

Review of compliance with the Code of
Practice for Statistics

War Pensions Scheme statistics

Statistics producer: Ministry of Defence

Report by: Office for Statistics Regulation

July 2026

The Office for Statistics Regulation

Statistics should serve everyone, helping enhance knowledge about every section of society and the economy, and people's place within them.

The Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) provides independent regulation of official statistics produced in the UK. Official statistics are statistics produced by Crown bodies and other organisations listed within an [Official Statistics Order](#), on behalf of the UK Government or the devolved governments.

We aim to enhance public confidence in statistics produced by government by setting the standards that they must meet in [the Code of Practice for Statistics](#). We ensure that producers uphold these standards by conducting reviews of statistics against the Code. We also report publicly on system-wide issues and on the way statistics are being used, celebrating when the standards are upheld and challenging publicly when they are not.

Compliance review

A compliance review is a review of any official statistics (or [accredited official statistics](#)) to establish the extent to which they meet the standards of Trustworthiness, Quality and Value in the Code of Practice for Statistics. We might undertake a review with a view to accrediting a set of statistics (this type of compliance review is called an assessment), focus on a specific issue or involve a high-level check of ongoing compliance.

A range of factors determine the scope of and approach to a compliance review, including the type of statistics, their accreditation status, the producer history, the profile of the statistics and the reasons for initiating the review.

Contents

The Office for Statistics Regulation	2
Compliance review	2
Overview.....	4
Why we did this review	4
Findings.....	4
Our judgement.....	5
Next steps.....	6

Overview

At the time of our review, the Ministry of Defence (MOD)'s [statistics on the War Pensions Scheme](#) were published as accredited official statistics.

These statistics cover claims, awards and recipients of pensions, allowances or other payments under the War Pensions Scheme (WPS) across the UK. The statistics feed into policy decisions on spending by providing an understanding of compensation claims and expenditure on the WPS.

This report provides our view on these statistics against the [The Code of Practice for Statistics](#) (the Code).

Why we did this review

We assessed these statistics in 2013. It is standard practice for OSR to review statistics that we have not looked at for a while, to ensure that they continue to meet the standards of the Code.

There have been several developments since we last assessed these statistics which have influenced our decision to carry out this review. Since our last assessment, the administrative data system used to manage WPS cases has changed from the War Pensions Computer System to Compendia Touch. Additionally, an issue was raised with us in August 2025 concerning how MOD manages the quality of the WPS statistics. From our investigation of this issue, we identified sufficient concerns to warrant a compliance review, with a focus on the Quality principle of the Code.

Findings

- Compendia Touch was not originally developed to support WPS data requirements; it was developed primarily as the case management system for the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme, which replaced the WPS in 2005. As a result, the team is reliant on workarounds to address system limitations, and there have been issues with accessing historic data. These factors increase the risk of poor data quality.
- The impact of changes to the system on reporting is generally only identified retrospectively. A data working group has been established with the data supplier team to help improve understanding of data quality and pre-empt changes which impact reporting. Currently, impacts of changes on the statistics are not communicated clearly to users.
- The [statistics bulletin](#) and [background quality report](#) clearly explain data sources, giving detail on when the system changed and advising users to take caution when comparing data before and after the change. This is clearly indicated to users, for example via lines on charts indicating the changeover date. However, there is a

lack of information on the impact of the new system on data quality and the statistics.

- Quality assurance processes are well established, with raw data undergoing initial and post-processing automated checks, followed by manual validation. However, data on clearance times for WPS claims and appeals are drawn directly from the source system without correcting known errors, such as clearance times of zero or one day. We understand that these errors are not corrected due to concerns about introducing bias and the significant resource implications associated with identifying invalid records. This approach results in knowingly inaccurate data being included in the statistics, which may give a misleading picture of clearance times.
- MOD has considered the needs of users by creating detailed demographic and geographic breakdowns, provided in open-format data tables. Following a [user consultation](#) on the 'Location of Armed Forces Pension and Compensation Recipients' release, the statistics were moved to local authority-level data tables only in the WPS release, improving usability while removing the need for a separate statistical publication.
- MOD has published some, but not all, of the [organisational policy documents and statements required](#) by the Code's [Standards for Official Statistics](#).

Our judgement

MOD has considered user needs and communicated when changes to the source system have occurred for the War Pensions Scheme statistics. However, we have concerns about some aspects of the approach taken to quality assurance, as well as the impact of system changes on data quality and the lack of transparency with users about this issue. These factors mean that, on balance, the statistics no longer comply with the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#). We therefore support MOD's request to cancel the accreditation for these statistics.

Based on the findings of our review, we identified three requirements that MOD must fulfil before we could reconfirm accreditation of these statistics:

Requirement 1: To anticipate and manage impacts on statistical outputs in a more proactive and informed way, MOD should build a clearer understanding of the impact of system workflows, system use, and change management on reporting.

Requirement 2: To enhance transparency and trust in the statistics, MOD should inform users of the nature and scale of the system change's impact on the statistics.

Requirement 3: To improve data quality, MOD should introduce steps into the quality assurance process to check for and correct known errors. In addition, MOD should explain, in more detail, its current approach to quality-assuring data on clearance times for claims and appeals.

In addition to our requirements, we have identified two recommendations from our review that MOD should address. Fulfilling these recommendations is not essential for accreditation, but would further enhance the statistics' Trustworthiness, Quality and Value:

Recommendation 1: To reduce the risk of errors and improve the overall accuracy of the statistics, MOD should seek further opportunities for the analysis team to work with the data input team to correct data at source and understand how planned changes in recording practices may impact the statistics.

Recommendation 2: To demonstrate statistical leadership and enhance transparency, MOD should continue its work to progress production of organisational policy documents in line with the Code's Standards for Official Statistics.

Next steps

To ensure clarity for users about the issues found in this review, MOD should explain the change in status of the statistics to users in its next release in July 2026. MOD should provide a public update on its progress against our requirements and recommendations by December 2026. We expect MOD to have implemented Code 3.0 by December 2026.

We will remain available to discuss plans with the team and offer support and guidance as needed.