

Building the Community: A Summary

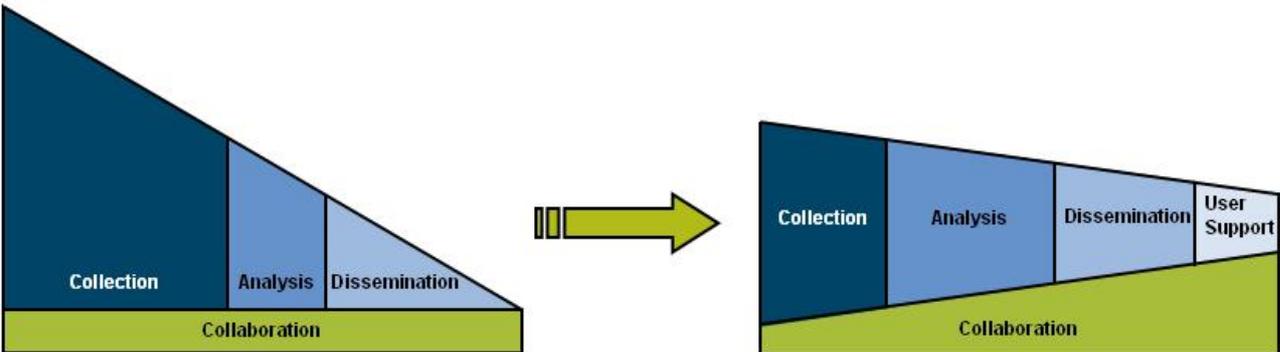
The Government Statistical Service (GSS) is experiencing a time of unprecedented challenge and opportunity. Advances in technology, reduced budgets and civil service reform are some of the issues that the GSS needs to adapt and respond to.

The strategic framework below shows how the GSS is changing in order to provide a flexible, high quality statistical service for the next decade and beyond. It explains:

- our vision (where we want to be by 2020)
- our mission statement (the reason for us being here)
- our priorities and outcomes (how we will achieve the vision)
- our values (the behaviours we'll display in all that we do).

Vision	Statistics produced by a collaborative community, used in decision making and debate				
Mission Statement	High quality statistics, analysis and advice for the public good				
Priorities & Outcomes	People	Users	Methods	Impact	Community
	People with the skills and experience to achieve the GSS vision	Engaged users who drive priorities and improvements	Innovative and efficient methods for delivering quality statistics	Clearly communicated statistics and advice, used for the public good	A proud and confident GSS that works together and with others
Values	Integrity	Honesty	Objectivity	Impartiality	

Achieving the vision will require a change in how we do things, with more emphasis than ever before on analysis and communicating our statistics. In the future, we expect the GSS to make greater use of available data and spend more time supporting users to interpret, understand and use statistics. In doing this, collaboration will become the norm. The steps we take towards achieving our vision must continue to support our mission for high quality statistics.



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1. Overview

1.1 Purpose

The vision for the Government Statistical Service is for “statistics produced by a collaborative community, used in decision making and debate”. The GSS strategy, *Building the Community*, set outs five key outcomes which explain how we will achieve this vision.

This implementation plan, for both the GSS and our stakeholders, sets out some of the things we will be doing to implement the GSS strategy in the first year after its launch. We have identified key projects and tasks which will help towards achieving the outcomes of the strategy in this first year. We have also identified ways that everyone across the GSS can be involved in achieving our outcomes.

GSS committees have their own work plans which are closely linked to this implementation plan. These work plans give more detail on the delivery of specific tasks, including detailed milestones, how progress will be monitored and measures of success. The GSS strategy outlines high level success criteria, which these more detailed measures will contribute to.

A Family of Strategies

The GSS strategy fits closely with the strategies for the UK Statistics Authority and the Office for National Statistics. The projects and tasks in this implementation plan contribute towards achieving the actions set out in the UK Statistics Authority’s strategy. Similarly, many of the outcomes that come from the ONS strategy will play a part in delivering the GSS and Authority strategies.

1.2 Implementation Approach and Governance

Everyone in the GSS plays a part in delivering the GSS strategy and achieving the vision by 2020. Heads of Profession in government departments and Chief Statisticians in the devolved administrations have overall responsibility for implementing the GSS strategy in their own organisation. GSS committees will lead on specific projects which will give Heads of Profession the tools to implement the strategy.

This initial implementation plan covers some of the key actions to be taken over the first 12 months of the strategy, using the GSS committee structure to deliver elements that fit within their remit. Alongside this, the National Statistician's Office will drive forward progress in key areas that do not fit within the committee structure. This will provide a co-ordinated approach to delivering the vision across the GSS community. The GSS committee with overall responsibility for each outcome is shown in the table below.

Outcome	Lead responsibility
People: People with the skills and experience to achieve the GSS vision	GSS People Committee
Users: Engaged users who drive priorities and improvements	GSS Theme Leaders Group
Methods: Innovative and efficient methods for delivering quality statistics	GSS Statistical Policy and Standards Committee
Impact: Clearly communicated statistics and advice, used for the public good	GSS Presentation and Dissemination Committee
Community: A proud and confident GSS that works together and with others	GSS Heads of Profession Group

The GSS Heads of Profession Steering Group will provide oversight and assurance for the delivery of the strategy and implementation plan. This group will ensure that we are on track to achieve our vision in 2020. To help them with this role, committees will provide an update to the Heads of Profession Steering Group on progress with implementing the strategy. At the end of the first year of implementation, each committee will provide plans and priorities for the next steps in delivering the strategy.

The National Statistician's Office will continue to review progress and any changes in the drivers for change to ensure that the GSS continues to be fit for the future.

2. Get Involved

There are many ways that everyone in the GSS can be involved in achieving the GSS vision. This page includes some suggestions for how all GSS members can be a part of implementing the strategy and move us towards achieving our vision.

Each department will already be at different stages of implementing the strategy and each will have their own priorities for improvement. But all GSS members should challenge the status quo, be innovative in the use of ideas and technology, and inquisitive about working with others at home and abroad.



3. Projects and Tasks

The rest of this implementation plan gives details of specific projects and tasks that GSS committees will lead as we implement the strategy. These projects will give official statistics producers the tools to work towards achieving the GSS vision.

The first year of implementation is about laying the ground work and moving the GSS in the right direction towards achieving our vision in 2020. Our priorities for the first year of the strategy are to:

- Raise understanding of the GSS amongst all its members and beyond
- Be clear of the skills needed to develop the capability of the GSS, and recruit and develop staff to achieve these skills.
- Strive to improve our methods and take steps to assure our users of the quality of our statistics
- Improve our engagement with users and communicate key messages to them with impact
- Encourage sharing and learning from good practice across the GSS and the global statistical community

Achievements So Far

We've already laid some of the groundwork to help us achieve these priorities over the next year. The following achievements have set us on the right path towards achieving the GSS vision:

- Reviewed and updated the competency framework for statisticians in order to strengthen professionalism and provide clarity on the skills needed from government statisticians.
- Revitalised the GSS theme groups to help us develop a strategic and joined-up approach to working with users.
- Introduced guidance on international collaboration, to help GSS members make the right strategic choices about their involvement in international activity.
- Set up the good practice team to develop and promote excellence in user engagement and statistical commentary.
- Begun the process of developing supporting strategies on data and presentation, which will provide the road map for how the GSS vision will be achieved in these areas.
- Organised a symposium to share innovation and good practice in presentation and dissemination, therefore helping to increase the importance the GSS places on this area.
- Started developing a new website for the GSS, to raise our profile, explain what we do and make it easier for GSS members to connect with each other.

People People with the skills and experience to achieve the GSS vision

High-Level Action	Project/Task	Lead responsibility	Timing
Raise understanding of the GSS among members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch the strategy for GSS to all GSS members 	National Statistician's Office	March 2013
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise understanding of the GSS through activities to promote the GSS strategy 	National Statistician's Office	May 2013
Be clear of the skills needed now and for the future. Recruit and develop staff to achieve these requirements and develop the capability of the GSS. Strengthen career management for the GSS and champion career development opportunities for the wider GSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop strategic plans to recruit, develop and empower staff to achieve the skills that the GSS needs now and in the future (e.g. skills in analysis, dissemination, consultancy) 	People Committee	March 2014
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the Civil Service Capability Plan to help identify the "people" challenges and opportunities facing the GSS and develop strategies to strengthen the profession 	People Committee	September 2013
Facilitate movement around the GSS, and to and from other professions and organisations, both within the UK and abroad.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify barriers to movement around the GSS, and to and from other professions and organisations, within the UK and abroad. Establish mechanisms to overcome those barriers 	People Committee	January 2014
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify partner organisations and put in place arrangements to facilitate moves with these organisations 	People Committee	January 2014
Encourage the establishment of regional and peer groups to facilitate knowledge sharing and managed moves where appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the development of regional or peer groups, champion their use and publicise the benefits 	People Committee	Ongoing
Increase recognition across government of the role of statistical Heads of Profession as leaders of the GSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote GSS successes with Permanent Secretaries and Ministers to encourage recognition of the status and value of statisticians 	People Committee	December 2013
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the best mechanisms to achieve senior championship for the GSS 		

Users Engaged users who drive priorities and improvements

High-Level Action	Project/Task	Lead responsibility	Timing
Actively seek the views of the widest range of users in innovative ways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide tools to help statistics producers identify who their users are and how they use the statistics (including European and international users) 	National Statistician's Office / Good Practice Team	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get feedback from users on what works well and how official statistics producers can engage better. Publicise the feedback to all official statistics producers 	Good Practice Team	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the Good Practice Team to promote and develop good practice in user engagement 	Good Practice Team	Ongoing
Co-ordinate cross-cutting engagement activity so that users are not flooded with overlapping engagement requests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the role GSS theme groups will play in being responsible for collaboration and co-ordination of user engagement, planning and horizon scanning for the theme 	National Statistician's Office	May 2013
Demonstrate a clear link between what users say and the actions taken to set priorities and improve official statistics and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate ways to strengthen central planning and co-ordination of official statistics 	National Statistician's Office	December 2013
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with users to understand the highest priority statistics and where user needs are not being met 	National Statistician's Office / Theme leaders	December 2013
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the impact good user engagement has had on decision making and prioritisation. Promote this across the GSS 	Theme leaders	Ongoing
Explain to internal and external users what can and cannot be done with available resources and engage with them in determining priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote tools such as StatsUserNet and e-bulletins to continue discussions between producers and users, in order to keep priorities up to date 	National Statistician's Office / Theme leaders	Ongoing

Look ahead and explore with users the statistics required for the future and be willing to cease collections and products that are of lesser importance.

- Support the Committee for Official Statistics in leading a public debate on the statistics needed in the future
- Promote the ongoing discussion of priorities and horizon scanning with users through tools such as StatsUserNet

National Statistician's Office /
Theme leaders

December 2013

Theme leaders

Ongoing

Methods Innovative and efficient methods for delivering quality statistics

High-Level Action	Project/Task	Lead responsibility	Timing
Develop methods for assuring the quality of our statistics and communicating this to users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the challenges faced in reporting quality in a consistent manner and identify and share examples of good practice across the GSS 	Statistical Policy and Standards Committee	May 2013
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote and develop risk assessment and methodological review processes (such as the new module of Quality, Methods and Harmonisation Tool), to enable all official statistics producers to assess and assure their processes and methods 	Statistical Policy and Standards Committee	September 2013
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish and develop mechanisms to allow a flexible, consistent, risk based and proportionate approach to quality review and assurance processes across the GSS 	Statistical Policy and Standards Committee	January 2014
Identify opportunities to increase efficiency and reduce burden through innovative use of technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify examples of innovative use of technology, methods and data sources which reduced burden on data suppliers and disseminate these examples 	Statistical Policy and Standards Committee	Ongoing
Exploit the potential of data by exploring new uses for admin data, data sharing and co-ordinating data collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the data challenges and opportunities facing the GSS and develop strategies to respond to these 	Data Strategy Group	September 2013
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the benefits and raise awareness of the importance of data sharing for statistical purposes 	Data Strategy Group	March 2014
Identify and share good practice in the UK and abroad in order to encourage continuous improvements in quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and maintain a library of good practice and guidance for all stages in the production of statistics and development of advice 	Statistical Policy and Standards Committee	December 2013
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify key emerging issues in the processes and methods used to produce official statistics from the assessment and quality assurance process and consider how the GSS can work together to improve 	Statistical Policy and Standards Committee	Ongoing

Understand how analysis can get more from the data we hold, whilst protecting confidentiality

- Support producers of statistics to strike the appropriate balance between risk and disclosure, and maximise the utility of data sets

Disclosure Working Group

August 2013

Impact Clearly communicated statistics and advice, used for the public good

High-Level Action	Project/Task	Lead responsibility	Timing
Simplify our messages and communicate our statistics in ways which reach out to the widest audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the challenges and opportunities facing the GSS on communication and develop strategies to respond to these 	Presentation and Dissemination Committee	September 2013
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversee the provision of statistical commentary courses (including plain figures content) across the GSS 	Good Practice Team	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a process for departments to peer review each others commentary in outputs and highlight good practice 	Good Practice Team	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify, share and embed good practice in commentary and dissemination 	Good Practice Team	Ongoing
Achieve the widest possible dissemination and use of official statistics through innovative use of the web and other technology and by adopting consistent data and metadata standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the challenges and opportunities facing the GSS on dissemination and develop strategies to respond to these 	Presentation and Dissemination Committee	September 2013
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete the review of the publication hub 	Presentation and Dissemination Committee	September 2013
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify examples of websites that users find easy to navigate and use and promote the positive elements across the GSS 	Presentation and Dissemination Committee	Ongoing
Make data available in open formats so that users can better find, understand and re-use the data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote GSS guidance on implementing transparency and associated e-learning 	Presentation and Dissemination Committee	May 2013

Be an engaged and influential part of the policy making process by advising on available evidence, options and techniques

- Identify examples of where GSS members have had a visible impact on policy and explore what factors contributed to the success
- Publicise and promote these examples and encourage other members of the GSS to learn from each other

Actions from the “people” section of this plan will also contribute towards increasing influence.

People Committee / Heads of Profession

December 2013

People Committee / Heads of Profession

Community A proud and confident GSS that works together and with others

High-Level Action	Project/Task	Lead responsibility	Timing
Be clear what the GSS can offer and be joined-up in its delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the GSS Theme Leaders network to support joined-up working on user engagement, planning and innovation 	National Statistician's Office / Heads of Profession Group	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the annual assurance reports produced by Heads of Profession to identify opportunities for joining up 	National Statistician's Office	June 2013
Promote the GSS effectively inside and outside of government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the brands we want to use to promote ourselves, why and to whom 	National Statistician's Office	February 2014
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate the benefits of the GSS to members and our strategic partners 	National Statistician's Office / Heads of Profession Group	Ongoing
Encourage the sharing of good practice across the community to maximise the knowledge we have	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the use of GSS website for sharing good practice across the global statistical community 	National Statistician's Office / Heads of Profession Group	July 2013
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the Good Practice Team promote and develop good practice 		Ongoing
Work with our key strategic partners, including in the analytical and international communities, making collaboration the cultural norm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify our key strategic partners and form contacts with them 	Heads of Profession Group	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify examples of collaboration (both domestic and international) and promote this good practice 	Heads of Profession Group	
Ensure all professions in the GSS contribute to the community and its future direction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the GSS website and other forums to encourage the contribution of all GSS members 	National Statistician's Office	July 2013
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider inclusion of non-statisticians on more GSS committees 	National Statistician's Office	September 2013
Develop a strategic approach to setting priorities for the GSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the GSS strategy as the basis for priority setting 	National Statistician's Office / Heads of Profession Group	March 2013

