
Director General, Monitoring and Assessment, Richard Alldritt

Professor Valerie Isham
President
Royal Statistical Society
12 Errol Street
London EC1Y 8LX

22 May 2012

Dear Valerie

OFFICIAL STATISTICS AND THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR

I am pleased to enclose a short report by the Statistics Authority which was published recently and sent to the Minister for Civil Society, Nick Hurd MP. It reviews the use of official statistics by the voluntary sector and the adequacy of official statistics about the scale and activities of the sector. We are grateful for the help that James Tucker provided while we researched this topic and drafted the report.

The report concludes (paragraph 19) that the use and potential use of official statistics by the sector would be enhanced by closer engagement between representatives of voluntary bodies and some of the many bodies that produce relevant official statistics. This would help the producer bodies to develop a fuller understanding of the sector's needs; ensure that official statistics are published in ways that are helpful to the sector; and identify unmet statistical requirements which it would be in the public interest to address.

We further conclude (paragraph 25) that the Government needs now to review the adequacy for its own purposes of the statistics it holds about the voluntary sector. We see a shortage of regular and timely data in this area and think it likely that this will inhibit the monitoring of the beneficial impact of the voluntary sector and its contribution to the Big Society and other Government initiatives. The introduction of Payment by Results schemes could further increase the need for reliable data about charities that operate as service providers.

We note (paragraph 26) that the Government has already called, in a recent White Paper, on providers of public services from all sectors to publish information on performance and user satisfaction to improve transparency and to allow the public to make informed choices. This is likely to lead to a greater pool of data which if properly co-ordinated could help produce a coherent national picture and allow the activities and outcomes of voluntary bodies to be compared with others.

And finally, we suggest (paragraph 27) that there would be merit in further discussion of the standards and principles that should apply to the production of statistical data by at least the larger voluntary bodies and would welcome the Statistics Authority's involvement in such discussions.

We are discussing this report with the National Statistician, Jil Matheson, the Office for Civil Society, the National Council for Voluntary Organisations and other relevant organisations. Part of this will be to review how closer engagement between the voluntary sector and the

bodies that produce official statistics can be facilitated. There is a suggestion in the report that the RSS might consider creating a voluntary sector user group (paragraph 22).

We are happy to discuss any aspect of the report with you. I am copying this to Jil Matheson, and to James Tucker.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Alldritt', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Richard Alldritt

Director General, Monitoring and Assessment, Richard Alldritt

Sir Stuart Etherington
Chief Executive
NCVO
Regent's Wharf
8 All Saints Street
London N1 9RL

22 May 2012

Dear Sir Stuart

OFFICIAL STATISTICS AND THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR

I am pleased to enclose a short report by the Statistics Authority which was published recently and sent to the Minister for Civil Society, Nick Hurd MP. It reviews the use of official statistics by the voluntary sector and the adequacy of official statistics about the scale and activities of the sector. We are grateful for the considerable help your research team provided while we researched this topic and drafted the report. We drew on the statistics from NCVO's Almanac in the report - which we found to be a very useful and engaging resource.

The report concludes (paragraph 19) that the use and potential use of official statistics by the sector would be enhanced by closer engagement between representatives of voluntary bodies and some of the many bodies that produce relevant official statistics. This would help the producer bodies to develop a fuller understanding of the sector's needs; ensure that official statistics are published in ways that are helpful to the sector; and identify unmet statistical requirements which it would be in the public interest to address.

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And finally, we suggest (paragraph 27) that there would be merit in further discussion of the standards and principles that should apply to the production of statistical data by at least the larger voluntary bodies and would welcome the Statistics Authority's involvement in such discussions.

With reference to this final conclusion, we wondered whether this might be an agenda that NCVO would be willing to be involved in? If this is something you feel able to do, we would welcome the opportunity to discuss it further with you or your research team. Richard Laux, Director of Monitoring and Assessment, (richard.laux@statistics.gsi.gov.uk) would lead on this.

We are discussing this report with the National Statistician, Jil Matheson, the Office for Civil Society, the Royal Statistical Society and other relevant organisations. Part of this will be to review how closer engagement between the voluntary sector and the bodies that produce official statistics can be facilitated.

We are happy to discuss any aspect of the report and would be pleased to engage with you in any way to help take forward its conclusions.

I am copying this to Jil Matheson, and to NCVO colleagues Karl Wilding, Jenny Clark and Joy Dobbs.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Alldritt', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Richard Alldritt

Director General, Monitoring and Assessment, Richard Alldritt

Sir Stephen Bubb
Chief Executive
Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations
1 New Oxford Street
London WC1A 1NU

6 June 2012

Dear Sir Stephen,

OFFICIAL STATISTICS AND THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR

I am pleased to enclose a short report by the Statistics Authority which was published last month and sent to the Minister for Civil Society, Nick Hurd MP. It reviews the use of official statistics by the voluntary sector and the adequacy of official statistics about the scale and activities of the sector.

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and other relevant organisations. Part of this will be to review how closer engagement between the voluntary sector and the bodies that produce official statistics can be facilitated.

We are happy to discuss any aspect of the report with you.

Yours sincerely

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Richard Alldritt

Director General, Monitoring and Assessment, Richard Alldritt

Professor Mohan
Third Sector Research Centre
Division of Sociology and Social Policy
School of Social Sciences
University of Southampton
Southampton
SO17 1BH

6 June 2012

Dear Professor Mohan

OFFICIAL STATISTICS AND THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR

I am pleased to enclose a short report by the Statistics Authority which was published last month and sent to the Minister for Civil Society, Nick Hurd MP. It reviews the use of official statistics by the voluntary sector and the adequacy of official statistics about the scale and activities of the sector. We are grateful for the help you provided while we were researching this report. In the report we cite the work of the Third Sector Research Centre, referring particularly to the programme of research into 'below the radar' organisations (paragraph 3).

The report concludes (paragraph 19) that the use and potential use of official statistics by the sector would be enhanced by closer engagement between representatives of voluntary bodies and some of the many bodies that produce relevant official statistics. This would help the producer bodies to develop a fuller understanding of the sector's needs; ensure that official statistics are published in ways that are helpful to the sector; and identify unmet statistical requirements which it would be in the public interest to address.

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We are happy to discuss any aspect of the report with you.

Yours sincerely

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Richard Alldritt

Director General, Monitoring and Assessment, Richard Alldritt

Justin Forsyth
Chief Executive
Save the Children UK
1 St John's Lane
London EC1M 4AR

6 June 2012

Dear Mr Forsyth,

OFFICIAL STATISTICS AND THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR

I am pleased to enclose a short report by the Statistics Authority which was published last month and sent to the Minister for Civil Society, Nick Hurd MP. It reviews the use of official statistics by the voluntary sector and the adequacy of official statistics about the scale and activities of the sector. We are grateful for the help that your Northern Ireland office provided while we researched this topic and drafted the report.

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Richard Alldritt

Director General, Monitoring and Assessment, Richard Alldritt

Lesley-Anne Alexander
Chief Executive
Royal National Institute for Blind People
105 Judd Street
London WC1H 9NE

6 June 2012

Dear Ms Alexander,

OFFICIAL STATISTICS AND THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR

I am pleased to enclose a short report by the Statistics Authority which was published last month and sent to the Minister for Civil Society, Nick Hurd MP. It reviews the use of official statistics by the voluntary sector and the adequacy of official statistics about the scale and activities of the sector. We are grateful for the help that your organisation provided while we researched this topic and drafted the report.

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Richard Alldritt

Director General, Monitoring and Assessment, Richard Alldritt

Campbell Robb
Chief Executive
Shelter Scotland
6 South Charlotte Street
Edinburgh EH2 4AW

6 June 2012

Dear Mr Robb,

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Richard Alldritt

Director General, Monitoring and Assessment, Richard Alldritt

Tom Wright CBE
Chief Executive
Tavis House
1-6 Tavistock Square
London WC1H 9NA

6 June 2012

Dear Mr Wright,

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Richard Alldritt

Director General, Monitoring and Assessment, Richard Alldritt

Martin Sime
Chief Executive
Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations
Mansfield Traquair Centre
15 Mansfield Place
Edinburgh EH3 6NB

6 June 2012

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