

Convenor  
Economy, Jobs and Fair Work Committee

By email to:  
[economyjobsandfairwork@parliament.scot](mailto:economyjobsandfairwork@parliament.scot)

Dear Convener

## **ECONOMY, JOBS AND FAIR WORK COMMITTEE INQUIRY INTO ECONOMIC STATISTICS**

Thank you for considering the potential role of the Enterprise and Skills Strategic Board and Analytical Unit in supporting the quality and coverage of economic statistics. Clearly these data are a key resource in our understanding of the health of our economy and the progress we are making towards our strategic aims.

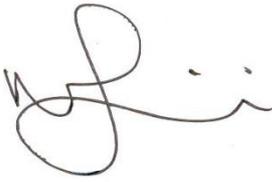
I have given a lot of consideration to the recommendation that the Strategic Board "*Undertake (or commission) a robust, independent analysis of Scotland's data needs.*" However, given that the role of the Strategic Board is to enhance the enterprise landscape, I would feel more comfortable if our Analytical Unit were just to focus on the needs across that dimension.

Were we to accept the recommendation it would likely involve using most of our resources for a year or more to undertake this kind of review which would be a considerable undertaking, at a point where there is a need to focus on driving the effectiveness of our enterprise and skills system, through appropriate evidence and data. In addition, might it not be the case that given the better quality of economic data which is now available, what is missing is perhaps evidence around the impacts of government spending, and not just in enterprise and skills? That is an area which is different from economic statistics to which the Committee refers.

I understand that there is a very active user consultation group spanning the whole of economic statistics – the Scottish Economic Statistics Consultation Group. My thinking is that they would be better placed to review economic data needs in the broadest sense?

Our Analytical Unit will be looking very closely at the data requirements for our interests and will be a constructively critical user of economic statistics, where appropriate contributing proposals for improvements to them and in particular, like the Scottish Government, they will want to take advantage of the new powers of the Digital Economy Act to maximise any analytical potential.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nora Senior', with a large initial 'N' and a stylized 'S'.

Nora Senior

**Chair - Enterprise and Skills Strategic Board**

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