

PRESS RELEASE

Statistics Commission

11-19 Artillery Row
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SC/PR/2006/05

26 July 2006

* * * EMBARGOED UNTIL 00.01 AM ON WEDNESDAY 26 JULY 2006 * * *

STATISTICS COMMISSION ENDORSES TREASURY COMMITTEE REPORT ON INDEPENDENCE FOR STATISTICS

The Statistics Commission welcomes the publication today of the Treasury Select Committee's report¹ on the Government's proposed legislation on independence for statistics.

Commission Chairman Professor David Rhind commented that "the Statistics Commission endorses all the main arguments in the Treasury Committee's Report and urges the Government to develop its own proposals accordingly. In particular:

- The new statutory arrangements must cover all official statistics, not just those produced by the Office for National Statistics.
- Clear separation is needed between the role of the National Statistician in the executive delivery of statistics and the new Board's responsibility for oversight and scrutiny.
- Ministers should not be free to place important departmental statistics outside the ambit of the new statutory arrangements.
- Pre-release access to statistics should be further restricted though we recognise the case for the introduction of limited pre-release access for opposition spokespeople under strict embargo arrangements.

/...CONTINUES.../

¹ 10th Report of the Treasury Committee, *Independence for statistics*, HC 1111, available via the Committee's website at www.parliament.uk/treascom.

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- The concordat on statistics between the four UK administrations should be reviewed and revised to ensure closer co-ordination.
- There is a need for a strong presumption in favour of statisticians having access to administrative data for statistical purposes.

“As the Commission has said before, the new arrangements will properly be judged by whether they have a beneficial impact on public perceptions and on the quality of the statistical service as a whole. I and my fellow Commission members will continue to work with all those involved to ensure that the statutory framework is robust and effective.”

/...ENDS.../

NOTES TO EDITORS

1. The Statistics Commission was set up in June 2000 to advise on the quality, quality assurance and priority setting for official statistics, and on the procedures designed to deliver statistical integrity, to help ensure official statistics are trustworthy and responsive to public needs. It is independent both of Ministers and of the producers of official statistics. More information about the Commission's role and work is on its website www.statscom.org.uk.
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The Statistics Commission is independent both of Ministers and of the producers of National Statistics. It operates openly and transparently, making its correspondence open to public scrutiny.