
Mark Pont, Assessment Programme Lead

Tony O'Connor
Head of Profession for Statistics
Ministry of Defence
(by email)

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Dear Tony

MOD HEALTH AND SAFETY STATISTICS

As you are aware we recently completed a Compliance check on the annual MOD [Health and Safety Statistics](#). This letter details our findings against the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#).

We welcome your publication of these Health and Safety Statistics as official statistics, in order to demonstrate transparency to inform public debate. We focussed on Quality and Value of published material in relation to the Code.

The review identified strengths, and recent improvements in the statistics. In particular we welcome the creativity and motivation to improve the presentation of the statistics in the last 12 months, as part of the wider plan to improve readership of MOD statistics.

We confirmed some areas for improvement that if addressed may enhance user understanding and further inform public debate in this area.

Quality

We were particularly pleased to see the link to the background quality report on the front page of the release, allowing users to easily navigate to this information. The document itself includes good evidence on quality caveats and limitations.

The use of administrative data in official statistics brings with it a responsibility for ensuring that the data and quality assurance processes are sufficiently robust to be used in the production of official statistics. To enable MOD to better understand and improve quality, and for users to be clearer on limitations of use, MOD should publish details about:

- Quality assurance processes undertaken by you and your data supplier
- Strengths and limitations of the statistics in relation to use

To help you with this work we suggest you refer to the [Administrative Data Quality Assurance Toolkit](#).

Value

We note the user consultation carried out in 2015. It may help to broaden engagement, and therefore public value, if the outcomes of the consultation were published in a way that is easily accessible to a wide range of users, along with information on user groups. More generally, there would be benefits to broadening your knowledge of who uses, or has the potential to use, the data and develop a way to engage routinely with them. A published approach to user engagement, that explains the impact of any future changes to the statistics, may help provide insights that serve the public good.

We welcome the improvements in methods, however it would be helpful for users to have a clear understanding of why methods have changed and any limitations identified.

We are encouraged by the recent changes to the presentation of the statistics, providing interesting commentary that highlights key points for users. To further improve clarity and insight, we suggest that you should review whether rationalising the wide use of infographics might enhance clarity for readers, and enable clearer presentation of key messages. It would also be useful to signpost to related statistics such as the MOD National Statistics on [armed forces deaths in service](#).

We welcome your commitment to work with the [GSS Good Practice Team](#) to further improve the presentation of these statistics. We suggest you consult with users throughout the process to collate their views on the changes and ensure it meets their expectations.

Trustworthiness

MOD demonstrate commitment to producing trusted statistics with integrity. The statistical bulletin has been written independently and we welcome your efforts to apply the Code of Practice standard. We did not identify any issues related to trustworthiness during this compliance check.

Thank you for engaging effectively with us during this review. Our new domain lead will get back to you in due course. Please let me know if there is any aspect of this letter that you wish to discuss.

Yours sincerely



Mark Pont
Assessment Programme Lead