



**NATIONAL STATISTICS
OTHER THEME WORKING GROUP
MINUTES OF MEETING 28th July 2000**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Stephen Penneck	ONS (Chair)	Colin Youngson	DASA, MOD
Elizabeth Robin	DFID	Gwyneth Edwards	ONS
Linda Murgatroyd	CO		

ALSO PRESENT

Chris Atwood	DASA
Claire Ricketts	ONS (item 7)

SECRETARIAT

Chris Chantler	NSPD, ONS
----------------	-----------

CIRCULATION

All participants

Absent Members:

Emma Waddington	SE	Jil Matheson	ONS
Ann Barber	HO		

Others for information:

Tim Harris	DCMS	Ed Swires-Hennessey	NAW
Rachael Beaven	FCO	Martin Tyrell	NISRA
Richard Allen	HO		

Action:

1. Apologies for absence were received from:

- Emma Waddington (SE)
- Ann Barber (HO)
- Richard Allen (HO)
- Jil Matheson (ONS)

2. The Secretary reported that Tim Harris DCMS had now taken over from Paul Allin as a correspondence member for the Group.

The Group also welcomed Martin Tyrell (DFPNI) and Richard Allen (HO) as correspondence members to the Group.

3. Item 1: Minutes from the meeting held on 15th June

4. The minutes were agreed.

5. The actions from the last meeting were discussed. Action to be taken forward:

- Populating the website

Chris Chantler

6. Revisions to the Membership and Terms of Reference (paper NSTWG O(2000)(1) were discussed. The Terms of Reference had been recast and were agreed.

- The Group considered whether the current list of correspondence members was sufficient. It was felt that there were a number of bodies who may be interested in the work of the Group. A suggestion was to have a two-tier list of correspondence membership, one tier would be made up of contributing members (the current list) and a second tier would receive papers mainly for information.

Secretariat

7. The Group expressed concern over the level of information sharing within the GSS. In particular, the Group were keen for key findings from the review programme to be publicised. The Chair will take this forward.

Stephen Penneck

8. The Group then discussed the revised paper on Scope (NSTWG O(2000)(3).

- Annex A of the paper, the Scope list, was agreed.
- Annex B of the paper, the theme description for the website, has still to be finished. The Secretary will circulate this to all TWG members for comment by 31 August.

All/ Chris Chantler

9. The Group then considered the quality review programme and discussed their chunks (paper NSTWG O (2000)(6)).
- The Group were keen to address the problem of coherence across departments and administrations. All TWG members should comment on the list. **All**
 - Clarification is sought on the nature of the FCO and HO review processes. Both need to be added in to the existing five-year plan. **Chris Chantler**
 - The proposed list should be provided to the Quality Assurance Program Board for its meeting on 4 August. **Chris Chantler**
 - The Group questioned how GSS work that fell outside National Statistics would be reported on. **Stephen Penneck**

10. Items 2 and 3: Existing User Consultation (paper NSTWG O(2000)(8)) and Further Guidance on Stakeholder Consultation (paper NSTWG O(2000)(9))

11. These two papers were discussed together.
12. The Group endorsed the consultation processes outlined in paper 9. However, for a number of departments within this TWG, their main users are internal, and it will be reliant on internal mechanisms to ensure that suitable consultation procedures take place.
13. The Group were also keen to stress the importance of managing user expectation. The views of government users will already have been taken into account.
14. Existing consultation arrangements were discussed. The Group agreed to provide outstanding lists to the Secretary by the end of August.

All/ Chris Chantler

15. The Group were keen to stress the importance of being able to target users effectively, a particular issue for a TWG with such a wide scope. Users will register their interest on the website by Theme. Consulting all those registered within this Theme on each topic would be unhelpful. A solution could be to sub-divide the Theme by subject. This would ensure, for example, that a consultation on fire statistics would not necessarily be sent to those who registered an interest within the Theme on personnel statistics. The Secretary will take this forward with the website team.

**Chris Chantler/
website team**

16. Item 4: Guidance on the three-year work plan (paper NSTWG O(2000)(7))

17. This paper was introduced by the Chair.

18. The editor of the plan will be Chris Chantler.

- All TWGs are actioned to deliver a Theme work plan, following a common timetable, by the time they next meet in November. The Group felt that they would need a slightly different approach if they were to pull all the disparate pieces together into a coherent plan. This would not delay the plan's final delivery, but would entail an extra TWG meeting in September to ensure Theme level coherence. The Group agreed to the following:

- All TWG members to provide the editor with their draft departmental plan by 31 August

All

- A Theme draft plan will be compiled and circulated by 8 September

Chris Chantler

- TWG meets the week beginning 11 September

- Revised Theme plan is cleared by correspondence week beginning 18 September and put out for consultation.

All/Chris Chantler

19. Item 5: Guidelines on Transparency (paper NSTWG O(2000)(10))

20. This paper was introduced by the Chair.

21. The Secretary pointed out that the Secretariat would be re-writing this paper. TWGs that had already met felt that consistency across all Themes was essential. A revised paper will be circulated to all TWG members in August. This will then be discussed at a Chairs meeting in September, where a common line on transparency can be achieved.

Secretariat

22. Item 6: Proposals for future agenda items (paper NSTWG O(2000)(12))

23. This paper was introduced by the Secretary.

24. The proposed agenda items outline all those tasks that the TWG must undertake to fulfil its terms of reference. However, the agendas are not set in stone and should be regarded as an aide memoir. With the exception of the planning cycle which is fixed, other items may be moved if agendas become too long.

25. Item 7: National Statistics Website (paper NSTWG O(2000)(11))

26. Claire Ricketts from ONS provided a demonstration of the website.

27. The Group wished clarification on the following:

- How are Cabinet Office press releases placed on the website

Website Team

- Scotland and Northern Ireland are to be placed in the “Learning Zone” **Website Team**
 - Labels for the TWG need to be edited to state “Other” **Chris Chantler**
 - All theme pages should be scanned and updated **Chris Chantler**
28. The Group thanked Claire for the demonstration.
29. The Group then briefly discussed the website paper. They agreed in principle to formalising arrangements for populating the website and looked forward to the first draft of the SLA. **Website Team**
30. The web champion will be seeking TWG member help to appoint departmental contacts to assist in ensuring the website is kept up-to-date. **All/Chris Chantler**
- 31. Any other business**
- Ethnic Work: The Cabinet Office and DASA reported that, for consistency, they will re-survey their personnel lists based on the new Census Categories. This work should be commissioned in the Autumn and carried out next year.