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Ed Humpherson  
Office for Statistical Regulation

Sent via e-mail.

20 February 2025

## Developing a modern statistical system – A review of Scotland’s Census 2022

Dear Ed,

I commissioned my team in Scottish Government to undertake an internal review to examine whether statisticians had sufficient seniority and influence to effectively respond to challenges during the 2022 Census programme. This followed on from the publication of reports by the Office for Statistical Regulation in [2019](#) and [2023](#) and subsequent discussions with you where I agreed to consider these questions with a focus on what we can learn for the future delivery of strategically important statistical exercises across the Scottish Statistical System.

I am writing to let you know that the internal review has been completed and will be published later today.

I welcome the recommendations in this review which recognises the broader learning for the statistics profession. Our system in Scotland is generally aligned to areas of devolved responsibility. With this structure, I need assurances that statistical decisions and leadership in all areas are making the right decisions with the proper oversight and seniority and especially on statistical outputs that cuts across areas of responsibility.

That is why I have restructured the Office of the Chief Statistician to centralise professional functions, support and improve the assurances I receive across the Statistics profession. I am also rolling out a successful programme of leadership training to improve this capability. But, I recognise we must go further and will reflect on the recommendations to deliver further improvements.

I will consider all recommendations and in due course publish an assessment of how we will meet them as we modernise our statistics, built trust and improve the transparency in our statistical decisions and methods. I will also invite the ScotStat board to scrutinise progress towards meeting these recommendations.

I am copying this letter to the Minister for Parliamentary Business who has responsibility for statistics within his portfolio, Alison Byrne Chief Executive of the National Records of Scotland, Scott Heald of Public Health Scotland and the co-chairs of the [ScotStat Board](#).

Yours sincerely



Alastair McAlpine  
Chief Statistician