
Director General for Regulation

Frank O'Donnell
Editorial Director
The Scotsman
Orchard Brae House (Level 7)
30 Queensferry Road
Edinburgh
EH4 2HS
(By email)

20th September 2017

Dear Frank,

The article in today's Scotsman headlined 'Scotland's statisticians less independent since devolution' reported that there is a lack of independent regulation of Scottish Statistics.

This is not correct. The UK Statistics Authority, chaired by Sir David Norgrove, has a UK-wide remit. The Authority, and its regulatory arm, the Office for Statistics Regulation, is completely independent of the Scottish Government and all other public bodies in Scotland.

We act clearly to support the public interest. We assess statistics produced by the Scottish Government, and highlight concerns with them. For example, in 2014 we removed the National Statistics designation from the Scottish Government's statistics on crime recorded by the police. And we regularly comment on the use of statistics in Scotland. For example in March this year we highlighted our concerns with a statement by the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport¹ comparing health performance in Scotland with other parts of the UK.

The Authority can and does comment publicly on the use of statistics in Scotland from an independent perspective, and will continue to do so.

Yours sincerely



Ed Humpherson
Director General for Regulation

¹ <https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Letter-from-Ed-Humpherson-to-Roger-Halliday-090317.pdf>