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**Ed Humpherson, Director General for Regulation**

Dr Nicola Williams  
Director, Fair Play for Women Ltd

17/02/2021

Dear Nicola,

**Collecting and reporting data about sex in crime official statistics**

Thank you for your email on 4 February, which followed up your concerns about the way data about sex is collected and reported in police recorded crime statistics. We investigated the issues you raised.

We are aware that police recording practices in relation to sex vary, and that this may impact the way the statistics are reported. We also recognise that statistics producers cannot always design or change administrative systems, including those used by the police. However, we expect producers to understand the systems they are using, including any risks and biases that may arise from the ways systems collect and categorise data.

In general, we think that Home Office and Ministry of Justice statisticians do understand the police administrative systems they are using and that they are aware of the limitations of the data collected about sex. But these limitations are not always communicated as clearly or as consistently as they should be. For instance, we would expect outputs to explain how personal characteristics (including sex) are recorded (i.e. whether they are self-identified, officer-identified, or a combination of the two) and whether this may affect interpretation of the statistics. The Ministry of Justice output you highlighted, Women and the Criminal Justice System, is an example of an output which we think does this well, in line with our Code of Practice for Statistics: it is transparent about recording practices, and the way the data are presented is clearly explained.

We agree that, from the information currently provided in the crime statistics bulletins, user guides or technical reports, users could not be expected to know (or determine) whether or not the figures for a given sex are likely to include transgender individuals. We think it would be helpful if this aspect of the statistics was highlighted prominently alongside the statistics to aid user interpretation.

We will raise these issues with Home Office and Ministry of Justice statisticians.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ed Humpherson', with a stylized, cursive script.

Ed Humpherson

Director General for Regulation