

Forthcoming Changes to MOD Statistical Releases

Background

- The UK Statistics Authority (UKSA) has recently carried out assessments of MOD's existing and proposed National Statistics releases, including the UK Defence Statistics Compendium (UKDS) (Assessment Report 210), Defence Health publications (Report 197), Defence Personnel publications (Report 186), Defence Inflation (Report 179), the Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey (Report 162), and Search & Rescue Callouts (Report 155). The assessment reports can be found at:
<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment-reports/index.html>

- Most of these assessment reports include the following requirements:
 - Improving engagement / identification of needs and uses of users.
 - Improving publication of information on quality (in relation to users).
 - Improving commentary to inform interpretation.
 - Making information available in forms which encourages reuse.

For UKDS, UKSA additionally suggests that the MOD:

- Reviews whether statistics released for the first time in UKDS could be released sooner.

UKSA also suggests that statistical compendiums like UKDS should not contain new information.

- Furthermore, the migration of MOD statistics to gov.uk (in early 2014) has meant that a simpler mechanism is required for the delivery of the publications. HTML versions of statistical publications cannot currently be hosted on gov.uk.
- To meet UKSA's requirements and suggestions, the following changes will be made to MOD's statistical releases. The publications from July 2013 that replace UKDS will be in an intermediate Bulletin format to allow time for any major changes to the Bulletin to go through consultation. This should result in all Bulletins being in a consistent format with any agreed changes implemented.

From April 2014

- All statistical publications produced by Defence Statistics and Defence Economics will be in a single consistent bulletin format, including a front page summary, a commentary section which pulls out the key points and charts, and links to supporting tables.
- All the bulletins will be part of a Statistical Series, as listed below. For example, Series 3 (Health) may include Bulletin 01 (Deaths in the UK Regular Armed Forces).
 - Series 1: Finance & Economics
 - Series 2: Personnel
 - Series 3: Health
 - Series 4: Equipment
 - Series 5: Activities
 - Series 6: Other
- There will be a standard table numbering format across all statistical publications, to make navigation simpler on gov.uk.
- All National Statistics bulletins, and any new Official Statistics bulletins developed from 1st June 2013, will have an associated Background Quality Report. This will be updated annually and released alongside the publication.
- UKDS will be a smaller publication, published in October/November each year. It will not include any new information, but instead will contain high-level summary information and

provide highlights from previously published bulletins, outlining the breadth of MOD Official statistics. It will also provide links to more detailed and up-to-date information.

- The information that was previously published for the first time in UKDS will be split up and published within new statistical bulletins as part of these Series, as soon as the information becomes available.
- MOD's existing National and Official Statistics will also all be placed into these Series.

There are a number of advantages to these changes.

- Statistics will be published as early as possible, to allow earlier access to the data.
- With no new figures, UKDS will be a true compendium of previously released figures.
- It aligns with gov.uk, which has a simpler site design and publication regime.

Disadvantages include:

- Moving to a simpler format means that unfortunately, searching becomes more difficult, as search engines are unable to search within PDF documents.
- The look and feel to the content of UKDS 2013 will be inconsistent; a problem which will be resolved for 2014.

Remainder of 2013

- 2013 is a transition year.
- Except for UKDS, all publications released in 2012 are being produced in the same way in 2013.
- All content from UKDS 2012 will be updated in a bulletin or existing publication: Each table and chart that was published in UKDS 2012 that will not be published in an existing Official or National Statistic before 30 September 2013, will be updated and released in a 2013 bulletin. An intermediate style of bulletin has been developed for this.
- Bulletins will be released when they are ready during 2013.
- A simpler delivery method means that there will be a PDF document accompanied by Excel tables for each Bulletin.
- A spreadsheet has been published on the Defence Statistics website detailing exactly where each table in UKDS 2012 can be found in 2013. Broadly, the UKDS tables will be broken out into Statistical Bulletins as follows:

UKDS 2012

Chapter 1 Tables 1-10 & 20

Chapter 1 Tables 11

Chapter 1 Tables 12-19

Chapter 1 Tables 21-24

Chapter 2 Tables 1-3,39*,40*

Chapter 2 Tables 4-24,41*

Chapter 2 Tables 25-38

Chapter 3

Chapter 4 Tables 1-10

Chapter 4 Tables 11-15

Chapter 5

Chapter 6 Tables 1-3

Chapter 6 Tables 4-5

Chapter 7

2013

Bulletin 1.03	Finance & Economics: Departmental Resources
Will be published in existing National or Official Statistics	
Bulletin 1.01	Finance & Economics: Industry, Trade & Contracts
Bulletin 1.02	Finance & Economics: International Defence
Bulletin 2.03	Personnel: Service & Civilian Personnel
Bulletin 2.01	Personnel: Service Personnel
Bulletin 2.02	Personnel: Civilian Personnel
Will be published in existing National or Official Statistics	
Bulletin 4.01	Equipment: Formations, Vessels & Aircraft
Bulletin 4.02	Equipment: CFE Vehicles & Aircraft
Will be published in existing National or Official Statistics	
Bulletin 6.01	Other: Land Holdings
Bulletin 6.02	Other: Accommodation
Bulletin 5.01	Activities: Military Aid to the Civil Authorities

*These tables have provisionally been allocated to these Bulletins – they may be moved.

- UKDS will be published in Oct/Nov 2013, in the same style as from 2014 onwards. It may be updated if additional Statistical Bulletins are published after November 2013.