

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Committee for Official Statistics

Minutes

**Meeting of Wednesday 7 September 2011
Board Room, Drummond Gate, London**

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
Sir Michael Scholar

Other Attendees

Mr Richard Laux
Mr Andy Sutherland (for item 4)

Secretariat

Mr Rob Bumpstead
Mr Joe Cuddeford

Apologies

Professor David Rhind

Declarations of Interest

None

1 Apologies, Minutes and Matters Arising

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on 6 April 2011 were agreed as a correct record. Apologies were received from Professor Rhind.

2 Update on actions

Mr Bumpstead provided an oral update on actions. All actions were complete or were in hand.

3 Statistical Expenditure Update and Overview [SA(COS)(11)21], Cuts to Official Statistics [SA(COS)(11)22] and Statistical Expenditure Report 5: Scottish Population Surveys [SA(COS)(11)23]

3.1 Mr Bumpstead introduced a paper summarising developments in relation to expenditure for official statistics. The Committee agreed that the Monitoring and Assessment team should investigate developments relating to the following statistics:

- i. statistics on the progress of children from disadvantaged backgrounds into higher education, produced by the Department for Business Innovation and Skills;
- ii. statistics about people registered deaf or hard of hearing, about community care, and about the activity of social services, produced by the NHS Information Centre; and
- iii. statistics about immigration and citizenship produced by the Home Office.

3.2 It was agreed that a Statistical Expenditure Report (SER) could have value even if the conclusion was that the decision made was the right one, as was the case with SER 2 on the Place Survey. But it was important that SERs should make clear exactly what information would no longer be available.

Action Mr Alldritt to investigate three potential Statistical Expenditure Reports and report to the Authority Board in September

3.3 The Committee considered a letter from Andrew Lansley MP, which confirmed that the NHS Information Centre would withdraw its contribution to the General Lifestyle Survey, which includes statistics on smoking, drinking and health. The National Statistician had provided a separate submission to the Authority Chair with information about the consequences of the decision. It was agreed that the Authority Chair would respond to the letter from Andrew Lansley MP. The response should include the information from the National Statistician, and should be copied to the House of Commons Health Committee.

Action Secretariat to prepare a draft response from the Authority Chair to Andrew Lansley MP

3.4 The Committee noted that many consultations on proposals to reduce statistical expenditure had closed, and final decisions were pending. It was agreed that the Autumn would be a suitable time to take stock of the effects of reductions to statistical expenditure across the statistical system. This should include reference to the effects of reductions on staffing, but would be dependent on the National Statistician's Office receiving sufficient information on reductions to inputs and wider changes.

Action Secretariat to work with the National Statistician's Office and the Monitoring and Assessment team to develop an analysis of the system-wide effects of reductions to statistical expenditure

3.5 The Committee agreed that for the next update paper from the National Statistician's Office, information on specific cuts or consultations should be summarised at departmental level, with detailed information on specific cuts only included for new cuts.

Action National Statistician's Office to revise format of information on cuts and consultations

3.6 The Committee heard that the NHS was currently conducting a 'Fundamental Review of Data Returns' and that this was likely to have an impact on official statistics. It was agreed that an executive summary of the consultation should be circulated to the Committee.

Action Secretariat to circulate summary of the NHS review of data returns

3.7 The Committee agreed that the draft SER on Scottish Population Surveys should be redrafted to include additional information about the positive engagement that the Scottish Government has had with users of the statistics, and to include some contextual information concerning the public money saved.

Action Mr Laux to revise the SER on Scottish Population Surveys

4 GSS Task Force in Quality: Outcome and next steps [SA(COS)(11)24]

4.1 Mr Sutherland introduced a paper summarising the work done by the Government Statistical Service (GSS) Quality Task Force. The Task Force had produced guidance documents, a training course, and an updated quality tool for undertaking quality reviews. Funds from the Quality Improvement Fund had been secured to run a series of training events, and the outputs from the task force had been publicised at meetings and conferences.

4.2 The Committee commented that the quality framework was valuable to users. It was suggested that seeking feedback from users on the framework might help improve its value. It was further suggested that the concept of 'fitness for purpose' could be more explicitly connected to an understanding of the use of statistics.

4.3 The Committee thanked Mr Sutherland and commended the work of the Task Force.

5 Developments with the Government's 'Open Data' Policy [SA(COS)(11)25]

5.1 Mr Bumpstead introduced a paper about issues related to 'transparency' and 'open data'. The following points were made in the discussion.

- i. Maintaining a balance between transparency and non-disclosure in an environment where more data is available from a variety of sources had implications for the release of statistical microdata. It was important to get the balance right between utility and privacy.
- ii. Data provided by respondents to statistical surveys was protected by the Statistics Act, and the open data initiative did not propose to override that protection.
- iii. There was a potential conflict between the open data initiative and charging policies for official statistics. It was agreed that this issue should be part of a scheduled discussion of charging policies more generally at the October meeting of the Authority Board.
- iv. The Authority had, in the past, argued that underlying datasets should not be released before the headline statistics. However, in some cases, it may be necessary to have a more flexible approach – for example when statistics are derived from administrative sources.

- v. There was a distinction between unpublished data that did not feed in to any published statistics, and unpublished data that was part of a statistical process.
- vi. Casual users needed to be able to distinguish between raw, unchecked, data and data that had been quality assured. The National Statistics quality mark could be a useful mark of provenance.

5.2 It was agreed that the Authority should prepare a response to the open data consultation. This should be supportive of the initiative to make more data publically available, offer the Authority's assistance in doing do, but should draw attention to the risk of disclosure of personal information and the effect that disclosure could have on trust in statistics.

Action Mr Alldritt to prepare a draft Authority response to the open data consultation, to be presented to the September meeting of the Authority Board

6 Monitoring Review of Statistical Publications [SA(COS)(11)26]

- 6.1 Dr Bowe summarised progress with the Monitoring Review of Statistical Publications. A series of meetings had been held with Heads of Profession and a way forward had been developed on a number of fronts, including the development of stronger statistical policies and better products; developing topic knowledge and writing skills; working more with other analytical professions; and making better use of new technologies and social media.
- 6.2 The Committee endorsed the way forward proposed in the paper. It was agreed that the issue of resource should be addressed explicitly in the review. It was further agreed that commentary should be more cross cutting, but that it should not be less frequent.
- 6.3 It was agreed that COS would act as Project Board for the Monitoring Review.

7 The web dissemination strategy for official statistics [SA(COS)(11)27]

- 7.1 The Committee noted the publication of the web dissemination strategy and supported its recommendations. The meeting heard that the review had been endorsed by all departments with the exception of the Scottish Government, which did not endorse the recommendation for a single site through which users can gain access to all official statistics.
- 7.2 The Committee reaffirmed its support for a single website for the dissemination of statistics, i.e. the Publication Hub, separate from other government websites.

8 Update on GSS activities [SA(COS)(11)28]

- 8.1 The Committee discussed the proposals for extending the 'payment by results' approach. There were statistical implications associated with developing measures that were contractually robust. It was agreed that the issues should be investigated, and that this was a task that the Monitoring and Assessment team could usefully perform, rather than the GSS.

Action Monitoring and Assessment team to consider a Monitoring Brief on statistical issues raised by 'payment by results'

- 8.2 The Committee was interested in the development of an apprenticeship scheme in statistical skills for school leavers and non-technical members of the GSS.

8.3 The meeting noted that an open data event was planned at the Royal Statistical Society in the Autumn.

Action Secretariat to circulate details of the open data event

9 Progress with the National Statistician's review of housing market statistics

The Committee heard that there had been no further progress since the last meeting.

10 Any other business










There was no other business. The Committee would meet next on 4 November at 13:30 in London.

Committee for Official Statistics

Agenda

Wednesday, 7 September, 2011
Board Room, Statistics House, London, 13:30 - 16:00

Chair: Professor Sir Roger Jowell
Apologies: Professor David Rhind

1	Apologies, Minutes and Matters Arising	Meeting of 030611 	<i>Page 1</i>
2	Update on actions	Oral update Mr Rob Bumpstead	
3	Statistical Expenditure i. Update and overview ii. Cuts to official statistics iii. SER 5: Scottish Population Surveys	SA(COS)(11)21  Secretariat SA(COS)(11)22  Ms Jil Matheson SA(COS)(11)23  Mr Richard Laux	7 41 75
4	GSS Task Force in Quality: Outcome and next steps	SA(COS)(11)24  Mr Andy Sutherland	85
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7	The web dissemination strategy for official statistics	SA(COS)(11)27  Ms Jil Matheson	119
8	Update on GSS activities	SA(COS)(11)28  Ms Jil Matheson	163
9	Progress with the National Statistician's review of housing market statistics	Oral update Ms Jil Matheson	
	Any other business		

Next Meeting: Friday 4 November 2011,
Drummond Gate, London, 13:30 - 16:00

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

COMMITTEE FOR OFFICIAL STATISTICS

SA(COS)(11)21

***Statistical Expenditure:
Update and overview***

Purpose

1. This paper summarises action taken so far by the Authority in response to reductions in expenditure for official statistics, and provides an update on developments since the last meeting of the Committee for Official Statistics.

Recommendations

2. Members of the Committee for Official Statistics are invited to:
 - i. note the summary of the Authority's response to cuts to date;
 - ii. note and comment upon developments since the last meeting; and
 - iii. consider whether further action should be taken in response to these developments.

Discussion

Summary of Authority response to cuts

3. The Authority has a statutory objective to promote and safeguard the production and publication of official statistics that serve the public good. To fulfil this statutory role, the Authority proposed that it should have a clear role in the co-ordination of any changes to statistical services. The Government's position remains as outlined by the Minister for the Cabinet Office in July 2010: that it is for each department to decide on how they manage their budgets, in accordance with departmental priorities.
4. In the absence of a formal role, the Authority has developed arrangements for monitoring and reporting on reductions to official statistics. These arrangements were initially proposed at the September 2010 Authority Board [SA(10)54], and were further developed at subsequent meetings of the Committee for Official Statistics. They are designed to enable the Authority to determine whether proposals to cut statistical expenditure or have taken full account of the impact on users and uses of the statistics and been considered transparently and systematically by the organisation responsible.
5. The Authority has published the following documents in relation to statistical expenditure.
 - i. *Monitoring Brief: The inter-dependence of statistical work in government* (October 2010).
 - ii. Letter from the Authority Chair to the Secretary of State for Health (March 2011), regarding proposals to withdraw funding for statistics on smoking, drinking and health.
 - iii. *Authority Statement: Reductions in Government Statistical Functions* (April 2011).
 - iv. *Statistical Expenditure Report 1: The Citizenship Survey* (April 2011).
 - v. *Statistical Expenditure Report 2: The Place Survey* (May 2011).
 - vi. *Statistical Expenditure Report 3: Scottish School Statistics* (June 2011).
 - vii. *Statistical Expenditure Report 4: Statistics on smoking, drinking and health* (July 2011).
6. Each Statistical Expenditure Report (SER) was sent to the relevant Minister with a covering letter from the Authority Chair. Responses to each letter have now been received. The following responses were received since the Committee last met:

- i. Letter of 15 July indicating that Ministers in the Scottish Government had noted SER 3 without comment (**Annex A**).
 - ii. Letter of 1 August from the Secretary of State for Health (**Annex B**). The letter confirms that the NHS IC will cease its contribution to the General Lifestyle Survey, which includes questions on smoking, drinking and health, but leaves open the possibility of finding new ways to continue statistics on weekly alcohol consumption. The response raises some questions in relation to Office for National Statistics (ONS), which have been provided to ONS, and we await a response.
7. The Committee may wish to consider whether any further action should be taken in relation to these responses.
 8. The letter to the Secretary of State for Health regarding funding for statistics on smoking, drinking and health was also cited during parliamentary debate and cited in a British Medical Journal article.
 9. A further SER on changes to the Scottish Government's population surveys is on the agenda of this meeting [SA(COS)(11)23].

Further action on statistical expenditure

10. The regular, detailed update on plans and proposals by producers of official statistics for the cessation of certain statistics is provided in a separate paper by the National Statistician's Office (NSO) [SA(COS)(11)22]. At its last meeting in June, members of the Committee agreed that information about reductions to inputs – e.g. staff or other resources – and about changes affecting UK comparability or sample size should also be collected by the NSO. This information is not yet available. It is hoped that it will be available for the November meeting.
11. Much of the information in this month's update is not new, but the following developments are of note.
 - i. The Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) consulted on proposals to change its statistics that measure the progress of children from disadvantaged backgrounds to higher education. It proposed to replace the 'Full-time young participation by socio-economic class' (FYPSEC) measure with the free school meals (FSM) measure, due to concerns about the data quality of FYPSEC. The consultation closed on 1 August and the changed statistics were published on 10 August. The new statistical release, which summarises the consultation outcome, is at **Annex C**. FYPSEC is no longer published in the release.
 - ii. The NHS Information Centre (NHS IC) plans to discontinue statistics about people registered deaf or hard of hearing, statistics about community care and statistics about the activity of social services. An eight week consultation on these proposals closed on 8 August. A formal response has not yet been published, but the NHS IC has informed the NSO that it received 150 responses to the consultation, around 100 of which were from the local authorities that collect the data. Two thirds of the respondents supported the cessation.
 - iii. The Home Office consultation on changes to statistics on *Control of Immigration* and *British Citizenship* has concluded and the department has published a summary of responses and outcomes. The publications will be combined and three datasets will be discontinued. The consultation also asked users whether the commentary should be 'shorter and focus on key points, but also provide longer term trends'. Eleven of the fourteen responses were in favour of the proposal. One user commented that the current commentary was too long and repetitive, and welcomed more commentary on what the figures reveal rather than just a list of comparative figures.

- iv. The Welsh Government has recently consulted on proposals to reduce the frequency of *New House Building and Social Housing Sales* and *Homelessness* statistics from quarterly to annual, and to stop data collection for *Social Landlords Possessions and Evictions in Wales*. The consultation ended on 15 July.
 - v. A number of the consultations about proposals to discontinue statistics ended some time ago, but an update on whether the proposals have been implemented has not been received by the NSO from producers. These include statistics about health and safety; self reported experience of patients from black and minority ethnic groups; and the demography statistical work programme of the General Registrar Office Scotland.
12. The Committee may wish to consider whether further action is should be taken in relation to any of these developments.
13. Overall, the NSO has received responses from 17 departments. The Committee should be aware that information has not yet been provided from many other departments, including:
- i. the Department for Culture, Media and Sport;
 - ii. the Department for Transport;
 - iii. the Cabinet Office;
 - iv. the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency;
 - v. the Department for International Development; and
 - vi. HM Treasury.

Authority Secretariat, September 2011

List of Annexes

- Annex A** Letter from Mal Cooke to the Authority Chair regarding **Scottish Schools Statistics**
- Annex B** Letter from Andrew Lansley MP to the Authority Chair regarding **statistics on smoking, drinking and health**
- Annex C** Statistical release: ***Widening Participation in Higher Education***

Director-General Learning & Justice

Sir Michael Scholar
UK Statistics Authority
Office for National Statistics
1 Drummond Gate
LONDON
SW1V 2QQ

Your ref:
Our ref: 2011/1008294
July 2011

Sir Michael

The Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Employment and Sustainable Growth and the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning have noted your report, without comment.

Thank you.

Mal Cooke
Senior Statistician
Analytical Services Unit (Learning)
Scottish Government

Annex B Letter from Andrew Lansley MP to the Authority Chair regarding statistics on smoking, drinking and 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-rt-hon--andrew-lansley-mp-to-sir-michael-scholar---1-august-2011.pdf>

BIS | Department for Business
Innovation & Skills

**WIDENING PARTICIPATION IN
HIGHER EDUCATION**

Analysis of progression rates for
young people in England by free
school meal receipt and school
type

AUGUST 2011

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Introduction

This Official Statistics Release provides the latest information on the estimated number of 15 year olds in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM) who progress to Higher Education (HE) by age 19 by 2008/09. The information is presented at national and local authority level. Further data is also provided on the number of young people taking A levels or equivalent qualifications who progress to the most selective institutions by school type.

This release replaces the previous Widening Participation release "*Full-time Young Participation by Socio-Economic Class (FYPSEC):2010 update*" published in July 2010¹. In this release, receipt of FSM is used as the measure of disadvantage and replaces the previous measure based on socio-economic classification. The context for these changes is reflected in the Background.

The FSM and school type/selective institution measures are intended to contribute to the understanding of widening participation issues as part of a range of measures, which have different strengths and limitations. Annex D provides information on some of the other measures available. We aim to further develop the measures contained in this publication over time.

¹ http://stats.berr.gov.uk/he/FYPSEC_2010_final.pdf

Key Findings

Table 1 compares the progression of pupils with and without Free School Meals to Higher Education.

**Table 1: Estimated percentage of maintained school pupils aged 15 by Free School Meal status who entered HE by age 19
Academic Years 2005/06 to 2008/09**

UK Higher Education Institutions and English Further Education Colleges

	Estimated % who entered HE			
	FSM ^[1]	Non-FSM ^[1]	Gap (pp) ^[2]	All
2005/06	13%	33%	19	30%
2006/07	14%	33%	19	31%
2007/08	15%	33%	18	31%
2008/09	17%	35%	18	33%

pp = percentage points

[1] FSM and Non-FSM refer to whether pupils were receiving Free School Meals or not.

[2] Gap is the difference between FSM and non-FSM expressed in percentage points. Percentage figures are rounded; gap figures are calculated from un-rounded data and therefore may not correspond to the gap between rounded percentages.

The table shows that an estimated 13% of maintained school pupils who received Free School Meals (FSM) entered Higher Education in 2005/06. This rose steadily to an estimated 17% in 2008/09. The estimated progression rate for pupils not receiving Free School Meals also rose, but with a smaller increase, from 33% to 35%. The gap between FSM and Non-FSM rates is therefore estimated to have fallen slightly, to 18 percentage points.

Prior attainment is not accounted for in this measure. Many pupils will not continue their education; therefore may not hold the qualifications to progress to HE. See Annex A, in particular the caveats, for more details on this measure.

Table 2 breaks down the 2008/09 progression rates by Local Authority. In addition, an Excel table associated with this publication gives a time series of this information.

Table 2: Estimated percentage of maintained school pupils aged 15 in 2004/05 by Free School Meal status who entered HE in 2007/08 at age 18 or 2008/09 at age 19, by Local Authority
UK Higher Education Institutions and English further education colleges

Local Authority ^[1]	Estimated % entering HE				% of pupils with FSM ^[5]
	FSM ^[2]	Non-FSM ^[2]	Gap (pp) ^[3]	All	
Camden	34%	47%	13	43%	30%
Greenwich	20%	34%	13	30%	29%
Hackney	37%	41%	4	40%	35%
Hammersmith and Fulham	32%	51%	20	45%	33%
Islington	34%	32%	-1	33%	36%
Kensington and Chelsea	44%	52%	8	50%	26%
Lambeth	30%	45%	16	39%	40%
Lewisham	26%	40%	14	36%	26%
Southwark	31%	37%	5	34%	45%
Tower Hamlets	33%	37%	4	34%	63%
Wandsworth	32%	43%	10	40%	23%
Westminster	45%	43%	-2	44%	29%
Barking and Dagenham	20%	23%	4	23%	25%
Barnet	34%	55%	22	52%	16%
Bexley	15%	33%	19	31%	9%
Brent	39%	56%	17	52%	22%
Bromley	17%	40%	23	38%	10%
Croydon	27%	41%	14	38%	18%
Ealing	35%	52%	16	47%	28%
Enfield	29%	46%	17	42%	19%
Haringey	32%	40%	8	37%	38%
Harrow	36%	56%	20	52%	19%
Havering	10%	32%	21	30%	8%
Hillingdon	19%	36%	16	33%	18%
Hounslow	31%	50%	19	46%	19%
Kingston upon Thames	29%	52%	23	50%	8%
Merton	24%	39%	15	36%	15%
Newham	40%	51%	11	46%	42%
Redbridge	43%	56%	13	54%	15%
Richmond upon Thames	21%	41%	20	38%	13%
Sutton	15%	50%	35	47%	8%
Waltham Forest	32%	40%	8	38%	26%
Birmingham	24%	40%	16	35%	32%
Coventry	16%	33%	16	30%	16%
Dudley	11%	33%	23	30%	14%
Sandwell	15%	25%	10	23%	16%
Solihull	16%	41%	25	38%	11%
Walsall	14%	31%	17	28%	17%
Wolverhampton	15%	36%	20	32%	18%
Knowsley	11%	23%	13	19%	34%
Liverpool	15%	36%	21	29%	32%
St. Helens	11%	35%	24	31%	16%
Sefton	18%	39%	21	36%	16%
Wirral	15%	44%	30	36%	28%
Bolton	18%	33%	15	31%	15%
Bury	15%	38%	23	35%	12%
Manchester	17%	30%	13	25%	43%

Annex C - SA(COS)(11)21 - Statistical Expenditure: Update and overview

Oldham	17%	34%	17	30%	21%
Rochdale	16%	30%	14	27%	24%
Salford	8%	26%	18	21%	24%
Stockport	11%	36%	25	34%	10%
Tameside	11%	27%	17	25%	16%
Trafford	23%	47%	24	44%	12%
Wigan	9%	31%	22	27%	15%
Barnsley	7%	25%	18	21%	21%
Doncaster	8%	27%	19	24%	15%
Rotherham	11%	30%	19	27%	14%
Sheffield	16%	32%	16	30%	15%
Bradford	19%	33%	14	29%	27%
Calderdale	15%	35%	20	32%	13%
Kirklees	17%	36%	18	33%	16%
Leeds	12%	32%	21	29%	18%
Wakefield	9%	27%	18	25%	13%
Gateshead	12%	35%	23	32%	16%
Newcastle upon Tyne	10%	32%	22	27%	20%
North Tyneside	4%	34%	30	31%	10%
South Tyneside	11%	33%	21	27%	27%
Sunderland	10%	27%	17	25%	14%
Isles of Scilly ^[4]	-	57%	-	54%	4%
Bath and North East Somerset	10%	34%	24	32%	7%
Bristol, City of	7%	22%	15	20%	15%
North Somerset	11%	36%	25	34%	8%
South Gloucestershire	10%	30%	19	29%	5%
Hartlepool	16%	34%	18	31%	19%
Middlesbrough	16%	35%	18	29%	31%
Redcar and Cleveland	14%	37%	23	32%	21%
Stockton-on-Tees	11%	39%	28	34%	17%
Kingston Upon Hull, City of	6%	21%	15	18%	23%
East Riding of Yorkshire	11%	38%	27	36%	7%
North East Lincolnshire	8%	24%	16	21%	17%
North Lincolnshire	11%	30%	19	28%	11%
North Yorkshire	15%	40%	25	39%	5%
York	15%	35%	20	34%	5%
Bedfordshire	16%	36%	20	34%	8%
Luton	27%	34%	7	32%	24%
Buckinghamshire	17%	50%	33	48%	8%
Milton Keynes	14%	32%	19	30%	11%
Derbyshire	11%	35%	24	32%	9%
Derby	19%	34%	15	32%	15%
Dorset	10%	32%	22	31%	6%
Poole	16%	36%	19	35%	6%
Bournemouth	11%	33%	22	30%	11%
Durham	10%	32%	22	27%	19%
Darlington	8%	39%	31	34%	16%
East Sussex	10%	28%	18	27%	10%
Brighton and Hove	13%	31%	18	28%	14%
Hampshire	11%	34%	24	33%	6%
Portsmouth	10%	21%	11	20%	13%
Southampton	8%	25%	17	22%	15%
Leicestershire	16%	37%	21	36%	6%
Leicester	26%	38%	12	36%	19%

Annex C - SA(COS)(11)21 - Statistical Expenditure: Update and overview

Rutland ^[4]	-	39%	-	38%	2%
Staffordshire	12%	33%	22	32%	7%
Stoke-on-Trent	11%	27%	16	24%	19%
Wiltshire	8%	34%	26	32%	5%
Swindon	9%	26%	17	24%	8%
Bracknell Forest	8%	32%	24	30%	5%
Windsor and Maidenhead	16%	42%	26	40%	6%
West Berkshire	7%	35%	29	34%	4%
Reading	10%	39%	29	35%	14%
Slough	24%	52%	28	48%	15%
Wokingham	9%	41%	32	39%	5%
Cambridgeshire	13%	36%	23	35%	7%
Peterborough	16%	31%	14	29%	15%
Cheshire	11%	39%	28	37%	9%
Halton	11%	27%	16	24%	18%
Warrington	8%	39%	31	37%	8%
Devon	13%	30%	17	29%	8%
Plymouth	11%	30%	19	28%	10%
Torbay	7%	38%	31	34%	13%
Essex	12%	32%	20	30%	8%
Southend-on-Sea	11%	40%	29	37%	12%
Thurrock	7%	24%	17	22%	10%
Herefordshire	9%	34%	25	32%	6%
Worcestershire	10%	35%	25	33%	7%
Kent	10%	36%	26	34%	8%
Medway	10%	31%	20	29%	8%
Lancashire	15%	36%	22	34%	12%
Blackburn with Darwen	22%	34%	13	31%	26%
Blackpool	16%	22%	6	21%	16%
Nottinghamshire	8%	31%	23	29%	11%
Nottingham	11%	26%	14	21%	30%
Shropshire	13%	34%	21	33%	5%
Telford and Wrekin	11%	32%	21	29%	17%
Cornwall	12%	30%	18	28%	9%
Cumbria	9%	36%	27	32%	12%
Gloucestershire	8%	37%	29	35%	7%
Hertfordshire	17%	43%	26	41%	6%
Isle of Wight	8%	28%	19	24%	17%
Lincolnshire	9%	34%	25	32%	7%
Norfolk	9%	28%	20	26%	9%
Northamptonshire	12%	31%	19	30%	8%
Northumberland	7%	35%	28	32%	10%
Oxfordshire	11%	34%	23	32%	8%
Somerset	12%	31%	19	30%	7%
Suffolk	10%	33%	22	31%	9%
Surrey	15%	38%	24	37%	6%
Warwickshire	10%	37%	27	35%	7%
West Sussex	10%	33%	23	31%	6%
Total England	17%	35%	18	33%	14%

pp = percentage points - = less than 0.5%

[1] Local authority refers to the location of the school the pupil attended, rather than their home address.

[2] FSM and Non-FSM refer to whether pupils were receiving Free School Meals or not.

[3] Percentage figures are rounded; gap figures are calculated from un-rounded data and therefore may not correspond to the gap between rounded percentages.

[4] Percentages below 0.5 are not shown in the table, nor are related figures which could potentially disclose these; the small numbers involved explain the difference between the non-FSM and overall percentages for these small authorities.

[5] Percentage of pupils with Free School Meals according to the matched data used to produce this table; figures may vary slightly from other sources.

The figures in the table suggest that 88 Local Authorities out of 149 (59%) have a larger gap between the progression rates for FSM and Non-FSM pupils than the England level gap (of 18 percentage points).

Figures are estimates. Care should be taken when comparing progression rates across local authorities. In particular, it is not possible to conclude that the gaps in progression rates shown for different Local Authorities are a reflection of the performance of educational institutions in those Authorities. This is because the composition of the Non-FSM group (and to a lesser extent the FSM group) will vary considerably in terms of levels of affluence and other factors that will impact on educational attainment and progression. The proportion of pupils with FSM varies considerably between authorities, as illustrated in the last column of the table. Note that there is a potential for minor errors in the matching process deployed. See Annex A for more details on this measure and Annex C for information about the matching process.

Table 3 compares progression to HE from the state and independent sector for A level and equivalent level students.

Table 3: Estimated number and percentage of A level and equivalent level students who entered HE by age 19 and the percentage who progressed to the most selective HE Institutions, by independent and state school/college. Academic Years 2006/07 to 2008/09

School/college type	Total age 17 in 2004/05	Progressed to HE by age 19 in 2006/07		<i>of which;</i> Most selective HE ^[1]	
		Number	% of total age 17	Number	% of total age 17
Independent	28,545	24,380	85%	17,925	63%
State	198,610	143,935	72%	51,440	26%
Total	227,155	168,310	74%	69,365	31%

School/college type	Total age 17 in 2005/06	Progressed to HE by age 19 in 2007/08		<i>of which;</i> Most selective HE	
		Number	% of total age 17	Number	% of total age 17
Independent	30,350	25,325	83%	19,195	63%
State	234,860	158,655	68%	58,195	25%
Total	265,210	183,980	69%	77,385	29%

School/college type	Total age 17 in 2006/07	Progressed to HE by age 19 in 2008/09		<i>of which;</i> Most selective HE	
		Number	% of total age 17	Number	% of total age 17
Independent	30,435	24,935	82%	19,005	62%
State	235,875	163,725	69%	60,395	26%
Total	266,310	188,660	71%	79,400	30%

School/college type	Progression rate to all HE			Progression rate to most selective HE		
	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Independent	85%	83%	82%	63%	63%	62%
State	72%	68%	69%	26%	25%	26%
All	74%	69%	71%	31%	29%	30%

[1] The most selective are defined as the top third of HEIs when ranked by mean UCAS tariff score from the top three A level grades of entrants.

An estimated 72% of those who studied A levels and equivalent qualifications in state schools and colleges in 2004/05 progressed to Higher Education by 2006/07. This rate fell to 68% in 2007/08 and rose to 69% in 2008/09. Over the same period the estimated progression rate for independent school and college pupils fell from 85% to 82%.

The estimated progression rate for state school and college pupils to the most selective Higher Education Institutions was 26% in 2008/09, up by one percentage point from 2007/08 but the same rate as in 2006/07. The equivalent progression rate for independent school and college pupils was 62% in 2008/09, which had fallen by one percentage point from 2007/08.

The independent and state sectors cover a wide range of different types of institution. Within the state sector for example it is possible to distinguish between selective and non-selective schools with sixth forms. In 2008/09 selective state schools overall HE participation was 88% and 58% of young A level entrants progressed to the most selective institutions. These rates are significantly higher than the overall 69% and 26% figures for the state sector shown above².

See Annex B for more information on this measure.

² These results are in line with the findings of a joint BIS/Sutton Trust report published on the 31 July 2009, 'Applications, Offers and Admissions to Research-Led Universities', for an earlier cohort of young A level entrants. <http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/corporate/migratedD/publications/B/BIS-RP-005> This report discussed differences in progression rates to HE and the most competitive institutions/courses by school type. Both sets of findings largely reflect prior attainment or the A level (or equivalent) performance of students.

Background

For 2008/09, BIS is publishing widening participation statistics by free school meal status rather than by socio-economic classification. Since 2007, the FYPSEC publication was produced annually and reflected the proportion of young people from the top three and bottom four socio-economic classes who participated for the first time in full-time higher education. The publication also included an annex that reproduced some of the other published measures of widening participation (WP). These measures are described in Annex C.

One of these WP measures, “the FSM measure” has been chosen to replace FYPSEC as the core measure of disadvantage in this publication. The “FSM measure” estimates the percentage of young people educated in English maintained schools aged 15 who progress to Higher Education by the age 19. Around 14 per cent of pupils in our dataset were eligible for and claiming free school meals.

The arguments for changing the core measure broadly were twofold. Firstly, there have been ongoing concerns with the quality of the socio-economic class variable that underpinned the FYPSEC measure. Secondly, the FSM measure is a well-established, versatile measure. The measure has helped to assess the number of children progressing to Higher Education from low income backgrounds. It is also one of two Higher Education metrics deployed to monitor the Government’s Social Mobility Strategy³. There is also a strategic link with the Pupil Premium announced by the Department for Education. In October 2010, the Government announced that FSM eligibility would be one of the criteria by which funds would be allocated.

There is also a wider interest in the HE aspirations of young people in local authorities. The FSM measure is an individual-based measure that can be disaggregated at local authority level unlike previous measures such as FYPSEC. Progression rates in England by local authority area are shown in Table 2.

Public consultation

By definition, the arguments for using FYPSEC or FSM as the main descriptor of disadvantage are detailed and complex. In addition, other changes to the scope and contents of the publication were proposed – the provision of information on Higher Education access rates by local authority area and access rates by school type to the most selective institutions. For these reasons, the proposed changes were released for public consultation. BIS released the official consultation paper on the 8th June and invited comments from a diverse group of users of Widening Participation statistics. A formal BIS response to the consultation is set out in Annex E.

³ <http://www.dpm.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/news/social-mobility-strategy-launched>

Technical Annexes

Annex A

The percentage of young people in maintained schools who progress to Higher Education by free school meal receipt

For the most recent data, the denominator used in this measure covers all pupils aged 15 in 2004/05 in English maintained schools. This denominator is broken down by free school meal (FSM) receipt.

The numerator is calculated by identifying pupils who progressed to HE in either 2007/08 at age 18, or in 2008/09 at age 19. The numerator can then be broken down by FSM receipt. HE students are those students on programmes of study for which the level of instruction is above that of level 3 of the National Qualifications Framework, i.e. courses leading to the Advanced Level of the General Certificate of Education (GCE A-levels), the Advanced Level of the Vocational Certificate of Education (VCE A-levels) or the Advanced Higher Grade and Higher Grade of the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) Advanced Highers/Highers).

This measure is calculated using matched data. This matches the National Pupil Database to the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) Individualised Learner Record and the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) Student Record. This allows pupils to be tracked from English schools at age 15 to higher education (HE) by age 19. The measure covers HE courses at both UK Higher Education Institutions and English Further Education Colleges. It must be noted, due to the matching procedures deployed, all figures in this measure should be treated as estimates. Further details of the matching procedure can be found in Annex C.

The following table helps to demonstrate how the cohort is tracked through to entry into HE.

Academic Year	Age at start of academic year	Stage of Education
2004/05	15	GCSEs or equivalent (Key Stage 4)
2005/06	16	AS Levels or equivalent (Key Stage 5)
2006/07	17	A Levels or equivalent (Key Stage 5)
2007/08	18	Entry to HE
2008/09	19	Entry to HE (following a gap year)

Free school meals may be claimed if parents receive any of the following:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual income (as assessed by HM Revenue & Customs) that does not exceed £16,190
- Working Tax Credit 'run-on' - the payment someone may receive for a further four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit

Caveats

1. There may be pupils who are eligible for FSM but do not claim for a number of reasons. Such pupils will not be classified as in receipt of FSM for the purposes of this measure.
2. Pupils may have claimed FSM in earlier school years, but not when age 15. Such pupils will not be recorded as in receipt of FSM in this measure.
3. This measure only tracks entry to HE by age 19. A number of pupils may enter HE at a later age and are not included in this measure.
4. Prior attainment is not accounted for in this measure. Many pupils will not continue their education; therefore will not hold the qualifications to progress to HE.

The following table gives the figures underlying the percentages given in table 1.

**Estimated number and percentage of maintained school pupils aged 15 by Free School Meal status who entered HE by age 19
Academic Years 2005/06 to 2008/09
UK higher education institutions and English further education colleges**

	Pupils ^[1]	% of all ^[2]	Estimated number who entered HE	% of all ^[2]
2005/06				
FSM ^[3]	79,745	14	10,760	6
Non-FSM ^[3]	475,205	85	156,005	93
All	556,615	100	167,070	100
2006/07				
FSM ^[3]	81,115	14	11,405	7
Non-FSM ^[3]	492,610	86	163,955	93
All	573,730	100	175,360	100
2007/08				
FSM ^[3]	82,785	14	12,550	7
Non-FSM ^[3]	508,415	86	169,545	93
All	591,205	100	182,095	100
2008/09				
FSM ^[3]	80,320	14	13,845	7
Non-FSM ^[3]	503,125	86	176,240	93
All	583,445	100	190,085	100

[1] Numbers of pupils according to the matched data used to produce this table; figures may vary from other sources.

[2] Percentage figures are rounded and calculated from un-rounded data, and therefore may not correspond to the gap between rounded percentages.

[3] FSM and Non-FSM refer to whether pupils were receiving Free School Meals or not.

The table shows that the proportion of pupils with Free School Meals has remained steady between 2005/06 and 2008/09 at 14%. The estimated percentage of Higher Education entrants who received Free School Meals at the age of 15 has changed by around 1 percentage point. For the most recent data point, there were 80,300 pupils who were in receipt of FSM at age 15 in 2004/05 who represented 14% of all 15 year olds on the matched dataset. It is estimated that around 7% of Higher Education entrants had received Free School Meals when they were aged 15.

Annex B

The percentage of young people who progress to the most selective higher education institutions by school and college type

This measure is calculated using matched data. This matches the National Pupil Database to the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) Individualised Learner Record and the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) Student Record. The denominator is defined as pupils aged 17 in 2006/07 studying at least one A level or equivalent qualification at all English schools and colleges. This denominator is broken down by the school/college type, state or independent. It must be noted, due to the matching procedures deployed, all figures in this measure should be treated as estimates. Further details of the matching procedure can be found in Annex C.

The numerator is calculated by identifying the pupils who progress to HE in 2007/08 age 18, or in 2008/09 age 19, and of those, which pupils progress to the most selective HEIs. The numerator can then be broken down by school/college type (state or independent).

HE students are those students on programmes of study for which the level of instruction is above that of level 3 of the National Qualifications Framework, i.e. courses leading to the Advanced Level of the General Certificate of Education (GCE A-levels), the Advanced Level of the Vocational Certificate of Education (VCE A-levels) or the Advanced Higher Grade and Higher Grade of the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) Advanced Highers/Highers).

The “most selective” Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are defined as the top third of HEIs when ranked by mean UCAS tariff score⁴ from the top three A level grades. This measure only covers HE courses at UK Higher Education Institutions and excludes HE courses at English Further Education Colleges.

The following school types make up the state school group in this measure: Community, Voluntary aided, Voluntary controlled, Foundation, City Technology College, Community special, Non-maintained special, Pupil referral unit, Further education, Miscellaneous, Academies, Higher education institutions, Sixth form centres. Schools with sixth forms comprise selective and non-selective institutions. Information on school type comes from DFE records.

Caveats

1. Analysis of changes across academic years in this top third list has shown that 92% of HEIs remained in the top third for three consecutive years.

⁴ Further information on UCAS tariff scores is available on the UCAS website:
http://www.ucas.com/students/ucas_tariff/tariffables/

2. This measure is restricted to top three A level attainment. Pupils who study other qualifications at Key Stage 5 will be excluded from this measure.
3. Prior attainment is not accounted for in this measure. Many pupils may not achieve the required A level or equivalent qualifications to progress to HE.

Annex C

Details of the matching process

The National Pupil Database (NPD) contains administrative data on all pupils in state schools in England, collected by the Department for Education. Key Stage 1 (KS1) to Key Stage 5 (KS5) data and Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) records were matched to the Higher Education Statistics Agency's (HESA) Student Record and the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) Individualised Learner Record (ILR). The matching process allows for school pupils to be tracked through to Higher Education. We estimate that coverage is at least 95% of the HE students that we would most expect to be matched. Although it is not possible to know for certain - it is highly unlikely that matching errors would cause the estimate to vary by more than the level of rounding used. The match achieved is called a "fuzzy match" where we rely on names, postcodes, dates of birth, etc and there is some potential for minor errors in the matching process. For this reason, the figures are deemed estimates due to the reliability of the matching procedure used and subsequently rounded to allow for a small margin of error that arises as result of the matching procedure deployed. There are currently only 4 data points available and the figures are reported from 2005/06.

The data used in developing the Free School Meal Measure is drawn from an extract of the NPD where the matching process permits maintained school pupils at age 15 to be tracked through to Higher Education. The base population is those with PLASC records at age 15 in English maintained schools for each relevant year. The figures are broken down by the Free School Meals status and an assessment is then made of their outcomes in entering a UK HEI or a Higher course at an English Further Education College at age 18 or at age 19.

The figures can also be broken down at local authority level. Young people are reported in the local authority at which they attended school as opposed to their normal residence.

The data used to describe the number of young people entering the most selective universities is drawn from a different extract of the NPD. The matching process permits maintained and independent school pupils at age 17 to be tracked through to Higher Education institutions. A level (or equivalent) students in schools and colleges (state and independent) at age 17 are tracked through who may have subsequently entered any UK HEI. The base population is those with Key stage 5 attainment records, which means they must have attempted qualifications of equivalent level to one or more A levels in the summer. Average tariff scores are collated from Key Stage 5 attainment records for entrants and the top third of HEIs are identified based on this information.

Annex D

Other widening participation measures

The measures given in the main body of this publication could be considered alongside other statistics on widening participation in Higher Education. Two other key measures are described in this annex.

Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE): Trends in young participation in higher education core results for England

HEFCE have an established programme of analysis tracking the proportion of young people from different backgrounds who enter higher education at age 18 or 19 ('young participation'), and periodically report progress on this measure. The latest publication (January 2010)⁵ reports on trends from 1994/95, with provisional results (based upon applications data) up to 2009/2010. The results cover young people from England in UK HEIs.

The starting point for the participation rate is an estimate of the population size of the young cohort at age 15, as they start their final year of compulsory education. The cohort is then allowed three years to undertake their GCSEs and further education before entrants to higher education (typically aged 18) are recorded followed by a further year of entrants (typically aged 19). The young participation rate is then simply the proportion that those HE entrants form of the population of that cohort when it was aged 15. HEFCE reference the cohorts by the two years in which they can enter HE. For example the participation rate for the 2006/07 cohort relates to that group of young people who were aged 15 on 31 August 2003, aged 18 on 31 August 2006, with those who entered HE doing so in academic years 2006/07 or 2007/08.

This young participation rate can then be directly interpreted as the proportion of a particular cohort of young people who enter higher education. The HE entrants in the measure are drawn from a single real cohort of young people followed across academic years – rather than combining young entrants from different cohorts who enter HE in a single academic year. This makes the participation rate less susceptible to distortions from demographic or behaviour changes (for example, from young people bringing forward their entry to HE to age 18 rather than age 19) that do not reflect a change in the proportion of young people entering HE.

⁵ http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2010/10_03/

Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA): Performance Indicators in Higher Education

HESA has published *Performance Indicators in Higher Education*⁶ since 2002/03, prior to which they were produced by HEFCE.

In addition to data about young peoples' socio-economic class, the Performance Indicators (PIs) provide information about the proportion of entrants who are from state schools and low participation neighbourhoods.

The indicator for state schools reflects the percentage of young, full-time entrants to first degrees in English Higher Education Institutions who had previously attended a school or college in the state sector.

The low participation neighbourhood indicator is the percentage of young, full-time entrants to first degree courses in English HEIs whose home area (as denoted by their postcode) is known to have a low proportion of 18 and 19 year-olds in higher education. Those students whose postcode falls within areas which have the lowest proportions (bottom 20%) of HE participation are denoted as being from a low participation neighbourhood (LPN). Please note that the new POLAR2 (Participation of Local Area 2) low participation data is not comparable with the low participation data published prior to 2006/07 (although this earlier data has been included in the table below for completeness).

Although these indicators allow us to assess the relative performance of different institutions in attracting students from different backgrounds, they do not allow us (and were not designed) to assess progress on getting more people from less privileged backgrounds into HE. This is because the PIs provide us with the make-up of the HE student body, and not with the participation rates of students from different backgrounds - i.e. they say nothing about the underlying population the HE students are drawn from.

A further important note is that the figures presented here are for UK-domiciled students in English HEIs.

It is important to realise that none of these measures are directly comparable, as there are differences in definitions, coverage and data sources. It should also be borne in mind that there are other approaches to measuring gaps in addition to the simple percentage point differences given here.⁷

⁶ Latest publication available on the HESA website: <http://www.hesa.ac.uk/index.php/content/view/2072/141/>

⁷ For example odds ratios, showing the relative odds of participating for the two groups.

Table A: Progress on widening participation in higher education – basket of measures

Academic Year	Progression to HE by FSM status (%)			HESA Performance Indicators (%)				HEFCE Trends in Young Participation (%) ⁽³⁾	
	FSM	Non-FSM	Gap (pp)	State schools	Lower socio-economic classes ⁽¹⁾	LPNs (POLAR2) ⁽²⁾	LPNs (POLAR) ⁽²⁾	Band 1 area	Band 5 area
2002/03	..	..	..	86.4	27.9	.	12.5	14	55
2003/04	..	..	..	86.1	28.2	.	13.3	14	54
2004/05	..	..	..	85.9	27.9	.	13.1	15	55
2005/06	13	33	19	86.9	29.1	.	13.5	15	55
2006/07	14	33	19	87.2	29.8	9.6	.	16	55
2007/08	15	33	18	87.4	29.4	9.9	.	17	56
2008/09	17	35	18	88.0	..	10.2	.	18	58
2009/10	..	..	..	88.4	30.1	10.5	.	19	57

. not applicable .. not available

⁽¹⁾ Due to a one-off issue with socio-economic class information, comparable figures for 2008/09 are not available.

⁽²⁾ From 1997-98 to 2005/06, Low Participation Neighbourhoods (LPNs) were defined as areas for which the higher education participation rate was less than two-thirds of the UK average rate, based on higher education participation levels in the late 1990's. From 2006/07, the LPN definition was updated to reflect changes in patterns of higher education participation since the 1990's. All wards have been ranked by their young participation rates (according to HEFCE's POLAR2 work, based on higher education participation in the early 2000's) and the bottom 20% of wards have been defined as LPNs.

⁽³⁾ HEFCE produce five-level classifications of neighbourhood classification where young people live based on participation levels in HE and the education level, occupation and income of their parents. Band 1 reflects participation rates for that quintile of young people from the most disadvantaged areas. Band 5 reflects participation rates for that quintile of young people from the most advantaged areas.

Annex E

Findings from the public consultation

On 8 June 2011, BIS released a public consultation regarding the content of this publication. The consultation closed on 1 August 2011. Thirty responses were received; respondents included 13 universities, 3 bodies representing groups of Higher Education Institutions, 2 Local Authorities, stakeholder bodies, government departments, a group of academics and a private individual.

Main themes from responses

Removal of FYPSEC

The majority of respondents agreed that the FYPSEC measure was flawed and there are serious data issues that would prove difficult to resolve. A large number of students do not declare their occupational information that is used to derive Social Class status. There were also concerns about the subjective nature of the data collective process that relied on the student's view of their parents' occupation. A small number of respondents did advocate retention of the FYPSEC measure as universities have access to the SEC data, and it is a broader measure of disadvantage than FSM.

Use of the FSM measure

Generally respondents were not opposed to using FSM, but were keen that the limitations were appreciated and explained⁸. There was recognition that FSM is more robust than FYPSEC. There was support for using a range of measures, rather than FSM alone.

There were comments that FSM is a "blunt instrument"; it captures a narrow subset of the population, excluding those with incomes too high to claim FSM who may still be regarded as disadvantaged. It also excludes those who choose not to claim FSM. Some respondents noted that there may be regional differences in take-up rates that could distort interpretation. Capturing FSM receipt at a single point in time, together with the time lag between age 15 and entry to Higher Education, is an issue. It is possible to measure whether there is any record of a potential student having been on FSM since the data was first collected in 2002 and some respondents felt that using this data would capture a larger group that had experienced some period of disadvantage.

⁸ These limitations are discussed for example in:

Vignoles, A.; Hobbs, G. (2009) 'Is children's free school meal 'eligibility' a good proxy for family income?'. *British Educational Research Journal*, Vol. 36, no. 4, pp.1469-3518, <http://www.ioe.ac.uk/study/departments/qss/756.html>

Kounali, Daphne; Robinson, Tony; Goldstein, Harvey & Lauder, Hugh (2008) 'The probity of free school meals as a proxy measure for disadvantage', Vol. Working Paper Bristol: Bristol University <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/cmm/publications/fsm.pdf>

It was noted that FSM rates may be volatile because pupils with FSM are a small section of the population, and this population may be sensitive to policy and economic changes. In particular, the number of pupils with FSM may rise temporarily during an economic downturn, which may affect progression rates.

New measure on access to the most selective universities

Many respondents accepted that access to the most selective institutions is important in securing access to the top professions. However, there were some concerns about the limitations of this measure.

The definition of the 'most selective third' of institutions will change every year. The way these institutions has been defined does not necessarily capture the "value added" by lower tariff institutions. Some lower average tariff institutions may have exceptionally competitive courses with demanding entry requirements. A focus on high achieving A level (or equivalent) students introduces a subjective assessment of the relative status of different qualifications. Equally, there is no adjustment for those who pursue different qualifications i.e. Level 3 options (i.e. BTEC National Diploma) or subjects. Another issue is that there may be changes to the UCAS tariff score that could impact on how institutions are identified in terms of selectivity.

There were comments on disaggregating the rather broad state school definition by school type and admissions policy. In addition, the measure only looks at schools/colleges which offer post-16 education (population denominator will be 17 year olds). A large number of state schools, particularly those in disadvantaged areas are 11 to 16 schools and so these schools' performance in progressing young people to post 16 education is overlooked.

Changes following the consultation

After considering the responses received from users, the scope of this publication was altered in the following ways:

- Greater clarity that the FSM and school type/selective university measures are intended to contribute to the understanding of widening participation issues as part of a range of measures, which have different strengths and limitations.
- Detailed explanation of measures, including their limitations
- A table available in Excel format with time series of the FSM measure by local authority.

Longer term BIS will consider the consultation responses in improving widening participation statistics. In particular we will review issues related to school and college type; and will review the use of the FSM measure in discussion with the Department For Education, in the light of possible future changes.

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Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to:

Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
1 Victoria Street
London SW1H 0ET
Tel: 020 7215 5000

If you require this publication in an alternative format, email enquiries@bis.gsi.gov.uk, or call 020 7215 5000.

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UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

COMMITTEE FOR OFFICIAL STATISTICS

SA(COS)(11)22

***Update on the impact of cuts on statistical inputs and outputs
and future plans to address statistical capability***

Purpose

1. This paper updates the Committee for Official Statistics (COS) on plans by producers of official statistics for ceasing the production of statistics and on public consultations relating to official statistics. The paper also details proposed arrangements for future reporting to the Committee by the National Statistician's Office on the impact of cuts on statistical capacity and quality, following a request made at the June meeting.

Recommendations

2. Members of the Committee are invited to note and comment upon:
 - i. the latest position on reported cuts to official statistics, further potential cuts subject to public consultation, and other official statistical issues being consulted upon;
 - ii. the proposed arrangements for future reporting to the Committee on the impact of changes to both statistical inputs and outputs; and
 - iii. the work on capability and talent management that is now underway and will be presented in a paper to a future meeting.

Discussion

Background

3. The National Statistician's Office (NSO) currently collate information from producers of official statistics on plans to cease the production of statistics as a consequence of spending review cuts, as well as on public consultations relating to official statistics. An update is provided at each meeting of the Committee for Official Statistics.
4. At its last meeting of 3 June 2011, the Committee agreed that information on consequent reductions to statistical capacity – e.g. staff or other resources – would also be useful. In addition, it was asked that information about impact on quality e.g. changes to sample size and changes affecting UK comparability, should also be collated.
5. The NSO has therefore considered the information already collected from Government Statistical Service Heads of Profession (HoPs) and what additional information could reasonably be made available in order to develop proposals for future reporting to the Committee. This additional information should be available for the update to the next meeting of the Committee in November.

Update on cessations and consultations

6. Since the last report to the Committee on 3 June 2011, the National Statistician has been notified of several further cessations of production of statistics. These include the following.
 - A decision by the NHS Information Centre (NHS IC), following a consultation, to cease the collection and publication of statistics on *People Registered Deaf or Hard of Hearing*, *Community Care Statistics: Grant Funded Services*, and *Community Care Statistics: Social Services Activity*.

- A decision by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), following a consultation which received no responses, to cease the annual Tax Benefit Model publication that is designed to illustrate the weekly financial circumstances of a selection of hypothetical local authority and private tenants, although DWP remains committed to keeping this decision under review.
 - The Welsh Government is ceasing the Welsh Short Term Output Indices due to reduction in their economic statistics budget. There has been consultation with users who seem to prefer the loss of these outputs to any impact on the Annual Population Survey.
 - Following consultation, the Home Office is combining the Control of Immigration Quarterly Statistical Summary and annual publication and the British Citizenship Statistics annual publication into a single quarterly web-based output. Following representations from users to the consultation, three (out of a proposed seven) datasets will no longer be included within this new output.
 - Due to expenditure cuts, Office for National Statistics (ONS) proposed a plan to stop the Wealth and Assets Survey. However, comments from DWP and others showed strong support for its continuation. ONS is reconsidering the funding for this survey in light of this response.
 - The Welsh Government also consulted during this period on proposals to stop or reduce the frequency of some of their housing data collections, including those covering new house building, social housing sales, social landlords' possessions and evictions and homelessness.
7. More information about confirmed and proposed cessations can be found in **Annex A**. There are currently no live statistical consultations. Information about previous consultations is set out in **Annex B**.

Monitoring the impact of cuts on outputs and statistical expenditure

8. The NSO currently collates information on actual and potential cuts to statistics based on information provided by HoPs. In light of the request by the Committee to receive information on the impact of cuts on statistical expenditure, staffing and quality or comparability, the NSO has reviewed its guidance to HoPs regarding the provision of this information. This additional information should be available for the update to the next meeting of the Committee in November.
9. In addition to informing the Committee, this information will also be sent to the UK Statistics Authority Secretariat frequently in order to facilitate decisions about early intervention and/or the preparation of a Statistical Expenditure Report.

Monitoring Statistical Capacity

10. Since 2000, the NSO has collected information on membership of the Government Statisticians Group (GSG), that is, the body of professional statisticians within government. The GSG is a subset of the Government Statistical Service (GSS), which includes all people working on the production of official statistics. It should be noted that the collection of information focuses solely on members of the GSG rather than the wider GSS. Whilst it may also be desirable to monitor GSS numbers, challenges relating to accurately identifying members of this group mean that such a collection would not be feasible. A summary of the key changes underlying the GSG headline figures since 2000 and the reasons behind them is provided as background information in **Annex C**.
11. The desire to assess the impact of the spending review on cross-government analytical capability has led to further work to improve the data in this area. The Government's Chief Scientific Advisor and the Head of the Government Economic Service, on behalf of the Heads of Analysis Group (HoAG), wrote recently to Sir Gus O'Donnell setting out a number of actions that HoAG are driving forward to help maintain analytical capability

and capacity. One of these actions is to begin quarterly monitoring of capacity in each of the analytical professions. Hence, the NSO are dovetailing their collection of changes in GSG members from HoPs with HoAG submissions. These changes will be reported to the Committee, related to cuts wherever possible, from November 2011 onwards.

12. As can be seen from Annex C, the reduction in GSG members of the Senior Civil Service and the small number of posts at director level and above is a concern. The National Statistician has commissioned work on talent management in the GSG and it is intended that a paper on the work to address capability issues is presented to a future meeting of the Committee.

National Statistician's Office, August 2011

List of Annexes

- Annex A Cessation of production of statistics by the GSS notified to the National Statistician**
- Annex B Consultations about statistics notified to the National Statistician**
- Annex C Historical changes to Government Statistician Group membership**

Annex A Cessation of production of statistics by the GSS (notified to the National Statistician between July 2010 and August 2011)

This table summarises the cuts to official statistics that have been notified by Departmental Heads of Profession to the National Statistician as at 11 August 2011.

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.

Entries added since the last meeting are shaded grey.

DETAILS OF CESSATION OR REDUCTION	DESCRIPTION OF STATISTICS	REASONS FOR CESSATION OR REDUCTION
<p>Statistics: National Adult Social Care data</p> <p>Producer: NHS Information Centre (NHS IC)</p> <p>Date notified to National Statistician: 19 August</p> <p>Date of cessation: April 2012 in respect of 2011/12 onwards.</p>	<p>The NHS Information Centre consulted recently on its national adult social care data collections and outputs.</p> <p>Within this consultation, a number of collections/outputs were proposed for cessation. Approximately 150 responses were received to this consultation, around 100 of which were from local authorities. Following this consultation, the NHS IC have decided that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The <i>People Registered Deaf or Hard of Hearing</i> triennial data collection should not be repeated and the associated National Statistics publication should be discontinued. • The <i>Community Care Statistics: Grant Funded Services</i> official statistics publication and data collection should cease. • Several tables and data items within the <i>Community Care Statistics: Social Services Activity</i> publication should cease (along with the associated data collection). These include 	<p>The review of national adult social care data collections was carried out in the context of changing information needs brought about by changes in the way in which services are commissioned and delivered.</p> <p>The proposals put forward in the consultation were agreed by the Outcomes and Information Development Board (OIDB), which is co-chaired by Department of Health and the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services and includes members from a range of stakeholder organisations. The consultation lead to modifications of these proposals, following which it has been decided to retain some statistics previously proposed for cessation.</p> <p>An earlier review established that the burden of collecting data on People Registered Deaf or Hard of Hearing outweighed the usefulness of the data, a view supported by the Law Commission's report on Adult Social Care. Around two thirds of respondents supported the cessation of this collection and publication. Less than 10 per cent raised an objection. A similar pattern of response was received on the proposal to cease the Community Care Statistics: Grant Funded Services publication and collection.</p>

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	<p>transfers from temporary to permanent residential/nursing care and length of time from assessment to receipt of services.</p>	<p>The NHS IC note that where collections are stopped or reduced, the proposed changes still leave councils with the option of collecting the information locally if they feel it is still relevant. However, national benchmarked figures will not be available.</p> <p>Final ratification of the consultation outcomes is planned to take place at the OIBD meeting on 13 September.</p>
<p>Statistic: Statistics on post-decision reviews on asylum applications, applications for asylum support and asylum appeals.</p> <p>Producer: Home Office</p> <p>Date Notified to National Statistician: 3rd August 2011.</p> <p>Date of cessation: 25 August.</p>	<p>The Control of Immigration Quarterly Statistical Summary and annual publication provide an overview of the work of the UK Border Agency. The information is grouped by operational area, i.e. border control, asylum, managed migration and enforcement and compliance.</p> <p>The British Citizenship Statistics annual publication provides statistics relating to persons granted British Citizenship.</p> <p>A formal consultation was conducted between February and May on proposals to combine the above publications into a single quarterly web-based output, in order to make the data more accessible and ensure the most effective use of resources.</p> <p>As part of this consultation, it was proposed that the number of tables published should be reduced through a combination of amalgamation and a reduction in the number of variables reported on.</p>	<p>The proposals to cease publication of some asylum-related data were made in the context of the fact that 43 different asylum tables were previously published in August each year, in light of reduced numbers of asylum applications, some quality concerns, and reduced resources following the Home Office Statistics restructuring.</p> <p>The Home Office originally consulted on the cessation of seven datasets within these outputs. In light of the responses received to the consultation, it was decided that some detailed data would cease to be published in three of those areas. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • post-decision reviews on asylum applications; • some detailed disaggregations of applications for asylum support; and • appeals on after-entry non-asylum cases and asylum appeals at upper-tier tribunal and Judicial Review. <p>For the data on appeals, links to alternative data from the Tribunals Service / Ministry of Justice will be provided to users.</p>

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<p>Statistic: Wealth and Assets Survey</p> <p>Producer: ONS</p> <p>Date Notified to National Statistician: 1st July 2011</p> <p>Date of proposed cessation: At present, ONS funds allocated till March 2012. Wave 3 data collection ends June 2012. Analysis and dissemination would be expected to take place until June 2014.</p>	<p>The Wealth and Assets Survey collects information about the economic well-being of households and individuals in Great Britain.</p> <p>In particular the survey asks people about their assets and liabilities in order to estimate household and personal wealth. This includes information on; property, financial, physical and private pension wealth; savings, debt, borrowing and arrears.</p> <p>The survey also asks people about their attitudes to debt, saving and retirement. A range of demographic data is also available such as sex, age, employment status, socio-economic classification, geography and education.</p> <p>The first wave of the survey started in 2006 and the survey is currently in its third wave. It is funded by a number of government departments, including DWP (54%), ONS (36%), HMRC (7%), BIS (2%) and SG (1%)*</p> <p>The outputs of the survey are published as National Statistics.</p> <p>*These are the proportions of the internal costs for the current financial year. The corresponding proportions of the full economic costs are: DWP (45%), ONS (47%), HMRC (6%), BIS (2%), SG (1%)</p>	<p>Cessation was proposed in response to need to reduce ONS expenditure following SR10. In summer 2010, ONS issued a consultation document on the full range of ONS work, setting out some proposals for reduced expenditure and asking customers for their views. At this stage, ONS indicated a plan to stop the Wealth and Assets Survey.</p> <p>Comments from DWP and others showed strong support. ONS is therefore considering again the funding for this survey in light of the strong support it received.</p> <p>ONS are seeking new members of the funding consortium. A formal business case will soon be presented to ONS's Investment and Planning Committee for decision, reflecting on benefits and affordability. It is intended that a decision will be made by September. .</p> <p>In the meantime, development work allowing ONS to conduct a fourth wave of the survey is going ahead, pending a final decision.</p>
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<p>Statistic: Business Payment Support Service</p> <p>Producer: HMRC</p> <p>Date Notified to National Statistician: 6th July 2011</p> <p>Statistics to cease: Last publication July 2011</p>	<p>The statistics relate to HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC's) Business Payment Support Service (BPSS) which provides 'Time to Pay' (TTP) arrangements to businesses and individuals experiencing difficulties in paying tax due in full and on time.</p> <p>Publications provide information since inception of the service in November 2008. These are Official Statistics.</p>	<p>As part of HMRC statistical work programme, HMRC reviewed the Official statistics publication on the Business Payment Support Service (BPSS).</p> <p>During February and March 2011 HMRC consulted on whether the Business Payment Support Service (BPSS) Official Statistics release should be published beyond April 2011. It considered whether the publication provided value for money based on the wider use and impact of the statistics it provided and the costs to HMRC to capture, collate and publish each quarter. It also took into account the observed reduced demand for TTP.</p> <p>One response was received from HM Treasury and one internal response was received from HMRC which was directly related to HM Treasury's response. HMRC received no other responses.</p> <p>HM Treasury and HMRC both currently use the VAT TTP to support other statistical outputs. However, it was felt that due to the low take-up of TTP arrangements for VAT, the impact of ceasing this output on these figures would be negligible. There was no indication that statistics for the other taxes covered in the BPSS statistical publication were being utilised.</p> <p>After due consideration of the responses provided to the consultation, HMRC decided the July 2011 release of the publication would be the last in the series. The outcomes of the consultation are published on HMRC's website.</p>
<p>Statistics: Welsh Short Term Output Indices</p> <p>Producer: Welsh Government</p>	<p>The economic indices on sectors or Short Term Output Indicators show short-term movements in the output of industries in Wales.</p> <p>There are five indices –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • House Price Index 	<p>WG's Improving Economic Statistics budget has been reduced from £1.305m in 2010/11 to £1.09m in 2013/14. This budget is used to improve the statistics that there are for Wales. It is used mainly to boost the Annual Population Survey (around £900,000 a year) and for the ONS to produce Short Term Output Indices (STOI) for Wales (around £200,000 a year). There are also smaller top-ups</p>

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<p>Date notified to National Statistician : 15 June 2011</p> <p>Statistics to cease: Within weeks if that decision is made by Ministers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Index of Market Services • Indices of Production and Construction • Retail Prices Index <p>The aim of the indices is to inform policy makers and the public on recent trends in the economic sectors and allow comparisons of performance at the level of Wales with other devolved regions in the economy at the UK level.</p>	<p>and data extracts paid for which are around £70,000 a year.</p> <p>WG have been looking at ways of ensuring that it can, as far as possible, continue with the current outputs whilst retaining a sufficient level of quality. WG has been unable to find a way in which to achieve sufficient savings to continue with the current APS boost levels or the STOI. WG has been working with the APS team to see if savings can be made and has established that these savings are unlikely to be large enough or to happen soon enough to continue with both the APS and the STOI in their current form.</p> <p>Given the importance of the APS to WG and their users, it is currently consulting known users on their use of the Welsh Short Term Output Indices. These users include the 21 external users who responded to their 2009 consultation and who stated that the indices were quite or very important to them and key policy contacts internally.</p> <p>Their 2009 consultation showed that the STOI (and in particular the Index of Production and Index of Construction) were some of their least important outputs to users.</p> <p>It is planned to ask the Minister for Business, Enterprise, Technology and Science for a decision on the future of the STOI in the coming weeks which may lead to the STOI being stopped. The STOI team in the ONS are aware of this.</p>
<p>Statistics: Tax Benefit Model</p> <p>Producer: Department for Works and Pensions</p> <p>Date notified to National</p>	<p>The Tax Benefit Model is an annual publication designed to illustrate the weekly financial circumstances of a selection of hypothetical local authority and private tenants.</p> <p>In 2010 the Model was released as a flexible spreadsheet based model allowing users more flexibility in defining and then using tables.</p>	<p>On 17 November 2010, DWP published the April 2010 tax benefit model alongside a consultation that asked for views on stopping publication and instead publishing a one-off interactive version of the model which can be updated by users themselves. The Model contained advice and links to aid users in updating the Model parameters.</p> <p>The consultation closed on 29 December 2010. DWP received no responses and therefore plan to discontinue</p>

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<p>Statistician : 8 June 2011</p> <p>Statistics to cease: With immediate effect</p>	<p>The model details:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Income Tax and National Insurance Contributions and benefits payable to family types and how these change at increasing levels of earned income, based on tax and benefit rates and estimated rents for that year the marginal deduction rate - the percentage of each extra £1 earned which is lost in increased tax/National Insurance and in reductions in benefit/tax credit entitlement for different hypothetical family types how net income after housing costs for a person on Income Support/ Jobseeker's Allowance compares with net income after housing costs when the head of household works at least 16 hours a week – the replacement ratio. 	<p>publication of the Tax Benefit Model. It plans to keep this under review, including any new requests to develop the model to support changes to the benefit system.</p> <p>DWP feel that the Model can be maintained, using publicly available information, by those outside the Department. Hence, it proposes to open up the spreadsheet model to allow others to maintain, add and improve.</p>
<p>Changes to Scottish Government Surveys from 2012 onwards</p>	<p>A decision has now been made that provides increased efficiency and will still meet the majority of user needs. In 2011 Scottish Government will seek to procure contracts the following three surveys:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A combined Household and House Condition Survey The Scottish Health Survey The Scottish Crime and Justice Survey. 	<p>An in-depth discussion about the future of surveys and the use of surveys across Scotland was had at the ScotStat Conference in March 2010. Further discussion on priorities, in light of public sector financial pressures, were discussed at the Annual Statistics Stakeholder Conference on 1st November 2010.</p> <p>Results:</p> <p>From 2012 onwards all the surveys described opposite will be sampled in a co-ordinated way and will include the same set of core questions. We will then pool the core questions from all the surveys together to provide more accurate data at a smaller level of detail than previously available. The first pooled data will be available in 2013.</p>

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<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</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>

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<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 – 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.” • 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. 	<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.
<p>Statistics: Citizenship Survey</p> <p>Producer: Communities and Local Government</p>	<p>Future cancellation of the Citizenship Survey</p> <p>Following the Secretary of State's consideration of the responses received to the Department's recent public consultation, The Future of the Citizenship Survey, the Survey, which is a complex and expensive survey to run, will be cancelled.</p> <p>As part of the current drive to deliver cost savings</p>	<p>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 priority data from this survey can either be dropped; collected less frequently; or collected via other means, the intention is for future Citizenship Surveys to be cancelled.</p>

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<p>Date notified to National Statistician: 25 January 2011</p> <p>Statistics to cease/reduce: 31 March 2011</p>	<p>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 priority data from this survey can either be dropped; collected less frequently; or collected via other means, the intention is for future Citizenship Surveys to be cancelled.</p> <p>The Department will publish the detailed responses received to the public consultation on the future of the Citizenship Survey in due course.</p> <p>The 2010-11 Citizenship Survey fieldwork will conclude on 31 March 2011, followed by publication of reports in the months following analysis of that data.</p>	
<p>Statistics: Statistical outputs and other activities falling into the following categories are candidates 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 	<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 	<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 determined 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

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<p>5. Analysis of specific health conditions including Health Statistics Quarterly</p> <p>6. Statistical services and support</p> <p>Producer: ONS</p> <p>Date notified to National Statistician: 18 January 2011</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>6. Includes support to the cross-government Longitudinal Data Strategy and Virtual Microdata Laboratory Micro-Analysis and Support.</p>	<p>Technology infrastructure must continue.</p> <p>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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The final package of cuts is expected to be agreed by the ONS Board that next meets on 11 February.
<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 CLG'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.

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<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 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: Immediately</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>2. Annual statistics relating to requests by parents to local authorities that a child be placed in a specified school.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>5. Annual Statistics relating to figures for local authority spending on school education.</p> <p>6. Annual statistics relating to budgeted running cost information provided by education authorities, and managers of grant-aided and self-governing schools.</p> <p>7. Annual statistics relating to results of the annual census of independent primary, secondary and special schools in Scotland.</p>	<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:- <ul 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 3 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 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.
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<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"> • 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 have offered users an opportunity to discuss this decision by contacting them.
<p>Statistics:</p> <p>i. Health Visitors, District Nurses & 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.

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<p>Statistics: Parental experiences of services provided to disabled children Statistics</p> <p>Producer: Department for Education (DfE)</p> <p>Date notified to National Statistician: 17 August 2010</p> <p>Statistics to cease/reduce from: November 2010</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 disabled child. • 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'. 	<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 reduce centrally imposed data burdens and to free up resources for front line services. • 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>	<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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data collection will stop to achieve necessary savings. • The percentage of schools with extended services (98%) 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.

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<p>Date notified to National Statistician: 10 August 2010</p> <p>Statistics to cease/reduce from: October 2010</p>	<p>the Training and Development Agency for Schools.</p>	<p>almost all schools have extended services. There are no known alternative sources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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: 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.

Annex B Consultations about statistics (notified to the National Statistician between July 2010 and August 2011)

This table summarises the consultations that have been notified by Departmental Heads of Profession to the National Statistician in the period 26 November 2010 – 11 August 2011.

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.

Entries added since the last meeting are shaded grey.

DETAILS OF CONSULTATION	DESCRIPTION OF CONSULTATION	CONSULTATION END
<p>Health Trends in Wales 2011 – User Survey</p> <p>Producer: WG</p> <p>16 June 2011</p>	<p>Health Trends in Wales 2011 was published for the first time on 31 March 2011, and it updates ‘Health in your Pocket’ published in 2003. It is an accessible, handy sized reference book showing long term trends in health. Much of the data presented here has already been published in ‘Health Statistics Wales’.</p> <p>To ensure that we are fulfilling the needs of our users, we are currently carrying out a user survey to seek feedback on the usefulness of the publication and how frequently it should be updated.</p>	<p>08 September 2011</p>
<p>Project Plan for Review of experimental components of the index of Services</p> <p>Producer: ONS</p> <p>Accessed via web on 3 August 2011</p>	<p>The document outlines the plan to review the experimental components of the Index of Services. Users are invited to provide views on the plan – for example, on the timing of the review or on the priority to be given to the experimental components – by 31 August 2011.</p>	<p>31 August 2011</p>

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<p>Consultation on Regional Economic Performance Indicators</p> <p>Producer: BIS</p> <p>Opening date: 24 May 2011</p>	<p>The annual web publication 'Regional Economic Performance Indicators' (REPI) provides data on a number of socio-economic indicators covering the nine English regions, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The aim of the publication is to give a balanced picture of all the statistical information relevant to economic performance, competitiveness and the state of the regions.</p>	<p>31 August 2011</p>
<p>Review of Infant Mortality Statistics</p> <p>Producer: ONS</p> <p>Accessed via website 5 July 2011</p>	<p>The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is reviewing its infant mortality outputs to ensure they are coherent and continue to meet user requirements. Comments are requested on the proposed changes outlined in this document.</p> <p>A wide-ranging ONS Work Programme Consultation, which was carried out in the light of the government's 2010 Spending Review, was published on 1 November 2010 and ended on 24 December 2010. Responses relevant to infant mortality received as part of the Work Programme Consultation will be considered alongside responses to this review.</p>	<p>16 August</p>
<p>Local area summary statistics</p> <p>Producer: WG</p> <p>Accessed via website on 3rd June 2011</p>	<p>We would welcome your contributions to help us understand the demand for information and what our users consider to be important. This will help to inform our priorities for the years ahead.</p> <p>The Local Area Summary Statistics were published for the first time in May 2010. They bring together a range of existing data, including statistics on health, the economy, education and other areas of interest. They are updated as newer information becomes available to ensure that, as far as possible, they contain the most recent data.</p> <p>To ensure that we are fulfilling the needs of our users, we are currently carrying out a consultation to seek feedback on the usefulness and usability of the Local Area Summary Statistics that we currently produce. We are seeking views on how the output can be improved and if there are any gaps in what we provide.</p>	<p>9 August 2011</p>

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<p>Consultation on National Adult Social Care Data Developments</p> <p>Producer: NHS IC</p> <p>13 June 2011</p>	<p>This Consultation covers the initial stage of the review of collections and data requirements relating to adult Social Care. Through it we are seeking your views on the Social Care collections which have been identified in this stage as no longer supporting a National requirement and therefore are proposed to be withdrawn for 2011/12.</p>	<p>08 August 2011</p>
<p>Consultation on statistics that measure the progress of children from disadvantaged backgrounds to Higher Education</p> <p>Producer: BIS</p> <p>Opening date: 08 June 2011</p>	<p>The government has an ongoing interest in monitoring the educational achievement of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds with a view to narrowing the gap in achievement between disadvantaged youngsters and their peers. The "Full-time young participation by socio-economic class (FYPSEC)" statistic has been published annually in an Official Statistics release produced by the Higher Education Analysis division of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS). The consultation relates to changes to this publication.</p>	<p>01 August 2011</p>
<p>Consultation on National Statistics on Income Tax liabilities and receipts and expenses and benefits</p> <p>Producer: HMRC</p> <p>Opening Date: 28 April 2011</p>	<p>HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) are holding a consultation on its income tax liabilities and receipts, and expenses and benefits statistics with users, from 28 April to 29 July.</p> <p>The consultation aims to understand how customers use the statistics and how the statistics can be improved to better meet the needs of users.</p>	<p>29 July 2011</p>

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<p>Proposed changes to Housing Data collections</p> <p>Producer: WG</p> <p>Accessed via website on 6th June 2011</p>	<p>We want to know your views about our proposals for stopping or reducing the frequency of some of our housing data collections.</p> <p>The data collections being considered are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New house building • Social housing sales • Social landlords' possessions and evictions • Homelessness <p>To help us do this it would be appreciated if you could take the time to complete and return a short questionnaire.</p>	<p>15 July 2011</p>
<p>Consultation on ceasing to collect data on some penalties for motor vehicle offences</p> <p>Producer: Scottish Government</p> <p>Notified on 24 May 2011</p>	<p>Further to a stakeholder review exercise completed in late 2009, and as outlined in the progress note published alongside the criminal proceedings bulletin in January 2011, we are considering ceasing the data collections that derive the data presented in the following additional motor vehicle datasets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Table 3, Police conditional offers for moving vehicle offences; • Tables 8 and 9, Police fixed penalty notices issued for stationary vehicle offences; and, • Tables 10 and 11, Local Authority penalty charge notices for parking infringements. <p>This proposal does not affect other information on motor vehicle offences presented in the additional motor vehicle datasets or the main criminal proceedings statistical bulletin.</p> <p>We are considering this action for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The usage of these data is considered low compared to other Scottish Government publications and resources need to be allocated to those data where clear user need is known and user interest is greatest. • The Safety Camera partnership now publishes in a new statistical release, a subset of data presented in Table 3 of the Criminal Proceedings additional dataset (on conditional offers for moving vehicle offences) • Over the last few years, these data have been used for very few responses to Parliamentary 	<p>8 July 2011</p>

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	<p>Questions, Freedom of Information and other ad hoc requests for information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The collection of these data imposes a burden on the resources of the police forces and local authorities providing the data. 	
<p>Consultation on the National Accounts classification process and sector classification guide</p> <p>Producer: ONS</p> <p>Opening date: 1 April 2011</p>	<p>The consultation seeks stakeholder views on the way ONS makes and publicises classification decisions in the national account. The consultation document describes a number of specific proposals that ONS are seeking views on, and these are reflected in a set of suggested revisions to the current document describing the process.</p>	30 June 2011
<p>Lifestyles Statistics Compendia Publications</p> <p>Producer: NHSIC</p> <p>Accessed via website: 11 April 2011</p>	<p>This consultation aims to engage with the users of the reports to understand how these reports are used and to seek comments on how the relevance and usefulness can be improved. This needs to be considered against increasing resource pressures, following the Government's 2010 spending review. The overall aims are to ensure the reports remain relevant and useful to users whilst maximising value for money; we would also seek the views of users on the methodologies used in the publications to ensure they remain up to date and fit for purpose.</p> <p>Comments are invited from all interested parties.</p>	24 June 2011
<p>Draft Statistics Plan for 2011-12: Consultation</p> <p>Producer: DCLG</p> <p>Notified on 13 April</p>	<p>The draft statistics plan describes our proposals for collecting and publishing official statistics over the period April 2011 to March 2012.</p> <p>We are seeking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> users' reactions to our proposals and their views on whether our planned deployment of resources will meet their needs suggestions for the development of any new statistics, products or services 	3 June 2011 (extended from 16 May 2011)

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<p>by DCLG</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • suggestions for any further reductions in the amount of data we collect and publish (beyond those already submitted in the context of the 'Single Data List') • information from users about the particular uses to which they put our statistics 	
<p>Future of Nomis – Consultation</p> <p>Producer: ONS</p> <p>Accessed via website</p>	<p>The ONS currently has a wide range of data disseminated through a number of different formats and portals; from columns of figures in pdf files to Neighbourhood Statistics, from spreadsheets to Nomis. The ONS intends to streamline this array of different ways of disseminating data to provide a smaller number of solutions with greater functionality.</p> <p>This document attempts to explain what these solutions will mean to users and in particular what the consequences might be for users who currently access data through Nomis.</p>	<p>20 May 2011</p>
<p>Consultation on the content of DASA's quarterly civilian publication CPS01</p> <p>Producer: MoD</p> <p>Accessed website on 3 June 2011</p>	<p>Defence Analytical Services and Advice (DASA) plans to expand the presentation of statistics on civilian manpower currently published as National Statistics in its Quarterly Publication (CPS01). This is a continuation of DASA's improvements of its National Statistics, following the creation of the military Monthly Manning Report (MMR) and Quarterly Manning Report (QMR) in 2009 and the current open consultation.</p> <p>Your views are sought on what you would like to be included in the expanded publication.</p>	<p>15 May 2011</p>

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<p>The future of the General Lifestyle Survey</p> <p>Producer: Office for National Statistics</p> <p>Date Notified to National Statistician: 24 February 2011</p>	<p>This consultation document outlines the intention to change the way the General Lifestyle Survey data are 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>6 May 2011</p>
<p>Statistic: Business Payment Support Service</p> <p>Producer: HMRC</p> <p>Date Notified to National Statistician: 6th July 2011</p>	<p>HM Revenue & Customs' (HMRC) Business Payment Support Service is designed to meet the needs of all businesses and individuals who are experiencing difficulties in paying the tax due in full and on time.</p> <p>Statistics relating to HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC's) Business Payment Support Service (BPSS) which provides 'Time to Pay' arrangements to businesses and individuals experiencing difficulties in paying the tax due in full and on time. Publications provide information since inception of the service in November 2008. These are Official Statistics.</p>	<p>31st March</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>

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<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 Statistics 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>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>	<p>19 April 2011</p>
<p>The priorities for health and safety statistics</p> <p>Producer: HSE</p> <p>Accessed via website: 16 March</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>	<p>11 April 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> <p>TSP 8: Age distribution of UK Regular Forces</p> <p>TSP 9: UK Regular Forces Rank Structure</p> <p>TSP 19: UK Regular Forces Intake and Outflow by Age</p> <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>13 March 2011</p>
<p>Streamlining of Annual Business Survey (ABS) Questionnaire</p> <p>Office for National Statistics</p> <p>Date Notified to National Statistician: 24 February 2011</p>	<p>The Office for National Statistics 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>	<p>28 February 2011</p>
<p>National Statistics on the experience of black and minority ethnic patients</p> <p>Producer: Department 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>	<p>18 February 2011</p>

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<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 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> <p>These proposals represent significant improvements by: 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> <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 criminal justice publications.</p>	<p>18 February 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> <p>What GROS demography statistical outputs are used and how.</p> <p>The impact of possible reductions in various areas of GROS demography statistical work.</p>	<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>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</p>	<p>14 January 2011</p>

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<p>Producer: DCLG Date notified to National Statistician: 30 November 2010</p>	<p>collections, and to reduce the burden imposed on data providers in the Fire and Rescue Services.</p>	
<p>Consultation on the proposed changes to the publication of monthly coal statistics Producer: Department of Energy and Climate Change 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: Statistical Directorate Annual Compendia Publications Producer: WAG 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> <p>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.</p> <p>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> <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>Education and Training Statistics</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" publication is now being carried out. The</p>	<p>31 December</p>

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<p>for the United Kingdom</p> <p>Producer: Department for Education</p> <p>Date Notified to National Statistician: 24 February 2011</p>	<p>Department is reviewing the 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 & training and qualifications & destinations, with annexes containing figures on education expenditure and UK population numbers</p>	<p>2010</p>
<p>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: what ONS outputs they use and how they use them the impact on them of possible reductions in various areas of ONS work.</p> <p>Responses will be used to inform ONS' work programme for the next four years.</p>	<p>24 December 2010</p>
<p>Education and Lifelong Learning Statistics</p> <p>Producer: WAG</p> <p>Date notified to National Statistician: 18 November 2010</p>	<p>WAG are 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 useability 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>
<p>The Future of the Citizenship Survey</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</p>	<p>30 November 2010</p>

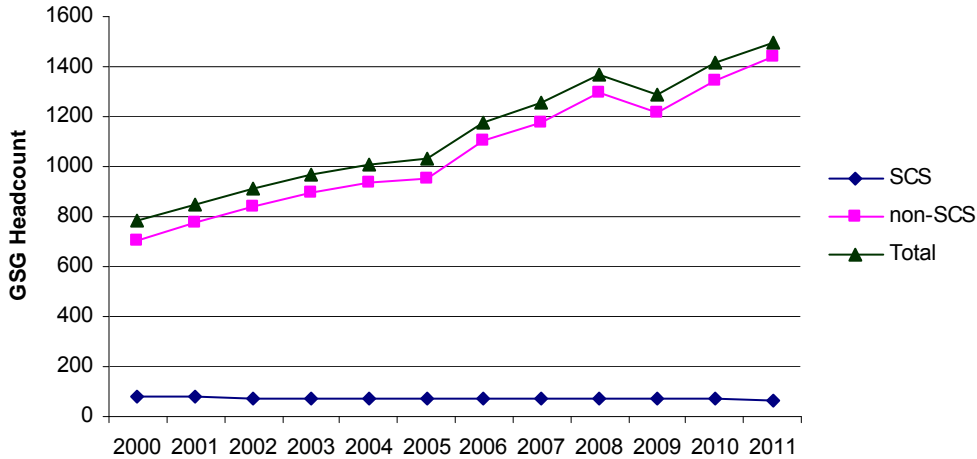
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<p>Producer: DCLG Date notified to National Statistician: 20 October 2010</p>	<p>in England and Wales each year, plus a minority ethnic boost sample of 5,000 and a Muslim boost sample of 1,200. This statistical consultation sets out the intention to 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>Future of Agricultural Statistics Producer: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) 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. 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>

Annex C Historical changes to Government Statistician Group membership

1. Since 2000, the NSO and its predecessors have collected information on membership of the Government Statisticians Group (GSG), that is, the body of professional statisticians within government. A summary of this data is provided in the chart below.

GSG membership by grade, 2000-11



2. It should be noted that, historically, this information has been collected for the purpose of maintaining communication links between the NSO and GSG rather than for workforce planning. This limits the usefulness of this data in accurately tracking historical changes to GSG membership. In particular, the collection method used in the past relied heavily on staff actively providing the NSO with information for themselves and their colleagues in order to ensure that the information remained up to date. However, the data does provide an overall picture.
3. An exercise designed to improve the quality of this database at the beginning of 2011 led to significant changes to the numbers for some departments. As a consequence, the net increase in GSG numbers observed between March 2010 and March 2011 was driven entirely by the results of this exercise, rather than an actual increase in the number of government statisticians. For the majority of this period, the Civil Service-wide external recruitment ban was in place, with the only exception being for Fast Stream Assistant Statisticians.
4. Over the period March 2000 to March 2011 the data available suggests that the GSG headcount has virtually doubled from 785 to 1500. The overall increase in trend is due largely to the introduction of the Statistical Officer (StO) scheme around 2004 (although 'near-misses' from the Fast Stream were being appointed as StO's from about 1999). Statistical Officers (including Higher and Senior StOs) now account for half (50 per cent) of the GSG. The StO grade was introduced in order to supplement the lack of successful Fast Stream Assistant Statisticians despite a continuing demand from departments, a purpose it clearly achieved. To an extent, the increase in StOs also reflects the replacement in many departments of administrative staff by StOs, leading to a general up-skilling in statistical areas.
5. Despite this increase, there has been a reduction in the number of Senior Civil Service (SCS) members of the GSG. There are currently 62 SCS members of the GSG, down from 77 in 2000. Of these, just 10 are at director (SCS2) level or above. As the number of GSG SCS posts, particularly outside ONS and the Authority, cannot be unrelated to the level of influence of statisticians within government, such a reduction is therefore a

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matter for concern. The National Statistician and the NSO are therefore undertaking a variety of work packages to address this and other capacity and capability issues.

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(COS)(11)23

Statistical Expenditure Report 5: Scottish Population Surveys

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-john-swinney-msp-22092011.pdf>

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

COMMITTEE FOR OFFICIAL STATISTICS

SA(COS)(11)24

***GSS Task Force on Quality:
Outcome and Next Steps***

Purpose

1. This paper updates the Committee on the work done by the Government Statistical Service (GSS) Quality Task Force, and how this is being taken forward.

Recommendations

2. Members of the Committee are invited to note and comment on the work and outcomes of the Quality Task Force.

Discussion

3. Principle 4 of the *Code of Practice for Official Statistics* requires that ‘...Quality should be monitored and assured taking account of internationally agreed practices.’
4. To assist the GSS in taking forward this requirement, and to look more widely at quality, a GSS Quality Task Force was set up in January 2010, to develop proposals for quality measurement and reporting, quality reviews, quality assurance and quality management on behalf of the GSS. The Task Force, chaired by Andy Sutherland, Head of Profession in the NHS Information Centre for Health and Social Care, included a wide range of members from across the GSS, and was supported by the ONS Quality Centre.
5. The task force completed its work in July 2011 and has produced:
 - i. a GSS quality good practice document which summarises the guidance to help producers of official statistics comply with the Code and supplements the National Statistician’s existing Guidance on Quality Methods and Harmonisation;
 - ii. quality measurement and reporting guidance, which describes an approach to reporting on quality, and provides templates to support this;
 - iii. a training course on quality assurance and quality management, at two levels – strategic and operational – for roll out across the GSS; and
 - iv. an updated tool for undertaking quality reviews, based on the earlier more survey – focussed Quality Methods and Harmonisation Tool (QMHT).
6. Each of these four elements are described in more detail below. A particular area of work has been to ensure that the material produced is relevant to statistics produced from administrative as well as survey sources.

Quality Good Practice Document

7. This document, attached at **Annex A**, provides a summary of the other tools and products available, and describes the working definitions used.
 - Quality – “Fitness for purpose”.
 - Quality Management – “encompassing approach to quality work”.
 - Quality Assurance – “anticipating and avoiding problems”.
 - Quality Control – “responding to observed problems”.

Quality Measurement and Reporting Guidance

8. This draws together pre-existing guidance and provides information on good practice, including examples and case studies. It provides templates and guidance for reporting against the quality dimensions and other reporting standards of the European Statistical System.

Training Course

9. This reviews the key elements of quality management and quality assurance. The course is available at two levels: one aimed at senior managers (strategic emphasis) and one aimed at other GSS staff (operational emphasis). The course covers definitions, output and process quality, quality assurance, control, management, roles, and tools available. The strategic course has a stronger focus on quality management, while the operational course focuses more on quality control, although both cover all areas. The course has been refined following piloting at a number of GSS sites.

Quality, Methods and Harmonisation Tool (QMHT)

10. This is a self-assessment questionnaire, designed to aid producers of statistics in reviewing their surveys and outputs. As such, it helps them work towards becoming compliant with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. QMHT covers all stages of the statistical process, and is suitable for survey and administrative data.

Dissemination and next steps

11. The quality good practice document, measurement and reporting guidance and QMHT are all now available across the GSS, through the GSS intranet, StatNet. Awareness of them has been raised by presentations at the GSS Heads of Profession meeting in June, and at the GSS Methodology Symposium and the Government Economic and Social Research Conference in July. Funding from the Quality Improvement Fund has been agreed for roll out of the training course across the GSS. This will be done from the autumn on a 'train the trainer' basis, with a limited number of courses provided by the ONS Quality Centre across the GSS, which can then be rolled out by departmental participants within their own departments.
12. The outcome of this work is a series of tools to help GSS staff meet the requirements of Principle 4 of the Code, held together by an overarching set of good practice guidance, and reinforced through the roll out of a training course. Inevitably this will take time, but the components are now in place. The Task Force has now closed down, and ongoing work will be overseen by the National Statistician's Office.

Andy Sutherland, Head of Profession for statistics, NHS Information Centre for Health and Social Care, and Chair of the GSS Task Force on Quality, September 2011

List of Annexes

Annex A GSS Quality Good Practice Document

Annex A: GSS Quality Good Practice Document

[Note: of the sub-annexes referred to here, only sub-annex 4 on quality measurement and reporting is included. Further sub-annexes can be circulated to the Committee on request]



GSS Quality Good Practice

2011

The GSS Quality Task Force was established in 2010 to develop and draft proposals for statistical quality policies, standards and good practice associated with:

- quality management;
- quality reviews;
- quality assurance; and
- quality measurement and reporting.

This document sets out guidance developed by the Task Force to help producers of official statistics achieve the quality requirements of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics as assessed by the UK Statistics Authority. It concentrates in particular on Principle 4 (sound methods and assured quality) and supplements the National Statistician's Guidance on Quality Methods and Harmonisation¹.

1. What does quality mean?

The GSS Quality Task Force has agreed definitions of key quality terms as used in the context of Official Statistics. These definitions have been signed off by the GSS Statistics Policy and Standards Committee. Key terms are:

Quality – “Fitness for purpose”

Quality Management – “encompassing approach to quality work”

Quality Assurance – “anticipating and avoiding problems”

Quality Control – “responding to observed problems”

¹ <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/national-statistician/ns-reports--reviews-and-guidance/national-statistician-s-guidance/quality--methods-and-harmonisation.pdf>

More detailed definitions of these quality terms, along with other quality concepts are provided in Sub-annex 1.

2. Good Practice

On the basis of the Code of Practice, (particularly Principle 4), the GSS are required to:

- Engage in quality management,
- Engage in quality assurance,
- Review their statistical processes, and
- Measure and report on the quality of their outputs.

This document recommends good practice in terms of meeting these requirements.

2.1 Quality Management and Quality Assurance (including continuous improvement)

Principle 4, Practice 4

“Publish quality guidelines, and ensure staff are suitably trained in quality management.”

Principle 4, Practice 3

“Adopt quality assurance procedures ...”

Principle 4, Practice 5

“Seek to achieve continuous improvement in statistical process ...”

A training course has been developed that reviews the key elements of quality management and quality assurance (specifically addressing the requirement in Principle 4, Practice 4). This course is available at two levels: one aimed at senior managers (strategic emphasis) and one aimed at other GSS staff (operational emphasis). More information on the course is available in Sub-annex 2.

2.2 Quality Reviews

Principle 4, Practice 1

“Ensure that official statistics are produced according to scientific principles. Publish detail of the methods adopted, including explanations of why particular choices were made.”

Principle 4, Practice 5

“Seek to achieve continuous improvement in statistical processes by, for example, undertaking regular reviews or releasing statistical work in progress, such as experimental statistics.”

The Quality, Methods and Harmonisation Tool (QMHT) is a self-assessment questionnaire, designed to aid producers of statistics in reviewing their surveys and outputs. As such, it helps them work towards becoming compliant with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. QMHT covers all stages of the statistical process, and is suitable for survey and administrative data. More information is available at Sub-annex 3.

2.3 Measure and report on quality

Principle 4, Practice 2

“Ensure that official statistics are produced to a level of quality that meets users’ needs, and that users are informed about the quality of statistical outputs ...”

Principle 4, Practice 4

“Publish quality guidelines ...”

Principle 8, Practice 1

“Provide information on the quality and reliability of statistics in relation to the range of potential uses, and on methods, procedures, and classifications.”

A means of measuring quality and ensuring that the above practices are considered is provided in the Quality Measurement and Reporting Guidance. This draws together pre-existing guidance and provides information on good practice, including examples and case studies and can be found in Sub-annex 4.

3. Implementation

Heads of Profession have responsibility for ensuring that the Code of Practice is observed within their departments. This document, its annexes and the training offered on quality management are effective tools to start the implementation and further development of this good practice within each department.

Sub-annex 4: GSS Quality Measurement and Reporting

Guidance statement and an example framework for reporting

1. Guidance Statement

1.1 The GSS guidance on quality measurement and reporting is:

Heads of Professions and Lead Officials of organisations producing statistics must ensure evidence of the quality of outputs by reporting against the nine European Statistical System (ESS) quality dimensions and principles², as appropriate for the output.

1.2 This is necessary to comply with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. In particular, Principle 4, Practice 2 which states:

Ensure that official statistics are produced to a level of quality that meets users' needs, and that users are informed about the quality of statistical outputs, including estimates of the main sources of bias and other errors, and other aspects of the European Statistical System definition of quality.

1.3 The following provides information to help producers decide how best to meet this requirement, and provides an example of a framework approach to reporting on quality. Beyond reporting against the ESS dimensions, the guidance does not require use of the framework, or preclude use of alternative approaches.

2. Good practice and an example framework for reporting

Background

2.1 There are approximately 1,500 National and Official Statistics publications currently released by 50 different Government Departments. Across these outputs, the publication of supporting quality information and measures is varied. Given the variety of statistics produced across Government, and different user requirements and trade-offs made, variation in quality is inevitable.

2.2 In 2009, the UKSA published the Code of Practice and has subsequently commenced a programme of assessment to determine which statistics should bear the label 'National Statistics'. Other statistics are simply 'Official Statistics'. The former must adhere to the code; for the latter the code is best practice. The code imposes requirements in respect of quality; Departments may make trade offs in respect of aspects of this.

² The original quality dimensions are: relevance, accuracy and reliability, timeliness and punctuality, accessibility and clarity, and coherence and comparability; these are set out in Eurostat Statistical Law. However more recent quality guidance from Eurostat includes some additional quality principles on: output quality trade-offs, user needs and perceptions, performance cost and respondent burden, and confidentiality, transparency and security.

- 2.3 All Departments responsible for Official and National Statistics must be open and transparent about the quality of statistics, in order to ensure all users are informed about the quality of the information upon which they will be drawing conclusions and making decisions.

The Remit of the Quality Task Force

- 2.4 The GSS Statistical Policy and Standards Committee (GSS SPSC) exists to develop, agree and promote statistical policies, standards and good practice, covering all of the Official Statistics managed by the GSS, and to monitor their implementation and application.
- 2.5 To assist in fulfilling its role the GSS SPSC has agreed that a small number of taskforces should be set up. The Quality Task Force was set up to develop proposals for statistical quality policies, standards and good practice associated with:
- **quality management and assurance** – the Code refers to ensuring that staff are trained in quality management (principle 4, practice 4); and to define quality assurance and develop guidance on different approaches to quality assurance;
 - **quality reviews** (to include Survey Control reviews) – the aim is to streamline reviews and consider the use of the Quality, Methods and Harmonisation Tool; and
 - **quality measurement and reporting** – consider existing guidance and make recommendations on good practice.
- 2.6 All of these streams of work have been designed to help statistics producers comply with the requirements of UK Statistics Authority Code of Practice.
- 2.7 This note describes the Quality Task Force’s recommended framework for **quality measurement and reporting** within statistical publications. This framework builds on the existing ‘National Statistician’s guidance: Quality Methods and Harmonisation³’.

Scope

- 2.8 The principles that the Quality Task Force have followed, on quality measurement and reporting are:
- to relate to existing quality resources where possible, notably the ESS quality dimensions and the ONS quality guidance;
 - to strike a balance between consistency in presentation of quality assessments across publications, and flexibility for producers to do what is sensible for them;
 - to create something that is equally applicable to statistics derived from administrative and survey based sources.
 - to propose a framework that is proportionate, and not overly burdensome on producers.

³ <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/national-statistician/ns-guidance-and-reports/national-statistician-s-guidance/index.html>

Framework

2.9 The main features of the framework are a layered approach to guidance, and flexibility in its application.

Three layers of guidance

2.10 There are three layers to the guidance for completing quality reports:

- i) top layer: the **quality report template** (Annex 1) guidance covering a high level summary of what producers might want to say under each dimension of quality, and which aspects might need to be covered in the regular quality update.
- ii) second layer: **GSS summary quality measures** a summary of more specific measures to help in completing the template (Annex 3)
- iii) third layer: **full ONS guidance** containing a detailed list of over 160 quality measures (link provided in Annex 5)

Reporting template

2.11 For outputs which are produced and published with regular frequency (monthly or quarterly), it is recommended that producers split the quality report into background information which does not change for each output and measures which do change with each output.

2.12 For surveys which are undertaken as a one-off exercise only a single quality report will need to be produced. Where the frequency is annual, producers may choose to combine or split the quality report as appropriate.

2.13 In summary, where the report is split:

1. **Background quality report:** This contains information which is typically static in nature, with most of the material not changing from one release to another. It is based around the nine European Statistical System (ESS) quality dimensions and principles*.
2. **Regular quality update:** This would more typically be within the notes of the publication itself, but minimal in length, containing the things specific to that run of the data, and would need to be kept regularly updated.

2.14 For example, static items might include methodology, where the data are collected from, the uses of the data, and the format of user-groups. On the other hand, dynamic things typically include actual measures such as response rates, standard errors, imputation rates, etc, metrics which change each time the output is published.

* The original quality dimensions are: relevance, accuracy and reliability, timeliness and punctuality, accessibility and clarity, and coherence and comparability; these are set out in Eurostat Statistical Law. However more recent quality guidance from Eurostat includes some additional quality principles on: output quality trade-offs, user needs and perceptions, performance cost and respondent burden, and confidentiality, transparency and security.

Flexibility

- 2.15 The Task Force are recommending all producers say something about quality, but it is not appropriate to mandate all producers to answer all aspects of the key quality measures, and so it is ultimately up to producers to decide what works best for their publications.
- 2.16 The layered approach offers the opportunity to pick and choose aspects and measures of quality that are relevant to a particular publication.
- 2.17 It is for the producing Department to decide whether to incorporate the template within the body of publications, as a separate document sitting alongside the publications, or simply a link on a website. It will depend upon the style of publication and technologies available to the author which approach 'fits best'. This is an attempt to provide something which helps authors report on quality, how authors wish to implement it is up to them.
- 2.18 More detail is contained in the annexes:
- Annex 1: The blank template for the Background Quality Report
 - Annex 2: Information to include in the Regular Quality Update
 - Annex 3: GSS Summary Quality Measures
 - Annex 4: Some links to example templates
 - Annex 5: Links to useful resources

Annex 1: Proposed GSS Background Quality Report template

Background Quality Report: *[Insert publication name]*

Dimension	Assessment by the author
Introduction	Context for the quality report.
	<p><i>Things to consider ...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A brief history of the statistical process and output in question</i> • <i>Summary of the method used to compile output</i> • <i>Overview of the production and dissemination process</i> • <i>Documentation available, particularly relating to methodology and quality</i>
Relevance	The degree to which the statistical product meets user needs in both coverage and content.
	<p><i>Things to consider...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A content-oriented description of all statistical outputs</i> • <i>Definitions of statistical target concepts (population, definition of units and aggregation formula) including discrepancies from ESS/international concepts (can also be discussed under Coherence and Comparability)</i> • <i>Information on completeness compared with relevant regulations/guidelines</i> • <i>Unmet user needs, including reasons for not meeting them</i> • <i>Available quality indicators</i>
Accuracy and Reliability	The proximity between an estimate and the unknown true value.
	<p><i>Things to consider...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A presentation of methodology sufficient for i) judging whether it lives up to internationally accepted standards and good practice and (ii) enabling the reader to understand specific error assessments</i> • <i>Identification of the main sources of error with special focus on the key estimates</i> • <i>An assessment of the potential for bias (sign and order of magnitude) for each key indicator in quantitative or qualitative terms</i>

	<p>Surveys</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sampling Errors • Coverage Errors • Measurement Errors • Non-response Errors • Processing Errors <p>Statistical Processes using administrative sources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An evaluation/assessment of undercoverage and overcoverage including of spatial variables • An evaluation/assessment of errors in classification variables • For event-reporting systems, an estimate/assessment of the rate of unreported events
<p>Timeliness and Punctuality</p>	<p><i>Timeliness refers to the time gap between publication and the reference period. Punctuality refers to the gap between planned and actual publication dates.</i></p> <hr/> <p><i>Things to consider...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For annual or more frequent releases: the average production time for each release of data • For annual or more frequent releases: the percentage of releases delivered on time, based on scheduled release dates • The reasons for non-punctual releases explained
<p>Accessibility and Clarity</p>	<p><i>Accessibility is the ease with which users are able to access the data, also reflecting the format in which the data are available and the availability of supporting information. Clarity refers to the quality and sufficiency of the metadata, illustrations and accompanying advice.</i></p> <hr/> <p><i>Things to consider...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of the conditions of access to data • A summary description of the information (metadata) accompanying the statistics • The description should refer to both less sophisticated and more advanced users and how their needs have been taken into account • A summary of user feedback on accessibility and clarity
<p>Coherence and Comparability</p>	<p><i>Coherence is the degree to which data that are derived from different sources or methods, but refer to the same topic, are similar. Comparability is the degree to which data can be</i></p>

	<p>compared over time and domain.</p> <hr/> <p><i>Things to consider...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Brief descriptions of all conceptual and methodological metadata elements that could affect coherence/comparability</i> • <i>An assessment (preferably quantitative) of the possible effect of each reported difference on the output values</i> • <i>Differences between the statistical processes and the corresponding European regulations/standards and/or international standards (if any)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Comparability over time</i> • <i>Comparability over Regions/ Administrations</i> • <i>Internal Coherence</i> • <i>Coherence with National Accounts</i> • <i>Coherence with Other Statistics</i> • <i>Mirror Statistics</i> <p><i>Geographies might be an important topic to include here. Issues such as boundary changes over time might affect comparability, and it may be possible to comment on the comparability (or lack of), of similar sources due to the geographical building blocks within which data has been collected.</i></p> <p><i>It may be useful here to describe any common pitfalls with the data. For example, 'users often interpret this as the number of GCSE passes, but care should be taken as this table does not include equivalent qualifications', or 'people occasionally misinterpret this figure as the number of people unemployed, whereas it is actually the number of people unemployed and claiming benefit. For figures on all unemployed, please see here www.insertlink.gov.uk'</i></p>
<p>Trade-offs between Output Quality Components</p>	<p><i>Trade-offs are the extent to which different aspects of quality are balanced against each other.</i></p> <hr/> <p><i>Things to consider...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A description of each important trade-off that has been analysed and the basis on which the trade-off decision has been made</i> • <i>A statement concerning any trade-offs that should have been analysed but have not been</i>
<p>Assessment of User Needs and</p>	<p><i>The processes for finding out about users and uses, and their views on the statistical products.</i></p>

<p>Perceptions</p>	<p><i>Things to consider...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Means of obtaining information on users and uses</i> • <i>Description and classification of users</i> • <i>Uses for which users want the outputs</i> • <i>Users and uses given special consideration</i> • <i>Means of obtaining user views</i> • <i>Main results regarding user satisfaction</i> • <i>Date of most recent user satisfaction survey</i>
<p>Performance, Cost and Respondent Burden</p>	<p><i>The effectiveness, efficiency and economy of the statistical output.</i></p> <hr/> <p><i>Things to consider...</i></p> <p><i>There are many recommended measures including:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Annual operational cost</i> • <i>Annual respondent burden in financial terms and/or hours</i> <p><i>The operational cost can be expressed in staff time or perhaps more helpfully (for external users) by giving a relative indication of its resource allocation compared to other Departmental outputs, or proportion of overall resources used.</i></p>
<p>Confidentiality, Transparency and Security</p>	<p><i>The procedures and policy used to ensure sound confidentiality, security and transparent practices.</i></p> <hr/> <p><i>Things to consider...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Description required for procedures on Confidentiality, Transparency and Security</i>

Annex 2: Regular quality update

These would more typically be within the notes of the publication itself, but minimal in length, containing the things specific to that run of the data, and would need to be kept regularly updated.

These should be identified as 'regular quality update' and reference to the ESS quality dimensions as appropriate. They should also provide a link to the full quality report. An example from the Department for Work and Pensions early estimates publication is given below:

Regular Quality Update

In line with the GSS standards for quality reporting, this publication has a full quality report which is available here:

www.dwp.gov.uk/statistics/earlyestimates/qualityreport

The more dynamic aspects of quality which are specific to this release are presented below.

Accuracy and Reliability

Accuracy of the early estimates is measured using the typical revision over the past 12 months.

For the Income Support Lone Parent statistics the revisions have:

- *had a mean magnitude of 0.4 percent;*
- *with the biggest revision being 1.06 percent; and*
- *the smallest revision being 0.07 percent.*

For the ESA/ incapacity benefits statistics the revisions have:

- *had a mean of magnitude 0.2 percent;*
- *with the biggest revision being 0.33 percent; and*
- *the smallest revision being 0.07 percent.*

Over the past 12 months Income Support Lone Parents (ISLP) early estimates have tended to under estimate the final National Statistic, in other words the estimation errors have not tended to zero. This is because the Lone Parent Obligation policy change has reduced the number of lone parents claiming Income Support, and this has had a small impact on the estimation modelling. This is expected to stabilise when the policy is full implemented.

Annex 3: GSS Summary Quality Measures

Key Quality Measure	Quantitative / qualitative/	Description / Notes	Related ONS quality measures - statistical surveys	Related ONS quality measures - administrative sources
Relevance:				
<i>The degree to which the statistical product meets user needs in both coverage and content.</i>				
1. Describe how the data relate to the needs of users	Qualitative	This should show how far the statistics go towards meeting user needs, including their use in informing decisions. This can be gathered from user satisfaction surveys or other feedback.	B1.1 Describe and classify key users of output; B1.2 Describe needs of key users and uses of output B8.29 Identify known gaps between key user needs, in terms of coverage and detail, and current data	B2.1 Describe the main uses of the administrative data; B2.2 Describe the primary purpose of data collection by the administrative source; B2.14 Describe the extent to which the data from the administrative source meet statistical requirements.
Accuracy:				
<i>The proximity between an estimate and the unknown true value.</i>				
2. What are the primary measures of statistical accuracy and what do they show?	Split	This will cover the headline accuracy measure for the statistical output. For statistical surveys this will usually be sampling errors, and may be conveyed as confidence intervals, standard errors or sample sizes, but for administrative sources the headline story on accuracy may be typical revisions between provisional and final estimates or coverage/ other data issues and in which case might cover similar ground to the other accuracy measures.	B5.2/B5.3 Estimated standard error for key estimates	
3. Describe the non sampling / or other data issues affecting accuracy?	Split	This should cover any other relevant information on the non-sampling or coverage aspect of accuracy - particularly measures of non-sampling error for statistical surveys and any other relevant information not already covered for administrative sources.	B3.4/3.5/3.7 Key Item/Unit response rate by sub-groups, weighted and unweighted (for household and business surveys)	B2.7 Describe the extent of coverage of the administrative data and any known coverage issues; B2.8 Describe the known sources of error in the administrative data; B2.9 Proportion of administrative records (units) with missing values; B2.18 Calculate match-rates, false positive match rates and false negative match rates for administrative sources; B2.10 Proportion of missing values by key data item

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4. Quantify the extent to which the data is cleaned before publication?	Split	This should give users an indication of any data cleaning that takes place on the raw data, and any impact this might have on the statistical output. This might be editing or imputation rates or missing data correction.	B4.11 Editing rate (for key items);B4.7 Total contribution to key estimates from imputed values	B2.16 Describe the data processing known to be required on the administrative data source
Timeliness and punctuality				
<i>Timeliness refers to the time gap between publication and the reference period. Punctuality refers to the gap between planned and actual publication dates.</i>				
5. What is the time lag from the reference date/period to the release of the provisional and final outputs?	Quantitative	Provides information on how timely statistics are in relation to user needs - for provisional and final outputs.	B8.1. Time lag from the reference date/period to the release of the provisional and final outputs B8.2 Time lag from the reference date/period to the release of the final output	B2.19 Describe extent to which data are timely
Accessibility and clarity				
<i>Accessibility is the ease with which users are able to access the data, also reflecting the format in which the data are available and the availability of supporting information. Clarity refers to the quality and sufficiency of the metadata, illustrations and accompanying advice.</i>				
6. Describe any restrictions on access to/use of the dataset?	Qualitative	Describe any restrictions on the availability of data on the statistical output, as well as any restrictions on the use of the final data by users, including any restrictions on sharing with third parties or standard caveats/ footnotes that will need to accompany the data.	B7.14 Describe any restrictions on access to the dataset B7.15 Describe any restrictions on the use of the dataset	B2.15 Describe constraints on the availability of administrative data at the required level of details
7. Describe the availability of metadata?	Qualitative	Metadata help users make appropriate use of statistics, and the availability helps improve accessibility.	B8.13 Are there links to metadata?	B2.4 Describe the metadata provided and not provided with the administrative source
Coherence and comparability				
<i>Coherence is the degree to which data that are derived from different sources or methods, but refer to the same topic, are similar. Comparability is the degree to which data can be compared over time and domain.</i>				
8. Describe the extent to which nationally/internationally agreed definitions and standards are used?	Qualitative	Describe the use of any standard concepts or classifications, including the reasons for any departures from standard. If relevant, include any information on how the policy behind the statistics/ admin collection compare internationally (e.g. OECD made some attempt to compare welfare benefit statistics)?		

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9. Describe the extent to which historical data are consistent?	Qualitative	This should summarise any issues which might affect time series comparability.	<i>B1.11 For a continuous survey, have there been any changes over time in the sample design methodology?</i>	<i>B2.22 Describe changes over time in the administrative data and their effects on the statistical product.</i>
10. Compare estimates with other sources on the same theme	Quantitative	This should provide a summary of how the statistics compare with other statistics covering similar ground or on the same theme, including explanations for any known differences.		<i>B2.23 Differences in concepts and definitions between the administrative sources and the statistical output</i>
Output quality trade-offs				
Trade-offs are the extent to which different aspects of quality are balanced against each other.				
12. A description of each important trade-off that has been analysed	Qualitative	Provide any information on important tradeoffs not provided elsewhere ...		
Assessment of user needs & perceptions				
The processes for finding out about users and uses, and their views on the statistical products.				
13. Describe results of user satisfaction assessments	Both			
Performance, cost and respondent burden				
The effectiveness, efficiency and economy of the statistical output.				
14. Annual Operational Cost and Respondent Burden	Quantitative	Provide estimates of the annual cost of operating the statistical output - either in financial or staff resource levels. This should include all activity directly relevant to that output. Do not include activity that would have happened anyway (e.g. administrative systems), and make an estimate for any resource that is shared between separate outputs.		
Confidentiality, transparency and security				
The procedures and policy used to ensure sound confidentiality, security and transparent practices.				
15. What are/give links to the data security policies underpinning the release	Qualitative	Describe the data security processes applied to the in the statistical collection, processing and dissemination processes. This should include a summary of confidentiality processes and disclosure control.	Possible measures include B7.2/B7.3 <i>Describe how data collection/processing security was ensured</i> and B7.6 <i>Describe in broad terms the statistical disclosure control methods applied</i>	

Annex 4: Example Full Quality Reports and Regular Quality Updates

NHS Information Centre: Dental and Eye Care Statistics



NHSIC

Department for Work and Pensions: Benefit Caseload Early Estimates



DWPEE

Department for Education: National Curriculum Assessments



DfE

Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency: Equality Statistics for the Northern Ireland Civil Service



NISRA

Annex 5: Links to useful resources

ONS guidance:

www.statistics.gov.uk/qualityreports

ESS guidance:

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/product_details/publication?p_product_code=KS-RA-08-015

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

SA(COS)(11)25

Developments with the Government’s ‘Open Data’ Policy

A letter from the Chair of the Authority in response to the Cabinet Office’s consultation on Open Data 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--francis-maude---open-data---11102011.pdf>

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

COMMITTEE FOR OFFICIAL STATISTICS

SA(COS)(11)26

Monitoring Review of Statistical Publications

Purpose

1. At its last meeting the Committee considered some ideas about the proposed review of statistical publications and agreed that the first stage should be a series of discussions with Heads of Profession [SA(COS)(11)18]. This paper reports back to the Committee on the results of those discussions and suggests a way forward for the remainder of the review.

Recommendations

2. Members of the Committee are invited to:
 - i. note the findings from the meetings with Heads of Profession at **Annex A**;
 - ii. agree the next steps (see paragraph 10);
 - iii. comment on the outline report at **Annex B**; and
 - iv. agree to act as the project board for the review.

Discussion

3. Three meetings were held in July 2011, chaired by Colette Bowe and attended by a total of 16 Heads of Profession (HoPs). Much of the discussion centred on the barriers to better commentary, but they also touched on the government's transparency agenda and the opportunities and challenges posed by digital media. A note drawing out our findings from all three meetings is at Annex A.
4. The meetings served to highlight the variety of circumstances in which commentary about statistics is written and which will need to be taken into account in completing the review. For example:
 - i. The contrast between political pressures in policy departments and the remoteness and lack of policy awareness that can exist in non-Ministerial departments. HoPs confirmed that direct political pressure is actually very rare, but it would seem that the possibility has influenced the way published commentary has developed and perhaps led to a degree of self censorship.
 - ii. Policy departments vary in the extent to which statisticians are involved in producing briefing for Ministers. Such involvement was generally viewed in a positive light by HoPs, especially as it often gave statisticians an incentive to look at the 'big picture'.
 - iii. Types of user: the needs of experts can be very different from the needs of most of the public and it is not clear that a 'one size fits all approach' to writing statistical commentary is helpful. Statisticians may have more contact with expert users and be more attuned to their needs than to the needs of occasional users who are simply seeking information about the topic area. This suggests a need for more tailored and dynamic range of products, as opposed to a static 'one size fits all' release.
 - iv. The nature of the statistics: administrative data that are capable of almost continual updating present a different challenge from data that only become available at lengthy intervals. The differences are especially marked in the context of digital technology and the transparency agenda. It was also noted that that commentary on administrative data

is often done less well than commentary on survey data, and that time pressures tended to be more intense for economic than for social statistics.

- v. The extent to which statisticians have direct contact with the media and with politicians: in some producer bodies such contact is minimal or non-existent. In Ministerial departments there may be no contact with the media but regular contact with politicians. In non-Ministerial departments the reverse situation may apply.
 - vi. The extent of collaboration with other analytical professions within government: where this happens, HoPs seem to value the topic expertise of researchers and economists and their ability to draw out the story from a set of data.
5. While the review is still in its early days, the discussions with HoPs suggest that there may be a way forward on a number of fronts, including the development of stronger statistical policies and better products; developing topic knowledge and writing skills; working more with other analytical professions; and making better use of new technologies and social media.
 6. Development of products might include the possibility of doing commentary less frequently but making it more cross cutting, with stronger overviews across topic areas and bringing in evidence from other sources. Some exploratory work might also be done on developing a common look and feel to give official statistics a stronger identity.
 7. Development of written statistical policies within producer organisations might produce agreement about the independence of statistical professionals; the right of HoPs to comment publicly, especially when statistics are being misunderstood or misused; and the extent of formal or informal contact between statisticians and the media.
 8. At some stage during or after the review, it may be useful to discuss emerging issues with two or three senior officials in policy departments, and perhaps also with the Central Office of Information (COI). The over-riding theme for such discussions would be how the Government Statistical Service (GSS) can best support the Authority's statutory requirement to promote official statistics that 'serve the public good'. Possible topics for discussion with senior officials include the following:
 - i. the role of statisticians within the department: professional responsibilities and relationships with policy staff;
 - ii. the case for commentary and metadata; how to mitigate risks from releasing unmediated data (risks include misunderstandings and loss of GSS skills);
 - iii. replacing or supplementing traditional statistical releases with more flexible products;
 - iv. how briefing is produced and whether some aspects can be made public;
 - v. relationships between statisticians and the media; contact with journalists;
 - vi. the professional authority of HoPs and attitudes to their independence – for example, in publicly correcting misunderstandings or misuse of statistics;
 - vii. the role of HoPs in relation to official statistics that are not under their direct control (eg management statistics and statistics produced by arm's length bodies); and
 - viii. views on the importance of external users.
 9. At an earlier meeting [SA(COS)(11)11] the Committee agreed to set up a formal project board for the review, including membership from outside the Authority and the GSS in order to provide a strong element of external challenge. The Committee may however wish to consider whether it might itself act as the project board for the remainder of the review. This would not only ensure the required degree of challenge from outside the producer community, but would also save a lot of time compared with setting up a

bespoke project board. If the Committee agrees with this suggestion, the usual practice would be for Colette Bowe to chair meetings of the committee while it is operating in this mode.

10. We envisage the next steps as follows (see Annex B for more explanation of the planned contents).
 - i. Request inputs from the National Statistician's Office and relevant GSS groups, covering digital strategy and the open data agenda (September)
 - ii. Complete research and write up findings: to include good practice from statistical websites and written commentary; the use of corporate branding; and advice from international bodies (September/October)
 - iii. Report to COS as project board: to include consideration of 'less frequent but better commentary' and issues to raise with senior officials (4 November meeting or a separate date if preferred)
 - iv. Meetings with senior officials and possibly COI (November)
 - v. Re-run meetings with HoPs to discuss emerging findings (November)
 - vi. Draft report to COS. Discussion of findings and next steps (January).

11. Outcomes from the review could include:
 - a relatively short report (outline of contents at Annex B);
 - one or more possible case studies in which Authority staff work with producers to improve commentary; and
 - training materials.

Jill Barelli, Monitoring and Assessment Team, August 2011.

List of Annexes

Annex A Summary of meetings with Heads of Profession

Annex B Outline report contents

Annex A Summary of meetings with heads of profession

1. Three meetings were held at Drummond Gate in July 2011, chaired by Colette Bowe. The number of HoPs (or deputies) present ranged from three to seven.
2. Discussion at the meetings highlighted a number of barriers to better commentary (set out below). However, it was also acknowledged that poor or non-existent commentary creates its own problems, risking misuse and misunderstanding of statistics that can be damaging and difficult to correct. These problems could increase in the future if large quantities of data are 'dumped' with no explanation. Some HoPs spoke of internal drivers for improved commentary, and thought that tired portfolios were a more immediate threat to the statistical system than political or resource pressures.
3. There was also some discussion of what success would look like, in terms of feedback from users; the extent of use and re-use of the data; and the extent to which an accurate message is conveyed in the media.

Time pressures

4. There is a trade-off between timely publication of statistics and the time required to investigate the factors that may be underlying trends in the data. There may be less time to develop a polished commentary for economic releases than for social topics (which are often released less frequently) although even here there was a risk that important or interesting findings are only spotted at the last minute.

Resource pressures

5. Expenditure cuts and resource constraints may mean that priority has to be given to metadata over commentary, or that the latter is largely recycled from one release to the next. In many producer bodies the suite of statistical releases has a one to one relationship with source data. This can result in a large number of individual releases, a very fragmented view of the topic area, and a downwards spiral in which lack of a useful statistical product leads to lack of funding. Given the pressure to release more data more often, in accordance with the transparency agenda, it might be better to produce commentary less often but to do it better, for example by drawing on a wider range of sources. This might include the use of other official statistics and data from the private sector, in order to create a more authoritative picture.

Media and reputational pressures

6. Motives here included a wish to avoid a media frenzy; a view that statistics ought to have a low profile; a view that comment is best left to policy staff; and a reluctance to stray into subjective comment and opinion. Such views might be held by statisticians themselves or by others within the department. In some areas there is an unwritten view that the less said, the better, and that topical issues are best avoided. Statisticians have sometimes responded by designing releases with standard tables and charts and with text that always addresses the same topics in the same order. This facilitates a quick turnaround and protects the statistics from challenge and criticism. More positively, it establishes the precedent that some particular aspect of the statistics will always be covered in the release, making it possible to draw attention to change without being accused of selectivity. But it can also result in very factual but boring 'escalator style' commentary, where figures going up or down are described but not explained; there is little policy or other context; and no long term perspective. This has frequently been commented on in assessments.

Users

7. Although consultations usually confirm there is a demand for commentary, there are undoubtedly some users who 'just want the data', often as quickly as possible and in as much detail as possible. The latter often include experts who wish to carry out further analysis themselves. Some HoPs thought that the effort required in writing an overview for occasional users was difficult to justify.

Views about the role of statisticians

8. Departments vary as to whether there is direct contact between statisticians and the media, and in the degree to which statisticians are involved in preparing policy briefing. Formal press briefings with no involvement from politicians and informal contact between experienced statisticians and expert journalists were both seen as positive steps, although it was acknowledged that there were risks, especially when the media were keen to obtain endorsement for highly speculative conclusions. In non-Ministerial departments and agencies, statisticians may not feel confident that they understand the background to the statistics well enough to explain them for users. It was noted that other government professions (researchers, economists, in-house journalists) were sometimes better at drawing out the story from a set of statistics and that there were benefits in working with these groups.

Information technology

9. Statistical requirements are unlikely to have much influence on the IT arrangements of departments with major administrative systems to run. HoPs also reported that firewalls could make it difficult to make use of social media or to access the work of other producers, including arm's length bodies. The possibility was raised that one department might act as an enabler in harnessing the latest technologies for statistical purposes and making them available to others. Knowledge and skills in the very latest technologies were also thought to be in short supply.

Annex B Outline report

- Introduction - objectives
- Evidence about commentary and conclusions (drawing on the annexes below, but also including an assessment of change/progress since the publication of the Statistics Commission's review of statistical first releases and the introduction of assessment)
- Views of Heads of Profession and senior officials (drawing on meetings)
- Barriers to change
- Proposed way forward, and criteria for success.

Proposed annexes

1. **Current status of GSS commentary**, drawing on findings from assessment reports and compliance with the Authority statement on standards for statistical releases. Additionally, examples of approaches that work well.
2. **Good practice from elsewhere** – this might include organisations such as the BBC, Bank of England, House of Commons Library, Guardian data blog, the London Datastore, voluntary sector organisations, and the national statistical offices in Scandinavian countries, New Zealand or Canada. We will look for good examples of written commentary; good use of digital media; and at the extent to which there is a professional statistical 'voice'. In addition, we will look at examples of advice from international sources in relation to commentary and the release of statistics (eg UNECE).
3. **Corporate branding** – current formats for GSS products (eg bulletins, releases, web pages, compendia and so on) and the extent to which decentralised statistical systems elsewhere use common branding to promote an identity for their statistics.
4. **Digital strategy for official statistics** – note to be commissioned from NSO based on the Web Dissemination Strategy (July 2011). To focus on how GSS publications and raw data can be further adapted for the web; the use of services such as social networking, mapping tools and smart phone apps; where commentary fits in and how it should be prepared. Examples of good practice in the use of technology to disseminate statistics may be available from the GSS Presentation and Dissemination Committee, which is due to complete some work on this issue by December.
5. **Open data and commentary**: the Authority is considering a response to some of the issues raised in the recent Cabinet Office consultation document (*Making Open Data Real*). This could form the basis of an appendix.

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

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The Web Dissemination Strategy for Official Statistics

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

To see this document go to:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/national-statistician/ns-reports--reviews-and-guidance/national-statistician-s-guidance/web-dissemination-strategy-for-official-statistics.pdf>

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

COMMITTEE FOR OFFICIAL STATISTICS

SA(COS)(11)28

***Activities of the Government Statistical Service
June 2011 to August 2011***

Purpose

1. This paper provides the Committee for Official Statistics (COS) with an update of Government Statistical Service (GSS) activities from June to August 2011.

Recommendations

2. The Committee is invited to note the summary of GSS activities for this period.

Discussion

3. Following consideration by the Committee at its May 2010 meeting of paper [SA(COS)(10)13] on *GSS Activity and Governance Arrangements*, it was agreed that regular updates would be provided to all future meetings. Throughout this recent period the GSS has been involved in the activities set out below.

Transparency Agenda

Transparency sub-group

4. The Transparency Sub-Group of the GSS Presentation and Dissemination Committee has continued to meet on a regular basis, with the last meeting being held on 6 July 2011. At that meeting a report was presented on the GSS stock-take which highlighted the progress that the GSS has already made in meeting the demands of the technological agenda. The report also highlighted concerns about user needs, skills and resources.
5. The two other main items discussed at the meeting were the proposed GSS Transparency Guidance and the Sub-Group's work plan. The former has been drafted by Iain Bell, Head of Profession (HoP) at the Ministry of Justice and is currently being developed through discussions with HoPs. Key points of the guidance include: the release of a Hyper Text Markup Language (HTML) summary of key findings for statistical releases to better support re-use; consistent branding and increased use of social media to promulgate release; a timetable for release of underpinning statistical datasets; Privacy Impact Assessments to be published alongside all statistical dataset releases; and use of GSS standard linked data formats. The wider work programme includes improving our transparency related communications, addressing issues around transparency related skills and influencing future policy and practice such as around charging for statistics and data.

Quarterly Data Summaries

6. Following commitments made in the 2011 Budget and the written ministerial statement on business plans, departments published their first Quarterly Data Summary (QDS) in July 2011. Each QDS provides a snapshot on how each department is spending its budget, the results it has achieved and how it is deploying its workforce. A QDS contains management information in a standard template though many of the individual indicators are unique to a department.

7. It is our understanding that HoPs are generally not involved in the publication of QDS as they are not official statistics. The National Statistician's Office is keeping in touch with HM Treasury and the Cabinet Office about developments.

Payment by Results

8. The Open Public Services White Paper published in July 2011 sets out how the Government will improve public services. The paper proposes extending the 'payment by results' approach taken in the welfare to work services to services for the rehabilitation of offenders, public health, drug and alcohol recovery, children's centres, and vulnerable people.
9. Hence, there are parts of the GSS which are expected to be involved in the measurement of outcomes or changes that may need to be reconciled with official statistics. This represents a new challenge for the GSS and for relationships with commissioners and providers of these services.

Open Data Event

10. The National Statistician's Office, in collaboration with the Royal Statistical Society, are planning to hold an 'Open Data' event in the autumn. The event will bring together the users and producers of statistical data to address the issues around Open Data set out in the Cabinet Office's consultation document 'Making Open Data Real' published in August 2011. Speakers already booked for the event include the National Statistician, Tim Kelsey (Head of the Transparency Team in the Cabinet Office) and Matthew Woollard (Director of the UK Data Archive).

Spending Review 2010

Reporting on changes to statistical outputs

11. HoPs continue to be involved in responding to the challenges of the Spending Review 2010. They have been keeping the National Statistician informed as the impact of the spending review starts to affect the production of statistics, so that she, together with the Authority, can monitor the effects on official and national statistics. A separate paper on this [SA(COS)(11)22] is on the agenda for this meeting.

Maintaining analytical capability

12. The revised terms of reference for the GSS People Committee along with the new work programme for the GSS were ratified by HoPs on 8 June 2011. The work programme includes the following:
 - i. monitoring the impact of the spending review on movements within the Government Statistician Group (GSG);
 - ii. improving the influence of statisticians in the policy-making process;
 - iii. developing an apprenticeship scheme in statistical skills to for school leavers and non-technical members of the GSS; and
 - iv. reviewing current recruitment processes to assess whether they remain fit for purpose.
13. With the support of the Cabinet Office, the National Statistician's Office is collecting departmental assessments of senior statisticians (where such data exist) with a view to developing talent management proposals by grade. This is intended to lead towards a succession planning process for HoPs and other senior GSG members. A key outcome will be a planned schedule of moves for the GSS Senior Civil Service.

Web Dissemination Strategy

14. The Web Dissemination Strategy for Official Statistics, along with an implementation plan, was launched on 14 July 2011. The implementation plan is now being taken forward by a series of workstream leaders and is being overseen by a programme board comprising members of the GSS Presentation and Dissemination Committee.
15. Additionally, a Strategic review of the Publications Hub, established by the Authority in 2007 as an essential web-tool for demonstrating the independence and coherence of National Statistics, has been initiated by the National Statistician's Office Strategy Division. Since its creation there have been many changes to the environment within which the Hub operates, e.g. the creation of data.gov.uk, open data initiatives, the evolution of social media, the rationalisation of government websites, evolving technologies and so on. The GSS has been asked to provide information to shape the Review including their own experiences of using the Hub, ideas for improvement and delivery of analogous services and whether its original purpose is still valid.

GSS Overarching Strategy

16. Over the past few months a series of workshops have been held across the GSS to discuss the development of the strategy. The workshops have given GSS colleagues the opportunity to discuss key issues around being widely recognised and trusted as an essential part of the debate and decision making process, making the GSS a 'place' where people feel proud to work and accessing relevant knowledge and expertise, wherever it lies through collaboration and partnerships. A copy of the latest version of the strategy was also shared with users through the Statistics User Forum. The current plan is to develop the revised version of strategy and implementation proposals in autumn 2011. It is intended that COS will receive a paper with the revised strategy and implementation proposals at its November meeting.

International activities

17. Revisions to the European System of Accounts (ESA) have been the main focus of the (EU) Council Working Party on Statistics. Discussions are expected to continue for some months yet. A first discussion of a proposed EU crime victimisation survey took place in July. Other dossiers discussed at recent Council meetings include crops and road traffic statistics.
18. There has been progress by Eurostat on its work on identifying negative priorities. There are huge disparities among member states particularly on the social statistics side. Eurostat is also planning to revise the European Statistics Code of Practice. Compliance will be enforceable by law under new enforcement mechanisms. Eurostat's 'vision' is progressing – the main change will be a shift away from domain specific to a single cross-cutting regulation and amendments thereof over time. A number of Vision Implementation Projects (VIPs) are now running which will develop the European Statistical System (ESS) infrastructure. The 2013-2017 Work Programme is currently being drafted. The UK's position is broadly supportive of the detail while seeking assurances on costs.
19. The Conference of European Statisticians (CES) and the OECD Committee on Statistics (CSTAT) were held back-to-back in Geneva in June. The main subjects discussed included: the development of common standards in data collection and data sharing; measuring human capital; progress with measuring well-being; and OECD accession issues relating to Israel and Russia. The key role played by the UK in dealing with Israeli accession issues was widely recognised. The National Statistician was voted onto the CES Bureau whose primary role is to steer the

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work of the Conference.

20. The GSS International Liaison Network (ILO) has now been formally launched. It aims to provide a framework for enhanced cooperation, coordination and communication across the GSS on international issues. The National Statistician's Office will now be looking at developing this network and exploring other ways of improving the efficiency and effectiveness of international activity across the GSS.

National Statistician's Office, August 2011