

Scottish Government Statistician Group

Corporate Policies and Procedures for Official Statistics

Procedure: Breaches, Exceptions and Corrections to Official Statistics

Updated: 12 August 2014

Breaches of the Code or Pre-release Access Order occur in situations where a non-observance of the Code or Order was not approved by the Head of Profession in advance of its happening. Examples of breaches include:

- Failure to pre-announce a release date or significant methodological change
- Persistent problems with adhering to the 9.30am release time.
- Accidental or wrongful early release
- Any other non-compliance with the principles or protocols of the Code of Practice that is likely to be sensitive or attract attention (from Ministers, senior management, politicians, media or the public).
- Any pressure to deliberately breach the Code of Practice.

Exceptions to the Code of Practice or pre-release Order occur when a decision is made in advance not to adhere to normal practice, for example when additional early access to a release is granted, or a pre-announced release date is changed at late notice. Exceptions must be agreed by your Head of Profession (Chief Statistician for Scottish Government or the Registrar General for GROS) who must put them to the UK Statistics Authority for approval, therefore as much notice as possible should be given.

Paragraph (xii) of the Preamble to the Code states that "*Under some circumstances it may be appropriate for the UK Statistics Authority to agree exemptions or exceptions to the practices, though not to the principles [of the Code of Practice]. Where a body that produces National Statistics is aware of a need for an exemption, it should make a case to the*

Head of Assessment. Details of all exemptions and exceptions will be made public"

Reporting breaches or exceptions

Breaches or exceptions (such as those detailed above) should be reported to the Head of Profession, via your Senior Statistician or Head of Division as soon as they occur. The Head of Profession will notify the National Statistician and the UK Statistics Authority.

Except for minor wrongful release breaches, you should then complete the [UK Statistics Authority's breach template](#) and send this to your Head of Profession who will send it to the National Statistician and the Statistics Authority. [Breach reports](#) are published on the SG Statistics internet site and on the [breach reports section](#) of the UK Statistics Authority website.

There is not currently a separate template for exceptions so the breach template should be used, amended as required.

Breaches and exceptions are reported case by case within the Head of Profession's Annual Report as well as a note of the number and type of minor breaches.

Revisions & Corrections

The arrangements to follow when dealing with revisions and corrections of published statistics are set out in our [corporate policy on revisions and corrections](#), which is published on the Scottish Government statistics website as required by the Code of Practice. Some areas publish more detailed arrangements on their topic pages.

Information

Please get in touch with us if you would like any more information about our guidance or policies:

Statistics Customer Team
(0131) 244 0 442

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