
Director General for Regulation

Neil McIvor
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02 March 2017

Dear Neil

**ASSESSMENT OF STATISTICS ON EMPLOYMENT AND SUPPORT ALLOWANCE:
OUTCOMES OF WORK CAPABILITY ASSESSMENTS, GREAT BRITAIN**

Thank you for the correspondence outlining the actions that have been taken to address the requirements in Assessment Report number 242 on Statistics on Outcomes of Work Capability Assessments.

On behalf of the Board of the Statistics Authority, I have reviewed these on the advice of the Assessment team and I am pleased to confirm the designation of *ESA: Outcomes of Work Capability Assessments, Great Britain* as National Statistics. The Authority appreciates that, while it has taken a number of years to meet the Requirements from the Assessment report, the various members of the statistical team in the Department for Work and Pensions have each demonstrated positive engagement with the assessment team throughout, viewing it as an opportunity to improve the statistics. We particularly welcome the improvements in the data presentation and narrative provided alongside the statistics, and particularly the use of the Sankey diagram showing the overview of the Work Capability Assessment, Mandatory Reconsideration and Appeals process. The new experimental cohort data explanation through providing match rates provides quantitative levels of quality, which are examples of good practice. The Authority also welcomes the statistical team's improved documentation on the quality assurance measures that are carried out on the data and we look forward to the publication of this documentation.

When the statistical bulletin carries the National Statistics designation it will be important to clearly distinguish the National Statistics from the experimental statistics in the publication and accompanying tables. Please consult us or the Good Practice Team if you would like any advice on appropriate means of making such distinctions.

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and value and is something to be celebrated. We invite you to include a statement alongside the statistics which reflects this status. You may wish to base your statement on the boilerplate text attached to this letter.

Please feel free to discuss any aspect of this with us at any time. I am copying this letter to John Pullinger, the National Statistician, and to Mike Jones at the Department for Work and Pensions.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ed Humpherson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "E" and a long, sweeping underline.

Ed Humpherson

NATIONAL STATISTICS STATUS

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the Authority's regulatory arm.

The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

It is the Department for Work and Pensions responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected of National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

