




Title: FOI01284/Briscoe

Originator: Paul Wearn on 26/10/2011

Response

19/11/2010 13:46 - Subject - Re: Joint Research project with Timetric ? (Peter Patterson)

Peter Patterson
19/11/2010 13:46

To: Joe Grice/ONS@ONS
cc: Aileen Simkins/ONS@ONS, Felix
Ritchie/EASD/MESAG/LONDON/ONS@ONS
Subject: [PROTECT] - Re: Joint Research project with Timetric? 

Joe,

Simon Briscoe was referred to us by Stephen Penneck. With his new company, Simon wishes take lots of ONS unpublished data series and put them on the web, focusing on LFS and price data.

The VML is one way - possibly the only feasible way at the moment - for him to get this information. After discussion with the LFS team, we have arranged for Simon B to obtain access to the data under standard VML rules for a feasibility project. This should allow him (or one of his team) to learn about the data and experiment with producing the kind of series he wants, in a lawful manner, while not permitting him to take any data away. It is **not** an open-ended project; the purpose is to enable him to develop a long-term proposal to ONS about releasing data. It also gives the office time to consider its broader response while being seen to be constructive in the meantime.

The VML team have been supporting this as they do any other project. Simon B has been through the VML training. We set up a meeting with the LFS team, but we do this for other researchers when we feel it would be useful.

We have also discussed with Prices - his other specified area of interest. They were concerned about the communication effect of 'alternative' RPI series being published, but also recognised the value of some free consultancy. They have therefore agreed to the same 'feasibility study' approach, but have explicitly asked for methodological development to be included in the project proposal.

We are now waiting for a response from Simon B. When it comes, it will probably go to a higher level of seniority than usual because of the potential sensitivity of what is being proposed. But this is not unknown - for instance, we asked Dennis Roberts to sign off the IFS project on prices because it was an investigation of the methodology on RPI.

This is exactly the sort of request that the new website should (in the long term) be designed to handle, but unfortunately not yet. We understand that Simon B's colleagues at Timetric have been talking to Simon Field about the web development API.

In summary:

- Timetric has a project to use the VML to run for a couple of months, to see whether their proposals are feasible. If they are, it is then for ONS to decide whether to support them or not.
- We are not showing Timetric any preferential treatment - just using standard standard VML processes.

Peter

Peter Patterson

Response 10 of 0 to "FOI01284/Briscoe"

Deputy Director, Economic Interpretation
Office for National Statistics
email: xxxxx.xxxxxxxx@xxx.xxx.xx

Helen Patterson
19/11/2010 15:05

To: Simon Field/ONS@ONS, Sarah Brown/ONS@ONS
cc: Joe Grice/ONS@ONS, James Edmonds/ONS@ONS, Nicola Shearman/ONS@ONS, Peter Patterson/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS, Felix Ritchie/EASD/MESAG/LONDON/ONS@ONS, DG@ONS, Jan Jones/ONS@ONS
Subject: [RESTRICTED] - Fw: Re: Fw: Re: Chat with Timetric

Simon / Sarah,

I attach some further emails at the bottom of this string between Joe and Peter Patterson giving further information about Simon Briscoe's request for data and linking this with his use of the VML. Peter and Felix are expecting further correspondence from Simon re work he would like to carry out on prices using the VML.

We need to join all this up.

Joe has suggested that you both meet with Simon Briscoe to find out more about his request but it may be worth either inviting Peter / Felix to the meeting or at least meet with them before you meet with Simon Briscoe.

It would be useful for us all to be kept in the loop.

Can Peter / Felix share any further correspondence they have?

Can Simon / Sarah let me know if you are happy with the proposed way forward?

Helen
Helen Patterson
DG Office
Office for National Statistics

09/12/2010 13:49 - Subject - Prices data (Paul J Jackson)

Paul J Jackson
09/12/2010 13:49

To: Sarah Brown/ONS@ONS, Simon Field/ONS@ONS
cc: Colin Downing/CEND/CPSG/TITCHFIELD/ONS@ONS
Subject: [UNCLASSIFIED] - Prices data

Hi Sarah, Simon,

A useful meeting yesterday, which brought out a lot of interesting issues.

But to drop down to the mundane, the release of the prices data needs MRP approval. Colin - could you assist?


Paul J Jackson
Legal Services,
ONS

Sarah Brown

To: Paul J Jackson/SSSG/TITCHFIELD/ONS@ONS

Response 10 of 0 to "FOI01284/Briscoe"

09/12/2010 14:13

cc: Colin Downing/CEND/CPSG/TITCHFIELD/ONS@ONS, Simon Field/ONS@ONS, Darren Morgan/OFD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS, Helen Patterson/ONS@ONS
Subject: [UNCLASSIFIED] - Re: Prices data 

Hi Paul yes absolutely message heard and received. It's Darren Morgan who is supplying the data so I am asking him to get in touch with Colin directly before supplying the data to Simon.

Best wishes,

Sarah
Sarah Brown
Head of Publishing | Pennaeth Cyhoeddiadau

09/12/2010 14:32 - Subject - Re: Prices data (Paul J Jackson)

From : Paul J Jackson/SSSG/TITCHFIELD/ONS
To : Sarah Brown/ONS
CC : Colin Downing/CEND/CPSG/TITCHFIELD/ONS, Darren Morgan/OFD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS, Helen Patterson/ONS, Simon Field/ONS
Date Sent : 09/12/2010 14:32:40
Subject : [UNCLASSIFIED] - Re: Prices data

Thanks Sarah,

Colin is aware of the pace requirement here too.

Paul J Jackson
Legal Services,
ONS

09/12/2010 16:13 - Subject - Prices microdata to Simon Field ? (Colin Downing)

Colin Downing
09/12/2010 16:13
To: Darren Morgan/OFD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS
cc:
Subject: [UNCLASSIFIED] -


Hi Darren

I understand there are plans to provide Simon Field with Prices data? I have no more information than that so I would be grateful if you could provide some background info so I can provide you with the relevant forms and info required to get this request moving.

regards
Colin

Microdata Release Unit - Legal Services
ONS - part of the United Kingdom Statistics Authority

09/12/2010 16:33 - Subject - Re: Prices microdata to Simon Field ? (Darren Morgan)

Darren Morgan/OFD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS
09/12/2010 16:33
To: Colin Downing/CEND/CPSG/TITCHFIELD/ONS@ONS
cc:
Subject: [UNCLASSIFIED] - Re: Prices microdata to Simon Field? 

Response 10 of 0 to "FOI01284/Briscoe"

Hi Colin,

The data request, if approved, wld be sent to Simon Briscoe whose name you might recognise as he used to be the Stats Editor at the FT but has just joined a private sector company called Timetric.

The data are pretty much consistent with the CPI/RPI data in the VML. The full details are here ->  but in summary:

1. Individual price quote data: basically the prices of a tin of beans, loaf of bread etc collected across the UK (shop names and addresses have been removed to anonymise the data)
2. Item indices: these are the indices for particular items e.g. loaf of bread (all price quotes for a particular item are averaged and indexed)
3. Item Weights: these are the weights allocated to each item index (provides info. on how important the item is in the CPI and are used when aggregating the items indices further up the CPI/RPI Hierarchy)
5. COICOP Map: this is metadata that is simply a map that shows how the all the information is combined to produce the CPI
6. COICOP Description: again just metadata than explains the item codes
7. Location Details: just a key of the how the regional codes translate into actual regions

We plan to provide data for 2009 as a sample dataset for review.

I hope this helps but pls do let me know if you wld like to discuss further.

Can I ask how long you think it wld take for these data to be considered by MRP? (depending on this, Helen Patterson may need to manage Simon's expectations on when he can expect to the receive the data).

Thanks

Darren

.....
.....
Darren Morgan | Head of CPI & RPI Production | Prices Division | Office for National Statistics: Newport
.....
.....

10/12/2010 11:28 - Subject - Meeting with Timetric on 8th December (Helen Patterson)

On 10 December 2010 11:28, Helen Patterson <helen.patterson@ons.gsi.gov.uk> wrote:

> Simon,

>

> Good to chat after so many years! I apologise that I am emailing a couple

> of days after the meeting rather than earlier. I thought it would be useful

> to do a quick summary of what we agreed.

>

> We agreed that Darren would let you have the prices data. We are putting it

> through disclosure control and once this is complete, I will let you know.


>

Response 10 of 0 to "FOI01284/Briscoe"

- > You were going to give some consideration to developing a proposal on data
- > for the labour market.
- >
- > I agreed to speak with the Business area about the headline figure in the
- > Index of Production release shown as a percentage of a year earlier (in this
- > case 3.3 per cent) but that the tables showed an index with 2006=100. The
- > Business area have said that Table 13 in the release shows the percentage
- > change on the year earlier, as shown in the pdf below. However, there is no
- > CDID for this at the moment but I understand this should change after
- > BB2011.
- >
- > Best wishes and will come back to you soon
- >
- > Helen
- >
- > Helen Patterson
- > Office for National Statistics

10/12/2010 12:01 - Subject - Re: Prices microdata to Simon Field ? (Colin Downing)

Colin Downing
10/12/2010 12:01

To: Darren Morgan/OFD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS
cc:
Subject: [UNCLASSIFIED] - Re: Prices microdata to Simon Field? 

Hi Darren

I discussed this request with Paul Jackson as I wasn't sure the formal MRP process was the correct route to authorise the release of the information required.

We think a more suitable option will be for you to provide a written submission to the MRP panel members and chair.

The submission should contain the following;

- description of the data
- information asset owner name
- why this is **not** personal information under S39 of SRSA (ie. why it doesn't relate to and identify a particular person (including a body corporate))
- recipient
- use of the data
- future uses - how other requests will be handled (disclosure log or publication scheme)
- state the type of licence/contract that will accompany the data and control its future use by Simon B. (Paul suggested an Open Government Licence (OGL) that permits free unrestricted re-use but with 'ONS' always listed as the source - this will obviously depend on the data not being classed as 'personal information')
- state Information Security Impact Level - the protective marking will have to be 'not marked' if it is to go out with an OGL

A number of the points above make it clear that the data will need to be classified as 'not personal information' otherwise it will require Simon to be accredited as an Approved Researcher which shouldn't be a problem in itself, but him wanting data off site might be. The panel has never allowed business data off of ONS to an AR and although this data isn't collected under the Stats of Trade Act

Response 10 of 0 to "FOI01284/Briscoe"

I'm not sure how they will treat it.

Any questions please give me a shout

regards
Colin

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10/12/2010 13:05 - Subject - Meeting with Timetric on 8th December (Simon Briscoe)

simon@timetric.com To: Helen Patterson/ONS@ONS
Sent by: cc: Sarah Brown/ONS@ONS, Darren
simon.briscoe@timetric. Morgan/OFD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS
com Subject: Re: [UNCLASSIFIED] - Meeting with Timetric on 8th December

10/12/2010 13:05

Thank you very much, Helen.

I suppose we might expect the data early next week - is that about right?

The one other issue we discussed was release times for data - we will let you know when we have trouble finding stuff that is not in the public domain by 9.45.

Simon

10/12/2010 17:24 - Subject - Link Message: CPI/RPI microdataset for Timetric: submission to MRP (Dec 10) (Darren Morgan)

From: [Darren Morgan/OFD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS on 10/12/2010 17:24](#)

To: Colin Downing/CEND/CPSG/TITCHFIELD/ONS@ONS

cc: Sarah Brown/ONS@ONS, Helen Patterson/ONS@ONS, Rowan Kelsoe/BDD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS

Subject: [UNCLASSIFIED] - Link Message: CPI/RPI microdataset for Timetric: submission to MRP (Dec 10)

Document Link Information:

Database: Prices

Document: CPI/RPI microdataset for Timetric: submission to MRP (Dec 10)

Colin,

Thank you for your advice earlier, very helpful. I wld be grateful if you cld circulate this request -> (Annex 2)to MRP Panel members. As discussed, it wld be gd to provide (if approval is given of course) these data to Timetric asap. The 'request' has limited access at the moment but I have given you editor control to 'open' as you see fit.

Pls do get in touch if you have any queries or wld like to discuss further.

Thanks again.

Darren

Response 10 of 0 to "FOI01284/Briscoe"

13/12/2010 11:38 - Subject - Fw: Link Message: CPI/RPI microdataset for Timetric: submission to MRP (Dec 10) (Colin Downing)

Colin Downing
13/12/2010 11:38

To: Tony Chapple/CEND/CPSG/TITCHFIELD/ONS@ONS
cc:
Subject: [UNCLASSIFIED] - Fw: Link Message: CPI/RPI microdataset for Timetric: submission to MRP (Dec 10)

regards
Colin

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ONS - part of the United Kingdom Statistics Authority

16/12/2010 14:43 - Subject - Untitled (Colin Downing)

Colin Downing
16/12/2010 14:43

Dear Frank

Following this afternoons meeting we have clarified the outstanding points

- Dennis has confirmed he is the driver for the release of this data.
- It is proposed that only physically collected data will be provided. This leaves out such components as housing and utility costs
- The dataset will cover the whole of 2009

regards
Colin

Microdata Release Unit - Legal Services
ONS - part of the United Kingdom Statistics Authority

17/12/2010 13:32 - Subject - Fw: Link Message: CPI/RPI microdataset for Timetric: submission to MRP (Dec 10) (Tony Chapple)

Tony Chapple
17/12/2010 13:32

To:Keith Spicer/ONS@ONS, Carole Abrahams/DHD/SESAG/LONDON/ONS@ONS
cc:Frank Nolan/MQD/SSSG/LONDON/ONS@ONS, Pam Davies/STID/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS, M Kelsoe/BDD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS, Paul J Jackson/SSSG/TITCHFIELD/ONS@ONS, M
Subject:[UNCLASSIFIED] - Fw: Link Message: CPI/RPI microdataset for Timetric: submission to MRP (Dec 10)

Keith, Carole,

As discussed on the phone.

I am forwarding a link to a document from Darren regarding a proposed release of data to Simon Briscoe/ Timetric. The link contains a zip file with the data to be released.

I have discussed this in detail in person with Frank as chair of MRP. Frank has asked that we look at the data and confirm its non disclosive.

Frank will not be able to make a decision on its release until we can give assurances that it is not possible to identify any individuals or businesses.

There is an urgency to action the request from Timetric. I would appreciate it if you could look at this at your earliest opportunity.
I am happy to discuss further on Monday.

Response 10 of 0 to "FOI01284/Briscoe"

Many thanks for your help.

Tony

21/12/2010 10:31 - Subject- Fw: Link Message: Timetric request for Prices data - MRP - Note - December 21 2010 (Frank Nolan)


Response

Tony
CC Paul, Colin, Helen,

1. I have discussed this request with Stephen Penneck and raised the issue at the Director's meeting this morning.
2. I was surprised this morning to have Dennis Roberts comment that he had not signed this out as the IAO. I had thought that we had discussed this last Thursday and I had asked for the agreement of the IAO concerned - which you noted was Dennis. Could you please follow through - this problem may have been caused by staff not being in Newport Office in the last few days.
3. Stephen also noted that I should send a note around Directors outlining what the proposal was. Could you please arrange. It would have to be very clear about what data we were proposing to release and how we were guaranteeing confidentiality, although again perhaps to note that we still need to have this agreed with SDC.
4. I would like the clearance from Dennis quickly and then follow this by sending the note to Directors.
5. To again note that as Chair of MRP I currently can see no issue that would prevent the release of this data.

21/12/2010 13:52 - Subject - Re: Fw: Link Message: CPI/RPI microdataset for Timetric : submission to MRP (Dec 10) (Carole Abrahams)

Carole Abrahams
21/12/2010 13:52

To: Tony Chapple/CEND/CPSG/TITCHFIELD/ONS@ONS
cc: Keith Spicer/ONS@ONS
Subject: [PROTECT] - Re: Fw: Link Message: CPI/RPI microdataset for Timetric: submission to MRP (Dec 10) 

Tony,

I have looked at this request and spoken at length to Rowan Kelsoe (Darren Morgan is on leave). Rowan has been very helpful and he is now going back to the agency who collected the data on our behalf, in order to get a copy of the agreement which they made with data suppliers.

I consider that an intruder could use these data to identify an individual retailer, due to the nature of some of the basket items and the low level of location variable. (For example there can't be many "non-NHS chiropractors" in Angel Islington, nor shops selling ham in Stamford Hill.) I consider that the best way to prevent such disclosure would be to have the location code no lower than local authority.

Although there is nothing in the data which could cause harm or distress to an individual retailer if he were identified in the data, we need to be aware that placing them in the public domain may impact on possible future data releases. We also need to ensure that we are not breaching any confidentiality agreement with data suppliers.

I need to see the MRP application before I can provide an assessment, so could you please send me a link to it. Once I see that and also the agreement made with the data supplier, then I shall do the required risk assessment.

Response 10 of 0 to "FOI01284/Briscoe"

Hope that helps. I'm here till Thursday evening, and I might be in next Thursday.

Carole

21/12/2010 14:00 - Subject - Re: Fw: Link Message: CPI/RPI microdataset for Timetric: submission to MRP (Dec 10) (Tony Chapple)

Tony Chapple
21/12/2010 14:00

To:Carole Abrahams/DHD/SESAG/LONDON/ONS@ONS
cc:Keith Spicer/ONS@ONS, Helen Patterson/ONS@ONS, Frank Nolan/MQD/SSSG/LONDON/Kelsoe/BDD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS, Pam Davies/STID/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS, Downing/CEND/CPSG/TITCHFIELD/ONS@ONS, Paul J Jackson/SSSG/TITCHFIELD/ONS@C
Subject:[PROTECT] - Re: Fw: Link Message: CPI/RPI microdataset for Timetric: submission to

Carol - a link to the MRP chairs brief sent to Frank ----> ([Annex 3](#) )


Frank / Dennis - for info. Please see Carol's initial response to the Timetric request from a disclosure control perspective.

Tony

21/12/2010 14:48 - Subject - Fw: Link Message: CPI/RPI microdataset for Timetric: submission to MRP (Dec 10) (Rowan Kelsoe)

Rowan Kelsoe
21/12/2010 14:48


To:Carole Abrahams/DHD/SESAG/LONDON/ONS@ONS
cc:Tony Chapple/CEND/CPSG/TITCHFIELD/ONS@ONS
Subject:[PROTECT] - Fw: Link Message: CPI/RPI microdataset for Timetric: submission to MR

Carole,
Please find .zip file in the attached doc link -> ([Annex 4](#) ). The zip file holds several letters that RI provide retailers when they recruit their stores into the CPI sample, as discussed.
Rowan

Rowan Kelsoe | RPI Production Computing and User Liaison | Room 1.227 | Office for National Statistics | Cardiff Road | Newport | Wales | NP10 8XG

21/12/2010 15:01 - Subject - Re: Meeting with Timetric on 8th December (Helen Patterson)

Helen Patterson
21/12/2010 15:01

To:simon@timetric.com
cc:Sarah Brown/ONS@ONS, Darren Morgan/OFD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS, Rowan Kelsoe
Subject:[UNCLASSIFIED] - Re: Meeting with Timetric on 8th December 

Simon,

I promised to keep you up to date with where we are. I mentioned last week that we were putting the data through disclosure control. We have come up with a disclosure issue which we are working on now to resolve as quickly as we can. I apologise for the further delay and will let you know as soon as a solution has been found. It is being worked on as I email.

Best wishes

Helen

Helen Patterson

Response 10 of 0 to "FOI01284/Briscoe"

DG Office
Office for National Statistics

21/12/2010 15:44 - Subject - Timetric request for Prices data - MRP - Note - December 21 2010 (Dennis Roberts)

Title: Timetric request for Prices data - MRP - Note - December 21 2010

Response To Response


Tony

Just to confirm that I was consulted and did approve the work on this project to assess what information could legitimately be provided. Until now however I had not seen the conclusions of the study and the recommendations. Using your note to Frank as a reference I am content with the thrust of the recommendations but like Carole Abrahams I have some reservations about disclosure of sensitive data, and I am concerned about how quickly we may be required to release data after the collection period. It is not clear what timing is envisaged - are we offering to supply days, weeks or months after the end of the quarter? I do not want to set an unhelpful precedent in this trial run so would be looking to supply data for the July to September period.

Dennis

22/12/2010 10:54 - Subject - Re: Fw: Link Message: CPI/RPI microdataset for Timetric : submission to MRP (Dec 10) - ADDENDUM/ONS (Carole Abrahams)

Carole
Abrahams/DHD/SESAG/
LONDON/ONS
22/12/2010 10:54

To Rowan Kelsoe/BDD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS
cc Darren Morgan/OFD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS, Frank Nolan/MQD/SSSG/LONDON/ONS@ONS, Helen Patterson/ONS@ONS, Mark Lewis/ONS@ONS, Nicola Shearman/ONS@ONS, Pam Davies/STID/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS, Paul J Jackson/SSSG/TITCHFIELD/ONS@ONS, Tony Chapple/CEND/CPSG/TITCHFIELD/ONS@ONS, Keith Spicer/ONS@ONS
Subject [PROTECT] - Re: Fw: Link Message: CPI/RPI microdataset for Timetric: submission to MRP (Dec 10) - ADDENDUM 

Rowan,

Thanks. Just having region code would be OK for SDC. But I think you'll find that the recipient will want lower geography. If you get the data collection agency to supply the post-codes for each location code, then ONS geography has a tool, the GRI Explorer, which converts post-codes to local authorities. Therefore, although it would be tedious and time-consuming, it would not require any special work to be put in place. (Maybe you could get the data collection agency to do this; they probably already have the information anyway.)

My opinion, based on dealing with customer requests for data, is that if we give them the lowest

Response 10 of 0 to "FOI01284/Briscoe"

geography which we can (i.e. LA/UA in this case), then they go away fairly happy.

Carole

22/12/2010 10:59 - Subject Re: Fw: Link Message: CPI/RPI microdataset for Timetric: submission to MRP (Dec 10) - ADDENDUM (Helen Patterson)

Helen Patterson
22/12/2010 10:59

To: Carole Abrahams/DHD/SESAG/LONDON/ONS@ONS
cc: Darren Morgan/OFD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS, Frank Nolan/MQD/SSSG/LONDON/ONS@ONS, Keith Spicer/ONS@ONS, Mark Lewis/ONS@ONS, Nicola Shearman/ONS@ONS, Pam Davies/STID/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS, Paul J Jackson/SSSG/TITCHFIELD/ONS@ONS, Rowan Kelsoe/BDD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS, Tony Chapple/CEND/CPSPG/TITCHFIELD/ONS@ONS
Subject: [PROTECT] - Re: Fw: Link Message: CPI/RPI microdataset for Timetric: submission to MRP (Dec 10) - ADDENDUM 

Carole,

If it would be helpful I could go back to Simon and check whether he would be happy with the information at the NUTS1 level before undertaking more work? Can you confirm if you would like me to do this?

Helen

Helen Patterson
DG Office
Office for National Statistics

22/12/2010 11:37 - Subject - Re: Fw: Link Message: CPI/RPI microdataset for Timetric: submission to MRP (Dec 10) - ADDENDUM

Carole Abrahams
22/12/2010 11:37

To:Helen Patterson/ONS@ONS
cc:Darren Morgan/OFD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS, Frank Nolan/MQD/SSSG/LONDON/ONS@ONS, Keith Spicer/ONS@ONS, Nicola Shearman/ONS@ONS, Pam Davies/STID/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS, Paul J Jackson/SSSG/TITCHFIELD/ONS@ONS
Subject:[PROTECT] - Re: Fw: Link Message: CPI/RPI microdataset for Timetric: submission to

Helen,

As discussed, if the only geography is NUTS1, then we do not consider that there are any disclosure issues. Please note that, if this is acceptable to the customer, then the following actions will be needed:

1. Remove "location code" field from the file 2009.txt
2. Remove row 7 "location" from file glossary.xls
3. Remove file location.txt.

The additional actions are recommended so that the customer does not know the format of the location code.

Carole

22/12/2010 13:45 - Subject - Link Message: Timetric request for Prices data - MRP - Final Note - December 24 2010 (Frank Nolan)

Response 10 of 0 to "FOI01284/Briscoe"

From: Frank Nolan/MQD/SSSG/LONDON/ONS on 04/01/2011 13:45
To: Tony Chapple/CEND/CPSG/TITCHFIELD/ONS@ONS
cc: Paul J Jackson/SSSG/TITCHFIELD/ONS@ONS, Michael Trevett/TITCHFIELD/ONS@ONS, Helen Patterson/ONS@ONS
Subject: [UNCLASSIFIED] - Link Message: Timetric request for Prices data - MRP - Final Note - December 24 2010

Document Link Information :

Database: New Methodology Directorate BDB
Document: Timetric request for Prices data - MRP - Final Note - December 24 2010

(Annex 1)



You may open the document by clicking on this link.

04/01/2011 15:02 - Subject - Fw: Link Message: Timetric request for Prices data - MRP - Final Note - December 24 2010 (Helen Patterson)

Helen Patterson
04/01/2011 15:02

To: Rowan Kelsoe/BDD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS
cc: Carole Abrahams/DHD/SESAG/LONDON/ONS@ONS, Tony Chapple/CEND/CPSG/TITCHFIELD/ONS@ONS, Darren Morgan/OFD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS, Pam Davies/STID/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS, Sarah Brown/ONS@ONS
Subject: [UNCLASSIFIED] - Fw: Link Message: Timetric request for Prices data - MRP - Final Note - December 24 2010

Rowan / Darren,

We now have the go-ahead to release the data - please see email below. Happy to be the go-between for this, but would be useful to know if I have to give any health warnings etc.

Helen

Helen Patterson
DG Office
Office for National Statistics


05/01/2011 10:20 - Subject - Re: Fw: Link Message: Timetric request for Prices data - MRP - Final Note - December 24 2010 (Darren Morgan)

Darren Morgan
05/01/2011 10:20

To: Helen Patterson/ONS@ONS
cc: Pam Davies/STID/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS, Rowan Kelsoe/BDD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS
Subject: [UNCLASSIFIED] - Re: Fw: Link Message: Timetric request for Prices data - MRP - Final Note - December 24 2010

Helen,

Thank you for the offer to act as the 'go-between' for this; I think for continuity of contact, this probably makes sense. To hopefully help, though, I've drafted the e-mail below but, of course, do feel free to amend as you see fit.

The data file can be found here -> . (this is a link to the timetric.zip file sent to Simon (it's very large, so not annexed). A password is required to open the file (the IM Security Team has advised on the approach that shld be taken on file transmission) and I will send you this separately. Pls note that you will also have to send the file and password separately to Simon.

I hope everything is clear but pls do get in touch if you wld like to discuss further.

Thanks again.

Darren

Response 10 of 0 to "FOI01284/Briscoe"

Hello Simon,

The disclosure control on the CPI data is now complete and attached are the CPI mircodata. As previously discussed these data are provided as a 'sample dataset' for internal review by Timetric only. For security reasons the file is sent via an encrypted executable file. I will send you the password to open the file in a separate e-mail.

There are five data/metada files and a glossary that further explains the data. In summary the files contain:

1. 2009_region: Individual price quote data collected for the CPI during 2009 e.g. the prices of a tin of beans, loaf of bread etc collected across the UK
2. coicop_desc: this is metadata that translates the category codes into descriptions.
3. coicop_map: this is metadata that simply shows which category the item is in and the timeframe for how long the item has been included in the CPI
4. coicop_weight: these are the weights allocated to each item index (provides info. on how important the item is in the CPI and are used in aggregation of the item indices further up the CPI/RPI Hierarchy)
5. item_indices_2009: these are the indices for particular items e.g. loaf of bread (all price quotes for a particular item are averaged and indexed)

I'm sorry for the delay in the provision of these data, the statistical disclosure testing took a little longer than expected.

I hope that you find the data helpful, please do get in touch if you have any queries or would like to discuss further.

Regards

Helen

.....

Darren Morgan | Head of CPI & RPI Production | Prices Division | Office for National Statistics: Newport
 Room: 1.227 |

05/01/2011 11:23 Subject - prices data (Helen Patterson)

Helen Patterson
05/01/2011 11:23

To:simon.briscoe@timetric.com
cc:simon@timetric.com, Rowan Kelsoe/BDD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS, Darren Morgan/O
Subject:[PROTECT] - prices data

Response 10 of 0 to "FOI01284/Briscoe"

Dear Simon,

A very happy New Year!

The disclosure control on the CPI data is now complete and attached are the CPI microdata. As previously discussed these data are provided as a 'sample dataset' for internal review by Timetric only. For security reasons the file is sent via an encrypted executable file. I will send you the password to open the file in a separate e-mail.

There are five data/metadata files and a glossary that further explains the data. In summary the files contain:

1. 2009_region: Individual price quote data collected for the CPI during 2009 e.g. the prices of a tin of beans, loaf of bread etc collected across the UK
2. coicop_desc: this is metadata that translates the category codes into descriptions.
3. coicop_map: this is metadata that simply shows which category the item is in and the timeframe for how long the item has been included in the CPI
4. coicop_weight: these are the weights allocated to each item index (provides info. on how important the item is in the CPI and are used in aggregation of the item indices further up the CPI/RPI Hierarchy)
5. item_indices_2009: these are the indices for particular items e.g. loaf of bread (all price quotes for a particular item are averaged and indexed)

I'm sorry for the delay in the provision of these data, the statistical disclosure testing took a little longer than expected.

I hope that you find the data helpful, please do get in touch if you have any queries or would like to discuss further.

Best wishes

Helen

Helen Patterson
DG Office
Office for National Statistics

06/01/2011 15:40 - Subject - Re: Meeting with Timetric on 8th December (Simon Briscoe)

simon@timetric.com
Sent by: simon.briscoe@timetric.com
06/01/2011 15:40

To: Helen Patterson/ONS@ONS
cc
Subject: Re: [UNCLASSIFIED] - Re: Meeting with Timetric on 8th December

That's great, Helen. Many thanks.

Could I ask you to let us know what you have sent!! It looks like monthly data for 2009 - which is fine for a first pass. Is it only regionally coded? (We'd been hoping for more detail.)

One or two of the other column heads do not have an obvious meaning!

Simon

Response 10 of 0 to "FOI01284/Briscoe"

On 6 January 2011 15:17, Helen Patterson <helen.patterson@ons.gsi.gov.uk> wrote:
Simon, and here is the password

*****Helen

Helen Patterson
DG Office
Office for National Statistics

simon@timetric.com
<http://timetric.com/>
twitter: @simonbriscoe
www.simonbriscoe.com


06/01/ 2011 16:07 - Subject -Re: Fw: Meeting with Timetric on 8th December (Rowan Kelsoe)

Rowan
Kelsoe/BDD/BSG/NEWP
ORT/ONS

06/01/2011 16:07

To Helen Patterson/ONS@ONS

cc

Subject [UNCLASSIFIED] - Re: Fw: Meeting with Timetric on 8th
December 

Hi Helen,

He needs to reference the monthly data against the file entitled 'Glossary_V2.xls', which describes each of the dataset and the variables within each. Do you want me to respond directly to Simon, or are you happy to direct him?

Many thanks

Rowan

Rowan Kelsoe | RPI Production Computing and User Liaison | Room 1.227 | Office for National Statistics | Cardiff Road | Newport | Wales | NP10 8XG

06/01/2011 16:17 - Subject - Re: Fw: Meeting with Timetric on 8th December (Helen Patterson)

Helen Patterson
06/01/2011 16:17

To:Rowan Kelsoe/BDD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS

cc:

Subject:[UNCLASSIFIED] - Re: Fw: Meeting with Timetric on 8th December 

Rowan, it may be better for you to do this directly if that is okay as you are more familiar with the data than me!

Helen

Helen Patterson

DG Office

Office for National Statistics

06/01/2011 16:42 - Subject - Meeting with Timetric on 8th December (Rowan Kelsoe)

Rowan Kelsoe
06/01/2011 16:42

To:simon@timetric.com

cc:Darren Morgan/OFD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS, Helen Patterson/ONS@ONS

Subject:[UNCLASSIFIED] - Meeting with Timetric on 8th December

Simon,

Response 10 of 0 to "FOI01284/Briscoe"

Your earlier email to Helen Patterson refers. I was responsible for preparing the data for sending so she has asked me to respond on some of the points raised.

Firstly, to help you understand each of the datasets and the meaning of the variables included, we have provided a file called 'Glossary_V2.xls'. This file has a number of tabs inserted with variable (headings) and their meaning. The tab names, in turn, have been named to accord with each of the datasets provided. You will need to cross-reference the glossary with each of the datasets and variables to determine their use.

The monthly data is coded to regional level only.

I hope this will provide further clarity, please come back to us if not.

Kind regards,

Rowan

Rowan Kelsoe | RPI Production Computing and User Liaison | Room 1.227 | Office for National Statistics | Cardiff Road | Newport | Wales | NP10 8XG

11/01/2011 12:32 - Subject - Inflation data (Simon Briscoe)

simon@timetric.com

Sent by: simon.briscoe@timetric.com

11/01/2011 12:32

To Helen Patterson/ONS@ONS

cc

Subject Inflation data

Dear Helen,

Thanks for getting us the data. Most interesting and much appreciated.

There is much to get our teeth into but a few questions if I may?

- what is the reason for not having a more precise geo location of the quote? Region is not very precise. Presumably the shop is post coded and we could have, say, the SW1R bit of SW1R 4AP?

- we have the full year data (I assume) for 2009. Have you any thoughts about the more recent (and older) stuff? Can we expect a dump of 08/07/etc data and monthly updates, now you have got your heads around it and once we know what's in it?

- more technically:

Don't really understand what "validity" is about

(i) for base price, I don't think you tell us what the codes mean

(ii) for quote validity, you tell us, but the explanations aren't very helpful!

Have no idea about "stratification" - can you please explain?

Finally, re publication by us. We intend to make what we produce publicly and freely available. (We do not yet know what this will be.) Is there any thing you want from us?

We will of course be heaping praise on the ONS for its vision and helpfulness - really! It might be best to chat about this???

Best wishes,
Simon

simon@timetric.com
<http://timetric.com/>

twitter: @simonbriscoe
www.simonbriscoe.com

19/01/2011 13:22 - Subject - Inflation Data (Helen Patterson)

On 19 January 2011 13:22, Helen Patterson <helen.patterson@ons.gsi.gov.uk> wrote:

Dear Simon,

The statisticians working on prices have been busy working on our releases but have now come back to me with some answers to your questions, please see these below:

We have guidance on how to quote ONS which is available on our website here <http://www.ons.gov.uk/copyright/index.html> but in essence you need to include 'Adapted from data from the Office for National Statistics licensed under the Open Government Licence v1.0'.

I will follow up your request on baby names and the issues you have raised on PPI relating where best to get the data from.

Sorry I have not been in touch to find a good time to chat but will do so soon.

Best wishes

Helen,

LOCATION INFORMATION:

A more precise geographical location for each price quote is available, but data at this level of detail failed when subjected to our disclosure checking procedures.

FURTHER DATA PROVISION:

The data provided most recently covers the full year for 2009. We are looking into how best to manage the provision of further historic micro data and we will keep you informed of progress.

VALIDITY:

To explain, a series of computerised checks are undertaken after price data is taken onto the ONS database systems. These checks are designed to identify prices with large price changes and to automatically/manually consider their validity or identify those well outside the usual range of prices for a product. A more refined credibility check, using a Tukey algorithm, is designed to identify outlying prices within each item. Once these checks are completed, it may still be necessary to omit a number of raw price quotes from index production, say for example, the quote for an incorrect item has been collected.

In essence, only quotes where both validity and base_validity are a 3 or 4 are included in index production for the reference period.

More information with regard to validation procedures can be found in the CPI Technical manual, Chapter 5, in the attached zip file.

Response 10 of 0 to "FOI01284/Briscoe"

STRATIFICATION:

Stratification is a method used to improve the estimates of item indices. Stratum weights indicate for each item what proportion is bought in regions, different shops or different regions and shops.

The stratum types used in CPI are:

- No stratification (stratum_type = 0)
- Region only (stratum_type = 1)
- Region and Shop type (stratum_type = 2)
- Shop type only (stratum_type = 3)

Further, the use of a stratum cell dictates whether the shop from which the price has been collected is an independent or multiple. Therefore, if stratum_type = 3 (stratified by shop only), then the stratum_cell is = 1 (multiple) or 2 (independent). If stratum_type = 1 (stratified by region only) then the stratum_cell is equal to the regional stratum code (region) 2 - 13. However, if stratum_cell = 2 (stratified by region and shop) then the stratum_cell is equal to the region stratum code (region), plus 13.

Indices are calculated for each regional stratum (region) and then multiplied by the stratum weight (the stratum_cell dictates which stratum weight is applied). These strata are, in turn, aggregated to form overall item indices to which item weights are then applied.

Please note, we have expanded the original glossary spreadsheet with regard to stratum_cell (amendment hatched in light blue font), which hopefully helps further.

Again, more information on stratification can be found in the CPI Technical manual, Chapter 6, in the attached zip file. The CPI technical manual also provides a wealth of additional information about the construction of both the RPI and CPI index.

Helen Patterson
Corporate Strategy & Support
Office for National Statistics

19/01/2011 13:22 - Subject - Inflation Data (Helen Patterson)

simon@timetric.com
Sent by: To Helen Patterson/ONS@ONS
simon.briscoe@timetric.c cc
om
19/01/2011 15:10 Subject Re: [UNCLASSIFIED] - Re: Inflation data

Helen,

Thanks for the technical help on the rpi and I look forward to seeing the feedback on babies and ppi.

We do feel a bit fobbed off on two points: geographic detail and access to more data.

Could we chat to someone who can explain disclosure? I can appreciate that for some prices (access to a racecourse or a cinema ticket?) going below the region might be disclosive but for bread and apples? With apples you have many 000s of quotes in your basket and multiple possible outlets in each town, it surely can't be disclosive. In any case, aren't prices (always?) in the public domain? Isn't it a requirement to label the price of goods in shops? So what is

Response 10 of 0 to "FOI01284/Briscoe"

disclosive - surely it is just that you don't want it to be known where you get the prices from? If that is it, please let us know. That said, I am not sure why that needs to be secret. On race courses and cinemas etc, does it matter if we know where the quote comes from?

On more data, surely now a process is in place, the hard work has been done, the second dump is relatively easy. Can we have time on this?

Simon

24/01/2011 11:01 - Subject - Fw: Inflation data (Helen Patterson)

Helen Patterson
24/01/2011 11:01

To: Carole Abrahams/DHD/SESAG/LONDON/ONS@ONS, Keith Spicer/ONS@ONS, Rowan K
Morgan/OFD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS
cc:
Subject: Fw: Inflation data

Can you possibly help with the questions Simon raises below:

Is there any documentation re disclosure we can give to Simon?

On the more data - I was assuming that the checks we did on the data this time would have to be done every month is this correct?

Answers to Simon's questions much appreciated.

Thanks alot

Helen

Helen Patterson
Corporate Strategy & Support
Office for National Statistics

26/01/2011 09:55 - Subject - ONS data late(Helen Patterson)

On 26 January 2011 09:55, Helen Patterson <helen.patterson@ons.gsi.gov.uk> wrote:
Simon,

I owe you one or two responses.

Thanks again for keeping us in touch with the data issues you are experiencing. I have followed up the issue with statbase where we had a technical problem which has now been resolved and should not be a problem next month. Statbase is the best source for data. However there are various statbase pages that contain published information if you do find a delay in the future with your normal route. Can you please keep me informed if you experience further problems.

We have been running lock-ins for Newsagencies since the 1990s. At lock-in briefings they are given the statistics bulletins and attached tables in paper form. They do not have access to the full electronic datasets. This means they can get out their stories at 9.30 precisely but they have to wait until the full dataset becomes available in the same way as all other customers.

We will come back to you soon on the data dump and baby names.

Helen

Helen Patterson
Corporate Strategy & Support

Response 10 of 0 to "FOI01284/Briscoe"

Office for National Statistics

26/01/2011 16:22 - Subject - Re: ONS data late(Simon Briscoe)

simon@timetric.com
Sent by: To Helen Patterson/ONS@ONS
simon.briscoe@timetric.c
om cc
26/01/2011 16:22 Subject Re: ONS data late

Hello and thanks,

On statbase, I am not sure I understand the 3rd and 4th sentences. And, hopefully finally on this, do you keep records of the timing that data are uploaded to statbase?

And can you let me have some timings on babies and cpi dump please?

Thanks,
Simon

27/01/2011 08:44 - Subject - Fw: ONS data late(Helen Patterson)

Helen Patterson To: Rowan Kelsoe/BDD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS, Darren
27/01/2011 08:44 Morgan/OFD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS
cc:
Subject: Fw: ONS data late

Apologies, can I ask for a little further help, thanks alot Helen

Helen Patterson
Corporate Strategy & Support
Office for National Statistics

27/01/2011 09:11 - Subject - Re: Fw: ONS data late (Darren Morgan)

Darren Morgan To:Helen Patterson/ONS@ONS
27/01/2011 09:11 cc:Rowan Kelsoe/BDD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS, Pam Davies/STID/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS
Subject:Re: Fw: ONS data late📎

Helen,

A quick update on this. We managed to speak to Dennis yesterday and he is of similar mind to us - basically we have gone far enough on a 1:1 basis with Timetric. In summary, his suggested line is that we agreed to conduct a pilot, plsd that it has been successful and that the data have proved useful. We (ONS) now need to consider how best to provide CPI microdata to all users whilst at the same time ensuring the data are non-disclosive and that we do not breach the confidentiality agreements that we have given to data providers. My suggestion is that we will conduct this work with the aim of launching the publication of the CPI/RPI microdata at the same time as the new ONS website. Pam and I will craft a response (hopefully today) along these lines for you to send to Simon.


On the points Simon raise on statbase, I can advise on the CPI context, which although may be appropriate more generally, I wonder whether Comms wld prob. be best placed to provide definitive advice?

Darren
.....

Response 10 of 0 to "FOI01284/Briscoe"

.....
Darren Morgan | Head of CPI & RPI Production | Prices Division | Office for National Statistics: Newport
Room: 1.227 |
.....

28/01/2011 10:23 - Subject - CPI data - response to SBT/ONS (Helen Patterson)

Darren Morgan/OFD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS To Helen Patterson/ONS@ONS
28/01/2011 10:23 cc Rowan Kelsoe/BDD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS, Pam Davies/STID/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS
Subject Re: CPI data - response to SB 

Hello Helen,

Below is a suggested response to Simon - I've cleared with Pam. No doubt Simon will be disappointed with this so pls feel free to amend as you see fit. Also below is our understanding of access to electronic data.

Do give me a ring if you wld like to discuss further.

Darren

'Hello Simon,

If you recall, the CPI dataset was provided as part of a pilot to explore the capability and usefulness of providing access to ONS microdata. It's good to hear that the pilot has been successful in that it appears you have found the data useful and it is clear that you are interested in having access to additional CPI data. As I mentioned in my earlier e-mail we are now reviewing how best to take forward access to the CPI microdata (historic and on an ongoing basis) as we believe that we should provide such data to all users. There are around 168 months of CPI data and, as I hope you will appreciate, it will take time to evaluate these data to ensure that the data provided are at the most detailed level possible (so it is of most use) whilst, at the same time, ensuring that the data are non-disclosive and that we do not breach the confidentiality assurances that have been given to data providers.

At this stage, we expect that we will make available on our website, data that are of a similar level of detail as provided to you in the pilot. This means, for example, that we are unlikely to be able to release a more detailed geographical breakdown. We intend to make these data available to all users as soon as is practical. In practice, given the work involved in evaluating and preparing the data for general release and our existing priorities, I expect that we will release the data publicly on our new website soon after it is launched at the end of April.

I will, of course, keep you informed of progress and please let me know if you would like to discuss further.'

Helen'

Re. statbase: if data are not available via this mode, we are not aware of an alternative that Simon cld use to access data electronically. We tend to direct users to the CPI product page -> <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=868> where the data can be accessed but only via 'hardcopy' tables. In exceptional circumstances we download data direct from our production system. As I mentioned in my earlier e-mail, though, you may want to check with Comms for a definitive response just in case we are missing something.

Response 10 of 0 to "FOI01284/Briscoe"

.....

Darren Morgan | Head of CPI & RPI Production | Prices Division | Office for National Statistics: Newport
Room: 1.227 |

28/01/2011 10:56 - Subject - Re: CPI data - response to SB (Helen Patterson)

Helen Patterson
28/01/2011 10:56

To: Darren Morgan/OFD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS
cc: Pam Davies/STID/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS, Rowan Kelsoe/BDD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS
Subject: Re: CPI data - response to SB 📎

Darren

Thanks very much for this. It looks a good way of dealing with this.

Helen

Helen Patterson
Corporate Strategy & Support
Office for National Statistics

31/01/2011 09:49 - Subject - CPI data (Helen Patterson)

Helen Patterson
31/01/2011 09:49

To: simon@timetric.com
cc: (bcc: Rowan Kelsoe/BDD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS)
Subject: CPI data

Hi Simon,

Good to chat briefly last week.

I think our FOI team have already responded to you on the baby names request.

If you recall, the CPI dataset was provided as part of a pilot to explore the capability and usefulness of providing access to ONS microdata. It's good to hear that the pilot has been successful in that it appears you have found the data useful and it is clear that you are interested in having access to additional CPI data. As I mentioned in my earlier e-mail we are now reviewing how best to take forward access to the CPI microdata (historic and on an ongoing basis) as we believe that we should provide such data to all users. There are around 168 months of CPI data and, as I hope you will appreciate, it will take time to evaluate these data to ensure that the data provided are at the most detailed level possible (so it is of most use) whilst, at the same time, ensuring that the data are non-disclosive and that we do not breach the confidentiality assurances that have been given to data providers.

At this stage, we expect that we will make available on our website, data that are of a similar level of detail as provided to you in the pilot. This means, for example, that we are unlikely to be able to release a more detailed geographical breakdown. We intend to make these data available to all users as soon as is practical. In practice, given the work involved in evaluating and preparing the data for general release and our existing priorities, I expect that we will release the data publicly on our new website soon after it is launched at the end of April.

I will, of course, keep you informed of progress and please let me know if you would like to discuss further.

Best wishes

Helen

Helen Patterson
Corporate Strategy & Support
Office for National Statistics

Response 10 of 0 to "FOI01284/Briscoe"

31/01/2011 11:28 - Subject - prices data - disclosure control (Helen Patterson)

Helen Patterson
31/01/2011 11:28

To: Keith Spicer/ONS@ONS, Carole Abrahams/DHD/SESAG/LONDON/ONS@ONS
cc: Rowan Kelsoe/BDD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS, Darren Morgan/OFD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS
Subject: prices data - disclosure control

Keith / Carole,

Simon Briscoe has been on the phone and is complaining that he cannot have the prices data at a lower level due to disclosure. How much can I say to him on disclosure and is there any document in the public domain that explains our disclosure control which I can let him have?

Helen Patterson
Corporate Strategy & Support
Office for National Statistics

From: Carole Abrahams on 03/02/2011 15:05
To: Keith Spicer/ONS@ONS, Tony Chapple/CEND/CPSG/TITCHFIELD/ONS@ONS, Rowan Kelsoe/BDD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS
cc: Helen Patterson/ONS@ONS, Owen Abbott/CEND/CPSG/TITCHFIELD/ONS@ONS

Document Link Information :

Database: [Methodology Directorate Projects](#)
Document: [Formal risk assessment of raw prices data](#)

Dear all,

You will remember the business about releasing Prices data to Timetric under the Open Government Licence. In accordance with SDC advice, the data were supplied but without the local geography. Simon Briscoe has asked Helen Patterson, in DG's office, why he can't have the original data. I quote: " Lets talk bread, for example. How can it be disclose (*sic*) to know that the prices were taken in London or SE1? "

I have therefore prepared a formal paper giving the whys and wherefores of the SDC risk assessment. Much of the text may be useful for future requests of this kind. However before I send it to Helen, which I undertook to do by the end of this week, I should be grateful if Keith, Tony and Rowan could look it over, and check that everything I've said is correct. As I'm not in tomorrow, could you please let Helen know (copy me) whether you are content for this paper to be sent to Simon Briscoe.


Thank you very much

Carole

(Annex 6)

03/02/2011 15:33 - Subject - Re: Link Message: Formal risk assessment of raw prices data (Rowan Kelsoe)

Rowan Kelsoe
03/02/2011 15:33

To: Carole Abrahams/DHD/SESAG/LONDON/ONS@ONS, Darren Morgan/OFD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS
cc: Helen Patterson/ONS@ONS, Keith Spicer/ONS@ONS, Owen Abbott/CEND/CPSG/TITCHFIELD/ONS@ONS, Tony Chapple/CEND/CPSG/TITCHFIELD/ONS@ONS
Subject: Re: Link Message: Formal risk assessment of raw prices data 


Carole,
My personal view on face value, in particular the coverage of 'Nature of the Data', is that all is correct.

Response 10 of 0 to "FOI01284/Briscoe"

Darren, as head of Price production branch, will need to sign this off for Prices, so I am copying him on the response.
Rowan

04/02/2011 10:41 - Subject - Re: Link Message: Formal risk assessment of raw prices data (Tony Chapple)

Tony Chapple
04/02/2011 10:41


To: Carole Abrahams/DHD/SESAG/LONDON/ONS@ONS
cc: Helen Patterson/ONS@ONS, Keith Spicer/ONS@ONS, Owen Abbott/CEND/CPSG/TITCHFIELD/ONS@ONS
Subject: Re: Link Message: Formal risk assessment of raw prices data 

Excellent piece of work from Carole. From my perspective, I'm happy with the content.

Tony

04/02/2011 10:43 - Subject - Re: Link Message: Formal risk assessment of raw prices data (Keith Spicer)

Keith Spicer
04/02/2011 10:43

To: Carole Abrahams/DHD/SESAG/LONDON/ONS@ONS
cc: Helen Patterson/ONS@ONS, Owen Abbott/CEND/CPSG/TITCHFIELD/ONS@ONS, Rowan Chapple/CEND/CPSG/TITCHFIELD/ONS@ONS
Subject: Re: Link Message: Formal risk assessment of raw prices data 

Thank you Carole

I think this is a really excellent response from the SDC perspective. An alternative that we may come back to later is to supply the lower geography (LAD?) with a coarser categorisation of items with some grouped together as 'Other' - but that would need close scrutiny and no little time.

Keith

04/02/2011 14:32 - Subject - Re: Disclosure control and prices (Helen Patterson)

From : Helen Patterson/ONS
To : xxxxx@xxxxxxxxxxx
CC :
Date Sent : 04/02/2011 14:32:21
Subject : [Re: Disclosure control and prices](#)

Simon,

As promised the note on disclosure control.

Best wishes



Raw prices data.pdf

Helen

Helen Patterson
Corporate Strategy & Support
Office for National Statistics

04/02/2011 16:45 - Subject - Re: Disclosure control and prices (Simon Briscoe)

Response 10 of 0 to "FOI01284/Briscoe"

simon@timetric.com

Sent by:
simon.briscoe@timetric.c
om

To Helen Patterson/ONS@ONS

cc

Subject Re: Disclosure control and prices

04/02/2011 16:45

Many thanks, Helen.

We spoke. I have a number of questions relating to your note.

I think I'd always accepted (and had mentioned as much) that some products like cinema tickets could not be broken down to more detail than region for disclosure reasons - and in any case would make no sense statistically. We are not trying to spot the suppliers of data as we are keen to create statistics that are of some significance - that means we need a good few data points for each geography!! Your note says: "Many of these are staple items just as foodstuffs, clothes, and household equipment such as furniture or electrical items. For these it would be extremely difficult to identify the retailers involved." Given that we should be able to have the data to lower geography!

Under 3.2 - do you not have the address/postcode of the store? Surely you must, otherwise the collector would not be able to find the shop. Perhaps giving us the first part of the post code is the solution?

The description of the geography in the note is unhelpful. I can't see this particular geography mentioned on the ONS site starting from the link you gave. Help please! But the post code route mentioned above would circumvent this.

I am interested to know the rationale for telling the retailers that you are using their prices. Is there not scope for manipulation? If you did not tell them, there'd be no need for secrecy, so haven't you created a rod for your back here? I have to say that this seems a bit odd: "This undertaking, as well as the SRSA, the Code of Practice and the Data Protection Act, all need to be considered when assessing the disclosure risk of publishing the raw microdata." Surely much of this is not relevant for items in the public domain. A cinema ticket price is not the same as someone's salary. I can see that you have dug this hole for yourself but it seems odd.

"The SDC assessment is that, given the nature of the data described above, it would be possible to combine the raw prices data with other published information such as www.yell.com to identify the retailer/establishment with a high level of certainty. "

I don't think this is true so I would like it to be reconsidered. Yell - indeed no single source of data - is a complete list of retail outlets. As we all know there is not even a complete list of addresses. And given we do not know what the local area geographies are we would not even know the universe of retail units in any given area even if we were to be on the ground.

A response asap would be appreciated.

Best wishes,

Simon

On 4 February 2011 14:32, Helen Patterson <helen.patterson@ons.gsi.gov.uk> wrote:
Simon,

As promised the note on disclosure control.

Best wishes

Helen

Helen Patterson
Corporate Strategy & Support
Office for National Statistics

Response 10 of 0 to "FOI01284/Briscoe"

simon@timetric.com
<http://timetric.com/>
twitter: @simonbriscoe
www.simonbriscoe.com

10/02/2011 10:22 - Subject - Fw: Disclosure control and prices

Helen Patterson
10/02/2011 10:22

To: Carole Abrahams/DHD/SESAG/LONDON/ONS@ONS
cc: Rowan Kelsoe/BDD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS, Darren Morgan/OFD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS, Paul J Jackson/SSSG/TITCHFIELD/ONS@ONS, Sarah Brown/ONS@ONS
Subject: Fw: Disclosure control and prices

Carole / Rowan / Darren,

Apologies I have been sitting on this note for a couple of days. Would any of you like to offer a response to this note? I am happy otherwise just to go back to Simon and say thanks for the email and these things will be considered as we move the dataset forward for publishing on the web.

Helen
Helen Patterson
Corporate Strategy & Support
Office for National Statistics

10/02/2011 10:49 - Subject - Re: Fw: Disclosure control and prices (Carole Abrahams)

Carole Abrahams
10/02/2011 10:49

To: Helen Patterson/ONS@ONS
cc: Darren Morgan/OFD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS, Paul J Jackson/SSSG/TITCHFIELD/ONS@ONS, Rowan Kelsoe/BDD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS, Sarah Brown/ONS@ONS, Keith Spicer/ONS@ONS, Felix Ritchie/EASD/MESAG/LONDON/ONS@ONS, SDC
Subject: Re: Fw: Disclosure control and prices 📧

Helen,

I think that sending the e-mail you suggest is a very sensible idea

A couple of thoughts:

1. If he only wants "statistics of some significance", then his best course is to use the VML as was originally suggested. Alternatively we could give him the full dataset under the Approved Researcher gateway.
2. If they want local geographies only for some widely available items, then I suppose that this could be arranged, but would cost them as it would involve both Prices and SDC in extra work.
3. On his rather nasty comments about the guarantee given to data providers, these are part of the ONS Survey Charter, and I would have thought that they are non-negotiable.
4. I don't intend to respond to his criticism of the SDC risk assessment. I would be prepared to defend this to Data Stewardship Group if required to do so.


Thanks

Carole

Response 10 of 0 to "FOI01284/Briscoe"

10/02/2011 13:12 - Subject - Re: Fw: Disclosure control and prices (Darren Morgan)

Darren Morgan
10/02/2011 13:12

To: Carole Abrahams/DHD/SESAG/LONDON/ONS@ONS
cc: Felix Ritchie/EASD/MESAG/LONDON/ONS@ONS, Helen
Patterson/ONS@ONS, Keith Spicer/ONS@ONS, Paul J
Jackson/SSSG/TITCHFIELD/ONS@ONS, Rowan
Kelsoe/BDD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS, Sarah
Brown/ONS@ONS, SDC
Subject: Re: Fw: Disclosure control and prices 

Helen,

Many thanks for continuing to act as point on this.

I agree that I think we have reached the point where your suggested response is appropriate (I fear that he will not be that patient but lets cross that bridge if it comes to it). Most of Simon's points relate to disclosure related matters and Carole has already helpfully commented on those. On his rather naive comment about not telling retailers that they are 'included' in the CPI/RPI, we do so to secure access and co-operation in the collection. On the point of potential price manipulation, this is the very reason that although retailers know they are 'in' they do not know the date the collection will take place.

Thanks again.

Darren

.....
.....

Darren Morgan | Head of CPI & RPI Production | Prices Division | Office for National Statistics: Newport
Room: 1.227

01/04/2011 08:17 - Subject - briefing for SMS (Helen Patterson)

Helen Patterson
01/04/2011 08:17

To: Darren Morgan/OFD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS, Rowan
Kelsoe/BDD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS
cc:
Subject: briefing for SMS

Darren / Rowan,

Can I check that you are happy for me to include the following in a brief to SMS

..... but we are proactively working to extend access to data, including microdata. In response to a request from another user, we are in the process of producing micro data sets for prices with the aim to release these on the new website. The facilities on the new website, in particular the API facility will help us with this. We are now in the process of producing a plan to release more underlying data on a regular basis. However, the protection of an individual's confidential information is paramount, which means we may not be able to satisfy all user requirements.

thanks very much, a quick response would be appreciated.

Helen

Helen Patterson
Corporate Strategy & Support
Office for National Statistics

01/04/2011 09:10 - Subject - Re: briefing for SMS (Darren Morgan)

Darren Morgan
01/04/2011 09:10

To:Helen Patterson/ONS@ONS
cc:Rowan Kelsoe/BDD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS
Subject:Re: briefing for SMS 📎

Helen,

Thanks for checking this with us. It is spot on and well framed, so no comments.

Darren

12/07/2011 19:14 - Subject - Publication of CPI microdata (Darren Morgan)

Darren Morgan
12/07/2011 19:14

To:Helen Patterson/ONS@ONS
cc:Rowan Kelsoe/BDD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS
Subject:Publication of CPI microdata

Hello Helen,

I understand that you would like in writing our plans to publish CPI Microdata.

We are currently aiming to publish a CPI microdataset at the point the CPI is first published on the new website (13 Sep 11). The key challenge that we are facing at the moment is how best to do this but at the very least we expect to be able to place the data on the website via a text file.

I hope this is sufficient for you but pls do let me know if you require further information.

Darren

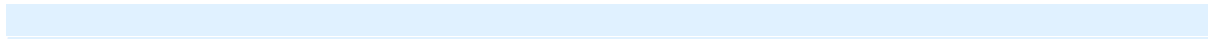
27/09/2011 11:12 - Subject - Freedom of Information request - Release of CPI/RPI price quotes data (Simon Briscoe)



Legal Services Branch on TGROU P1

Created By: Paul Wearn on 27/09/2011 at 11:12

Title: FOI01284/Briscoe



Categorisation
002 - Freedom of Information\0003 -
Cases

Freedom of Information request - Release of CPI/RPI price quotes data

Dear Office for National Statistics,

Response 10 of 0 to "FOI01284/Briscoe"

Please send me a copy of all your internal records, including wmails and meeting notes, relating to the release of this data. Please cover the period since the start of 2010.

Yours faithfully,
Simon Briscoe

06/10/2011 09:43 - Subject -MDRP - Release of detailed CPI/RPI price quote data (Rowan Kelsoe)

Rowan Kelsoe
06/10/2011 09:43

To:Carole Abrahams/DHD/SESAG/LONDON/ONS@ONS, Helen Patterson/ONS@ONS, Keith Paul J Jackson/SSSG/TITCHFIELD/ONS@ONS, Nicola Shearman/ONS@ONS, Frank Nolan/Ritchie/EASD/MESAG/LONDON/ONS@ONS, Jan Jones/ONS@ONS, Joanne Whiting/DCPD/cc:Darren Morgan/OFD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS, Philip Gooding/OFD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS
Subject:[PROTECT] - MDRP - Release of detailed CPI/RPI price quote data (ADDENDUM)

All,

Paul Wearn has sent Philip Gooding an FOI request from Simon Briscoe asking for all internal records relating to the release of CPI/RPI price quote data. I am sending you this email because you were involved in this process in some manner or other, with some peoples roles being more critical than others.

I have been charged with the responsibility of collating relevant documentation. I have a wealth of email transactions stored from this process, including bookmark summaries and key documents. My initial intention is to collate a summary of these for circulation, and to give you all an opportunity to add any further documentation between departments/individuals that we (Prices) have not been party to.

A decision can then be taken about which are relevant and need to be covered in compliance with the FOI Act. The documentation can then be packaged and sent together to Legal Services for forwarding to Simon.

I hope this is generally acceptable, but any alternative thoughts on how we may approach this are welcome.

Regards,

Rowan

Rowan Kelsoe | RPI Production Computing and User Liaison | Room 1.227 | Office for National Statistics | Cardiff Road | Newport | Wales | NP10 8XG

ANNEX

Annex 1



New Methodology Directorate BDB on BSG2

Created By: Tony Chapple on 15/12/2010 at 13:59

Title: Timetric request for Prices data - MRP - Note - December 15 2010

Response

Frank,

cc Paul, Helen

A submission to MRP is being drafted today using the information the microdata release unit (MRU) received from Darren Morgan.

MRU are having to redraft the MRP submission to correct misunderstandings regarding the framework under which the information requested can be released (FOI). Also, the Open Government Licence issue also needs to be considered as part of the submission.

As the MRP proposal will be used to base precedent decisions in future, its important that the correct issues are scrutinised by the panel and the correct decision is reached.

Considering the urgency of the request and the desire to respond to Simon Briscoe as quickly as possible, I suggest a 30 min meeting tomorrow with Frank (as chair of the MRP) to go through the submission face to face. With this in mind, Ive booked a meeting tomorrow at 1.30pm

With regard to future requests and the time taken to make an MRP decision, if Frank as chair agrees for the information to be released, MRU will be able to action similar requests in future under precedent, thereby speeding up requests to release non disclosive information / data under the FOI act.

Tony

Annex 2




Prices on NGROUP1

Created By: Darren Morgan on 10/12/2010 at 15:53

Title: CPI/RPI microdataset for Timetric: submission to MRP (Dec 10)


Response

In response to -> (Annex 2b .

Brief Background to request for CPI/RPI microdata

- Timetric has requested access to all of the ONS's unpublished data under the new Open Government Licence.
- ONS response suggested that there would be disclosure issues prohibiting the supply of much of that data.
- Through discussion it was agreed to provide a sample microdataset for a pilot area (which turned out to be CPI/RPI) for Timetric to review.
- This submission seeks approval to release the CPI/RPI

Response 10 of 0 to "FOI01284/Briscoe"

	<p>microdata to Timetric</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ONS personnel who have led the engagement with Timetric are Simon Field, Helen Patterson and Sarah Brown
Data description	<p>These data are pretty much in line with the CPI/RPI data in the VML (full details of the data held in the VML are here -> ). In addition a glossary of the data is also included in the attached winzip file. In summary, though:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual price quote data: basically the prices of a tin of beans, loaf of bread etc collected across the UK (shop names and addresses have been removed to anonymise the data) Item indices: these are the indices for particular items e.g. loaf of bread (all price quotes for a particular item are averaged and indexed) Item Weights: these are the weights allocated to each item index (provides info. on how important the item is in the CPI and are used in aggregation of the item indices further up the CPI/RPI Hierarchy) COICOP Map: this is metadata that simply shows which category the item is in and the timeframe for how long the item has been included in the CPI COICOP Description: this is metadata that translates the category codes into descriptions. Location Details: this is metadata that translates the 'location' codes into actual locations
Information asset owner name	Dennis Roberts
Rationale why this is not personal information under S39 of SRSA	Data were publicly available price quotes for items to purchase. No data providers can be identified as shop names and addresses have been removed.
Recipient	Timetric (main contact is Simon Briscoe)
Use of the data	Data are being provided as a sample dataset for Timetric to review in order to consider whether it would prove useful to their users. Timetric's aim is to make all public data freely available, chartable and downloadable to everyone, a link to their website is here -> http://timetric.com/ .
Future uses	This has not yet been confirmed. The current thinking, though, is that we would place a statement on the CPI/RPI homepage that these data are available on request.
Type of licence/contract that will accompany the data	Open Government Licence
Information Security Impact Level	Not marked
Dataset and Glossary that would be provided	

Annex 2b

Prices on NGROUP1

Created By: Darren Morgan on 10/12/2010 at



15:51

Title: CPI/RPI microdataset for Timetric: submission to MRP (Dec 10)

Categorisation
CPI Production
Branches\Publications\Release Issues

From : Colin Downing/CEND/CPSG/TITCHFIELD/ONS
To : Darren Morgan/OFD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS
CC :
Date Sent : 10/12/2010 12:01:54
Subject : [UNCLASSIFIED] - Re: Prices microdata to Simon Field?
Hi Darren

I discussed this request with Paul Jackson as I wasn't sure the formal MRP process was the correct route to authorise the release of the information required.

We think a more suitable option will be for you to provide a written submission to the MRP panel members and chair.

The submission should contain the following;

- description of the data
- information asset owner name
- why this is **not** personal information under S39 of SRSA (ie. why it doesn't relate to and identify a particular person (including a body corporate))
- recipient
- use of the data
- future uses - how other requests will be handled (disclosure log or publication scheme)
- state the type of licence/contract that will accompany the data and control its future use by Simon B. (Paul suggested an Open Government Licence (OGL) that permits free unrestricted re-use but with 'ONS' always listed as the source - this will obviously depend on the data not being classed as 'personal information')
- state Information Security Impact Level - the protective marking will have to be 'not marked' if it is to go out with an OGL

A number of the points above make it clear that the data will need to be classified as 'not personal information' otherwise it will require Simon to be accredited as an Approved Researcher which shouldn't be a problem in itself, but him wanting data off site might be. The panel has never allowed business data off of ONS to an AR and although this data isn't collected under the Stats of Trade Act I'm not sure how they will treat it.

Any questions please give me a shout

regards
Colin

Microdata Release Unit - Legal Services
ONS - part of the United Kingdom Statistics Authority

Response 10 of 0 to "FOI01284/Briscoe"

Darren Morgan/OFD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS
09/12/2010 16:33

To Colin Downing/CEND/CPSG/TITCHFIELD/ONS@ONS
cc

Subject [UNCLASSIFIED] - Re: Prices microdata to Simon Field? 

Hi Colin,

The data request, if approved, wld be sent to Simon Briscoe whose name you might recognise as he used to be the Stats Editor at the FT but has just joined a private sector company called Timetric.

The data are pretty much consistent with the CPI/RPI data in the VML. The full details are here ->  but in summary:

- 1. Individual price quote data: basically the prices of a tin of beans, loaf of bread etc collected across the UK (shop names and addresses have been removed to anonymise the data)
- 2. Item indices: these are the indices for particular items e.g. loaf of bread (all price quotes for a particular item are averaged and indexed)
- 3. Item Weights: these are the weights allocated to each item index (provides info. on how important the item is in the CPI and are used when aggregating the items indices further up the CPI/RPI Hierarchy)
- 5. COICOP Map: this is metadata that is simply a map that shows how the all the information is combined to produce the CPI
- 6. COICOP Description: again just metadata than explains the item codes
- 7. Location Details: just a key of the how the regional codes translate into actual regions

We plan to provide data for 2009 as a sample dataset for review.

I hope this helps but pls do let me know if you wld like to discuss further.

Can I ask how long you think it wld take for these data to be considered by MRP? (depending on this, Helen Patterson may need to manage Simon's expectations on when he can expect to the receive the data).

Thanks

Darren

.....

Darren Morgan | Head of CPI & RPI Production | Prices Division | Office for National Statistics: Newport

Colin Downing
09/12/2010 16:13

To: Darren Morgan/OFD/BSG/NEWPORT/ONS@ONS
cc:
Subject: [UNCLASSIFIED] - Prices microdata to Simon Field?

Hi Darren

I understand there are plans to provide Simon Field with Prices data? I have no more information than

Response 10 of 0 to "FOI01284/Briscoe"

that so I would be grateful if you could provide some background info so I can provide you with the relevant forms and info required to get this request moving.

regards
Colin

Microdata Release Unit - Legal Services
ONS - part of the United Kingdom Statistics Authority

Annex 3



Legal Services Branch on TGROUP1

Created By: Tony Chapple on 16/12/2010 at
11:00

Title: Timetric request for Prices data

Categorisation
007 - Microdata Release Unit\0010 - Note
To Chair

To: MRP chair

Issue

A proposed release of raw prices micro-data to Timetric, an econometrics business.

- This constitutes a precedent. (ONS has not released raw prices data in this way before.)
- The data are not requested for research purposes.
- The use of the data will be to prepare prices time series for public or exclusive use through the Timetric website, and other unspecified purposes.

This request:

- The original request from Simon Briscoe was for all ONS non-personal micro-data.
- Meetings have taken place between Simon Briscoe and Helen Patterson, Paul Jackson, Simon Field, and Sarah Brown.
- As a result the request has been narrowed down to prices data in the first instance.
- The outcome is an undertaking to provide to Timetric all monthly prices for the last quarter.
- The assumption is that the same information will be requested for subsequent quarters.

In his application for underlying ONS data, Simon Briscoe refers to a right of access to information that is not personal information.

He is aware of, and is appealing to, the policy of the new Government with respect to public access non-personal government data, and the re-use of that information.

Response 10 of 0 to "FOI01284/Briscoe"

(MRP submission sent to MRU for consideration from Darren Morgan (Prices Division) ----> See Annex A)

Background:

Timetric is an information business startup company. Simon Briscoe, the applicant (formally statistics editor for the FT), is working for Timetric to search for new sources of primarily economics data to underpin their information products.

Timetric was one of the 4 organisations given early access to the data on government spending. Some of their recommendations (such as structured data entry instead of free-text entry for contractors' names) have been welcomed by Francis Maude.

From their website (www.timetric.com) two services are offered.

- A searchable index of repackaged existing statistical information, with visualisations. (Example: comparison of trends in CPI and RPI, see www.timetric.com/topic/cpi-rpi-comparison-of-indexes/).
- Products of "exclusive" data for which a subscription must be paid.

Application for ONS data :

Legal framework

The framework is in three parts:

- The right of access to information held by public authorities (FOI)
- The freedom to re-use that information (OGL)
- The SRSA.

FOI - The public's right of access to information is found in the Freedom of Information Act. Case law finds that data is within the scope of FoIA. (Leukaemia statistics case in Scotland, the Abortions case in England)

FoIA does not require the applicant to cite the Act.

ONS is obliged to treat all requests for information, including data, as an FoI request.

Simon Briscoe is not pressing on the matter of the 20 working days time limit, but he is aware of that obligation.

Undue delay in responding to his request may lead to an FoI Appeal.

Case law finds that if information has to be modified in order to release it, then that modification should be done.

For text this can be through summarising or redacting the information.

The same is true for data - if we must modify the data in order to be able to comply rather than refuse a reasonable request, then we should. This allows for the application of statistical disclosure control techniques before the release of the information.

In a letter to departments the Prime Minister has promised a change to the FoI Act to make clear the right of public access to all non-personal data held in government. The letter requires departments to interpret the current FoI Act as if this change had already been made.

The FoI Act requires that systematic releases of information are described on the ONS website, as part of our publication scheme. Ad hoc releases of information should be posted in a disclosure log.

OGL - The freedom to re-use information obtained from public authorities has been modified in 2010. The rules of Crown Copyright have been changed to the "Open Government Licence". The previous limitations on re-use (the permission required for onward transmission, the collection of royalties, the need for all users to obtain a 'Click-Use Licence' from OPSI) have been removed.

The new Open Government Licence (OGL) allows anyone to re-use public sector information without having to pay or get permission. Commercial exploitation is permitted and no royalties are to be


Response 10 of 0 to "FOI01284/Briscoe"

collected. Provided there is source attribution, users of information can onwardly disclose it as they please.

The Open Government Licence can be found here ----->
<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/>
more background info can be found here ----->
<http://data.gov.uk/blog/new-open-government-licence>

SRSA - SRSA prohibits the disclosure of personal information unless an exemption applies. Personal information is defined as information which relates to and identifies an individual, taking into account other sources of published information. For prices data, the information may be personal information if the prices relate to and identify a particular vendor. If this is the case, then an exemption to the non disclosure rule must be used. If it is thought that the prices in the data have already lawfully been made available to the public, then that exemption will be available. If the prices data are not personal information under the Act, then there is no restriction on the disclosure of them in the Act.

Issues for MRP

1. MRP approves all releases of data from ONS other than statistical publications and tabulations that meet the GSS Standard for Tabular Outputs. The release of prices data are in the scope of MRP.
2. MRP must consider the advice of Prices Division that the data in question can be released under Fol in the format proposed, for re-use by Timetric under the Open Government Licence regime.
3. Members should note that if this is the framework for the release there is no opportunity for a restrictive data access agreement or contract determining the use and re-use of the data.
4. Members should be aware that data can be modified before release if that modification is necessary and proportionate to enable the release of data that would otherwise be exempt.
5. Members should note that the wider issue of the ONS response to the Transparency Agenda and Open Government Licensing is the subject of an Executive Committee paper > 

Timescale:

Urgent. required before cop 21st December.


Action Required:

The Chair is asked to approve the release in principle to allow the business area to action the request from Simon Briscoe as soon as possible. A full MRP will be generated retrospectively.

Annex A submission from Darren Morgan

Brief Background to request for CPI/RPI microdata	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Timetric has requested access to all of the ONS's unpublished data under the new Open Government Licence.● ONS response suggested that there would be disclosure issues prohibiting the supply of much of that data.● Through discussion it was agreed to provide a sample microdataset for a pilot area (which turned out to be CPI/RPI) for Timetric to review.● This submission seeks approval to release the CPI/RPI microdata to Timetric● ONS personnel who have led the engagement with Timetric are Simon Field, Helen Patterson and Sarah Brown
Data description	These data are pretty much in line with the CPI/RPI data in the

Response 10 of 0 to "FOI01284/Briscoe"

	<p>VML (full details of the data held in the VML are here -> ). In addition a glossary of the data is also included in the attached winzip file. In summary, though:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual price quote data: basically the prices of a tin of beans, loaf of bread etc collected across the UK (shop names and addresses have been removed to anonymise the data) • Item indices: these are the indices for particular items e.g. loaf of bread (all price quotes for a particular item are averaged and indexed) • Item Weights: these are the weights allocated to each item index (provides info. on how important the item is in the CPI and are used in aggregation of the item indices further up the CPI/RPI Hierarchy) • COICOP Map: this is metadata that simply shows which category the item is in and the timeframe for how long the item has been included in the CPI • COICOP Description: this is metadata that translates the category codes into descriptions. • Location Details: this is metadata that translates the 'location' codes into actual locations
Information asset owner name	Dennis Roberts
Rationale why this is not personal information under S39 of SRSA	Data were publicly available price quotes for items to purchase. No data providers can be identified as shop names and addresses have been removed.
Recipient	Timetric (main contact is Simon Briscoe)
Use of the data	Data are being provided as a sample dataset for Timetric to review in order to consider whether it would prove useful to their users. Timetric's aim is to make all public data freely available, chartable and downloadable to everyone, a link to their website is here -> http://timetric.com/ .
Future uses	This has not yet been confirmed. The current thinking, though, is that we would place a statement on the CPI/RPI homepage that these data are available on request.
Type of licence/contract that will accompany the data	Open Government Licence
Information Security Impact Level	Not marked

Annex 4



Prices on NGROUP1
 Created By: Rowan Kelsoe on 21/12/2010 at 14:43

Title: Timetric Request: Use of data - Response from RI

Categorisation
Personal Work Areas\Rowan Kelsoe

Carole,
As discussed, please find enclosed .zip file containing 5 letters that Research International use when recruiting shops, these are endorsed by Jo Whiting (head of our Quality and Contract Monitoring team). There are two for outlet recruitment and two for services, and one referred to as assertive recruitment. They all give the same basic message but are tailored to suit the situation.

Rowan

Recruitment Letters.zip

Annex 5



Prices on NGROUP1
Created By: Joanne Whiting on 03/02/2011 at
11:03

Title: Retailer Recruitment Letters - CPI & RPI

Categorisation
Quality & Contract Management
Branch\Enumeration\2010\Recruitment

General - initial retailer recruitment



CPI Enumeration - letter of introduction 2010 final.doc

CPI Enumeration – letter of introduction 2010

Dear Retailer,

CONSUMER PRICES INDEX

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is the Government Department responsible for producing the Consumer Prices Index (CPI), the most commonly used measure of inflation in the British economy. We do this by collecting prices of goods and services for a wide range of the most commonly purchased items in over 140 locations across the United Kingdom, and compare how these prices change over time.

The ONS is concerned to ensure that the locations and retail outlets included in the local price

Response 10 of 0 to "FOI01284/Briscoe"

collection for the CPI continue to be representative of consumer spending across the country. We have commissioned TNS Research International to undertake a survey of all retail outlets in your area. Following this, a small number of retail outlets will be asked to participate in the monthly price collection for the CPI.

We have planned the survey to be of minimal disturbance to the retailers. Our surveyors have been asked to collect very brief details of each store – address, approximate size, type of business and whether the outlet is independent or part of a multiple chain. They will as far as possible make use of readily available information, and we hope no inconvenience is caused.

All of the information that you provide is kept strictly confidential. It is illegal for us to reveal your data or identify your business to unauthorised persons.

If you require any further information about this procedure, please contact me on the number above. For enquiries about the Consumer Prices Index, please contact the CPI Helpline on 01633 456900.

We are very grateful to you for your co-operation.

Yours faithfully,



Joanne Whiting
Head of Quality & Contract Management Branch
Prices Division

Specific - Property Rental Collection



CPI Data Protection Letter 2010 v1.doc

CPI Data Protection Letter
Version 1 August 2010

Dear Retailer,

COLLECTION OF PROPERTY RENTAL DATA FOR THE CPI

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is the Government Department responsible for producing the Consumer Prices Index (CPI), the most commonly used measure of inflation in the British economy. TNS-Research International are contracted to collect prices on behalf of the ONS.

As you are aware, a collector from Kantar Operations (working on behalf of TNS-Research International) visits your business on a quarterly basis. The purpose is to collect house rental prices for inclusion in the CPI. It is important that the same property is priced, wherever possible, each quarter. To further ensure that price data is consistent, the collector will record the following property details: Rental Period, Property Type, Rental Status and Property Address.

The ONS is registered to hold this data for statistical purposes under the Data Protection Act 1998, *registration number Z1404686*.

All of the information that you provide is kept strictly confidential. It is illegal for us to reveal your data or identify your business to unauthorised persons.

If you require any further information about the price collection, please contact me on the number

above.

For enquiries about the Consumer Prices Index, or to request a copy of the booklet "*Consumer Price Indices: A Brief Guide*", please contact the **CPI Helpline** on **01633 456900**.

Yours faithfully,



Joanne Whiting
Head of Quality and Contract Management
Prices Division

Collector Authorisation



Collector Authorisation letter.doc

Dear Retailer,

CONSUMER PRICES INDEX

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is the Government Department responsible for producing the Consumer Prices Index (CPI), the most commonly used measure of inflation in the UK economy. We do this by collecting prices of goods and services for a wide range of the most commonly purchased items in over 140 locations across the United Kingdom, and compare how they change over time.

The bearer of this letter is a collector from Kantar Operations, working on behalf of Research International, and is authorised to collect prices on behalf of the ONS.

He/she will carry an MRS (Market Research Society) photo-ID card issued by Kantar Operations.

If you require any further information, please contact the CPI Helpline on 01633 456900. Alternatively, you may wish to visit our website www.ons.gov.uk.

We are very grateful to you for your co-operation.

Yours faithfully,



Joanne Whiting
Head of Contract and Quality Management
Prices Division

General - ongoing participation



CPIRecruitmentLetter_Businesses_OngoingRecruitment 2010 v1.doc

CONSUMER PRICES INDEX

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is the Government Department responsible for producing the Consumer Prices Index (CPI), the most commonly used measure of inflation in the British economy.

We do this by collecting prices for a wide range of the most commonly purchased goods and services in about 150 locations across the United Kingdom, and compare how they change over time. The market research company TNS-Research International has been commissioned by the ONS to carry out the local price collection for the CPI.

The ONS needs to ensure that retail outlets and providers of services included in the local price collection continue to be representative of shopping patterns across the country. To do so, businesses are randomly sampled for inclusion in the Consumer Prices Index sample. Your business has been selected as one of the outlets that we would like to use in the price collection for the CPI.

Collections take place monthly or quarterly, depending on the type of good or service being collected. A price collector from Kantar Operations, working on behalf of TNS-Research International, will telephone your business to request price information. Price collectors will always announce that they are calling on behalf of the Consumer Prices Index, and in their initial call will explain when you can expect to receive calls in the future.

All of the information that you provide is kept strictly confidential. It is illegal for us to reveal your data or identify your business to unauthorised persons.

If you require any further information about the price collection, please contact me on the number above. For enquiries about the Consumer Prices Index, or to request a copy of the booklet "*Consumer Price Indices: A Brief Guide*", please contact the **CPI Helpline on 01633 456900**.

We are very grateful to you for your co-operation.

Yours faithfully,



Joanne Whiting
Head of Quality and Contract Management
Prices Division

Annex 6



Methodology Directorate
Projects on NGROUP1

Created By: Carole Abrahams on 01/02/2011 at
12:49

Title: Formal risk assessment of raw prices data

Response



Raw prices data.doc

SDC Risk Assessment for raw prices data



1. Introduction

The Statistical Disclosure Control branch has been asked to carry out a risk assessment on raw prices data for publication of the microdata (record level data).

2. Background – ONS governance and protocols for release of microdata

2.1 Normal process for release of unpublished data

This is described on the ONS web-site

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/about/who-we-are/our-services/unpublished-data/index.html>. It states that all releases of microdata must be approved by the ONS Microdata Release Panel (MRP). Such releases are always accompanied by a data access agreement (DAA), which is signed by the data provider (ONS) and the recipient. This agreement lists the terms and conditions under which the data are supplied, for example restrictions on data linkages. If the data are personal information, then the DAA also advises the appropriate GSS guidance for ensuring that any published outputs are not personal information. Data which are personal information are defined as those which could reveal the identity of an individual or organisation, or any private information relating to them, through being specified in the information, by being deduced from the information, or by being deduced from the information when taken together with any other published information (Statistics and Registration Service Act (2007) section 39 (3))., see <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/data/bestpractice.asp>.

Note that this data request is outside the scope of the process, as the data will not be protected by a data access agreement nor any other confidentiality declaration.

2.2. Categories of data – levels of disclosiveness

Microdata may be categorised according to the level of disclosiveness and the required status of recipients, see

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/data/disclosure/downloads/GSS-Microdata-Policy.pdf>, section 4. In summary the categories are:

(a) **Private/personal information.** These may only be released via one of the gateways to Section 39 of the Statistics and Registration Service Act (SRSA), (or another appropriate clause in the Act). Examples are government departments and Approved Researchers.

(b) **Licensed datasets/ End-User Licence datasets.** These are not private information under the CoP nor personal information under the SRSA, because there is no risk of disclosure resulting from the use of data in the public domain. They may be lodged at the UKDA under the End-User Licence. The UKDA end-user licence includes the following restrictions:

- The user must preserve the confidentiality of individuals and households in the data.
- The user must not attempt to derive information from the data relating to an individual, nor claim to

have done so.

- The data must be kept secure and may only be shared with other registered users of the UKDA.
- The data may only be used for research or educational purposes, and may not be used for commercial purposes without permission. (EUL), which is considered to provide adequate protection against disclosure resulting from the use of other data, such as private databases. These are also referred to as "non-disclosive" datasets. If they are released to individuals, rather than via the UKDA, then a licence or DAA is required which includes equivalent terms and conditions to those of the EUL.

(c) **Public use data** These data are neither private information under the Code of Practice, nor personal information under the SRSA. Account must be taken of the risk of disclosure from data in the public domain and private sources of information since the data are released without any kind of licence arrangement. In the past ONS has not released microdata for public use.

2.3 Code of Practice for Official Statistics and the Survey Charter

The Code of Practice (CoP), see

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html>, states in Principle 5: Confidentiality "Private information about individual persons (including bodies corporate) compiled in the production of official statistics is confidential, and should be used for statistical purposes only. Practice 3 of this principle states "Inform respondents to statistical surveys and censuses how confidentiality will be protected".

This is further discussed in National Statistician's Guidance, see paragraphs 30, 33, 34. <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/national-statistician/ns-guidance-and-reports/national-statistician-s-guidance/confidentiality-of-official-statistics.pdf>. The latter two paragraphs state:

"33. It is good practice to provide information to the public in general about how confidentiality is protected. The Office for National Statistics, for example, publishes a Survey Charter and advance leaflets for each of its social surveys.

34. The information provided to respondents should be treated as a binding promise about how their data will be used. If it is thought necessary to breach this promise, the procedure set out in the fifth practice statement is relevant."

The survey charter can be found here:

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/ons/survey_charter.asp

3 **Prices data**

3.1 Guarantee of confidentiality

Data for the Consumer Prices Index are collected in the Prices survey. Each data provider (retailer or other establishment) receives a letter from the ONS which includes the following wording:

"All of the information that you provide is kept strictly confidential. It is illegal for us to reveal your data or identify your business to unauthorised persons."

This undertaking, as well as the SRSA, the Code of Practice and the Data Protection Act, all need to be considered when assessing the disclosure risk of publishing the raw microdata.

3.2 Nature of the data

The raw data includes two geographic variables: (a) Government Office Region (GOR), (b) Local area/ shopping district. The latter is not a standard geography (see <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/geography/default.asp>). The closest equivalent is probably ward level. Note that data released under licence, such as those lodged at the UK Data Archive for access under the End User Licence, have no geography below GOR.

The data also include actual items for which prices were requested. Many of these are staple items just as foodstuffs, clothes, and household equipment such as furniture or electrical items. For these it would be extremely difficult to identify the retailers involved. However there are other items for which there is likely to be just one supplier in the local area. A few examples are:

- Dog kennel fees
- Carbon fibre fishing rods
- Smokeless fuel
- Cinema admission
- Golf green fees
- Secondary school cafeteria
- Non-NHS chiropractor

4 **SDC risk assessment**

The SDC assessment is that, given the nature of the data described above, it would be possible to combine the raw prices data with other published information such as www.yell.com to identify the retailer/establishment with a high level of certainty. This would be in breach of the SRSA, the Code of Practice, the ONS Survey Charter, and the undertaking given to the survey respondent. It would thus be illegal for ONS to make these data publicly available.

We have given the advice that the local area variable should be suppressed, with the only geography being GOR. We consider that this would then give sufficient uncertainty that any possible identification of a respondent would be a correct re-identification.

Annex 7



MAUS BDB on NGROUP1
Created By: Suzanne Fry on 19/11/2010 at 09:30

Title: [UNCLASSIFIED] - VML Application - CPI/RPI data

Categorisation
BUS Business Research Other\10041 -
Simon Briscoe\2 - Project Application

Response 10 of 0 to "FOI01284/Briscoe"

From : Suzanne Fry/NEWPORT/ONS
To : xxxxx.xxxxxxx@xxxxxxx.xxx
CC : Felix Ritchie/EASD/MESAG/LONDON/ONS
Date Sent : 19/11/2010 9:29:46
Subject : [\[UNCLASSIFIED\] - VML Application - CPI/RPI data](#)

Dear Simon,

We had a meeting last week with the Prices team to discuss your project. They raised a few concerns and challenges, related to the complexity of the Prices data given your plans on how you intend to use the data. For instance, there are numerous weights applied to the data at each stage of the index construction; any series you produced and made available on your website would therefore be extremely sensitive to the weighting methodology you adopted. The series would also be greatly affected by how you chose to combine variables. The production of Prices statistics within ONS goes through numerous, complex stages, including considerable research into the most appropriate methodology to adopt. There is a risk that the availability of a contrasting series may mislead and result in misinterpretation, which would be particularly unhelpful given the uses of the CPI and RPI.

However, the Prices team, at the same time, recognise the potential value in what you are trying to achieve. They think it may be helpful, though, for the methodological issues/challenges to be understood when using CPI/RPI data. We therefore suggest that you submit an application (by completing a new Customer Request Form) that proposes a feasibility study into creating a time series using prices data. A key component of this would need to propose examining the various methodological issues surrounding creating a time series. This would ensure the complexity of the data was taken account of, and would therefore be of interest to all parties. Once we receive this, we will forward the application on to our senior colleagues within ONS, to seek approval for the feasibility study.

Please let me know if you have any queries about this or would like some more guidance on completing the Customer Request Form.

Kind Regards,

Suzanne

Virtual Microdata Laboratory
Office for National Statistics
www.ons.gov.uk/about/who-we-are/our-services/vml/index.html

Last Modified : 26/10/2011 14:41:20