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Dear Cabinet Secretary,

**Pre-release Access to Official Statistics (Scotland) Bill**

Thank you for your letter of 24 September to Professor Ashby, setting out the Scottish Government's position on pre-release access to official statistics. She has asked me to reply.

In our view, it is not correct to claim that pre-release access in Scotland is being managed in line with the UKSA Code of Practice. While it is true that the Pre-Release Access Order gives Scottish Government the responsibility to decide on this matter, the Code is also quite clear – in its section on [accessibility](#) – that statistics and data should be made available to everyone at the same time.

We would also note that UK government departments, which also have statisticians embedded in them, have successfully been operating since 2008 with 24-hour pre-release access.

We continue to remain concerned with the practice of the Scottish Government, and the impact that it has on trust in official statistics. As this concerns the recent Bill introduced by the Economy, Energy and Fair Work Committee, we have sent them a copy of this letter together with the previous correspondence.

Yours sincerely



Stephen Penneck  
Chair, RSS National Statistics Advisory Group

