

3 Monitoring cuts to statistics: Update on cuts to Official Statistics [SA(COS)(11)06] and Authority response [SA(COS)(11)07]

3.1 Ms Matheson introduced a paper to update the Committee about reductions in statistical expenditure across the Government Statistical Service (GSS), as at 25 March 2011. The paper related to information received from producers of official statistics about plans for ceasing the production of statistics and on public consultations relating to official statistics.

3.2 Mr Alldritt introduced a paper which summarised how the Authority was responding to proposals to reduce expenditure on official statistics. The first Statistical Expenditure Report (SER) about the Department for Communities and Local Government's (DCLG) decision to cancel the Citizenship Survey would be published shortly. The Chair of the Authority would write to the Secretary of State. The Authority would also publish a short Statement about its intention to monitor and respond to cuts in official statistics. The committee endorsed this approach.

3.3 The Chair of the Authority had recently written to the Secretary of State for Health urging him to reject proposals by the NHS Information Centre to withdraw funding for health questions from the General Lifestyle Survey (GLF). The vital importance of the time series of health statistics provided from the GLF was discussed, together with statistical series that described other aspects of health including the British Social Attitudes Survey and NHS patient satisfaction surveys. The meeting agreed that retaining consistent health statistics series over time was essential.

4 Housing market review: Phase two emerging recommendations [SA(COS)(11)08] and Housing Statistics Network perspective [SA(COS)(11)09]

4.1 Mr Bradbury introduced a paper which provided an update on the progress with the National Statistician's Review of Official Housing Market Statistics. The first stage of the review, focussing on official house price statistics [SA(COS)(10)29] was discussed at the December meeting of the Committee for Official Statistics (COS) and then published on 16 December 2010.

4.2 The report recommended that the two current producers of official house price statistics (DCLG and Land Registry) each indicate how they could more fully comply with the user-driven criteria for house price statistics, and that they work together to explore the feasibility of producing a joint publication containing a single definitive house price index with accompanying statistics. The report also included an invitation for comments on the way forward. A further statement, in light of the responses from DCLG and Land Registry, would then be published by the National Statistician.

4.3 The second stage of the review intended to widen the focus of the work to investigate the extent to which the public, businesses and policy makers have the information that they need to make decisions on the housing market more generally. The paper focused on progress with this second stage of the review and presented some emerging recommendations on improvements that could be made to housing statistics. The

intention was to publish these recommendations in May.

- 4.4 The Committee considered the draft recommendations and the following comments were made in discussion:
- i. the scope of the review included the owner occupied and private rental sectors but excluded the social housing sector. This omission could be seen as a key weakness of the review;
 - ii. further consideration might be given to recommending more commentary around the topic of mortgage interest rates;
 - iii. it was important to be clear about what was to be achieved through the review and not to raise user expectations beyond what would realistically be delivered;
 - iv. there was a need to think about a charging policy in respect of certain housing statistics and whether this might improve the prospects of delivery;
 - v. a sense of incrementalism, with the review providing a 'direction of travel', might be helpful. It was a difficult time to propose and deliver all encompassing solutions. It was important not to 'over-promise'; and
 - vi. the review could only succeed with co-operation between, and commitment from, the principal producer bodies. Securing this was key to the success of the project.

Action: Mr Bradbury to further consider the draft recommendations in light of the meeting's comments, in particular to consider the inclusion of social housing in the scope of the review or to produce a clear account of the reasons for its exclusion.

Action: Ms Matheson to take forward the emerging recommendations with the relevant departments.

4.5 Mr Johnston introduced a paper providing a summarised response of housing statistics users to the National Statistician's review of house price indices and wider housing market indicators. The meeting heard about user concerns of threats to existing statistics, for example tenant statistics. A priority of users was to preserve the current range of indicators, but also to make much stronger connections between local and national indicators. Housing statistics had long been the responsibility of a variety of different producer organisations and this had sometimes resulted in a lack of a sense of overall ownership. Previous efforts to improve and develop housing statistics had foundered in part because of a lack of co-operation or co-ordination between these bodies. This was the central issue which needed to be addressed.

4.6 Mr Johnston also commented on the consultation exercise that had been run by the National Statistician's Office, as part of the review. It had been inclusive and well-run and was an exemplar of how such consultations should be conducted. At the Committee's invitation Mr Johnson agreed to provide a short note setting out some more details on this point.

Action: Mr Johnston to provide the committee with a short note setting out the aspects of the consultation on housing statistics which users had found particularly helpful.

5 Government Statistical Service (GSS) overarching strategy [SA(COS)(11)10]

5.1 Mr Bradbury presented a draft overarching GSS strategy. This sought to build on *Statistics Matter* (the National Statistician's first strategic statement, published in March 2010) to ensure that the GSS is clear and focused on the right things over the period to 2020 in light of changing drivers and priorities.

5.2 Members of the Committee considered and discussed the strategy, noting that the

document was an early, first draft. Overall, the committee agreed that it was important to establish who the strategy was for and to which audience it was addressed. As drafted, the strategy could be seen as too inward-looking. It was important to raise the status of the GSS in the eyes of those outside of the GSS. An element of this could be an aim to encourage members of the GSS to think and act more as members of a wider statistical professional community.

5.3 The Committee also considered what the role of the ONS should be in the strategy. For example, ONS needed to be the leader for the delivery of the technological elements of the strategy, since it was the only organisation with the critical mass required. Technology needed to be central to the strategy, not just in improving the capability of the GSS and its ability to deliver existing statistics, but in fundamentally transforming the business. To address these issues the GSS might also benefit from help from experts from outside of the statistical world. More broadly, there was also a need to consider the leadership role of the ONS in relation to the GSS in general.

5.4 Other suggestions for further improving the draft included:

- i. developing the text to better support the stated vision of the GSS being 'dynamic and highly influential leaders in debate and policy making';
- ii. clarifying the points made about freedom of information, the right to data, and the public data corporation to show more clearly how they related to the strategy;
- iii. establishing that administrative data was a supplement to survey data, not necessarily a replacement for it (figure 1);
- iv. placing more emphasis on better collaboration between providers and users of statistics; and
- v. limiting the number of key strategic choices to a manageable number, perhaps five or six.

Action: Mr Bradbury to further consider the draft strategy in light of the meeting's comments, in particular to consider a greater outward focus for the GSS and a leadership role for the ONS.

6 Proposed review of UK statistical releases and publications [SA(COS)(11)11]

6.1 Mr Alldritt presented a paper proposing that the Monitoring and Assessment team should establish a project to produce a Monitoring Report looking at UK official statistics releases and other statistical publications in the round. This review would be overseen by a formal project board chaired by a non-executive member of the Board.

6.2 The meeting considered the possible outputs from such a Monitoring Report and implications for training across the GSS.

6.3 The Chair of the Committee proposed that Dr Bowe be appointed Chair of the proposed Monitoring Report Project Board. Dr Bowe withdrew from the meeting while the committee considered, and approved, the proposal.

6.4 It was agreed that the membership of the Project Board should include a strong element of external challenge and voices from outside the Authority and the GSS.

6.5 It was further agreed to recommend the proposal to the next meeting of the Authority Board.

Action: Secretariat to schedule consideration of the review of UK statistical releases and publications by the April meeting of the Authority Board.

7 Progress with a National Address Register [SA(COS)(11)12]

- 7.1 Mr Jenkinson introduced a paper which provided an update on a national address register. The issue was last discussed by the Committee in July 2010 [SA(COS)(10)16].
- 7.2 DCLG had announced in December 2010 the creation of a centrally funded 'National Address Gazetteer (NAG) database' to provide one definitive source of accurate spatial address data for England and Wales. Since then the meeting heard that excellent progress had been made and it was thought likely that a usable product would be available in about six months. It would be free of charge to the entire public sector as part of the Public Sector Mapping Agreement. It would also be sold to the private sector.
- 7.3 The Committee considered that a pricing policy and mechanism for access to the address register (by academics or the commercial sector) should be published as soon as possible. It was agreed that this should be raised with DCLG.

Action: Secretariat to raise the issue of pricing policies for the National Address Register.

- 7.4 The Committee warmly welcomed these very positive developments and noted the exchange of correspondence on this topic which the Chair of the Authority had initiated in 2010.
- 7.5 The Chair of the Committee thanked Mr Jenkinson for his excellent work in this area and wished him well on his forthcoming retirement.

8 Any other business

The Committee would meet next on Friday 3 June at 13:30pm in London.

Committee for Official Statistics

Agenda

Wednesday, 6 April, 2011

Board Room, Statistics House, London, 13:30 - 16:00

Chair: Professor Sir Roger Jowell

Apologies:

1	Apologies, Minutes and Matters Arising	Meeting of 040211
2	Update on actions	Oral update Mr Rob Bumpstead
3	Monitoring cuts to statistics i. Update on cuts to official statistics ii. Authority response	SA(COS)(11)06 Ms Jil Matheson SA(COS)(11)07 Mr Richard Alldritt
4	Housing market review i. Phase two emerging recommendations ii. Housing Statistics Network perspective	SA(COS)(11)08 Mr Jason Bradbury SA(COS)(11)09 Mr Mick Johnston
5	GSS overarching strategy	SA(COS)(11)10 Mr Jason Bradbury
6	Proposed review of UK statistical releases and publications	SA(COS)(11)11 Mr Richard Alldritt
7	Progress with a National Address Register	SA(COS)(11)12 Mr Graham Jenkinson
	Any other business	

**Next Meeting: Friday 3 June 2011,
Drummond Gate, London, 13:30 - 16:00**

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

COMMITTEE FOR OFFICIAL STATISTICS

SA(COS)(11)06

Update on cuts to official statistics

Purpose

1. The National Statistician's Office (NSO) is collating information from producers of official statistics on plans for ceasing the production of statistics as a consequence of Spending Review 2010 cuts and on public consultations relating to official statistics. This paper updates the Committee for Official Statistics (COS) on the information received as at 25 March 2011, and also recent activity across departments in monitoring the impact of cuts.

Recommendations

2. The Committee is invited to:
 - i. note 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. note the recent activity across departments in terms of monitoring the impact of cuts on the evidence base and analytical capability.

Discussion

3. The information being collated by the NSO on actual and potential cuts to statistics from Government Statistical Service (GSS) Heads of Professions (HoPs) provides the basis on which the Authority will decide whether to prepare a Statistical Expenditure Report (SER) or take other action. The NSO's information includes details of all public consultations being conducted by departments whether for the purpose of determining the impact of a cut or some other purpose to aid their decision making. This information is now sent to the UK Statistics Authority Secretariat frequently in order to facilitate decisions about early intervention and/or the preparation of a SER. Additionally, the Committee receives a report at each meeting from the NSO summarising the reported cuts, and all public consultations including those which may result in cuts, to statistical outputs. This is the third such report. **Annex A** sets out information about the actual cuts to official statistics and **Annex B** information about potential cuts.
4. On 21 March the NSO was informed that the NHS Information Centre (NHS IC) had decided that its contribution to the costs of the General Lifestyle Survey, conducted by the ONS on behalf of several government departments, would cease with immediate effect, subject to approval by the Department of Health (see paper [SA(COS)(11)07] for the Authority's response).
5. ONS consulted on its future work programme between 1 November and 24 December 2010. The purpose of the consultation was to inform the ONS work programme for 2011/12 to 2014/15. In order to meet a reducing budget, and still allow for the investment required to develop ONS, the consultation focused on ONS outputs which are not required by statute and asked users to outline the impact on them if cuts were made in these areas. ONS has published its response to the consultation on its website and has notified the National Statistician about its proposed reductions to its work programme.
6. These reductions are set out in **Annex C**, with an indication of what users said in the consultation and a description of the specific cut being pursued. The reductions are to be phased over the four year period. For some of the outputs listed, there will be alternative formats or sources available on the new ONS website. However, for those outputs which will be cut and which will not be available in an alternative source or format, it is intended that there will be further, more specific, consultation with users before they cease to be produced.

7. The HM Treasury Review of Government Data first reported to the Committee in December 2010 is well underway with departments being required to provide information about their data collections by 1 April 2011. (As reported to previous meetings of COS, one of its aims is to reduce data collection and 'burden', but also to review dependencies i.e. the impact that any proposed cuts would have on other departments, and on users more broadly. It is expected that potential cuts to data collection identified would then go forward to public consultation. The NSO is keeping in touch with developments via the National Statistician's membership of the Data Review Steering Group, and feedback from an ONS secondee to the HM Treasury Review team.)
8. The review team have planned a number of challenge meetings to ensure that each department has undertaken a thorough review. The challenge team will consist of senior HM Treasury and Cabinet Office Efficiency Reform Group officials, departmental representatives, a spending team representative (where appropriate) and a senior GSS representative. HoPs along with other members of the GSS senior civil service were given the opportunity to participate in those meetings and have responded positively with nine volunteers. The Review is expected to report in May 2011.

National Statistician's Office, March 2011

List of Annexes

Annex A	Cessation of production of statistics by the GSS
Annex B	Consultations about cessation of production of statistics by GSS
Annex C	Specific reductions to ONS statistical outputs and services

Annex A Cessation of production of statistics by the GSS

DETAILS OF CESSATION OR REDUCTION	DESCRIPTION OF STATISTICS	REASONS FOR CESSATION OR REDUCTION
<p>Statistics: National Statistics produced by ONS relating to smoking, drinking, health conditions and the use of health services</p> <p>Producer: NHS Information Centre (NHS IC)</p> <p>Date notified to National Statistician: 21 March 2011</p> <p>Statistics to cease/reduce from: Funding for these questions (£300k) will be withdrawn for the 2011 Survey.</p>	<p>Questions related to these topics are included in the General Lifestyle Survey (GLF). [ONS is consulting on the future of the GLF from 2012].</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the end November 2010, the NHS IC was informed by their sponsor the Department of Health (DH) of an overall reduction in funding, which equates to 17 per cent in 2011/12, including a fall in Grant in Aid (GIA) funding by 10 per cent every year from 2011/12 (i.e. 30 per cent reduction in GIA by 2013/14). This meant that the IC has had to make some difficult budgetary decisions very quickly. • In view of the perceived likelihood that the GLF would be discontinued in 2012, Tim Straughan, NHS IC's Chief Executive, supported a proposal within the NHS IC business plan to withdraw funding a year early, i.e. from April 2011. The decision is conditional upon agreement of the Business Plan by DH. • The NHS IC understands that withdrawal of this funding will not be palatable to users, particularly as there has been no time to consult widely on this decision. It plans to mitigate this to some extent by considering whether there are any cost-effective steps it can take to better signpost alternative sources where they exist.
<p>Statistics: New Deals and the Flexible New Deal programme statistics</p> <p>Producer: Department for Works and Pensions</p> <p>Date notified to National Statistician: 4 March 2011</p> <p>Statistics to cease : 16 March</p>	<p>Jobcentre Plus offer a number of programmes to help unemployed people, particularly those who have been unemployed for a long time, people with disabilities and anyone in need of extra help to find work. However, employment programme policy is changing, with the intention to move to the new "Work Programme". In the interim, both earlier schemes: New Deals and Flexible New Deal (FND), are running concurrently.</p>	<p>Recent employment programme policy changes mean that New Deals and the Flexible New Deal programme are coming to an end</p>

<p>Official Statistics on Supporting People(SP)</p> <p>Producer: Communities and Local Government</p> <p>Date notified to National Statistician: 15 February 2011</p> <p>Statistics to cease/reduce: 31 May 2011</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The statistics are derived from 'Supporting People' Client records data that provides information about characteristics of clients entering Supporting People services. This data is collected each time a client enters a housing related support service funded by 'Supporting People'. • Outcomes for short-term services data provide information about characteristics and outcomes achieved by clients leaving short-term 'Supporting People' services. This data is collected each time a client exits a short-term (more than 28 days but less than two years) housing related support service funded by 'Supporting People'. • The 'Supporting People' Client Records and Outcomes data tables below provide a breakdown of; Client Records data by service type and primary client group and Outcomes for short-term services data by service type, primary client group and outcomes achieved against identified support needs. 	<p>From April 2011, 'Supporting People' will roll into Formula Grant and will no longer be identified as a separate funding stream at Local Authority level. Consequently, it will no longer be possible for authorities and providers to submit data that correlates specifically to their SP budget. In addition, local authority commissioning bodies are already re-configuring and merging services for vulnerable people at the local level. This trend is expected to accelerate post April 2011 as local authorities have more freedom and flexibility to pool and align funding (e.g. adult social care funding) to deliver local services. This blurring of service boundaries will make it nigh impossible for the Department to apply a national uniform definition of 'housing related support services' so that collecting data on what was a SP service becomes increasingly ambiguous.</p>
<p>Statistics: The Citizenship Survey</p> <p>Producer: Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)</p> <p>Date notified to National Statistician: 25 January 2011</p> <p>Statistics to cease/reduce from: 31 March 2011</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Citizenship Survey is a face to face household survey covering a representative core sample of almost 10,000 adults in England and Wales each year, plus a minority ethnic boost sample of 5,000 and a Muslim boost sample of 1,200. • DCLG ran a targeted consultation from 1 to 30 November. The consultation document anticipated the outcome when it stated "as part of the current drive to deliver cost savings across government and to reduce the fiscal deficit, research budgets are being closely scrutinised to identify where savings can be made. For this reason and the belief that data can be dropped or collected less frequently, the intention is for future Citizenship Surveys to be cancelled." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Secretary of State made this decision in the context of the need to deliver cost savings in order to reduce the fiscal deficit, and in the belief that priority data from the survey can be dropped; collected less frequently; or collected via other means. A statement to this effect has been placed on DCLG's website. • A detailed response to the public consultation on the future of the survey will be published on the department's website in due course, along with a summary of each of the submissions received.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within central government results from the Survey are used by policy leads and analysts across a range of government departments including Ministry of Justice, Home Office, Cabinet Office, Office for Civil Society, Department for Work and Pensions and Government Equalities Office. • Survey results are also used by local government, academic researchers, charities and other non-governmental organisations. 	
<p>Statistics: Statistical outputs and other activities falling into the following categories are <u>candidates</u> for removal from ONS' Work Programme:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Statistical Compendia and Journals 2. A re-focus of the ONS analysis programme 3. The Knowledge Economy 4. UK Health Statistics 5. Analysis of specific health conditions including Health Statistics Quarterly 6. Statistical services and support <p>Producer: ONS</p> <p>Date notified to National Statistician: 18 January 2011</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Includes Annual Abstract/ Monthly Digest; Quarterly Consumer Trends and Monthly Financial Statistics; Monthly Economic and Labour Market Review; and, Reporting on Population Change Analysis and reporting of population statistics. 2. Includes Public Service Productivity; Analysis of the Labour Market; and, Regional Analysis. 3. This is principally development work, a reduction in which will partly be offset by European funding in 2011/12 and 2012/13. 4. UK level reporting will extend only to meeting legal and international requirements e.g. Eurostat leading to a less comprehensive picture of health in the UK. 5. Analytical work on healthy and disability free life expectancy will be stopped or reduced in frequency unless funding materialises. Outputs related to conceptions, teenage pregnancy and infant mortality will be less frequent. Work programme is therefore proposed to focus on mortality, data required to meet EU obligations and those activities that are income funded e.g. cancer analysis, health inequalities. 6. Includes support to the cross-government Longitudinal Data Strategy and Virtual Microdata Laboratory Micro-Analysis and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Between 25 October and 24 December 2010, ONS sought views to help determine the shape of its future statistical work programme. • Responses will be used to inform ONS' work programme for the next four years. • The budget reductions announced as part of the 2010 Spending Review mean that ONS has to consider where savings can be found. • Consultation document outlined ONS' approach to reducing its budget that was approved by the Authority. It set three central principles: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Whatever ONS does, it should do well. Compromising the quality of outputs is not in the public interest. 2. Budget reductions must not damage the core infrastructure of the organisation. In particular, the development and renewal of the ONS Information Technology infrastructure must continue. 3. ONS must continue to fulfil its statutory obligations, in terms of the statistical outputs that ONS is required to produce to meet international and domestic legal requirements. • The final package of cuts was agreed by the ONS Board on 11 February. <p>Note: More information about the proposed reductions to the ONS work programme is at Annex C.</p>

Annex A - SA(COS)(11)06 - Update on cuts to official statistics

	Support.	
<p>Statistics: Local Government Key Facts Card: England</p> <p>Producer: DCLG</p> <p>Date notified to National Statistician: 30 November 2010</p> <p>Statistics to cease/reduce from: Immediately</p>	<p>The Card is published as a portable aide-memoire of DCLG's compendium publication "Local Government Financial Statistics".</p> <p>From current and capital expenditure to council tax and local authority pensions, Local Government Financial Statistics England brings together data from a wide range of sources to paint a comprehensive and important overview of local government finance in England.</p> <p>It is an essential guide to local authority financial systems, both past and present and contains detailed commentary, tables, time series, full colour charts and maps</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLG has decided, in the context of the SR10 budget cuts, to cease publication of this product. • It states that this will not result in the loss of any published data simply because the contents of this Card are available within their compendium publication 'Local Government Financial Statistics'. • CLG has advised that it will shortly notify their customer-base about this decision by means of a note on their website. • It has judged that this decision does not warrant a public consultation.
<p>Statistics: Scottish School Statistics:</p> <p>1. Children Educated outwith Schools</p> <p>2. Placing Requests</p> <p>3. Teacher and Educational Psychologists Vacancies</p> <p>4. Pre-Appeal Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) Examination Results</p> <p>5. Expenditure on Schools</p> <p>6. Budgeted School Running Costs</p> <p>7. The Independent School Census</p> <p>Producer: Scottish Government (SG)</p> <p>Date notified to National Statistician: 25 November 2010</p> <p>Statistics to cease/reduce from:</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. These annual statistics provide information on the numbers of children who were educated outwith school at any point during the school year, whether out of necessity or by parental choice. 2. Annual statistics relating to requests by parents to local authorities that a child be placed in a specified school. 3. Annual statistics derived from a survey which measures the level of vacancies during term time in order to indicate any possible areas of shortage. 4. Annual statistics relating to national and educational authority level information on the cumulative attainment of National Qualifications by all pupils in publically funded secondary schools. 5. Annual Statistics relating to figures for local authority spending on school education. 6. Annual statistics relating to budgeted running cost information provided by education authorities, and managers of grant-aided and self-governing schools. 7. Annual statistics relating to results of the annual census of independent primary, secondary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In September 2010, the Education Analytical Services department of SG carried out a consultation of users of its Schools statistics. • This consultation followed on from an earlier one which sought views about the style and content of Schools statistics, and the Statistics Authority Assessment report on School statistics. • The Scottish Government has drawn the following conclusions from the consultation:- <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) There was a lack of demand for the retention of the NS in column 3 so they will be discontinued; ii) Attendance and Absence statistics will not be retained as an annual product but moved to a biennial basis; iii) There was little concern expressed about the repackaging of statistical publications and therefore SG will draw together the range of School statistics and release them on three key publication dates - Resources in December, Assessment in February and Outcomes in June; iv) In response to expressions of strong user need Exclusion statistics are retained on a biennial basis and published alongside the

Annex A - SA(COS)(11)06 - Update on cuts to official statistics

	and special schools in Scotland.	biennial Attendance and Absence figures in the Resources publication; and, v) In response to expressions of strong user need School Meals is retained but that a reduced set of information is collected and published annually in June.
<p>Statistics: New Deal Statistics</p> <p>Producer: Welsh Assembly Government (WAG)</p> <p>Date notified to National Statistician: 18 November 2010</p> <p>Statistics to cease/reduce from: November 2010</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Statistics relating to the New Deal and Flexible New Deal (FND) Employment Programmes are published monthly by provider. • The following day WAG publishes headline statistics for Wales. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As the New Deal and the FND are being phased out WAG will no longer be publishing this headline. • This information will continue to be available from DWP's website. • The publication of statistics on employment programmes will be reviewed once DWP have further information on the range of statistics that will be available under their new employment programme policy. • WAG has offered users an opportunity to discuss this decision by contacting them.
<p>Statistics:</p> <p>i. Health Visitors, District Nurses and Other Community Nurses</p> <p>ii. Community Psychiatric Nurses and Community Learning Disability Nurses</p> <p>iii. NHS Day Care</p> <p>Producer: WAG</p> <p>Date notified to National Statistician: 6 September 2010</p> <p>Statistics to cease/reduce from: October 2010</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • i and ii. – Used to monitor the advice and support given by health visitors, district nurses and other community nurses and by Community Psychiatric Nurses and Community Learning Disability Nurses by recording information on face-to-face contacts with patients. • iii – Used to monitor NHS day care facilities by recording information on first and total attendances for regular day attendees and patients using a bed by speciality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A user consultation was conducted to ask for views on a proposal to discontinue these statistical returns. An earlier consultation and review within the NHS had recommended that the returns be dropped. • The user consultation showed that 85 per cent or more of respondents felt that each of the collections should be dropped and failed to identify significant uses of the data. • Some users felt that it was unwise to discontinue these returns in the absence of fully developed alternative data collection and publication arrangements • As Community health information has been made a priority area by the Welsh Assembly Information Requirements Board, alternative statistics will be developed.
<p>Statistics: Parental experiences of services provided to disabled children Statistics</p> <p>Producer: Department for Education (DfE)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The services for disabled children parental survey was established through the Aiming High for Disabled Children (AHDC) programme and measures parents' satisfaction with the local education, health, and care and family support services provided for their 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministerial decision that the survey that informs this publication should cease on cost grounds. • Unlike previous years, there will be no central follow-up with local authorities and therefore the impact of the survey could be limited. • Decision reflects the Coalition Government's commitment to

Annex A - SA(COS)(11)06 - Update on cuts to official statistics

<p>Date notified to National Statistician: 17 August 2010</p> <p>Statistics to cease/reduce from: November 2010</p>	<p>disabled child.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Was established to provide data for the previous government's Local Authority National Indicator Set (NI 54) and although funded by the DfE, it also forms a measure within the NHS National Operating Framework 'Vital Signs'. 	<p>reduce centrally imposed data burdens and to free up resources for front line services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No legal obligation to publish these statistics. DfE reported that there has been no consultation with users, who are mainly Local Authorities and Primary Care Trusts. Children's disability groups and parents also have an interest in the survey, but DfE does not have evidence of the level of use. DfE ministers plan to communicate to them as soon as possible, to inform them that the survey has been discontinued and providing LAs with tools that would allow them to carry out similar surveys themselves at a local level if they wish. The National Statistician has asked DfE to make an announcement on the Publication Hub setting out why publication is to end and their expectation of the impact on users.
<p>Statistics: Schools Providing Access to Extended Services Statistics</p> <p>Producer: DfE</p> <p>Date notified to National Statistician: 10 August 2010</p> <p>Statistics to cease/reduce from: October 2010</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly publication providing at a local authority level the percentage of schools providing access to the full core offer of extended services. Statistics were used to inform the previous government's national indicators which may not reflect current government policy. The relevant administrative data are collected by the Training and Development Agency for Schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data collection will stop to achieve necessary savings. The percentage of schools with extended services (98 per cent) is close to the previous government's target. No legal obligation to publish these statistics. DfE reported that there has been no consultation with users. It said that the impact on users is expected to be limited as the percentage is close to the target i.e. almost all schools have extended services. There are no known alternative sources. The National Statistician has asked DfE to make an announcement on the Publication Hub setting out why publication is to end and their expectation of the impact on users.

Annex A - SA(COS)(11)06 - Update on cuts to official statistics

<p>Statistics: The Place Survey</p> <p>Producer: DCLG</p> <p>Date notified to National Statistician: 27 July 2010</p> <p>Statistics to cease/reduce from:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collects the views of people on a range of issues concerning the place they live. • Results used to measure progress on National Indicators in the Local Performance Framework. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department's own reduced need for the data. • The need to reduce costs and achieve savings. • Government's desire to localise activities when appropriate, and when required. • CLG has stated that it will provide the National Statistician with a fuller explanation for the decision and outline any ramifications including for users.
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Annex B Consultations about cessation of production of statistics by GSS

DETAILS OF CONSULTATION	DESCRIPTION OF CONSULTATION	CONSULTATION END
<p>The priorities for health and safety statistics</p> <p>Producer: Health and Safety Executive (HSE)</p> <p>Date notified to National Statistician: 16/3/11</p>	<p>In line with all government bodies, HSE's Spending Review settlement for 2011-2015 represents a significant reduction in their government grant. One implication of this reduction is that there will be less money available to procure data via surveys or other methods. Hence, some of their National Statistics will need to change. HSE is seeking the views of users both inside and outside government to determine what the priorities should be for their statistics over the next five years.</p>	11 April 2011
<p>National statistics, published by the Department of Health re the experience of black and minority ethnic patients: a consultation</p> <p>Producer: Dept of Health</p> <p>Date Notified to National Statistician: 24 February 2011</p>	<p>The Department of Health has launched a consultation, as required under the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, to seek feedback on a proposal to stop producing a report on the self-reported experience of patients from black and minority ethnic groups. The collection and publication of the data is unaffected</p>	18 February 2011
<p>Streamlining of Annual Business Survey (ABS) Questionnaire</p> <p>Producer: ONS</p> <p>Date Notified to National Statistician: 24 February 2011</p>	<p>ONS plan to remove a number of redundant questions from the Annual Business Survey. This is in order to improve the quality, along with the accuracy and efficacy of the survey.</p> <p>Prior to any decisions and implementation of any changes we are seeking feedback from our users and stakeholders to determine the exact questions to be removed.</p>	28 February 2011
<p>Review of Conception Statistics</p> <p>Producer: ONS</p> <p>Date Notified to National Statistician: 24 February 2011</p>	<p>ONS is proposing to reduce the cost of producing conception statistics by publishing figures once a year (around February), rather than twice a year as at present. At the same time, ONS is reviewing the outputs to ensure they are coherent and continue to meet user requirements.</p>	19 April 2011
<p>The future of the General Lifestyle</p>	<p>This consultation document outlines the intention to change the way the General Lifestyle Survey data are</p>	6 May 2011

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<p>Survey</p> <p>Producer: ONS</p> <p>Date Notified to National Statistician: 24 February 2011</p>	<p>collected, seeks to identify the current uses of the survey data, any implications of stopping the survey, and options for alternative information sources.</p>	
<p>EUSILC integration into the Family Resources Survey</p> <p>Producer: ONS</p> <p>Date notified to National Statistician: 24 February 2011</p>	<p>This note sets out the intention by the ONS to transfer the data collection approach required for Eurostat's Survey of Income and Living Conditions (EUSILC), from the General Lifestyle Survey (GLF) to the Family Resources Survey (FRS). EUSILC questions to first time respondents will be asked within the FRS, with repeated waves of EUSILC questions (covering the longitudinal element of the EUSILC requirement) asked as an ONS stand-alone telephone survey.</p>	<p>6 May 2011</p>
<p>Consultation on changes to immigration-related Home Office statistical outputs</p> <p>Producer: Home Office</p> <p>Date notified to National Statistician: 24 February 2011</p>	<p>Home Office Statisticians are proposing a phased development of changes that would ultimately lead to the release of data using the web as the main vehicle of dissemination. It relates to these outputs - Control of Immigration: United Kingdom Statistics (annual publication), Control of Immigration: (Quarterly Statistical Summary) and British Citizenship Statistics (annual publication).</p> <p>It is proposed that in a phased development between August 2011 and February 2012:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) commentary and analysis of the data should be structured in virtual topics, be shorter and focus on key points, but provide longer term trends; ii) the annual and quarterly Control of Immigration publications, together with the British Citizenship Statistics, are combined to avoid duplication; iii) tables are presented in such a way that makes them more accessible to users, in particular listing within tables all annual data, followed by quarterly data (a draft example of this layout is available in Table 1.2 of Control of Immigration: Quarterly Statistical Summary Q4 2010); and a standard and full country of nationality and continent list; iv) the number of tables released is reduced through a combination of amalgamation and a reduction in the variables reported on; and v) all data (except passenger arrivals) are provided unrounded. 	<p>4 May 2011</p>
<p>User Consultation - Education and Training Statistics for the United</p>	<p>As part of the Department's aim to make its statistics relevant and useful, a user consultation on the "Education and Training Statistics for the United Kingdom" is now being carried out. The Department is reviewing the</p>	<p>31 December 2010</p>

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<p>Kingdom</p> <p>Producer: Department for Education</p> <p>Date Notified to National Statistician: 24 February 2011</p>	<p>relevance and usefulness of this statistical publication.</p> <p>Education and Training Statistics for the United Kingdom provides statistics relating to education and training in the UK and includes chapters relating to schools, post-compulsory education and training and qualifications and destinations, with annexes containing figures on education expenditure and UK population numbers</p>	
<p>Consultation on the proposed changes to the publication of monthly coal statistics</p> <p>Producer: Department of Energy and Climate Change</p> <p>Date Notified to National Statistician: 24 February 2011</p>	<p>The Department of Energy and Climate Change currently collects and publishes monthly data on coal production, consumption and stocks in the UK. This consultation asked for views on our proposal to make changes to the frequency of data collection, methodology used to produce coal statistics and the dissemination of these statistics.</p>	<p>14 January 2011</p>
<p>Title: Demography Statistical Work Programme</p> <p>Producer: General Registrar Office Scotland (GROS)</p> <p>Date notified to National Statistician: 9 December 2010</p>	<p>The General Register Office for Scotland (GROS) is seeking views to help determine the shape of its future Demography statistical work programme. The budget reductions announced as part of the Scottish Spending Review on 17 November 2010 mean that GROS has to consider where savings can be found. It is critically important that our statistical outputs reflect our users' priorities.</p> <p>GROS is asking users to let them know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What GROS demography statistical outputs are used and how. • The impact of possible reductions in various areas of GROS demography statistical work. 	<p>9 February 2011</p>
<p>Title: Reductions of annual returns data collected from Fire and Rescue Services and of Fires of Special Interest reporting</p> <p>Producer: DCLG</p> <p>Date notified to National Statistician: 30 November 2010</p>	<p>CLG is seeking views on proposals to reduce non-financial annual data returns from Fire and Rescue Services in England and to terminate the majority of data collected on 'Fires of Special Interest' forms.</p> <p>The annual data returns relate to fire safety, health and safety, personnel and equality, and diversity.</p> <p>CLG have stated the changes envisaged are driven mainly by a desire to rationalise their data collections, and to reduce the burden imposed on data providers in the Fire and Rescue Services.</p>	<p>14 January 2011</p>

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<p>Title: Consultation on DASA's annual manpower national statistics publications</p> <p>Producer: Ministry of Defence - Defence Analytical Services and Advice (DASA)</p> <p>Date notified to National Statistician: 30 November 2010</p>	<p>DASA plans to change the presentation of statistics on UK Armed Forces manpower currently published as National Statistics in its annual Tri-Service Publications (TSPs).</p> <p>The three National Statistics publications proposed for consolidation are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TSP 8: Age distribution of UK Regular Forces • TSP 9: UK Regular Forces Rank Structure • TSP 19: UK Regular Forces Intake and Outflow by Age <p>last published on the 10 June 2010. DASA proposes to replace these with a single annual publication analysing the same aspects of Service manpower (age and rank) but containing more commentary, with fewer detailed tables.</p> <p>Users' views are sought on what they would like to be included in the new consolidated publication.</p>	<p>27 February 2011</p>
<p>Title: Future of Agricultural Statistics</p> <p>Producer: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)</p> <p>Date notified to National Statistician: 25 November 2010</p>	<p>DEFRA completed a consultation exercise in July 2010, writing to a number of key external stakeholders to gather views regarding the future of their Agricultural Statistics.</p> <p>DEFRA have reported that this was extremely positive and provided useful avenues to pursue. The results of the consultation are being written up and will provide a focus for internal user consultation . A smaller group of key users is in the process of being set up.</p>	<p>July 2010</p>
<p>Title: Education and Lifelong Learning Statistics</p> <p>Producer: WAG</p> <p>Date notified to National Statistician: 18 November 2010</p>	<p>WAG is looking for views in general on their current suite of around 40 outputs but also in response to some specific issues it has raised.</p> <p>WAG states that the purpose of this consultation is to seek feedback on the usefulness and usability of what it currently produces, how it can be improved, any gaps in what it provides and an indication of the relative priority attached to a particular analysis.</p> <p>Given the breadth of data covered by the Education and Lifelong Learning Statistics Unit, the consultation document has separate sections for schools, further education, higher education and a number of cross cutting areas.</p> <p>There are two separate response forms, according to whether you are a user of schools or post-16 education statistics.</p>	<p>30 November 2010</p>

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<p>Title: Statistical Directorate Annual Compendia Publications</p> <p>Producer: WAG</p> <p>Date notified to National Statistician: 18 November 2010</p>	<p>WAG's Statistical Directorate is seeking views from customers on the proposal to cease printing of hardcopy statistical publications. WAG states that the same information will still be available on their web site but will only be published electronically rather than professionally printed.</p> <p>The advantages of this approach are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data will be timelier. WAG anticipates being able to publish information on the web earlier than is currently possible due to the need to prepare and print hard copies. • The resources saved will be diverted into enhancing the range of information available on the interactive StatsWales data analysis tool, and hopefully finding innovative ways of making this information available. This will allow users to access a wider range of official statistics in a more flexible and user friendly way. <p>It will help reduce WAG's carbon footprint and impact on the environment and be saving on resources needed to produce and distribute paper editions.</p>	<p>31 December 2010</p>
<p>Title: Improvements to Ministry of Justice statistics</p> <p>Producer: Ministry of Justice (MoJ)</p> <p>Date notified to National Statistician: 17 November 2010</p>	<p>The consultation seeks views on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the definitions of statistics - making the statistics consistent across MoJ publications and clarifying the definition of certain important measurements. • introducing a quarterly criminal justice statistics bulletin which would give an overview of trends in crime, out of court disposals, prosecutions, convictions and sentencing. • moving to a single measure of re-offending which would get rid of the six different ways it is currently measured. This includes consolidating five separate publications on re-offending into a single publication. <p>These proposals represent significant improvements by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • making a wider range of data available routinely through MoJ's statistical publications; • presenting a coherent overview of criminal justice statistics to help understanding and ease of comparison; • simplifying access to information in line with the Code of Practice. <p>The consultation is a response to a number of separate reports including the UK Statistics Authority Assessment of Criminal Justice Studies, the Stern Review of Rape Reporting and UK Statistics Authority's Barrier to Trust in Crime Statistics as well as MoJ's own internal review of</p>	<p>18 February 2011</p>

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	criminal justice publications.	
<p>Title: Work Programme Consultation</p> <p>Producer: ONS</p> <p>Date notified to National Statistician: 25 October 2010</p>	<p>ONS is seeking views to help determine the shape of its future statistical work programme. The budget reductions announced as part of the 2010 Spending Review mean that ONS has to consider where savings can be found. ONS considers it is critically important that statistical outputs reflect users' priorities. User feedback can also help ONS strive to become a more efficient and effective organisation.</p> <p>The consultation document outlines ONS' approach to reducing its budget, including the core principles which determine this approach, and asks stakeholders to let ONS know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what ONS outputs they use and how they use them • the impact on them of possible reductions in various areas of ONS work. <p>Responses will be used to inform ONS' work programme for the next four years.</p>	<p>24 December 2010</p>
<p>Title: The Future of the Citizenship Survey</p> <p>Producer: DCLG</p> <p>Date notified to National Statistician: 20 October 2010</p>	<p>The Citizenship Survey is a face to face household survey carried out by the Department for Communities and Local Government covering a representative core sample of almost 10,000 adults in England and Wales each year, plus a minority ethnic boost sample of 5,000 and a Muslim boost sample of 1,200.</p> <p>This statistical consultation sets out the intention to cancel the future Citizenship Survey, and in doing so, seeks to identify the uses of the Survey data, the implications of stopping and options for alternative information sources.</p>	<p>30 November 2010</p>

Annex C Specific reductions to ONS statistical outputs and services**1) Statistical compendia and journals**

During the Spending Review 2010 period, ONS will make a step-change in their wider public reporting by replacing the suite of compendia and journals with a web-based approach that will realise benefits from the new website. ONS will replace the existing compendia with business area reporting that is published directly to the theme pages of the website, alongside a coordinated programme of cross-cutting analysis brought together to give a picture of the UK in one place. ONS will produce more timely cross-cutting articles that better reflect the issues of the day, using shorter and nested articles. All this is made possible by exploiting the capabilities of the new website, including more dynamic web tools, as well as providing datasets and an 'Application Programming Interface'. Some of the more specific changes as a result of this initiative are below.

ONS output	Saving (£)	User response to consultation	Specific proposal
Annual Abstract/ Monthly Digest	400,000	Very few stakeholders said that there would be a high impact on them if these publications were withdrawn.	The compendia will be stopped, with statistics accessible on the new web site where needed.
Quarterly Consumer Trends and Monthly Financial Statistics		Again, very few stakeholders said that these would have a high impact on them if they were withdrawn. Key stakeholders including HM Treasury are interested in the data rather than the publications.	Consumer Trends data sets will be made available on the web only - once work done to set up 'data sets' to access National Accounts. Implementation probably 2012. There will also be a similar approach on Financial Statistics.
Monthly Economic and Labour Market Review (ELMR)		Responses show that different stakeholders are interested in different articles and no stakeholder said they were interested in the full publication	ELMR will no longer be published as a journal, but articles will appear in different formats on the economics or labour market pages of the website. Change to be made in 2011.
Reporting on Population Change Analysis and reporting of population statistics		A number of stakeholders who used population statistics also used the analysis. Population Trends is less well used but the House of Commons Library mentioned they used it as did some academics for teaching purposes	Analysis and reporting on the population will be less extensive and provided less frequently. Articles will be produced that are better suited to being disseminated via the web. They will be disseminated via the population theme page on the new website, rather than through a separate journal; Population Trends will cease to exist as a separate entity. The experimental production of quarterly population estimates will be stopped as it has not been widely supported by users.

2) Refocus the ONS analysis programme

ONS has looked closely at its analysis programme to find savings in areas which are of lower priority to users, and do not fit as well with their future strategy. This will enable ONS to make savings and focus their analysis programme on new priority areas.

ONS output	Saving (£)	User response to consultation	Specific proposal
Public Service Productivity, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Total Public Service Productivity article • Annual Education and Health productivity articles • Developing methodology to improve estimates of public service productivity 	222,000	While there were a number of stakeholders who said that this would have a high impact on them, the responses suggested the scale of the work could be cut back.	<p>Statistical series for public service output would continue as an input into the National Accounts.</p> <p>The work on developing methodology would be stopped, after completion of some current priorities including work with Eurostat to promote best practice.</p> <p>The budget for the Annual Total Public Service Productivity Article and Annual Education and Health Productivity Articles would be reduced progressively to around half. This would be achieved through reviewing the scope of the articles and seeking more efficient production methods.</p>
Published Analysis of the Labour Market	30,000	Local government were the main stakeholders to respond that this would have a high impact if wholly withdrawn, as the national context helps them understand their local areas. The Labour Market Theme Group endorse the proposal to cut back in this area and think ONS could afford to do less analysis than in the past.	Labour Market analysis in future will focus mainly on quality assurance of existing methods, supporting the monthly release (on emerging stories), and methodological developments (impact of welfare reform and changes in state pension age), with fewer/shorter 'news' stories. The saving shown is low because a number of posts have already been moved, in anticipation of this decision.

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Ad hoc analysis of European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EUSILC)	8,000	No high impact central government responses. Six out of the nine responses were from education stakeholders where the analysis is used for research purposes.	This activity will be stopped, although savings will be small.
Regional Reporting and Analysis: Various outputs including Regional Trend and Regional economic analysis	480,000	Several government departments and a number of local authority stakeholders said that if the regional statistics were to be withdrawn then it would have a high impact on their work - Gross Value Added (GVA) was mentioned in a number of cases. Local authorities want data to support their Local Enterprise Partnerships. Very few stakeholders mentioned that they use Regional Trends, one of the few being the House of Commons Library.	There will be a significant reduction in our levels of regional reporting, focusing in future on the production and dissemination of basic regional/local level tables and local profiles. Regional Trends will be stopped after 2011/12. Reporting on the new Local Enterprise Partnerships will focus on providing basic data through our existing local profiles and/or via the Neighbourhood Statistics Service; any further reporting or analysis will need to be income funded. Regional Accounts and regional Gross Value Added will be maintained, as required by European Law, but there will be a significant reduction in the amount of other regional/area-based analysis, while maintaining some of the more important economic analyses. Articles will be produced that are better suited to being disseminated via the web.

3) Concentration on the core business of ONS

The core business of ONS is economic and business statistics, labour market statistics and demographic statistics. ONS will make savings in areas that fall outside of this core, where others may be well placed to provide the statistics and analysis that users need.

ONS output	Saving (£)	User response to consultation	Specific proposal
Analysis of specific health conditions	200,000	The Department of Health said that they need estimates of healthy and disability free life expectancy for the new Public Health Outcomes and the Department for Work and Pensions use these estimates for policy developments. The local government stakeholders report that some local authorities use teenage pregnancy as one of their key performance indicators. Local authorities are concerned that their new public health responsibilities will increase their demand for this type of statistics.	There will be a substantial reduction in health analysis over the four year period, both in terms of what is produced and how frequently. Our work programme will be refocused towards reporting on mortality, data required to meet EU regulations and in those areas such as cancer analysis and health inequalities that are income funded. Healthy and disability free life expectancy analysis will continue. Health analysis will be reduced, as it generally doesn't fit as well as other areas with the ONS economic/demographic core. Some analytical work will be produced less frequently, such as on teenage pregnancies, unless income funded. Articles will be produced that are better suited to being disseminated via the web. They will be disseminated via the health theme page on the new website, rather than through a separate journal; Health Statistics Quarterly will be stopped after 2011/12.
UK Level Health Statistics and Reporting	100,000	The Department of Health are concerned that we continue to meet our legal requirements. Other stakeholders expressed concern in the consultation that if data were not available it would have a high impact on them.	The current UK Health Statistics publication will be stopped after 2011/12. Some UK level reporting on health will be continued to meet the requirements of international bodies, including Eurostat, and Parliament, as well as other users. This will include the production of relevant tables and perhaps an occasional UK-wide article or statistical bulletin, but users may no longer get as comprehensive a picture of health in the UK
Development work on the Knowledge Economy	89,000	Some of our key stakeholders recognise the importance of this work in particular HM Treasury and the Department of Business Innovation and Skills. However this is not key to our core work.	ONS will publish fewer ad hoc analyses in this area. A number of projects have recently completed. Some costs will be offset by income now contracted by European funding in 2011/12 and 2012/13.

4) Statistical services and support

ONS is involved in a number of statistical services and support activities. ONS will find savings in the areas identified below while maintaining the service provided to users.

ONS output	Saving (£)	User response to consultation	Specific proposal
Ongoing support to the Cross Government Longitudinal Data Strategy	77,000	Although only a few stakeholders said that if this work was withdrawn it would have a high impact on them, they included a number of key stakeholders including HM Treasury, the Department of Work and Pensions and Department for Business Innovation and Skills.	Overall significant savings across government would stem from this work. We would expect that the work to achieve such savings would be largely completed in the early years of the Spending Review 2010 settlement period. After this point the ONS support costs could be reduced.
Ongoing Virtual Microdata Laboratory (VML) Micro-Analysis and User Support	208,000	The VML is clearly important to users, mainly in the academic world but also to some government departments including the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. The Bank of England have also made recent use of it in a project on price setting	Access to micro-data will be maintained but savings will be found. Once the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) has set up the Secure Data Service (SDS), and decisions have been made within ONS to move business microdata onto the SDS, some ONS costs will reduce (possibly by 2012). The VML will continue to provide a reduced service focussed on government users. Some VML costs are already covered by user charges and further work is needed to assess whether charges should increase to cover residual costs.

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

COMMITTEE FOR OFFICIAL STATISTICS

SA(COS)(11)07

Authority response to cuts to official statistics

Purpose

1. To update the Committee for Official Statistics (COS) on action taken by the Statistics Authority in response to proposed cuts to official statistics.

Recommendations

2. Members of the Committee are invited to note the progress made with Statistical Expenditure Reports (SERs) and other actions outlined below.

Discussion

3. The Authority Board considered further drafts of the first three SERs and a Statement about the Authority's intention to monitor and respond to cuts in official statistics at its meeting on 25 March 2011 [SA(11)18]. The SERs relate to the Citizenship Survey, the Place Survey and Scottish Schools Statistics. These are currently being finalised for publication.
4. On 21 March the NSO was informed that the NHS Information Centre (NHS IC) had decided that its contribution to the costs of the General Lifestyle Survey, conducted by ONS on behalf of several government departments, would cease with immediate effect, subject to approval by the Department of Health. This information was passed to the UK Statistics Authority Secretariat under the agreed arrangements.
5. On 23 March the Chair of the Statistics Authority wrote to the Secretary of State for Health to urge him to reject these proposals. A copy of the letter is at **Annex A**. At time of writing a response is awaited.

Richard Alldritt, Head of Assessment, April 2011

List of Annexes

Annex A Letter from the Chair to the Secretary of State for Health

Annex A Letter from the Chair to the Secretary of State for Health

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

To see this Document go to:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/reports---correspondence/correspondence/letter-from-sir-michael-scholar-to-rt-hon-andrew-lansley---23032011.pdf>

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(COS)(11)08

National Statistician’s Review of Housing Market Statistics

This document will be published on the National Statistician’s website in due course.

The National Statistician’s website is available at:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/national-statistician/index.html>

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

COMMITTEE FOR OFFICIAL STATISTICS

SA(COS)(11)09

***Housing Statistics Network response to the National Statistician's
Review of House Price and Wider Housing Market Indicators***

Purpose

1. To provide a summarised response of housing statistics users to the National Statistician's review of house price indices and wider housing market indicators.

Recommendations

2. Members of the Committee for Official Statistics are invited to note the views of housing statistics users. A brief response from the Committee which could be reported back to housing statistics users would be valued. Responses to paragraphs 5vi and 5vii would be of particular interest.

Discussion

Background

3. The Housing Statistics Network (HSN) was inaugurated in February 2010 with the aim of giving housing statistics users a forum for discussion of housing statistics issues, pressing for improvement in the quality and availability of housing statistics and assisting dialogue between users and producers. The HSN is affiliated to the Royal Statistical Society's Statistics Users Forum, has a large Steering Group representing a wide range of users and providers of housing statistics and a current contact list of over 350. The Constitution, Steering Group minutes and membership and documentation of seminars are on the HSN Website.

Comment on the Consultation Process

4. Broadly, the HSN feels that the consultation process was exemplary. The National Statistician's Office (NSO) involved the HSN at an early stage in the design of the consultation process, made best use of the HSN's knowledge and contacts and, through a staged process gave statistics users plenty of opportunity to comment. The process culminated in a well attended seminar organised by the HSN in close liaison with the NSO. This is in stark contrast with many of the consultations that the HSN has been involved with which often seem tokenistic.

Comment on the Review of House Price Statistics [Phase One]

5. The HSN welcomes the National Statistician's Review of House Price Statistics and:
 - i. Applauds the recommendation that: '**A single definitive house price index and accompanying statistics should be produced by the official statistics producer community.**'
 - ii. Supports all of the nine index standards specified but recognises that while all are highly desirable the full standard is ambitious and a staged approach to achieving it may be necessary to prevent stasis.
 - iii. Stresses the importance of local, i.e. local authority and lower level, statistics. The national institutions are concerned almost exclusively with national level statistics yet the vast majority of users of house price statistics want information that relates specifically to local areas. The Middle Super Output Area level house price statistics which the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) publishes as Neighbourhood Statistics already provide this. These should be recognised as

National Statistics incorporated in the Review and harmonised with the definitive index.

- iv. Considers that in developing a definitive index the priority should be to make best use of the Land Registry transaction based data, which are the most complete and consistent source, and seek to enhance the property attribute data by linking with data from other administrative data which already exist, most notably the Valuation Office Agency.
- v. Supports the recommendation that: '**a regular official statistics report should be developed presenting and analysing official house price measures and their relationship to other non-official sources and wider housing market indicators.**'
- vi. Calls on the National Statistician and the Government Statistical Service (GSS) to ensure that the recommendations are formally adopted as policy, that responsibility for delivering them is clearly allocated, that the development process is transparent and that users are appropriately engaged with it.
- vii. Calls on the National Statistician and GSS to take a lead, so far as is possible, in harmonising the various house price methodologies. An important element of this would be the establishment and promotion of National Data Standards.

Comments on the Review of Wider Housing Market Indicators [Phase Two]

6. The HSN input to the review of wider housing market indicators is based on the workshops and discussions at the seminar on 7 March 2010. A very wide range of suggestions were made and the HSN has not yet opened these up to wider comment. The following points are therefore draft and no attempt has been made to prioritise them.
 - i. **Private Rented Sector.** This should be recognised as a major element of the Housing Market and something done as a matter of urgency about the current paucity of statistics on it; in particular production of statistics on rent levels, perhaps an index, and transactions. The Tenancy Deposit Scheme data should be released and as soon as possible should be amended to capture rents. Better use should also be made of Valuation Office Agency (VOA) administrative data which are currently under review as part of the changed government policy on housing benefit. Rental yield statistics should be produced; these would provide a particularly useful direct insight to the rental market.
 - ii. **Planning and Land.** More statistics on planning permissions are urged, covering applications, new approvals, consumption of approvals and the outstanding balance. Land supply was not specifically mentioned but should perhaps be looked at in conjunction with this. There was a strong call for better, more accessible land price statistics.
 - iii. **Construction.** The long running disparity between starts and completions statistics needs to be resolved. These are important basic indicators but the continuing incongruence between them undermines confidence in their accuracy.
 - iv. **Financial Statistics.** These were seen as very important, obviously, and already largely sufficient although there are concerns about the availability and sometimes cost of acquiring the statistics that are available. Mortgage availability, loan approvals, loan to value ratio, price to incomes ratio, buy to let, repossession and equity release were all mentioned as important/desirable indicators.

- v. **Vacant Dwellings.** Vacancy levels and rates specific to tenure were considered to be important. Note that DCLG recently discontinued collection of private sector vacancy data and that the council tax based vacancy data published as Neighbourhood Statistics suffer from incompleteness and late delivery. Statistics on vacancy by size and type would be useful but do not currently exist. There is also interest in new statistics on some of the components/drivers of vacancy such as death or divorce of owner/occupier.
- vi. **Transactions and Flows.** Users would like statistics which help understanding of the internal churning of the market. Estimates of flows between sectors are produced by local authorities but are not always complete or reliable. The relationship between owner occupation and renting is seen as important, and largely unknown, but there is also flow and a relationship between the private sectors and social housing. Statistics on transactions by **size and type** of dwelling are an important part of this and there is potentially a tie up between producing these and the Definitive House Price Index as the same source data could be used. In relation to both transactions and price statistics there should be a move towards using floor space as the measure of size.
- vii. **Market Failure.** Most of the comment relates to the mechanisms of the market but a key area is statistics which reflect the results of the operation of the market; particularly its failure. Homeless and homeless prevention are seen as valuable and good quality statistics currently available but there is also a requirement for statistics on overcrowding and sharing. Council waiting lists are a potential but underused source for some of these kinds of statistics.
- viii. **Localism, localism, localism.** As with house price indices there is a strong demand from many users of statistics for many of the above to be readily available at a local level, i.e. local authority or often preferably a lower level. This demand has always been there but is now powerfully reinforced by the new government emphasis on localism. It is ironic that there was a similar fresh emphasis on localism fourteen years ago which led to the Neighbourhood Statistics Service which seems to have become largely marginalised.
- ix. **Disaggregation.** A further crosscutting point is the general requirement for disaggregation of statistics particularly by size and type of dwelling. This applies equally to prices, rents, vacancies, transactions, starts and completions. In this context there is strong support for a move to floor space as the standard measure of size.

Mick Johnston, Housing Statistics Network, March 2011

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(COS)(11)10

GSS Overarching Strategy

This document will be published on the National Statistician's website in due course.

The National Statistician's website is available at:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/national-statistician/index.html>

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

COMMITTEE FOR OFFICIAL STATISTICS

SA(COS)(11)11

Proposed review of UK statistical releases and publications

Purpose

1. At its February 2011 meeting, the Committee for Official Statistics considered a paper [SA(COS)(11)03] about 'Progress on improving statistical commentary' which outlined the work of the Government Statistical Service (GSS) Presentation and Dissemination Task Force. This identified the need for further development of statistical releases and publications across the statistical service.
2. This paper proposes that the Monitoring and Assessment team should establish a project to produce a full-scale Monitoring Report looking at UK official statistics releases and other statistical publications in the round. This review would be overseen by a formal project board chaired by a non-executive member of the Board.
3. This proposal can be accommodated without any significant consequential changes to plans for Monitoring and Assessment work in 2011-12, as discussed by the Authority Board at its last meeting. The most likely impact would be to reduce marginally the resources committed to Assessment Reports and to push back a little some of the other planned Monitoring Briefs.
4. As well as looking at a sample of releases and publications as described below, the review would consider wider questions including:
 - i. the overall structure of the portfolio of GSS outputs;
 - ii. the scope to further adapt the outputs to better exploit the internet as the primary means of dissemination;
 - iii. the case for continuing with paper publication formats; the growing role of external websites and non-government bodies in adding comment to official data;
 - iv. the implications for existing statistical releases and publications of government policies such as data.gov; and
 - v. the possible need to amend the existing expectations as set out in the Code and elsewhere.
5. However, the central focus would be on what the GSS should do in terms of extracting messages from the figures (commentary) and communicating those clearly to those people and organisations whose decisions and actions may be beneficially influenced by them.

Timing

6. There are no major timing constraints but a project starting in April 2011 and finishing by March 2012 would lay the ground for informing decisions about the Authority's focus and priorities from April 2012. To meet that timetable, we would envisage a draft report being available to interested parties from January 2012 and there being a public meeting, probably at the Royal Statistical Society, in February 2012.

Recommendation

7. The Committee is invited to endorse the proposed review. The Committee is also invited to nominate a non-executive member of the Board to chair the project board. Subject to those matters, the proposal will then be submitted to the Authority Board for agreement.

Discussion

8. Statistical Releases and publications are the shop window of official statistics. Whilst there are several other forms of 'output' from the GSS – including websites, databases, and direct policy advice – statistical releases contain the key messages and advice based on the latest statistics.
9. Most Assessment Reports produced so far mention the need to improve the commentary in statistical releases. The Code expects producers to 'provide information on the quality and reliability of statistics in relation to the range of potential uses..', and include 'factual information about the policy or operational context of official statistics'. Whilst the Code is not explicit that these things should be done in (or linked to) every Release, we tend to interpret the Code in that way as there is clearly value in identifying the main uses of the statistics and relating the commentary to those uses and to contextual information. It is only through supporting use in the real world of decision-making and action that official statistics can deliver their potential value. Better statistical commentary is at the heart of developing both the beneficial impact of, and public confidence in, the statistical service.
10. In October 2010, the Authority issued a statement summarising in general terms what it expects to see in statistical releases (see **Annex A**). As yet, only a small proportion of statistical releases and publications reach that standard. The reasons for this seem to be quite complex. We do not think that government statisticians reject the arguments that underlie the Authority's position, it is more a matter of uncertainty as to the detail of the changes that need to be made to existing releases and concern that changes of this kind might be seen negatively by government departments or Ministers.
11. It has also become evident in the course of Assessment work that departments differ considerably in their use of the 'Statistical First Release' format that was introduced in the early 1990's. At that time, the First Release was seen as a unifying format (a GSS house style) in which to announce to the outside world the availability of new official statistics and to summarise the main points for users in a standard and objective voice. The intention was to move away from terms such as 'statistical press notice' where the emphasis was on the news media and move to a system of quite highly standardised all-purpose announcements that would be instantly distinguishable from departmental press statements.
12. The introduction of the National Statistics Publication Hub has made statistical releases more accessible, but it has also highlighted the differences in practice that exist. There are now a multitude of formats being used, some of them barely distinguishable from departmental press releases. Often the same press office staff handle both the statistical release and the Ministerial statement that accompanies it. The distinctiveness of the appearance of GSS Releases has been eroded and the 'online only' policies of government have further blurred the distinction between statistical and non-statistical outputs. There have been cases of departmental policy documents which look to the casual online reader very much like a statistical release but which are quite selective and political.

13. As well as addressing the broad questions outlined at paragraphs 4 and 5 above, the proposed review would look at quite a large sample of statistical releases and publications, addressing the following types of issues:

- The format and content of different releases; why some statistical subjects are covered by regular releases whilst others are not; the quality of commentary and the amount of contextual information, such as the existence of related targets or recent policy initiatives; compliance with the Code and statement on standards for statistical releases.
- The identification of good and bad practices, and options for a common look and feel to all statistical releases, and common rules for their production and labelling. In this context the review would build on the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe's 'Making Data Meaningful' guides¹.
- Whether the position that the Authority has taken so far on these matters may need to be modified in some respects, taking account also of international practice and expectations. It might for example recommend changes to the Code of Practice or to the statement on Standards for Statistical Releases, or the promulgation of further guidance.

14. Such a review would need to involve leading users and producers of official statistics both on the project board and via a consultation on a draft report. The aim would be to build consensus on, and understanding of, the way forward without losing the momentum achieved so far.

Monitoring and Assessment team, April 2011

List of Annexes

Annex A Authority Statement: Standards for Statistical Releases

¹ These guides are intended as a practical tool to help managers, statisticians and media relations officers in statistical organizations use text, tables, charts, maps and other devices to bring statistics to life for non-statisticians. See: www.unece.org/stats/documents/writing

Annex A Authority Statement: Standards for Statistical Releases

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

To see this statement go to:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/news/standards-for-statistical-releases.html>

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

COMMITTEE FOR OFFICIAL STATISTICS

SA(COS)(11)12

Progress with a National Address Register

Purpose

1. This paper provides an update on a national address register since the Committee discussed the issue in July 2010 [SA(COS)(10)16].

Recommendations

2. The Committee is invited to note and comment on the progress outlined below.

Discussion

3. On 2 December 2010 the Department for Communities and Local Government announced to Parliament the launch of a 'National Address Gazetteer database' (NAG) providing one definitive source of accurate spatial address data for England and Wales. The cost will be centrally funded and the NAG will therefore be free at the point of use for the entire public sector as part of the Public Sector Mapping Agreement. It will also be sold to the private sector.
4. This is an immensely positive step for both the public and private sectors, with some key benefits for statistics. It provides scope for large efficiencies in the delivery of services to the public. It is the end of a very long running campaign, with previous attempts foundering on the rocks of intellectual property rights and the vested interests of the parties involved. This time:
 - i. ministers of the previous and current governments have strongly signalled their backing for a solution;
 - ii. many powerful lobby groups made their views known, led by Sir Michael Scholar who initiated a flurry of correspondence in 2009;
 - iii. leaders of the key parties were willing to put their institution's interests to one side and act strategically;
 - iv. the quality of the existing address products had improved significantly, making the job of bringing them together easier; and
 - v. work done by ONS for Census 2011 proved that the products could be combined and reconciled and also persuaded the key parties to work together.
5. These factors have combined to produce a successful outcome to the negotiations.
6. On timing it seems likely to be the last quarter of 2011 before the NAG is available for use following development work and user comment. The Office of Fair Trading approved the arrangement on 15 February and formally the new consortium GeoPlace starts work on 1 April.
7. ONS has been talking to the members of GeoPlace to develop the NAG, and is ready to offer some of our work and experience from the Census for their use – for example on algorithms for matching address registers. In practice the model which GeoPlace are using is a bit different to ours using the local authority network of address custodians to resolve queries. Two issues which need some more work are:
 - whether the initiative can be expanded to include Scotland, as well as England and Wales; and
 - the role of Royal Mail and the Postcode Address File within the new model.

8. The NAG will have benefits for statistics:

- i. it will be a key input to the Beyond 2011 project, which needs a high quality and up to date address register;
- ii. it could be used to provide a better finer definition sampling frame for household surveys; and
- iii. as the single definitive address gazetteer it will act as a national standard for consistent referencing of statistical source data enhancing the harmonisation of statistics.

Graham Jenkinson, Statistical Framework Division, ONS, April 2011