

National Statistician and Registrar General

**Len Cook**

Gordon Harris  
Department for Work and Pensions,  
The Adelphi,  
1-11 John Adam Street,  
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Dear Gordon,

**QUALITY REVIEW OF HOUSEHOLDS BELOW AVERAGE INCOME/THE  
PENSIONERS' INCOME SERIES**

Thank you for the submission of the Quality Review of Households Below Average Income/The Pensioners' Income Series, having read the report I welcome and approve its content.

This report is detailed and looks at progressive development of statistics, rather than major redevelopment. It is noted that a number of the initial issues raised have been progressed prior to the conclusion of the review. The emphasis of the review is on providing a greater range of statistics, providing users with a choice of outputs to meet their needs, is welcomed and is in line with the strategic direction of National Statistics.

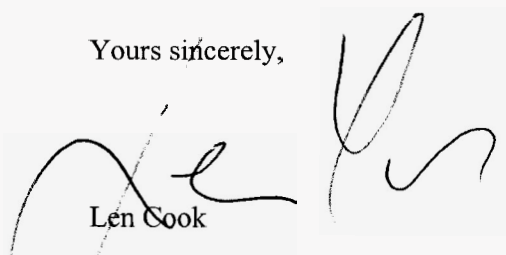
The Review recommendations listed under S2 and C9 are important in addressing the issue of further reviews of the methods of estimation, in light of the requirement for country and regional based data.

The definition of pensioners in relation to the current state pension age as shown in P4, may be only a short term solution, due to the mounting pressure to increase the pension age. This is an issue that may arise again.

The review has raised a number of issues relating to the definition of pensioner statistics. There must be care in defining couples as pensioner units when one of the couple is a pensioner and the other is not. Also the definition of a pensioner couple is problematic when based on the age of the male. There is a need to recognise as a pensioner couple the cases where the female is of pensionable age. At the very least there should be outputs produced by male-pensioner couples and female-pensioner couples to provide users with more comprehensive statistics.

I would like to thank the team for their work in the conduct of the Review and the production of this Report.

Yours sincerely,

  
Len Cook