

Code of Practice for Official Statistics

Principle 6: Proportionate burden

Response to DRD Central Statistics and Research Branch consultation of data providers

Principle 6 of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics deals with *proportionate burden*. A copy of the code is available at <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html>

This principle states that the cost burden on data suppliers should not be excessive, and should be assessed relative to the benefits arising from the use of the statistics. Practice 1 of this principle details the need to assess the estimated costs of responding to statistical surveys in order to develop, if necessary, methods that will reduce the costs to individual organisations or people.

To meet this principle CSRB asked data providers when responding to data requests for the *Northern Ireland Transport Statistics Annual 2009-10* and the *Northern Ireland Road and Rail Transport Statistics April-June 2010*, respectively, to include their grade, estimated time to complete data request and comments, if any, regarding the data collection process. A copy of this note can be found in Annex A. The majority of data providers responded and this information is collated in Tables 1 and 2 below.

CSRB were pleased to note that none of the data providers had negative comments regarding the data collection process. In most cases the data was already collected by the respondent's organisation, and their role involved a quality assurance check of the figures before forwarding the data to CSRB. Data providers did highlight the necessity of maintaining sufficient time in the collection process to allow them to collate, quality assure and respond to the data requests. Based on these findings CSRB is content that the current data collection process places no undue burden on data suppliers, but is mindful of the need to ensure that data requests are sent as early as possible to suppliers to prevent unnecessary burden.

Northern Ireland Transport Statistics Annual 2009-10

Chapter	Table	Source	Respondent Grade	Time (Hr)	² Cost (£)
1	1.15	Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA)	Assistant Statistician	.5	9
1	1.16	NISRA	Deputy Principal (DP)	1	24
2	2.5 & 2.7	Drivers Standards Agency (DSA)	Administrative Officer (AO)	.25	3
2	2.10 - 2.11	Driver and Vehicle Licensing Northern Ireland (DVLNI)	Staff Officer (SO)	4	77
3	3.1 - 3.3	Roads Service	Higher Professional and Technology Officer (HPTO)	¹ 16-25	309-483
4	4.1 & 4.2	DoE Road Transport Licensing Division (RTLTD)	Executive Officer 1 (EO1)	1	15
5	5.1 - 5.8	Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI)	Assistant Statistician	4	70
6	6.1 - 6.7	Translink	Grade 6	1.5	65
8	8.1 & 8.2	Dept. Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI)	SO	.25	5
8	8.3 & 8.4	Dept. Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI)	EO1 Assistant Statistician	.25 .25	4 4
8	8.5 (Northern)	Roads Service	Professional and Technology Officer (PTO)	1	15
8	8.5 (Western)	Roads Service	EO1	.25	4
8	8.6	Dept. Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI)	Executive Officer 2 (EO2)	2	26

¹ Respondent indicated that this data is useful for internal purposes in their organisation and would probably still be collected even if not required for the publication.

² The calculation cost is based on the 2009/10 pay scale and assumes a working calendar of 247 days. The cost figure is rounded to the nearest £.

Northern Ireland Road and Rail Transport Statistics April-June 2010

Chapter	Table	Source	Respondent Grade	Time (Hr)	¹ Cost (£)
5	5.1 - 5.4	Translink	Grade 6	1.5	65
7	7.1 - 8.6	Driver Vehicle Testing Agency (DVTA)	EO2	2.25-2.75	29-36
8	8.2 & 8.4	Drivers Standards Agency (DSA)	AO	.25	3

¹ The calculation cost is based on the 2009/10 pay scale and reflects a working calendar of 247 days. The cost figure is rounded to the nearest £.

Annex A

Copy of note to data suppliers

The Northern Ireland Road and Rail Transport Statistics Bulletin is a National Statistics publication, therefore this publication should meet the principles and protocols outlined in the *Code of Practice for Official Statistics*. Principle 6 - **Proportionate Burden**, advocates that the cost of burden on data suppliers should not be excessive and should be assessed relative to the benefits arising from the use of the statistics.

Considering this, I would like to take this opportunity to gather your feedback regarding the cost of burden, both in terms of time and finance, in completing this data request for the Northern Ireland Transport Annual. I would be extremely grateful if you could supply your grade and an estimate of the amount of time (minutes) that it takes you to complete the data request. By supplying your grade, I can prepare a financial cost against your time estimate. I would also appreciate any comments that you may have on the current data collection process.

Thank you in advance for supplying this information, the results of which will help CSRB evaluate the effectiveness of the current data collection methodology and inform future strategy, the main aim of which is to minimise the burden on data suppliers, while maximising the usefulness of the statistics. Any questions on any of the above please don't hesitate to contact me.