
Ed Humpherson, Director General for Regulation

Stephen Penneck
Chair, RSS National Statistics Advisory Group
(by email)

26 October 2020

Dear Stephen

Pre-release Access to Official Statistics (Scotland) Bill

Thank you for your letter of 9 October 2020 regarding the Pre-release Access to Official Statistics (Scotland) Bill. As you may have seen in my evidence to the Scottish Parliament's [Economy, Energy and Fair Work Committee](#), I regard official statistics as a public asset that should be equally available to all. My [letter](#) to the Convenor of the Committee in May 2018 emphasised that equality of access to official statistics is a key component of the trustworthiness in a statistical system. This is the Authority's long-standing policy position, reiterated by Sir David Norgrove in his [letter](#) to the Convenor in September 2019.

Under the [Code of Practice](#), official statistics producer bodies must commit to releasing statistics in an open and transparent manner. It does so while acknowledging the preserved rights of Ministers to decide their pre-release access arrangements, in line with legislation in each administration. In Scotland, it is for the Chief Statistician to determine the appropriate arrangements for pre-release access to official statistics. Our regulatory role involves monitoring whether the operation of the pre-release access arrangements is in line with the position set out by the Chief Statistician, and I can reassure you that we will continue to do so.

I am copying this letter to Roger Halliday, Chief Statistician, Scottish Government.

Yours sincerely



Ed Humpherson
Director General for Regulation