



TULDQR(01)

Trade Union Membership and Labour Disputes Statistics Quality Review

Project Initiation Document

Project Name: Trade Union Membership and Labour Disputes Statistics Quality Review

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Annex 1: Timetable

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Government's White Paper (1999) – *'Building Trust in Statistics'* – includes a commitment to assuring the quality of National Statistics outputs and refers to a programme of thorough reviews of key outputs. These reviews are an important way of ensuring that National Statistics and other official statistics are fit for purpose and that the quality and value of these outputs is continually improved. This Project Initiation Document (PID) relates to the review of Trade Union membership statistics from the Labour Force Survey and Labour Disputes statistics collected in the Labour Disputes Survey.
- 1.2 These statistics are two key outputs in the Employment Relations field with a number of users, both within and outside government. The DTI, are a key government department with an interest in these statistics in the UK. As well as this there is a large academic community in the UK and abroad in the Employment Relations field who are key users of the statistics. The OECD and the ILO are also users of these statistics.

2. Aims and Scope of the Review

- 2.1 The main aims of the review are to:
 - Identify the main users and uses of Trade Union membership and Labour Disputes statistics.
 - Establish how well the outputs meet user requirements.
 - Assess how well the outputs are meeting quality requirements (for example the relevance, accuracy, timeliness, punctuality, accessibility, clarity, comparability, coherence and completeness).
 - Identify areas for improvement and assess which should take highest priority.
 - Make recommendations for future work on Trade Union membership and Labour Disputes statistics, and if necessary, options for how to better meet user requirements.

Trade Union Membership Statistics

- 2.2 There is one main National Statistics source of Trade Union Membership statistics, and that is data from the Labour Force Survey. There are a number of other sources for Trade Union membership statistics for example, the administrative data from the Certification Officer, the Workplace Employee Relations Survey, the British Social Attitudes Survey and the British Household Panel Survey, but these are outside the scope of this review (although they may be referred to at times when considering the

quality of Labour Force Survey data). The TU membership statistics from the Labour Force Survey are produced by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI).

- 2.3 The LFS provides estimates of the number and proportion of trade union members, whether members of a trade union are present in the workplace and whether employees' pay and conditions are covered by a collective agreement. All these measures will be focussed on in this review.

Labour Disputes Statistics

- 2.4 Labour Disputes statistics are produced by the Office for National Statistics and are considered a National Statistic. The Labour Disputes Survey began in 1891 and figures are available for every year since that date. The statistics cover stoppages of work in the United Kingdom caused by labour disputes between employers and workers and other workers, in relation to terms and conditions of employment. They detail the number of working days lost, the number of stoppages and the number of workers involved. All these measures will be focussed on in this review.

- 2.5 The ONS collects this information directly from the employer involved, in addition, some returns (including 'nil' returns) are provided on a centralised basis by some large firms, public bodies and Trade Unions. There is no legal obligation for the United Kingdom to produce labour stoppage data. However, under the ILO "Resolution on Strikes and Lockouts:1993", the UK provides the ILO with data covering working days lost, number of workers involved, and the number of stoppages, by industry, for each calendar year.

- 2.6 The Labour Disputes Survey form requests the minimum amount of information to produce the analyses required by users, and the inquiry has always been a voluntary one. Information is not available on the completeness of coverage so consequently it is not known what proportion of all stoppages are included in the statistics. This will be part of the focus of the review.

Nature of the Review

- 2.7 The National Statistics Planning Board have decided that NS quality reviews should normally be one of three types of review. It has been decided that this review should be a standard review. This type of review allows the evaluation of key issues, highlighting of concerns and identification of areas for improvement.

- 2.8 This review will seek to find what the main uses of the statistics are, how well they meet these uses in the eyes of users and whether the quality is adequate. To achieve this aim key users of the information will be consulted using either a structured questionnaire or by bilateral interviews whichever is more appropriate.

2.9 The review will also seek to find answers to the following questions:

- Are the methodologies used appropriate and in line with best practice?
- Are the inputs required appropriate and fit for this set of purposes, and is the burden on data suppliers justified?
- Are there aspects of cost effectiveness that can be improved?
- Can the information available to users on quality be improved?

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 A Steering Group will oversee the work of a Review Team that will be lead by a review manager. A review sponsor will oversee the review as a whole and will be part of the Steering Group. Details of the roles and responsibilities of the teams and individuals are outlined below:

Review Team

3.2 The structure of the Review Team is as follows:

Stephen Hicks	EMAR, DTI	Review Manager
Harry Duff	EEPD, ONS	Team Member
Joanne Monger	EEPD, ONS	Team Member
Tom Palmer	EMAR, DTI	Team Member

3.3 The responsibilities of the Review Team are as follows:

- To draw up the PID and scope of review and make any subsequent changes to it;
- To consult with users and undertake assessment of the quality of the statistics;
- To develop options and recommendations for the improvement of the statistics;
- To report to the TULDQR Steering Group.

Steering Group

3.4 The structure of the TULDQR Steering Group is as follows:

Grant Fitzner	EMAR, DTI	Review Sponsor, Head of Employment Market Analysis and Research
Ole Black	EEPD, ONS	Group Member, Head of Employment, Earnings and Productivity Division
Prof. Steve Machin	LSE/UCL	Academic representative

3.5 The responsibilities of the Steering Group are as follows:

- to agree scope of the review and the PID
- to assure that the review is being carried out within specified National Statistics guidelines
- to consider emerging findings throughout the period of review taking account of wider issues related to the areas of the review;
- to ensure that the review team utilises all its resources such that the review meets its objectives (including agreeing to any change to the timetable), and resolves any difficulties that may arise;
- to consider the sensitivity of the report findings and ensure that stakeholders are appropriately consulted throughout the review;
- to consider and agree the final report, setting out recommendations for the future of the statistics in question to be submitted to the National Statistician;
- to commission an initial implementation plan by the business areas in DTI and ONS to take forward the recommendations, to be produced within 3 months of the final report being published.

Review Manager (Stephen Hicks)

3.6 The responsibilities of the review manager are:

- to manage the day to day running of the review;
- to produce, and maintain a record of changes to, the plans and timetable;
- to ensure that the project risk register is maintained;
- to prepare draft PID and reports for discussion by the Review Team;
- to ensure the review team is regularly informed of progress;
- to liaise between team members between meetings of the whole team;
- to consult as necessary with team members and other interested parties on the subject matter of the review;
- to report regularly to the Review Sponsor;
- to produce necessary papers for Project Steering Group;
- to attend steering group meetings;
- to maintain a documentation and decision log.

Review Sponsor (Grant Fitzner)

3.7 The responsibilities of the review sponsor are:

- to chair the Steering Group Meetings;
- to ensure that the Review Team meets at regular intervals;
- to be aware of the risks to the project in the context of his corporate management responsibilities; and,
- to help overcome barriers to the successful completion of the project which are brought to his attention.

Review Team members

3.8 The responsibilities of the review team members are:

- to undertake analysis and contribute papers, as necessary, on issues of particular interest or importance;
- to be fully involved in the consultation process with users, including helping to design questionnaire and undertaking interviews with key users;
- to fully participate in discussions on review subject matter, seeking where necessary views from colleagues;
- to advise the project manager of any problems which may effect their participation;
- to attend project team meetings, contributing and developing ideas and supplying documentation as necessary.

Steering Group members

3.9 The responsibilities of the Steering Group members are:

- to agree the scope of the review;
- to assure the projects technical and business integrity;
- to consider emerging findings and provide comments and insight throughout the review;
- to oversee the commitment of any necessary resources;
- to consider and agree final report, containing recommendations for the future of the statistics in question to be submitted to the National Statistician.

4. Quality Review Procedures

- 4.1 The conduct of quality reviews by data producers is a key element of the National Statistics approach set out in the framework document. In each case, these reviews should involve consultation with data users and incorporate a quality assurance procedure involving outside experts.
- 4.2 The machinery of the review (outlined above) is designed in such a way as to facilitate this. It is normally assumed that a review of this nature will take approximately 3-6 months to conduct. This review is likely to take around 9 months overall, due to staff changes with the review period. A timetable for the review is given under section 6 of this PID.
- 4.3 The procedure for the remainder of this review is as follows:
- a) Review manager/team prepares a scoping document identifying the major issues to be reviewed.
 - b) Steering Group considers/agrees the scope of the review;
 - c) Review Manager/team undertakes studies and develops options, discusses these with users and other stakeholders and prepares a report of emerging findings;
 - d) Steering Group considers/agrees emerging findings;
 - e) Project manager/team produces final report and recommendations;
 - f) Steering Group considers/agrees final report;
 - g) Final report submitted to National Statistician and published on NS/DTI website.

5. Communication and Consultation Plan

- 5.1 One of the main aims of the review is to ascertain how well the statistics are meeting customer needs across the whole range of quality criteria. Initial discussions and thinking has taken place with a limited number of users; however, as part of the review a thorough consultation exercise is envisaged with key users.
- 5.2 The review team are currently drawing up plans for this exercise, which will commence as soon as possible. Consultations will be undertaken by all members of the review team, within a pre-defined framework, which is again being prepared. Key users of the information will be consulted using either a structured questionnaire or by bilateral interviews which-ever is more appropriate.

6. Project Timetable

- 6.1 The proposed timetable for the main stages of the review is outlined below and detailed in Annex A. The timetable in Annex A will be used as a basis for a working timetable which will be updated and revised (if necessary) as the review progresses.
- 6.2 **Review team agree PID, including scope** (*late March 04*). The scope of the project, incorporated in this PID will be discussed and agreed by the review team and presented to the steering group for approval (item 6.3).
- 6.3 **First meeting of Steering Group** (*late March/early April 04*). The main purpose of this meeting is for the group to approve the PID and scope of the review, the proposed timetable and suggested procedures. The steering group should note that, once agreed the full PID will be published on the NS and DTI website.
- 6.4 **Consultation Phase** (*April – June 2004*). Initial plans for the consultation phase of the project are given in section 5.
- 6.5 **Analytical Phase** (*April – July 04*). The analytical phase will run concurrently with the consultation phase but be elapsed to give the review team extra time to consider the aspects of quality outlined in paragraph 2.1 and assess how well the statistics are meeting user needs.
- 6.6 **Emerging findings report** (*mid Jul – early August 04*). An emerging finding report will be produced and submitted to the steering group for comments. This will provide the steering group with information so that comments can be given on the likely future options that may be needed to improve the quality of the statistics.
- 6.7 **Second meeting of Steering Group** (*mid August 04*). This meeting will allow the steering group to consider the emerging finding report and provide comments on work undertaken up to this point. The main purpose of this meeting is to make sure that the review is proceeding satisfactorily and to plan. The group will also advise on particular aspects of the work and on any other issues the review team might raise.
- 6.8 **Preparation of the Final Report** (*end August – late September04*). The review team will prepare a draft final report, which will include any further work that comes out of the second review meeting, with recommended course of action. This will be considered by the steering group (item 6.9).
- 6.9 **Third meeting of Steering Group** (*mid October 04*). The Steering Group will consider the draft of the final report and provide comments to review team. The main

purpose of this meeting is to make sure the review has been undertaken satisfactorily and to approve the final report.

6.10 **Final report and dissemination** (*November 04*). The aim is to present the final report (which incorporates comments from the Steering Group) to the National Statistician by the mid November 2004. The final report will then be published shortly afterwards on the NS and DTI website.

6.11 It should be noted that within 3 months of the report being published, a plan for the implementation of recommendations and/or progress made on implementation, should be made available. This aims to show users the progress that is being made against the recommendations and also should indicate the priority given to the recommendations. The plan should be published on the National Statistics and DTI website.

7. Project Risk Register

Risk No.	Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Implication and counter measure
1	Staff changes, including review manager, in the review team	High	High	This may lead to a delay in completion of work. Solution: Ensure adequate documentation is maintained in order to facilitate any staff changes with the minimum of impact and set timetable of the review to reflect this.
2	Other worked deemed to be of higher priority	Medium	High	Again may lead to a delay in the review. Solution: Ensure that key staff are aware of their responsibilities towards the review and that senior managers give adequate commitment in time and resources.
3	Unplanned expansion of the scope of the review	Low	Medium	If the scope of the review increases so will the timetable. Solution: Ensure the scope is agreed at the start with the

				Steering Group and that as many issues are considered to begin with. The review manager will seek advice from the steering group if the scope seems to be changing.
4	New issues emerging during the consultation process	Medium	Medium	<p>This could have the potential of increasing the scope.</p> <p>Solution: Project manager should monitor consultation closely and report any potential problems to steering group.</p>
5	Inability of the Steering Group to reach agreement	Low	High	<p>It is vital that key stakeholders are fully committed both to the review itself and to the outputs of the review.</p> <p>Solution: The review manager will seek guidance from the steering group on any points of contention. The Sponsor has ultimate responsibility and is accountable to the National Statistician for the review and if necessary will make final decisions in order to resolve any disagreements.</p>
6	Unexpected intervention at high level, which has major implications on Trade Union and Labour Dispute Statistics e.g. unexpected change to major policy need	Low	High	<p>A low risk as senior officials in DTI and ONS will be informed of the scope of the review.</p> <p>Solution: Members of review team and steering group should let the review manager know of any events known to them that may have a major impact in the review.</p>

8. Quality Assurance

8.1 It is important that the quality of the review itself is monitored. This will be done in the following ways:

- There will be regular meetings of the Review Team which will have responsibility for quality assuring all documents which are sent out and for ensuring Quality Review procedures are adhered to.
- Records of all Review Team meetings will be available to steering group members on request.
- Membership of the Steering Group includes a representative from the academic community.
- The Steering Group will be responsible for quality assuring the PID, the emerging findings report and the final report.
- The implications, including time, cost and quality of any proposed changes to Trade Union Membership Statistics (defined as in scope in this PID) or Labour Disputes Statistics, of any form, will be thoroughly investigated, by the Review Team, before being put forward to the Steering Group.

9. Evaluation

9.1 At the end of the review an Evaluation Report will be produced:

- to determine the extent to which the outcome of the Review has achieved its aims;
- to determine how effectively the process of the project was managed;
- to identify lessons learned which might be applied to future quality reviews.

9.2 To this end an evaluation log will be kept throughout the life of the review being discussed at each review team meeting.

Stephen Hicks
Review Manager
March 2004.

Annex 1

Time table for Trade Union and Labour Dispute Statistics review

