ONS KEY ACCOUNT ASSESSMENT 2015/16

Name of Organisation: Bank of England

Topic	Question	Answers and further comments
Our statistics, analysis and services	**Use** 1. Which ONS statistics, analysis and services does your organisation mainly use	The Bank uses a variety of ONS statistics on the National Accounts, labour market, population, migration and mortality and prices (for example CPI, PPI and trade deflators).
	Value and Impact 2.1 How important are ONS statistics and analysis to your work	Please select one of the following • **Very important** • important • Neither important not unimportant • unimportant • Very unimportant
	2.2 How have ONS statistics, analysis and advice helped to inform your decision and/or policy making over the last 12 months. Please give examples	

	2.3 Please advise on the type of analysis/ advice/service you would require from ONS to help improve your decision and/or policy making	The Bank's main requirement from the ONS is the production of timely and high quality statistics. It is important that ONS staff are intellectually curious and able to help Bank staff understand movements in the data that might be affected by changes in the underlying data source, temporary erratic factors or structural changes in the economy. The Bank would also welcome more joint work between Bank and ONS staff using microdata to improve our understanding of economic issues.
	2.4 How **helpful** have ONS statistics, analysis and advice been in providing an evidence base for your decision making and/or policy work over the last year.	Please select one of the following • Very helpful • **Helpful** • Neither helpful nor unhelpful • Unhelpful • Very unhelpful Please provide additional comments (e.g. which statistics, analysis or advice has been the most helpful)
	Quality 3 How satisfied are you with the quality of ONS statistics, analyses and advice. Quality has a number of components, e.g. they: • Meet your needs • Are accurate • Are timely • Are clearly presented • Are punctual • Are easy to find • Enable comparisons with other data • Are complete	Please select one of the following Very satisfied.................................5 **Satisfied......................................4** Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3 Dissatisfied....................................2 Very dissatisfied.............................1
		Please provide additional comments **National Accounts** Blue Book 2015 was delivered successfully and the Bank appreciates the comprehensive planning, communication and briefing that ONS provided to ensure that users were well sighted of the changes ahead of time. However, the "all tables Blue Book pdf" is a valued product that was discontinued at Blue Book 2015 and were replaced by excel spreadsheets. Fortunately the pdf still exists for the Pink Book. While excel spreadsheets are clearly superior to a pdf for retrieving the data, they are very difficult to browse (e.g. when trying to understand the relationships between the data or trying to find something specific). A pdf version could

easily be created since hard copy data tables are published. The loss of the Blue Book pdf makes this flagship ONS publication much less accessible.

The Interim Construction prices solution took some time to develop (construction prices data were suspended in December 2014 and the Interim solution was implemented in June 2015), and the Bank notes that a permanent solution will take a further significant period of time to develop and implement. This remains a concern of the Bank, as the quality of the construction output volume estimates is likely to be compromised through prolonged use of the Interim solution given its limitations (margins and productivity are both assumed to be constant). More generally, we also note that there have been sizeable revisions to construction output estimates.

With regards to our ad hoc queries, the ONS have been responsive in helpfully answering these throughout the past year (e.g. providing more information about seasonal adjustment reviews).

Price statistics
Throughout the year, CPI has been released on time and without issue. ONS staff from the Prices Division continue to provide valuable input to our regular work.

We appreciate the work by ONS staff to improve the measurements of rents as part of the CPI and CPIH.

Labour market statistics
The earnings and employment data has been released on time and without issue and provides a good guide to developments in the labour market. We look forward to the reweighting of the LFS for the 2014-based population projection later in the 2016.

Bank staff continue to place a premium on ensuring that ONS statistics using labour market data (eg productivity and unit labour costs) ensure consistency across all measures where the same data sources are used. Where different sources are available for labour market statistics it is important that the ONS continues to work on understanding the differences between these sources.

It is important that the ONS continue to ensure that the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) dataset is produced in a timely manner and to the same quality standards as currently.

Population and mortality
We appreciate the work that has gone into the production of the 2014-based population projections. Bank staff particularly welcome the proactive approach taken by the ONS before publication of the population projections to ask about our key areas of interest so that ONS staff were able to provide tailored briefing on the day of the publication of the projections. We also appreciate the time taken by ONS staff to come into the Bank to present the latest projections.

Trade

The Bank has some concerns about the quality of the UK Trade statistics, which were de-designated as National Statistics in November 2014. We agree with the concerns of the UK Statistics Authority (UKSA), as set out in their May 2015 Assessment Report. The UKSA highlighted that "confidence in the UK trade statistics has been diminished by the errors in 2014 that led to the de-designation of the statistics", and "concerns remain that errors could happen again due primarily to three factors: weaknesses in the quality assurance of data inputs; a lack of cohesive sense checking of UK Trade statistics; and risks around processing systems, which are inflexible and built on workarounds".

There were a few problems with the trade data last year. Bank staff identified a discrepancy between the implied goods trade price deflators and published price indices that arose after Blue Book 2015. This added uncertainty to the Bank's calculation of exchange-rate pass-through to UK inflation. The ONS was prompt and thorough in investigating the issue, allowing MPC to cite ONS guidance on discrepancy in the November 2015 Inflation Report. The openness of the UK economy means data on trade, including the relevant deflators, are of particular importance for the MPC. In addition, there have been other minor issues with trade statistics.

Balance of payments

Throughout the past year, ONS communications on the balance of payments have been very good and the ONS have been proactive in raising issues in advance with key users. The informative analytical report based on microdata was a great example of the ONS utilising their comparative advantage in terms of data access and understanding, and one that data users would have struggled to produce. It was helpful to see the comprehensive analysis of the reasons for the fall in FDI earnings between 2011 and 2014. And when the ONS were unable to incorporate the annual FDI benchmark data into the national accounts, a very useful article setting out what the benchmarking data implies for the official BoP estimates was released.

On the downside, the ONS were unable to incorporate the benchmark FDI data into the national accounts when the appropriate revisions window was open. That meant, for the second year running, the official FDI, current account and IIP numbers were partly based on out-of-date FDI data (i.e. only two of the four quarterly publications in the year incorporate up-to-date FDI data). There are also some concerns about the quality of the FDI data, which have driven the worsening in the current account over the 2011-2014 period.

Flow of Funds

Progress on Flow of Funds in 2015 was pleasing and arguably exceeded expectations. The ONS took the initiative in seconding a fast stream economist to the Bank, allowing seconded staff to access their data compilation systems, and sharing financial survey data with the Bank. This has led to substantial progress on the joint project, including the development and publication of experimental "from-whom-to-whom" statistics for the UK and an

		extremely thorough review of quality issues in the existing ONS financial accounts. However, although recent developments have been promising, there remains substantial work to do to bring Flow of Funds statistics up to the standards of those in other advanced economies. The financial accounts still rely heavily on estimation and some top-down adjustments, and macroprudential policy at the Bank requires a much more detailed breakdown of the financial sector. We would also value greater information on the maturity and currency of assets and liabilities, for example in order to assess the risks associated with international capital flows.
	Trust 4. How much trust do you have in ONS statistics, analysis and advice	Please select one of the following Trust them greatly..........................5 **Tend to trust them...........................4** Neither trust nor distrust them......3 Tend to distrust them.....................2 Distrust them greatly......................1
		Please provide additional comments **Trade** Trust in the trade statistics has been affected over the past year by their de-designation as National Statistics, repeated errors in the data and data tables, and increased volatility in the quarterly figures. The return of National Statistics status would be an important step forward.
Your opinion of ONS	**Innovation** 5. To what extent do you agree that ONS develops and implements **innovative methods** in response to statistical needs (e.g. using new technology, identifying and exploiting new methods and data sources).	Please select one of the following Strongly agree......................................5 Agree...4 **Neither agree nor disagree..................3** Disagree...2 Strongly disagree................................1
		Please provide additional comments
	Independence 6. Do you agree that ONS statistics and	Please select one of the following **Strongly agree....................................5** Agree...4 Neither agree nor disagree..................3

	analysis are produced **independently** and presented free from political influence	Disagree...2 Strongly disagree................................1
		Please provide additional comments
	Reputation 7. Which of the following statements best reflects your view of ONS	Please select one of the following I would speak highly of ONS, without being asked...................5 I would speak highly of ONS, if someone asked my opinion.....4 I would be neutral about ONS, if someone asked my opinion..3 I would be critical of ONS, if someone asked my opinion.........2 I would be critical of ONS, without being asked.......................1
		Please provide additional comments

Our engagement with you	8.1 Do you agree that ONS understands the needs of your organisation	Please select one of the following
		
		     Strongly agree......................................5
		     Agree..4
		     Neither agree nor disagree..................3
		     Disagree...2
		     Strongly disagree................................1

		Please provide additional comments More regular informal meetings between the Bank and ONS have helped to improve the ONS' understanding of the Bank's statistical needs over the past year. Additional informal engagement between Bank and ONS staff at all levels would continue to improve mutual understanding between the Bank and ONS.

	8.2 How satisfied are you with our engagement, e.g.
	
	• Do we give you the opportunity to influence our
		Please select one of the following
		
		     Very satisfied................................5
		     Satisfied..4
		     Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3
		     Dissatisfied.....................................2
		     Very dissatisfied.............................1

		priorities and plans? • Are we engaging with the right people in your organisation? • Do we work collaboratively with you, e.g. shared analysis • Do we seek and respond to your feedback? • Do we keep you informed about our work?	Please provide additional comments The Bank has a very good working relationship with the ONS at all levels through the two organisations. Over the past year Bank and ONS staff have had more regular informal meetings, which have helped to facilitate more active two-way communication. ONS engagement with users around the Blue Book was excellent this year. We appreciated the continuation of last year's approach, where articles outlining the changes were published well ahead of the Blue Book, the ONS were extremely helpful in accommodating requests for additional information and analysis, and a useful briefing seminar on the main messages was provided. Similarly, we appreciated the proactive approach taken by the ONS around the publication of their population projections late in 2015, and the informative briefing presentation provided to us. The Bank has been offered the opportunity to comment on the ONS' priorities and plans, and our feedback has been sought on a number of occasions. The quarterly key stakeholder meetings, which now focus on broader thematic topics, are also a useful opportunity for the Bank to learn more about the ONS' work and to offer suggestions. In addition, Bank staff have found the ONS Economic Forum meetings and other user seminars informative. Bank and ONS staff collaborated, with the help of external academics, to reconstruct historical UK financial accounts and institutional sector balance sheets back to the 1950s (1920s for the personal sector). The data were recently published with an accompanying co-authored Bank-ONS article. This was a very fruitful and positive collaboration, and the work has received positive feedback from externals users. Bank and ONS staff are investigating further opportunities for joint-work on topics of mutual interest, and we would also welcome more secondments across the two organisations.

Overall performance	9	Overall, how satisfied are you with the performance of ONS.	Please select one of the following
			
			    Very satisfied.................................5
			    Satisfied......................................4
			    Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3
			    Dissatisfied....................................2
			    Very dissatisfied............................1

			Please provide additional comments Overall, we judge that performance was satisfactory in 2015/16.

| Continuous improvement | 10 | What do you think we do well and what changes would you like ONS to make to improve our statistics, analysis, advice and services | Please provide additional comments

In last year's assessment, we noted that the Bank supports implementation of the National Statistics Quality Review recommendations. Some progress has been made (e.g. on the deflator strategy), but we look forward to further developments.

Bank staff also welcome the work by ONS to improve the performance of the Virtual Microdata Laboratory (VML) systems.

The Bank also supports the interim recommendations of the Independent review of UK economic statistics by Charlie Bean. We appreciate the engagement Between Bank and ONS staff and would hope this develops further. We also welcome efforts to make the most of existing and new data sources. The Bank will continue to work with the ONS to understand how new data can help improve economic statistics. |

Ben Broadbent
Deputy Governor, Monetary Policy

Jon Cunliffe
Deputy Governor, Financial Stability

26 February 2016

Joe Grice
Chief Economist and Executive Director
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Dear Joe

ONS annual customer satisfaction survey 2015/16

In accordance with the Service Level Agreement between the Bank and the ONS, this letter discusses the Bank's view of the performance of the ONS in 2015/16, and its priorities for economic and financial statistics over the coming years. The attached survey provides further details. The views set out in these documents reflect consultation with members of the Monetary Policy Committee and the Financial Policy Committee.

Performance

Overall, we judge that performance was satisfactory in 2015/16. There were several areas where performance improved on the previous year, though there remain some that, in our view, need further improvement.

ONS statistics are an invaluable input to policy making at the Bank. We continue to place high value on the quality of the economic and financial statistics. We appreciate the ONS's expertise and efforts to deliver high quality data that meet users' needs.

For monetary policy, the most important data are in the inflation, national accounts and labour market releases. In the main their standard has remained very high. The changes in Blue Book 2015 were well communicated. Bank staff welcomed the active engagement from ONS staff ahead of the publication of the 2014-based population projections. We welcome efforts to improve the measurement of rents in CPIH and construction output, and encourage further work on the measurement of construction prices.

There were a few problems with the trade data last year. Bank staff identified a discrepancy between the implied goods trade price deflators and published price indices that arose after Blue Book 2015. This added uncertainty to the Bank's calculation of exchange-rate pass-through to UK inflation. The ONS was prompt and thorough in investigating the issue, allowing MPC to cite ONS guidance on discrepancy in the November 2015 Inflation Report. The openness of the UK economy means data on trade, including the relevant deflators, are of particular importance for the MPC.

From a financial stability perspective, the Bank's main interest is in Flow of Funds data. Progress on Flow of Funds in 2015 was pleasing and exceeded expectations. There has been substantial progress on the joint project, including the development and publication of experimental "from-whom-to-whom" statistics for the UK and an extremely thorough review of quality issues in the existing ONS financial accounts.

However, although recent developments have been promising, there remains substantial work to do to bring Flow of Funds statistics up to the standards of those in other advanced economies. The financial accounts still rely heavily on estimation and some top-down adjustments, and macroprudential policy at the Bank requires a much more detailed breakdown of the financial sector. We would also value greater information on the maturity and currency of assets and liabilities, for example in order to assess the risks associated with international capital flows.

Bank staff continue to value their working relationship with ONS colleagues across all levels of the two organisations. We appreciate the ONS's willingness to help with both regular data releases and more substantive ad hoc requests, often at short notice.

Priorities for 2016/17

For the year ahead, a key priority from a monetary policy perspective is addressing the issues with the CPIH. It will also be important to make further progress on the measurement and integrity of construction and trade data.

From a financial stability perspective, we welcome the fact that ONS now plan to make greater financial resources available for the development of Enhanced Financial Accounts (EFA). This provides a great opportunity to improve the UK's financial statistics. It is important the opportunity be grasped. We hope that, within the next few years, the ONS will be able to address any concerns with the quality of existing financial accounts and to publish the detailed sectoral and instrument breakdowns necessary for macroprudential policy.

For the longer term, we support the interim recommendations of the Independent review of UK economic statistics by Charlie Bean. We appreciate the engagement between Bank and ONS staff and would hope this develops further. We welcome efforts to make the most of existing and new data sources and will continue to work with the ONS to understand how these might be used to improve economic statistics.

Finally, on behalf of the Monetary and Financial Policy Committees, we would like to thank you and your colleagues for your invaluable help and support over the past year. ONS statistics are a crucial input to our work and we strongly appreciate your continued efforts to provide us with the data we need to make effective policy decisions.

We are copying this letter to Jonathan Athow, Glen Watson, Nick Vaughan and Peter Patterson at the ONS, Dave Ramsden at HM Treasury and Andrew Dilnot at the UK Statistics Authority.

Yours sincerely

ONS KEY ACCOUNT ASSESSMENT 2015/16

Name of Organisation: Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS)

Topic	Question	Answers and further comments
Our statistics, analysis and services	**Use** 1. Which ONS statistics, analysis and services does your organisation mainly use	Full range of ONS economic and labour market releases, including: • GDP (all three) • Business Investment • CPI, PPI • Index of Production • Retail Sales Index • UK trade, Balance of Payments, Foreign Direct Investment • Labour Productivity, International Comparisons of Productivity, • Blue Book, Pink Book, UK Economic Accounts. • BERD, GERD • SET Statistics • UK Business • Business Demography • Labour Market Statistics • ASHE • Low Pay Statistics • Output in the Construction Industry • Annual Business Survey We also read ONS methodology articles for example regarding National Accounts (especially in the run-up to Blue Book), as well as ONS analysis, such as the analysis of Foreign Direct Investment, or articles in the ONS Economic Review. We have access to ONS microdata – ASHE, LFS, IDBR – which is used for internal analysis and to produce BIS official and National statistics releases. ONS also carry out surveys for BIS such as the UK Innovation Survey and the building materials surveys. BIS staff also attend ONS user groups, seminars and training sessions.
	Value and Impact 2.1 How important are ONS statistics and analysis to your work	Please select one of the following • **Very important** • important • Neither important not unimportant • unimportant • Very unimportant

	2.2 How have ONS statistics, analysis and advice helped to inform your decision and/or policy making over the last 12 months. Please give examples	ONS statistics and analysis underpin a range of BIS policy development and analysis on the economy, business and the labour market. For example: • We use the BERD data for monitoring the business expenditure on R&D. This source provides us the details required for sector analysis, eg provides us with the information where the significant improvements or cuts are coming from etc. • ONS trade statistics are a key source of information for evidence-based policy making. They have helped us to improve our understanding of trade and FDI issues. They are used to monitor progress towards the Government's targets (e.g. £1 trillion export drive, inward investment targets); analyse trends in UK trade and current account performance; bilateral trade relationships; contribution of trade to GDP growth etc.
	2.3 Please advise on the type of analysis/ advice/service you would require from ONS to help improve your decision and/or policy making	BIS needs reliable, granular data to improve the analysis we carry out – geography, sector, demographic. In particular we need more timely and in depth coverage of the services sector, including domestic production and trade. We also need improved metadata and methodological information which is easily accessible – hopefully some of the accessibility issue will be resolved now that the new ONS website has been launched. BIS is now funding ONS statistics on labour disputes – this is a key source of information on the labour market and needs to be retained.
	2.4 How **helpful** have ONS statistics, analysis and advice been in providing an evidence base for your decision making and/or policy work over the last year.	Please select one of the following • Very helpful • helpful • neither helpful nor unhelpful • Unhelpful • Very unhelpful Please provide additional comments (e.g. which statistics, analysis or advice has been the most helpful)

		Quality	Please select one of the following
		3 How satisfied are you with the quality of ONS statistics, analyses and advice. Quality has a number of components, e.g. they: • Meet your needs • Are accurate • Are timely • Are clearly presented • Are punctual • Are easy to find • Enable comparisons with other data • Are complete	Very satisfied..................................5 Satisfied...4 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3 Dissatisfied....................................2 Very dissatisfied............................1
			Please provide additional comments While we are in general satisfied with the quality of ONS statistics, analyses and advice, there are some specific concerns: • Metadata and methodology documents can be hard to find and are not always comprehensive • There is inconsistency between teams in how they handle pre-release access which causes confusion. For example some teams provide spreadsheets as well as the PDF bulletins; others claim this is not allowed • Trade and FDI information which is not included in formal publications is now being made available via the ONS ad hoc pages, which is much appreciated, but the titles are not always clear. It would be much more helpful to have these published in the same place as the main publications, and if the same information is being requested regularly that suggests it should be included in the main releases • There are ongoing problems with the seasonal adjustment of construction output data which were not initially picked up by ONS QA procedures, and for which corrections notices or explanations have not been very prominent.
		Trust	Please select one of the following
		4. How much trust do you have in ONS statistics, analysis and advice	Trust them greatly..........................5 Tend to trust them..........................4 Neither trust nor distrust them......3 Tend to distrust them.....................2 Distrust them greatly......................1

		Please provide additional comments More comprehensive metadata and methodology information would improve trust.
Your opinion of ONS	**Innovation** 5. To what extent do you agree that ONS develops and implements **innovative methods** in response to statistical needs (e.g. using new technology, identifying and exploiting new methods and data sources).	Please select one of the following Strongly agree.....................................5 Agree...4 Neither agree nor disagree.................3 Disagree..2 Strongly disagree...............................1
		Please provide additional comments For trade statistics, ONS are making increased use of technology and data visualisation to improve dissemination which is welcome and useful. ONS are also working with BIS and HMRC to exploit existing data more effectively through data linking. However in other areas there is less evidence of innovation.
	Independence 6. Do you agree that ONS statistics and analysis are produced **independently** and presented free from political influence	Please select one of the following Strongly agree.....................................5 Agree...4 Neither agree nor disagree.................3 Disagree..2 Strongly disagree...............................1
		Please provide additional comments

	Reputation	Please select one of the following
	7. Which of the following statements best reflects your view of ONS	I would speak highly of ONS, without being asked..................5 I would speak highly of ONS, if someone asked my opinion.....4 I would be neutral about ONS, if someone asked my opinion..3 I would be critical of ONS, if someone asked my opinion.........2 I would be critical of ONS, without being asked.......................1
		Please provide additional comments ONS clearly place a high priority on producing consistent and robust statistics.
Our engagement with you	8.1 Do you agree that ONS understands the needs of your organisation	Please select one of the following Strongly agree.....................................5 Agree...4 Neither agree nor disagree..................3 Disagree...2 Strongly disagree...............................1
		Please provide additional comments
	8.2 How satisfied are you with our engagement, e.g. • Do we give you the opportunity to influence our priorities and plans? • Are we engaging with the right people in your organisation? • Do we work collaboratively with you, e.g. shared analysis • Do we seek and respond to your feedback? • Do we keep you informed about our work?	Please select one of the following Very satisfied.................................5 Satisfied...4 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3 Dissatisfied....................................2 Very dissatisfied............................1
		Please provide additional comments Engagement can vary between different parts of ONS. Recently we have had good engagement on national accounts, financial statistics, trade, FDI and construction. We really appreciate recent engagement on a joint project with the trade teams in both ONS and HMRC and this is a good model for the future. In addition, ONS attendance at the BIS-chaired Consultative Committee on Construction Industry Statistics is much appreciated by members, who have remarked positively about ONS willingness to engage and consult, and to be open about the statistics and development work. In general ONS do keep us informed about work, but there have

		been some occasions when we have been surprised by a new release. Often this is an ad hoc release, where it would have been useful to know it was coming out, in particular where it relates to a key BIS policy area. It can also sometimes be difficult to find the right contact within ONS, or to obtain detailed data or metadata.	

Overall performance	9	Overall, how satisfied are you with the performance of ONS.	Please select one of the following
			
			    Very satisfied..................................5
			    Satisfied..4
			    Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3
			    Dissatisfied....................................2
			    Very dissatisfied............................1

			Please provide additional comments
Continuous improvement	10	What do you think we do well and what changes would you like ONS to make to improve our statistics, analysis, advice and services	Please provide additional comments Done well: engagement, training courses, use of new technology, data collection and management Could do better: website, more granular data, better metadata and methodology, need to be more aware of what is going on and refreshing content of releases to keep them topical.

ONS KEY ACCOUNT ASSESSMENT 2015/16

Name of Organisation: DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Topic	Question	Answers and further comments
Our statistics, analysis and services	**Use** 1. Which ONS statistics, analysis and services does your organisation mainly use	Macroeconomic statistics (e.g. GDP, CPI, Earnings) Demographic/Migration statistics [e.g. disaggregated Population Estimates and Projections, Census) Macro/Micro business statistics (e.g. ASHE, LFS, Retail Sales) Construction/Housing Statistics (e.g. HPI, Construction New Orders and Output, Index of Private Housing Rental Prices) Geography Portal, Geospatial expertise Strategic/policy/procedural pronouncements and decisions issued by the National Statistician's Office or the UK Statistics Authority's Secretariat As a contractor on Troubled Families, linking local authority data to government administrative systems.
	Value and Impact 2.1 How important are ONS statistics and analysis to your work	Please select one of the following • Very important - **X** • important • Neither important not unimportant • unimportant • Very unimportant
	2.2 How have ONS statistics, analysis and advice helped to inform your decision and/or policy making over the last 12 months. Please give examples	ONS statistics on Housing complement those from DCLG and elsewhere to allow a better analysis of trends in the Housing Market. Statisticians have engaged positively in improving housing market statistics. ONS have been very supportive on the development of DCLG household projections. In particular with assessing how we could make best use the available 2001 and 2011 census data in our household projections. ONS demographic data underpin the Department's allocation of funding to Local Authorities ONS business statistics inform the Department's work on Local Growth. ONS small area statistics underpin the Department's 'Devolution/Decentralisation' agenda.

	2.3 Please advise on the type of analysis/ advice/service you would require from ONS to help improve your decision and/or policy making	Like most other Government Departments DCLG would like complete, timely and robust information which covers a wide range of economic and social issues and can be disaggregated to a wide range of geospatial levels.
	2.4 How **helpful** have ONS statistics, analysis and advice been in providing an evidence base for your decision making and/or policy work over the last year.	Please select one of the following • Very helpful - **X** • helpful • neither helpful nor unhelpful • Unhelpful • Very unhelpful Please provide additional comments (e.g. which statistics, analysis or advice has been the most helpful) All of the quantitative information we obtain from the ONS is very helpful especially if the data are available at low levels of geospatial disaggregation.
	Quality 3 How satisfied are you with the quality of ONS statistics, analyses and advice. Quality has a number of components, e.g. they: • Meet your needs • Are accurate • Are timely • Are clearly presented • Are punctual • Are easy to find • Enable comparisons with other data • Are complete	Please select one of the following Very satisfied................................5 Satisfied..4 **- X** Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3 Dissatisfied....................................2 Very dissatisfied............................1
		Please provide additional comments

	Trust	Please select one of the following
	4. How much trust do you have in ONS statistics, analysis and advice	Trust them greatly..........................5 Tend to trust them.........................4 **- X** Neither trust nor distrust them......3 Tend to distrust them.....................2 Distrust them greatly......................1
		Please provide additional comments By its very nature and status, the ONS is more likely than any other public body to conform fully to the standards and principles set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.
Your opinion of ONS	**Innovation** 5. To what extent do you agree that ONS develops and implements **innovative methods** in response to statistical needs (e.g. using new technology, identifying and exploiting new methods and data sources).	Please select one of the following Strongly agree.......................................5 Agree...4 **- X** Neither agree nor disagree.................3 Disagree...2 Strongly disagree................................1
		Please provide additional comments ONS have been working as a data processor for DCLG on the troubled families programme. This project involves linking local authority data to government administrative systems. This is one of the biggest data projects in Whitehall and the data is being used by the Implementation Taskforce and is being fed back to local areas to help transform services for troubled families. The deadlines for the work have been very challenging but the ONS team have managed the project – despite its complexity – especially well, and we have been able to meet our reporting deadlines.
	Independence 6. Do you agree that ONS statistics and analysis are produced **independently** and	Please select one of the following Strongly agree.......................................5 - **X** Agree...4 Neither agree nor disagree.................3 Disagree...2 Strongly disagree................................1

	presented free from political influence	
		Please provide additional comments
	Reputation 7. Which of the following statements best reflects your view of ONS	Please select one of the following I would speak highly of ONS, without being asked...................5 I would speak highly of ONS, if someone asked my opinion.....4 - **X** I would be neutral about ONS, if someone asked my opinion..3 I would be critical of ONS, if someone asked my opinion.........2 I would be critical of ONS, without being asked.......................1
		Please provide additional comments The ONS has a well-deserved reputation, nationally and internationally.

Our engagement with you	8.1 Do you agree that ONS understands the needs of your organisation	Please select one of the following
		
		    Strongly agree......................................5
		
		    Agree...4 - **X**
		    Neither agree nor disagree..................3
		    Disagree...2
		    Strongly disagree................................1

		Please provide additional comments ONS has clearly made an effort to become more customer-focused and mindful of the needs of other Government Departments. On occasions, however, one gets the impression that some officials in the ONS have limited exposure to the realities of working in a policy Department, or how the wider Government Statistical Service operates.

	8.2	How satisfied are you with our engagement, e.g. • Do we give you the opportunity to influence our priorities and plans? • Are we engaging with the right people in your organisation? • Do we work collaboratively with you, e.g. shared analysis • Do we seek and respond to your feedback? • Do we keep you informed about our work?	Please select one of the following Very satisfied..................................5 Satisfied...4 - **X** Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3 Dissatisfied....................................2 Very dissatisfied.............................1 **Please provide additional comments** Yes, ONS always invites us to comment on consultations on the plans for changes to statistics. At times the engagement, especially via email, would benefit from being more targeted and ensuring that the head of profession is kept aware.
Overall performance	9	Overall, how satisfied are you with the performance of ONS.	Please select one of the following Very satisfied..................................5 Satisfied...4 - **X** Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3 Dissatisfied....................................2 Very dissatisfied.............................1 Please provide additional comments
Continuous improvement	10	What do you think we do well and what changes would you like ONS to make to improve our statistics, analysis, advice and services	Please provide additional comments This year we have been thinking grateful for the input on household projections, and the work on data matching in support of troubled families. ONS staff are generally expert in their area and are willing to help. Looking forward will be looking for support on population estimates in context of changes to local government funding. We are also keen to see a successful outcome to the

		ONS's continuous improvement programme for a single House Price Index.
		A long-running concern has been the website. There has been considerable work on this and we are hopeful the new website will raise awareness ONS's standing. It might also be helpful if the ONS published a comprehensive Organogram on its website, and a Directory of Services which shows who does what in the organisation, and how customers can contact them.

ONS KEY ACCOUNT ASSESSMENT 2015/16
Name of Organisation:

Topic	Question	Answers and further comments
Our statistics, analysis and services	**Use** 1. Which ONS statistics, analysis and services does your organisation mainly use	DCMS use/liaise with a range of areas in ONS. The most significant of these are: National Accounts Annual Business Survey Trade International Passenger Survey Tourism Intelligence Unit (production of Tourism Satellite Account) Internet Access Survey (from opinion and lifestyle survey) LFS/APS International Classifications Population estimates
	Value and Impact 2.1 How important are ONS statistics and analysis to your work	Please select one of the following · Very important
	2.2 How have ONS statistics, analysis and advice helped to inform your decision and/or policy making over the last 12 months. Please give examples	ONS data are used in a range of areas in DCMS including to inform briefing, impact assessments and DCMS statistical outputs. Some specific examples are provided below. **Tourism:** · Data from the International Passenger Survey and Tourism Satellite Account have been used to inform the government's "Five Point Plan" which was launched by the Prime Minister and the DCMS Secretary of State. · Numbers of International Visits and region visit are headline indicators for the DCMS Single Departmental Plan and monthly briefing on visit numbers is important to the department. · APS data analysed by ONS were used in DCMS' #MyTourismJobs campaign. **Economic Estimates** · DCMS have used ONS data on GVA and employment for telecoms and gambling, including for briefing at select committees. · Annual Population Survey micro data have been used to allow DCMS to publish estimates on employment in the Creative Industries and Digital Sectors. · Annual Business Survey data are used for

		estimates of GVA for the Creative Industries and Digital Sector – the Creative Industries estimates were used as part of a week-long communications campaign around the creative industries #CreateUK, aimed at promoting the Creative Industries and encouraging careers in these industries. · ITIS micro data and CPA trade in goods data are used for Trade estimates for Creative Industries and Digital Sectors. Recently these data have been used to support the work of the Exports Implementation Taskforce, as well as work of UKTI.
	2.3 Please advise on the type of analysis/ advice/service you would require from ONS to help improve your decision and/or policy making	There are a number of areas where the data are very complicated or it is hard to find the most appropriate source. The ability to provide some more simple explanations and clearer sign posting of would allow the data to be more helpful to the less knowledgeable user, and reduce the number of requests ONS receive for basic queries. The most significant issue for DCMS is that the sectors we cover are not defined as sectors in top level international definitions, therefore much of the ONS analysis does not provide what we require without significant additional work from ONS. Access to the micro-data is extremely helpful in these circumstances but it would be even better if some of this analysis could be done by ONS to ensure it is more consistent with the other industries/sectors. Finally something that would be helpful would be more understanding/commentary on why things are happening, rather than just what is happening. This is challenging, but would be a huge benefit to support policy development and understand the implications of policy decisions.
	2.4 How **helpful** have ONS statistics, analysis and advice been in providing an evidence base for your decision making and/or policy work over the last year.	Please select one of the following · helpful Please provide additional comments (e.g. which statistics, analysis or advice has been the most helpful) Tourism has been the area where we have made most use of data directly published by ONS. We have also made a lot of use of other data sources using the underlying data as building blocks for our analysis/definitions.
	Quality 3 How satisfied	Please select one of the following

	are you with the quality of ONS statistics, analyses and advice. Quality has a number of components, e.g. they: · Meet your needs · Are accurate · Are timely · Are clearly presented · Are punctual · Are easy to find · Enable comparisons with other data · Are complete	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3
		Please provide additional comments There are a number of areas where the quality of ONS products is high, but others where there is room for development. The biggest issues for DCMS are: · Timeliness of the data for example, ministers do not find using figures on the economy which are two years out of date acceptable. · Measurement of the "digital economy". We have a lot of policy resource focused on the digital economy in our Digital Economy unit and as part of the Creative Industries, but concerns about whether digital activity is adequately picked up. The pace of change in this areas is fast and it is hard for traditional outputs to keep up.
	Trust 4. How much trust do you have in ONS statistics, analysis and advice	Please select one of the following Tend to trust them..........................4
		Please provide additional comments The independence of ONS statistics is not disputed and this is very important.
Your opinion of ONS	**Innovation** 5. To what extent do you agree that ONS develops and implements **innovative methods** in response to statistical needs (e.g. using new technology, identifying and exploiting new methods and data sources).	Please select one of the following Neither agree nor disagree..................3
		Please provide additional comments There have been some very good examples of ONS showing innovation, for example a tourism "data science" project was recently presented to DCMS and there has been very clear evidence of ONS making an effort to provide more support for policy. However, there is limited innovation in understanding the structure of the economy, while this is largely driven by

		international classifications and sensible efforts to have consistent time series, it is problematic for the Creative Industries and Digital Sectors. Hopefully the Bean Review recommendations will support more innovation in this area.
	Independence 6. Do you agree that ONS statistics and analysis are produced **independently** and presented free from political influence	Please select one of the following Strongly agree......................................5
		Please provide additional comments Most of the department consider ONS statistics to be indisputable and are confident in using them in any briefing.
	Reputation 7. Which of the following statements best reflects your view of ONS	Please select one of the following I would speak highly of ONS, if someone asked my opinion.....4
		Please provide additional comments
Our engagement with you	8.1 Do you agree that ONS understands the needs of your organisation	Please select one of the following Neither agree nor disagree..................3
		Please provide additional comments There has been a clear change in focus of ONS over the last 6 months or so to try and provide more support for policy. This is welcomed and is already showing its value (for example in our tourism and economic statistics). I hope this will continue over time and as a result ONS

		will build up its understand of how policy departments operate and what the needs of these organisations are.
	8.2 How satisfied are you with our engagement, e.g.

·   Do we give you the opportunity to influence our priorities and plans?
·   Are we engaging with the right people in your organisation?
·   Do we work collaboratively with you, e.g. shared analysis
·   Do we seek and respond to your feedback?
·   Do we keep you informed about our work? | Please select one of the following

      Very satisfied...................................5 |
| | | Please provide additional comments

Over the last 6 months in particular ONS have been extremely helpful and it will be good to see this relationship develop over the coming 12 months. |
| **Overall performance** | 9   Overall, how satisfied are you with the performance of ONS. | Please select one of the following

      Satisfied..4 |
| | | Please provide additional comments

There are clear signs that ONS is moving in the right direction and are working towards better support for policy departments/policy development. There is however still some way to go in ONS understanding how departments operate and therefore the constraints on departments when urgent ad hoc requests are made and being better able to pre-empt what policy makers may value most (while not undermining the highly valued independence of the organisation). |

Continuous improvement	10 What do you think we do well and what changes would you like ONS to make to improve our statistics, analysis, advice and services	Please provide additional comments ONS have been extremely helpful in trying to support DCMS develop more robust economic estimates. The new ONS website, is a clear improvement on the previous website. It is attractive and much more modern looking and is easier to navigate to new areas of interest However, the changed links and locations mean it can be difficult to find releases we use frequently and the 'click through' process required to reach actual data spreadsheets seems long.

ONS KEY ACCOUNT ASSESSMENT 2015/16

Name of Organisation: DECC

Topic	Question	Answers and further comments
Our statistics, analysis and services	**Use** 1. Which ONS statistics, analysis and services does your organisation mainly use	Varied selection, use CPI, GDP, ABS and other economic data. Would use Purchasing Inquiry if available and provided it produced data to our required level of disaggregation. Key relationship is perhaps more of DECC as supplier of data – IOP, PPI, CPI, Consumers' expenditure teams are all users of our outputs. ONS carry out 2 surveys with DECC as sole user - covering generation by auto-generators and a survey of energy prices paid by manufacturers. In 2015 the ONS carried out a survey on the low carbon economy on DECC and others' behalf. First results have been published, with final analysis due March/April 2016. This survey has been re-commissioned for 2016.
	Value and Impact 2.1 How important are ONS statistics and analysis to your work	Please select one of the following • Very important • **important** • Neither important not unimportant • unimportant • Very unimportant
	2.2 How have ONS statistics, analysis and advice helped to inform your decision and/or policy making over the last 12 months. Please give examples	Wide variety of ONS economic data used as denominator in energy ratio calculations, with other key indicators related to energy re-published by DECC – eg energy employment, contribution to GDP etc. Inflation data used in impact assessments etc. Macro data feeds into DECC modelling. ASHE data used in impact assessments. EFS data used in analysis of fuel poverty etc. Also, ONS attend high level EU meetings where for example energy statistics legislation are discussed.
	2.3 Please advise on the type of analysis/ advice/service you would require from ONS to help improve your decision and/or policy making	Difficult to answer – without surveying all economist colleagues. In general our key departmental statistics are sourced from internal colleagues within DECC statistics. Would be good to have had volume of energy purchased as well as value in Purchasing Inquiry – see later comments.

	2.4 How **helpful** have ONS statistics, analysis and advice been in providing an evidence base for your decision making and/or policy work over the last year.	Please select one of the following • Very helpful • **helpful** • neither helpful nor unhelpful • Unhelpful • Very unhelpful Please provide additional comments (e.g. which statistics, analysis or advice has been the most helpful) Find ONS staff generally receptive to DECC needs, and obliging.
	Quality 3 How satisfied are you with the quality of ONS statistics, analyses and advice. Quality has a number of components, e.g. they: • Meet your needs • Are accurate • Are timely • Are clearly presented • Are punctual • Are easy to find • Enable comparisons with other data • Are complete	Please select one of the following Very satisfied..................................5 **Satisfied...4** Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3 Dissatisfied....................................2 Very dissatisfied............................1
		Please provide additional comments

The bullet point next to "helpful" is red, and the word "helpful" is bold and red.
The "Satisfied...4" line is bold and red.

	Trust 4. How much trust do you have in ONS statistics, analysis and advice	Please select one of the following Trust them greatly..........................5 **Tend to trust them..........................4** Neither trust nor distrust them......3 Tend to distrust them.....................2 Distrust them greatly......................1
		Please provide additional comments
Your opinion of ONS	**Innovation** 5. To what extent do you agree that ONS develops and implements **innovative methods** in response to statistical needs (e.g. using new technology, identifying and exploiting new methods and data sources).	Please select one of the following Strongly agree......................................5 **Agree..4** Neither agree nor disagree.................3 Disagree...2 Strongly disagree.................................1
		Please provide additional comments Good examples of engagement via Twitter – like the use of graphs and other infographics in these.
	Independence 6. Do you agree that ONS statistics and analysis are produced **independently** and presented free from political influence	Please select one of the following Strongly agree......................................5 **Agree..4** Neither agree nor disagree.................3 Disagree...2 Strongly disagree.................................1
		Please provide additional comments

	Reputation 7. Which of the following statements best reflects your view of ONS	Please select one of the following I would speak highly of ONS, without being asked...................5 **I would speak highly of ONS, if someone asked my opinion.....4** I would be neutral about ONS, if someone asked my opinion..3 I would be critical of ONS, if someone asked my opinion........2 I would be critical of ONS, without being asked......................1
		Please provide additional comments This answer based on our specific experience. The Bean review has identified some wider issues, which ONS is going to address.
Our engagement with you	8.1 Do you agree that ONS understands the needs of your organisation	Please select one of the following Strongly agree.....................................5 Agree...4 **Neither agree nor disagree..................3** Disagree...2 Strongly disagree.................................1
		Please provide additional comments There is good engagement with a number of teams where we have close relationships. In general DECC is more a provider of data to the ONS than vice versa. The web site could be improved by providing a better portal for GSS statistics as a whole (through links to gov.uk pages). There is a risk that users see it as a first port of call like the National Statistics Institutes in other countries, but it only covers ONS produced statistics. ONS could improve this portal to better reflect richness of wider GSS data.
	8.2 How satisfied are you with our engagement, e.g. • Do we give you the opportunity to influence our	Please select one of the following Very satisfied.................................5 **Satisfied...4** Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3 Dissatisfied....................................2 Very dissatisfied.............................1

		priorities and plans? • Are we engaging with the right people in your organisation? • Do we work collaboratively with you, e.g. shared analysis • Do we seek and respond to your feedback? • Do we keep you informed about our work?	Please provide additional comments Happy with collaborative work where links are close. Have had good conversations regarding the Purchasing Inquiry – disappointed that it was dropped from the electronic data capture program but understand why the decision was made. This does though make it more difficult for ONS to send different versions to specific respondents, which impacts on the collection of volume data of energy components which is still a key ask from DECC, and is under consideration. To re-iterate though, DECC is happy with engagement on this project.

Overall performance	9	Overall, how satisfied are you with the performance of ONS.	Please select one of the following
			
			    Very satisfied................................5
			    Satisfied.......................................4
			Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3
			Dissatisfied....................................2
			Very dissatisfied.............................1

			Please provide additional comments
Continuous improvement	10	What do you think we do well and what changes would you like ONS to make to improve our statistics, analysis, advice and services	Please provide additional comments Improved ONS web site would help - allowing users to access information more easily. Will comment next year on new version soon to be launched. Think ONS could review press releases – these seem to be growing so that they meet all users' needs. For example the IOP December release is over 50 pages. Does this release need over 10 pages of revisions tables. Hopefully ONS can share improvements they make to presentation on their web site with GDS – and be force to drive forward overall web presentation of statistics.

ONS KEY ACCOUNT ASSESSMENT 2015/16

Name of Organisation:

Topic	Question	Answers and further comments
Our statistics, analysis and services	**Use** 1. Which ONS statistics, analysis and services does your organisation mainly use	- Social capital statistics - Labour Force Survey 2011 Census - Cuts of population data (mid-year estimates, population projections) - Registered child deaths data
	Value and Impact 2.1 How important are ONS statistics and analysis to your work	Please select one of the following - Very important **Important** - Neither important not unimportant - unimportant - Very unimportant
	2.2 How have ONS statistics, analysis and advice helped to inform your decision and/or policy making over the last 12 months. Please give examples	- Examining the extent of civic participation - Comparisons of actual numbers of deaths versus numbers of deaths reviewed
	2.3 Please advise on the type of analysis/ advice/service you would require from ONS to help improve your decision and/or policy making	

	2.4 How **helpful** have ONS statistics, analysis and advice been in providing an evidence base for your decision making and/or policy work over the last year.	Please select one of the following • Very helpful • helpful • **neither helpful nor unhelpful** • Unhelpful • Very unhelpful ONS information is primarily used in DfE as part of wider analytical modelling rather than as a direct evidence base for decisions.
	Quality 3 How satisfied are you with the quality of ONS statistics, analyses and advice. Quality has a number of components, e.g. they: • Meet your needs • Are accurate • Are timely • Are clearly presented • Are punctual • Are easy to find • Enable comparisons with other data • Are complete	Please select one of the following Very satisfied.................................5 Satisfied...4 **Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3** Dissatisfied....................................2 Very dissatisfied.............................1
		Some information, for example child deaths data, can be some years out of date, e.g. DfE published child death reviews in 2015 when the latest ONS figures were for child deaths that occurred in 2013.

	Trust	Please select one of the following
	4. How much trust do you have in ONS statistics, analysis and advice	Trust them greatly..........................5 **Tend to trust them..........................4** Neither trust nor distrust them......3 Tend to distrust them.....................2 Distrust them greatly.....................1
		ONS, like all members of the GSS, employ trusted techniques and individuals and have very robust QA procedures.
Your opinion of ONS	**Innovation** 5. To what extent do you agree that ONS develops and implements **innovative methods** in response to statistical needs (e.g. using new technology, identifying and exploiting new methods and data sources).	Please select one of the following Strongly agree.....................................5 **Agree...4** Neither agree nor disagree.................3 Disagree..2 Strongly disagree................................1
		ONS have worked extremely hard at finding an alternative solution to anomalies in one set of the information the Department uses. They came up with several potential solutions, they listened to our advice and went with our proposed solution, sharing their work and on the whole they did respond to feedback.
	Independence 6. Do you agree that ONS statistics and analysis are produced **independently** and presented free from political influence	Please select one of the following Strongly agree.....................................5 **Agree...4** Neither agree nor disagree.................3 Disagree..2 Strongly disagree................................1
		ONS, as members of the GSS, follow the strict codes of practice.

	Reputation 7. Which of the following statements best reflects your view of ONS	Please select one of the following I would speak highly of ONS, without being asked..................5 **I would speak highly of ONS, if someone asked my opinion.....4** I would be neutral about ONS, if someone asked my opinion..3 I would be critical of ONS, if someone asked my opinion........2 I would be critical of ONS, without being asked......................1
		ONS provide a robust service and a valuable information base.
Our engagement with you	8.1 Do you agree that ONS understands the needs of your organisation	Please select one of the following Strongly agree.....................................5 Agree...4 **Neither agree nor disagree.................3** Disagree..2 Strongly disagree................................1
		Whilst ONS actively consult government departments on the measures they have develop they need to ensure the solutions they identify are more aligned with the aims of the departments. For example whilst ONS developed the Education productivity measure it use is limited within the department.
	8.2 How satisfied are you with our engagement, e.g. • Do we give you the opportunity to influence our	Please select one of the following Very satisfied.................................5 **Satisfied...4** Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3 Dissatisfied....................................2 Very dissatisfied.............................1

		priorities and plans? • Are we engaging with the right people in your organisation? • Do we work collaboratively with you, e.g. shared analysis • Do we seek and respond to your feedback? • Do we keep you informed about our work?	ONS staff are always very pleasant and helpful in telephone conversations.

Overall performance	9	Overall, how satisfied are you with the performance of ONS.	Please select one of the following
			
			    Very satisfied.................................5
			    Satisfied...4
			Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3
			Dissatisfied....................................2
			Very dissatisfied.............................1

			Please provide additional comments
Continuous improvement	10	What do you think we do well and what changes would you like ONS to make to improve our statistics, analysis, advice and services	Continue to consult widely with government departments on their information needs.

ONS KEY ACCOUNT ASSESSMENT 2015/16

Name of Organisation: DFID

Topic	Question	Answers and further comments
Our statistics, analysis and services	**Use** 1. Which ONS statistics, analysis and services does your organisation mainly use	**National Accounts - GNI estimates : These are used by DFID to enable us to monitor and then calculate the proportion of GNI spent on Official Development Assistance (ODA).**
	Value and Impact 2.1 How important are ONS statistics and analysis to your work	Please select one of the following • Very important for analysis and reporting around the ODA:GNI ratio
	2.2 How have ONS statistics, analysis and advice helped to inform your decision and/or policy making over the last 12 months. Please give examples	We work closely with the ONS to understand changes in the GNI estimates. The information and analysis provided by ONS is essential to ensuring that the UK government is able to efficiently meet the target to spend 0.7% of GNI on ODA. The International Development (Official Development Assistance Target) Act 2015 was brought into force on 1 June 2015 and requires that the UK spends 0.7% of GNI on international development in each and every year.

	2.3 Please advise on the type of analysis/ advice/service you would require from ONS to help improve your decision and/or policy making	The main challenge we have is that National Accounts methodology papers are complex. Short accessible summaries would be helpful.
	2.4 How **helpful** have ONS statistics, analysis and advice been in providing an evidence base for your decision making and/or policy work over the last year.	Please select one of the following • helpful We value the support of the team leading on GNI estimates, and their willingness to be helpful
	Quality 3 How satisfied are you with the quality of ONS statistics, analyses and advice. Quality has a number of components, e.g. they: • Meet your needs • Are accurate • Are timely • Are clearly presented • Are punctual • Are easy to find • Enable comparisons with other data • Are complete	Please select one of the following Satisfied..4
		Please provide additional comments Very satisfied with the advice and ad-hoc analysis provided by the ONS team working on GNI to my team. However, even as an experienced statistician I find the National Accounts publication, tables and methodology papers complex and difficult to navigate. The National Accounts team are always happy and able to provide support.

	Trust 4. How much trust do you have in ONS statistics, analysis and advice	Please select one of the following Trust them greatly..........................5
		Please provide additional comments Absolutely no concerns on this front
Your opinion of ONS	**Innovation** 5. To what extent do you agree that ONS develops and implements **innovative methods** in response to statistical needs (e.g. using new technology, identifying and exploiting new methods and data sources).	Please select one of the following Agree...4
		Please provide additional comments We are really pleased that ONS is leading the way in championing the use of new forms of data in official statistics, and that the innovative work being done by the big data lab is really impressive. We would really encourage them to do more experimentation with data sources that are relevant in other countries too – such as satellite imagery and mobile phone data, so that other countries, especially developing countries can benefit from the methods that they come up with. We support the decision that has recently been made for the big data lab to spend dedicated time on SDG measurement, and feel that this work will have benefits beyond the UK. • ONS has represented the UK on the Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDG). The IAEG-SDG is composed of Member States. It includes regional and international agencies as observers. The IAEG-SDG has been tasked to develop an indicator framework for the goals and targets of the post-2015 development agenda at the global level, and to support its implementation

	Independence	Please select one of the following
	6. Do you agree that ONS statistics and analysis are produced **independently** and presented free from political influence	Strongly agree......................................5
		Please provide additional comments
		No concerns on this front
	Reputation	Please select one of the following
	7. Which of the following statements best reflects your view of ONS	I would speak highly of ONS, if someone asked my opinion.....4
		I would speak highly of the commitment, professionalism and helpfulness of ONS individuals with whom I have regular interactions
		As an organisation, the findings from the interim report for the Bean review resonate. ONS has got quite some distance to travel if it is to move away from focusing largely on the production of statistics and become rather more of a service provider, helping users answer their questions about the economy. This is a big challenge. I am impressed by the direction that the new leadership team are setting for ONS.
Our engagement with you	8.1 Do you agree that ONS understands the needs of your organisation	Please select one of the following
		Agree..4
		Please provide additional comments
		When we ask for advice the National Accounts team are always happy to help, however I do feel that on occasion particular when there are large changes to methodology it would have been helpful to have pro-actively engaged with government departments affected by the changes.
		ONS engagement tends to be very domestically focused. Sometimes, it can be quite hard to get them to understand what the SDG agenda looks like from a DFID perspective.

	8.2 How satisfied are you with our engagement, e.g. • Do we give you the opportunity to influence our priorities and plans? • Are we engaging with the right people in your organisation? • Do we work collaboratively with you, e.g. shared analysis • Do we seek and respond to your feedback? • Do we keep you informed about our work?	Please select one of the following Very satisfied...................................5 Satisfied..4 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3 Dissatisfied.....................................2 Very dissatisfied.............................1
		Please provide additional comments There are multiple ways in which ONS engages DFID in their work. These include: - Satisfied with the engagement on the SDG indicators. ONS communicated well with us, were open to our views and very responsive. John Pullinger and Glenn Everett played key roles in reaching international agreement on the indicators. On the whole they represented our views accurately in the various consultations. The only issues were when our needs conflicted with those of other government departments. Ideally, we would have had a fuller readout from the crucial IAEG meeting last October, but also understand the pressures that made this difficult. - Engagement on the data revolution and the global partnership for sustainable development. ONS has played a significant role in enhancing engagement between the official statistics community globally, and broader players with a role in 'the data revolution'. Notably John Pullinger in his role as chair of UNSC has played a key role, speaking at the launch of the global partnership on sustainable development and championing coordination between the two communities. DFID and ONS have worked together very well in this area and engagement has been very satisfactory. - Engagement on ONS' own data innovation work – this has been good, we have been kept informed of successes and are now beginning to work together on future plans, which is fantastic. There is probably more we could do to increase understanding with a wider group within DFID (action on DFIDs side here). - Engagement on international technical assistance. This has worked well to date (satisfied). ONS usually approach DFID to ensure that study visits and requests that they receive for TA are in line with DFID priorities in the partner country (e.g. recent study visit from Tanzania to ONS and UKSA), and ONS have been positive in supporting DFID requests for support (e.g. on Sierra Leone census, and on National Accounts through an IMF project). There will be further need for engagement going forwards as ONS scales up its ambitions on TA.
Overall performance	9 Overall, how satisfied are you with the performance of ONS.	Please select one of the following Satisfied...4

		Please provide additional comments
Continuous improvement	10 What do you think we do well and what changes would you like ONS to make to improve our statistics, analysis, advice and services	Please provide additional comments DFID enjoys constructive working relations with a number of different ONS teams. We appreciate the advice and analysis that they provide, and their responsiveness to our requests.

ONS KEY ACCOUNT ASSESSMENT 2015/16

Name of Organisation: Department of Transport

Topic	Question	Answers and further comments
Our statistics, analysis and services	**Use** 1. Which ONS statistics, analysis and services does your organisation mainly use	**Statistics:** Census Population estimates Population projections are used in our transport models Annual Business Survey National Accounts Environmental Accounts Labour Force Survey Omnibus Survey Price Indices and Inflation (RPI, CPI etc) Living Costs and Food Survey International Passenger Survey Business Register and Employment Survey Business Accounts International Passenger Survey **Services** Methodology Advisory Service Geography portal
	Value and Impact 2.1 How important are ONS statistics and analysis to your work	Please select one of the following • **Very important** • Important • • Neither important not unimportant • unimportant • Very unimportant
	2.2 How have ONS statistics, analysis and advice helped to inform your decision and/or policy making over the last 12 months. Please give examples	We use a range of ONS statistics, mainly in collaboration with other data sources. For example, they are used to calculate rates, provide context for our data, feed into briefings, inform Impact Assessments etc. GVA and employment figures are used to estimate the economic contribution of different transport sectors (aviation, maritime etc). Some economic indicators are essential to policy decisions eg RPI data still informs changes to rail fares.
	2.3 Please advise on the type of analysis/ advice/service you would require from ONS to help improve your decision and/or policy making	We value the technical, statistical expertise ONS can offer, partly through the MAS, from which we have received an excellent service, but also through topic leads. ONS could do more on interpreting the impact of their estimates/projections on policies. It would also be useful to have more advice on interpreting results within certain series (eg understanding the trends in transport elements within series such as the ABS and National Accounts). It is sometimes difficult to find the correct named individual to approach with specific questions.

	2.4 How **helpful** have ONS statistics, analysis and advice been in providing an evidence base for your decision making and/or policy work over the last year.	Please select one of the following • Very helpful • **helpful** • neither helpful nor unhelpful • Unhelpful • Very unhelpful Please provide additional comments (e.g. which statistics, analysis or advice has been the most helpful) We use a range of ONS statistics and have contact with various different teams in ONS. We generally find ONS staff are helpful and responsive to questions although they are often are unaware of the uses of their data. Representatives from National Accounts provided useful insight at a DfT workshop. We have also noticed an increase in the support provided by ONS for wider GSS work such as the PDC, running induction courses/training, which is greatly appreciated.
	Quality 3 How satisfied are you with the quality of ONS statistics, analyses and advice. Quality has a number of components, e.g. they: • Meet your needs • Are accurate • Are timely • Are clearly presented • Are punctual • Are easy to find • Enable comparisons with other data • Are complete	Please select one of the following Very satisfied.................................5 **Satisfied...4** Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3 Dissatisfied.....................................2 **Very dissatisfied.............................1**
		Please provide additional comments We are generally satisfied with the accuracy and presentation of statistics but they remain very difficult to find on the ONS website (hence the multiple response). Some series appear to be subject to frequent revisions (eg ABS, National Accounts) which undermines trust in the results. We have also noticed that some useful tables seem to have been discontinued eg for the Living Costs and Food Survey
	Trust 4. How much trust do you have in ONS statistics, analysis and advice	Please select one of the following Trust them greatly.........................5 **Tend to trust them..........................4** Neither trust nor distrust them......3 Tend to distrust them....................2 Distrust them greatly.....................1
		Please provide additional comments Our level of trust in ONS statistics is generally high but see the comment above on revisions, which affects confidence in some series

Your opinion of ONS	Innovation 5. To what extent do you agree that ONS develops and implements **innovative methods** in response to statistical needs (e.g. using new technology, identifying and exploiting new methods and data sources).	Please select one of the following Strongly agree......................................5 Agree...4 **Neither agree nor disagree.................3** Disagree...2 Strongly disagree................................1
		Please provide additional comments We have noticed some excellent work eg on data visualisation and interactive web content. The ONS Twitter feed is an effective way to keep users informed of recent publications and is used creatively to generate interest in statistics by linking to topical events/issues ONS is arguably less innovative in some other technological areas where they could have a real impact leading across government (eg mobile phone data).
	Independence 6. Do you agree that ONS statistics and analysis are produced **independently** and presented free from political influence	Please select one of the following **Strongly agree.......................................5** Agree..4 Neither agree nor disagree..................3 Disagree..2 Strongly disagree.................................1
		Please provide additional comments
	Reputation 7. Which of the following statements best reflects your view of ONS	Please select one of the following I would speak highly of ONS, without being asked...................5 **I would speak highly of ONS, if someone asked my opinion.....4** I would be neutral about ONS, if someone asked my opinion..3 I would be critical of ONS, if someone asked my opinion.........2 I would be critical of ONS, without being asked.......................1
		Please provide additional comments We would generally speak highly of ONS and have a largely positive impression of most of ONS's work. We recognise ONS as methodological experts - often world leaders. These positives can be overshadowed by bad experiences with the ONS website, which for many people constitutes their most frequent interaction with ONS
Our engagement with you	8.1 Do you agree that ONS understands the needs of your organisation	Please select one of the following Strongly agree......................................5 Agree...4 Neither agree nor disagree.................3 **Disagree...2** Strongly disagree................................1

		Please provide additional comments It is not always obvious that ONS fully understands the different challenges and experiences faced by statisticians working in a policy department. However, there are examples of good practice. For example, we recognised that ONS tried hard to understand our needs in the Beyond 2011 project, and in particular reacted to feedback from DfT and others on the need for small area data in response to the consultation on that	
	8.2 How satisfied are you with our engagement, e.g.	Please select one of the following Very satisfied..................................5 Satisfied.......................................4 **Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3** Dissatisfied....................................2 Very dissatisfied.............................1	
	• Do we give you the opportunity to influence our priorities and plans? • Are we engaging with the right people in your organisation? • Do we work collaboratively with you, e.g. shared analysis • Do we seek and respond to your feedback? • Do we keep you informed about our work?	Please provide additional comments We have been consulted on a number of issues and generally feel our voice is heard. Where there are established links between teams, we are kept well informed of developments.	
Overall performance	9 Overall, how satisfied are you with the performance of ONS.	Please select one of the following Very satisfied..................................5 **Satisfied...4** Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3 Dissatisfied....................................2 Very dissatisfied.............................1	
		Please provide additional comments	
Continuous improvement	10 What do you think we do well and what changes would you like ONS to make to improve our statistics, analysis, advice and services	Please provide additional comments ONS produces high quality, independent statistics and has a wealth of technical expertise, which it shares with the wider GSS. Keys area for improvement are: - Policy engagement – though there has been some progress here through the implementation task forces - Ability to pick up new areas and data sources and run with them - Website - it is still often difficult and time consuming to find key statistics.	

ONS KEY ACCOUNT ASSESSMENT 2015/16

Name of Organisation: DWP – feedback reflects responses from a number of teams across DWP

Topic	Question	Answers and further comments
Our statistics, analysis and services	**Use** 1. Which ONS statistics, analysis and services does your organisation mainly use	**WAS** – publication and raw data **ASHE** – publication and raw data **OPSS** – publication and raw data **MQ5** - publication and raw data **ABS** - publication and raw data **BRES** - publication and raw data **Adhoc releases -** some published at our request **Statistical short stories** – developed in conjunction with ourselves • All forms of Labour Force Survey data (individual, household and longitudinal LFS; individual and household Annual Population Survey (APS); Integrated Household Survey (IHS). • A wide range of sources on the Nomis database, including APS, claimant count, benefit and population data. • National and regional bulletins on 'Labour Market Statistics', 'Working and workless households', 'Labour market flows', 'Migration statistics', 'Public Sector Employment' and 'NEETs' (and other bulletins on an ad hoc basis). • LFS Performance and Quality Monitoring Report • Census statistics • Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings • Ad hoc stories and analyses of the labour market DWP modelling team use a wide range of statistics. Most importantly (this year) are the new population estimates and projections. We align some of our models to historic and projected numbers of births, deaths, immigrants and emigrants. The modelling team also use a wide variety of other statistics for validation, including private pensions contributions and membership, wealth estimates (from Wealth and Assets Survey). DWP is the largest contributor to the Wealth and Assets Survey project and DWP uses the statistics and analysis are extensively used by DWP for policy development and evaluation.
	Value and Impact 2.1 How important are ONS statistics and analysis to your work	Please select one of the following • **Very important** • ~~important~~ • ~~Neither important not unimportant~~ • ~~unimportant~~ • ~~Very unimportant~~

	2.2 How have ONS statistics, analysis and advice helped to inform your decision and/or policy making over the last 12 months.
	
	Please give examples
		ONS data has been used to inform analysis underpinning the following DWP Private Pensions policy areas;
		  - Automatic Enrolment
		  - Pensions Flexibilities
		  - Better Workplace Pensions
		
		ONS publications, raw data analysed by ONS on an adhoc basis, and raw data analysed by DWP have been used in the above policy areas, which has greatly added to the strength of the policy analysis which has been possible, underpinning many key assumptions and references.
		
		• Monitoring and explaining labour market performance
		• Developing and monitoring indicators of Departmental performance
		Informing high-level policy strategy and priorities
		
		DWP's long-term pension model makes use of ONS population and marital status projections, and other statistics. Over the last 12 months that model has been used to produce long-term estimates of expenditure on pensioner income-related benefits, to support analysis of workplace pension reforms and other ad-hoc policy analysis.
		
		WAS analysis was used in the Auto-enrolment evaluation report. WAS data is used in the DWP policy simulation model for validation.

	2.3 Please advise on the type of analysis/ advice/service you would require from ONS to help improve your decision and/or policy making	DWP would like the future focus of ONS in the private pensions area to be on new data collection and new analysis, rather than adding to the policy background information which has already been released in many forms by DWP. Discussions on this have continued to be positive, primarily with PAU. It may be that setting up regular meetings between the teams at a working level, as well as the quarterly catch ups at a high level, would be beneficial to ensure both parties are aware of time pressures and deadlines on each side. Regular communications regarding adhoc statistical releases would be beneficial. DWP have found some useful adhoc tables by chance, so wonder what other releases we may have missed. Not sure where this responsibility would sit, but some regular (monthly?) communications on latest adhocs, and upcoming adhocs, would be much appreciated. Discussions with individual data owners continue to be positive, with many surveys (OPSS and WAS in particular) being very open to negotiate on new questions being included in their surveys, and publications being amended to give a greater amount of useful information. Regular and reliable statistics, trusted by the wider public. Products should provide an independent and authoritative voice on what the most important aspects are of that topic – while ensuring 'hot topics' are informed by reliable statistics, it is important not to let them 'drown out' the more relevant messages

		form regular outputs.

form regular outputs.
Likewise, although the most important outputs will evolve over time, it is crucial to balance any changes against the need for continuity and comparable back-series of data.

A single format and point of contact for population estimates and projections of births, deaths, immigrants and emigrants by single year of age (of mother) for the whole of UK, GB and constituent countries. Not just for the central projection, but for key variants too.

At present the DWP modelling team need to get in touch with various teams in ONS and the Scottish equivalent.

It seems a bit odd that there isn't a single definitive spreadsheet of historic information on basic characteristics of changes in the population.

Longer-term it would be helpful to share the population projection models more widely. DWP often does scenario analyses on combinations of changes in assumptions: demographic, economic and policy related. Access to population projection models would allow us to more easily ensure that all the assumptions are internally consistent.

In general, and given limited resources, DWP need ONS to avoid duplicating data and analysis that DWP are already taking forward in relation to DWP policies and decision making. ONS should focus on the unique data sources and analysis it can provide to users.

2.4	How **helpful** have ONS statistics, analysis and advice been in providing an evidence base for your decision making and/or policy work over the last year.	Please select one of the following

- ~~Very helpful~~
- **helpful**
- ~~neither helpful nor unhelpful~~
- ~~Unhelpful~~
- ~~Very unhelpful~~

Please provide additional comments (e.g. which statistics, analysis or advice has been the most helpful)

See question 2.2.

ONS WAS team has been helpful on providing the support for our work.

DWP has worked with ONS on a number of occasions in relation to State Pension age analysis (life expectancy, population projections and WAS analysis) and have found them very helpful and responsive to queries.

Quality	Please select one of the following
3 How satisfied are you with the quality of ONS statistics, analyses and advice. Quality has a number of components, e.g. they: • Meet your needs • Are accurate • Are timely • Are clearly presented • Are punctual • Are easy to find • Enable comparisons with other data • Are complete	Very satisfied..................................5 **Satisfied..4** Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3 Dissatisfied.....................................2 Very dissatisfied.............................1

Please provide additional comments

The vast majority of ONS analysis is produced in a timely manner, to a very high level of accuracy and presentation. Comparisons are possible, with links to other relevant sources made throughout the extensive commentaries.

Some of the metadata for some sources (Ashe in particular) is not presented well, meaning pointing inexperienced users or policy colleagues to the underlying Excel tables is not really an option. DWP realise that this is a feature of how ASHE is set up and would be very time consuming and costly to change.

Having some dynamically accessible tables hosted on the ONS website would be of benefit to new and existing users, so breakdowns of interest could be easily generated.

Outputs are generally timely and accurate, but ONS could spend more time (on presentation and advice) to explain the strengths and weaknesses in the data, guide users towards the right sources for different analyses and helping them interpret the statistics. ONS could also be more consistent in commenting publicly where figures have been mis-used or misinterpreted.

Finding the data on the website continues to be a challenge. Often quicker and easier to go direct to the contact emails.

Getting the information on historic and projections of population changes requires quite a few conversations with people in ONS and other organisations. But the individuals are always very helpful and clear on what can be done to what deadlines.

We also had some (very) detailed questions on the Wealth and Assets Survey (derivation of wealth measures, details on questions asked). Again, the team was helpful, but in this case felt that their knowledge was not quite as extensive as it could have been.

Last minute change of plan on WAS wave 4 report has raised some quality concerns but we worked closely with ONS to do what we can to ensure quality in the available time. It would have been better to confirm the structure of report earlier without the need to change it at the last minute but overall the engagement over the last year has improved. DWP hope that lessons have been

		learned for the planning of future publications.

Search results on the ONS website often yield unhelpful results: listings seem not to prioritise results so that, for example, a search for "Consumer Price Indices" does not have the monthly CPI release at the top, and "Labour Market Statistics" does not prioritise the national release, rather than the sub-national ones. It is not always easy to find the level of data needed. For example, searching for population datasets yields well over 100 hits which can only be sorted by publication date or alphabetically. Being able to narrow down searches further would be very useful. |
| | **Trust**
4. How much trust do you have in ONS statistics, analysis and advice | Please select one of the following

Trust them greatly............................5
Tend to trust them...........................4
Neither trust nor distrust them.......3
Tend to distrust them.....................2
Distrust them greatly.......................1 |
| | | Please provide additional comments

ONS provide a large part of the data DWP use to inform private pensions policy, with many sources underpinning our policy analysis. DWP trust the sources, which is enhanced by often receiving quality assurance access to the key publications which we use. We have never found reason to question to quality of the data in relation to private pensions. |
| **Your opinion of ONS** | **Innovation**
5. To what extent do you agree that ONS develops and implements **innovative methods** in response to statistical needs (e.g. using new technology, identifying and exploiting new methods and data sources). | Please select one of the following

Strongly agree..5
Agree...4
Neither agree nor disagree..................3
Disagree..2
Strongly disagree.................................1 |
| | | Please provide additional comments

Positives

Stats Bulletins & Reference Tables – A move to shorter stats bulletins from the longer annual reports has seen resource freed in some data source teams to focus on developing the sources further, rather than being bogged down in the production of numerous charts and tables. These bulletins and associated reference table workbooks can also be much more responsive and flexible, year on year.
The recent consultation on publications hints at a more data focused offering, which would certainly be of benefit. |

		WAS Early Indicators – Ability to trial new questions in this format through WAS is a very useful feature, especially in a bi-annual survey. May be less feasible or needed in annual surveys, but the options for shorter responsive questions gives good flexibility, and some intelligence when planning for questions to be included in standard questionnaires. Such an option may have to be explored if data survey frequency reduces in other areas, as is alluded to in the consultation. Negatives **Data collection** – No major developments in data collection methods have been obvious in the private pensions area. **Data sources** – No new data sources are on offer. **ASHE Reference Tables** – From discussions with the ASHE team, these are complex and unwieldy to reproduce year on year. Whilst DWP would not want to lose any of the detail from these – they are extremely useful – finding a way to make them more flexible, or expanding their offering would be a big benefit. ONS are generally open to new approaches, but sometimes lack resources to make incremental improvements to products. We would like to see faster progress on internet-based interviews and greater availability of user-defined micro-data analysis in user-friendly form (e.g. tabulation tools like Nomis).
	Independence 6. Do you agree that ONS statistics and analysis are produced **independently** and presented free from political influence	Please select one of the following **Strongly agree......................................5** ~~Agree...4~~ ~~Neither agree nor disagree..................3~~ ~~Disagree...2~~ ~~Strongly disagree..............................1~~
		Please provide additional comments
	Reputation 7. Which of the following statements best reflects your view of ONS	Please select one of the following ~~I would speak highly of ONS, without being asked..................5~~ **I would speak highly of ONS, if someone asked my opinion.....4** ~~I would be neutral about ONS, if someone asked my opinion..3~~ ~~I would be critical of ONS, if someone asked my opinion.........2~~ ~~I would be critical of ONS, without being asked......................1~~

		Please provide additional comments
		ONS data is regularly highlighted as some of the most robust available in the private pensions space.

Our engagement with you	8.1 Do you agree that ONS understands the needs of your organisation	Please select one of the following
		Strongly agree......................................5
		Agree..4
		Neither agree nor disagree...................3
		Disagree...2
		Strongly disagree................................1

		Please provide additional comments
		Progress has certainly been made in this area, but there is still more work to do.
		As mentioned, work with PAU surrounding the reactive statistical short stories has been positive, with some new and useful analysis published, and in the pipeline.
		PAU have also been very thorough in their QA of DWP's automatic enrolment evaluation report, which is invaluable ahead of publication.
		The WAS team have been very receptive (and thorough) with our requests for private pensions based questionnaire changes, which will prove great benefit in future waves.
		We have also been able to get a new question added into the ASHE questionnaire, which has proved a challenge in some earlier years.
		At a higher level however, there is potentially a disconnect between DWP and ONS needs in relation to private pensions data, underlined by some of the detail in the recent consultation on ONS publications . Responsibility on both parties to proactively improve this.
		ONS generally understand our needs, through regular engagement, although there are occasions when they have lacked the political awareness to see the impact of changes or misinterpretation of their figures on the wider public debate.

	8.2 How satisfied are you with our engagement, e.g. • Do we give you the opportunity to influence our	Please select one of the following
		Very satisfied...................................5
		Satisfied...4
		Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3
		Dissatisfied.....................................2
		Very dissatisfied.............................1

	priorities and plans? • Are we engaging with the right people in your organisation? • Do we work collaboratively with you, e.g. shared analysis • Do we seek and respond to your feedback? • Do we keep you informed about our work?	Please provide additional comments As above in 8.1. Working level engagement tends to be fairly positive as shown in the many examples given in 8.1. ONS actively engage with DWP on labour market statistics, with several forums meeting regularly, and working collaboratively where appropriate. DWP have been involved in a number of exercises to publish new presentations of data (such as *UK Perspectives*). It has often not been clear what the justification for this work was, given both our and ONS's stretched resources. Furthermore, our feedback was not always acted on, and, partly as a result, the reports themselves were sometimes superficial and contained inconsistencies and errors. DWP would like the case for further such work to be more convincingly made – what is it for? what value would it add? – since such independent commentary is also available from the IFS and the OBR, for example. And if ONS does proceed, we would like our feedback to be acted on, to ensure DWP-related statements are as accurate and helpful as possible. This general point applies in relation to a number of areas where ONS seek a contribution and then DWP expertise and feedback is ignored, or else sufficient time is not allowed to make a sensible contribution.	
Overall performance	9 Overall, how satisfied are you with the performance of ONS.	Please select one of the following ~~Very satisfied...................................5~~ **Satisfied...4** ~~Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3~~ ~~Dissatisfied.....................................2~~ ~~Very dissatisfied.............................1~~	
		Please provide additional comments Overall the engagement with the ONS WAS team has improved over the last year but the ONS report producing team should have the required resources in place so they can deal with the queries from DWP and other consortium members promptly. Currently it appears that the team leader has to deal with all the queries which can obviously delay the response.	

Continuous improvement	10	What do you think we do well and what changes would you like ONS to make to improve our statistics, analysis, advice and services	Please provide additional comments Detail already given in earlier responses. It will be very important to invest in improving response rates to household surveys and more user-friendly dissemination of the underlying detail in the data (outside of key releases). Noted under question 2.3

ONS KEY ACCOUNT ASSESSMENT 2015/16

Name of Department: Department of Health

Introductory Statement based on feedback from [REDACTED] (SCS Statistician in DH Health Improvement team who represents DH in ONS-DH Key Account meetings)

Department of Health (DH) uses a wide range of ONS data, products and services to inform the evidence base supporting a number of our policy responsibilities and decisions. Typically ONS information makes an important contribution to the evidence base but does not comprise the entirety of the required evidence.

DH relies on ONS statistics to be accurate, quality assured and independent. We have found ONS to be helpful and responsive, and welcome the example of proactive engagement to improve cancer survival bulletins to meet our needs. Cancer bulletins have been used to inform the department's Shared Delivery Plan (SDP) to create a safer, higher quality healthcare service, providing key outcome indicators of cancer survival. Additionally ONS have been highly engaging and helpful by providing selected births and fertility statistics in an England only format in response to expression of DH need: publishing key tables as England only and backdating to 1993 (when the latest definition of stillbirth was introduced). We'd like to see this continue and would welcome the approach in other areas. Strategic user-focused engagement is ever more important when priorities need to be assessed in the context of tightening resources allocated to ONS and to DH's administrative functions.

Some colleagues report it often remains challenging to find statistics on the ONS website. These colleagues use other websites to access data that originally comes from ONS, as they find the platforms tend to be more user-friendly, and the data easier to find and extract. We have seen this week (w/c 29 February) that ONS has rolled out a new website, and we welcome ONS continued efforts to improve its dissemination and presentation of data – though these changes were not made in time to inform this assessment.

Note on responses

DH co-ordinators asked colleagues to respond as per the template however some replied by free text. We have attempted to match free text to the template, with minimal editing.

Topic	Question	Answers and further comments
Our statistics, analysis and services	**Use** 1. Which ONS statistics, analysis and services does your organisation mainly use	Analysts and policy officials from DH use ONS statistics and services covering a number of key areas to inform our policy and decisions. These areas include (but are not limited to): **Birth, Child and Infant Mortality** Analysts make use of a range of fertility, child and infant mortality and maternity statistics published by ONS including bespoke tables on births (by ethnicity of mother, country of birth of mother, and parity) and conception statistics. **Public Sector Productivity** Analysts in DH use public service productivity estimates (namely Healthcare and Adult Social Care) **Population Statistics** Population estimates and projections are used in many indicators to calculate rates, and other demographic information (e.g. age, gender, deprivation profiles) are also vital inputs to analysis. **Health Inequalities related** Health inequalities policy and analytical staff make use of data on mortality, populations, life expectancy and healthy life expectancy relevant to health inequalities (i.e. analysed by local area, small area deprivation, or social class). In particular colleagues use ONS outputs on life expectancy by local authority and by NSSEC, and healthy life expectancy by local authority and by area deprivation. **Mortality and Lifestyles** Analysts make use of regular statistical bulletins and publications related to mortality such as deaths summary tables, avoidable mortality and excess winter deaths, and survey data (the General Lifestyle Survey, Opinions and Lifestyle Survey and Integrated Household Survey) on inequalities in smoking and alcohol consumption. **Cancer survival and VOICES (end of life care)** DH uses ONS figures on cancer prevalence and survival rates, and the VOICES survey data on the places and conditions of death.
	Value and Impact 2.1 How important are ONS statistics and analysis to your work	**Birth, Child and Infant Mortality** 5 Very important **Public Sector Productivity** <u>Healthcare</u> 5 Very important **Population Statistics** 5 Very important **Health Inequalities related, Mortality and Lifestyles**

Topic	Question	Answers and further comments
		5 Very important **Cancer survival and VOICES (end of life care)** 5 Very important
	2.2 How have ONS statistics, analysis and advice helped to inform your decision and/or policy making over the last 12 months. Please give examples	**Birth, Child and Infant Mortality** Birth, child and infant mortality data was heavily used for the Secretary of State announcement around halving rates of stillbirth and neonatal deaths in November. Data is also regularly used as part of an answer to PQs. In August 2015, the Secretary of State for Health presented a review of the evidence on sex selection terminations. An analysis of birth ratios in Great Britain, which drew largely on ONS births data, was the primary source of evidence for this review. The Department also monitors conception statistics, and this data is also included as a local level indicator in the Public Health Outcomes Framework (PHOF). **Public Sector Productivity** Healthcare Reconciling ONS estimates of healthcare productivity with other measures helps aid understanding of impacts of funding and health policy. **Population Statistics** Population statistics aids analysis of demographic pressures. **Health inequalities related and Mortality** ONS mortality data is used widely across a number of different teams in DH to monitor trends in disease-specific mortality, e.g. cancer and CVD monitoring, infant deaths, excess winter deaths, inequalities and regional differences. The overarching health inequalities indicator in the PHOF, which is the headline indicator used to monitor progress on inequalities, uses ONS published data on life expectancy and healthy life expectancy by area deprivation. Data on inequalities in life expectancy and healthy life expectancy are also used to monitor trends in health inequalities, including to help inform assessment against the Secretary of State's legal duty on health inequalities, for example in the Department of Health Annual Report. Reducing premature mortality forms an essential element of the NHS and Public Health Outcomes Frameworks. Shared indicators across both these frameworks mean that action must be taken to prevent, diagnose as early as possible and treat disease and illness that lead to the major causes of death. Additionally, disease-specific mortality data has been used in development of indicators and ambitions for diabetes policy. **Cancer survival and VOICES (end of life care)** Variations in cancer survival (e.g. by CCG) are important in terms of focus on how to improve cancer survival. The VOICES survey gives important data around which places of death (home, hospital, etc.) tend to have higher levels of good

Topic	Question	Answers and further comments
		experience, and which conditions are associated with higher levels of good experience. This helps determine the focus for government action in this area.
	2.3 Please advise on the type of analysis/ advice/service you would require from ONS to help improve your decision and/or policy making	**Birth, Child and Infant Mortality** Any further clinical information in this area may be useful for finer breakdowns or linking to hospital records, (although this may not be a feasible or an effective use of resource). **Public Sector Productivity** Healthcare It is sometimes very difficult to find statistics on the ONS website. Analysts often resort to using other websites (HSCIC, NOMIS) to access population data that originally comes from ONS, as their platforms are more user friendly (data is easier to find and extract). Adult Social Care We have not been able to use Adult Social Care productivity estimates to inform decision making, as it is insufficiently clear how the measure is calculated. The statistics would be useful if the analyst could better understand how they are constructed. There are some signs of greater engagement with the ONS team in future. **Cancer survival and VOICES (end of life care)** Within the budgets available, we get the data/analysis we need, however we all agree that we need CCG level data in relation to end of life care.
	2.4 How **helpful** have ONS statistics, analysis and advice been in providing an evidence base for your decision making and/or policy work over the last year?	**Birth, Child and Infant Mortality** 5 Very Helpful - Analysts have had regular contact with the Vital Statistics team at ONS, who have been very helpful with their advice and information regarding the statistics that they use. **Public Sector Productivity** Healthcare 5 Very helpful - The statistics ONS produce are very helpful as they can be relied upon for accuracy. **Health Inequalities related** 5 Very helpful **Cancer survival and VOICES (end of life care)** 5 Very helpful

Topic	Question	Answers and further comments
	Quality 3 How satisfied are you with the quality of ONS statistics, analyses and advice. Quality has a number of components, e.g. they: • Meet your needs • Are accurate • Are timely • Are clearly presented • Are punctual • Are easy to find • Enable comparisons with other data • Are complete	**Birth, Child and Infant Mortality** 5 Very Satisfied **Public Sector Productivity** <u>Healthcare</u> **4** Satisfied – analysts would appreciate a greater understanding of how ONS combines data sources on inputs to estimate public sector productivity in healthcare. ONS statistics broadly reconcile with those produced by other sources, but the process by which they are combined could be more transparent. <u>Adult Social Care</u> Colleagues suspect that the productivity measure does not adequately reflect the pressures on councils to deliver a cost-effective service but cannot be sure without a better understanding of the measure. **Health Inequalities related** 5 Very Satisfied **Cancer survival and VOICES (end of life care)** 5 Very Satisfied – We are pleased that ONS is doing more work on cancer survival bulletins to meet our needs. We are also pleased with the new briefings they provide. However we do need to sort some issues about getting third party access to the cancer survival data to put it on myNHS. There are some issues with the VOICES survey, and there has been concern about handling of a safeguarding issue. We do not know all the details but there is concern that their protocol does not meet our needs. We are working with them to try to produce a satisfactory protocol going forward. We are also concerned to make other changes re VOICES, e.g. use the free text box.
	Trust 4. How much trust do you have in ONS statistics, analysis and advice	**Birth, Child and Infant Mortality** 5 Trust them greatly – Analysts have been very satisfied with the quality of the statistics and advice and have a lot of trust in the data. In terms of punctuality it can be a considerable time between the reporting period and the publication, but in many case it takes time for the data to get to ONS and be finalised. **Public Sector Productivity** <u>Healthcare</u> 4 Tend to trust them – we would appreciate a better understanding of how public sector productivity estimates are calculated (input data sources and how they are combined, the methodology note (chain linked Laspeyres index) is very clear). More generally we can trust ONS statistics to be accurate and as timely as possible. However they are not easy to find. <u>Adult Social Care</u> For this particular measure we have little trust – see earlier comments on transparency of methods **Health Inequalities related** 5 Trust them greatly

Topic	Question	Answers and further comments
Your opinion of ONS	**Innovation** 5. To what extent do you agree that ONS develops and implements **innovative methods** in response to statistical needs (e.g. using new technology, identifying and exploiting new methods and data sources).	**Birth, Child and Infant Mortality** • <u>General</u> There is not a lot of innovation in the statistics, but the analyst does not see this as an issue – maintaining long term trends, and ensuring that the data are published in usable Excel tables is a very important aspect of the data for DH work. • <u>Birth Ratio work</u> 4 Agree - Colleagues are pleased to hear that the next birth ratio analysis will utilise more up to date matched data on ethnicity of mother, and that ONS are offering these bespoke data tables to us free of charge this year. **Public Sector Productivity** <u>Healthcare</u> 2 Disagree **–** We are sure that ONS does exploit new data methods and sources, but it may be helpful if they explained and publicised this more. There may also be ways they could exploit technology to make it easier for users of the website to access and extract the data they require. **Health Inequalities related** 4 Agree
	Independence 6. Do you agree that ONS statistics and analysis are produced **independently** and presented free from political influence	**Birth, Child and Infant Mortality** 5 Strongly agree **Public Sector Productivity** <u>Healthcare</u> 4 Strongly agree **Health Inequalities related** 5 Strongly agree
	Reputation 7. Which of the following statements best reflects your view of ONS	**Birth, Child and Infant Mortality** 5 I would speak highly of ONS, without being asked **Public Sector Productivity** <u>Healthcare</u> 4 I would speak highly of ONS, if someone asked my opinion..... **Health Inequalities related** 4 and 5
Our engagement with you	8.1 Do you agree that ONS understands the needs of your organisation	**Birth, Child and Infant Mortality** 4 Agree **Public Sector Productivity** <u>Healthcare</u> 3 Neither agree nor disagree **Health Inequalities related** 4 Agree

Topic	Question	Answers and further comments
	8.2 How satisfied are you with our engagement, e.g. • Do we give you the opportunity to influence our priorities and plans? • Are we engaging with the right people in your organisation? • Do we work collaboratively with you, e.g. shared analysis • Do we seek and respond to your feedback? • Do we keep you informed about our work?	**Birth, Child and Infant Mortality** 4 Satisfied **Public Sector Productivity** <u>Healthcare</u> 4 Satisfied - we have access to QA materials, have adequate time to provide feedback and the people we contact are always helpful. **Health Inequalities related** 4 and 5 - Over the last year the team have had direct contact with the health analysis team at ONS in relation to production of an update to LE by NSSEC time series. ONS engaged with the team in a very constructive way on the details of the analysis and the content of the publication, seeking the team's views and taking on board our suggestions for additional analysis and presentation of the results.
Overall performance	• Overall, how satisfied are you with the performance of ONS.	**Birth, Child and Infant Mortality** 5 Very satisfied **Public Sector Productivity** <u>Healthcare</u> 4 Satisfied **Health Inequalities related** 5 Very satisfied
Continuous improvement	• What do you think we do well and what changes would you like ONS to make to improve our statistics, analysis, advice and services	**Public Sector Productivity** <u>Healthcare</u> ONS statistics are relied upon to be accurate, quality assured and free of bias. However the website could be improved to help users find data more easily. The infographics used in reports are good at illustrating findings.

<u>Responding officials</u> (contact details available on request)

Birth, Child and Infant Mortality [REDACTED]
Public Sector Productivity [REDACTED]
Population Statistics [REDACTED]
Health Inequalities related and Mortality [REDACTED]
Cancer survival and VOICES (end of life care) [REDACTED]
Co-ordination [REDACTED]

ONS KEY ACCOUNT ASSESSMENT 2015/16

Name of Organisation: **Health and Social Care Information Centre**

Please note: the responses contained in this Assessment are from multiple teams

Topic	Our statistics, analysis and services
Question	**Answers and further comments**

Use
 	
1. Which ONS statistics, analysis and services does your organisation mainly use?
	The following is a list of ONS products we have been asked by users to include within our reference data repository:
	
	• Code History Database
	    o Geography Equivalents
	    o Geography Listings
	    o Geography History – ongoing data issues
	    o We have created many views off this table, to show parent mappings
	• Register of Geographic Codes
	• Mapping: Local Authority Districts to Counties
	• Mapping: Local Authority Districts to Public Health England Centres to Public Health England Regions
	• Mapping: LSOA to CCG to Local Authority Districts
	• Mapping: 2001 LSOA to 2011 LSOA to Local Authority Districts
	• Boundaries : Lower_layer_super_output_areas_(E+W)_2011_Population_Weighted_Centroids_V2.zip
	• Population Estimates
	• Area Classification for Super Output Areas
	
	On a monthly basis Medical Research Information Service (MRIS) receives new cancer registrations, as well as amendments and cancellations to previously-received registrations, from the National Cancer Registration Team. At the end of each month MRIS return reports based on the registrations previously submitted that aids statistical analysis.
	
	At various points throughout the year, MRIS receives data from the Longitudinal Study Team, namely new births, widowerhoods, birth to sample mothers, immigrants, deaths and cancers. A number of reports are generated throughout the year to provide the team with a snapshot of the current LS population as held on MRIS's MIDAS system.
	
	ONS also provide mortality data for patient flagged in MRIS studies who have died over the previous reporting period.
	
	We use Population Estimates data every year for weighting our own survey results and in sample designs. For example,
	
	• design samples and weighting for our annual Health Survey for England.
	• weight survey results from the Children's Dental Health Survey 2013, 2014 Smoking Drinking and Drugs Among Young People Survey and the What About Youth survey, all of which were published in 2015.
	
	We use population estimates and Census data to help us in designing and planning surveys to find out the size and distribution of groups of interest, eg adults, older people, children, ethnic minorities, people whose first language is not English, speakers of other languages and how well they speak English, nationality.
	
	Births and deaths data
	
	Population estimates and projections (including ethnicity)

Topic	Our statistics, analysis and services
Value and Impact 2.1 How important are ONS statistics and analysis to your work?	Please select one of the following: • **Very important** • important • Neither important not unimportant • Unimportant • Very unimportant Very important to enable us to produce high quality health surveys and statistics from our surveys. This team is responsible for the dissemination of record level births and deaths data to public health users in Local Authorities. These tables are also used by the team to produce Vital Statistics reports at an aggregated level for the same users. This was done by the team for the first time in 2015/16. The team also load the population estimates at the different health geographies it is available into our internal database to aid analysis for HSCIC staff.
2.2 How have ONS statistics, analysis and advice helped to inform your decision and/or policy making over the last 12 months? Please give examples?	ONS are currently going through a managed withdrawal from supplying MRIS with cancer information, which will come from Public Health England in future. ONS have kept MRIS informed every step of the way and made sure representatives of the team attended key meetings where future policy decisions were made. The Census and population estimates data have helped us • design the size and scope of the Mental Health of Children and Young People which was commissioned in 2015 is scheduled to start data collection in 2016 • design samples and weighting for our annual Health Survey for England • weight survey results from the Children's Dental Health Survey 2013, 2014 Smoking Drinking and Drugs Among Young People Survey and the What About Youth survey, all of which were published in 2015.
2.3 Please advise on the type of analysis/ advice/service you would require from ONS to help improve your decision and/or policy making?	Should ONS turn out to be subject to Patient Objections (currently undecided at time of writing), MRIS would welcome a firm understanding on the part of ONS as to how this would impact on the data that MRIS disseminates to them. Service provided currently is very good and meets our needs. The data available are usually sufficient and if they are not we can request additional analyses from ONS.
2.4 How **helpful** have ONS statistics, analysis and advice been in providing an evidence base for your decision making and/or policy work over the last year?	Please select one of the following: • **Very helpful** • helpful • neither helpful nor unhelpful • Unhelpful • Very unhelpful Please provide additional comments (eg which statistics, analysis or advice has been the most helpful)

Topic	Our statistics, analysis and services
Quality 3 How satisfied are you with the quality of ONS statistics, analyses and advice? Quality has a number of components, eg they: • Meet your needs • Are accurate • Are timely • Are clearly presented • Are punctual • Are easy to find • Enable comparisons with other data • Are complete	Please select one of the following: Very satisfied 5 **Satisfied** **4** Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied 3 Dissatisfied 2 Very dissatisfied 1 Generally the quality of data has been good but on a small number of occasions we have had to go back and query things. These are usually addressed but some DQ issues have had to wait until subsequent releases of data which can cause us issues. Data is always received on time and to specification. If changes need to be made to scheduling or turnaround times MRIS have always found ONS extremely accommodating. Please provide additional comments: Data could be more timely, although it is appreciated that quality needs to be taken into consideration. There have been 2 revisions to annual births data this year: 1. 2014 Annual births data was revised due to mother and father's country of birth details being incorrect. However, this only affected a small number of records. 2. 2012 Annual births data was revised as the LSOA field was left blank. As mentioned above, the team produced the Vital Statistics tables (NHS version) for the first time this year and we have been very satisfied with the responses to our queries and advice we have received in producing these from ONS. When data is provided it is always helpful to receive a copy of the latest specification in case any of the metadata behind any of the variables has changed. Sometimes we have had to ask for this after receiving the data.
Trust 4. How much trust do you have in ONS statistics, analysis and advice?	Please select one of the following: **Trust them greatly** **5** Tend to trust them 4 Neither trust nor distrust them 3 Tend to distrust them 2 Distrust them greatly 1 Please provide additional comments: Data has been provided over decades and has firm quality control check procedures in place. This has been further boosted by the cancer data coming direct from PHE's Encore system, rather than from individual cancer registries.

Topic	Your opinion of ONS
Innovation 5. To what extent do you agree that ONS develops and implements **innovative methods** in response to statistical needs (eg using new technology, identifying and exploiting new methods and data sources)?	Please select one of the following:
	Strongly agree 5
	Agree **4**
	Neither agree nor disagree 3
	Disagree 2
	Strongly disagree 1
	Please provide additional comments:
	Cannot comment in terms of statistical needs but in other areas there do appear to be innovative eg Open data, release of data via XML.
	The ONS LEDR system is replacing the outdated Model 204 and should provide MRIS with an appropriate look up access function.
Independence 6. Do you agree that ONS statistics and analysis are produced **independently** and presented free from political influence?	Please select one of the following:
	Strongly agree 5
	Agree **4**
	Neither agree nor disagree 3
	Disagree 2
	Strongly disagree 1
	Please provide additional comments:
Reputation 7. Which of the following statements best reflects your view of ONS?	Please select one of the following:
	I would speak highly of ONS, without being asked 5
	I would speak highly of ONS, if someone asked my opinion **4**
	I would be neutral about ONS, if someone asked my opinion 3
	I would be critical of ONS, if someone asked my opinion 2
	I would be critical of ONS, without being asked 1
	Please provide additional comments:
	We are only familiar with certain departments within ONS.

Topic	Our engagement with you	
8.1 Do you agree that ONS understands the needs of your organisation?	Please select one of the following:	
	Strongly agree	5
	Agree	4
	Neither agree nor disagree	3
	Disagree	2
	Strongly disagree	1
	Aggregate score	**3.5**
	Please provide additional comments:	
	Not qualified to comment on how the HSCIC is viewed from an organisational perspective.	
8.2 How satisfied are you with our engagement, eg • Do we give you the opportunity to influence our priorities and plans? • Are we engaging with the right people in your organisation? • Do we work collaboratively with you, eg shared analysis? • Do we seek and respond to your feedback? • Do we keep you informed about our work?	Please select one of the following:	
	Very satisfied	5
	Satisfied	4
	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	3
	Dissatisfied	2
	Very dissatisfied	1
	Aggregate score	**4.5**
	Please provide additional comments:	
	I would agree with the statements positively. Again similar to comments above, work on active engagement with relevant colleagues at ONS is now starting specifically for my team and I am sure will be the start of a positive and successful relationship.	
	Very clear cross organisational engagement on matters relating to ONS. NBO requirements are understood and appropriately represented within ONS.	
	We have recently provided comments on a few recent consultations including the ONS products consultation.	
Topic	**Overall performance**	
9 Overall, how satisfied are you with the performance of ONS?	Please select one of the following:	
	Very satisfied	5
	Satisfied	**4**
	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	3
	Dissatisfied	2
	Very dissatisfied	1
	Please provide additional comments:	
	I look forward to attending my first GSUF in March!	
Topic	**Continuous improvement**	
10 What do you think we do well and what changes would you like ONS to make to improve our statistics, analysis, advice and services?	Please provide additional comments:	
	A better service in terms of releasing data eg notifications, release schedule. Addressing responsiveness to DQ issues.	
	Clear line of contact between NS and NBO on related matters.	
	ONS produce good quality statistics but sometimes accessibility can still be an issue in finding them on the ONS website.	

ONS KEY ACCOUNT ASSESSMENT 2015/16

Name of Organisation: HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC)

Topic	Question	Answers and further comments
Our statistics, analysis and services	**Use** 1. Which ONS statistics, analysis and services does your organisation mainly use	HMRC uses many ONS outputs: • ONS data are used to estimate total consumption for VAT and excise duties in the tax gap methodology. GDP(E) from the National Accounts and the Consumer Trends data are used to estimate the total consumption for VAT. The Living Costs and Food Survey, International Passenger Survey and the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey are used to estimate total consumption for excise duties (alcohol and tobacco). • Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) and the Wealth and Assets Survey (WAS) supplement the evidence available on pension schemes. • The ONS postcode directory is used in a number of work areas to provide geographical breakdowns of our UK statistics and aid our quality assurance measures. • The Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR) is also used in many work areas. One key use is to provide a sample of businesses for HMRC's Compliance Perceptions Survey (CPS). The survey with individuals is carried out by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) and is used to measure national attitudes towards tax compliance. • HMRC regularly uses the Omnibus Survey in instances where it has been important to understand an issue of operational importance relatively quickly (or quicker than it would otherwise take to set up and conduct a bespoke survey) or to complement or validate information that is available from a broader methodological approach.
	Value and Impact 2.1 How important are ONS statistics and analysis to your work	Please select one of the following • **Very important** • important • Neither important not unimportant • unimportant • Very unimportant
	2.2 How have ONS statistics, analysis and advice helped to inform your decision and/or policy making over the last 12 months. Please give examples	HMRC has used the ONS omnibus to inform a variety of business decisions from:- - Monitoring awareness of campaigns and effectiveness; - Estimating the prevalence of different behaviours or consumption; and - Identifying attitudes to elements of tax policy or tax administration / other issues of interest to HMRC among the general adult population or key sub groups. In addition, ONS statistics are used to help HMRC estimate the tax base and behavioural impacts of policy measures. In particular, at Summer Budget 2015:

		• ONS research, along with HMRC operational data, was used to estimate the tax base for two Summer Budget 2015 measures on Inheritance Tax; and • the ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings as well as the Occupational Pension Scheme Survey were used to estimate the pensions tax relief measure.
	2.3 Please advise on the type of analysis/ advice/service you would require from ONS to help improve your decision and/or policy making	Increasing data availability for devolution activity would improve the quality of our analysis, for example: HMRC regional estimates rely heavily on data from the IDBR, which is only based on a sample of companies. Small companies below the VAT registration threshold as well as new companies who have not yet been assigned a SIC 2007 code may be omitted from the survey. Estimates would be greatly improved if better coverage from the IDBR could be obtained. Regional estimates for analyses of indirect taxes also rely on consumption data from the Living Costs and Food Survey. Improving the stratification and sample sizes for the regions would limit the variability in these estimates.
	2.4 How **helpful** have ONS statistics, analysis and advice been in providing an evidence base for your decision making and/or policy work over the last year.	Please select one of the following • **Very helpful** • helpful • neither helpful nor unhelpful • Unhelpful • Very unhelpful Please provide additional comments (e.g. which statistics, analysis or advice has been the most helpful) HMRC uses Omnibus surveys where they provide strong value for money i.e. where HMRC only needs to seek evidence on a small number of questions and we would otherwise not be able to justify the cost that would be incurred in running a bespoke survey. The fact that we are able to join up with data from existing questions already on the ONS omnibus helps further enrich the data available to inform key business decisions.
	Quality 3 How satisfied are you with the quality of ONS statistics, analyses and advice. Quality has a number of components, e.g. they: • Meet your needs • Are accurate	Please select one of the following Very satisfied.................................5 **Satisfied...4** Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3 Dissatisfied....................................2 Very dissatisfied.............................1

	- Are timely - Are clearly presented - Are punctual - Are easy to find - Enable comparisons with other data - Are complete	Please provide additional comments Overall, the quality of ONS statistics is very good. HMRC uses the ONS Omnibus, over other providers, when we need the resulting evidence to be robust (i.e. from a random probability sampling design and face-to-face interviewing) because the data has the potential to form a significant part of the picture alongside other strands of evidence and stand up to external scrutiny. We also use of the IDBR and the postcode directory to improve the quality of our outputs.
	Trust 4. How much trust do you have in ONS statistics, analysis and advice	Please select one of the following **Trust them greatly..........................5** Tend to trust them..........................4 Neither trust nor distrust them......3 Tend to distrust them....................2 Distrust them greatly......................1
		Please provide additional comments The trust in ONS outputs is high.
Your opinion of ONS	**Innovation** 5. To what extent do you agree that ONS develops and implements **innovative methods** in response to statistical needs (e.g. using new technology, identifying and exploiting new methods and data sources).	Please select one of the following Strongly agree......................................5 **Agree..4** Neither agree nor disagree..................3 Disagree..2 Strongly disagree................................1
		Please provide additional comments
	Independence 6. Do you agree that ONS statistics and analysis are produced **independently** and presented free from political influence	Please select one of the following **Strongly agree..5** Agree..4 Neither agree nor disagree..................3 Disagree..2 Strongly disagree................................1
		Please provide additional comments

	Reputation	Please select one of the following
	7. Which of the following statements best reflects your view of ONS	**I would speak highly of ONS, without being asked...................5** I would speak highly of ONS, if someone asked my opinion.....4 I would be neutral about ONS, if someone asked my opinion..3 I would be critical of ONS, if someone asked my opinion........2 I would be critical of ONS, without being asked......................1
		Please provide additional comments
Our engagement with you	8.1 Do you agree that ONS understands the needs of your organisation	Please select one of the following **Strongly agree.......................................5** Agree..4 Neither agree nor disagree..................3 Disagree...2 Strongly disagree................................1
		Please provide additional comments
	8.2 How satisfied are you with our engagement, e.g. • Do we give you the opportunity to influence our priorities and plans? • Are we engaging with the right people in your organisation? • Do we work collaboratively with you, e.g. shared analysis • Do we seek and respond to your feedback? • Do we keep you informed about our work?	Please select one of the following **Very satisfied.................................5** Satisfied..4 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3 Dissatisfied.....................................2 Very dissatisfied.............................1
		Please provide additional comments We were grateful for the opportunity to provide a response on your recent consultation to change the frequency of some of your Official/National Statistics publications. HMRC primarily use the source data and metadata rather than the publications themselves. Having this information on a timelier basis will benefit HMRC. We have worked collaboratively with the ONS, which included being part of a public discussion, on the Coherence and Accessibility of Official Statistics on Income and Earnings.

Overall performance	9	Overall, how satisfied are you with the performance of ONS.	Please select one of the following Very satisfied...................................5 **Satisfied...4** Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3 Dissatisfied....................................2 Very dissatisfied.............................1
			Please provide additional comments
Continuous improvement	10	What do you think we do well and what changes would you like ONS to make to improve our statistics, analysis, advice and services	Please provide additional comments Having a designated key accounts manager for HMRC works really well and the quarterly meetings are a good opportunity to raise concerns, share knowledge and recognise successes. I hope this to continue in the year ahead. An area of improvement is for GOV.UK – it is still not a great place to host National / Official Statistics. We have raised this in the Presentation and Dissemination Committee (PDC) and we will work with them to propose a solution.

Joe Grice
Chief Economist and Executive Director
Office for National Statistics
Cardiff Road
Newport
South Wales
NP10 8XG

Dear Joe,

ONS annual customer satisfaction survey 2015/16

I am writing in response to your annual request for feedback on ONS performance over the last year. I summarise here the HMT view on ONS performance in 2015/16 and suggest areas for improvement in the coming year. The attached survey provides more detail.

Performance
We judge that ONS performance for 2015/16 has been satisfactory. While there have been challenges to some key statistics this year, particularly Construction Output and UK Trade, there have also been further improvements in engagement and ONS have shown greater willingness to innovate. ONS have consolidated transparency improvements that we highlighted last year and the vast majority of statistics continue to meet our needs as an expert user.

The ongoing difficulties that led to UK Trade and Construction Output losing National Statistic status have been the biggest challenge to ONS in 2015/16. GDP and its component parts are crucial for HMT and other users and we were perturbed by the initially low priority given to fixing these statistics. The issues with UK Trade prices were a concern this year as was the continued divergence between the Construction Output and the PMIs. We also note however that in the second half of the year ONS put more resources into investigating and iteratively improving Construction Output and UK Trade which gives us more confidence going to 2016/17.

Aside from these exceptions, the vast majority of ONS data continue to meet our needs as expert users of ONS' outputs. These data are released to appropriate timescales and are clearly presented within the publications while ONS staff are responsive and helpful when asked ad hoc queries about their publications.

ONS engagement has continued to improve. Structured engagements with ONS, including senior engagements such as the Advisory Panel on Consumer Prices, have been a useful forum for users to raise priorities and issues. ONS engagement throughout the Spending Review was also constructive.

There has also been an improvement in ONS willingness to explore new processes and technologies, such as web-scraping of food prices and use of VAT data in national accounts. As outlined in the interim report of the Bean Review of Economic Statistics, using public sector administrative data to improve the production of economic statistics will be key and we welcome this area of improvement. The transparent communication of Blue Book changes this year was again helpful.

The ONS has also engaged positively with the Review of UK Consumer Prices which the UKSA followed with a full consultation and has continued to make some progress on the National Statistics Quality Review. While we welcome progress on Flow of Funds we note as well that there is still some way to go before the UK achieves the same quality as other major advanced economies.

Looking forward to 2016/17
We hope to see a continuation of this year's improvements, particularly in regard to exploration of new methods and technologies. Engagement has improved this year and we would like to see this continue in 2016/17.

The first and foremost objective however must be to maintain the quality of key national statistics to give HMT, the public and other institutions that depend on ONS statistics, full trust and confidence in the statistics that underpin policy decisions. It will be particularly important for the ONS to undertake all appropriate methodological improvements to achieve re-designation of Construction Output, UK Trade and CPIH as swiftly and as robustly as possible to assure stakeholders of the integrity of these key statistics.

A key organisational challenge in coming years will be to robustly integrate the use of public sector data into National Statistics. More detailed suggestions are enclosed in the attached survey.

On behalf of all officials at HMT, I would like to thank you and your staff for your vital work over the past year. We continue to place a high value on ONS statistics which are a critical input to policy analysis and advice at HMT.

I am copying this letter to Jonathan Athow, Glen Watson, Nick Vaughan and Peter Patterson at the ONS, Ben Broadbent, Jon Cunliffe and Andy Haldane at the Bank of England and Andrew Dilnot at the UK Statistics Authority.

Yours sincerely

Dave Ramsden

ONS KEY ACCOUNT ASSESSMENT 2015/16

Name of Organisation: HMT

Topic	Question	Answers and further comments

Our statistics, analysis and services	**Use**
	1. Which ONS statistics, analysis and services does your organisation mainly use
		HMT predominantly uses five broad categories of ONS statistics. They are:
		   1. National Accounts;
		   2. Labour Market Statistics;
		   3. Price Statistics;
		   4. Public Sector Finances;
		   5. Microdata (particularly Labour Force Survey, Annual Survey of Hours and Earning and the Wealth and Assets Survey).
		
		In addition, HMT uses a range of ONS expertise. These include engaging through various working level groups, ad hoc requests for support and more formal opportunities to discuss ONS practices.

	Value and Impact 2.1 How important are ONS statistics and analysis to your work	Please select one of the following • **Very important** • important • Neither important not unimportant • unimportant • Very unimportant
	2.2 How have ONS statistics, analysis and advice helped to inform your decision and/or policy making over the last 12 months. Please give examples	The UK's fiscal and economic policy and fiscal framework are directly built on the Public Sector Finance statistics published by the ONS.
	2.3 Please advise on the type of analysis/ advice/service you would require from ONS to help improve your decision and/or policy making	HMT's key requirement from the ONS is the production of timely and high quality statistics.

	2.4 How **helpful** have ONS statistics, analysis and advice been in providing an evidence base for your decision making and/or policy work over the last year.	Please select one of the following • Very helpful • **helpful** • neither helpful nor unhelpful • Unhelpful • Very unhelpful Please provide additional comments (e.g. which statistics, analysis or advice has been the most helpful) The publication of economic and fiscal statistics enable HMT to monitor the latest debt, deficit and economic position against the Office for Budget Responsibility forecasts and the Government's fiscal targets. Over the last year we note continued improvements and transparency in the classification process of entities and transactions for national account purposes, combined with greater engagement with the devolved administrations. The ONS have recognised Government's priorities in these areas and addressed them efficiently. The ONS have also ensured that recent significant classification decisions and quality improvements have been implemented efficiently and quickly in Public Sector Finances (PSF). They have also been extremely helpful in putting information on future PSF revisions into the public domain to allow HMT and the OBR to anticipate changes at fiscal events.
	Quality 3 How satisfied are you with the quality of ONS statistics, analyses and advice. Quality has a number of components, e.g. they: • Meet your needs • Are accurate • Are timely • Are clearly presented • Are punctual • Are easy to find • Enable comparisons with other data • Are complete	Please select one of the following Very satisfied...................................5 **Satisfied..4** Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3 Dissatisfied.....................................2 Very dissatisfied.............................1
		Please provide additional comments The majority of ONS statistics are produced to time and continue to meet our needs as an expert user of ONS outputs. We have observed quality improvements in some areas, including CPIH and Flow of Funds but note that Construction Output and UK Trade continue to be a challenge. The Blue Book articles published in advance of Blue Book 2015 and 2016 continue to be helpful. **Construction Output and UK Trade** The National Statistic kite mark was removed from Construction

Output in December 2014 but there was no comprehensive work-plan or dedicated team put in place until late 2015. While the interim fix to construction prices was an improvement it is not sufficient in the medium- long term. Although construction is a complicated area to measure properly, we feel that greater priority should have been given to this key area of economic statistics sooner.

The discrepancies between the implied trade deflators and published prices which emerged at the end of last year was also unhelpful. We welcome the resources that have since been dedicated to investigating the issues in trade but stress the need to continue quality improvement in this space.

The new team dedicated to improving Construction Output has also been welcome and the December improvements to the treatment of outliers in Construction Output was also useful.

National Accounts
The series of articles outlining changes to key data was again exceptionally important in improving our understanding of the data and its impact on key statistics such as GDP and GNI (on an ESA95 and ESA10 basis).

Particularly in regard to National Accounts publications, HMT welcomes continued efforts to take on board user feedback which we believe has made the publications more useful to the public. Explaining the different measures of GDP for example and, particularly, deploying proprietary data to provide further insight has been useful. For example explaining that Q2 2015 growth in Mining and Quarrying Output was partly due to a low number of oil production shutdowns helped the public, commentators and institutions understand the drivers better.

HMT would again welcome the ONS going further in the future. It would be more useful if ONS were to provide more detailed analysis in the bulletins which focussed more on proprietary data which would not otherwise be made available to the public.

Labour Market
The ONS has performed well on labour market statistics over the past year – providing these consistently to time and to a high standard. We have also felt well consulted on changes coming into effect, with the ONS regularly updating us on their plans, and seeking views and comments from users of the data.

The range of labour market data available provides real opportunities for insightful analysis. We would encourage the ONS also to continue its work on understanding the differences between data sources on earnings in particular and ensuring this is well communicated to the end users of this data.

Balance of Payments
Over the last year, ONS has actively engaged with its main users of the Balance of Payments, which has been very helpful.

While we regret that FDI benchmark data was not incorporated

into the Balance of Payments as scheduled in December, the article that explained the implications of the annual FDI figures was helpful. Responses to user queries as well as informed updates of upcoming changes have been well received and the commissioned work on reasons for the fall in FDI earnings between 2011 and 2014 provided valuable insight.

Price statistics
We welcome the improvements to CPIH and the associated publications which helped to give institutions and the public greater reassurance on the quality of the statistic. The ONS have dedicated notable resources to this area which has been fruitful.

CPI has been released to time and quality throughout the year. ONS staff have been responsive, helpful and informative when answering factual questions about the statistic.

Public Sector Finances
The quality of the Public Sector Finances continues to be high as does the microdata. HMT welcomes the degree of resource ONS has transferred into maintaining and improving this and welcomes the improvements resulting from the recently completed UKSA assessment of PSF. We note that in-year estimates for Local Government spending are an area of uncertain quality and welcome ONS' engagement on this issue.

Miscellaneous
In collaboration with the Bank the ONS have made noteworthy progress on the Flow of Funds project including publication of experimental "whom-to-whom" statistics for the UK and a thorough quality review of the ONS financial accounts. We note that there is however still substantial work to bring flow of funds data into line with other advanced economies.

We note as well that the ONS has continued to implement some recommendations of the National Statistics Quality Review, in particular progressing the deflator strategy.

We also welcome efforts made to develop the beta website and we welcome extensive user testing that preceded it. The new approach of informing named contacts when re-publications occur is helpful but we note this is not yet always completely timely or systematic.

	Trust 4. How much trust do you have in ONS statistics, analysis and advice	Please select one of the following Trust them greatly.........................5 **Tend to trust them.........................4** Neither trust nor distrust them......3 Tend to distrust them....................2 Distrust them greatly......................1

		Please provide additional comments HMT is confident that ONS statistics reflect ONS best understanding, based on the data available to them. As a result of this process we believe that much of the data ONS produce are generally trustworthy. We also welcome the commitment to openness and transparency which is important in building public trust. The recent transparent communication of changes to National Accounts, Prices and Public Sector Finances helps to build trust in the data and associated analysis. The clear exposition of the impacts of the changes and why these changes occur is crucial to not only understanding the basis of the data but also trusting that it is a reflection of reality. We again welcome the National Accounts articles preceding Blue Book 2015. While the changes this year were significantly smaller it was highly reassuring to understand the magnitude of the changes in advance. As outlined above, the biggest challenge to HMT trust is the de-designation of some national statistics last year. Clear public communication when these issues occur has been an essential mitigation but for HMT and the public to improve their trust in ONS statistics it is essential that greater prioritisation is given to fixing errors in key statistics once they have been identified. Publication of a number of articles and work plans relating to CPIH and Construction Output have however been helpful in increasing trust in the new statistics.
Your opinion of ONS	**Innovation** 5. To what extent do you agree that ONS develops and implements **innovative methods** in response to statistical needs (e.g. using new technology, identifying and exploiting new methods and data sources).	Please select one of the following Strongly agree......................................5 **Agree...4** Neither agree nor disagree..................3 Disagree...2 Strongly disagree................................1
		Please provide additional comments Over the past 12 months ONS have increased their appetite to innovate. ONS have productively engaged with external reviews (such as the Bean Review of Economic Statistics and the Johnson Review), undertaken internal reviews (such as the Industry Review of the GDP(O) sub-components) and experimented proactively with new methods and technologies. ONS' meaningful exploration of VAT administrative data was an important example of this. As was the Prices division's experimentation with web scraping of supermarket prices. We note that the use of these new technologies is still in the experimental phase and has not yet been rolled out as an official statistic. In the implementation phase it will be important for ONS to continue their resolve to be innovative but balance it against the need for the necessary quality assurance procedures to be met.

		We also welcome the ONS' work and consultation on Country and Regional Public Sector Finances as a helpful contribution to the information at lower level geographies.
	Independence 6. Do you agree that ONS statistics and analysis are produced **independently** and presented free from political influence	Please select one of the following **Strongly agree.......................................5** Agree...4 Neither agree nor disagree.................3 Disagree..2 Strongly disagree................................1
		Please provide additional comments ONS has continued to provide support users this year while maintaining its independence.
	Reputation 7. Which of the following statements best reflects your view of ONS	Please select one of the following I would speak highly of ONS, without being asked...................5 **I would speak highly of ONS, if someone asked my opinion.....4** I would be neutral about ONS, if someone asked my opinion..3 I would be critical of ONS, if someone asked my opinion.........2 I would be critical of ONS, without being asked.......................1
		Please provide additional comments Although there have been challenges this year ONS has generally continued to progress in 2015/16. The ONS have begun to embrace innovation and demonstrated a desire to experiment appropriately which is key to making robust improvements. We are grateful for ongoing effort to inform members of the public of upcoming changes to the National Accounts which represents a step change compared to pre-2014 Blue Book delivery. We further welcome the beta website and the user testing which HMT was involved in. However this progress has been somewhat overshadowed by the untimely response to fixing key economic statistics such as Construction Output and UK Trade. We recognise however the resources and energy that has gone into this in the second half of the year.
Our engagement with you	8.1 Do you agree that ONS understands the needs of your organisation	Please select one of the following Strongly agree......................................5 **Agree...4** Neither agree nor disagree.................3 Disagree..2 Strongly disagree................................1

		Please provide additional comments Regular formal and informal meetings and have helped to improve the ONS' understanding of HMT's statistical needs.
	8.2 How satisfied are you with our engagement, e.g. • Do we give you the opportunity to influence our priorities and plans? • Are we engaging with the right people in your organisation? • Do we work collaboratively with you, e.g. shared analysis • Do we seek and respond to your feedback? • Do we keep you informed about our work?	Please select one of the following **Very satisfied................................5** Satisfied...4 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3 Dissatisfied....................................2 Very dissatisfied.............................1
		Please provide additional comments Over the past year engagement has improved and appropriate co-operation has gone a long way toward becoming systematic and embedded. We welcome the ONS renewed commitment to engagement at both senior and working level, including the sharing of a risk register and the structures surrounding it. ONS staff continue to do a very good job at responding to ad-hoc queries across the range of business areas. This is notable across many parts of ONS including, but not restricted to, National Accounts and Prices divisions. The stakeholder groups through which the ONS keeps HMT, other institutional stakeholders and the public informed of a number of methodological developments is also key to enhancing trust and understanding. We also welcome the strong working relationships that have been formed across HMT and ONS and the proactive efforts of some business areas, to build appropriate working relationships. ONS and HMT continue to have an excellent working relationship on Public Sector Finances, based around the continuing joint production arrangements. Similarly the relationship between HMT's spending team and ONS continues to be open and honest. Spending engagement throughout the spending review period was constructive and communication on classification decisions has been clear throughout.
Overall performance	9 Overall, how satisfied are you with the performance of ONS.	Please select one of the following Very satisfied...................................5 **Satisfied...4** Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3 Dissatisfied....................................2 Very dissatisfied.............................1

		Please provide additional comments There have been notable challenges to key statistics this year including slow progress re-designating Construction Output and difficulties with UK Trade. However there have also been improvements in engagement and ONS' willingness to innovate. ONS have further consolidated transparency improvements that we highlighted last year and the majority of statistics continue to meet our needs as an expert user.	
Continuous improvement	10	What do you think we do well and what changes would you like ONS to make to improve our statistics, analysis, advice and services	Please provide additional comments **As outlined in the answers above.**

John Pullinger
National Statistician
Government Buildings
Cardiff Road
Newport
NP10 8XG

18 March 2016

Dear John,

ONS annual assessment of ONS for 2015/16

Thank you for your letter dated 6 January inviting me to make an assessment of ONS's performance over the last 12 months.

As usual, I have not completed the questionnaire as the format does not seem suited to collective departmental response from a variety of teams.

I am responding with the views of Jon Simmons, Head of Migration and Border Analysis, Damon Wingfield Head of Crime & Policing statistics and myself on behalf of our analytical teams. We can discuss the feedback in more detail in our future stakeholder meetings with Guy Goodwin's replacement.

Our main dealings with ONS are on the topics of population, migration and crime although these overlap with other topics such as subsets of the labour market and the presentation of statistical data.

<u>**Crime**</u>

The crime statistics agenda has continued to be high profile in the latest year. Improved recording of crime and increased willingness of victims to report these crimes to the police has dominated the story of police recorded crime statistics. ONS have progressively become more assertive in reporting this after their initial hesitation (where words like "likely" and "probably" were used in attributing the rise in violent crime to recording).

Good progress has been made on the redesignation work, but it is frustrating that the goal posts don't feel any closer to us being able to apply for National Statistics re-designation. We welcome the work ONS have done to pull together the existing

development work and we are keen to continue to work closely with you and the Statistics Authority to apply a resolution to this soon.

Generally, teams in the ONS and HO work well together across the production and publication of crime and policing related outputs. Joint staffing meetings continue to be very popular and productive for working relationships. We hope these continue. We also encourage ONS colleagues to continue to build their knowledge of the policy agenda and how a policy department works. Perhaps we could revisit the possibility of jointly beneficial secondments in 2016/17, as part of your development and improvement of crime statistics agenda.

We are keen to approach the development of crime statistics agenda jointly. The ONS has allocated additional funding for this important work whereas analysts with the Home Office face continued resource constraints. We need to ensure we consider all key users and all sources of information in taking this work forward.

Despite a few continued reservations, by some, we felt the combined reporting of the July publications of crime, outcomes and police workforce statistics on the same day worked well and enabled the media to produce a comprehensive story, with support from teams in both departments. We therefore intend publishing both police recorded outcomes and police workforce statistics on the same day as the annual crime statistics again this year.

Whilst we welcome the developmental work ONS continue to push forward on new measures of fraud and cyber crime for the Crime Survey for England and Wales, we felt the dissemination of the new measures last autumn could have been handled better. From our perspective, it appeared there were some decisions being made late in the process perhaps reflecting resource constraints and other pressures at the time. The overall output looked coherent, but perhaps the time pressures affected the media handling by ONS which led to some sensationalist reporting of crime having doubled. We have discussed this issue with your team who have been receptive in acknowledging our concerns and subsequently working with us to avoid repeat occurrences.

Generally, we feel ONS could be more supportive and robust in the defence of recent criticisms of the Crime Survey which for many years, if not decades, has been seen as the 'Gold Standard' that other countries aspire to. The obvious example relates to the capping of low volume, high repeat incidents such as domestic abuse. The survey can never be accurate for low volume crimes and one of its greatest strengths has always been comparability over time. Whilst we agree survey recording and methodology must move forward, we should not be too reactive and should develop considered responses that measure inconsistencies and differences to maintain time series, perhaps whilst offering alternative or parallel measures.

Last year we noted reservations about the way that the quarterly crime statistics publication has grown and we welcome the ONS plans to reduce the size of the publication from April 2016. We will wait to see what this looks like but we support the new ONS proposed increased focus on accessibility of the key messages, stories and data.

We remain pleased with the collaborative way we have considered questionnaire development work for the Crime Survey for England and Wales and we are positive about the broader relationships between the two teams, often resolving potentially awkward decisions between themselves in an amicable manner. Discussions over allocations of PQs and broader work tend to have settled down and now work well due to effective and responsible engagement at all levels.

Migration

We have successfully arranged meetings between you (the National Statistician) and the Immigration Minister which appear to have been well-received on both sides. This has helped consolidate the strong relationship between the two departments, and has provided a light steer to our joint programme of work on migration statistics.

Our joint programme of work has so far tended to focus on more clearly reporting, to the public, what we in the statistical community already know, rather than the development of new analyses that might offer additional insights. Now we need to focus on the latter. Whilst the descriptive work on the survey as well as student and family migration have been completed, we still need to provide a more coherent assessment of the various series which relate to migration and the labour market. Despite being the lead policy department in Whitehall on migration related matters, Home Office analysts were only brought into the discussion of the challenges around NINo data late in the day. However, we are pleased we are now fully engaged in that respect and look forward to contributing actively to that work, which will be critical in improving our national data on labour market migration. In addition, to these core projects, there are still significant inconsistencies between the sources on visitors (e.g. from China) and other data on short-term migration appears quite thin now given the new and intense focus, in particular on European movements. Notwithstanding these outstanding issues, our joint working has helped improve the way in which the statistics are being presented in the regular quarterly outputs.

ONS have contributed welcome work in presenting statistics to a wider range of stakeholders, and the presentation of the population projections was particularly good. We recognize that ONS have to be careful not to risk stepping into more political territory rather than focusing on statistical issues and the internal-government debates over student migration, for example, have in the end been balanced and sensibly handled. We were pleased to facilitate greater involvement of ONS in providing advice to the Cabinet Secretary for his consideration of migration issues, but encourage ONS to ensure they learn from the wealth of knowledge on this topic in other departments, in particular within the Home Office, and build on (and hopefully give credit to) the excellent analytical work already done by our Migration and Borders Analysis team and by the Migration Advisory Committee. We will work closely with you in relation to the future use of exit check data so that any statistical advice is appropriate, consistent and clear.

We were pleased that the importance of migration was recognised in both the ONS spending review bid and the Treasury's response to it in providing additional resources. ONS engagement with us on developing that bid was good and we look forward to working closely with you (including by co-chairing the Migration Advisory Group) to ensure that any new developments are well-designed, target the key information gaps and will provide value-for-money solutions which aim to enhance UK policy on migration.

The collaborative work to produce the Migration Statistics Quarterly Report has improved over the past year, and we are currently pleased with the interactions between our two teams and the significant improvement in the quality of the product. There is still work to be done on presentation, not least to simplify what is an over-long and wordy routine statistical report, but the current report is now better organised, more streamlined and there is greater flexibility of approach than previously. These improvements have been recognised by our policy colleagues. The two departments should work together to further enhance the explanations provided to the public on the various trends in the data, an area where Home Office analysts' subject expertise can add real value to the ONS data. We will also continue to offer advice to ONS to ensure that the data is presented with greater

clarity, for example in emphasising the value of administrative sources and ensuring that the MSQR is not seen primarily as a vehicle for presenting the data from the survey. We acknowledge that some further developments may have to wait for the new ONS website and we were grateful for the presentation of the plans for the new web pages provided by ONS staff and think this may offer a great deal of potential for the future (although there will be much devil in the detail of course). The most recent revamp of the ONS website has introduced some improvements in finding key outputs but at the same time has not delivered the richness in presenting the data we had hoped for. We can see this is very much a 'work in progress' so we look forward to contributing to the public presentation of the statistics on our topics of interest.

Contact between our two SCS leads on migration is regular and very productive. Similarly at a working level, the two teams collaborate and exchange information routinely. We acknowledge there is work to be done by us to ensure we deliver the right messages to ONS in a constructive way and in a form which makes it easier for ONS colleagues to respond. We will work on this to improve our collaboration. We do however believe there is still too much risk and potential duplication created by the restricted sharing of the underlying data within the two production teams prior to publication. It would reduce the pressure on the Home Office team if they had earlier sight of the full tables which would also benefit ONS by providing an additional level of quality assurance (to avoid errors prior to publication, as has been the case in the past).

We still believe ONS needs to improve its own internal workings, not least to make sure that its own outputs are made more consistent and coherent (e.g. inconsistencies in the approach taken by the population statistics, labour market and Census teams in such things as presentation of world country groupings and confidence intervals. These differences reflect different approaches by the teams and styles of working which are based on more on history than logic.

Other related issues

We still have occasional difficulties surrounding the flexibility and handling of Pre-Release Access, but I was pleased that Guy was so willing to meet staff from our Private Offices if required.

We recognise the importance of the statistical community and policy colleagues working closely together on Sustainable Development Goals for which the Home Office has lead responsibility for some indicators on migration and crime. This has obviously been a tricky area for ONS to co-ordinate with often unwieldy spreadsheets heading our way (e.g. 1750 rows x 20 columns). I am pleased to note that in recent correspondence the ONS documentation and signposting to departments and their accompanying requests have improved making it easier for us to make our contributions.

I have copied this letter to ███████████████████████████ who have both contributed significantly to this reply and to Amanda White (Head of Crime & Policing Analysis).

███████████

David Blunt
Chief Statistician & Head of Profession for Statistics
████████████████████████████

ONS KEY ACCOUNT ASSESSMENT 2015/16

Name of Organisation:

Topic	Question	Answers and further comments
Our statistics, analysis and services	**Use** 1. Which ONS statistics, analysis and services does your organisation mainly use	**The Ministry of Justice** provides funding to **Crime Survey for England and Wales** for the inclusion of questions of interest. Raw data are delivered annually and we analyse these in-house. ONS provide us with advice on this analysis. In addition we provide an annual return to **ONS Survey Control Unit** on the surveys MoJ run to inform the annual report and the Online List of Government Statistical Surveys. **We also use a wide range of ONS statistics including:** • Population estimates and population projections for use in caseload forecasts and in the National Statistics MAPPA report. • Cohort data for births, marriages and divorce that support a variety of forecasting models. • Geographic data that augments and supports analysis of administrative data e.g. Output Area Classifications, Post Code database. • Mortality statistics supporting projections of lasting powers of attorney and used within National Statistics on Safety in Custody and the Coroners Annual Statistics. • Census data is used to compare our Equalities data with that in the general population. • In the Youth Justice Statistics publication, census projections are used to compare the proportion of young people of offending age (i.e. aged 10 years and over) with the proportion of arrests of young people.

	Value and Impact 2.1 How important are ONS statistics and analysis to your work	Please select one of the following - <mark>Very important</mark> - important - Neither important not unimportant - unimportant - Very unimportant
	2.2 How have ONS statistics, analysis and advice helped to inform your decision and/or policy making over the last 12 months. Please give examples	Key demographic and economic statistics have been essential drivers of family and civil caseload forecasts and as such have informed financial and workload decisions. Geographic products have been essential in developing insights about OPGs customers and the take-up of Lasting Powers of Attorney that has driven a OPGs strategic thinking on promoting the protection of vulnerable adults. We use the **Crime Survey for England and Wales** to explore public perceptions of **Ministry of Justice** policies (and changes in policy) as well as confidence in and attitudes towards the Justice System. We also use **Crime Survey for England and Wales** to further our understanding of the characteristics of Justice System users (e.g. users of courts or users of mediation services) as well as to inform equalities statements for a number of policy areas. We also use the **Crime Survey for England and Wales** to explore victims' experiences of the CJS and victim support services. A recent example of use of Census data and prison data was improving our understanding of the growth in the proportion of Muslim prisoners over the last 10 years compared to the general population. The census projections are also very useful and help us to put our statistics in context. The use of geographic data has proved increasingly useful particularly for OPG where ONS sources can be linked to detailed external health data at Clinical Commissioning Group level (eg DoH Quality and Outcomes Framework). Increasingly data is being mapped (using Arc GIS) and products that support this such as digital boundaries as shape-files have proved very useful.

	2.3 Please advise on the type of analysis/ advice/service you would require from ONS to help improve your decision and/or policy making	Development of more geographic products would be a benefit to improving analysis and decision making. Specifically: • Ensuring all key demographic statistics (inc births, deaths, marriages, divorce) are available across a range of geographies. Key benefit would be the ability to link data sources from other providers e.g. (deaths to DoH GP registration data at CCG level; divorce to DWP out of work benefits at LSOA level etc.) • Extending area classifications to CCGs and LSOAs (i.e. beyond Output Areas and Local Authorities). • Improving the documentation around digital boundaries / shape files; this is currently quite confusing, specifically a number of alternative are often provided for specific areas but it isn't clear which the appropriate one to use is. • Develop products that exploit UK National Survey data held by the UK Data Archive that can be represented at a geographic level. Typical examples might include anonymisation of the Family Resources Survey, Labour Force Survey's etc to reflect aggregated data at different geographic levels. Key benefit would be to open up a vast data resource that could be linked directly to MoJ administrative data, for modelling and analysis. It would be helpful to have ethnicity projections by age. In the past, we used Population Estimates by Ethnic Group (PEEGs) but these are no longer produced so we have to use 2011 census figures, even though we suspect that the ethnicity profiles have changed since then. My understanding was that ONS were reviewing the methodology used to produce these?
	2.4 How **helpful** have ONS statistics, analysis and advice been in providing an evidence base for your decision making and/or policy work over the last year.	Please select one of the following • Very helpful • <mark>helpful</mark> • neither helpful nor unhelpful • Unhelpful • Very unhelpful Please provide additional comments (e.g. which statistics, analysis or advice has been the most helpful)

	Quality 3 How satisfied are you with the quality of ONS statistics, analyses and advice. Quality has a number of components, e.g. they: • Meet your needs • Are accurate • Are timely • Are clearly presented • Are punctual • Are easy to find • Enable comparisons with other data • Are complete	Please select one of the following Very satisfied..................................5 Satisfied...4 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3 Dissatisfied....................................2 Very dissatisfied.............................1
		Please provide additional comments **The Ministry of Justice** sit on the **Crime Survey for England and Wales Steering Group** and so are involved in the decision making process for this survey. The statistics and data deliverables we use are of consistently good quality; they are timely; with clear documentation; and meet our needs. They also generally cover a large time period and are therefore beneficial in looking at long term trends. Provisional statistics are clearly labelled, with appropriate caveats, so we are aware of any limitations. The technical appendices for derivation of statistics can sometimes be difficult to follow. A simple guide would frequently be helpful to aid our understanding and be something we could share with our own customers.

	Trust 4. How much trust do you have in ONS statistics, analysis and advice	Please select one of the following ==Trust them greatly==..........................5 Tend to trust them.........................4 Neither trust nor distrust them......3 Tend to distrust them....................2 Distrust them greatly....................1
		Please provide additional comments **Crime Survey for England and Wales** is a robust survey and we trust the data provided. We use a range of data from ONS and work with a variety of teams and have full trust in the statistics, analysis and advice that is provided.
Your opinion of ONS	**Innovation** 5. To what extent do you agree that ONS develops and implements **innovative methods** in response to statistical needs (e.g. using new technology, identifying and exploiting new methods and data sources).	Please select one of the following Strongly agree.....................................5 ==Agree==...4 Neither agree nor disagree.................3 Disagree...2 Strongly disagree................................1
		Please provide additional comments The use of visualisations in the presentation of statistics has been helpful both in terms of improved accessibility to users as well as inspiring innovation amongst other producers of statistics. There have been some very helpful innovations in terms of provision of data, including web-based delivery.
	Independence 6. Do you agree that ONS statistics and analysis are produced **independently** and presented free from	Please select one of the following ==Strongly agree==.....................................5 Agree...4 Neither agree nor disagree.................3 Disagree...2 Strongly disagree................................1

	political influence	Please provide additional comments The users in the **Ministry of Justice** have no doubts over the independence of ONS.
	Reputation 7. Which of the following statements best reflects your view of ONS	Please select one of the following <mark>I would speak highly of ONS, without being asked...................5</mark> I would speak highly of ONS, if someone asked my opinion.....4 I would be neutral about ONS, if someone asked my opinion..3 I would be critical of ONS, if someone asked my opinion.........2 I would be critical of ONS, without being asked.......................1
		Please provide additional comments
Our engagement with you	8.1 Do you agree that ONS understands the needs of your organisation	Please select one of the following <mark>Strongly agree.......................................5</mark> Agree...4 Neither agree nor disagree.................3 Disagree...2 Strongly disagree................................1
		Please provide additional comments The ONS Crime Statistics team are very helpful and collaborative. We are kept informed of developments to the **Crime Survey for England and Wales** through regular meetings and the **Crime Survey for England and Wales Steering Group** allows us to engage and influence decisions on the survey. More generally, ONS teams are always willing to engage with the users in Ministry of Justice on their statistics and data. **The Chief Statistician for the Ministry of Justice** has regular account meetings with ONS to discuss the requirements of the Department and the service that ONS provide.

	8.2	How satisfied are you with our engagement, e.g. • Do we give you the opportunity to influence our priorities and plans? • Are we engaging with the right people in your organisation? • Do we work collaboratively with you, e.g. shared analysis • Do we seek and respond to your feedback? • Do we keep you informed about our work?	Please select one of the following Very satisfied.................................5 <mark>Satisfied...4</mark> Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3 Dissatisfied....................................2 Very dissatisfied............................1
			Please provide additional comments MoJ, ONS and Home Office criminal statistics teams are frequently in dialogue over the potential to publish joint bulletins covering the full crime lifecycle (from victimisation to offender management) for specific topics, such as past publications on sexual offending and hate crime. Level of engagement can vary. It was noted that the published Survey Control Return contained an error regarding the MoJ statistics which might have been picked up if the final collated outputs were shared with to providers for review/approval before they publish them.
Overall performance	9	Overall, how satisfied are you with the performance of ONS.	Please select one of the following <mark>Very satisfied.................................5</mark> Satisfied...4 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3 Dissatisfied....................................2 Very dissatisfied............................1
			Please provide additional comments
Continuous improvement	10	What do you think we do well and what changes would you like ONS to make to improve our statistics, analysis, advice and services	Please provide additional comments **What ONS does well** - User support and engagement - Provision of high quality statistics and data - Innovation in presentation of statistics

		What could ONS change?
		- The new ONS website and improved search capabilities are a big improvement. There was some feedback around navigation on the new site – although the search facilities makes up for this. - More online analytical tools. For example, tools to support geographical views of data.

ONS KEY ACCOUNT ASSESSMENT 2015/16

Name of Organisation: NORTHERN IRELAND STATISTICS & RESEARCH AGENCY

Topic	Question	Answers and further comments
Our statistics, analysis and services	**Use** 1. Which ONS statistics, analysis and services does your organisation mainly use	<u>Services:</u> Support from • the GSS professional support team • the Quality Centre (including QIF team) • Survey Control Liaison Team • the Good Practice team • [REDACTED] PDC and SPSC • [REDACTED] Data Science team • [REDACTED] re EU liaison • National Wellbeing team • UK HPI Team – [REDACTED] • [REDACTED] – Life Expectancy methodology etc. <u>Statistics/Analysis/Other:</u> • Public Confidence in Official Statistics report • OLGSS • ONS Customer Survey • Labour market and population statistics • Outputs relating to Income at Northern Ireland Level • Housing statistics – GB stock, starts and completions • Data from the Living Costs and Food Survey • Regional Economic Indicators • Wealth and Assets Survey • Occupational Pensions Scheme Survey • Working and Workless Households Bulletin • Pension Trends

	Value and Impact
	2.1 How important are ONS statistics and analysis to your work
		Please select one of the following
		
		    Services are very important
		    Important
		
		• <mark>**<u>Very important</u>**</mark>
		• Important
		• Neither important not unimportant
		• Unimportant
		    Very unimportant

	2.2 How have ONS statistics, analysis and advice helped to inform your decision and/or policy making over the last 12 months.
	
	Please give examples
		• Survey Control advice and guidance on what is in/out of scope
		• Advice on pre-release issues
		• Advice other release issues
		• Training (Quality, Effective Tables/ Graphs, Peer Review, Infographics etc)
		• Presentation and Dissemination Guidance documents
		• Advice on peer review
		• Advice on Quality assurance of Admin data
		• Information on what ONS is doing which we may wish to consider and/or replicate
		• Information on some of the big issues that we are likely to have to deal with (that ONS has already encountered) such as Data Science
		• Information sharing via Champions networks
		• Invaluable help in the recent NUTS Review
		• Invaluable help in producing Life Expectancy Statistics and integrating IRIS coding into a new registration system
		    • Providing comparisons between GB and NI labour market and population as whole in the impact analysis of Universal Credit.
		    • Comparing ONS DWP statistics and procedures within the production of Fraud and Error measurement statistics with Northern Ireland Processes.
		    • Household income values within the Household Income Administrative database have been compared against ONS data sources. This database forms an integral part of DSD's Benefit Uptake Strategy. DSD is committed under priority 2 of the NI 2011-15 Programme for Government (PfG) to the development of a long term benefit uptake strategy.

	2.3 Please advise on the type of analysis/ advice/service you would require from ONS to help improve your decision and/or policy making	• More breakdown of income outputs at a regional level where feasible would be welcomed • Regional Household Aggregate Debt (Mortgages, Credit etc.) • GB/UK Fraud and error management comparisons
	2.4 How **helpful** have ONS statistics, analysis and advice been in providing an evidence base for your decision making and/or policy work over the last year.	Please select one of the following • <mark>**<u>Very helpful</u>**</mark> • helpful • neither helpful nor unhelpful • Unhelpful • Very unhelpful Please provide additional comments (e.g. which statistics, analysis or advice has been the most helpful) See response to 2.2, in particular Training & Guidance Advice on Code of Practice interpretation issues Liaison with Eurostat on the recent NUTS review

	Quality	Please select one of the following
	3 How satisfied are you with the quality of ONS statistics, analyses and advice. Quality has a number of components, e.g. they: • Meet your needs • Are accurate • Are timely • Are clearly presented • Are punctual • Are easy to find • Enable comparisons with other data • Are complete	==**Very satisfied**== Satisfied Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied Dissatisfied Very dissatisfied
		Please provide additional comments Training and Guidance, NUTS Review – very satisfied Code Advice – satisfied Guidance issued by ONS is generally useful – harmonisation standards are easily found and the breakdown of themes for both primary and secondary standards (as well as and the regional heading titles and inputs/outputs headings within these documents) are useful.
	Trust	Please select one of the following
	4. How much trust do you have in ONS statistics, analysis and advice	==**Trust them greatly**== Tend to trust them Neither trust nor distrust them Tend to distrust them Distrust them greatly
		Please provide additional comments ONS statistics are a trusted data source. The UK stats accreditation status for each publication is likely to be more of a factor for assessing the level of trust. The people are very knowledgeable and helpful
Your opinion of ONS	**Innovation**	Please select one of the following
	5. To what extent do you agree that ONS develops and implements **innovative methods** in response to statistical needs (e.g. using new technology, identifying and exploiting new methods and data sources).	Strongly agree ==**Agree**== Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree
		Please provide additional comments

	Independence 6. Do you agree that ONS statistics and analysis are produced **independently** and presented free from political influence	Please select one of the following ==**Strongly agree**== Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree
		Please provide additional comments
	Reputation 7. Which of the following statements best reflects your view of ONS	Please select one of the following I would speak highly of ONS, without being asked ==**I would speak highly of ONS, if someone asked my opinion**== I would be neutral about ONS, if someone asked my opinion I would be critical of ONS, if someone asked my opinion I would be critical of ONS, without being asked
		Please provide additional comments
Our engagement with you	8.1 Do you agree that ONS understands the needs of your organisation	Please select one of the following Strongly agree Agree ==**Neither agree nor disagree**== Disagree Strongly disagree
		Please provide additional comments Sometimes ONS does not understand how we are set up or our particular issues, but our experience is that generally staff try to understand when we have an opportunity to discuss with them. • Further breakdowns, where feasible, at regional level (including NI) would be helpful.
	8.2 How satisfied are you with our engagement, e.g. • Do we give you the opportunity to influence our	Please select one of the following Very satisfied ==**Satisfied**== Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied Dissatisfied Very dissatisfied

		priorities and plans? • Are we engaging with the right people in your organisation? • Do we work collaboratively with you, e.g. shared analysis • Do we seek and respond to your feedback? • Do we keep you informed about our work?	Please provide additional comments Again this varies from topic to topic, but generally we are being involved more; engagement is at the right level; more collaborative working; some requests for feedback and generally good dissemination of information • Further breakdowns, where feasible, at regional level (including NI) would be helpful.
Overall performance	9	Overall, how satisfied are you with the performance of ONS.	Please select one of the following **Very satisfied** Satisfied Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied Dissatisfied Very dissatisfied
			Please provide additional comments
Continuous improvement	10	What do you think we do well and what changes would you like ONS to make to improve our statistics, analysis, advice and services	Please provide additional comments ONS is very helpful in providing advice and guidance It would be helpful if: • papers and minutes of the GSSMAC, PDC and SPSC were available sooner on the GSSnet (online) after the meeting • similarly for conference papers and presentations Access to an ONS directory or a lower level organisation chart so that we know who the correct contacts are (and a UK Statistics Authority directory) would be really helpful. • ONS is very good with keeping users informed of their most recent research. This includes publications on experimental statistics as well as publications outlining the methodology of a newly proposed process.

ONS KEY ACCOUNT ASSESSMENT 2015/16

Name of Organisation: Office for Budget Responsibility

Topic	Question	Answers and further comments
Our statistics, analysis and services	**Use** 1. Which ONS statistics, analysis and services does your organisation mainly use	The Office for Budget Responsibility is a key user of the ONS' whole range of economic and public finance statistics. The latest ONS statistics provide the platform or launch point which determines the starting point for our forecasts, and so the accuracy of their statistics has a critical impact on the accuracy of our forecasts. ONS statistics also provide the outturn benchmark against which the performance of our forecasts is measured. Our use of ONS statistics includes (but is not limited to) the following releases: Public Sector Finances Preliminary estimate of GDP Second estimate of GDP Quarterly National Accounts United Kingdom Economic Accounts Blue Book UK Trade Balance of Payments Pink Book Provisional Business Investment Labour Market Statistical Bulletin Consumer Price Indices Capital Stocks/National Balance Sheet Index of Production Construction Output Index of Services
	Value and Impact 2.1 How important are ONS statistics and analysis to your work	Please select one of the following • Very important

	2.2 How have ONS statistics, analysis and advice helped to inform your decision and/or policy making over the last 12 months. Please give examples	ONS statistics are a fundamental input to our forecasts of the economy and public finances. The latest ONS statistics provide the platform or launch point which determines the starting point for our forecasts, and so the accuracy of their statistics has a critical impact on the accuracy of our forecasts. ONS statistics also provide the outturn benchmark against which the performance of our forecasts is measured. In order to produce forecasts we require a detailed understanding of the UK Economic Accounts and of the Public Sector Finances and ongoing engagement with ONS is therefore essential.
	2.3 Please advise on the type of analysis/ advice/service you would require from ONS to help improve your decision and/or policy making	
	2.4 How **helpful** have ONS statistics, analysis and advice been in providing an evidence base for your decision making and/or policy work over the last year.	Please select one of the following • helpful Please provide additional comments (e.g. which statistics, analysis or advice has been the most helpful)
	Quality 3 How satisfied are you with the quality of ONS statistics, analyses and advice. Quality has a number of components, e.g. they: • Meet your needs • Are accurate	Please select one of the following Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3

	• Are timely • Are clearly presented • Are punctual • Are easy to find • Enable comparisons with other data • Are complete	While Blue Book 2015 was a much more limited exercise than Blue Book 2014, the ONS successfully delivered a series of methodological improvements (including an improved software deflator) and addressed a number of GNI reservations. As with Blue Book 2014, we appreciated advance engagement on these changes (see section 8 below), including the substantial volume of advance published material. This helped to ensure that we were well-sighted on the technical aspects of the changes. We have a number of concerns about data series. The volatility of trade estimates appears to have increased on both a monthly and quarterly basis, making it very difficult to interpret recent movements in the series. Recent trade datasets have also included errors, with the November 2015 trade estimates (upon which our November 2015 forecast was based) inconsistent with the latest trade price indices. We welcome further investigation of the volatility of trade outturns and are happy to engage with the ONS on this area. The effect of net trade volatility on GDP has been offset to some extent by volatility in the contribution of inventories, which also contributed to the weakness of nominal GDP at the end of 2015. The volatility of inventories on a real and nominal basis, and the relationship of inventories with net trade, would warrant further investigation. There have been a number of errors in National Accounts datasets released over the past year – including errors in non-north sea profits. These errors are unfortunate, and it is essential that we are notified of errors and the subsequent timing and scale of any correction, as soon as possible (see section 8). It is also unfortunate that annual benchmarks for Foreign Direct Investment in 2014 were not incorporated into the Balance of Payments (BoP) datasets at the end of last year, leading to an inconsistency between the latest available FDI data and the BoP/UK economic accounts. We look forward to the inclusion of the FDI benchmark data into these datasets. Ongoing issues with the quality of construction output statistics remain a significant concern for the quality of the headline GDP(O) estimates. As the ONS has recognised, the current methodology for estimating construction prices is unsatisfactory and we fully support the ONS work programme to develop an appropriate set of construction price deflators. We are required to forecast both the National Accounts and the Public Sector Finance statistics, so inconsistencies between the two can cause us significant problems. While we welcomed efforts to align the National Accounts and Public Sector Finances in Blue Book 2015, we are concerned about the limited alignment planned between now and Blue Book 2017, which could lead to the accumulation of significant discrepancies between the two datasets. We support efforts to maintain as much consistency as possible between the Public Sector Finances and National Accounts over this period; where this is not possible, it will be important to maintain an inventory of classification decisions that are yet to be implemented in the National Accounts. To this end, a

		recent article on National Accounts/PSF alignment was very welcome, and we look forward to future updates.
		The absence of consistent historical series prior to 1997 for certain variables outside the "core dataset" continues to impede comparisons with previous recessions – in particular, for business investment. To facilitate comparisons with previous recessions, users are required to construct their own series using previous vintages of data, which is not satisfactory. The recent publication of experimental financial accounts data prior to 1987 was a welcome development.
		On the public sector finances side, there were a number of successes – the quick incorporation of housing associations into the PSF numbers, the continued work reconciling the CGNCR and CG net debt and the work to resolve unexplained differences between cash and accrued borrowing. It was very welcome to be able to draw on these information sources in our latest forecasts. Engagement with ONS staff on these issues was also helpful.
		We have some quality concerns on local authority data. Over the last year we have continued to work with ONS to try to improve the transparency of the adjustments that they apply to the source data that is collected on local authority spending, where they make adjustments to improve the quality of the statistics, for instance where they need to estimate underspends against budgeting data, or to ensure that spending is measured according to National Accounts definitions. We need to understand and replicate these adjustments, to ensure that our forecasts will be accurate against their future measurements of outturn. We are grateful for all their work in this area over the past year, which has made some very helpful progress. However this has identified some quality concerns that still need to be addressed, and more work still remains to be done so that we can fully understand their methods, and therefore align our in-year estimates of spending and borrowing.
		We continue to have concerns on the implementation of some previous classification decisions. One example would be the classification decision on London and Continental Railways. This was made in July 2014, backdated to September 2013. However, the decision was implemented in December 2015, almost 18 months later. There continue to be outstanding decisions e.g. imputed tax and spend such as feed-in tariffs and expenditure by multilateral aid agencies.
	Trust 4. How much trust do you have in ONS statistics, analysis and advice	Please select one of the following Neither trust nor distrust them......3

		Please provide additional comments
Your opinion of ONS	**Innovation** 5. To what extent do you agree that ONS develops and implements **innovative methods** in response to statistical needs (e.g. using new technology, identifying and exploiting new methods and data sources).	Please select one of the following Neither agree nor disagree..................3
		While Blue Book 2015 was a much more limited exercise than Blue Book 2014, the ONS successfully delivered series of methodological improvements, including the introduction of an improved software deflator, and addressed a number of GNI reservations. The ONS has been responsive to user feedback and has established working groups of experts and key users to develop methods, including construction prices. More generally, planned ONS' development work in a number of areas seeks to exploit new data sources: ongoing work on the 'flow of funds' could lead to improvements in National Accounts data sources, while work on the greater use of administrative data could lead to improvements in the reliability of early outturns. We support ONS efforts in these areas.
	Independence 6. Do you agree that ONS statistics and analysis are produced **independently** and presented free from political influence	Please select one of the following Agree...4
		Please provide additional comments
	Reputation 7. Which of the following statements best reflects your view of ONS	Please select one of the following I would be neutral about ONS, if someone asked my opinion..3

		Please provide additional comments
Our engagement with you	8.1 Do you agree that ONS understands the needs of your organisation	Please select one of the following Agree...4
		See comments to 8.2
	8.2 How satisfied are you with our engagement, e.g. • Do we give you the opportunity to influence our priorities and plans? • Are we engaging with the right people in your organisation? • Do we work collaboratively with you, e.g. shared analysis • Do we seek and respond to your feedback? • Do we keep you informed about our work?	Please select one of the following Satisfied...4
		We maintain a good level of engagement with the ONS on economic statistics. We maintain regular liaison by means of key account meetings (Economic/Labour Market Statistics theme groups, Balance of Payments user group, Quarterly National Accounts group, Public Sector Data Group and Sector Accounts for Local Government), regular catch-ups and ad-hoc requests/discussions. We have also participated in a number of seminars through the year. Outside regular meetings, we are satisfied with the responses of ONS staff to ad-hoc queries, which have generally been prompt and helpful. The publication of a revised medium-term National Accounts Work Plan was a welcome development and we appreciated the opportunity to engage and provide feedback on an early version of the plan. We understand that the ONS are planning to develop an Economic Statistics strategy that will encompass the National Accounts work plan, and we look forward to engaging on this in due course. As with Blue Book 2014, we particularly appreciated advance engagement on the changes to the National Accounts introduced in Blue Book 2015, including the series of advance articles. This helped to ensure we were better sighted on the technical changes introduced in the Blue Book. The pre-release arrangements for the September 2015 UK Economic Accounts – which provided the starting point for our November forecast – worked well, and ONS were helpful and responsive in providing the data we required and in dealing with follow-up queries.

			In general we maintain a good dialogue on the National Accounts with errors and corrections typically flagged to us at an early stage. However, it was disappointing that we were not notified of the error in non-north sea profits in the June Quarterly National Accounts nor the resulting correction. It is important that we are notified of errors and corrections in the National Accounts as soon as possible and we understand that an improved system is now in place to ensure any errors/corrections are flagged to us. Engagement with the ONS on the public sector finances release has been good. We have appreciated their pro-active approach in engaging with the OBR and ensuring that CG and LA outturns were incorporated into the September PSF release ahead of our Forecast Evaluation Report. The inclusion of housing associations in the public sector finances statistics ahead of our March Budget forecast was also successful.
Overall performance	9	Overall, how satisfied are you with the performance of ONS.	Please select one of the following Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3
			We have been grateful to the ONS for the help that they have provided to us over the past year in liaising with us directly over our various requirements, and in engaging with us in various working groups and user liaison groups. While Blue Book 2015 was somewhat more limited in scope than Blue Book 2014, the ONS successfully delivered series of methodological improvements and addressed a number of GNI reservations. We appreciated advance engagement on the changes to the National Accounts introduced in Blue Book 2015, and the help that the ONS provided on the September 2015 UK Economic Accounts. We also welcomed efforts to align the PSF and National Accounts as far as possible in Blue Book 2015. We have concerns about the limited alignment planned between now and Blue Book 2017, which could lead to the accumulation of significant discrepancies between the two datasets. We support efforts to maintain as much consistency as possible, and to maintain a record of any discrepancies as they build up. We continue to have concerns about a number of data series (see section 2), including the volatility of recent trade outturns. There have also been a number of unfortunate errors in datasets over the past year. In some cases we were unaware of these errors, and we would stress the importance of informing us as soon as possible in the event that errors are found.
Continuous improvement	10	What do you think we do well and what changes would you like ONS to make to improve our statistics, analysis, advice and services	Please provide additional comments

ONS KEY ACCOUNT ASSESSMENT 2015/16

Name of Organisation: Scottish Government and National Records of Scotland

Topic	Question	Answers and further comments
Our statistics, analysis and services	**Use** 1. Which ONS statistics, analysis and services does your organisation mainly use	**Population projections** **Population Estimates** **Migration statistics** **Life Tables national and sub national** **Vital Events** **Labour Market Statistics, including related datasets like Labour Force Survey, Annual Population Survey, Annual survey of Hours and Earnings, claimant count,…** **Scottish data from Business surveys: regular business inquiries, annual business survey, Inter-Departmental business register,…** **Deflators**
	Value and Impact 2.1 How important are ONS statistics and analysis to your work	Please select one of the following • Very important • important • Neither important not unimportant • unimportant • Very unimportant **Very Important**
	2.2 How have ONS statistics, analysis and advice helped to inform your decision and/or policy making over the last 12 months. Please give examples	Stats and advice used to help us produce our population and migration estimates for Scotland, also projections and life expectancy estimates which are used in resource allocation and service planning across Scotland. Discussions with ONS help to inform decisions on how we produce our vital events statistics. For further information see uses sections in our publications on the NRS website. Having the underlying datasets around the labour market, the economy and business has helped us to produce headline national statistics covering businesses in Scotland and the Scottish economy. This also underpins national indicators in Scotland Performs – our overarching outcome measurement framework for Scotland. This has allowed significant evidence based policy development in Scottish Government.

	2.3 Please advise on the type of analysis/ advice/service you would require from ONS to help improve your decision and/or policy making	Colleagues still do not find it straightforward to navigate through the ONS website, so improvements to make it easier to find information would help. Contact phone numbers included as standard in email signatures It would be helpful to use comparable local authority income/ expenditure figures. We appreciate that there are reasons why this is difficult (different local authority structure in England & Wales, LA functions not always the same as in Scotland etc.).
	2.4 How **helpful** have ONS statistics, analysis and advice been in providing an evidence base for your decision making and/or policy work over the last year.	Please select one of the following • Very helpful • helpful • neither helpful nor unhelpful • Unhelpful • Very unhelpful Please provide additional comments (e.g. which statistics, analysis or advice has been the most helpful) **Very helpful – All very helpful, working level contacts are generally really good, particularly the population projection team**
	Quality 3 How satisfied are you with the quality of ONS statistics, analyses and advice. Quality has a number of components, e.g. they: • Meet your needs • Are accurate • Are timely • Are clearly presented • Are punctual • Are easy to find • Enable comparisons with other data • Are complete	Please select one of the following Very satisfied.................................5 Satisfied...4 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3 Dissatisfied....................................2 Very dissatisfied.............................1 **Very satisfied**
		Please provide additional comments Could be easier to find on website

	Trust	Please select one of the following
	4. How much trust do you have in ONS statistics, analysis and advice	Trust them greatly..........................5 Tend to trust them.........................4 Neither trust nor distrust them......3 Tend to distrust them.....................2 Distrust them greatly.....................1 **4 – tend to trust them**
		Please provide additional comments It has been really helpful to develop our role in quality assuring Scottish components of ONS outputs. This has been a positive development for both ONS and Scottish Government/National Records of Scotland colleagues.
Your opinion of ONS	**Innovation** 5. To what extent do you agree that ONS develops and implements **innovative methods** in response to statistical needs (e.g. using new technology, identifying and exploiting new methods and data sources).	Please select one of the following Strongly agree......................................5 Agree...4 Neither agree nor disagree..................3 Disagree..2 Strongly disagree................................1 **Agree**
		Please provide additional comments New projection methods and system rewrite Dissemination improvements e.g. infographics and improvements to publications e.g. MSQR Leading the way within the UK on IRIS death coding software (and advising other UK countries) We are looking to work with ONS in exploring how we can collectively use administrative data to replace the need for some regular business surveys. It will be important here that both ONS and the devolved administrations are able to access the necessary administrative data.
	Independence 6. Do you agree that ONS statistics and analysis are produced **independently** and presented free from	Please select one of the following Strongly agree......................................5 Agree...4 Neither agree nor disagree..................3 Disagree..2 Strongly disagree................................1 **Strongly agree**

	political influence	Please provide additional comments
	Reputation 7. Which of the following statements best reflects your view of ONS	Please select one of the following I would speak highly of ONS, without being asked...................5 I would speak highly of ONS, if someone asked my opinion.....4 I would be neutral about ONS, if someone asked my opinion..3 I would be critical of ONS, if someone asked my opinion.........2 I would be critical of ONS, without being asked.......................1 **I would speak highly of ONS, if someone asked my opinion.....**
		Please provide additional comments
Our engagement with you	8.1 Do you agree that ONS understands the needs of your organisation	Please select one of the following Strongly agree.....................................5 Agree..4 Neither agree nor disagree..................3 Disagree...2 Strongly disagree................................1 **Agree**
		Please provide additional comments Sometimes unaware of devolved issues until they are brought to their attention
	8.2 How satisfied are you with our engagement, e.g. • Do we give you the opportunity to influence our priorities and plans?	Please select one of the following Very satisfied..................................5 Satisfied..4 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3 Dissatisfied....................................2 Very dissatisfied............................1 **3.5**

	• Are we engaging with the right people in your organisation? • Do we work collaboratively with you, e.g. shared analysis • Do we seek and respond to your feedback? • Do we keep you informed about our work?		Please provide additional comments We have taken a number of positive steps to develop the relationships at a working and strategic levels and this is bearing some fruit. Generally very good, particularly some teams. Working level relationships very good, lots of engagement and opportunities to influence. However, sometimes at a working level it still feels like devolved issues are an afterthought and that ONS are trying to accommodate devolved issues after making decisions rather than thinking about them before taking a decision.

Overall performance	9	Overall, how satisfied are you with the performance of ONS.	Please select one of the following
			
			    Very satisfied.................................5
			    Satisfied...4
			    Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3
			    Dissatisfied....................................2
			    Very dissatisfied.............................1
			
			Satisfied

			Please provide additional comments Over and above the substantial joint work we enjoy with ONS, the fact that we have worked together so well on strategically important topics like the statistics concordat, implementation of UK wide work to support further devolution, and draft data sharing legislation has been incredibly valuable. I think these complex issues benefit from the different experiences and perspectives across the four nations, and in doing so strengthen the GSS as a whole. I look forward to building on this strength moving forward.
Continuous improvement	10	What do you think we do well and what changes would you like ONS to make to improve our statistics, analysis, advice and services	Please provide additional comments + very helpful projections team +respond quickly, if you have a named contact to ask - need contact phone numbers as standard in email signatures - hard to find material on website - awareness of devolved issues

ONS KEY ACCOUNT ASSESSMENT 2015/16

Name of Organisation:

Topic	Question	Answers and further comments
Our statistics, analysis and services	**Use** 1. Which ONS statistics, analysis and services does your organisation mainly use	Census data. Data on births, deaths, and migration and mid-year population estimates and population projections. Data covering a range of mortality and life expectancy outputs (e.g. avoidable mortality, deaths from alcohol etc.) Crime statistics including Crime Survey for England & Wales (CSEW) and Police Recorded Crime (PRC) data Labour market and economic data: almost all the work of the WG economic and labour market team depends on ONS statistics. This covers data that the Welsh Government sponsors (e.g. APS in Wales, Welsh STOI) and other data ONS publish with a regional and/or devolved administration component (e.g. GVA(I), GVA(P), GVA per head/ job / hour worked, R&D data, GDHI, IDBR, BRES, ABS, workforce jobs, public sector employment, WAS, ASHE, LFS, APS, labour market analysis). Many of our relationships are with particular areas of statistics are determined by SLAs and / or data access agreements; we have pre-release access to much of this data. We have regular bilateral meetings in a number of topic areas in order to provide a formal forum and process for collaboration between ONS and Welsh Government. **We have direct relationships with ONS such as contractual ones around the National Survey for Wales and an SLA on the Annual Population Survey. Service standards for those arrangements are not discussed here.**
	Value and Impact 2.1 How important are ONS statistics and analysis to your work	Please select one of the following - **Very important** ← for all areas described in Q1 - important - Neither important not unimportant - unimportant - Very unimportant

	2.2 How have ONS statistics, analysis and advice helped to inform your decision and/or policy making over the last 12 months. Please give examples	Almost all of the work of the WG economic and labour market statistics branch depends on ONS statistics. As such, all the impact of this branch on policy development, implementation and monitoring involves some sort of ONS data. This includes: high level briefing about the Welsh labour market; statistical support to economist colleagues; policy development and monitoring for European funded projects; policy development and support for specific Welsh economic and industrial policies (e.g. priority sectors); support for education, training and skills development policies; and monitoring Welsh language use. Provision of a bespoke spreadsheet of 2011 Census data on Welsh speaking ability for a range of occupational classifications. This will be included in a new baseline report on Welsh Language in Primary Care services to be used for health board planning. Avoidable mortality covered in Chief Medical Officer's annual report. Other vital statistics data used in a range of policy documents (e.g. liver disease plan) and monitoring data. Provided evidence base on extent of crime involving domestic abuse and/or sexual violence. APS and other survey data are used as performance and outcome indicators in many indicator frameworks including the Programme for Government. ONS colleagues have provided advice to our work on developing National Indicators to measure progress against the 7 statutory Future Generations and Well-being goals.
	2.3 Please advise on the type of analysis/ advice/service you would require from ONS to help improve your decision and/or policy making	Timely provision of important data Access to more detailed, unrounded data, to be used internally to support policy development and published outputs. Continued provision of vital statistics data, including making it available on NOMIS. Continued provision of crime statistics including underlying data. In particular, 'Wales only' data from the CSEW (perhaps aggregated over 3 years).
	2.4 How **helpful** have ONS statistics, analysis and advice been in providing an evidence base for your decision making and/or policy work over the last year.	Please select one of the following • Very helpful • **helpful** ← for all areas described in Q1. • neither helpful nor unhelpful • Unhelpful • Very unhelpful Please provide additional comments (e.g. which statistics, analysis or advice has been the most helpful)

	Quality 3 How satisfied are you with the quality of ONS statistics, analyses and advice. Quality has a number of components, e.g. they: • Meet your needs • Are accurate • Are timely • Are clearly presented • Are punctual • Are easy to find • Enable comparisons with other data • Are complete	Please select one of the following Very satisfied...................................5 ← population stats Satisfied..4 ← health and crime stats Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3 ← economic & labour market stats Dissatisfied......................................2 Very dissatisfied..............................1
		Please provide additional comments Ongoing data-quality concerns relating to PRC data are an issue in terms of analysing Welsh crime data. This is a particular problem sub-nationally as we only have 4 police forces and therefore Welsh figures could be unduly affected by recording practices. Taken alongside the lack of robust Welsh data from the CSEW due to the current sample size means that we do not have a clear picture of crime trends in Wales. In terms of economic statistics on a general level we believe ONS provide high quality economic statistics that are critical for public debate and are well respected within Wales as a source of evidence on the performance of the Welsh economy. However at a detailed level there are issues that impact on our work. ONS products tend to be published on a standalone basis which do not allow for a wider understanding of economic trends. For example although ONS agree with international perspectives that a basket of indicators is needed to understand economic performance, the publication of annual regional GVA is undertaken as a standalone issue with no reference to economic trends around the labour market or income, nor historical or underlying economic context, and reporting generally focuses on year on year change. ONS are helpful in addressing questions and issues arising from published statistics, but could be more proactive in identifying apparent anomalies and determining their source. Some analysis has been undertaken using LFS data when APS data may have been more appropriate given the larger sample size. This reflects the fact that ONS want to present data at a UK level using the LFS but ignores the issues of using very small samples for component regions and countries and the impact this can have on economic narrative.

		The vast majority of analysis and communication is helpful and informative; however, on occasion analysis produced has not been well explained and, when queried, responses could be more thorough. Occasionally more care could be taken over the presentation of ad-hoc research outputs. New work can reflect ONS priorities for analysis rather than being useful to use in policy and decision making, and sometimes it is difficult to understand the justification for ad hoc pieces of work. Comparisons with non-ONS data sources (but still Official Statistics) are limited and should be exploited further.
	Trust 4. How much trust do you have in ONS statistics, analysis and advice	Please select one of the following Trust them greatly..........................5 ← population stats Tend to trust them.........................4 ← health and crime stats, economic & labour market stats Neither trust nor distrust them......3 Tend to distrust them....................2 Distrust them greatly.....................1
		Please provide additional comments There is high trust in regular statistics such as GDP and inflation figures. Advice received from the ONS is mostly helpful, we are grateful for the help and support provided; especially from the Labour Market teams. However, some of the advice provided should be made clearer in releases, negating the need for the questions to be asked in the first place. See wider comments under quality, above. Some analysis has used the LFS when the APS may have been more appropriate due to the larger sample size. The quality assurance processes undertaken on ad-hoc analyses, which are not National Statistics, are sometimes not made clear. Comparisons and coherence with non-ONS sources (but still Official Statistics) is rarely considered.
Your opinion of ONS	**Innovation** 5. To what extent do you agree that ONS develops and implements **innovative methods** in response to statistical needs (e.g. using new technology, identifying and exploiting new methods and data sources).	Please select one of the following Strongly agree.......................................5 Agree...4 ← for all areas described in Q1 Neither agree nor disagree..................3 Disagree...2 Strongly disagree.................................1
		Please provide additional comments ONS are clearly demonstrating a commitment to developing and implementing innovative methods throughout their processes. This includes the work undertaken on admin data, web scraping of prices, the new website and electronic data collection. The new website is excellent (although the ambition to avoid broken links

		was not achieved with many error messages being found)

However some forms of working with ONS (for example, the one for commissioning unpublished Census tables, or establishing a business case for sharing data for each release rather than a topic) are outdated and are designed to be faxed or sent through the post rather than being emailed.

Some developments are slow, e.g. making more data available via NOMIS.

Development of longitudinal datasets and analysis in the labour market area has been welcomed, although a clear use for the data is yet to be established.

The ONS offers a lot of expertise; however this is segregated into multiple silos which don't effectively communicate with each other. This leads to a large volume of meetings with multiple different stakeholders across the organisation, where officials from other government departments have to provide the links. Effective collaboration within the ONS needs to be developed to ensure that the potential for innovation is exploited. |
| | **Independence**

6. Do you agree that ONS statistics and analysis are produced **independently** and presented free from political influence | Please select one of the following

Strongly agree......................................5 ← for all areas described in Q1
Agree...4Neither agree nor disagree..................3
Disagree..2
Strongly disagree................................1 |
| | | Please provide additional comments

ONS statistics are clearly published free from political interference and with autonomy.

However ONS need to be wary that this independence is not undermined by a focus on ad-hoc and timely pieces of work in line with any current political narrative, as the selection of which topics to analyse can be a political decision in itself. They also need to ensure they are not undermining Section 20 of the SRSA on devolved matters, which has happened on occasions.

Whilst statistics are independent of political influence, the ONS should have a better understanding of user need by consulting with devolved administrations, policy officials and Ministers to ensure evidence is fed into the development of policy from the outset to maximise public value of their statistics. When decisions are made about priorities more evidence should be provided on what user need is being met and what the statistics will be used for specifically. |

	Reputation	Please select one of the following
	7. Which of the following statements best reflects your view of ONS	I would speak highly of ONS, without being asked...................5 I would speak highly of ONS, if someone asked my opinion.....4 ← all areas I would be neutral about ONS, if someone asked my opinion..3 I would be critical of ONS, if someone asked my opinion.........2 I would be critical of ONS, without being asked.......................1
		Please provide additional comments
Our engagement with you	8.1 Do you agree that ONS understands the needs of your organisation	Please select one of the following Strongly agree.......................................5 Agree...4 Neither agree nor disagree..................3 ← population, health and crime stats Disagree...2 ← economic & labour market stats Strongly disagree.................................1
		Please provide additional comments Note comments under question 6 which are relevant to this section However broadly ONS can be too UK/England focussed sometimes on the health side. ONS need to work closer with us on issues around quality assurance of administrative data in the light of the requirements of the QAAD regulatory standard. Pre-release access arrangements could be improved where WG are also producing statistical releases on the same topic using ONS data. We have had helpful discussions at senior level with ONS on this issue this year. Sometimes WG has to work hard to ensure data will meet our needs, for example the Purchases Survey initially had no strata for Wales. The disclosure rules on the IDBR are strict and we are often unable to answer requests because of them. It would be helpful for WG to have access to administrative sources that ONS are obtaining. This is especially important if those sources are replacing existing sources.

	8.2 How satisfied are you with our engagement, e.g. • Do we give you the opportunity to influence our priorities and plans? • Are we engaging with the right people in your organisation? • Do we work collaboratively with you, e.g. shared analysis • Do we seek and respond to your feedback? • Do we keep you informed about our work?	Please select one of the following Very satisfied..................................5 Satisfied..4 ← health and crime stats Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3 ← population and economic & labour market stats Dissatisfied.....................................2 Very dissatisfied..............................1
		Please provide additional comments Generally satisfied with overall engagement. However, due to the non-devolved nature of Crime & Justice, our involvement can occasionally feel a tad perfunctory. More notice to the ONS consultation on outputs would have been helpful. Our account holder had helpfully provided us with a briefing of the key themes a couple of weeks in advance but we had received no notification of the intended launch. We welcome that some the labour market (and other) analytical articles are sent to us for peer review but consider we should decide which are 'in scope' and which are not, and for WG to provide more feedback given the importance we place on this aspect of ONS work. There is a shortage of capacity within WG to analyse data from the ONS and we would welcome the opportunity to work more collaboratively with ONS in analysing Welsh labour market and economic data. It would be helpful to ensure that where release dates change that the Welsh Government are kept informed. The ONS offers a lot of expertise; however this is segregated into multiple silos which don't effectively communicate with each other. This leads to a large volume of meetings with multiple different stakeholders across the organisation, where officials from other government departments have to provide the links. Effective collaboration within the ONS needs to be developed to ensure that the potential for innovation is exploited
Overall performance	9 Overall, how satisfied are you with the performance of ONS.	Please select one of the following Very satisfied..................................5 Satisfied..4 ← population, health and crime stats, economic & labour market stats Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied...3 Dissatisfied.....................................2 Very dissatisfied..............................1

			Please provide additional comments
			ONS need to ensure that staff have a full understanding of devolution issues, promote engagement with devolved administration officials and be aware of their obligations under Section 20 of the SRSA.
			Wales is sometimes referred to as a region when it is a country.
			The consultation on accessing BRES data became unavailable with the launch of the new ONS website. The old link no longer worked and ONS had not provided NomisWeb with an updated link.
Continuous improvement	10	What do you think we do well and what changes would you like ONS to make to improve our statistics, analysis, advice and services	Please provide additional comments It would be very helpful if all statistics were produced for England and Wales separately rather than for England and Wales as a whole.
			Making more health data available via NOMIS.
			The ONS are effective in communicating the importance of statistics.
			The ONS regularly provides additional information where required in a timely and professional manner, especially in terms of labour market and economic statistics.
			The development of the new ONS website is welcomed.

ONS KEY ACCOUNT ASSESSMENT 2015/16

Name of Organisation: Economic and Social Research Council

Topic	Question	Answers and further comments
Our statistics, analysis and services	**Use** 1. Which ONS statistics, analysis and services does your organisation mainly use	As the largest funder of socio-economic research in the UK, the ESRC represents a vibrant community of social scientists and economists which use a full range of ONS's products and services. The ESRC also represents its community in responding to consultations and in specific discussion with the ONS. In recent years, the ESRC has engaged with the ONS on the Beyond 2011 Programme, and more recently on the Census Transformation Programme. Our engagement has been to focus on the possibilities of collaboration in developing methodology, design and skills around a census that makes use of administrative data alongside traditional survey data. The ONS is a significant partner in the ESRC funded Administrative Data Research Centre for England playing an important role to widen safe access of linked administrative data to our research communities. Access to sensitive data, such as produced by the ADRC, is critical to our research community and the redevelopment of the VML has been important. Our community greatly values the ONS's products and more broadly, the ESRC welcomes the regular engagement that we have with senior ONS staff in order to progress our shared objectives. Our responses to the ensuing questions briefly elaborate on these points.
	Value and Impact 2.1 How important are ONS statistics and analysis to your work	Please select one of the following • **Very important** • important • Neither important not unimportant • unimportant • Very unimportant
	2.2 How have ONS statistics, analysis and advice helped to inform your decision and/or policy making over the last 12 months. Please give examples	Over the last 12 months, the ONS has engaged closely with ESRC's big data infrastructures via its senior representatives to the ADRN Board and the Advisory Board of the Consumer Data Research Centre as well as methodological expertise via its representative on the ADRN Panel that approves research projects. Last year, the ESRC and the ONS discussed potential uses of private sector data, given our common interest and in particular one of our key investments in this area (i.e. the Consumer Data Research Centre). This has led both organisations to identify shared opportunities and challenges in this area and consider improved collaboration on plans and future developments in this area.

		In the last 12 months ESRC has been developing a small number of research priorities, and ONS has been active in its engagement where most appropriate. In particular Productivity is an area of shared interest and ONS involvement and advice has been helpful in shaping plans for future activity.
	2.3 Please advise on the type of analysis/ advice/service you would require from ONS to help improve your decision and/or policy making	We already have in place regular partnerships discussions between ONS and ESRC, and engagement with ONS divisions and functions as shared areas of interest are identified. This approach is working well from our perspective. A recent consultation on Methodological Research Needs in UK Social Science, carried out by the National Centre for Research Methods (NCRM) found that there is already a high demand for small area statistics, and the ability to produce small area estimates of high quality is likely to become increasingly important. In terms of other areas of ONS activity that has important implications on ESRC and our community, the ONS's response to the outcomes of its Approved Researcher Status consultation is of great interest to the ESRC. We are looking forward to how the ONS will take forward the outcomes of the consultation in order to reduce administrative effort on access providers (including the ADRN) and on researchers and eventually to increase transferability of skills and greater transparency to research with sensitive data. In the context of the Census Transformation Programme, the ONS's explorative work on the use of administrative data and private sector data and any lessons learned, skills acquired and methodological outputs from this work will be of wider benefit to our research communities and to the ESRC. The ONS also has strength in data visualisation and there may be opportunities for further discussions exploring this in relation to our investments but also how ESRC visualises its data The work on public attitudes to using new forms of data (administrative and private sector data) has value beyond the ONS and could be subject to further discussions with ESRC.

	2.4 How **helpful** have ONS statistics, analysis and advice been in providing an evidence base for your decision making and/or policy work over the last year.	Please select one of the following • Very helpful • **helpful** • neither helpful nor unhelpful • Unhelpful • Very unhelpful Please provide additional comments (e.g. which statistics, analysis or advice has been the most helpful) As the largest UK funder of research in social sciences and economics, our communities often draw from ONS products for their own research. Census data, in particular, provides a valuable resource for a range of research topics of interest to the social sciences from housing to socio-economic inequalities to mental health. The ESRC has invested extensively in its Census service over many years and more recently through the UK Data Service (UKDS) Census Support (CS). In the period from 1 October 2014 to 31 March 2015 alone, UKDS reported 16,000 unique users of its CS Service tools and 120,386 data downloads using these tools. The Census is also integral to the design of the ESRC-funded Census Longitudinal Studies Research Support Units. However, the ESRC further seeks to increase demand for and the exploitation of many more ONS products and services. For example, the ESRC Secondary Data Analysis Initiative, which in past rounds has attracted applications from researchers with ONS as a significant partner, will continue to feature ad-hoc competitions in collaboration with ESRC's partner organisations ("highlight notices"). These calls may focus on exploitation of other datasets or research questions identified by the partner organisations that differ from those in the standard call. In these instances additional funding will be provided by the partner organisation for these purposes. Therefore this offers the potential for the ONS to utilise the SDAI to further exploit the Census or other datasets. This new mechanism is already being utilised by the Department for Education who are using it to fund projects to generate insight for particular policy areas. Finally, the ONS is a significant partner of the Administrative Data Research Centre in England. As a data owner as well as an analytical service, the ONS should support the work of the ADRN to overcome barriers to accessing admin data and deliver high quality research project of societal benefit.

	Quality	Please select one of the following
	3 How satisfied are you with the quality of ONS statistics, analyses and advice.	
		Very satisfied...................................5
		Satisfied...4
		Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3
	Quality has a number of components, e.g. they:	Dissatisfied.....................................2
	• Meet your needs	Very dissatisfied.............................1
	• Are accurate	
	• Are timely	
	• Are clearly presented	Please provide additional comments
	• Are punctual	
	• Are easy to find	
	• Enable comparisons with other data	The ONS is considered as providing trustworthy, high quality statistics that broadly meet the research needs of the UK research community. The emphasis on quality can be at the expense of timeliness. On occasion the meta data could be improved. The data visualisation work has been well received.
	• Are complete	
		As a major UK funder of applied economics research, the ESRC acknowledges the essential needs of our community for quality, and easily accessible, economic data: we have followed the consultation exercise and interim report of the Bean Review. We have noted that the Bean Review has flagged the need for the ONS to exploit more administrative and private sector data for the production of more timely and accurate economic statistics. We look forward to the Review's final report.
		Progress is now being made with potential collaborative research ventures between ESRC and ONS in this space, with a particular focus on the research theme of 'labour productivity'. This co-funded work, if it goes ahead, will have a focus on business data, and could become a 'theme' to the proposed 'economic stats centre'.
	Trust	Please select one of the following
	4. How much trust do you have in ONS statistics, analysis and advice	
		Trust them greatly..........................5
		Tend to trust them..........................4
		Neither trust nor distrust them......3
		Tend to distrust them.....................2
		Distrust them greatly......................1
		Please provide additional comments

Your opinion of ONS	Innovation 5. To what extent do you agree that ONS develops and implements **innovative methods** in response to statistical needs (e.g. using new technology, identifying and exploiting new methods and data sources).	Please select one of the following Strongly agree......................................5 **Agree...4** Neither agree nor disagree..................3 Disagree..2 Strongly disagree................................1
		Please provide additional comments In parts the ONS's work is truly innovative such as its work under the Census Transformation Programme, which is considered to be at the forefront of innovation.
	Independence 6. Do you agree that ONS statistics and analysis are produced **independently** and presented free from political influence	Please select one of the following Strongly agree......................................5 **Agree...4** Neither agree nor disagree..................3 Disagree..2 Strongly disagree................................1
		Please provide additional comments
	Reputation 7. Which of the following statements best reflects your view of ONS	Please select one of the following I would speak highly of ONS, without being asked...................5 **I would speak highly of ONS, if someone asked my opinion.....4** I would be neutral about ONS, if someone asked my opinion..3 I would be critical of ONS, if someone asked my opinion.........2 I would be critical of ONS, without being asked.......................1
		Please provide additional comments ONS is a trusted and helpful partner for ESRC, producing quality outputs and working collaboratively with us in a range of areas.
Our engagement with you	8.1 Do you agree that ONS understands the needs of your organisation	Please select one of the following Strongly agree......................................5 **Agree...4** Neither agree nor disagree..................3 Disagree..2 Strongly disagree................................1

		Please provide additional comments Strategically, we have helpful meetings and that dialogue does inform our mutual understanding. However in more specific areas of activities there is a still the need to maintain and perhaps enhance current engagement and create opportunities to share information between the two organisations, particularly given the range of shared interests between us (e.g. on Census, LSs, ADRN and big data more generally).
	8.2 How satisfied are you with our engagement, e.g. • Do we give you the opportunity to influence our priorities and plans? • Are we engaging with the right people in your organisation? • Do we work collaboratively with you, e.g. shared analysis • Do we seek and respond to your feedback? • Do we keep you informed about our work?	Please select one of the following Very satisfied...................................5 **Satisfied...4** Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3 Dissatisfied.....................................2 Very dissatisfied.............................1
		Please provide additional comments As indicated above, the ESRC does work with ONS as a strategic partner across many areas. Engagement with ONS at senior level has been excellent, and ONS Directors are willing to participate in meetings and on Boards/Committees with ESRC investments. For example, there is a senior ONS representative on the ADRN Board. Looking ahead, from May 2016, there are great opportunities for strengthening the strategic relationship between the ONS and the ESRC via their jointly run of the new UK Data Forum. The ESRC is usually informed of consultations and of key developments in the ONS through engagement with Directors. It is important that this good relationship and understanding at senior strategic level between the two organisations extends also to more junior/ operational staff with ONS to ensure that they too understand our role, needs and so work with our funded researchers more collaboratively.
Overall performance	9 Overall, how satisfied are you with the performance of ONS.	Please select one of the following Very satisfied...................................5 **Satisfied...4** Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied....3 Dissatisfied.....................................2 Very dissatisfied.............................1

			Please provide additional comments The ESRC welcomes the collaborative and positive approach to engagement with the ONS and the shared endeavours that are being progressed. We hope that this commitment will continue.
Continuous improvement	10	What do you think we do well and what changes would you like ONS to make to improve our statistics, analysis, advice and services	Please provide additional comments ONS is an accessible and helpful strategic partner for ESRC and we value accessibility of staff at a senior level. There could be further opportunity to engage in more specific areas of joint interest, potentially across our research priority areas and or in innovations in data collection. There is some benefit from improving mutual understanding of each organisation across all level of our staffing. As previously discussed we could consider delivering presentations to staff on our respective organisations, or potentially short term staff secondments could be explored. This would help embed understanding of ESRC in ONS, and vice versa.