

PSNI Official Statistics

Revisions Policy

This Statement is issued in accordance with the requirements set out under Principle 2 of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics and sets out the Police Service of Northern Ireland's Statistics Branch's intention to be open and transparent about any revisions it makes to Official or National Statistics and to ensure that users of statistics produced by PSNI Statistics Branch have easy access to comprehensive information about those revisions

Revisions to statistical data can be required for a variety of reasons, especially when working with large administrative databases that are constantly changing on a daily basis. Any such revisions are usually minor in nature with minimal implications for the interpretation of the data. The PSNI's Statistics Branch continually strives to produce the most accurate and reliable figures it can, in light of the available information and resources. However, improvements and consequential revisions can result from ongoing developments and improvements to our processes and data sources.

Some statistical outputs are more subject to revisions than others for example, our in-year performance statistics are provisional and subject to revision/change whereas our complete financial year statistics are not subject to planned revision. Where required, Statistics Branch will make it clear which Official or National Statistics are provisional and subject to a scheduled pattern of revision. Our in-year statistical reports on crime, injury road traffic collisions and on the security situation contain a section highlighting the extent and scale of revisions made to previously reported figures within the current financial year (i.e. if the figures published for a previous month are revised later in the year). All previously published monthly reports within the current financial year are also available from our website year so that users can access the original reports if required.

Our methods will be kept under review to minimise the scale of revisions. In general, our regular in-year official statistics updates are provisional and will be superseded by the next update of the same statistic as we progress through the financial year reporting period (e.g. when the statistics for April & May are updated with the figures for the next month – June – the revised figures for April & May will also be included in that next update). The publication of the finalised statistics at the end of the financial year therefore contain the complete official statistics for the year in question and for the various intervening periods that provisional statistics may have been provided for.

Errors

Many of the revisions made by the PSNI's Statistics Branch are a normal and inevitable feature of statistical life and users are able to absorb and plan for those revisions accordingly. They reflect the conflicting demands of having to provide timely information which is also accurate, reliable and meaningful. However, occasionally figures may need to be corrected as a result of errors or weaknesses in procedures or systems or in source material. Regardless of whether the responsibility is the PSNI's Statistics Branch or others, we will follow the procedures described below.

Announcement of impending corrections

The PSNI's Statistics Branch will be open and transparent about the need for any unscheduled corrections. Once the need for a correction that warrants customer notification is ascertained, The PSNI's Statistics Branch will announce its intention to issue corrections and the planned date of issue on the PSNI's website.

Dissemination of corrections

Decisions relating to the dissemination of unscheduled corrections will be made by the senior statistician within the PSNI. In general terms:

Web versions of releases/publications/tables/articles/etc

As soon as possible after the PSNI's Statistics Branch ascertain that a correction is necessary and warranted, it will amend all current electronic versions of any release, publication, table, article, etc which contains the affected statistics or text, and re-populate the website as soon as possible with those amended versions. If the correction is minor, or insignificant, in the sense of being inconsequential and hardly noticeable, the PSNI's Statistics Branch will insert the necessary changes without alerting anyone. Alternatively, the Branch may accumulate minor corrections and make an update at the time of the next scheduled web publication to avoid making too many frequent but minor changes.

Any major revisions/corrections to web versions of statistical outputs will be made as soon as possible and an appropriate notification will be placed on the website to ensure that users are aware of the revision.

Paper versions of releases/publications/tables

Unless there are compelling reasons, the PSNI's Statistics Branch will not attempt to recall/re-issue any paper versions of any release, publication or table etc. that contains the affected statistics or text if it has already been distributed. The PSNI's Statistics Branch will ensure that when further paper copies are issued, they will include any corrections that have been incorporated in the electronic versions.

However, if the error is substantial or significant, the PSNI's Statistics Branch will, where practicable, notify the recipients of paper versions by telephone or e-mail, and point them to the revised version available on the web. If the release or publication has a long shelf-life, the Branch will consider re-issuing a revised paper version

Principal Statistician
PSNI's Statistics Branch
Tel 0845 600 8000 Ext. 24135
statistics@psni.police.uk

Last updated June 2014