
Director General for Regulation

Sir Robert Devereux
Permanent Secretary
Department for Work and Pensions
Caxton House
Tothill Street
London
SW1H 9NA

22 January 2016

Dear Robert,

I am writing following a report from the Office for National Statistics of a breach of the *Code of Practice for Official Statistics* and the *Pre-Release Access to Official Statistics Order 2008*.

I note that an indication of the substance of Wednesday's *Labour Market Statistics* release was shared by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) with up to 300 people, through a social media network ahead of the publication of the report by someone who is not approved to have pre-release access to the statistics.

The Authority is deeply concerned about the impact that breaches (and apparent breaches) relating to the unauthorised, widespread sharing of statistics before their publication may have on the trustworthiness of the UK's official statistics system.

I would welcome your assurance that you will review – and improve where necessary – the processes relating to the handling of pre-release access within your department to ensure that such an occurrence cannot and will not happen again.

I have copied this letter to John Pullinger, the National Statistician and to David Frazer and Neil McIvor at DWP.

Yours sincerely,



Ed Humpherson