



[Redacted]

Richard Laux
UK Statistics Authority

[Redacted]

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Dear Richard

[Redacted], from our Justice Analytical Services team, has already written setting out a number of specific concerns about the content and accuracy of the draft report. I also promised to follow up our meeting last Tuesday, with my concerns about the assessment process.

On the process, my initial understanding was that the purpose of the review was to seek reassurance that the quality concerns identified about the Recorded Crime Statistics for England and Wales were not replicated in Scotland. The issues raised about the statistics in England and Wales included concern that the underlying data on crimes recorded by the police in England and Wales may not be reliable; a lack of assurance around recording practices, and a differing trend between the survey and administrative data, linked to the use of the recorded crime figures in police performance management. In response, we agreed that you would seek reassurance from users of the Scottish Recorded Crime statistics, and that we would deliver evidence on the other reasons.

I am content that my colleagues have provided good evidence on the comparison between survey and administrative data. [Redacted] While the planned HMICS audit will be more comprehensive, the 2013 HMICS audit, combined with other long-standing assurance processes, suggests little evidence that there are flaws in recording or quality assurance practices. [Redacted]

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The Scottish Government received its final designation letter last July for other official statistics products based on the recorded crime data (homicide, domestic abuse, firearms). How UKSA considers data from administrative systems in its assessment work appears to have moved substantially since then. While this policy is still under development by the UKSA, it seems unreasonable to apply an approach to re-assessment that has not yet been finalised or communicated to us.

Taking these issues together, I want to challenge the recommendation set out in the draft report to de-designate the Recorded Crime in Scotland statistics. I believe that we are at a point now where we can be appropriately confident about the quality of recording and data management practices. Once we have the HMICS audit and your policy on taking statistics from administrative data is published, we would of course want to engage with you on any further assessment of these statistics.



I think it is important that my concerns and issues about the assessment process and the content of the report are considered and responded to and are articulated clearly to the Committee, before any decision is reached.

Yours sincerely

Roger