



**NATIONAL STATISTICS
OTHER THEME WORKING GROUP
MINUTES OF MEETING 15th June 2000**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Karen Dunnell	ONS (Chair)	Colin Youngson	DASA, MOD
Ann Barber	HO	Jil Matheson	ONS
Emma Waddington	SE		

ALSO PRESENT

Andrew Stephens	ONS (Methods and Quality)
Caroline Bustard	ONS (Methods and Quality)
Mandeep Lota	ONS (Methods and Quality)
Stephen Penneck	ONS (NAG)

SECRETARIAT

Chris Chantler	NSPD, ONS
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CIRCULATION

All participants

Absent Members:

Linda Murgatroyd	Cabinet Office
Elizabeth Robin	DFID

Others for information:

Paul Allin	DCMS	Ed Swires-Hennessey	NAW
Rachael Beaven	FCO	Richard Allen	HO
Martin Tyrell	NISRA		

Action:

1. Item 1: Introductions

2. Apologies for absence were received from:

- Linda Murgatroyd (CO)
- Elizabeth Robin (DFID)

3. The Chair welcomed members to the group's first meeting. Everybody present introduced themselves.

Mandeep and Caroline were present as part of their induction to the ONS quality review team.

Stephen Penneck was introduced as the new Director of National Statistics and Policy Division in ONS from 3rd July. He will succeed Karen Dunnell as Chair to the Group.

4. Item 2: Confirm Membership and Terms of Reference (Paper 2000(1))

5. The Chair introduced this paper detailing membership and terms of reference for the Other Theme Working Group (OTWG).

6. Since the initial membership was listed, the Cabinet Office has become a full member of the group.

7. The Group felt that it would improve the coherence of its activities if a representative of the Northern Ireland Assembly were to be added as a correspondence member.

Chris Chantler

The terms of reference were considered difficult to follow, and the group wished them to be recast.

Chris Chantler

8. Item 3: Methods of Working (Paper 2000(2))

9. The Chair introduced this paper.

10.

10. The methods of working as set out in the paper were agreed.

11. The group considered the issue of disseminating papers on the website. They agreed that a summary of the minutes and output papers, rather than process papers would be most useful.

12. Item 4: Scope of the OTWG (Paper 2000(3))

13. This paper was introduced by the Chair. It details the outputs within the scope of the theme, and provides a draft description of the theme intended to sit on the website.

14. Annex A was discussed in detail and members suggested various revisions. All members are to make amendments to the list and return them to the secretary

All/ Chris Chantler

by Friday 30 June. A revised list will then be circulated for approval at the next meeting.

15. It is essential that all outputs are accounted for within the scope of the various themes. The group were keen to ensure specifically that the Economy and Crime and Justice Theme lists were consulted. The secretary will circulate the Crime and Justice list and liaise with the secretary of the Economy TWG.

Chris Chantler

Following the completion of revised lists for all TWGs, the secretariat will circulate them to all members to ensure that all outputs are accounted for.

Chris Chantler

16. Item 5: The National Statistics Planning Process and Committee Structure (Paper 2000(4))

17. This paper was introduced by the Chair.

18. The group agreed on the need to produce a draft three-year plan for discussion at the next meeting. To inform this process, they considered what issues the group currently faced and what a strategic high-level plan for the group might include, accepting that this would provide a very diverse and challenging set of issues.

19. The main issue for the group was seen as trying to achieve some degree of harmonisation from the diverse range of outputs. Personnel statistics were identified as perhaps the one topic within the scope of the theme that does offer the opportunity for cross-departmental work, and may even cut across other TWGs. Other cross-cutting issues might include the dissemination of outputs and the changing nature of compendia publications. It was reported that the Cabinet Office are co-ordinating a review of personnel statistics, and more information on this would be made available to TWG members.

**Chris Chantler/
Linda Murgatroyd**

20. DASA reported that they were conducting their own review and would circulate their project plan to TWG members.

Colin Youngson

21. The Group also wished to consider ethnicity, regional requirements and devolution and how they impact on the statistical collection and production processes.

22. The group proposed that a TWG bulletin board may facilitate easier discussion, and the secretary agreed to look into this.

Chris Chantler

23. It was agreed that the group should prepare a draft 3-year plan. Further guidance would be issued to TWG members by the secretary.

24. Based on this guidance, all TWG members are to provide the secretary with their draft plans by 30 June. These will be collated and circulated for discussion at the next meeting.

All/ Chris Chantler

25. Item 6: User Consultation Arrangements (Paper 2000(5))

26. This paper sets out a common user consultation strategy for consulting users on National Statistics plans. It was introduced by the Chair.

27. The Group felt that effective user consultation posed a great challenge, given the broad scope of the theme. Members briefly outlined existing user consultation mechanisms, and agreed to provide the secretary with a full assessment by correspondence.

All

These returns would then be compiled into a paper for discussion at the next meeting.

Chris Chantler

28. Item 7: Quality Assurance Review Program (Paper 2000(6))

29. This paper sets out the quality review program and was introduced by Andrew Stephens from Methods and Quality Division in ONS.

30. The group considered the draft list of chunks and agreed that further work was required to achieve greater coherence.

31. The Home Office reported that their outputs were subject to an existing review process and this suited each one being listed individually. The group agreed that it would be best practice to label as many existing reviews as possible as National Statistics ones. ONS MQD will provide assistance on this.

All/ MQD

32. The group identified three possible chunks that were candidates for early review: compendia and personnel, both of which would cut across departments within the theme, and the existing DASA reviews.

33. All members agreed to provide details of their planned review processes, and to attempt to re-chunk their outputs. This will be discussed further at the next meeting.

All

34. Item 8: Website

35. The group agreed that populating the website was a priority. The theme “web champion” will write to all members requesting information for the theme part of the site.

All/ Chris Chantler

36. Annex B of the Scoping Paper (3), the long description of the theme, was discussed and members were actioned to return comments to the web champion.

All/ Chris Chantler

37. It was agreed that a demonstration of the website would be useful and that this should be arranged for the next meeting.

Chris Chantler

38. Item 9: Agree Forward Agenda Items

39. It was agreed that the following items would be put on the next agenda:

- Terms of Reference
- Website
- Draft 3-year plan
- Scope
- Chunking and the draft 5-year quality assurance review plan
- User consultation

40. Item 10: Dates for Future

- It was agreed that the secretary would arrange the next meeting for the mid-late July.