
Ed Humpherson, Director General for Regulation

Steve Farrington
Chief of Staff
Office for Budget Responsibility
(By email)

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Dear Steve

Office for Statistics Regulation Review of the Public Value of Devolved Public Finance statistics

The Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) recently concluded [a review](#) of the public value of public finance statistics for the devolved administrations (DAs) and the regions and I wanted to share with you some of the results. The complexity of new fiscal frameworks and the associated need to make public finance statistics for the DAs and the regions more easily understood was one of the factors that prompted us to conduct our review.

You will find a presentation concerning the findings from this review are summarised in [this blog](#) from which the findings of the review can be accessed. One of our findings in respect to transparency of devolved public finance statistics is that we found that an annual [Statement of Data Needs](#) published by the Scottish Fiscal Commission (SFC) has been instrumental in bringing transparency not only to their data needs but to the progress there has been from statistics producers in meeting those needs over the past year. This progress was evident from [their second publication](#) of their Statement recently.

We wondered whether OBR had prepared any similar summary of its data needs and the steps that have been taken to plug gaps with a view to improving forecasts? We have seen the positive effect that the SFC's Statement published had over the past year and would be interested to learn whether OBR sees any potential from publishing such a summary in respect to those needs which it has identified?

I declare an interest here as we have found the SFC's statement to be very helpful to us in our work in deciding our regulatory work priorities. We produce an [annual regulatory work plan](#) which we update through the year. In our regulatory monitoring of economic statistics, we often contact the OBR for any feedback on analysts' experiences of using the statistics. A periodic statement of data needs might help obviate the need for our regulators contacting you every time we assess economic statistics.

I'd be interested to hear from you (if possible, by the end of October) about whether you have already any summary of data needs or see it as desirable from time to time to publish such a summary.

Yours sincerely



Ed Humpherson
Director General for Regulation