HOME OFFICE STATISTICS

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH CODE OF PRACTICE FOR OFFICIAL STATISTICS – updated August 2017

OVERVIEW

The Home Office is responsible for collecting, compiling, processing, analysing, interpreting, and disseminating a wide range of official UK statistics which cover key areas of national interest in crime, policing, fire and rescue, immigration, terrorism, animal scientific procedures and alcohol licensing.

Official statistics are fundamental to good government, to the delivery of public services and to decision-making. The results of Home Office Statistics’ outputs are very high profile attracting a great deal of attention within government at all levels, in the media, in parliament, from academics and the general public. We ensure informative and comprehensive statistics are published in a timely and accurate way.


Our National Statistics outputs are all announced in advance via the Statistics release calendar.

Aims

Our aim is to

- support government policy development through provision of a credible evidence base,
- support monitoring and operational decision making, to aid the accountability of the Home Office to parliament and
- contribute to making a wide range of data available for public use.

Legislation

The Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 created a new framework for all official statistics with specific requirements relating to National Statistics outputs, and established the independent UK Statistics Authority as a non-ministerial department accountable to Parliament and responsible for safeguarding the production and publication of official statistics that serve the public good and the quality, good practice and comprehensiveness of official statistics.

Home Office statistical outputs are designated as ‘National Statistics’ where they
are produced in accordance with the arrangements set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics (building on the previous Framework for National Statistics and the principles set out in the National Statistics Code of Practice and its supporting Protocols).

Management

The Home Office Chief Statistician (Head of Profession for Statistics) is directly responsible for the management and production of Home Office’s Statistics outputs, and the implementation of the legislation (and of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics and other guidance) including decisions on content, release dates, formats and pre-release access.

Home Office Statistics outputs are collected at considerable cost and constitute a valuable public resource. We seek to manage our data in such a way so as to maximise the value obtained from these data, given the available resources both within the Home Office and of our data providers.

Our data managers will ensure that we manage these resources wherever possible in accordance with the principles of best practice and requirements (as applicable) set out in Code of Practice for Official Statistics and the Statistics and Registration Act 2007.

CUSTOMER SERVICE & MINIMISING BURDENS

In collecting, processing & publishing our statistics, we will endeavour to place the minimum burdens necessary on data providers and will endeavour to integrate our statistical work across government. We will consider the costs to data suppliers in developing new data requirements and we will review regularly the existing data requirements to ensure that they continue to be relevant. We will endeavour to ensure that managers of administrative systems consider statistical needs in their design and development.

We will take care of the information provided to us, and we will respect the confidentiality of that information.

We welcome constructive comments on everything we do because that will help us to improve our service.

If you contact us, you can expect us to be transparent, polite, approachable and helpful. We will make every reasonable effort to ensure that you are provided with information that is timely, relevant and accurate and will endeavour to do so within the minimum standards that the government has set for responding to correspondence and public enquiries (normally 20 working days). If we are unable to provide you with a full response within that time we will contact you to let you know, and provide you with the date by which we anticipate we will be able to respond in full.
USER CONSULTATION & ENGAGEMENT

The Home Office is committed to regularly reviewing its National Statistics outputs. Our data collection, analysis and dissemination methods will be reviewed regularly to identify ongoing opportunities for improvement.

Proposals to introduce withdraw or substantially modify National Statistics data collections and outputs (e.g. timing, content, coverage, methodologies) will normally be subject to consultation. We will make information about consultations available on our own website, as well as notifying active user groups and others with a recognised interest in the topic.

We will conduct consultations on an appropriate scale, balancing the importance of the issue and the impact of users’ views against the time and resources available, in order to ensure good value for money. Details of past and current consultations are included at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?publication_filter_option=consultations

Information about new publications appears the Gov.UK website at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?departments%5B%5D=home-office&publication_filter_option=statistics

Users can subscribe for updates to the website at https://www.gov.uk/government/email-signup/new?email_signup%5Bfeed%5D=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fgovernment%2Fpublications.atom%3Fdepartments%255B%255D%3Dhome-office%26publication_filter_option%3Dstatistics

User group events

We intend to continue with annual meetings of users via events organised with the Royal Statistical Society, such as the Migration Statistics User Forum and the Fire and Rescue Statistics User Group.

There is an annual conference supported by the Home Office and the Ministry of Justice, of the British Society of Criminology (BSC) specialist network on Crime & Justice Statistics. This network assists Home Office and MoJ in consulting with users.

Further information

Details of the British Society of Criminology can be found at

http://britsoccrim.org/new/index.php
and https://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/cgi-bin/webadmin?A0=CRIM-BCS-USERS
QUALITY MANAGEMENT

People

We aim to provide the opportunities for all of our staff to develop their talent and professional skills. Our people and their expertise are our most valuable and critical resource. The Home Office offers all statistical staff the opportunity to join the Royal Statistical Society (RSS) to allow them to develop their professional experience and expertise through RSS activities and literature, such as the RSS Ordinary and Higher Certificate training.

We encourage specialist statistical staff to maintain Continuing Professional Development logs in line with Government Statistical Service requirements and we support participation by our staff in a wide range of GSS committees, taskforces and other activities. Corporate GSS functions such as on recruitment policy and standards provide vital support to our work and equally we support the GSS by participating actively, as well as assisting with fast stream and other GSS recruitment processes.

Process

For all major statistical collections and analyses, we will make available the methodologies either as part of the main publication or as a separate technical note.

We will ensure that our methods are subject to internal review and external validation and scrutiny, both in the form of published methodological notes and presentations to scientific conferences and journals.

The methods we use will be objectively chosen and based on sound statistical approaches. Wherever possible the Home Office will adopt standard practices and approaches, and unless there is good reason we will adopt the harmonised questions and procedures agreed by the Government Statistical Service.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND ACCESS TO STATISTICAL DATA

The Home Office will protect the security of its statistical data and ensure that no statistics are produced that are likely to identify an individual unless the individual has previously consented to their data being used in this way.

In publishing data, we will adopt standard statistical techniques for controlling disclosure (for example by rounding data, or by non-disclosure of small numbers in cells in statistical tables).

In certain circumstances we will provide micro-level data to other Home Office researchers or bona fide researchers in the academic sector or other organizations. However, we will only do so under clear and strict terms that ensure that the data can only be used for a specified and agreed purpose. These terms will be set out in writing, and agreed by the organisation who wishes to use the data and the Home Office data manager, in consultation with the Head of Profession for Statistics.
REVISIONS AND CORRECTIONS

We will be open and transparent at all times about revisions and corrections to our published statistics.

REVISIONS

Statistical revisions of data (e.g. updates to provisional data to take account of more complete data available later) are a normal and expected part of the production of official statistics. We will provide our users with clear and accessible information making them aware of such revisions and their implications, including making reference to revisions of previously published data that are reported in the latest available statistical release and the reason for the revisions.

CORRECTIONS

Despite all our best efforts, there may occasionally be a need to amend publications to correct errors (these may occur if, for example, if data supplied to us is subsequently found to be incorrect). Significant errors in published statistics will be corrected as soon as possible (e.g. amend electronic versions of the release as soon as possible and include a prominent alert on our website to notify users of the change), and we will “correct errors discovered in statistical reports and alert stakeholders, promptly” in line with the Code of Practice, Principle 2, Practice 7. We will use appropriate methods to communicate with users. An error is considered to be significant if the resultant change would qualify or contradict the conclusions that would previously have been drawn from the data.

If the error is minor or textual, or insignificant in the sense that any correction would be reasonably deemed inconsequential, we will not issue a correction immediately, but would do so when a new release was due for publication.

If we discover an error which is insubstantial but which, in our professional judgement, warrants immediate correction we will amend electronic copies of the published release and ensure that the revision is clearly identified in the amended publication.

Decisions on how to address any errors in published statistics will be made by the Head of Profession for Statistics in the Home Office in consultation with the National Statistician and the Chief Scientific Advisor as appropriate. Information on all such amendments will be placed on our website alongside the link to the published document.

COMPLAINTS

We aim to deliver a high quality service. If you have need to complain about the service we provide, you may do so in writing, by e-mail or by telephone. Please provide as much relevant information as possible so that we can deal with your case promptly. For our regular National Statistics outputs, contact details are normally provided on all our statistical publications, in line with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. If you do not know who to contact, please telephone our public enquiry point who will be pleased to advise you on the most appropriate
person.

If direct contact would not be appropriate or if having done this you remain dissatisfied, you should write to the Head of Profession for Statistics, Fire, Licensing and Public Order Analysis Unit, 2 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DF (email: david.blunt3@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk).

CONTACT POINT

For more information about the application of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics within the Home Office please see

Statement of Compliance- Release Practices

Use of Administrative Sources

or contact the Head of Profession for Statistics, Fire, Licensing and Public Order Analysis Unit, 2 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DF email: david.blunt3@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk.

Fire, Licensing and Public Order Analysis Unit,
Home Office Analysis and Insight
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