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Research and Development Statistics for Scotland

Dear Mr Humpherson,

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) has been leading a redevelopment project for Research and Development (R&D) statistics.

The first phase of the project concluded on the 22nd of November with the publication of the latest ONS Business Enterprise R&D (BERD) estimates, which reflect significant methodological changes. There is currently uncertainty around the detailed breakdowns of the new BERD estimates, which includes the data for Scotland. And, as you know, the OSR agreed to temporarily pause the National Statistics status of the detailed breakdowns of BERD until the second stage of the redevelopment project completes in 2023.

The Scottish Government is due to release the 'Business Enterprise Research and Development Scotland 2021' and 'Gross Expenditure on Research and Development Scotland 2020' publications on the 14th of December. The BERD estimates used in these publications are sourced from the ONS BERD estimates for Scotland, and therefore we would similarly ask that the OSR temporarily pause the National Statistics status of these Scottish Government R&D publications.

Given the current uncertainty around the BERD estimates for Scotland, we do not intend to publish any detailed breakdowns in our own publications. We will be working with the ONS on the second stage of the redevelopment and we would hope to be able to produce more detailed Scottish Government R&D publications in 2023.

Yours sincerely

Alastair McAlpine
Chief Statistician