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The Business Register and the National Accounts in the UK

Summary of the paper submitted by the ONS¹

1. Within the UK, the national accounts are compiled from a number of sources but key inputs are the statistical surveys of businesses. The Interdepartmental Business Register (IDBR) provides the sampling frame for these statistical surveys.

2. While the UK operates a decentralised statistical service within central government, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) is responsible for the computation of the national accounts, all of the main business surveys and the management of the IDBR. To ensure communication within the ONS, a National Accounts Surveys Strategy Group (NASSG) has been set up. The key players are the macro-economic, social and business statistics groups. This paper summarises the policies and principles agreed by the NASSG in relation to congruence, coherence, continuity and presentation. It considers specific issues on employment and earnings statistics and the consistency of inputs from the business registers and other data sources. The issues have wide application in other national statistical offices.

¹ John Perry, UK Office for National Statistics