



Open Data Strategy

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Summary

1. HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) are fully committed to the transparency agenda, and transparency is a key principle for the Department.
2. We have made a number of additional commitments in this Open Data strategy as a first step towards continued and greater openness in the department. Most notable of these, and to ensure there is continued oversight of the transparency agenda, we are setting up a Tax Transparency sector board which will drive the Transparency agenda in the department. This will incorporate key views from across government, academia and the private and social sector.
3. Working closely with the Valuation Office Agency, our Executive Agency, we have a history of producing useful and relevant data for broader use. We have been collecting and producing data for many years and made our performance and activities transparent through the publication of annual reports and official statistics.
4. Key elements of our strong commitment to transparency have been demonstrated by:
 - Our alignment to the Public Data Principles and Information Principles for the UK Public Sector;
 - The position we have adopted to publish data proactively;
 - Our intention to make information available whilst taking into consideration our legal duties to protect the confidentiality of our customers.
5. We see information as a fundamental tool to deliver public services, as witnessed by a number of initiatives we have undertaken since the transparency agenda was announced:
 - Between November 2010 and January 2011, we engaged the public in an informal consultation to seek views on our approach to transparency¹;
 - In May 2011, we were one of the first departments across Whitehall to publish an initial inventory of their datasets, as part of our transparency implementation plan²; and
 - In 2011, we also launched a dedicated transparency site³, which has allowed us to make several datasets available to the general public.
6. The Government is now moving towards the next phase of transparency and we want to continue in our efforts to make more data public. The Open Data Strategy (ODS) outlines our plans to engage with citizens and make more information available under an Open Government Licence.
7. We are currently publishing several datasets on our website and on www.data.gov.uk under an Open Government Licence. In our publication plans for 2012-2014, we will continue assessing our information and look for ways to move our data up the '5 star' rating system determined by the transparency standards.

¹ <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/transparency/consultation.htm>

² <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/transparency/implementation-plan.htm>

³ <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/transparency>

8. A list of the key datasets we will release for the period 2012-2014 has been presented around the following headings:
 - a) Capture and release of *Big Data*: publication of large routine public service datasets;
 - b) Capture and release of *My Data*: provision of access for service users to their own identifiable data;
 - c) *Satisfaction and Experience Data*: customer insight and user feed-back on services;
 - d) The creation of *Dynamic Information Markets*: public service strategies for engagement with data users to drive social and economic growth;
 - e) *Continuously Improving the Quality* of data published.
9. In particular, our key new commitments for publishing Open Data include:
 - Setting up of a **Tax Sector Transparency Board** to drive this agenda in the department and allow us to engage directly with organisations across government, academia and the private and social sector;
 - The development of a **tax calculator and downloadable phone application** which will show how much income tax and National Insurance they can expect to pay and an illustration of how their taxes contribute to public spending;
 - The issue of **personal tax statements** to around 20 million taxpayers, as announced in Budget 2012, detailing how much income tax and National Insurance contributions (NICs) they have paid, their average tax rates, and how this contributes to public spending;
 - The expansion of information available through the **HMRC Datalab and Tax Administration Research Centre**, an initiative allowing access to anonymised administrative and survey data for approved academic researchers;
 - A programme of engagement with software firms, civic-minded developers and related communities, as well as our own staff, to enable **innovative uses of HMRC published data** such as mobile applications, info-graphics, data-journalism and others which help the public get the best out of HMRC services or promote the public understanding of tax;
 - Upgrade of **uktradeinfo website** to improve public access to UK Overseas Trade Statistics data, including a new multi-dimensional presentation of data with time-series, charting, mapping and dynamically-updated graphics, and enhanced data table storing functionality with 'sharing' capability for social media users.
10. The wide range of datasets and initiatives we are planning to release and undertake for 2012-2014 underlines once more our commitment to play a key role in transparency and drive reform further. As part of this pledge, we will continue to engage with data-holders, data-users and developers, and investigate opportunities to publish new information through existing or innovative channels. This process will be overseen by the new Tax Transparency sector board.

11. Our strategy reinforces our commitment to the principles for public sector information⁴. In line with these commitments, we have also developed a detailed Information Management Strategy and Framework, which provides a clear model of what comprises good information management and highlights key principles, processes and common practices.

Introduction

12. HMRC's Open Data Strategy (ODS) outlines our plans to engage with citizens and make more information available under an Open Government Licence⁵. We are aiming to enhance existing data quality procedures and share best practice, in order to make information easier for the public to understand and re-use.
13. As part of our business, we collect, create and exploit a wide range of data in the area of taxes, benefits and trade. Information on our performance and activities has already been made available on our Transparency website and on www.data.gov.uk, the single online portal for central and local government data.
14. Our approach to Open Data is aligned with the *Public Sector Information Principles*⁶ developed under the Government ICT Strategy⁷. The Open Data Strategy as a whole is informed by two key principles that *Information is valued as an asset*, and that *Information is managed*. We have developed mechanisms to handle information properly, aiming to adopt a consistent approach in assessing and managing risks, whilst ensuring legal and regulatory compliance.
15. In line with these commitments, we have developed a detailed Information Management Strategy and Framework, which provides a clear model of what comprises good information management and highlights key principles, processes and common practices to ensure that our information is fit for purpose.
16. Our default position is that our data will be published wherever possible. However, we fully recognise the privileged access we have to confidential and personal information, and we will protect it. Although we will seek to be ambitious in releasing data, we will ensure that we do not publish data which would reduce our ability to function. We will also guarantee that we do not provide sensitive information to those who seek to pervert the tax system, safeguarding our ability to hold them to account and maintain fairness.
17. Subject to this we will continue to engage with the academic, business, commercial, public data and application developer communities and our staff to maximise the value of our data, obtain their feedback, and explore new opportunities. We will keep our information under review to examine and improve the amount and frequency of data we release.

⁴ <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/content/government-ict-strategy>

⁵ The OGL allows the public and business to, for free: copy, publish, distribute and transmit the information; adapt the information; exploit the information commercially for example, by combining it with other data, or by including it in their own product or application. The full licence can be found at <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence>

⁶ <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/resource-library/uk-government-ict-strategy-resources>

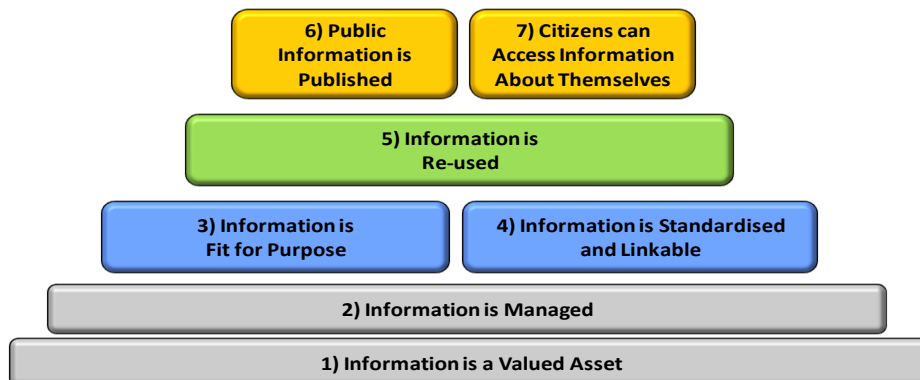
⁷ Government ICT Strategy, March 2011. <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/content/government-ict-strategy>

18. We will ensure that our publication plans for 2012-2014 are in line with our legal obligations and will continue assessing our information and look for ways to move our data up the '5 star' rating system determined by Sir Tim Berners Lee.
19. Amongst various initiatives, we are setting up a Tax Sector Transparency Board which will drive this agenda in the department. This will incorporate key views from across government, academia and the private and social sector.

Information Principles for the UK Public Sector

20. In line with the information principles for the UK Public Sector⁸, we believe that 'managing information effectively and appropriately is essential to the delivery of secure, seamless and efficient operational services'. Information is vital to the success of the business and as such needs process and governance to manage it as any other asset.
21. We are committed to being as transparent as possible within the framework of our legal obligations to protect our customers' information, as set out in the Commissioners for Revenue and Customs Act 2005.
22. Data is used in the Department to inform policy development and make evidence based decisions, as well as to ensure accountability to Parliament and the public. In order to allow citizens to make informed choices on the services available, we maintain a consistent approach in managing the records we hold and continuously explore ways to ensure openness and accessibility in our datasets.
23. We have developed a detailed Information Management Strategy and Framework to provide HMRC with a clear model of what comprises good information management and the key principles, processes and common practices.
24. More detail on HMRC's alignment to the Information Principles for the UK Public Sector is available from Appendix B.

Figure 1: Information Principles for the UK Public Sector



⁸ <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/content/government-ict-strategy>

Big Data

25. Big Data refers to information that is routinely collected and held by HMRC, either as part of our everyday activities or through specific initiatives. As part of our business, we collect, create and exploit a wide range of data in the area of taxes, benefits and trade. Information on our performance and activities has already been made available on our Transparency website and on www.data.gov.uk.
26. Due to the nature of our work, a large proportion of the information we hold is disclosive. We have a strict legal duty to protect our customers' information, as set out in the Commissioners for Revenue and Customs Act 2005. In line with our legal obligations, we are not able to release information that relates to an identifiable individual customer or entity.
27. Whilst we are embedding the principle of Open Data in our policies, the confidentiality of the information we handle poses some challenges affecting our ability to release large datasets. We are committed to examine whether there is scope for further publication, whilst continuing to ensure that information is suitably anonymised before it is disclosed.
28. A significant amount of HMRC's Big Data is routinely released under our programme of official and national statistics publications. This includes the release of very detailed datasets, such as small area analyses and geographical tables. We believe that this information can be regarded as Open Data, as they are routinely published on our website, in machine-readable formats. We will explore ways to expand the granularity of our data, increase use amongst the public and link to other sources.
29. The publication of new organisation and procurement information is another example on how we have been able to open large datasets to the public. For the period 2012-14, we will make new datasets available online and in non-proprietary formats. The vast amount of data items released will offer the potential for linking and reusing and to drive improvements in public service quality and productivity.
30. In May 2011, we launched The HMRC Datalab. This initiative has opened up a number of anonymised administrative datasets to academic researchers, including Corporation Tax and VAT Returns, Trade Statistics and Stamp Duty Land Tax. The Datalab follows HMRC data protection security policies and there are restrictions on working practices to safeguard taxpayer confidentiality. As part of the Department's Open Data Strategy, HMRC are planning to include more information within the Datalab based on requests. The VOA will explore with HMRC and other stakeholders the potential for making its data sets available through this.
31. We have also made available the detailed datasets in electronic format for research purposes from Survey of Personal Incomes (SPI) with UK Data Archive through the Economic and Social Data Service (ESDS).
32. A database of importers who import goods into the UK from outside the European Union is routinely published on www.uktradeinfo.com. This provides free access to the names and addresses of over 130,000 businesses. Data is available from the year 2000 onward and it is updated monthly with information taken from Customs administrative documents.
33. Most of the examples we have provided relate to datasets that have been made routinely available electronically with an open licence, machine-readable and structured format. We will work with stakeholders to expand the use of our data and continue to look for ways to move our data up the '5 star' rating system designed by Sir Tim Berners-Lee.

Table 1 Big Data publication plans

Dataset Name	Description	Date of release	Frequency	Open Government Licence?
Official and National Statistics	<p>We publish over 100 official and national statistics datasets on taxes, benefits and trade in line with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. HMRC remains committed to adding new releases to its National Statistics datasets from new data sources and as user demand dictates.</p> <p>As part of this programme, we have released very detailed information, including small area analyses and geographical tables, and we will explore ways to expand the granularity of our data, increase use and explore opportunities to link to other sources. These datasets they are routinely published on our website, available for reuse and in machine-readable formats.</p> <p>By publishing robust official and national statistics, the Department promotes social and economic growth. Citizens and businesses will be better informed on the UK's taxes and benefits, stimulating public debate and supporting evidence-based decisions. This information will also ensure that HMRC is made accountable for its performance. The National Statistics publication plan for the HMRC is available from:</p> <p>http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/thelibrary/national-statistics.htm</p> <p>The VOA have released datasets on Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rating lists, including numbers of challenges and changes to the lists, and private residential rents. They are committed to significantly extend the available range.</p>	Various in line with annual updating plans	Monthly, quarterly and annual publications	★★ Available as structured data
Procurement Data	<p>In line with the Prime Minister's letter to Cabinet colleagues dated 29 May 2010 , HMRC/VOA have published information relating to procurement and contracts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tender documents for contracts over £10,000; • Items of spending over £25,000 - published monthly from April 2010 onwards; • Details of Government Procurement Card (GPC) spending over £500 - published monthly, from April 2011 onwards; • Exceptions to the Government spending moratorium. <p>By bringing this information out into the open, the public are more able to hold government and public bodies to account, allowing more effective assessments of Public Service productivity and quality.</p>	Various in line with annual updating plans	Monthly, quarterly and annual publications	★★★ Non-proprietary format

Dataset Name	Description	Date of release	Frequency	Open Government Licence?
Organisation Data	<p>HMRC/VOA have also published data relating to our organisation under these categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of civil servants with salaries above £150,000 in a cross departmental dataset; • Details of senior salaries (within £5,000 bands) of HMRC's most senior people; • Structure of senior posts; • Summary of more junior posts in the organisation structure; • Organisation charts and resource description framework data; • Non-consolidated performance related payments; • Workforce management information, including payroll staff and non-payroll staff by grade, headcount, full-time equivalent and costs <p>The publication of organisational data makes us more accountable to the public and allows more informed assessments of the Department's performance.</p> <p>We are planning to publish new information for the period 2012-14 and include new data categories as user demand dictates.</p>	Various in line with annual updating plans	Monthly, quarterly and annual publications	<p>★★★</p> <p>Non-proprietary format</p>
HMRC Datalab	<p>The HMRC Datalab was launched in May 2011 as a new Research Data Centre (RDC) allowing access for approved academic researchers to anonymised administrative and survey data. The aim of this initiative is to produce high quality research that benefits both the Department and the wider academic community, in the form of a wider evidence base to support knowledge sharing and policy making.</p> <p>The Datalab follows HMRC data protection security policies and there are restrictions on working practices to safeguard taxpayer confidentiality. To become an 'approved academic researcher', institutions have to submit a proposal and complete a short training course, which covers legal issues as well as the statistical disclosure control of outputs. Only research that serves HMRC functions as specified in the Commissioners for Revenue and Customs Act 2005 is approved.</p> <p>Since its launch, the Datalab has already made a number of large administrative datasets available to various academic institutions for approved research purposes, including Corporation Tax and VAT Returns, Trade Statistics and Stamp Duty Land Tax.</p> <p>As part of the Department's Open Data Strategy, HMRC are planning to include more information within the Datalab based on requests. Researchers can browse a catalogue of HMRC's datasets and request access to specific datasets for analytical purposes.</p>	Datalab set-up in May 2011, plans to expand information available for the period 2012-14	Periodical depending on research needs	Conditions to the use of the information

Dataset Name	Description	Date of release	Frequency	Open Government Licence?
Survey of Personal Incomes (Public Use Tapes)	<p>We will also continue sharing information from the Survey of Personal Incomes (SPI) with UK Data Archive through the Economic and Social Data Service (ESDS).</p> <p>The SPI covers, on a sample basis, all individuals for whom income tax records are held by HMRC. The survey is used for various purposes including providing cost data for Treasury Ministers, assisting policy decisions within HMRC and to compile National Statistics and National Accounts. As the SPI includes confidential taxpayer information, we create a non-disclosive version called the Public Use Tape (PUT) for the ESDS.</p> <p>Making the information on personal income available to the general public contributes to achieving the overarching benefits of Transparency including accountability, public service productivity and quality, social and economic growth.</p> <p>More information on the SPI is available from the ESDS website: http://www.esds.ac.uk/doc/6502/mrdoc/pdf/6502userguide.pdf</p>	Summer 2012	Annual	Conditions to the use of the information
Importers Details	<p>The Importers Details database hosted on www.uktradeinfo.com provides free access to the names and addresses of over 130,000 businesses who import goods into the UK from outside the European Union. Data is available from the year 2000 onward and it is updated monthly with information taken from Customs administrative documents. It allows users to view and download the detail of company name, address and commodity imported, and can be searched by name, commodity code, goods description, postcode and county.</p> <p>Benefits of providing access to this data include helping UK businesses identify potential customers for UK supply as an alternative to importation, informing business choice and promoting economic growth.</p>	Ongoing	Monthly	<p>★★★</p> <p>Non-proprietary format</p>

My Data

34. We hold a vast amount of personal information in the Department which we process in line with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Commissioners for Revenue and Customs Act 2005.
35. As part of our business, we are already providing useful calculators to inform citizens on rates and allowances for taxes and benefits, as well as publishing data on online filing and tax deadlines. However, we are taking further steps to release information purely for access by individuals.
36. HMRC is committed to improving the transparency of the personal tax system so that individual taxpayers know how much tax they are paying and how government spends it.
37. In November 2011, we published a discussion document 'Modernising the administration of the personal tax system: tax transparency for individuals'. The consultation invited views on how the personal tax system can be modernised to be more transparent and easy to use for the individual taxpayer. It also explored how other countries are making taxpayers' information available to them, and investigates whether these ideas might work in the UK.
38. From April 2012, individuals who pay tax through PAYE will be able to access a new online tax calculator and downloadable phone application which will show how much income tax and National Insurance they can expect to pay.
39. Budget 2012 announced that from 2014–15, around 20 million taxpayers will receive a new Personal Tax Statement. This will detail how much income tax and National Insurance contributions (NICs) they have paid, their average tax rates, and how this contributes to public spending.
40. Allowing citizens to access their own data clearly results in a better informed public, with positive impacts on social and economic growth and increased accountability of the Department. We believe that this will make it easier for taxpayers to:
 - understand what they need to do to comply with their obligations;
 - understand what they should do if they think their tax is not right;
 - understand what HMRC's role is in the tax calculation;
 - encourage individuals to take greater responsibility for their own tax affairs; and
 - be more aware of why tax is paid, how it supports society and public services.
41. The long-term ambition is to develop a more transparent personal tax system that makes it easier for individuals to engage with HMRC, raising awareness and understanding of tax and improving the customer experience. The use of online and mobile technology is core to delivering this ambition.
42. The Valuation Office Agency has also created a facility to check the entry on the CT valuation and NDR rating lists for properties. This information is available on direct.gov.uk and, for NDR rating list, as bulk data sets to purchase, including (i) the rating list and (ii) the summary valuations giving details underlying the valuation for the majority of 'bulk classes'.

Table 2 My Data publication plans

Dataset Name	Description	Date of release	Frequency	Open Government Licence?
Personal Tax Calculator	<p>From May 2012, individuals who pay tax through PAYE will be able to access a new online tax calculator and downloadable phone application which will show how much income tax and National Insurance they can expect to pay and an illustration of how their taxes contribute to public spending.</p> <p>This tool will be added to the wide range of calculators already published by HMRC (http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/calcs-tools/index.shtml) and will aim to drive social economic growth by allowing citizens to improve their knowledge on the amount of tax they may expect to pay.</p>	May 2012, application developed in June/July 2012	Ad Hoc	<p>★★★</p> <p>Non-proprietary format</p>
Personal Tax Statements	As announced in Budget 2012, from 2014–2015, around 20 million taxpayers will receive a new Personal Tax Statement. This will detail how much income tax and National Insurance contributions (NICs) they have paid, their average tax rates, and how this contributes to public spending.	2014–2015	Ad Hoc	Personal data only accessible by its owner
VOA Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rating List Band Search	Facility to check the entry on the CT valuation and NDR rating lists for properties. This information is available on the internet (direct.gov) and, for NDR rating list, as bulk data sets to purchase, including (i) the rating list and (ii) the summary valuations giving details underlying the valuation for the majority of 'bulk classes'.	Ongoing	Ad Hoc	<p>★★</p> <p>Available as structured data</p>

Satisfaction and Experience Data

43. HMRC have a broad and varied customer base including citizens, businesses of all sizes and other parts of the public sector. We regularly collect and analyse customer satisfaction and experience data to ensure that our services are meeting customer needs.
44. Satisfaction and experience information provides customer insight about the performance levels of public bodies, allowing an evidence base from which to analyse the concerns of users, customers and stakeholders. This information enables the public to hold government to account, assessing public service quality and productivity.
45. Our aim is to improve *public service quality* principle through the creation of visible feedback mechanisms to improve the services delivered by HMRC.
46. In the last few years, we have published a number of satisfaction and experience datasets. As part of our Open Data strategy, we will release the following information for the period 2012-14:
 - Quarterly Data Summaries containing a wide range of management information;
 - Customer Experience scores;
 - HMRC Charter progress reports;
 - Outputs from the International Benchmarking Programme;
 - Staff Survey.
47. The Quarterly Data Summaries (QDS) provide a snapshot of how we are spending our budget, the results we have achieved and how we are deploying our workforce. Customer Experience Scores are published using the HMRC Customer Survey within QDS as a measure of our customers' experience of dealing with us.
48. The HMRC Charter was launched in 2009, setting out standards of behaviour and values to which HMRC aspires in dealing with taxpayers and others. We are committed to publishing annual reports monitoring progress against the Charter, through the HMRC Charter Advisory Committee.
49. HMRC have also undertaken an International Benchmarking Programme to comparing the way we work to our counterparts in nine other countries. This analysis enables us to investigate leading practice elsewhere, and identify potential opportunities for improvement. It also allows other tax administrations to learn from HMRC's practices, and areas where we perform strongly.
50. As endorsed by the Permanent Secretary's Management Group (PSMG), we have also been releasing information and results of our annual staff survey and will publish new results in line with our commitment. By publishing this information we aim to monitor our organisational performance.

Table 3 Satisfaction and experience data publication plans

Dataset Name	Description	Date of release	Frequency	Open Government Licence?
Quarterly Data Summaries (QDS) – Management Information Data	<p>The Quarterly Data Summaries (QDS) are designed to provide a snapshot of how each Department is spending its budget, the results it has achieved and how it is deploying its workforce.</p> <p>The QDS follow commitments made at Budget 2011 and the Written Ministerial Statement on Business Plans. Their primary purpose is to make more of the management information currently held by government available to members of the public on a regular basis.</p> <p>As well as publishing QDS, we are committed to improve the quality, timeliness and accuracy of the data to allow the public to be able to judge the performance of HMRC in a meaningful and understandable manner. HMRC is planning for an annual version of this information to be formally laid in Parliament in the Annual Report and Accounts for July 2011/2012 onwards.</p>	Various in line with annual updating plans	Quarterly	<p>★★★</p> <p>Non-proprietary format</p>
Customer Experience Scores	<p>Customer Experience Scores are published within QDS as a measure of our customers' experience of dealing with us. The scores are calculated using the HMRC Customer Survey.</p> <p>Scores are measured for four customer groups (personal tax customers, benefits and credits customers, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and agents) by taking an average of positive responses to three survey questions. Two of these questions are common to all four customer groups: 'how easy was it to complete the processes?' and 'how easy was it to get in touch?'. The third question is 'how easy was it to understand what you had to do?' for personal tax, benefits and credits and SME customers or 'how good were HMRC at getting things right?' for agents only.</p> <p>The measure takes an average of scores for these four customer groups to produce an overall HMRC score for customer experience. The score is a rolling annual measure, which is released quarterly.</p>	Various in line with annual updating plans	Quarterly	<p>★★★</p> <p>Non-proprietary format</p>

Charter Progress Reports	<p>The HMRC Charter was launched in 2009, setting out standards of behaviour and values to which HMRC aspires in dealing with taxpayers and others. We are committed to publishing annual reports monitoring progress against the Charter, through the HMRC Charter Advisory Committee. The first report was released in January 2012.</p> <p>By monitoring and publishing our progress towards achieving the Charter standards, we will be improving our accountability to citizens, enabling them to assess public service quality.</p> <p>More information on the HMRC Charter can be found on the HMRC website at: http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/charter/index.htm</p>	January 2012	Annual	★ Accessible on the web
International Benchmarking Programme	<p>Part of HMRC's research activities involve comparing the way we work to our counterparts in nine other countries. This analysis enables us to investigate leading practice elsewhere, and identify potential opportunities for improvement. It also allows other tax administrations to learn from HMRC's practices, and areas where we perform strongly.</p> <p>One of the first outputs from this programme of work is an international tax benchmarking study, which compares HMRC's operational performance to nine other international tax administrations. This was published in 2011 and can be found at http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/research/benchmarking.htm.</p> <p>In line with our commitments to Open Data, we are planning to publish more International Benchmarking reports for 2012/2014.</p>	Ongoing	Ad Hoc	★ Accessible on the web
Staff Survey	<p>As endorsed by the Permanent Secretary's Management Group (PSMG), we have also been releasing information and results of our annual staff survey and will publish new results in line with our commitment.</p> <p>Staff are surveyed as part of the Civil Service People Survey. The reports are designed to measure employee opinion on a consistent basis and also to understand and enable action on the key drivers of employee engagement. This is done across a range of elements linked to our organisational performance.</p> <p>Our staff survey results are published on the HMRC website at: http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/research/staffsurvey.htm.</p>	Ongoing	Annual	★ Accessible on the web

Dynamic Information Markets

51. The creation of dynamic information markets involves developing an infrastructure that supports, allows and encourages data users to access the information being released by the Department.
52. Sharing data drives economic and social growth, allowing us to make the most of the information we collect and delivering value for money. It also enhances the quality of our analyses. We are continuously engaging with the academic, business, commercial, public data and application developer communities and our staff to maximise the value of our data, obtain their feedback, and explore new opportunities.
53. Building on the release of Open Data, we will aim to reach out to new communities of interest who may be able to put HMRC published data to good use, including communities not normally associated with tax. The ultimate aim is to foster growth in new and innovative uses such as mobile applications, info-graphics, data-journalism and others which help the public get the best out of HMRC services or promote the public understanding of tax.
54. We are also planning to develop a Tax and Administration Research Centre, in an effort to share our data with the academic community, maximise the use of the information we hold and to promote re-use for analytical purposes. The centre represents a major new investment in research, addressing taxation policy and operational challenges and is designed to build upon current UK research strengths and complement existing centres of expertise.

Table 4 Dynamic information markets publication plans

Dataset Name	Description	Date of release	Frequency	Open Government Licence?
Reaching Out to New Markets	<p>Building on the successes above, we want to reach out to new communities of interest who may be able to put HMRC published data to good use, including communities not normally associated with tax. The aim is to foster growth in new and innovative uses such as mobile applications, info-graphics, data-journalism and others which help the public get the best out of HMRC services or promote the public understanding of tax.</p> <p>We will conduct a programme of engagement with software firms, civic-minded developers and related communities, as well as engaging our own staff, to enable wider uses of HMRC published data.</p>	2012-13	Ad Hoc	Aiming to develop open sourced mobile applications
Tax Administration Research Centre	<p>We are planning to establish an independent Centre for Research on Tax Administration in January 2013, in partnership with the Economic Social Research Council (ESRC) and HM Treasury.</p> <p>The aim of the centre is to support high quality research and related activities on tax administration with a view to strengthening the theoretical and empirical understanding of the delivery and design of tax operations and policies. The centre represents a major new investment in research, addressing taxation policy and operational challenges, is designed to build upon current UK research strengths and complement existing centres of expertise.</p> <p>The main focus for the centre will be tax administration, but it will also develop models used in forecasting and evaluation. It will use and advance a wide range of methods and approaches including, for example, utilising and linking new data sources and building on current modelling simulation and forecasting techniques.</p> <p>In addition to conducting its own high quality, innovative and multi-disciplinary research programme, the centre is expected to provide a focus for academic and practitioner networking, stakeholder engagement, knowledge exchange and transfer, international collaboration and the development of research capacity in tax administration.</p>	January 2013	Ad Hoc	Conditions to the use of the information

Continuous improvement of data quality

55. We are committed to improve the quality of the data we hold and publish, in an effort to drive the benefits and outcomes of the Transparency agenda to a higher level. Our approach to data quality will be focused on balancing the trade-off between high data quality, data protection and cost.
56. The Department has a number of initiatives that will help to improve the quality of data in HMRC. This includes the RTI Programme, which is working with employers to improve the quality of data they submit to HMRC, and the Data Programme, which is working to put in place effective governance and tools for business units to improve on data quality issues. As a Department we aim to ensure that data held in HMRC is monitored, reviewed and quality-assured.
57. We will also work to develop mechanisms to enhance the standard of our information and meets the purpose for which it is intended. This is an ongoing process that involves regularly reviewing our information and assessing whether it is fit for purpose. We will also continue to try to engage users in our decisions, as demonstrated by the number of consultations we have undertaken in the past few years.
58. Better data will drive public service quality and productivity, with tangible benefits to the services provided to the public. In order to achieve this, we will work to develop clear corporate standards for the information we hold and publish.
59. The Department is currently engaging in various activities to enhance its information and make it available in Open formats, such as the upgrade of UK Trade Statistics publication channels and the improvement of National Statistics releases.

Table 5 Continuous improvement of data quality publications plans

Dataset Name	Description	Date of release	Frequency	Open Government Licence?
Upgrade of UK Trade Information Website	<p>The www.uktradeinfo.com website provides access to information, guidance and tools related to the collection of trade statistics from the EU-wide Intrastat survey and Customs import and export procedures. It also provides high-level (aggregated) data tables and a database hosting the detailed trade datasets in an interactive environment.</p> <p>We are redeveloping the website to improve user access to the trade datasets and to enhance the user experience. The improvements which will be launched in Spring 2012, include: removing the registration requirement to access detailed data; 2-click access to the enhanced interactive trade database; an increase in the data available by adding past years and additional data fields, and by reducing over-suppression of data; new multi-dimensional presentation of data with time-series, charting, mapping and dynamically-updated graphics, and enhanced data table storing functionality with 'sharing' capability for social media users.</p> <p>UK Trade Statistics specific consultations are available via the trade statistics website at https://www.uktradeinfo.com/index.cfm?task=userconsults</p>	Spring 2012	Twice monthly (one each for Non-EU and EU trade)	★★★ Non-proprietary format
Improvement of National Statistics	<p>We are committed to improving National Statistics releases through increased public consultation. Engagement ensures National Statistics releases are developed to meet user needs, with particular emphasis on improving commentary and presentation.</p> <p>As highlighted in the Big Data section, the main internet page for HMRC's National Statistics is at http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/thelibrary/national-statistics.htm. From here, users can access over 100 statistical releases. Sub-sections provide access to current user consultations, and historic consultation exercises specific to particular publications, including HMRC's responses.</p> <p>Details of other consultations held by HMRC available at: http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/consultations/index.htm.</p>	Various in line with annual updating plans	Monthly, quarterly and annual publications	★★ Available as structured data

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Tax Transparency Sector Board

60. As part of the Open Data Strategy, we are planning to set up a Tax Transparency sector board which will drive this agenda in HMRC. This board will be a platform to engage in influential discussions about the information HMRC holds, with senior representatives from various organisations across government, academia and the private and social sector.
61. It will also represent a forum for debate and/or resolution potential issues in the high public-interest area of taxation, involving senior political leaders and officials, as well as the relevant data user and re-user community (e.g. academics, private and third sector organisations).
62. The board will inform and advise HMRC's Open Data Strategy, helping us identify and record new data releases that could be reused by industry for commercial purposes and analysed by academia for wider public benefit, with a particular focus on:
- large routine public service datasets;
 - provision for users of HMRC services to access their own identifiable data;
 - user feedback on service;
 - strategies for engagement with data users to drive social and economic growth;
 - supporting individuals and businesses to obtain access to public sector data.
63. The HMRC Tax Transparency sector board will be chaired by a senior HMRC representative. It will also include representatives from the department to cover taxpayer confidentiality and data protection issues.

Conclusion

64. The Open Data Strategy demonstrates our full commitment to the transparency agenda and the Public Data Principles.
65. The size of HMRC and the very wide range of data we hold and use within our department means that this is an ambitious undertaking. We believe this covers the vast majority of HMRC's Open Data initiatives and data of greatest general interest.
66. However, as part of our ongoing work on transparency we will engage with internal and external stakeholders to consider what other information and data we might release at regular intervals and continue to ensure that the data we publish is relevant to users.
67. The wide range of datasets and initiatives we are planning to release and undertake for 2012-2014 underlines once more our commitment to play a key role in transparency and drive reform further. As part of this pledge, we will continue to engage with data-holders, data-users and developers, and investigate opportunities to publish new information through existing or innovative channels.
68. Feedback on the Open Data Strategy can be sent to transparency.kai@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk.

Appendix A - Our Commitment to Transparency and Data Protection

Transparency and openness are at the heart of the government commitment to transform the relationship between the citizen and the state. HMRC believes that greater transparency will deliver greater value for money and enable the public to better hold us to account.

We are fully committed to the transparency agenda, and transparency has become a key principle for Department. The Chief Executive, Lin Homer and the whole of the Executive Committee have underpinned our commitment to transparency across HMRC by communicating our approach to transparency at all levels.

We also remain dedicated to the [Public Data Principles](#) set out by the Public Sector Transparency Board. In line with these, we have released information that is directly aligned to our performance management framework, and will continue to gather evidence from users of our data and other members of the public to assess whether we have met our pledge to deliver an effective customer service.

We will continue publishing data wherever possible. However, we fully recognise the privileged access we have to confidential and personal information, and we will protect it. We will release data as and when it is appropriate, but at the same time we need to keep some data confidential, as releasing it could harm our operational capabilities. We will also ensure we do not provide sensitive information to those who seek to pervert the tax system, safeguarding our ability to hold them to account and maintain fairness.

Subject to this we will continue to engage with the academic, business, commercial, public data and application developer communities and our staff to maximise the value of our data, obtain their feedback, and explore new opportunities. We will keep our information under review to examine and improve the amount and frequency of data we release.

Working closely with the Valuation Office Agency, our Executive Agency, we have made a number of datasets available at www.data.gov.uk, the single online portal for central and local government data. We will continue to publish our datasets in accessible and reusable formats, where reasonable and practical.

Requests for new data will be treated in line with Freedom of Information guidelines. Where release does not breach our legal obligations to protect customer data, we now also publish many more Freedom of Information responses on our website at: <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/freedom/disclosure-log.htm>.

Our Transparency Implementation Plan setting out more detail on our approach to transparency and an initial inventory of some of our key datasets was published in May 2011: <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/transparency/implementation-plan.htm>.

In line with the commitments set out in the transparency section of the HMRC Business Plan 2011-2015 (<http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/about/reports.htm>) we will continue to:

- Publish data by default wherever possible;
- Publish data in line with the Public Data Principles;
- Make transparency a key part of our everyday activities;
- Make datasets available in a reusable format where reasonable and practical;

- Keep our data under review, so as to examine and improve the amount and frequency of data released into the public domain;
- Link all datasets released on www.data.gov.uk, the single online portal for central and local government data.

We will also continue to comply with our obligations, namely:

- Our strict legal duty to protect all information we hold, as set out in the Commissioners for Revenue and Customs Act 2005. In line with our legal obligations, we will not release any information we hold unless we have a legal basis to do so;
- To ensure we do not provide information that would encourage or support those seeking to pervert the tax system and steal from the public purse;
- To maintain our ability to function as a government department in line with public expectations of our role and effectiveness. In this context, we will consider both the likely positive and negative behavioural implications of releasing our data.

Appendix B – Alignment to the Information Principles

Principle	Implication	HMRC Alignment
Principle 1 - Information is a Valued Asset	There is a declaration from the organisation to establish the importance of information to the business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information is a valued asset in HMRC and we see it as a fundamental tool to deliver public services. In order to manage the tax system, we need to be able to collect and administer data effectively, whilst protecting taxpayers' records. We recognise that good quality information is not only an operational imperative but that information is and must be treated as a valuable resource. It must be managed responsibly to enable support for dynamic, evidence led decisions both in the administration of the business and in how we conduct relationships with our customers and the remainder of government. Therefore, we have developed an Information Management Strategy and Framework, providing a clear model for assessing and recording the value of our information assets. As part of our ongoing commitment to transparency we will continue to analyse and understand the extent of the information assets we hold, through developing information models, asset registers, data dictionaries and repositories in order to guide and, where necessary, impose information management. In May 2011 we were one of the first Departments across Whitehall to publish an initial inventory of their datasets⁹. This project allowed us to start investigating the life cycle of our data and take stock of our information, analysing ownership, security marking/disclosure and assessing publication opportunities/risks.
	The approach is defined for consistently identifying, categorising and cataloguing Information Assets and their usage	
	A framework for assessing and recording the value of information assets is established	

⁹ <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/transparency/implementation-plan-catalogue.xls>

Principle 2 - Information is Managed	A framework for managing information through the different stages of its lifecycle is established	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We aim to ensure that information is stored, managed, protected and exploited in a manner commensurate with its value. This is supported by a governance structure establishing clear roles and responsibilities, as well as controls and assurance protocols to handle data. • We have identified good practice for data administration and developed procedures to manage information securely. Different steps are taken depending on the assets' lifecycle, from identification of data requirements to the retirement of the asset. Information items handled by the Department are given protective markings and we have operating standards for transferring data. • We have created registers to minimise risk exposure and information loss and implemented models to facilitate early identification, mitigation and acceptance of potential issues that might damage our assets. • Roles have been established and defined within the Department to clarify ownership and responsibilities. Each business unit in HMRC has a data guardian whose responsibility is to promote good information security and to help ensure that our policies are currently applied. • Our staff undertakes mandatory training in records management and data security, with the goal to promote a culture of safe information management and raise awareness on the importance of appropriate data handling practices in the Department. • In line with our Information Management Strategy, Framework and Principles, we will continue to develop mechanisms for retention and disposal of essential information in accordance with Departmental and Government standards. HMRC will continue working to ensure that information is recoverable in the event of loss, on a timescale consistent with the Department's requirements. • In our plans for storing data, we will also seek to be aligned to current technology developments, with information collected and published using appropriate media. When releasing data, we will take into consideration accessibility and explore the possibility of adopting reusable formats, in accordance with Open Government guidance. • We recognise the privileged access we have to customer and personal taxpayer information. Therefore we will continue to protect confidential records and personal data in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Commissioners for Revenue and Customs Act 2005. We will not publish data which could inhibit our ability to perform our functions or provide those who pervert the tax system with information that could undermine our ability to ensure the fairness of our system.
	The approach to digital continuity is defined	
	A framework for information risk assessment and risk management is established	
	The approach to ensuring legal and regulatory compliance is defined	
	The approach to Information Governance is defined	
	A skills framework and / or maturity model is established to develop organisational capabilities and culture for information management	

Principle 3 - Information is Fit for Purpose	An approach is defined to determining the right quality of information to meet its purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For certain processes / datasets we have created systems to monitor, review and quality-assure data. We aim to put mechanisms in place to ensure that information is of a sufficient standard to meet the purpose for which it is intended. This will include regularly reviewing our information and assessing whether it is fit for purpose. We seek to engage users in our decisions, as demonstrated by the number of consultations we have undertaken in the past few years.
	A consistent approach is established to describing, recording, and communicating information quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We aim to be transparent regarding the purposes of the data, methods of collection and reasons for non-disclosure.
	Processes and governance are established to monitor and assure information quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are working to ensure that the majority of our information is described, recorded and communicated in a consistent way. We have developed standards for publication and we want to ensure that citizens are aware of what we hold.
	An approach is defined to recording the relationship between information and its supporting technology platform and format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where the information is sourced from outside the Department, all reasonable care is taken to ensure its accuracy and integrity. Whilst considering whether data can be published externally, we take into account accessibility and use. The aim is to enable information users to form a common understanding of our data, and make informed judgements regarding accuracy, format and suitability for reuse. Prior to disclosure, we have to ensure that taxpayers' confidentiality is protected but also take into consideration accuracy, validity, reliability, timeliness, relevance and completeness. Information systems will be managed according to defined processes with appropriate technical support as data is moved and transformed during processing such as ETL (Extract, Transform & Load).
Principle 4 - Information is Standardised and Linkable	There is a commitment to Open Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are developing clear corporate standards for the information we hold and publish and we are committed to make it available openly, wherever possible. We will continue to define conventions on format, taxonomies, ontology and placement in existing data frameworks and hierarchies, including the metadata which defines and describes it.
	Corporate standards are established for the organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are also aiming to create a framework for linking information both internally and with external organisations and we are committed to develop innovative formats for data linkage. Whilst exploring possibilities to join data, we will assess benefits and risks of migrating our information to new platforms.
	A framework for linking information is established	
	A pragmatic approach for migrating to standardised, linkable data is established	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will also continue considering ways for joining information from HMRC datasets together and with various Whitehall data sources, as demonstrated by initiatives such as the HMRC Datalab¹⁰ and the number of gateways for data exchange we have developed with other government departments.

¹⁰ <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/datalab/index.htm>

Principle 5 - Information is Re-used	Opportunities to proactively offer re-use opportunities are identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We acknowledge that the value of our information would increase if we allow its reuse. For this reason, we have been looking for opportunities to maximise the potential of our datasets, both internally and externally and through the use of master data. We will work to improve consistency and standardisation of information assets further, by promoting their suitability for sharing and effective reuse within the Department, across government, and when shared as part of the governments Open data and Transparency initiatives. A list of datasets that can be reused is currently published as part of our implementation plan, which we will continue to update in line with transparency and information developments.
	Mechanisms are established to understand and, where possible, overcome the constraints on re-use	
	An approach is established for promoting information that can be reused	
	An approach is established to discovering information that can be reused	
	The approach to managing Reference / Master data is established	
Principle 6 - Public Information is Published	A framework is in place for responding to legal obligations regarding public access to information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We acknowledge the importance of releasing data back to the public, as demonstrated by the publication of a number of datasets through channels such as our website and www.data.gov.uk. We have adopted a proactive approach to disclosure. We publish information on our website systematically and have released clear guidance on data disclosures within and outside the Department. For example, we have regularly released Freedom of Information (FOI) requests¹¹ that we believe may be of wider public interest on our website. We have also regularly published procurement and organisation data, national and official statistics and research reports, which we have made available in reusable, non-proprietary formats.
	Going beyond the legal obligations, a framework is in place for proactively categorising information in terms of its relevance and suitability for publication	
	Channels and processes for publishing information are established	
	A pragmatic migration approach for publishing data is established	

¹¹ <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/freedom/disclosure-log.htm>

Principle 7 - Citizens and Businesses Can Access Information About Themselves	A framework is in place for responding to legal obligations regarding citizens' access to information about themselves and how it has been used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our website allows citizens and businesses to browse datasets that contain information about themselves, along with an explanation of how the data is used. • We continuously explore ways to improve the quality of our data and engage with users to understand their requirements. In our view, the information we collect ultimately belongs to the citizens and we see our role as caretakers of this data. • We recognise that we have privileged access to information and we will protect it in line with our legal obligations. HMRC complies with the eight Data Protection Principles set out in the Data Protection Act (1998) and acts as a data controller within the meaning of the legislation¹². At the same time, the Commissioners for Revenue and Customs Act 2005 guarantees that no information is released unless there is a legal basis to do so.
	Going beyond the legal obligations, opportunities are identified to proactively make information about citizens available to them by default	
	The approach to discovering information about a person is established	
	A pragmatic migration approach is established for enabling citizens' to access information about themselves	

¹² <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/leaflets/dp-fs1.htm>

Appendix C – Summary of HMRC's Publication Plans

Big Data

Dataset	Description	Accountability	Choice	Public service productivity	Public service quality	Social growth	Economic growth
HMRC Official and National Statistics	Over 100 official and national Statistics datasets on taxes, benefits and trade data, including small area analyses and geographical tables.	√			√	√	√
Procurement Data	Information about HMRC procurement and contracts: expenditure over £25,000; government procurement card (GPC) use over £500; tenders and contracts over £10,000.	√		√	√		√
Organisation Data	Information about HMRC people and organisation, including: our senior leaders' salary details, business expenses and hospitality received, summary data on our workforce and our organisation chart.	√			√		
HMRC Datalab	The HMRC Datalab is a new Research Data Centre (RDC) allowing access to anonymised administrative and survey data for approved academic researchers in a secure environment that is consistent with HMRC data policies.	√		√	√	√	√
Survey of Personal Incomes (Public Use Tapes)	Anonymised data from the Survey of personal Incomes, accessible through the Economic and Social Data Service (ESDS)	√		√	√	√	√
Importers Data	The Importers Details database provides access to the names and addresses of over 130,000 businesses who import goods into the UK from outside of the European Union.		√				√

My data

Dataset	Description	Accountability	Choice	Public service productivity	Public service quality	Social growth	Economic growth
Personal Tax Calculator	A system allowing people to calculate the amount of tax and NICs they may expect to pay, which does not link to their own personal data.	√			√	√	√
Personal Tax Statements	Personal income statements released to around 20 million taxpayers, including details of the income tax and National Insurance contributions (NICs) they have paid, their average tax rates, and how this contributes to public spending.	√		√	√	√	√
VOA Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rating List Band Search	Facility to check the entry on the CT valuation and NDR rating lists for properties. This information is available on the internet (direct.gov) and, for NDR rating list, as bulk data sets to purchase, including (i) the rating list and (ii) the summary valuations giving details underlying the valuation for the majority of 'bulk classes'.	√			√	√	√

Satisfaction and Experience Data

Dataset	Description	Accountability	Choice	Public service productivity	Public service quality	Social growth	Economic growth
Quarterly Data Summaries (QDS) – Management Information Data	A quarterly snapshot on how HMRC is spending its budget, the results it has achieved and how it is deploying its workforce.	√	√	√	√	√	√
Customer Experience Scores	Published within the QDS, the customer experience measure for SR10 is 'customers find us straightforward to deal with'. This is measured through the HMRC Customer Survey 2011-15 covering Personal Tax customers, Benefits and Credits customers, Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) and Agents.	√	√	√	√	√	√
Charter Progress Reports	An annual report is produced by the Charter Advisory Committee monitoring the on progress against HMRC Charter.	√	√	√	√	√	√
International Benchmarking Programme	Results from the first international benchmarking programme, comparing HMRC's performance to a number of other countries' tax administrations	√	√	√	√	√	√
Staff Survey	Results from the HMRC Staff Survey as part of the Civil Service People Survey	√	√	√	√	√	√

Dynamic Information Markets

Dataset	Description	Accountability	Choice	Public service productivity	Public service quality	Social growth	Economic growth
Reaching Out to New Markets	A programme of engagement with software firms, civic-minded developers and related communities, as well as engaging our own staff, to enable wider uses of HMRC published data.	√		√	√	√	√
Tax Administration Research Centre	Establishment of an independent Centre for Research on Tax Administration in partnership with the ESRC and HMT. The aim of the centre will be to support high quality research and related activities on tax administration with a view to strengthening the theoretical and empirical understanding of the delivery and design of tax operations and policies.	√		√	√	√	√

Continuously improving the quality of data

Dataset	Description	Accountability	Choice	Public service productivity	Public service quality	Social growth	Economic growth
Upgrade of UK Trade Information Website	Rebuild of the uktradeinfo website to improve public access to UK Overseas Trade Statistics data. Includes simplifying access by removing the registration requirement, publishing more data by improving web suppression algorithms and adding port data field, providing charting and mapping tools and data time-series from 1996.	√		√	√	√	√
Improvement of National Statistics	HMRC is committed to improving National Statistics releases through increased user consultation. Engagement with users has ensured National Statistics releases are developed to meet user needs with emphasis on improving commentary and presentation.	√	√	√	√	√	√