

15 November 2006

National Statistician welcomes Statistics and Registration Service Bill

Karen Dunnell, the National Statistician, welcomes the announcement in the Queen's Speech today that the Government will legislate to create an independent board to enhance confidence in government statistics. The Statistics and Registration Service Bill, proposed details of which were also announced today by the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, John Healey, will be introduced in this Parliamentary Session.

The legislation will include provisions for:

- The creation of an independent Statistics Board as a non-ministerial department
- A clear separation between the Board's role to scrutinise the whole of the UK's statistical system and the operational responsibilities of the Office for National Statistics
- The post of National Statistician to be enshrined in statute
- The Devolved Administrations to participate in the new arrangements
- The sharing of data to and from the Board for statistical purposes that will be subject to a robust confidentiality regime
- Removal of the anomalous employment position of registration officers

Karen Dunnell said:

"I see legislation as an important step in helping to build public confidence in official statistics. I believe these new arrangements will reinforce the independence and quality of statistics produced within the UK's long-standing decentralised system.

"I am pleased the legislation will leave the National Statistician as the government's Chief Advisor on statistical matters, with responsibility for the day-to-day running of the ONS and the leader of the Government Statistical Service."

Issued by
National Statistics
1 Drummond Gate
London SW1V 2QQ

Telephone
Press Office 020 7533 5702
Email press.office@ons.gsi.gov.uk
Public Enquiries 0845 601 3034

Internet
www.statistics.gov.uk