



**An Analytical Guide for
Reporting
Housing Benefits Administration
Performance Data**

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Analytical Guide for Reporting Housing Benefits Administration Performance Data

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1: INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. There is a requirement for users of Housing Benefits information to have an integrated set of management information and guidance to allow consistent use of information. DWP uses management information for number of purposes including:
 - Setting PSA and SDA targets.
 - Monitoring of PSA and SDA targets.
 - To monitor the national level of performance improvement in delivery of services to customers.
 - For intervention by DWP and monitor the impact of interventions.
 - Informing the distribution of administrative subsidy.
- 1.2. The DWP Information Centre's Housing Benefit Data Services (HBDS) collects and verifies Management Information (MI) on housing benefits administration from local authorities. HBDS also estimates missing data for key data points.
- 1.3 We need to ensure that all reports that IAD and other groups that use housing benefits MI are produced consistently. This report aims to develop a way forward for providing consistent reporting definitions of management information throughout DWP.

Objectives

- 1.4 The objective of the IAD OR5 Analytical Guide is to bring together in one document the key technical aspects that govern the development of the IAD Model on reporting management information.

Purpose of the document

- 1.5. The purpose of this document is to:
 - allow easy reference for users;
 - enable new team members to be easily aware of terminology
 - give reference to the IAD OR 5 evidence base – support its development, link to evidence base specification
 - investigate differences between Absolute Vs Rounded scores.
 - provide an audit trail on methods and as well as explaining differences between methods.

Areas covered in this guide

- 1.6. Housing benefits administration is a very complex world not least in terms of data definitions. Across the range of uses of housing benefits data that are active in the HB community, there are many types of definitions that in use as well as other intangible interpretations that can be applied.
- 1.7. It is not the aim of this guide to provide a description for every type of definition that can be encountered. To do so would make for a huge guide containing highly complex measures that would be difficult to understand and virtually impossible to implement. Instead, concepts are generalized to provide relatively high level descriptions. This provides for a much more compact guide that is well structured, easier to understand and which can be implemented.
- 1.8. The report covers the following topics in order to encourage best practice by using standardised approach of data reporting:
 - Management Information sources and time table.
 - Data issues
 - Targets and data sources used to monitor the targets.
 - Reporting definitions: This is the highest level of definition and details the look and feel of the IAD reports used in reporting to customers.
 - Methods of calculation of averages.
 - Rounding.
 - Policy on data use.
- 1.9. The report will also cover a strategy over how best to ensure that the definitions discussed here are consistent with those used in the wider DWP analytical community.
- 1.10. The report also covers the appropriateness of each definition for different situations.

Customers

- 1.11. The intended audience for the IAD OR5 Analytical Guide includes:
 - Information Centre HBSD;
 - IAD OR
 - HSD;
 - HBSD;
 - BFI;
 - Other persons having a general interest.
- 1.12. IAD OR 5 is responsible for applying these guidelines during the development of database/evidence base.

1.13. We assume that the reader is reasonably familiar with the following:

- Terminology on Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit administration management information.
- Concepts and terminology associated with the statistical data reporting. However, refer to annex B for glossary of some commonly used statistical terms.

2: MANAGEMENT INFORMATION ON HOUSING BENEFITS

Introduction

- 2.1. The DWP collects a large volume of management information on Housing Benefit and Council Tax benefit from local authorities via a range of sources including HBMI and HBMS.
- 2.2. The process of defining, collecting and collating HBMI alone could be considered as one of the biggest surveys in Europe.
- 2.3. A number of different forms are used to collect different types of information including caseload, performance, overpayment, security etc. A brief description of the HBMI forms used to collect management information is given in Annex A. Annex C describes data management policy of the IAD. A brief description of data issues of management information is discussed below:

Data Issues

Completeness of data: Missing data

- 2.4. One of the problems in using HBMI data for the purpose of monitoring and evaluation in the past was the relatively poor HBMS response rate from LAs.
 - Compliance: Not all local authorities return MI
 - Completeness: Not all local authorities who return management information report all data
 - Consistency: Not all local authorities who report data for a quarter report data for all quarters continuously.
- 2.5. DWP is making continuous efforts to improve the return rate. This has been reflected in an improvement in the rate of return for most of the performance items.

Data Quality

- 2.6. Across LAs, there have been a number of data quality problems particularly with the Best Value PI data in their first year. These may be due to some or and of the following reasons:
 - inaccurate & insufficient MIS guidance
 - misinterpretation of definition & miscounting of claims.
 - problems with IT
- 2.7. Again, DWP is making continuous efforts to improve the quality of data through improved guidance and responding queries from local authorities.

Reliability of data

- 2.8. DWP has no audit mechanism to verify reliability of data reported by local authorities via MI. There is Audit of Best Value performance scores by Audit/Accounts commission, but we do not know yet much about the audit procedure.

Validity of data

- 2.9. The IAD Information Centre (HBSD) has been carrying out some validation of BVPI data reported by local authorities for obvious errors. Currently, the Information Centre is testing some more validation tests for other items such as security and overpayment.

3: TARGETS

Introduction

- 3.1. The department has two main sets of targets that cover the delivery of housing benefits. These are:
- SDA targets agreed in SR2002
 - PSA targets agreed in SR2004
- 3.2 The SDA target covers the period 2002/03 – 2005/06. The PSA target covers the period 2005/06 – 2007/08.
- 3.3 Up to the end of 2004/05 the department will report against the SDA target alone. In 2005/06 reports will need to be made on progress against both targets. For 2006/07 and 2007/08 reports will be made against the PSA target. In 2007/08, it is possible that we may need to report progress against targets set as part of SR2006.

Service Delivery Agreement (SDA) target

- 3.4. The department's SDA targets for housing benefits were agreed as part of SR2002, The SDA targets set to the DWP on reducing the processing times for new claims were:
- reduction of the processing time of the slowest 60 LAs by 33% and the national average by 10% by April 2006.
- 3.5. The SDA targets set to the DWP on reducing the *fraud and error based on*:
- a reduction of 25% in housing benefit fraud and error for people of working age by 2006.
- 3.6. The baseline and target for the speed PSA are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Baseline and target for speed of processing new claims PSA

<u>Target</u>	<u>Baseline</u>	<u>Target</u>
(a) To improve HB claims processing times in the slowest 60 LAs by 33% by April 2006	99 days	65 days
(b) To improve national average HB claims processing times by 10% by April 2006	55 days	50 days

Public Service Agreement (PSA)

3.7. As part of SR2004, the department has agreed Public Service Agreement Targets for the delivery of housing benefits. The department has two PSAs in this area as described below.

- **PSA 9a:** Reducing the average time taken to process a claim for Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit claim to no more than 48 days nationally to, at the most, 48 days and across the bottom 15 per cent of Local Authorities to, at the most, no more than 55 days, by March 2008;
- **PSA 10b:** reducing losses from fraud and error by 25% for people of working age in housing Benefit by 2008.

Data Source

3.8. The measure used to set up the SDA and PSA targets for reducing the processing time for new claim is BVPI 78a. The definitions used to set up the targets are:

- The average time taken to process a Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit is defined as the number of calendar days taken to process the claim from and including the date claim physically received at a local authority designated office to the date (including) a decision is made on the claim (see MIS guide 2004/05 page 78).
- The bottom 60 (or 15%) LAs are defined as the LAs with the worst 60 reported scores for the speed of new claims processing in the particular quarter being monitored. If not all LAs reported scores for processing speed of new claims for a quarter, the bottom 60 becomes the bottom 15% of LAs that reported in that quarter.

Monitoring targets

3.9. The baseline for the SDA target was set using audited 78a (Speed of processing new claims BVPI) results from LAs, weighted by their workload (or estimated workload if missing) for 2002/03.

3.10. To monitor the progress against target, we set a provisional SDA baseline and target based upon un-audited scores based upon the 4 quarters stats 124 data for 2002/03 weighted by LA workloads for 2002/2003.

Baseline

3.11. The quarterly monitoring (un-audited) data for 2002/03 has provided an indication of the baseline from which the targets will be measured.

Achievement of the target

3.12. The achievement of the target will be measured at the end of 2005/06 and would depend on the "weighted" average for the bottom 60 authorities using audited data for 2005/06 showing at least a 33%

improvement and a 10% improvement for all LAs again using a weighted average.

Data sources available

Stats 124

3.13. DWP's Housing Benefit Data Services collect MI data from local authorities quarterly through stats 124. The information collected is validated for obvious errors. However, it is not possible to fully assess the accuracy of any information returned to DWP by LAs. The validated data is published in the DWP intranet, with LA scores for the main performance measures reported on the DWP internet site. Quarterly information is used by DWP for a number of purposes including:

- Quarterly monitoring team: to monitor the local authority performance and to write the letters to chief executives.
- Answer PQs.
- Monitor and evaluate the impact of engagements with LAs.

Stats 124A

3.14. Local Authorities also report data on Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit management information to DWP annually. The annual management information is supplied via Stats 124a.

3.15. Theoretically, the data supplied via Stats 124 should be used to derive data reported in Stats 124a. However, in practice there are differences between the derived annual figures from Stats 124 and figures reported in Stats 124a for some LAs. Anecdotal evidences suggest nearly half of the LAs use annual data which is reviewed after submitting quarterly data.

Audit/Account Commission

3.16. Audit commission in England and Wales publishes annual scores for individual local authorities in their respective websites. However, not all the reported scores are qualified by auditors. The average reported in Audit Commission website is the simple average (mean) of those LAs whose data is audited by auditors.

3.17. Audit Scotland (Account commission) produce annual scores for individual local authorities in their website. In addition to simple averages, they also report upper lower quartile and median figures.

Why do we use Stats 124 to monitor the SDA target?

- 3.18. Figures reported by Audit commission are annual, audited, however these are not available until 9 to 12 months after end of financial year at the earliest.
- 3.19. Figures reported by Stats 124a, also annual are only available after three to six months from end of financial year. These data also un-audited. Not all LAs report MI consistently with the methodology described in the MI guide for stats 124a. A number of LAs fail to report stats 124a data to DWP.
- 3.20. Stats 124 provide quarterly information (un-audited) which is available every quarter within two months of end of a quarter. Using Stats 124 data allow us to monitor the progress of improvements and consistent methodology to set up targets, monitor the progress and evaluate the achievement of targets.
- 3.21. Most LAs return stats 124 data for at least 1 quarter in the year, so calculating annual scores using stats 124 is more likely to cover the full range of LA performance than using stats 124a data.
- 3.22. To date, the observed differences in the national average between the Stats 124, Stats 124a and audited data has been minimal.

4: REPORTING DEFINITIONS

Introduction

- 4.1. This section covers reporting definitions commonly used when reporting LA performance. Most of the definitions for PIs are given in the DWP MI guide for HB MI¹.
- 4.2. It also gives a brief description of the calculation of speed of processing new claims PI (BVPI 78a). Following this, the section gives a detailed discussion on the uses of simple and weighted averages.
- 4.3. We use some technical notation here, however, this given mainly for completeness and non-technical readers should be able to follow the text without needing to refer to these areas.

Calculation of new claims PI: Average processing time for new claims for a LA for a quarter

- 4.4. The information required to calculate the average processing time for new claims for a LA in a quarter is reported in stats 124 items 1, 2 & 6.
 - Item 1: Number of successful claims decided in the quarter.
 - Item 2: Number of unsuccessful claims decided in the quarter.
 - Item 6: total number of calendar days taken to process claims recorded in item 1 & 2.
- 4.5. The average processing speed is calculated as:
$$\frac{\text{(Item 6)}}{\text{(Item 1 + item 2)}}$$
$$= \text{Total number of days (N)} / \text{Total number of claims (D)}$$
- 4.6. Consider the following LA:
 - Item 1: 303 claims
 - Item 2: 30 claims
 - Item 6: 4848 days
- 4.7. Then the PI calculation will become:
 - $\text{PI} = \text{Item6 (4848 days)} \div (\text{Item 1 (303 claims)} + \text{Item 2 (30 claims)})$
 - $\text{PI} = 14.55856 \text{ days}$, this should be rounded to at most 2 decimal places, which gives 14.56 days.

¹ Refer MIS guide 2005/06 for latest version of definitions and guidance.

Use of averages

- 4.8. There are many ways in which data can be summarised. The 'average' is the common statistical concept used to summarise data. In this section we briefly discuss the concepts of simple and weighted averages and methods of calculating these averages for different situations.
- 4.9. There are four types of average we could use:
- Arithmetic Mean (simple and weighted)
 - Median
 - Mode
 - Geometric mean
- (see Annex B for glossary of these concepts).
- 4.10. A common statistical technique to summarise a selection of values is the arithmetic mean - generally known as the average. For the purpose of setting up and monitoring SDA target for new claims we use the weighted average. For new claims we weight by new claim workload.

Choosing the reporting average

- 4.11. The selection of which average (simple or weighted) should be used to report data depends on the purpose of its use. There are advantages and disadvantages of each method. For example, for reporting national average of processing times, it is useful to use the weighted average because it tells us something about the general experience of the population (of a claim).
- 4.12. However, for the purpose of impact analysis of a small group of LAs, it is useful to report both simple and weighted averages because both improvements at number of LAs of the group and group level are important.
- 4.13. In these situations, the weighted mean may be dominated by a single LA that is much larger than the others in a group. It may be possible that in a group of say 10 LAs, 9 may be reporting improvements in performance but the 10th may be reporting deterioration. If the 10th LA is much larger than the other 9, any weighted average may show an overall deterioration in performance and the simple average an improvement.
- 4.14. In this case using both simple and weighted averages would enable us to indicate the influence of the single poorly performing LA has on the group. This could not be achieved through using the simple or weighted averages alone.

Calculating the Simple average for a quarter (National)

4.15. The steps to calculate the national simple average for a quarter is:

- Use all reported (validated) data for the quarter.
- Find the sum of performance scores of LAs who reported data (P).
- Divide the sum of scores by the number of LAs who reported data (L).
- Round up or round down to the nearest two decimals.

$$Average = \sum_{i=1}^{i=n} P / L$$

4.16. The following example illustrates how the simple averages are calculated using reported performance scores for a number of LAs. This method can be used to derive national simple average for a quarter.

Table 1: Simple average for a quarter (days)

LA NAME	78a score (days)
Angus	58.06556
Brighton & Hove	34.81005
Calderdale	43.33054
Castle Morpeth	14.55856
Cherwell	41.81951
Derby	50.16362
Edinburgh	Missing
Fife	30.93582
Sum of 78a Scores	273.68366
Average= (Sum of 78a scores /Number of LAs reported)	39.09767
Reported Average	39.10
Number of LAs that reported data	7

Simple average for a year

4.17. It is possible to calculate a simple average of a year. However, the results can be very misleading. Therefore, we have not included the calculation of a simple average of a year in this guide.

Weighted average for a single quarter for all LAs

4.18. The steps to calculate weighted average for a quarter:

- Use all reported validated scores for the quarter.
- Find the sum of number of claims of all LAs who reported data for the quarter = total number of claims (Wd).
- Find the sum of total number of days of all LAs who reported corresponding data = total number of days (Wn).
- Divide the total number of days by total number of claims.
- Round up or round down to the nearest two decimals

$$\text{WeightedAverage} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{i=n} Wn}{\sum_{i=1}^{i=n} Wd}$$

4.19. The following example illustrates how the weighted averages are calculated using reported data for items 1,2 and 6 of stats 124 for a number of LAs. This method can be used to derive national weighted average for a quarter for those LAs who reported data during the quarter. However, the calculated average using this method may give different quarterly average figure from simple averages calculated using reported performance scores. We use this method for monitoring SDA targets, reporting quarterly monitoring, impact analysis etc.

Table 3: weighted average for a single quarter

LA NAME	78a score (days)	Total number of new claims	Total number of days
Angus	58.06556	2105	122228
Brighton & Hove	34.81005	9529	331705
Calderdale	43.33054	3933	170419
Castle Morpeth	14.55856	333	4848
Cherwell	41.81951	1640	68584
Derby	50.16362	5751	288491
Edinburgh	78.12494	14495	1132421
Fife	30.93582	7822	241980
Sum	351.8086	45608	2360676
Average	43.97608		51.76013
Reported Average	43.98		51.76

Weighted Vs Simple Averages

4.20. The above table shows the difference between weighted average and simple average for 8 LAs. The weighted average is nearly 8 days longer than simple average in this case. If we look at the data you find that Edinburgh's new claim workload is one-third of the 8 LAs which also reported long processing time. So, the differences in simple average and weighted average could be attributed due to:

- The increased effect of LAs with larger workloads. Historically larger LAs tended to have poorer performance than smaller LAs.
- The reduced impact of LAs with smaller workloads when calculating a weighted average.

Annual weighted averages for a single LA

4.21. The steps to calculate annual weighted average are:

- Use all the reported data from quarters where we have all the data items² irrespective of number of quarters they reported in a year.
- Find the sum of number of claims processed during the year. Add the number of claims processed of each quarter (refer this as "Wd").
- Divide the sum calculated in "Wd" by number of quarters for data is reported (refer this as "Wd/n").
- Multiply "Wd/n" by 4 (refer this as "(Wd*4/n)").
- Find the sum of total number of days taken to process those claims processed in a year (refer this as "Wn").
- Divide the sum calculated in "Wn" by number of quarters for data is reported (refer this as "(Wn/n)").
- Multiply the results of "Wn/n" by 4 (refer this as "(Wn*4/n)").
- Divide ("Wn* 4/n) by "(Wd*4/n)" to get the weighted average.
- Report the data for 2 decimals.

$$Average = \sum_{i=1}^{i=4} (Wn \times 4 / n) \div \sum_{i=1}^{i=4} (Wd \times 4 / n)$$

4. ² This means that we include only when data for both number of claims and number of days is available. For example, if one LA reports complete data for two quarters and partial data for other two quarters, only those two quarters data with complete data will be used.

4.22. The following example illustrates how the weighted average is calculated using reported data for items 1,2 and 6 of stats 124 for a LA. This method can be used to derive national weighted average for a quarter for those LAs who reported data during the quarter.

Table 4: Calculating annual weighted average for a LA

Quarter	Number of new claims (Denominator)	Number of days (Numerator)
Q1	2943	176963
Q2	1604	112322
Q3	1858	176291
Q4	2888	292259
Sum	9293	757835
Average		81.54902
Reported Average		81.55

Note: Annual LA Score = Sum (Q1 numerator + Q2 numerator + Q3 numerator + Q4 numerator) / Sum (Q1 denominator + Q2 denominator + Q3 denominator + Q4 denominator). The reported average in IAD OR5 database rounded to 2 decimal points.

Annual weighted average for all LAs

4.23. The steps to calculate national annual weighted average are:

- Use all the LAs who reported data within the particular year concerned.
- Find the sum of number of claims processed during the year for each LA.
- Divide by number of quarters reported.
- Multiply by 4. This will give you the total number of claims for the year for each LA (refer this as “A”).
- Find the sum of total number of days to process the total number of claims for each LA.
- Divide by number of quarters reported.
- Multiply by 4. This will give you the total number of days to process claims for each LA (refer this as “B”).
- Add “A” for all LAs (Denominator).
- Add “B” for all LAs (Numerator).
- Divide numerator (“B”) by denominator (“A”).
- Report the result to 2 decimals.

4.24. The following example illustrates how the weighted average is calculated using reported data for items 1,2 and 6 of stats 124 for all LAs who reported data. This method can be used to derive national annual weighted average. **This method is used to monitor the SDA targets, quarterly monitoring, impact analysis and for other similar purposes.**

Table 5: Calculating annual weighted average

LA NAME	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		Q1:Q4	
	No. of claims	No. of days	No. of claims	No. of days	No. of claims	No. of days	No. of claims	No. of days	Total No. of claims	Total No. of days
Kirklees	8434	1200346	8644	1234860	8806	1202192	9468	1125560	35352	4762898
Fife	9489	610182	11737	578191	8295	293125	Missing	Missing	39361	1975331
Edinburgh	8416	493491	7221	419001	6885	389981	5754	372933	28276	1675406
Derby	5240	397876	Missing	Missing	Missing	Missing	Missing	Missing	20960	1591504
Calderdale	3271	258326	3613	295674	4615	364614	2964	222419	14463	1141033
Brighton and Hove	6890	250657	6620	248383	6285	261457	7408	253724	27203	1014221
Angus	2943	176963	1604	112322	1858	176291	2888	292259	9293	757835
Lincoln	2657	150952	2929	166850	3123	168738	2523	123667	11232	610207
Cherwell	1305	68029	1419	63313	1272	49623	1451	71259	5447	252224
Castle Morpeth	631	42406	277	28047	426	41163	418	50852	1752	162468
Sum	49276	3649228	44064	3146641	41565	2947184	32874	2512613	193339	13943127
Av/LA		74.05690		71.41069		70.90543		76.43162		72.11738
Reported average		74.06		71.41		70.91		76.43		72.12 (73.20)

Note: Annual LA score for Missing data (e.g:q2,q3 &q4 missing for Derby)

Score = $\text{Sum (Q1N)} \times (4/1) / \text{Sum (Q1D)} \times (4/1)$

() data reported within brackets is the simple average of quarterly averages.

Weighted averages for comparison of averages over a period of time for all LAs who reported data consistently

4.25. To calculate weighted average for LAs who reported data consistently:

- Set the start and end period for which comparison should be made.
- Select those LAs who reported data consistently during the selected period of time.
- Find the weighted averages as discussed above for each quarter.

Impact of missing data on annual averages

4.26. In the above example, in the case of missing data we assume that the available data represents the missing quarter's data, ignoring the seasonal variations and performance improvements/deteriorations. As we have seen above in Table 2, the missing data had some differences between simple and weighted averages. It could be possible that the missing data may have some impact on reported averages using small group of LAs (e.g. impact analysis of PIAT, BFI, Help Team) where focus of impact analysis is on number of LAs in the group rather than group as a whole.

4.27. However, evidence so far suggests that the missing data do not have significant impact on the national level averages. In the above example, the weighted average including Derby is 72.12 and excluding Derby is 71.65 with a difference of 0.5. The number of LAs returning MI in the recent quarters increased and the net effect on national weighted average is not significantly different between with or without missing data.

5: ROUNDING

Introduction

- 5.1. Rounding has become an issue in the recent periods with classifying LAs for revised performance standards and audit. The Performance standard “PM 1” (see Para 5.6) define that LA has to process new claims within 36 days to achieve “standard”. In the revised performance standards, the boundary between scoring a 4 grade (excellent) and a 3 grade (good) is 36 days. A score of less than 36 days earns a 4 and a score in the range 47-36 days earns a 3.
- 5.2. The method of rounding you choose to classify LAs according to their reported performance score may have some impact for LAs. For example, if the reported score is 36, it could be a figure derived from absolute scores between 35.5000 and 36.4999.
- 5.3. The performance scores published by different sources vary in number of decimal points. For example, performance scores (BVPI 78a) published by Audit Commission (England) are to the nearest whole number. Scores published by Audit Scotland are rounded up or down to nearest one decimal. The performance scores published on IAD OR 5 data base rounded to 2 decimal points.

IAD policy on rounding

General

- 5.4. In general, the rounding of performance scores for publishing scores being done at the last stage of reporting averages. The reported averages of IAD OR5 database (Hobod) is rounded to two decimal points.

Monitoring SDA targets

- 5.5. For statistics that is reported nationally, the rounding is done at the last stage of reporting. For example, the national scores reported for 2003/04 is calculated as shown in Table 5 (page 19).

Performance Standards

5.6. The revised performance standards for claim processing are:

Item	Indicator
PM1	Performance Indicator for average speed of processing new claims (Standard 36 days)
PM2	Percentage of new claims outstanding over 50 days (Standard 10 %)
PM3	Percentage of new claims decided within 14 days of receiving all information (Standard 90%)
PM4	Percentage of rent allowance claims paid on time or within 7 days of decision is being made (Standard 90%)
PM5	Performance Indicator for average speed of processing changes of circumstances (Standard 9 days – 9 is a working assumption pending a clearer picture of the impact of abolition of benefit periods)

Monitoring Performance Standards

- 5.7. When determining whether a LA has achieved a grade 4 or a grade 3 for processing new claims, round the score reported by the local authority to the nearest whole day. For example, a score of 35.49 days would round to 35 days and earn the LA a '4' grade, a score of 35.50 days would round to 36 days and earn the LA a '3' grade.
- 5.8. The same logic will be used for all the performance measures in the revised performance standards.

Audited scores

- 5.9. Similarly when monitoring performance against audited scores, round the reported score for any performance measure to the nearest whole number. For example, if an LA achieves a score of 35.6 days, this should be rounded to 36 days.

ANNEX A: DATA COLLECTION FORMS

Stats 124

A.1. The Stats 124 return collects data from all Local authorities every quarter, for:

- Administration
- Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs)
- Security
- Staffing

Stats 124A

A.2. The stats 124A return collects data annually from all Local authorities for:

- Security
- Overpayments
- Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs)

Stats 128

A.3. The Stats 128 return collects data quarterly from all Local authorities for:

- Accuracy BVPI from a sample of cases.

The data collected on this form is used to complete Stats 124 section on accuracy and subsequently to complete Stats 124A .

Stats 121

A.4. The Stats 121 return collects data quarterly from all Local authorities for:

- caseload analysis by tenure of those claimants with HB and /or CTB;
- also receiving income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA (IB), Income Support (IS), Pension Credit (Guarantee credit or Guarantee credit and Savings Credit)

Stats 122

A.5. The Stats 122 return collects data quarterly from all Local authorities for:

- caseload analysis by tenure of those claimants with HB and /or CTB not in receipt of income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA (IB), Income Support (IS), Pension Credit (Guarantee credit or Guarantee credit and Savings Credit)

Stats 116

A.6. The stats 116 is

- a 1% sample of claimants with HOUSING BENEFITS also receiving Income Support (IS) or income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA (IB)), or Pension Credit (Guarantee credit).

Stats 123

A.7. The stats 123 is

- a 1% sample of claimants with HOUSING BENEFITS not receiving Income Support (IS) or income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA (IB), or Pension Credit (Guarantee credit or Guarantee credit and Savings Credit). It includes claimants receiving Pension Credit (Savings credit only).

WIBS (Weekly Incorrect Benefit Scheme)

WIB 1

A.8. The WIB 1 return collects data quarterly from all Local authorities for the Security Against Fraud and Error (SAFE) scheme

- weekly incorrect benefit additional subsidies being claimed for the year to date
- claimant error, fraud and other overpayments identified for the year to date for which subsidies were not claimed

VMIS

A.9. The VMIS collected data from Local authorities from VF compliance LAs until 2004-05. VMIS data will be collected via HBMS from 2005-06.

HBMS (Housing Benefit Matching Service) Scan

A.10. Housing Benefit Matching Service collects detail information on HOUSING BENEFITS administration including:

- claimant's details;
- claim details;
- payments details;

Performance Standard data

A.11. The original Performance standard framework collects data on:

- Counter fraud
- Claim processing
- Strategic management
- Working with landlords
- Overpayment
- Internal security

A.12. The original 7 modules have now replaced with four themes covering:

- Claims administration
- Security
- User focus
- Resource management.

Data types

A.13. IAD Information Centre releases two types of data for analysts use. They are:

Estimated Data: Data estimated by Information Centre based on the past data.

Keyed Data: Actual data reported by Local authorities to Information Centre

Location of Data

A.14. The SAS data sets released by Information Centre are available at location:

Newdu 5: Data reported by Local authorities on time after basic validation tests.

Time table

A.15. A time table for availability of all MI is given below:

Form/Data	Quarter	Return from LA to IC	Available on Repository
Stats 124	1 st April – 30 th June	28 th July	16 th September
	1 st July – 30 th September	28 th October	16 th December
	1 st October – 31 st December	27 th January	16 th March
	1 st January – 30 th March	28 th April	16 th June
Stats 128	1 st April – 30 th June	28 th July	Not available
	1 st July – 30 th September	28 th October	Not available
	1 st October – 31 st December	27 th January	Not available
	1 st January – 30 th March	28 th April	Not available
WIB1	1 st April – 30 th June	28 th July	Not available
	1 st July – 30 th September	28 th October	Not available
	1 st October – 31 st December	27 th January	Not available
	1 st January – 30 th March	28 th April	Not available
Stats 121/122	May	09 June	15 th September
	August	08 September	15 th December
	November	08 December	16 th March
	February	09 March	15 th June
Stats 124A	Annual Data	28 April	05 September
Stats 116	Annual (1% sample)	23 June	14 September
Stats 123	Annual (1% sample)	23 June	14 September
Audited data*	BVPs		
	England	Not available	December*
	Wales	Not available	December – March*
	Scottish	Not available	December – March*
Performance Standard	1 st April – 30 th June	28 th July	30 th September
	1 st July – 30 th September	28 th October	31 st December
	1 st October – 31 st December	27 th January	31 st March
	1 st January – 30 th March	28 th April	30 th June

* Audited data is neither collected by IC nor published in repository. It is published in audit/accounts commission website.

ANNEX B: GLOSSARY OF STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES

MEASURES OF CENTRAL TENDENCY

The mode

- B.1 This is the value in a data set which appears most frequently. For example in the data set which follows:

1,3,5,5,7,5,9,5,3,5,2,5,7,8,5,9,5 the number 5 is the mode

The median

- B.2. This is the middle value in an ordered set of data e. g. 1,2,3: 2 is the median.

The Arithmetic mean \bar{x}

- B.3. This is also known as the average. The mean is the sum of the data divided by the number of bits of data. The mean is the sum divided by the number of samples e.g. 1,2,3 mean = $6/3 = 2$

The most useful measure of central tendency is the mean

The Geometric mean

- B.4. The **geometric mean** of a set of [positive data](#) is defined as the [product](#) of all the members of the set, raised to a power equal to the

In a formula: the geometric mean of a_1, a_2, \dots, a_n is, which is
$$\sqrt[n]{a_1 \cdot a_2 \cdot \dots \cdot a_n}.$$

Quartiles and percentiles

- B.5. If we rank the data for example in ascending or descending order we can divide the data into quarters, Q1...Q4 known as quartiles. So for example a set of performance scores can be arranged in order and separated into quartiles. Percentiles are exactly the same concept and the 25th percentile corresponds to the first quartile Q1 etc.

The first Quartile (Q1) is that value where 25% of the values are smaller and 75% are larger.

The second Quartile (Q2) is that value where 50% of the values are smaller and 50% are larger. This is also referred as median.

The third Quartile (Q3) is that value where 75% of the values are smaller and 25% are larger.

MEASURES OF DISPERSION

- B.6. Often we take a series of data and observe a spread in the values. It is very important to distinguish between dispersion caused by **instrument** variation and dispersion caused by **sample** variation. We must report both these sources of variation in any report. These may be random or systematic errors.

The Range

- B.7. The range is the difference between the smallest and the largest data observation. The interquartile range is the difference between the third and first quartiles in a data set i.e. Q3-Q1.

Standard deviation s

- B.8. This describes the measure of dispersion about the mean

$$\sigma = \sqrt{\frac{\sum(x - \bar{x})^2}{n - 1}}$$

where n is the number of samples. Note that n-1 (known as Bessel's correction) is used when n < approximately 30 and need not be used if n > 30. In practice it is always used.

Variance

- B.9. is the standard deviation squared s^2

Coefficient of variation v

- B.10. is the standard deviation divided by the mean

$$v = \frac{\sigma}{\bar{x}}$$

and is usually expressed as a percentage ie $v \times 100$. This is useful because it is a dimensionless number. Usually a value less than 10% indicates a reasonably tight spread about the mean but this can vary according to the experiment.

Shape

- B.11. The shape of a distribution is important. The data are either **symmetric** in distribution or not. If they are not then it is called asymmetrical or **skewed**. To describe the shape we only need the mean and the median.

Mean > median: positive or right-skewness

Mean = median: symmetric or zero-skewness

Mean < median: negative or left-skewness

Accuracy Vs Precision

- B.12. Accuracy refers to the closeness of the measurements to the "actual" or "real" value of the physical quantity, whereas the term precision is used to indicate the closeness with which the measurements agree with one another quite independently of any systematic error involved. Therefore, an "accurate" estimate has small bias. A "precise" estimate has both small bias and variance.

ANNEX C: DATA MANAGEMENT POLICY

Background

- C.1. All 408 LAs in Great Britain are required to return Management Information to DWP each quarter, by a set deadline. However, some LAs do not return the data, and some LAs return the data late, by varying degrees.
- C.2. For those LAs returning the data late by more than a quarter, or not at all, this presents problems with accuracy of published figures, but few problems with data handling. Those LAs returning data within the required quarter, but later than the deadline present some data handling problems.
- C3. The published statistics and datasets are based on the data submitted by the deadline. This leads to a conflict between accuracy (utilising all the data available) and consistency and audit (using only the published data). The quest for accuracy can lead to work being repeated every time an additional LA returns data in extreme cases, which is arguably not a profitable use of analysts' time. Comparisons of published data with the final set of data returned have shown substantial differences in the statistics calculated.

Policy

- C.4 We will use two data sources. The data set on newdu5 contains the published data, and we will use this for all work which will enter the public domain. The data set on newtru1 contains the most recent information, and is frequently updated. We will use this to source the second release of our database.
- C.5. We will use two releases of our 'Evidence Base', the database we use for our work. The first release will be on the publication date, and

contain the published data. The second release will be 6 weeks after the publication data, and additionally contain all the late returns available at this point.

- C.6. The additional late returns will be used in the Quarterly report to Ministers, internal queries and work by OR to be published at a later date. Late returns will not be made available to customers under other conditions i.e. before the second release, or if the return is too late to be included in the second release.

Comments

- C.7. The repository data set only contains the data submitted for each quarter by the deadline. This differs from the 'published data' referred to above, which is the repository data for the current quarter, and all data for previous quarters.