
Ed Humpherson, Director General for Regulation

Roger Halliday
Chief Statistics
Scottish Government

21 March 2018

Dear Roger

NATIONAL STATISTICS STATUS OF STATISTICS FROM THE SCOTTISH CRIME AND JUSTICE SURVEY

We have reviewed the actions that you and your team have taken in response to our Assessment Report number 334¹ on Statistics from the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey.

On behalf of the Board of the Statistics Authority, I am pleased to confirm the designation of these as National Statistics. The assessment team appreciated the commitment and responsiveness of the statisticians throughout the assessment. I welcome the positive way in which the SCJS team has sought to improve the value of these statistics through enhancing the presentation of the report and infographics, and through its engagement with users. Your review of the presentation with users, in gaining a full understanding of users' views and needs, provides a good example for other producers.

We have included more detail about our judgement in an annex to this letter. I, or my team, would be very happy to talk you or colleagues through any aspects of this letter, the annex or Code compliance more generally.

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.

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 Euan Dick and Neil Grant in Scottish Government.

Yours sincerely



Ed Humpherson
Director General for Regulation

¹ <https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/publication/scottish-crime-and-justice-survey-2/>

Annex: Review of actions taken by Scottish Government (SG) in response to Assessment Report 334 on Statistics from the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey.

Requirement	Actions taken by SG to meet Requirements	Office for Statistics Regulation evaluation of evidence in meeting Requirements
<p>Requirement 1</p> <p>Scottish Government should increase the effectiveness of its user engagement by providing users with more clarity on how it has taken account of users' feedback, including explanations when no action has been taken.</p>	<p>SG provided a report on its recent user consultation and event, which we intend to publish shortly. It received lots of feedback. It provided a detailed report with information on how they took into account of users' feedback, including explanations when no action has been taken.</p>	<p>SG conducted a thorough review of the presentation of the statistics involving users. They published a detailed paper about their engagement with users and their findings and response regarding the feedback.</p> <p>It includes responses on the overall presentation of the SCJS and structure of future reporting, the format and priorities for SCJS reporting, and the presentation and accessibility of the report and web tables.</p> <p>We are pleased with the response and recommend that Requirement 1 is met.</p>
<p>Requirement 2</p> <p>To maximise the public value of the statistics Scottish Government should improve the presentation, for example, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) reviewing each of the infographics to establish if they are accurately representing the data and adding value b) reviewing the chart types used to ensure they depict the data appropriately c) reviewing the colour schemes used in charts to ensure they meet accessibility rules. 	<p>SG reflected on the points made in the SCJS assessment report and considered the full range of charts and graphics to be presented in the 2016/17 SCJS report, considering these requirements throughout that process. They received support on accessibility and charts from the GSS good practice team, reviewed a range of their guidance, and also worked with an in-house designer to examine how to increase clarity in its reporting.</p>	<p>The assessment team reviewed a draft chapter and infographic. While we noted some minor points, which were fed back to the SG team, we regard the requirement to have been met.</p> <p>The SG team have worked with the Good Practice Team on the presentation and ensure that they achieve a clear design and accurate representation of the statistics.</p> <p>SG addressed the concerns raised in the assessment report, such as, unclear design of charts in the infographic; using too many shades of blue in some charts in the report.</p> <p>Requirement 2 is met</p>
<p>Requirement 3</p> <p>Scottish Government should review the resources allocated to</p>	<p>It reviewed the resources allocated to the SCJS and provided a detailed report which it subsequently published.</p>	<p>SG reviewed their resources in relation to the priorities for the statistics and in relation to user needs.</p> <p>They concluded: <i>The delivery of the core SCJS tasks and the additional priority work is challenging, however by effectively and regularly</i></p>

<p>the production of these statistics to ensure that they are sufficient to meet the standards of the Code of Practice and the obligation within it to serve the public good, and publish the outcome of the review.</p>		<p><i>planning we ensure that we prioritise the work of the immediate SCJS team and call on additional support, as required, for a range of ongoing work and additional developmental activity.</i></p> <p><i>At present, there is a proportionate use of resources to deliver the priorities for the SCJS. The on-going working planning and prioritisation process allows us to keep resources under-review, ensuring we prioritise and efficiently use proportionate resource across the survey year and, where our priorities change over time, we can ensure that our resources can adapt and reflect any such changing priorities.</i></p> <p>We recommend that Requirement 3 is met.</p>
<p>Requirement 4</p> <p>To promote public confidence in the SCJS statistics Scottish Government should:</p> <p>a) reduce the number of people included on the pre-release access list and provide a justification for each individual listed</p> <p>b) ensure that the pre-release access list is reviewed prior to each publication and updated accordingly.</p>	<p>As discussed during an earlier phase of the assessment process, at this stage in advance of the 2016/17 publication SG did not have a final pre-release access list. However it responded to this requirement by reviewing its approach to providing pre-release access.</p> <p>It highlighted in an email to the previous recipients the requirement to minimise pre-release access in line with new guidance issued by the Scottish Government's Office of the Chief Statistician (OCS), asked for justifications for anyone who requests access and advised anyone not provided pre-release access would instead receive a briefing note at 9:30 on the day of release.</p>	<p>The PRA evidence shows SG has contacted recipients to reduce the list size. Given the difference in arrangements allowed for Scotland I was impressed by the stance taken by the Chief Statistician. He is actively encouraging a tighter circulation list. Requirement 4 is met</p>
<p>Requirement 5</p> <p>Scottish Government should provide an indicative publication date for SCJS on its release calendar, updated with a firm date within a reasonable notice period of publication.</p>	<p>SG pre-announced an indicative publication date of Feb 2018 on the SG forthcoming publications website: http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/ForthcomingPubs</p> <p>The data processing phase has taken longer than expected as the contractor took more time and required additional support to understand and process some of the complexities of our data. It is now completing final checks on the data and analysis tables provided by the contractor and expect to confirm a publication date later in March 2018.</p>	<p>SG has met req 5, in relation to giving an indication of the publication date, with a commitment to providing the actual date shortly. We are satisfied with the approach taken and recommend. The date was subsequently released.</p> <p>Requirement 5 is met</p>