

Minutes of meeting with Chief Minister

Date of meeting: **4 September 2014**; office of the Chief Minister

Present: Senator Ian Gorst, Chief Minister
Paul Bradbury, Director of Corporate Policy, Chief Minister's Department
Martin Richardson, SUG Chairman
Craig Leach, SUG Member
Duncan Gibaut, Chief Statistician

This meeting had been requested by the Statistics Users Group in order to discuss with the Chief Minister the Group's concerns regarding the Manpower Survey, as developed and administered by the Population Office of the Chief Minister's Department. These concerns had been detailed in a letter sent to the Chief Minister, dated 2 June 2014.

The Chief Minister opened the meeting and stated that he was aware that there had been progress since the date of the letter from SUG. He asked the Chief Statistician to outline the current situation.

The Chief Statistician addressed two principal areas:

- progress on the Manpower Survey;
- estimation of the resident population.

Manpower Survey

The Chief Statistician indicated that there had been progress on the administration of the Manpower Survey by the Population Office but that concerns remained.

Increased resources had been directed towards the Population Office, specifically for:

- chase-up of non-respondent undertakings
- compliance checking
- data management/quality (validation; resolving anomalies)
- system expertise (external: Prosperity 24/7)

The improved technical expertise had led to the resolution of simple process and arithmetic errors within the Manpower Survey databases.

Over the summer of 2014 there had also been improved co-operation from the Population Office to the requests of the Statistics Unit.

On Friday 1 August 2014 the Population Office was able, for the first time, to provide the Statistics Unit with a dataset for the December 2013 round of the Manpower Survey which was internally consistent, from a basic arithmetic perspective.

The Chief Statistician stated that in spite of this progress there remained high numbers of non-respondent businesses and of "nil" returns. In particular he stressed that:

- ⇒ the June 2014 round of the Manpower Survey was crucial to understanding the systematics of the December 2013 round;
- ⇒ publication of both the December 2013 and June 2014 rounds of the Manpower Survey on 8 October 2014 *remained provisional*.

Population estimation

In the continued absence of a robust and mature Population Register (under development and administration by the Population Office), the Statistics Unit would be adopting the following strategy in order to measure the population and net migration over the next ten years:

Short-term: apply the methodology used for each annual update since 2002

NB: the December 2014 round of the Manpower Survey would be required in order to assess the accuracy and coverage of residential status data

⇒ potentially publish population and net migration for year-end 2014 in June 2015

Medium-term: over next two years (2015-2016) develop a broader statistical approach, facilitated by Ministerial Decisions enabling data sharing between the Statistics Unit and other States departments;

Longer-term: run a population Census, when *a robust and mature Population Register is in place*

Recommendations

The Chief Statistician suggested two recommendations for the Population Office over the coming months and years:

- maintain adequate resources and expertise for all future rounds of the **Manpower Survey**;
- develop and maintain **Population Register**: systems, processes and (*crucially*) data management (coverage, accuracy)

Finally, the Chief Statistician informed the meeting that he would be keeping all parties abreast of the status of the ongoing analysis of the Manpower Survey during the forthcoming weeks.

The Chief Minister brought the meeting to a close.