



# **Governance Guide**

Decision making in the UK official statistics system

**November 2017**



Version 3.0

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## Introduction

1. This document outlines our approach to decision making within the UK statistical system. It sets out the boards, committees, groups and forums which guide the strategic direction of our work and manage the delivery of our objectives. A review of governance in autumn 2014 established a number of core principles: that decision making should be simplified; decisions should be made at the right level; and, wherever possible, governance should provide greater integration between the UK Statistics Authority, the Office for National Statistics (ONS), and the Government Statistical Service (GSS).
2. These core principles support the concept of first base decision making. It is intended that such arrangements should stretch beyond conventional hierarchical approaches to recognise the importance of making decisions at all levels. Therefore the formal governance model and arrangements have been deliberately under-engineered to allow for future growth and adaptation, allowing them to evolve in response to the changing needs of the organisation.
3. These governance arrangements are iterative, and as the Authority, ONS and the GSS move forward under the 'Better Statistics, Better Decisions' strategy, so will our governance model continue to evolve.

## Who we are

### The UK Statistics Authority

4. The *Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007* established the UK Statistics Authority (the 'Authority') as an independent body at arm's length from Government, with direct reporting to the UK Parliament, the Scottish Parliament, the National Assembly for Wales, and the Northern Ireland Assembly.
5. The Act gives the Authority the statutory objective of promoting and safeguarding the production and publication of official statistics that 'serve the public good'. This includes:
  - i. informing the public about social and economic matters;
  - ii. assisting in the development and evaluation of public policy; and
  - iii. regulating quality and publicly challenging the misuse of statistics.

### The Government Statistical Service

6. The GSS is a cross-government network, spread across a whole range of public bodies, including components of the devolved administrations and UK government departments. Led by the National Statistician, it includes statisticians, researchers, economists, analysts, operational delivery staff, IT specialists and other supporting roles. The GSS community works together to provide the statistical evidence base required by decision-makers, publishing around 2,000 sets of statistics each year, and providing professional advice and analysis to decision-makers. ONS has an important role at the heart of the GSS, providing guidance, support, standards and training.

### Office for National Statistics

7. ONS is the executive office of the Authority. It is the UK's National Statistical Institute (NSI) and largest single producer of official statistics in the UK. ONS produces statistics on a range of key economic, social and demographic topics. Key services include measuring changes in the value of the UK economy (GDP), estimating the size, geographic distribution and characteristics of the population (including statistics from the Census), and providing indicators of price inflation, employment, earnings, crime and migration.

## Independent Regulation

8. The Authority's independent regulatory function, based in offices in England, Scotland and Wales, ensures that statistics are produced and disseminated in the public interest. It acts as guardian of the integrity of the statistical system, watchdog against abuse, and advocate of the highest standards. It does so by assessing official statistics for compliance with the *Code of Practice for Official Statistics*, monitoring and reporting publicly on statistical issues, and challenging the misuse of statistics. The legislation requires strict separation of the functions of production and regulation. In particular, those involved in the production of statistics are not involved in the assessment of statistics against the Code. The Director General of the Office for Statistics Regulation, who reports directly to the Chair of the Authority, draws attention to claims that are not supported by the statistics and recommends whether the National Statistics quality mark can be awarded to statistics which can be relied upon and meet the highest standards.

## Our Strategy – ‘Better Statistics, Better Decisions’

9. In autumn 2014, the UK Statistics Authority published a strategy for UK statistics for the period 2015-2020 entitled ‘*Better Statistics, Better Decisions*’. The strategy sets out our aims, priorities, mission and values and is framed around the five perspectives ‘Helpful’, ‘Innovative’, ‘Professional’, ‘Efficient’ and ‘Capable’.
10. In April 2015 the Authority also published an integrated business plan, which sets out how the strategy will be delivered. Both the strategy and the business plan can be found at the following link: <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/about-the-authority/strategy-and-business-plan/index.html>

## Background

11. Since its inception in 2008, the Authority's governance structure has continued to be developed and streamlined as the organisation established itself and matured. At foundation, a particular set of arrangements was necessary to a) establish independence from government, and independence between production and regulation, which was central to the legislation, and b) publish a new *Code of Practice for Official Statistics* and complete the very large programme of work required by the Act to formally assess over 1,000 pre-existing sets of National Statistics against the Code.
12. These fundamental tasks were completed by 2013. By this point the Authority had established itself as an independent organisation and was able to streamline and delayer its governance structures. Opportunities to enhance the previous arrangements were identified to help address the challenge of managing and focussing ONS, the need for greater foresight on emerging problems, and to boost strategic and statistical capability. Structural amendments were made to enhance clarity, help the organisation focus on those things that really matter, best support the lead executives doing the job, and equip the Authority Board to best achieve its objectives while protecting and strengthening the independent regulatory function.
13. Following the appointment of John Pullinger as National Statistician in the summer of 2014, a new senior leadership structure for UK Statistics was introduced. This saw the creation of three Deputy National Statistician positions with responsibility for helping the National Statistician discharge his responsibilities across the entire statistical system. The role of the National Statistician was refocused more clearly as the Chief Executive of the Authority and ONS, with a remit for statistical delivery across the whole GSS, and

clear accountability to the Authority Board. In parallel the Board took steps to make even clearer the distinct role of the regulatory function.

14. This revised leadership and governance model helped strengthen expertise and break down silos within different parts of the Authority, ONS and across the wider GSS community.

### **Legislation**

15. The UK Statistics Authority's functions and powers are specified in the *Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007*, together with its duty to report to Parliament and the devolved legislatures. The Act includes an overall objective for the Board to "promote and safeguard the production and publication of official statistics that serve the public good" and three principal areas of responsibility:
  - i. the promotion, safeguarding and monitoring of quality, comprehensiveness and good practice in relation to all UK official statistics;
  - ii. production of a Code of Practice for Statistics, and assessment of official statistics against the Code; and
  - iii. the production of statistics relating to any matter relating to the UK or any part of it, via the Board's executive office, ONS.
16. The Act specifies some governance features including the following.
  - i. The Board will consist of executive and non-executive members. The non-executive members are to be the Chair, a Crown appointment, and at least five other non-executive members. The executive members are to be the National Statistician, and two other employees of the Board, appointed by the non-executive members. This means that the Board will always have a strong non-executive majority.
  - ii. The National Statistician, also a Crown appointment, is the Board's Chief Executive, and must establish the Board's executive office, ONS. He or she is also the Board's principal adviser on quality, comprehensiveness and good practice in relation to official statistics.
  - iii. The Head of Assessment (also known as the Director General for Regulation) is appointed by the non-executive members of the Board, and is the Board's principal adviser on assessment against the Code.
  - iv. There must be separation of the functions of the National Statistician and the Head of Assessment, so that employees who take part in the production of statistics on behalf of the Board should not be engaged in advising the Board on the assessment of those statistics.

### **Governance principles**

17. A review of the organisation's internal governance arrangements was undertaken in 2014. A set of principles was defined to guide this review, which stated that our governance arrangements should:
  - i. be simplified to help provide clarity, transparency and avoid duplication;
  - ii. empower timely, informed and consistent decision making;
  - iii. enable clear communication to help establish trust and confidence;
  - iv. support stakeholder engagement; and
  - v. meet our statutory duties and provide clear accountability,
18. The concept of 'first base decision-making' underpins the governance structure to ensure decisions are made in the right place, at the right time, and by those who have the most knowledge and expertise. It is intended that this should stretch beyond conventional hierarchical approaches to recognise the importance of making decisions at all levels.

19. The governance model has been deliberately under-engineered to allow for future growth and adaptation – therefore allowing it to evolve in response to the changing needs of the organisation.
20. To be effective the governance system requires all parts to perform optimally. The model is therefore not a management framework; business decisions affecting the way in which services are delivered and strategy is implemented require a conventional management structure to support delivery.
21. The governance model is predicated on the basis that:
  - i. those who are responsible for setting the strategic vision are provided with the necessary space to **'lead'** the business;
  - ii. those responsible for monitoring, compliance and setting controls remain sat within a **'managing'** the business context;
  - iii. those tasked with operational delivery are provided with space and authority to **'deliver'** the business with pace; and
  - iv. those asked to **'advise'** decision makers on complex issues.
22. Such an approach and demarcation will help to ensure that responsibility, trust and accountability is placed at the right level. Whilst GSS Heads of Profession will lead and manage the statistical activities within their own departments, the leadership community across the Authority will be empowered to make sound and responsible decisions that support the delivery of the business which represents a key change in the conventional approach to supporting the organisation.

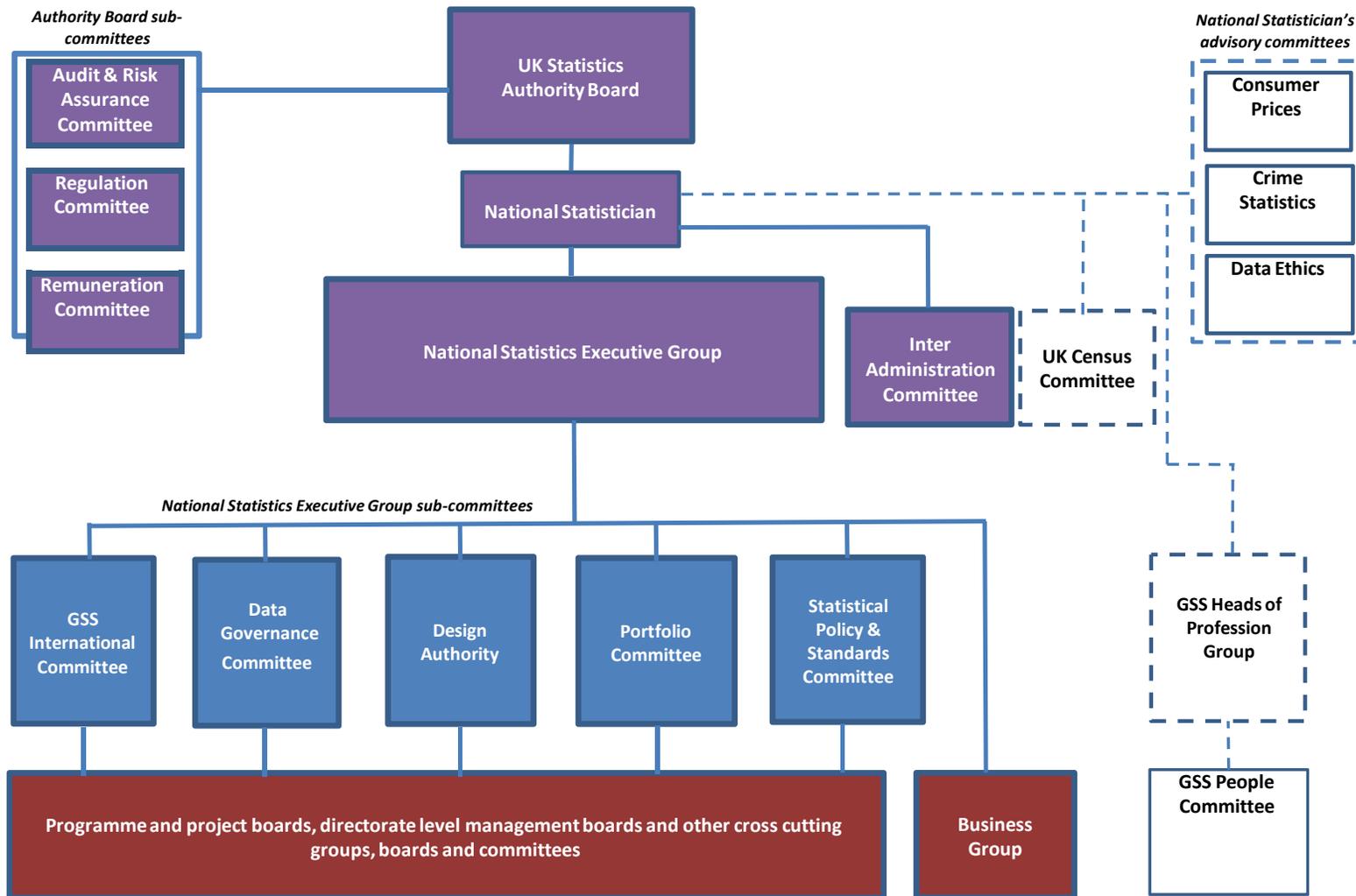
#### **GSS by Default – wider GSS governance**

23. The Statistics Act left unchanged the un-centralised nature of the UK official statistics system. Each government department that produces official statistics has a GSS Head of Profession, who leads and manages the statistical activities within their own department<sup>1</sup>. They are accountable to their departmental management for day to day delivery, but also have a professional accountability to the National Statistician as the Head of the GSS.
24. Part of the rationale for the governance reforms introduced in 2014 was to bring ONS and the wider GSS community closer together. The principle of 'GSS by default' has been applied to the entire governance model. The National Statistics Executive Group (NSEG) is the primary executive leadership forum for the GSS, and its system-wide remit is reflected by its membership which includes two GSS Heads of Profession. Sub-committees of NSEG also have a GSS wide remit to varying degrees; for instance the Statistical Policy and Standards Committee (SPSC) has a particularly strong GSS role due to its focus on policies and standards, while the Portfolio Committee is focussed on ONS due to its role in managing the ONS investment fund.
25. In addition to the formal committee governance, all 30 GSS Heads of Profession are invited to attend a quarterly meeting, chaired by the National Statistician. The Deputy National Statisticians also attend, as do some senior ONS staff and the Director General for Regulation. These quarterly meetings are used to:
  - i. cascade, communicate and share best practice,
  - ii. engage the GSS leadership in the development of thinking,
  - iii. discuss issues and help find solutions, and
  - iv. maintain relationships and galvanise collective leadership of the statistical system.

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<sup>1</sup> Some smaller departments and arms' length bodies have a 'lead official' with accountability to a Head of Profession from their sponsor department.

# UK Statistical System Governance Map



**Key:** Not part of formal governance 'Leading' layer of governance 'Managing' layer of governance 'Delivering' layer of governance

## Leading

26. Boards and Groups within the ‘leading’ sphere operate at a strategic level and are responsible for leading the Authority, ONS and the wider statistical system by establishing a collective vision and making decisions of strategic importance.

### The UK Statistics Authority Board

27. The Authority Board is the statutory board as set out in the Act. The Board has a non-executive majority, and its sub-committees are all chaired by non-executive directors. The Authority Board is responsible for promoting and safeguarding the production and publication of official statistics that serve the public good.
28. The Board has responsibility for setting the overall strategic direction of the organisation. In October 2014 it approved the current strategy, *Better Statistics, Better Decisions*.
29. The Board meets at least eight times a year – in 2017 it is scheduled to meet 9 times. Each meeting includes reports from the chairs of the sub-committees, as well as a report from the Chief Executive and a report from the Director General for Regulation. The Authority Board’s Standing Orders are published on the UK Statistics Authority website<sup>2</sup>.
30. Membership of the Authority Board is as follows:
- i. The Chair
  - ii. The Deputy Chair
  - iii. The Non-executive Directors
  - iv. The National Statistician
  - v. The Director General for Regulation
  - vi. One of the Deputy National Statisticians, on an annual rotating basis.
31. The legislation allowed for three executive members of the Authority Board, one of whom must be the National Statistician and the other two being appointed by the Non-Executive members. The Authority Board determined that the other two executive members of the Board shall currently be the Authority’s Director General for Regulation and one of the three Deputy National Statisticians, rotating on an annual basis.
32. The three Deputy National Statisticians are equal in status and, irrespective of one of them being at any one time an Executive member of the Authority Board, all three attend meetings of the Authority Board.
33. Secretariat for the Authority Board is provided by the Central Policy Secretariat. Contact **Joe Cuddeford**.

### Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

34. This sub-committee supports the Authority Board and the Authority’s Accounting Officer (who is also the Chief Executive and National Statistician) in their responsibilities for risk management, control and governance. It does this by reviewing the comprehensiveness, reliability and integrity of assurances. The Committee acts in a scrutiny and advisory capacity and it has no executive authority.
35. The National Statistician is also the Accounting Officer for the Authority. The Accounting Officer is responsible for maintaining a sound system of internal control that supports the achievement of the UK Statistics Authority’s objectives, whilst safeguarding public funds and departmental assets for which they are personally responsible in accordance with the responsibilities assigned to them in HM Treasury’s “Managing Public Money”

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/about-the-authority/board-and-committees/>

36. The Committee is chaired by Dame Collette Bowe and meets at least four times a year. Its terms of reference are published on the UK Statistics Authority website<sup>3</sup>.
37. Secretariat for the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee is provided by the Central Policy Secretariat. Contact **Mervyn Stevens**.

### **Regulation Committee**

38. The role of the Regulation Committee is to help shape the regulation strategy and work programme and to oversee the programme of Assessment of sets of official statistics against the Code of Practice and other work related to regulation.
39. The Regulation Committee meets at least quarterly and is chaired by Professor Sir Adrian Smith, Deputy Chair of the Authority. Its terms of reference are published on the UK Statistics Authority website<sup>4</sup>. The Committee meets in the absence of staff involved in the production of statistics, to safeguard the independence of regulatory decisions.
40. Secretariat for the Regulation Committee is provided by the Central Policy Secretariat. Contact **Michael Bleakley**.

### **Remuneration Committee**

41. The Remuneration Committee is chaired by Sir David Norgrove and meets at least twice a year to discuss matters relating to the pay and reward strategy for the UK Statistics Authority and ONS.
42. Secretariat for the Remuneration Committee is provided by the Central Policy Secretariat. Contact **Mervyn Stevens**.

### **National Statistics Executive Group**

43. The National Statistician chairs NSEG, the top level executive committee in the UK statistics system. NSEG supports the National Statistician in the discharge of his responsibilities as National Statistician, Chief Executive and Accounting Officer of the Authority and as the Head of the GSS. As such, NSEG has a cross-cutting remit across the UK statistical system to help achieve the collective mission and strategic objectives of the official statistics system.
44. NSEG comprises of the National Statistician, the three Deputy National Statisticians, the Head of Communications, the Director of Finance, the Authority's Chief of Staff and two Heads of Profession from the GSS. The National Statistician also nominates two additional voluntary members to attend meetings. Three ONS Directors, on rotation, also attend meetings. NSEG usually meets on a monthly basis to discuss:
- i. major projects and programmes and risks;
  - ii. financial performance to budget;
  - iii. key activities and decisions taken by its sub-committees; and
  - iv. other management information.
45. NSEG's Terms of Reference are included at this [link](#). Secretariat for NSEG is provided by the Central Policy Secretariat. Contact **Sally-Ann Jones**.

### **Inter Administration Committee**

46. An Inter Administration Committee (IAC), comprised of the National Statistician (chair) and the Chief Statisticians from the Devolved Administrations, meets quarterly to promote coherence across the administrations and resolve inter-administration issues. The IAC works within the context of the Concordat on Statistics<sup>5</sup> between the UK

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/about-the-authority/board-and-committees/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/about-the-authority/board-and-committees/>

<sup>5</sup> [https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Concordat-on-Statistics\\_FINAL.pdf](https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Concordat-on-Statistics_FINAL.pdf)

Government (including the UK Statistics Authority and Office for National Statistics) and each of the Devolved Administrations. The Concordat outlines the ways in which the four nations work together in relation to the production of statistics, for and within the UK, statistical standards and the statistics profession. Further information, including the Terms of Reference<sup>6</sup>, can be found on the GSS website.<sup>7</sup>

47. Secretariat for the IAC is provided by the Central Policy Secretariat. Contact **Michael Bleakley**.

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<sup>6</sup> <https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/IAC-TOR-August-2016-Published.pdf>  
<sup>7</sup> <https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/about/governance-and-structure/inter-administration-committee/>

## Managing

48. Committees at this level are responsible for monitoring, organisational control, standards setting and providing assurance to NSEG.

### Portfolio Committee

49. The 'portfolio' refers to all major programmes/projects and programmes of work in ONS requiring the application of programme and project methodologies and funded within the organisation. The Portfolio Committee's main purpose is to:

- i. ensure the optimal design of the ONS portfolio to deliver the '*Better Statistics, Better Decisions*' Strategy; and
- ii. provide oversight and support to delivery of the portfolio to meet all due diligence requirements; enable collaborative working; allow for flexible and adaptive delivery methods and optimise benefits.

50. The Portfolio Committee's remit covers all aspects of the ONS portfolio of work and the associated allocation of resources (this may be major programmes/projects, business as usual and smaller innovative projects). A proportionate approach to oversight of these different aspects of the portfolio of work will be adopted.

51. The Portfolio Committee seeks to manage investment funding in a way that gives Senior Responsible Owners (SRO) the funding certainty they require to plan effectively. Where appropriate, it takes strategic decisions on potential overspends and re-invests underspends.

52. The Terms of Reference for the Portfolio Committee are included at this [link](#). The Committee is co-chaired by the Finance Director, Nick Bateson, and the Director of Business Services and Development, Neil Wooding.

53. The Portfolio Committee's objectives are to:

- i. Design the portfolio
- ii. Set the funding for the portfolio
- iii. Flex the portfolio
- iv. Support delivery of the portfolio
- v. Manage and monitor return on investment

54. To support the Portfolio Committee achieve its objectives, a Key Holders Approval Group and a Portfolio Delivery Group have been established:

- i. Key Holders scrutinise and assess investment proposals (i.e. business cases) on behalf of the Portfolio Committee, freeing up time for more strategic Portfolio-level discussions.
- ii. PDG supports the Portfolio Committee in its role to ensure successful delivery of the portfolio. It takes the monitoring of delivery out of committee, escalating to the Portfolio Committee only when required and with the right information to make timely decisions. Focus is discussion based, with both peer to peer constructive challenge and support in resolving issues. This will both reduce the reporting burden and ensure that information is current.

55. Secretariat to the Portfolio Committee is provided by the Portfolio Management Division. Contact **Sarah Parry**.

## **Statistical and Analytical Priorities Group**

56. This group has responsibility for providing operational and strategic leadership in statistical and analytical prioritisation. On behalf of Portfolio Committee, the Group provides oversight to the formation and balance of analytical priorities across the Office, noting the priorities of (and wider benefits for) users, the GSS and the Analytical Function across government broadly. GASP will therefore also give regard to the broader statistical, social research and economist professions' resources and priorities, making the necessary complementary inter and intra-governmental links.
57. The SAPG's primary role is to generate an output that enables ONS to transparently and rigorously align its resources to a clear set of requirements.
58. A second key function of GASP is to oversee a suite of topic focussed groups that operate across the Office.
59. The co-Chairs of GASP will be Directors who equally represent economic and social statistics. Secretariat is provided by the Central Policy Secretariat. Contact **Michael Bleakley**.

## **Design Authority**

60. This committee, chaired by the Director of Digital Services Technology and Methodology, David Best, determines the design of statistical and non-statistical systems, processes, tools and methods. This helps to ensure that new programmes of work meet the aims and objectives of the Authority Strategy and the ONS 'Enterprise Architecture'. The layers of the ONS Enterprise Architecture are:
  - i. Business architecture – all the activities undertaken by an organisation in order to meet its goals
  - ii. Application architecture – how specific applications are designed and deployed, how they interact with each other and their relationships with the business processes.
  - iii. Information architecture – the information and knowledge assets of the organisation, how the enterprise data stores are organised and accessed. It also includes information standards and frameworks.
  - iv. Technology architecture – the IT infrastructure (hardware, software, networks) that supports the deployment of applications and delivery of IT Services.
61. There is a key governance flow between the Design Authority and Portfolio Committee to ensure projects and programmes are consistently designed and delivered.
62. The Design Authority meets every month and its terms of reference are included at this [link](#).
63. Secretariat is provided by Service Design and Assurance Division. Contact **Steve Vickers**.

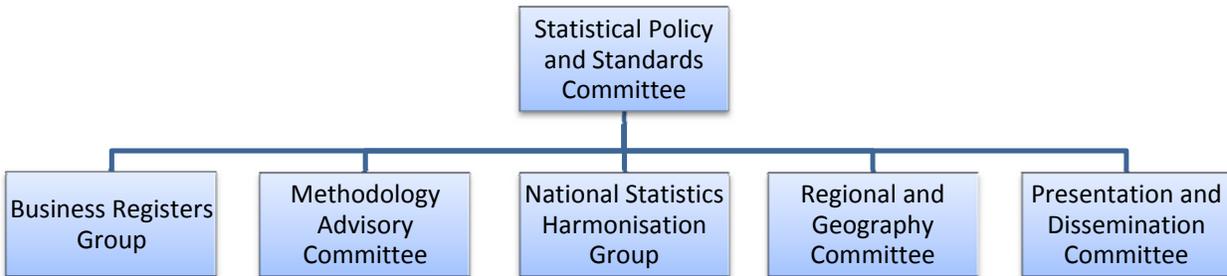
## **Statistical Policy and Standards Committee (and sub groups)**

64. The Statistical Policy and Standards Committee (SPSC) supports the National Statistician in promoting and safeguarding the quality of official statistics across ONS and wider GSS. It meets quarterly and has three main responsibilities:
  - i. advising on legal obligations which affect statistics;
  - ii. developing and putting into action statistical policies and standards; and
  - iii. improving the quality of statistics.
65. Membership includes Heads of Profession for Statistics in Government departments, a representative Chief Statistician from the devolved administrations (Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland), and senior statisticians from across the GSS. The Committee is

chaired by the Head of Profession for Statistics at the Department for Communities and Local Government, David Fry.

66. The SPSC is further supported by the work a number of sub-groups, as shown in the diagram below.

67. The terms of reference for SPSC are included at this [link](#).



68. Secretariat is provided by the Central Policy Secretariat. Contact **Sezen Barutcu**.

#### **Data Governance Committee**

69. The Data Governance Committee is chaired by Heather Savory. The Committee is responsible for the development and application of policies and processes for all aspects of data governance within ONS, and oversight of the formal approval of data flows into and out of the organisation, with its activities split into three key areas: Data Acquisition, Data Security and Data Access.

70. It is intended that, in time, this Committee becomes a recognised and trusted Committee across the wider statistics and research community, supervising arrangements for the granting of researcher access to data through the Digital Economy Bill powers. Until that time, although this Committee will formally accredit such use of data (via the Microdata Release Panel in respect of ONS data and, in future, a new cross-Government accreditation panel), no access will be granted without explicit permission of the data owning Department(s).

71. Secretariat to the Committee is provided by the Portfolio Management Division. Contact Simon **Whitworth**.

#### **International Committee**

72. The GSS International Committee (GSSIC) is the sub-committee of the National Statistics Executive Group (NSEG) with responsibility for coordination and strategic leadership in international affairs in official statistics. Its core responsibility is to ensure the UK Statistical System is competent in international statistics forums, and has the capacity to exert its influence and make its contribution to international statistical development, in the interest of the *Better Statistics, Better Decisions* strategy.

73. The GSSIC primary role is to guide and steer the international strategy of the GSS, which incorporates the strategic UK position with respect to engagement at all international statistics forums. The GSSIC is therefore responsible, on behalf of the National Statistician, for the development, and oversight of the objectives and actions of the international strategy.

74. Secretariat to the International Committee is provided by the Central Policy Secretariat. Contact **Sezen Barutcu**.

# Delivering

## Business Group

75. To support clearly delineated decision making, a Business Group, comprised of Deputy Directors and chaired by an ONS Director (currently Frankie Kay), was established to assume the broader responsibility for managing the day to day operational business of ONS. This includes, for example, providing a challenge function in relation to implementation of organisational wide policies and initiatives and driving collective action across ONS to ensure it operates as efficiently and effectively as possible.
76. While the Business Group does not have delegated financial authority, it does provide a distinct forum that physically separates strategic and operational activities, allowing for members of the ONS senior leadership team to better engage in the operational decision making of ONS.
77. The Business Group meets on a monthly basis and its terms of reference are included at this [link](#). Secretariat is provided by the Integrated Planning Unit. Contact **Alex Lewis**.

## Directorate and Divisional Management Boards

78. The governance structure encourages decisions to be taken, wherever possible, at a local level. Each directorate and division therefore has its own management board or group responsible for taking decisions within their area of remit. This ensures quicker decision making and clearer accountability.

## Programme and Project Boards

79. Specific programmes and projects will usually have a Programme or Project Board. Examples include the Census Transformation Programme Board and the Improving Dissemination Programme Board.

# Advising

## National Statistician's Data Ethics Advisory Committee

81. In November 2014 the Authority Board agreed that a Data Ethics Committee (NSDEC) should be established to act in an advisory capacity to the National Statistician on matters relating to policy and case work relating to ethics, and ensure transparency of the access, use and sharing of data.
82. Specific responsibilities of the NSDEC include to:
- i. provide ethical consideration of proposals to access, share and use data;
  - ii. advise on individual policies and projects against NSDEC's ethical principles;
  - iii. develop a consistent ethical framework for relevant projects related to official statistics;
  - iv. promote transparency around data shares; and
  - vi. provide ethical advice on other data issues within the National Statistician's remit, which includes his role as head of the Government Statistical Service.
83. At the invitation of the Chair of the Administrative Data Research Network Board, NSDEC will also provide ethical consideration for government and third sector researchers wishing to access the ADRN
84. The chair of NSDEC is Ian Cope.
85. Further information is available on the Authority website<sup>8</sup>. Secretariat is provided by the Central Policy Secretariat. Please contact: **Simon Whitworth** or **Petros Saravakos**.

## National Statistician's Advisory Panels on Consumer Prices

86. The Review of the Governance of Prices Statistics<sup>9</sup> recommended the creation of two advisory panels on consumer prices: a stakeholder panel to advise the National Statistician on the uses and application of prices indices; and, a technical panel to provide advice on technical aspects of the statistics.
87. Dame Kate Barker is the Chair of the Stakeholder Advisory Panel on Consumer Prices. Nick Vaughan, ONS's Director of National Accounts and Economic Statistics and Chief Economist, is the Chair of the Technical Advisory Panel on Consumer Prices. These groups met for the first time on 27 November 2015, and meet at least 3 times per year. More information is on the ONS website<sup>10</sup>.
88. Secretariat is provided by Prices Division. Contact: **James Tucker** (Stakeholder Advisory Panel) or **Chris Payne** (Technical Advisory Panel).

## National Statistician's Crime Statistics Advisory Committee

89. The National Statistician's Crime Statistics Advisory Committee advises the National Statistician how best to ensure that official statistics on crime for England and Wales are accurate, clearly presented, comprehensive, transparent and trustworthy taking account of the needs of users and providers. The Committee is chaired by the Authority Deputy

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/national-statistician/national-statisticians-data-ethics-advisory-committee/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/news/review-of-the-governance-of-prices-statistics/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/national-statistician/ns-reports-reviews-guidance-and-advisory-committees/national-statisticians-advisory-committees/advisory-panels-for-consumer-price-statistics/>

Chair, Professor Sir Adrian Smith. Further information is available on the Authority website<sup>11</sup>.

90. Secretariat is provided by Crime Statistics team. Please contact: **John Flatley**.

## Other forums, committees and cross cutting groups

91. To support the work of the formal standing committees and boards, a number of forums, working groups and other committees have been established to support decision making. Some of these are described below, though this is not an exhaustive list.

- i. **Statistical Heads of Profession.** A quarterly forum chaired by the National Statistician and attended by the 30 GSS Heads of Profession, the Deputy National Statisticians, the Director General for Regulation and some senior ONS staff. These meetings are used to cascade, communicate, engage, discuss issues and galvanise collective leadership of the statistical system. (Contact **Sezen Barutcu**)
- ii. **People Committee.** A forum leading on GSS and GSG People issues, providing: advice on the development of people policies and practice, advice to HoPs on people issues for decision-making, the development and ongoing review of key reference documents such as the GSG Competency Framework and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) policy, oversight of core statistical training programmes and GSS Recruitment . (Contact **Pam Davies**; Chair Neil McIvor)
- iii. **Thursday Morning Colleagues.** This weekly meeting chaired by the National Statistician is attended by the Deputy National Statisticians, Directors, Chief of Staff and Head of Communications. It is a cascade meeting where bullet points from each area are discussed before being disseminated to staff. (Contact **Tom Marsh**)
- iv. **Departmental Joint Consultative Committee.** This is a committee where Trade Union Representatives and ONS Human Resources and Management meet to discuss, and consult, on organisational wide staffing matters such as Pay, Absence Management and Staff Welfare.
- v. **UK Census Committee.** This is a quarterly meeting with the same membership as the Inter Administration Committee, which meets to coordinate Census activity across the UK.
- vi. **Editorial and Communications Group.** ECG's remit is to coordinate external communication and commission new digital content and communication. The Group identifies and considers opportunities for repackaging existing ONS outputs to respond to the news agenda, reviews communication issues and opportunities arising from forthcoming publications, ensures proportionate handling plans are in place for releases and produces and reviews a communication grid of forthcoming content on ONS channels. ECG meets once a week and is jointly chaired by Chris Lines, Head of Communications and Laura Dewis, Head of Digital Publishing Division. Membership of ECG is drawn from right across the statistical production divisions of ONS.
- vii. **Equality & Diversity Steering Group** - The steering group provides the governance for equality, diversity, and inclusion for the organisation. A quarterly forum which provides advice and guidance to the organisation and Business Group as they monitor the progress and implementation of the ONS Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and business area goals. The group examines the work done by business areas, with peer review providing an opportunity for challenge and to showcase good practice. In addition, the group ensures that the organisation aligns with the Civil Service Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, and is meeting its legal obligations. The group is led by the National Statistician as the UKSA Diversity Champion, and its members are

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<sup>11</sup> <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/national-statistician/ns-reports--reviews-and-guidance/national-statistician-s-advisory-committees/crime-statistics-advisory-committee.html>

made up of Director General Diversity Champions, and Diversity Network Chairs and Sponsors. The group reports into Business Group on the work underpinning the strategy. NSEG receives regular updates from EDSG's sub groups.

## **Prioritisation, planning and allocation of funding**

92. The strategic direction of the Authority is set by the Authority Board. Working within the strategy and the priorities set by the Board, NSEG oversees executive production of a business plan which sets out more details around how the Authority will deliver outcomes which align with the strategy.
93. This business plan incorporates the 'what' and the 'how' – ensuring integration of the business plan deliverables with workforce and financial plans. A critical component of this planning is the work undertaken by the Portfolio Committee which prioritises investment across the organisation. This work involves discussions around continuing and emerging demands/projects on the organisation. Each business area will then be responsible for the construction of business cases to demonstrate the value of such investment. The final stage of the prioritisation exercise is the completion and use of the Options Analyser tool which brings together different components, such as strategic fit, complexity and expected benefits. This then provides the Portfolio Committee with analytics to decide on its priorities should resources not be sufficient to meet all demands.
94. Once the core business areas have completed their budgets and together with the ratification of the investment portfolio, the business plan (which includes the budget) is submitted to NSEG for review and then on to the Authority Board for approval.
95. With regards to emerging pressures during the year, these are discussed by NSEG through the 'Issues Log' – this is a standing item on the monthly NSEG and Authority Board agendas. From those discussions, emerging pressures are discussed that may involve workforce or financial demands. If the relevant business area cannot sufficiently resource an emerging pressure then the senior executives in the first instance would look to reprioritise other resources to support the work. Should that not be an option then a business justification would be required to draw down additional funding from the Contingency Fund.

## Guidance - submitting papers to boards and committees

96. Although first base decision making lies at the heart of the governance arrangements, it will inevitably be necessary for some strategic and key operational matters to be escalated to a relevant committee from time to time. In such instances, a paper will need to be prepared summarising the issue and confirming what action is requested.
97. The below points should be considered fully prior to submitting a paper.
- i. Before drafting a paper to go to a committee, consider whether or not this is the right course of action. Your Deputy Director or Director will be able to provide advice.
  - ii. Could an individual (for example, a Deputy Director, Executive Director, or Deputy National Statistician) actually consider the item and make a decision within their existing remit?
  - iii. Ask yourself what will you actually be asking of the committee in your paper? Do they simply need to be informed of an issue or do you require a decision to be made?
  - iv. Is there an alternative committee that could consider the item and make a decision? For example, instead of submitting a paper to NSEG, does the Business Group (or one of the standing committees) have delegated authority to take the decision?
  - v. If a paper is required, keep to no more than three sides of A4, use plain English, and include any technical explanations as part of your annex. Make sure you schedule enough time for the commissioning, drafting, and clearance of your paper.
  - vi. Before submission, ensure your paper has been proof-read and check the paper to make sure:
    - a. recommendations are clear;
    - b. acronyms are spelt out in full the first time;
    - c. job titles are included where staff members are referenced;
    - d. annexes are formatted correctly and clearly labelled; and
    - e. the paper is presented in the correct house style and in line with the committee's template
98. If a paper is required, please use the standard template at this [link](#). The template also contains further guidance on style and content.