


Message

Message Key: 0003157FA42727FD39FB69FFEB0944847C789C6F 

From: Tom Walker <T.Walker@gov.je>
To: Gailina Liew <chair@statistics.org.je> [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED] <admin@statistics.org.je>, [REDACTED]
Addressed To: chair@statistics.org.je, admin@statistics.org.je
Subject: Re: Statistics Users Group - Letter for Chief Minister
Date: Friday, January 14, 2022 19:15 UTC
Attachments: image.png (54.6 KB)

Thanks Gailina.

Happy New Year!

Will read with interest.

Our thanks also to you for all your good work as Chair, which has been much appreciated.

Hope you have a good weekend.

All the best, Tom.

Tom Walker

Director General

Direct +44 (0)1534 [REDACTED]

Mobile +44 (0) [REDACTED]

Government of Jersey

Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance

19-21 Broad Street | St Helier | Jersey | JE2 3RR

[http://statesofjersey.newsweaver.com/files/2/75101/168349/404471/1dc1fb08b18781316cdb3e67/goj%20logo%20red%20english_2.png]

From: Gailina Liew <chair@statistics.org.je>
Sent: 14 January 2022 18:26
To: [REDACTED] Tom Walker <T.Walker@gov.je>
Cc: [REDACTED] <admin@statistics.org.je>; [REDACTED]
Subject: Statistics Users Group - Letter for Chief Minister

Good evening,

Hope you are well and Happy New Year!

[REDACTED] - As discussed last year following my appointment, I wanted to initiate a regular periodic communication with the Chief Minister to provide him with SUG's recommendations as expected under the current law. We agreed that an annual letter would be welcomed although we would, of

course, notify the Chief Minister of any critically urgent observations at any time warranted. Our annual letters will generally precede the publication of our annual report by a couple of months so that the Chief Minister has sufficient time to reflect on a response. I would be grateful if you would share the letter with the Chief Minister on our behalf and convey my request for a brief meeting with him in January.

Tom - We are providing you with sight of the letter as the head of the sponsoring department for SUG and Statistics Jersey. As we have discussed, we continue to have concerns about the current organisational structure and its impact on the independence of Jersey's statistical system as a whole so our recommendations in this area will not be a surprise to you.

Both - At the operational level, please note that we have established new email addresses for all SUG-related correspondence and we request use of these new email addresses effective immediately. There are two new email addresses to note as follows:

chair@statistics.org.je<mailto:chair@statistics.org.je> - for matters requiring the attention of the SUG Chair

admin@statistics.org.je<mailto:admin@statistics.org.je> - for matters requiring the attention of our administrator, [REDACTED] (copied on this note)

Many thanks to you both for your support and assistance over the course of a challenging first year in post.

Kind regards,

Gailina

Gailina Liew
Chair, Statistics Users Group
chair@statistics.org.je<mailto:chair@statistics.org.je>

[image.png]

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----- End Of Message -----

To: Senator John Le Fondré - Chief Minister, Government of Jersey

From: Gailina Liew - Chair, Statistics Users Group

Subject: Initial Observations and Recommendations – Jersey’s National Statistical System

Date: January 14, 2022

Dear Chief Minister,

I am writing on behalf of the Statistics Users Group (SUG) to share a few initial observations about Jersey’s national statistical system and to highlight a number of important concerns at this stage. Nine key recommendations are presented to address our specific concerns and to safeguard and enhance the independence, quality, relevance and integrity of public authority statistics in Jersey.

Context

The Statistics Users Group (SUG) is an independent body established under the Statistics and Census Law (2018).

A brief summary of recent history is important to understand the context that has given rise to our recommendations. Shortly after the sudden departure of the longstanding former Chief Statistician became public in January 2021, three concerns emerged that are germane:

- C1.** The role of Chief Statistician, previously solely focused on leading and managing the work of an independent Statistics Jersey unit working autonomously within the Chief Minister’s office, was incorporated, without the benefit of a public consultation at the time, into a director-level role within the Department of Strategic Planning, Policy and Performance (SPPP),
- C2.** SUG as the statutory oversight body for public authority statistics was not consulted about this restructuring before the proposal was put to the States Employment Board (SEB),
- C3.** An interim appointment into the redefined role had been made without the benefit of an open recruitment exercise and advance notice to SUG.

As these actions were taken before my appointment was confirmed in February 2021, I took some time over the initial months of my tenure to learn more about the circumstances behind these issues and to consider Jersey’s statistical system as a whole. Your decision to establish a steering group to consider amendments to the statistics law early in 2021 also provided a timely and welcome opportunity to consider the benchmarking and alignment of Jersey’s national statistical system against the best practice standards/guidelines as articulated by the United Nations, OECD, United Kingdom, European Union, IMF and other jurisdictions and multi-national standard-

setting bodies. The formulation and provision of advice to the steering group was the focus on much of SUG's activity for the first six months of my tenure. We have also reviewed the current and historical resourcing of Statistics Jersey and will shortly commence our review of the overall capacity of Jersey's national statistical system.

Recommendations

Our nine recommendations are centred around safeguarding certain core principles and present actionable opportunities to enhance the effectiveness of Jersey's national statistical system within the context of the current statistics law.

Independence

R1. Provide Statistics Jersey as the independent national statistical office with a separate budget that is solely defined and managed by the Chief Statistician with guidance from SUG.

The budget for Statistics Jersey is currently incorporated into the SPPP budget. Annual financial statements and an annual report should be published to reflect the independent mandate of Statistics Jersey and to ensure transparency and accountability. We note that the C&AG has made a similar recommendation in her March 2021 Thinkpiece.

R2. Ensure that SUG is consulted in advance regarding any proposed government restructuring to enable SUG to assess whether the independence of Statistics Jersey and/or the Chief Statistician is or may be perceived to be compromised.

SUG is the independent oversight body for public authority statistics under the law. Implementing this recommendation would ensure that concerns such as those described earlier in this note (C1 and C2) would not arise again.

R3. Enable the Chief Statistician to focus solely on the management, production, quality assurance and dissemination of official statistics by Statistics Jersey along with fulfilling head of profession responsibilities to mentor all public authority data analysts/statisticians, coordinate and monitor the production of statistics by other public authorities.

These activities alone comprise more than a single full-time executive officer role that also needs to demonstrate independence from the influence of government and other interested stakeholders. Responsibilities currently assigned to the Chief Statistician that are related to the director-level role within SPPP should be assigned to a separate person within SPPP to ensure that there is clear separation of the independent Chief Statistician's role from any policy-related work required to support government and its development of performance management metrics.

R4. Ensure that SUG is consulted in advance and represented on the selection panel from the outset for the recruitment of a Chief Statistician (interim, permanent or otherwise) and that a majority of voting members on the selection panel are independent going forward.

Although my request to be included (in my capacity as SUG Chair) as a voting member of the selection panel in the recruitment for the permanent post was eventually agreed, and the selection panel ultimately agreed the appointment of the best candidate from a small but highly qualified and competitive pool, the recruitment process itself requires these improvements to ensure that the principle of independence is appropriately reflected throughout and in the future.

R5. Appoint four additional members to SUG on the recommendation of the SUG Chair following an open recruitment process where the SUG Chair is included from the outset as a voting member on the selection panel and ensure that a majority of voting members on the selection panel are independent.

With respect to SUG's composition, you will be aware from officers that SUG's membership has changed in the last quarter with Graeme Marett completing his tenure at the end of November and two members, Lianne Dacres and Mary (Moz) Scott resigning, effective October 5 and November 26, respectively. SUG's membership under the law is intended to represent a broad range of statistics users and the diversity of the general public. The law stipulates that SUG is comprised of 6 to 10 members in addition to the chair. As SUG currently has 6 members, it would be prudent to recruit for an additional 4 members to ensure continuity and to maximise the breadth of statistics users' interests and the diversity of knowledge and perspectives within the group. To that end, we will conduct an assessment of the skills and interests of current SUG members in the coming weeks to prepare for the recruitment of additional SUG members. To ensure the independence of SUG, we seek your assurance that the SUG Chair will be included as a voting member of the selection panel and that a majority of the selection panel voting members will be independent.

R6. Prioritise the drafting and consideration of amendments to the statistics law by the States Assembly to bring the legislation into alignment with international standards and strengthen the independence of Jersey's national statistical system before the election in 2022.

The public consultation on the steering group's work to date closed in December. I requested a copy of all consultation responses but have only been provided with selected responses, primarily from a handful of organisations. We expect your support to ensure that all members of the steering group will be provided with all consultation responses received by government to ensure transparency and enable SUG to independently assess the responses.

Quality, Relevance and Integrity

R7. Invest in the design and creation of a data infrastructure that will allow for the coordinated collection and integration of relevant data sets across all government departments to enable the production of higher quality and more relevant statistical reporting.

As the last two years have highlighted in very stark terms, timely access to high quality and relevant data is critical to support effective decision-making and policy development, both in times of crisis and also for the longer-term success of the island. The challenges created by not having more robust and integrated data systems and practices in place are longstanding and reflected in the dearth of timely and well-integrated statistics on Jersey's education system, health and social service provision and economic performance to name just a few broad areas. One specific and narrow example of this data infrastructure gap is reflected by the weaknesses noted in COVID reporting as detailed further in Recommendation 9 below. The investment in establishing a more robust data infrastructure will be offset by the advantages of having access to more current and comprehensive data and, in time, cost savings to be realised through the retirement of the current census and other survey practices if administrative data sets are adequately robust.

R8. Champion the formal introduction and application of the statistical Codes of Practice across all government departments and public authorities to establish a solid foundation of practice standards for all producers of statistics within Jersey's national statistical system.

SUG fulfilled its responsibility under the law to establish these Codes of Practice in 2019 and they were agreed by you within the same year. These Codes provide guidelines against which producers of statistics should be monitored but I was dismayed to learn after my appointment that the Codes have not yet been formally introduced across government for implementation. With my urging and SUG's support, the Chief Statistician has recently started to engage with certain government department heads to bring their attention to the requirements of these Codes. It is critically important for you to support and champion the roll-out and implementation of these Codes by the Chief Statistician across all government departments at an accelerated pace in 2022 to ensure the quality, relevance and integrity of statistics being produced, particularly as the ongoing global pandemic and the resulting ramifications continue to impact on the well-being and health of islanders and the economy.

R9. *Improve the organisation and resourcing of COVID statistical reporting as a matter of urgency.*

In various meetings and numerous email exchanges with the Chief Statistician and data analysts in two separate departments (Health and SPPP where public health resides), SUG has noted a number of weaknesses in the reporting of COVID statistics. We have repeatedly raised the importance of collecting and reporting on additional characteristics (including ethnicity, vaccination type, booster frequency, hospitalisation rate/vaccination status, frequency of infection, etc.) as these characteristics have emerged as important factors to improve the management of the pandemic and in crafting better guidance for populations. Some of this data exists but is not included in the government reporting in a manner that is easily accessible or understood by the public – for example, the hospitalisation rate on the main Covid gov.je reporting page is not clearly shown and requires the reader to calculate it (see Annex). Other datasets do not apparently exist - as an example, we understand that the ethnicity data was inconsistent and incomplete across most of the population when the first COVID wave hit in early 2020 - unfortunately, several opportunities to collect this important data were lost when the online vaccination booking system was rolled out and indeed when shots were being administered. At an even more granular level, we have noted on several occasions that vaccination percentages as reported on various government social media posts over the past year have been inaccurate – simple arithmetic errors that were easily spotted on a casual review – this does not reflect well on the quality assurance processes before statistical information is made public.

Some of these observations were brought to your attention before my appointment. You wrote to my predecessor asking him to communicate primarily with the Chief Statistician regarding COVID statistics. We have done this but have been advised that under the current organisational structure, the Chief Statistician does not have any authority to direct the work or priorities of the relevant data analysts who are employed in Health and Public Health (within SPPP) as noted earlier. These observations as a whole point to an organisational structure and process flow that require significant improvements to ensure the quality and integrity of the statistics being produced. As referenced earlier in Recommendation 1, the independence of the entire system is also questionable if the Chief Statistician is unable to drive the production of such critical statistical information. We believe that the simplest structure is to ensure that there is one person that is responsible and accountable for the production and reporting of COVID statistics – that person would have the authority to direct the work of analysts across all relevant departments and work under the professional guidance of the Chief Statistician. This structure is also reflected in the Codes of Practice referenced earlier in Recommendation 7. In terms of resourcing, we note that there is clearly a shortage of data analysts within Statistics Jersey and more broadly throughout government. We expect to make further recommendations on resourcing after we complete our assessment of overall statistical capacity.

In closing, we respectfully seek your commitment to acknowledge and act on our recommendations and trust that we may look forward to your positive response. These recommendations along with a summary of our more specific activities over the past year and our proposed activities for the year ahead will be included in SUG's first annual report to be published in the first quarter of 2022.

Our thanks to you and your officers for the support provided to SUG over the course of a challenging year. As an independent body, we look forward to continuing our work with government and all interested stakeholders to strengthen the independence of Jersey's national statistical system and to safeguard the quality, relevance and integrity of public authority statistics for the benefit of everyone in Jersey.

With our best wishes and respects,



Gailina Liew
Chair, Statistics Users Group
chair@statistics.org.je

CC: SUG Members - A. Ashbrooke, M. Delap, S. Lewis, M. Pellin, D. Pullinger, E-L. Veitch

Annex – COVID Reporting

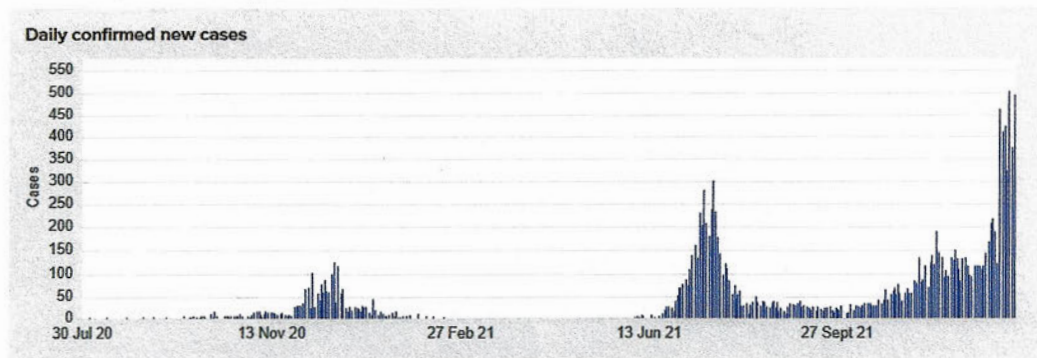
Screenshot of https://www.gov.je/Health/Coronavirus/Pages/CoronavirusCases.aspx#tab_current as at 12:30 p.m. on 6th January 2022:

Coronavirus (COVID-19) data for Jersey



Cases updated: 3:45 PM, Wednesday 5 January 2022

Vaccinations updated: Wednesday 29 Dec 2021



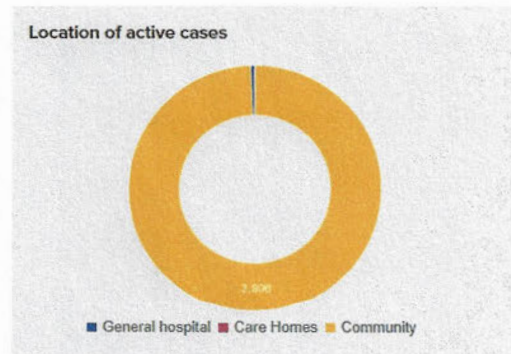
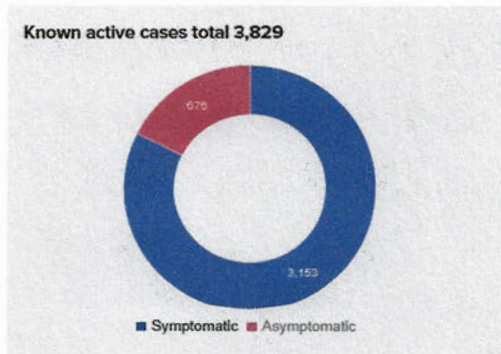
Vaccination 1st and 2nd dose percentage is calculated as the proportion of the total population who have received a first or second dose of the coronavirus vaccine to date. An estimated population of 107,800 is used.

Active cases is a daily snapshot of the current active cases.

14 day rate per 100,000 population is calculated using the PCR swab date 1 day in arrears to allow for results to be received. An estimated population of 107,800 is used. The **7 day rate per 100,000 population** is available below.

Deaths is total number of COVID-19 deaths that have been registered.

Confirmed new cases are plotted on date of swab. This better reflects the state of the pandemic in the island compared to date reported, which is impacted by test turnaround times.



SUG Observations:

- Hospitalisation data requires reader to perform calculation using the % in the location of active cases diagram ($3829 \times 0.5 / 100 = 19.145$) – recommend use of simple table to report actual numbers in each category
- No mention of Booster vaccines
- No breakdown by ethnicity, vaccine type, vaccination status, etc.

Message

Message Key: 0003157FA694FFD025A58D5FAA5BED0648DC2BF8



From: Gailina Liew <chair@statistics.org.je>
To: [REDACTED] Tom Wa ker <T.Wa ker@gov.je>
Cc: [REDACTED] <admin@statistics.org.je>, [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Statistics Users Group - Letter for Chief Minister
Date: Tuesday, January 18, 2022 11:41 UTC
Attachments: image003.png (22.1 KB)

[REDACTED] Tom,


Many thanks for your respective notes.

[REDACTED] - appreciate that you will be conferring with the Chief Minister and have passed on my request for a meeting. Will look forward to a meeting and response to our letter in due course.

Kind regards,

Gailina

Message

Message Key: 0003157F62FFD51734FA0901C273A036A6B118D9 

From: John Le Fondré <J.LeF@gov.je>
To: Tom Walker <T.Walker@gov.je> [REDACTED] <chair@statistics.org.je>
Addressed To: [REDACTED] <t.walker@gov.je>
Subject: (SUG) Statistics Users Group Recommendations
Date: Thursday, February 10, 2022 11:11 UTC
Attachments: Re: Statistics Users Group - Letter for Chief Minister.eml (134.5 KB)

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[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

----- End Of Message -----

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] <admin@statistics.org.je>
Sent: 01 February 2022 12:20
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Statistics Users Group - Letter for Chief Minister

Morning [REDACTED]

The 10 Feb at 1 pm would suit Gailina, thank you.

Yes, I can confirm those are the correct attendees. Could you use the new SUG email for Gailina which is chair@statistics.org.je

Thanks very much.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Administrator



On Tue, 1 Feb 2022 at 10:47, [REDACTED] wrote:

Morning [REDACTED]

Unfortunately the Chief Minister doesn't have any availability this week.

Next week is a States Sitting week but we could use the lunchtime on the Thu 10th at 13:00?

The CM is off island for a couple of weeks after that, so I would need to push back to March if the above doesn't work.

Could you confirm who this invite needs to go to please?

Chief minister

Gailina Liew

Tom Walker

[REDACTED]

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

PA to Senator John Le Fondré, Chief Minister of Jersey

Chief Ministers Private Office

[REDACTED] | 01534 [REDACTED]

19-21 Broad Street | St Helier | Jersey | JE2 3RR



From: [REDACTED] <admin@statistics.org.je>
Sent: 28 January 2022 11:09
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Statistics Users Group - Letter for Chief Minister

Good morning [REDACTED]

I hope you are well.

I am just following up on Gailina's request for some time with the Chief Minister.

Does he have 30 minutes on either 2, 3 or 4 February please?

Thanks. I look forward to hearing from you.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Administrator



On Mon, 17 Jan 2022 at 21:20, [REDACTED] > wrote:

Thank you also Gailina,

I trust all is well – here's to 2022, let's hope it's an improvement!

A thoughtful letter, and we'll confer and respond. Will also pass on the request of a meeting to the Chief Minister. I think you know he has strong views on the importance of statistical independence.

Hope to speak soon.

Kind Regards, [REDACTED]

From: Tom Walker <T.Walker@gov.je>

Sent: 14 January 2022 19:15


To: Gailina Liew <chair@statistics.org.je>; [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED] <admin@statistics.org.je>; [REDACTED]

Subject: Re: Statistics Users Group - Letter for Chief Minister

Duplicate email removed

Message

Message Key: 0003157FF57BB6C0918387519EC83ECF28378264 

From: John Le Fondré <J.LeF@gov.je>
To: Tom Walker <T.Walker@gov.je> [REDACTED] chair@statistics.org.je"
Addressed To: chair@statistics.org.je
Subject: (SUG) Statistics Users Group Recommendations
Date: Thursday, February 10, 2022 12:57 UTC
Attachments: Re: Statistics Users Group - Letter for Chief Minister.eml (134.5 KB)

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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----- End Of Message -----

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] <admin@statistics.org.je>
Sent: 01 February 2022 12:20
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Statistics Users Group - Letter for Chief Minister

Duplicate email removed

Message

Message Key: 0003157FDE68C007409232174A5564C0C88C6DA6
From: Gailina Liew <chair@statistics.org.je>
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: Tom Walker <T.Walker@gov.je>
Subject: Re: Statistics Users Group - Letter for Chief Minister
Date: Monday, February 21, 2022 16:10 UTC
Attachments: image002.png (22 KB)



Hello [REDACTED]

Thanks for your note and update.

It was helpful to have some time with the Chief Minister on Feb. 10 and please convey my thanks to him for making time available on a busy States Assembly sitting day. I was pleased to hear that the Chief Minister supports all of SUG's recommendations in principle and would expect that his letter will clearly reflect the commitment he expressed during our meeting.

From a timing perspective, next week is good and we would be grateful to receive the Chief Minister's letter in our inbox by no later than March 4th so that we have sufficient time to review. That will also allow time for us to come back to you and/or the Chief Minister if any clarification is needed prior to the publication of our Annual Report.

Hope you are well and thanks for keeping our timing in mind.

Gailina