Geography – Background Information – Standard Names and Codes

The Scottish Government (SG) were first to introduce a new 9 character coding system when they launched 2001 Datazones. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) followed suit and the use of the 9 character code now forms part of the Coding and Naming policy endorsed by the [Government Statistical Service (GSS) Regional and Geography Committee](#) (ONS website).

The 9 character code

A simple 9 character alpha-numeric coding structure is at the centre of the new system.

It is made up of 2 parts within the format ANNNNNNNN.

Taking 2001 Datazone as an example:

- The first 3 characters (ANN) represent the area entity and Geography, e.g. S01 where S represents Scotland and 01 is Datazone geography.

- The second part of the code (NNNNNN) represents the specific area (individual instance) of the Geography.

  This part of the code is sequential, and when updates to the geography are made, recoding will start at the next number in the sequence.

  For example, 2001 Datazones are numbered S01000001 to S01006505. 2011 Datazones will follow on the numbering structure and start at S01006506.

Notable features of the coding system

Coding changes will be due to actual boundary changes. These are either by Scottish Statutory Instruments (SI) or an up-to-date dataset is made available (i.e. Census related geography):

- Name changes do not constitute a change in code.

- There is no imbedded intelligence, codes are not hierarchical.

- Codes are not reused.

Maintenance of the Scottish Code History Database

The SG maintains the Scottish Code History Database (CHDb) and is responsible for assigning new geographies with a 9 character code.

Geography – Background Information –
Standard Names and Codes

Customers requiring the CHDb should contact:

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Geographies using the new coding system

The following geographies already use the 9 character coding.

Code Prefix	Geography Name
S92	Country
S00	Output Areas
S01	Datazones
S02	Intermediate Zones
S03	Community Health Partnerships
S04	Regeneration Outcome Agreement Areas - Scotland
S05	Regeneration Outcome Agreement Areas - Community Planning Partnerships
S06	Regeneration Outcome Agreement Areas - Local Areas
S07	Regional Transport Partnerships
S08	Health Board Areas
S09	Scottish Enterprise Regions
S10	Urban Regeneration Companies
S11	Strategic Development Plan Areas
S12	Council Areas
S13	Electoral Wards
S14	United Kingdom Parliamentary Constituencies
S15	European Electoral Regions
S16	Scottish Parliamentary Constituencies
S17	Scottish Parliamentary Regions
S19	Locality
S20	Settlement
S21	National Parks
S22	Travel to Work Areas
S23	Police Force Areas
S24	Highlands and Islands Enterprise
S25	Community Justice Authorities
S26	Community Health Partnership Subareas
S27	Information Services Division (ISD) Health Board of Treatment
S28	Census Detailed Characteristics
S29	Census Local Characteristics
S30	Local Administrative Units 1
S31	Local Administrative Units 2
S32	Scottish Police Divisions

List as at March 2013

Lookups from the old coding system to the new system will be included as part of the 2011 Census Indexes.

Geographies not using the new coding system

There are 2 NRS geographies that don't follow the new 9 character coding structure, these are: Civil Parishes, and Islands.