



Ministry of  
**JUSTICE**

## **Statistical notice**

Inclusion of new data to 2010  
edition of the statistical bulletin  
'Statistics on deaths reported to  
coroners, England and Wales'

Published March 2010

# **Planned additions to 2010 edition of the statistical bulletin 'Statistics on deaths reported to coroners, England and Wales'**

## **Introduction**

1. This note is to advise users of planned additions to the next edition of the National Statistics bulletin 'Statistics of deaths reported to coroners, England and Wales', which is due to be published 20 May 2010 and will report on deaths reported to coroners during 2009.

## **Summary**

2. The annual bulletin presents statistics on the work of coroners in England and Wales. Data are obtained from statistical returns submitted by all coroners under the requirements of the Coroners Act 1988. The release presents figures on deaths reported to coroners, inquests and post mortems held, and verdicts returned. The publication also includes data on finds reported to coroners, inquests and verdicts, under Treasure legislation.
3. The 2010 edition of the bulletin will include, for the first time, summary statistics on the timeliness of inquests. Information on the time taken to conduct inquests has been collected from coroners since around 1995 in order to facilitate the management of the coroner service. Although these data have not previously been included within the annual statistical bulletin, this information has always previously been made available upon request (for example, in response to Parliamentary Questions or Freedom of Information Act requests).
4. For the purpose of determining the timeliness of inquests in the statistics, the time taken to conduct an inquest is deemed to be from the day the death was reported to the coroner until either (a) the day the inquest is concluded by the delivery of a verdict or (b) the day the coroner certifies that an adjourned inquest will not be resumed.

5. The average time for an inquest to be conducted is calculated in the following way. Coroners are asked in their annual return to state how many inquests were concluded within certain time periods (1 to 3 months, 3 to 6 months, etc.) All the inquests falling within a time-band are then assumed to have been completed at or near the mid-point of the various time-bands for the purposes of calculating the average. Numbers are then aggregated and the average figure (in weeks) estimated in the normal way.
6. Timeliness information is only collected in relation to inquests into deaths occurring within England and Wales. Deaths occurring elsewhere can be significantly delayed for various reasons, for example due to the difficulty of obtaining reports from other countries.
7. All statistics which appeared in the 2009 edition of the bulletin will continue to be published in the 2010 edition.

### **Contact details and further information**

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

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