

## BREACH OF THE CODE OF PRACTICE FOR OFFICIAL STATISTICS

This document reports a breach of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, or the relevant Pre-release Access to Official Statistics Orders, to which the Code applies as if it included these orders.

### 1. Background information

Name of Statistical Output (including weblink to the relevant output or 'landing page')

Personal Incomes Statistics: tables 3.1 to 3.11 for the tax year 2014 to 2015

Main page for Personal Incomes Statistics:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/personal-incomes-statistics>

Bulletin location: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/personal-incomes-statistics-tables-31-to-311-for-the-tax-year-2014-to-2015>

Table Location: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/income-of-individuals-with-self-employment-sources-2010-to-2011>

Name of Producer Organisation

HM Revenue and Customs

Name and contact details of the statistical Head of Profession (Lead Official in an Arm's Length Body) submitting this report, and date of report

Sean Whellams, Head of Profession for Statistics, HMRC, 19 April 2017

Room 2/44, 100 Parliament Street, London SW1A 2BQ, Tel 03000 586101

### 2. Circumstances of breach

Relevant Principle/Protocol and Practice

Principle 4 (Sound methods and assured quality), Practice 3 (Adopt quality assurance procedures, including the consideration of each statistical product against users' requirements, and of their coherence with other statistical products).

Date of occurrence

2<sup>nd</sup> March 2017 (date of publication)

## Nature of breach (including links with previous breaches, if any)

Twelve tables were published as part of this release. It has been found that four figures within table 3.10 were incorrect. All other tables and figures are unaffected by this error.

Specifically:

- In the Total income, number of individuals column, the first figure (row showing self-employment income with a lower limit of zero), the number of individuals was shown as 584,000 but should be 779,000;
- In the same column, for the 'all ranges' row, the number of individuals was shown as 5,400 thousand but should be 5,600 thousand;

The corresponding figures in the Mean Total Income column were also incorrect

- for the first range of self-employment income (lower limit of zero), mean Total income was shown as £33,700 and should have been £25,300;
- for the 'all ranges' row, mean Total income was shown as £27,300 but should have been £26,400.

## Reasons for breach

An error was inadvertently introduced into the software program producing outputs for the table concerned. The error affected the count of individuals in one cell of the table (those for Total income in the lowest income range), which in turn affected the 'all ranges' count for Total income and the mean values in the first range and the 'all ranges' rows. Unfortunately the error was not picked up by quality assurance checks for the publication.

Amounts for Total Income in table 3.10 are not affected.

## 3. Reactions and impact (both within the producer body and outside)

A corrected table has now been produced and re-published.

This error was queried by a member of the public, who asked about the difference between the Self Employment counts and the Total Income counts. Known users will be alerted to the publication of the corrected figures.

## 4. Corrective actions taken to prevent reoccurrence of such a breach (include short-term actions, and long-term changes made to procedures)

The software program has been amended so that the correct counts are output.

The quality assurance process for the table affected and the statistics release more widely will be reviewed and strengthened as necessary to pick up this type of problem and address any other risks identified as appropriate.

## 5. Links to published statements about this breach

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**6. Any other relevant supporting material**

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