

# Statement on Revision Policy

## Department for Transport

### Scope of Document

This document sets out how revisions to the Department for Transport's Statistics outputs, whether scheduled or not, take place in line with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics published in January 2009 at, <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html> .

The Department for Transport aims to avoid the need for revisions to statistics but has put in place practices to make any necessary revisions transparent to users.

### Purpose of Revisions

Statistics are by their nature subject to error and uncertainty. Initial estimates are often systematically amended to reflect more complete information. Improvements in methodologies and systems can help to make revised series more accurate and more useful.

### Definitions

A **revision** is a change to any National Statistic once it has been placed in the public domain, whether through a printed document or electronically.

### Policy

**'Scheduled'** revisions will be managed systematically, pre-announced and reflected in dissemination plans. Such revisions will take place at the next scheduled publication of the series.

Scheduled revisions usually occur for the following reasons:

- Where they form a normal part of the release process for a given series. This is common in highly aggregate series which are often first released in a less than complete state in order to meet the needs of users for timely information. Results based on more complete responses and analyses are then released at a later date
- As a result of seasonal adjustment, benchmarking or rebasing exercises. Examples include regular updates to take account of further supplies of data; rebasing of an index to take account of new information, such as updated vehicle estimates; an annual survey replacing the results of quarterly or monthly surveys
- Changes, for example, to the underlying methodology, or to sources or classifications, or changes to transport authority or local authority boundaries

**‘Unexpected’** revisions are those which do not fit into the managed pattern of revisions normally associated with the statistics in question. They can occur, for instance, at an unusual point in the revision cycle, or have an impact on the statistics which was not anticipated. They can be caused, for example, by errors, by unforeseen changes in methodology, by the unexpected acquisition of new data, or by the effects of changes that may be made, for both statistical and non-statistical reasons, to any administrative or management systems that contribute data to Official Statistics.

The general rule is that when revisions are needed they will take place as soon as practicable. For those revisions deemed by the Head of Profession to be ‘minor’ a replacement document will be issued clearly marked by the date of the revision with a note giving a reason for the revision, identifying the statistics that have been affected and where possible an assessment of the size of the revision. Where results are affected by methodological changes, a description of the change will be given.

**‘Substantial’** revisions, whether ‘scheduled’ or not, are those which lie outside the range of revisions normally associated with the statistics in question and which tend, therefore, to have a more significant impact. Decisions on the content, format, and timing of releases which incorporate substantial revisions will be made by the Head of Profession. At the minimum, the statistics publication will be removed from the Department’s website and replaced by a statement giving a reason for the revision and a timetable for the replacement statistics at the same time placing a notice on the UK National Statistics publication hub at <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/hub/index.html> .

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