



Ministry of
JUSTICE

Ministry of Justice statistics in 2009/10 and consultation on 2010/11 statistics work plan

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Foreword

The Code of Practice for Official Statistics puts a duty on producers of Official Statistics to:

Adopt systematic statistical planning arrangements, including transparent priority setting, that reflect the obligation to serve the public good.

On 30 October 2009, the Ministry of Justice announced that in order to meet this duty, we would put forward a consultation each December on the work-plan for the following year.

I am pleased to put forward the first such work-plan alongside a detailed consultation on proposed enhancements to the availability of reoffending data.

This document sets out what we have done in 2009/10 and the proposals for 2010/11 for all users of our statistics to provide views on.

Iain Bell
Chief Statistician
Ministry of Justice

Overview

Under the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, producers of statistics are required to consult annually on their statistical work-plan. Users are invited to comment on the proposals in this document by 26 February 2010 either in writing or at a public meeting in February 2010.

During, 2009/10 we focused on ensuring our Official and National Statistics cover the key areas of the Ministry of Justice and its agencies and we have begun publishing the following in line with the Code of Practice:

- Quarterly Statistics on Licence Recalls and Returns to Custody
- Annual Employment Tribunal Statistics
- Court Statistics Quarterly

By April 2010 we will also be publishing Safer Custody Statistics for 2008 in line with the Code of Practice.

Our plans for 2010/11 focus around the key themes and proposals

- Implementing recommendations from UK Statistics Authority and users from the Barriers to Trust in Crime Statistics Review
- Improving the timeliness of key statistics
- Making our statistics publications user-friendly and accessible

On 17 December 2009, the UK Statistical Authority published their interim report on Barriers to Trust in Crime Statistics which made two recommendations for Ministry of Justice. We await the full views of users, but as part of our work-plan we are planning to:

- introduce a new Quarterly Criminal Statistics publication to allow more timely release of key information spanning the Criminal Justice System and consult with users on the contents of this (we will work closely with the Home Office and National Statistician to ensure this development can also meet the recommendations of the UK Statistics Authority Review. In doing this, we will ensure that all currently available information continues to be published)
- (by April 2010) publish a user guide to assist users in navigating our statistics as currently published
- work with the National Statistician, Home Office and National Assembly for Wales to put forward a framework for Criminal Justice System Statistics.

We will also undertake the following developments in other areas:

- Implement the consultation proposals on Offender Management Statistics consulted on during 2009 to improve the frequency and timeliness of these statistics. This will be implemented during 2010.
- Release the annual statistics on legal aid as Official Statistics.
- To work in partnership with the Senior Judiciary and the Sentencing Guidelines Council with the Office for National Statistics to design an ongoing data collection about the factors taken into account in sentencing as stated in court.
- Put all current remand statistics in one easy to find place and make them easier to understand.
- To introduce a quarterly summary of Tribunal Service caseload statistics in summer 2010.
- Introduce a compendia publication covering the most commonly requested information on reoffending.
- Develop consistent ways of presenting reoffending data at both the local and national level and between juveniles and adults in order to complement the existing measures.
- To explore ways to cut the number of data checks requested of HM Court Service staff by implementing automated procedures.
- The Judicial Appointments Commission will publish diversity statistics on appointments to the Judiciary.
- To improve the timeliness of ethnicity data by releasing ethnicity data into first releases of statistics and re-focus the Race and the Criminal Justice System publication as a compendium of statistics.

Statistics Authority assessment work

The Ministry of Justice are committed to working with the UK Statistics Authority to ensure our statistics and processes are fully in line with the Code of Practice. In 2009, the UK Statistics Authority re-accredited the Prison Population Projections as National Statistics. UK Statistics Authority is currently assessing:

- Freedom of Information Act Monitoring Statistics
- Judicial and Court Statistics and related publications

In February 2010 the UK Statistics Authority will begin assessment of a range of publications around the Criminal Justice System. During 2010/11 the UK Statistics Authority will also assess our Coroners Statistics publication.

Key questions for consultation

Users are invited to provide views on:

- whether the range of developments proposed in this document address user needs?
- whether there are any proposals within this document which users do not feel meet their requirements?
- whether there are any other proposals users wish the Ministry of Justice to consider?

Comments are invited by close of play on Friday 26 February 2010 and should be sent by email to:

statistics.enquiries@justice.gsi.gov.uk

or by post to:

Justice Statistics Analytical Services
Ministry of Justice
7th floor
102 Petty France
London SW1H 9AJ

Ministry of Justice Statistics and 2009/10 progress

The Ministry of Justice and its Arms Length Bodies cover a range of high profile statistics. The majority of the Ministry of Justice's Official and National Statistics are produced by Justice Statistics Analytical Services with small teams bedded out in the National Offender Management Service, Tribunal Service, Youth Justice Board and the Judicial Appointments Commission.

The Statistics and Registrations Act currently covers the following Ministry of Justice Agencies and sponsored bodies.

Crown bodies that produce Official Statistics		Non-Crown bodies listed
Advisory Committee on Statute Law	Office of Public Sector Information	Judicial Appointments Commission
HM Court Service	Office of the Judge Advocate of the Forces	Parole Board
HM Land Registry	Office of the Judicial Committee	Youth Justice Board for England and Wales
HM Prison Service	Office of the Public Guardian	
Law Commission	Privy Council office	
Legal Services Commission	The National Archives	
National Offender Management Service	The Tribunals Service	

A full list of Ministry of Justice statistics publications and the publication schedule through to December 2010 is available at:
www.justice.gov.uk/publications/statistics.htm

The Code of Practice for Official Statistics was published in January 2009 and 2009/10 has been the first year where the Ministry of Justice has operated under the Code. There have been a number of significant developments to Ministry of Justice statistics during the year:

Expanding the range of statistics produced and published in line with the Code of Practice

We have introduced or will introduce by the end of 2009/10 the following publications in line with the Code of Practice.

Licence Recalls and Returns to Custody. First published following Freedom of Information requests and released as a Written Ministerial Statement and published as an Official Statistics Bulletin in October 2009, this bulletin provides an overview of prisoners released on licence from custody, breaches of the conditions of release on licence and the subsequent return to custody.

Annual Employment Tribunal Statistics – bringing together an overview of cases brought before Employment Tribunals during 2008/9.

Court Statistics Quarterly – a new quarterly publication to complement Judicial and Court Statistics which provides timely provisional information on court

workloads and outcomes in year. This means information is now available within 12 weeks after the end of the quarter.

Safer Custody Statistics – this will be published from February 2010 and will cover statistics on Deaths in Custody, self-harm and violence in prisons for 2008. This has been brought into the Official Statistics framework as there has been considerable interest in these data from media, parliament and through Freedom of Information Requests.

Tribunals Service Customer Satisfaction Survey will be published annually in line with the Code of Practice from early 2010.

Statistics Policies and Procedures

We published all our statistical policies and procedures documents during August and October 2009. These policies are available at:
www.justice.gov.uk/publications/statistics-policy-procedures.htm and are:

- Statement of Compliance with Pre-Release Access Order
- Revisions Policy
- Customer Service and Engagement Statement
- Quality Principles
- Statement of Administrative Sources

Assessments under the Code of Practice

Our Prison population projections were assessed against the Code of Practice by the UK Statistics Authority. The initial report gave three requirements for Ministry of Justice which are now completed and the UKSA have confirmed that the Prison Population Projections have had their National Statistics status confirmed for 5 years.

We are now working with UK Statistics Authority on the next round of assessment which covers:

- Freedom of Information Act Monitoring Statistics
- Judicial and Court Statistics
- Court Statistics Quarterly
- Mortgage and Landlord Possession Statistics
- Bankruptcy and Company Winding-up Statistics

In February 2010 the UKSA will begin assessment of:

- Criminal Statistics
- Sentencing Statistics Annual publication
- Quarterly Sentencing Statistics

- Women and the Criminal Justice System
- Race and the Criminal Justice System

Delays to publications

In August 2009, we suspended publication of the monthly Population in Custody bulletin due to issues with the statistical extracts from the C-NOMIS system. On 9 October 2009, we announced that the publication will resume in April 2010 alongside announcements of delays of Criminal Statistics, Sentencing Statistics annual, and Women and the Criminal Justice System.

Following these delays, the Chief Statistician reviewed the statistics function and made recommendations to prevent this from happening again. We are on schedule to produce Criminal Statistics, Sentencing Statistics and Women and the Criminal Justice System in January 2010 and resuming publication of the monthly publication in custody tables in April 2010.

Proposals for 2010/11

The proposals for 2010/11 are based around the response to the UK Statistics Authority's Barriers to Trust in Crime Statistics Review and two themes:

- Improving the timeliness of key statistics
- Making our statistics publications user friendly and accessible

These themes have been put forward by the Chief Statistician after reviewing internal and external demands and issues raised.

On 17 December 2009, the UK Statistical authority published its interim report on Barriers to Trust in Crime Statistics which made two recommendations for the Ministry of Justice:

- The National Statistician, in conjunction with relevant government departments and the Welsh Assembly Government, should consult users of statistics inside and outside government on proposals to develop the range of statistical publications on crime and the criminal justice system.
- The Home Office, Ministry of Justice and National Statistician should produce a conceptual framework for crime and criminal justice data.

Our work-plan for 2010/11 reflects the work needed to address the recommendations which we accept. We await fuller user views with interest on these recommendations, but our initial proposals are:

Criminal Justice System Statistics

There are six main Criminal Justice System Official Statistics publications

- Criminal Statistics
- Sentencing Statistics Annual
- Sentencing Statistics Quarterly (indictable, tri-able either way offences)
- Quarterly Criminal Justice System Performance Information
- Women and the Criminal Justice System
- Race and the Criminal Justice System

Criminal Statistics, Sentencing Statistics Annual, Women and the Criminal Justice System and Race and the Criminal Justice System are currently published between 11 and 13 months after the end of the year they refer to. In the case of Sentencing Statistics, there is a provisional quarterly publication covering indictable and tri-able either way offences but not summary offences.

The main proposals for 2010/11 focus on this area and improving this situation:

We will work with the National Statistician, Home Office and National Assembly for Wales to put forward a framework for Criminal Justice System Statistics during 2010.

We will also introduce a new Quarterly Criminal Statistics publication to allow much more timely release of key information spanning the Criminal Justice System. We will work with the Home Office and National Statistician and consult with users on the contents of this during 2010.

The quarterly Criminal Statistics and Offender Management Statistics publications will allow users to compare Criminal Justice Statistics and Crime Statistics more easily as Crime Statistics are currently published on a financial year basis while Criminal Justice System Statistics are on a calendar year basis.

The Ministry of Justice will summarise the relevant data relating to remand and bail into one publication in order to ensure that all relevant data can be accessed easily from one place.

Race and the Criminal Justice System is currently a publication which both publishes data for the first time and republishes data already released. The Ministry of Justice feel that the value in this publication is in presenting an overview of data from across the Criminal Justice System. We therefore plan to work with the other relevant producers to ensure that the relevant publications release ethnicity data at the same time as the headline data on that area. This will improve the timeliness of ethnicity data being released to users.

Statistics from the Sentencing Council

The Sentencing Council will be established from April 2010. One of its key functions will be to monitor the operation and effect of sentencing guidelines. The Ministry of Justice in partnership with the Senior Judiciary and the Sentencing Guidelines Council are currently working with the Office for National Statistics to design an ongoing data collection about the factors taken into account in sentencing as stated in court.

The Ministry of Justice expects the data collection to begin in 2010/11 with initial results published in 2011/12.

Reoffending Statistics

There are currently three publications on reoffending:

- Reoffending of adults
- Reoffending of juveniles
- Local adult reoffending

These publications all look at reoffending from a slightly different perspective and often use differing definitions. We have begun a programme of work to look at how we can better present this information into an aligned set which is fully comparable between adult and youth systems and nationally and locally. This will take time and we expect to put forward proposals in summer 2010. This is to supplement the existing data measures and the current measures would continue to be published.

The reoffending data are among the most requested information in the Ministry of Justice and there are demands for many different cuts and definitions for the data. In order to meet the short-term demand, we put forward a consultation document today for an annual compendia publication on reoffending.

Offender Management Statistics

The Ministry of Justice will implement the proposals in our consultation document on Offender Management Statistics, where the response was welcoming to the proposals. This improves the timeliness and frequency of many offender management statistics and places these into an integrated product covering offender management. This is currently under development and will be introduced during 2010.

Judicial appointments

Diversity of Judicial Appointments Statistics – these will be published in line with the Code of Practice from 2010. There has been ongoing interest in parliament and amongst the Judiciary on the diversity of appointments and the work of the Judicial Appointments Commission.

Tribunal Service Statistics

We aim to introduce a quarterly summary of Tribunal Service caseload statistics in summer 2010 covering the work of all the key Tribunals.

Cross-cutting issues

Although the plans put forward here will aid the ease of use of our statistics, the Ministry of Justice will publish by end of April 2010 a Guide to our Statistics to help users find the information they need.

We also need to ensure that we minimise the burdens on front-line staff wherever possible. In 2009, Ministry of Justice statisticians cut between 10,000 and 15,000 data quality checks requested of Crown courts through use of more automated procedures. We can still do more in this area and will continue to look for opportunities to reduce this burden further.

The UK Statistics Authority will also begin assessment of our Coroners Statistics publication in 2010.

Contact details

For queries, comments or further information on the issues set out in this note, please contact:

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