

Chief Statistician and Data Officer
Roger Halliday



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

T: 0131-244 0302
E: chiefstatistician@gov.scot

Address
Sent via e-mail.



17 July 2018

Dear Gordon

INQUIRY INTO ECONOMIC STATISTICS REPORT: HOW TO MAKE DATA COUNT

Keith Brown copied me your letter about our responses to the recommendations from this inquiry. You had further comments about pre-release access to economic statistics. Given the legal responsibilities about determining our policy on this matter in Scotland lies with me, I wanted to come back to you to lay out my position.

I am responsible for the trustworthiness, quality and value of our official statistics in Scotland, and key to this is ensuring that our statistics are properly communicated and interpreted. As I said in my evidence to the inquiry, this is not straightforward when there is no pre-release access to the statistics.

I believe that statistics that have a tangible effect on the value or volume of trading in markets are the most sensitive we have and need to be treated as such. For these statistics, we will not have pre-release access. The paper outlined a method for assessing market sensitivity of statistics when we either produce new economic statistics, or bring forward the timing of our existing series.

As the analytical paper (now published) I previously shared concluded, our key economic statistics are not currently market sensitive. However, they are still very sensitive. As such, these statistics will have a maximum of 24 hours pre-release access.

For all other official statistics in Scotland, I will maintain 5 days pre-release access.

Yours sincerely

Roger Halliday
Chief Statistician and Data Officer

St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG
www.gov.scot

