
Ed Humpherson, Director General for Regulation

Johanna Hutchinson
Head of Data and Data Science
Joint Biosecurity Centre
(by email)

23 June 2021

Dear Johanna

Transparency in statistics

Thank you for taking the time to meet me last week; I was encouraged to hear your commitment to transparency.

The Joint Biosecurity Centre (JBC) has a pivotal role in pulling together data both from within the United Kingdom and beyond to inform key government decision-making around Covid-19. It is important that as far as possible these data are made available in a clear and accessible form to the public. Making data available in this way supports citizens decision making and enables the public to hold Governments to account. When these data relate to key decisions it enables the public to better understand why decisions have been made.

We welcome the recent interactions we have had with your teams. They have been open and swift to respond to our questions over a number of recent government statements, for example, on the traffic light system for international travel and previously around travel corridors.

The team at JBC and the [published methodology](#) both explain that there are many factors feeding into the decisions in these risk assessments, many of which are based on qualitative evidence rather than quantitative. We are reassured that JBC is obtaining a wide range of available evidence to reach these decisions.

We understand that some of this evidence cannot be published for various reasons but we would stress the importance of transparency, especially where specifics are given in government statements.

Yours sincerely



Ed Humpherson
Director General for Regulation