

Comments on HMT Consultative Document on limiting pre-release access to statistics

Note: my response is as an individual user of government statistics.

Comments

1. As with the earlier consultative document *Independence for Statistics*, I agree with much of the content of the consultative document concerning pre-release access to statistics. I welcome the proposal in para 3.14 to reduce the length of time for advance sight of statistics to a maximum of 24 hours.
2. I also support the proposal for a review of the new pre-release arrangements after 12 months to see how effective they have been and whether there have been any problems with the new arrangements.
3. The only slight matter of concern that I felt when reading the consultative document concerned the statement in para 3.4 that the rules would not cover wholly devolved statistics produced by the administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. While appreciating that it is for the devolved administrations to set out their own rules for pre-release statistics, I think it would be a good idea if the review after 12 months looked at the arrangements that had been followed in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and whether there had been any differences in arrangements and if any problems had arisen. If different arrangements were adopted by the devolved administrations, then there might be some lessons to be learnt for the arrangements in England.

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