

**Last updated 12 October 2001**

## **Review of the Inter-Departmental Business Register - NSQR series No. 2. - Implementation Plan**

The IDBR quality review was published on 18 April 2001 on the [National Statistics web site](#) and as a paper-based document. ONS accepted in principle all of the recommendations in its initial response to the publication of the review.

The ONS has looked carefully at each of the 29 recommendations to ensure that they are consistent with the ONS Business Strategy. The resulting implementation plan is designed to complete work on all of the high (1) priority and some medium (2) priority recommendations by December 2002. Low (3) priority recommendations will be completed over a longer time-scale.

In broad terms the plan will deliver the following improvements to the IDBR. ONS will

- produce and publish a range of quality indicators for the IDBR by July 2002
- work closely with IR/CE improving the access to timely administrative data by September 2002
- improve the quality of the register through continued emphasis on training
- consider developing its annual register inquiry to meet the increasing requirements for small area data

Changes to the annual register inquiry (recommendation 5), which were identified in the review as being of high priority, would increase the burden on businesses and also incur government expenditure next financial year (2002/3). For these reasons, the priority has been reduced in the implementation plan. The ONS will consider the possibility of finding resources both in terms of the compliance costs and the ONS internal costs in the coming business planning cycle, balancing the IDBR requirements against a range of other priorities for the organisation. The implementation plan also delays, and hence allocates lower priorities to, two other recommendations (recommendations 28 and 29) reflecting the need for additional research. The priority of one of the training recommendations (recommendation 22) has however been increased to reflect the greater importance accorded to training within the ONS Business Strategy.

The more detailed response to each of the review recommendations is annexed to this document via the links in the following table.

For questions and more detail on specific recommendations contact: [bru@ons.gov.uk](mailto:bru@ons.gov.uk)

<b>Rec. No.</b>	<b>Summary of Recommendation</b>	<b>Published priority</b>	<b>Link to action</b>
1	ONS should publish regularly a wide range of measures of both the level of the IDBR's quality and the change in quality over time. The existing user satisfaction questionnaire should be improved to include a wider range of questions relating to the IDBR's quality and that of the service provided by the Business Registers Unit.	1 - High	<a href="#">Link</a>
2	The development of the Comprehensive Business Directory should continue to be a priority within ONS, as a means of improving access to data from administrative sources, improving the quality of the IDBR through better matching of source data and of reducing the need to collect data directly from businesses.	1 - High	<a href="#">Link</a>

3	<p>Building on the existing relationships with HM Customs and Excise (HMCE), Inland Revenue (IR) and Companies House (CH), ONS should:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. seek to extend the range of data supplied by the administrative departments to include, from HMCE, company numbers and previous VAT registration details and, from all administrative sources, comprehensive contact information (Priority: 1);</li> <li>2. seek to improve the method and frequency of transferring data from the administrative sources (Priority: 3);</li> <li>3. consider, within the scope of the current legal framework, feeding back industrial classification data to the administrative departments (Priority: 2); and</li> <li>4. seek to improve the quality of industrial classification coming from administrative sources by using consistent data-collection and coding techniques, and by supporting those people who classify businesses.</li> </ol>	<p>1 - High</p> <p>3 - Low</p> <p>2 - Medium</p> <p>1 - High</p>	<p><a href="#">Link</a></p>
4	<p>Quality standards for industrial classification, legal status, company number and address should be agreed and documented by ONS and the administrative departments.</p>	<p>1 - High</p>	<p><a href="#">Link</a></p>
5	<p>ONS should revise the Annual Register Inquiry sample design and selection so that it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• completely enumerates enterprises with employment of 50 or more;</li> <li>• includes a wider range of enterprises with conflicting auxiliary information;</li> <li>• includes, every four years, enterprises with employment of 10 or more;</li> <li>• includes enterprises with employment of less than 10 only to the extent that is necessary for adequate quality measurement; and</li> <li>• can be used to update the IDBR in an unbiased way.</li> </ul>	<p>1 - High</p>	<p><a href="#">Link</a></p>
6	<p>In the Annual Register Inquiry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The response rate should be improved by following up non-response more effectively. The response rate for the largest enterprises should be 100 per cent.</li> <li>• The general procedures used by ONS to ensure compliance with the Statistics of Trade Act 1947 should be applied rigorously to the Annual Register Inquiry.</li> </ul>	<p>2 - Medium</p> <p>2 - Medium</p>	<p><a href="#">Link</a></p>
7	<p>Questionnaire design for the Annual Register Inquiry should be given priority within ONS's proposed business-survey questionnaire design project. Among the particular topics that need to be addressed are omission of local units; delineation of business units; feedback of known industrial classification information; and efficient collection of business description information.</p>	<p>1 - High</p>	<p><a href="#">Link</a></p>

8	ONS should continue to extend the present electronic data-collection arrangements for the Annual Register Inquiry.	2 - Medium	<a href="#">Link</a>
9	The Annual Register Inquiry, Business Profiling Team and the administrative sources should have highest priority for updating IDBR auxiliary information. In the case of industrial classification, this depends on improvements to the current level of quality of information from those sources. Other sources should be used by the Business Registers Unit to resolve uncertainty and ambiguity.	1 - High	<a href="#">Link</a>
10	The agreed electronic tool should be used to aid classifying business descriptions. All staff members should feed back information on deficiencies to those controlling the system to improve the quality of the coding tool. The use of expertise from outside ONS (for example, industry groups) should be considered as a way of improving coding quality. ONS should review the Precision Data Coder alongside other similar products to ensure that the most effective tool for the job is used.	2 - Medium	<a href="#">Link</a>
11	The rules for updating the industrial classification and employment variables, set up to maintain stability of sample membership for short-period inquiries, should be reviewed to see if they could better accommodate register maintenance requirements and should be applied rigorously.	3 - Low	<a href="#">Link</a>
12	A business profiling strategy should be agreed based on two objective measures: the level of secondary activity; and the impact on survey estimates and analyses. A solution should be developed to bring profiling and ARI operations together for the largest businesses. A trigger mechanism should be established for sub-annual profiling of the most complex enterprises.	1 - High	<a href="#">Link</a>
13	The Business Profiling Team (BPT) should initially establish the correct structures of the businesses at the desk. For complex businesses, an agreed programme of profiling visits should be put in place, and this should be made available to survey managers in advance. The BPT should ensure that data collection and survey results managers are informed, in advance, of its updates to business structures on the IDBR.	3 - Low	<a href="#">Link</a>
14	To reduce the burden on business and improve coherence across National Statistics, ONS should explore with other government departments opportunities, within the requirements for maintaining data confidentiality, to co-ordinate the collection of data relating to the structure of complex enterprises.	3 - Low	<a href="#">Link</a>
15	A detailed review of the requirements for survey-specific reporting arrangements should be carried out with the aim of standardising reporting arrangements for all surveys. Where non-standard arrangements are necessary, the procedures for managing them should be simplified.	2 - Medium	<a href="#">Link</a>
16	ONS should work with the Department of Trade and Industry to improve the method of estimating the under-coverage that arises from businesses not required to register with HM Customs and Excise and Inland Revenue.	3 - Low	<a href="#">Link</a>

17	ONS should measure any bias that may arise because of the treatment of potential duplicate businesses, and revise the treatment of reporting units in surveys as appropriate.	2 - Medium	<a href="#">Link</a>
18	The audit of on-line amendments should be more timely and frequent. The sample size of the audit should be reviewed and the audit should be focused on those amendments that can have material impact on the quality of the IDBR. Recommendations should be developed and agreed in partnership between the audit team and work areas.	2 - Medium	<a href="#">Link</a>
19	Business Registers Unit should extend the range of validation checks on inputs to ensure that statistical data present on the IDBR are of adequate quality.	3 - Low	<a href="#">Link</a>
20	Business Registers Unit (BRU) should develop a specific recruitment policy and training programme that reflects its specialist function. This policy should include arrangements to make sure that members of staff are encouraged to move within BRU and across Prices and Business Group to ensure a breadth, as well as a depth, of expertise.	2 - Medium	<a href="#">Link</a>
21	The Business Registers Unit should improve electronic communication with the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment Northern Ireland to ensure consistent practice is adopted in the two departments. This should include consideration of how present legal constraints can be overcome in future.	2 - Medium	<a href="#">Link</a>
22	ONS should strengthen staff training with regard to the principles of maintaining and using a business register. The use of the Data Analyst and Statistical Analyst schemes for this purpose is endorsed. (Priority: 3)	3 - Low	<a href="#">Link</a>
23	Additional documentation should be produced for users of the Register. Part of this documentation should take the form of a frequently asked questions document.	1 - High	<a href="#">Link</a>
24	The existing quarterly and monthly management reports should be focused on measuring the impact on quality of changes to the Register. Business Registers Unit should continue to develop its monthly report of changes to the size and structure of the register in consultation with users.	3 - Low	<a href="#">Link</a>
25	An improved on-line interface should be developed to make it easier for authorised users to access and update the register.	2 - Medium	<a href="#">Link</a>
26	ONS should ensure that the impact on outputs is assessed for any proposed changes to the IDBR.	1 - High	<a href="#">Link</a>
27	ONS's Register strategy group should take responsibility for overseeing the implementation of recommendations from projects relating to the improvement of the IDBR. The membership of the group should be reviewed and include a non-ONS member.	1 - High	<a href="#">Link</a>
28	ONS should change sample selection procedures to ensure stability of sample membership for businesses newly included in samples.	2 - Medium	<a href="#">Link</a>
29	ONS should set aside resources to study further the impact of births and deaths of enterprises on statistical outputs.	1 - High	<a href="#">Link</a>

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Rec. No.	Summary of Recommendation	Review Priority
1	ONS should publish regularly a wide range of measures of both the level of the IDBR's quality and the change in quality over time. The existing user satisfaction questionnaire should be improved to include a wider range of questions relating to the IDBR's quality and that of the service provided by the Business Registers Unit.	High

**Priority adopted:** High

**Reason for different priority (if different from that published):** -

**Planned action:**

Quality measures based on existing analysis will be presented in the December 2001 report to the IDBR Management Committee.

A customer satisfaction survey will be conducted in January 2002.

Feedback from the IDBR Management Committee resulting in a revised quality report for the first quarter of 2002.

Publication of quality report on the National Statistics web site in July 2002

**Expected start date:** December 2001

**Expected completion date:** July 2002

**Status:** Not started

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2	The development of the Comprehensive Business Directory should continue to be a priority within ONS, as a means of improving access to data from administrative sources, improving the quality of the IDBR through better matching of source data and of reducing the need to collect data directly from businesses.	High

**Priority adopted:** High

**Reason for different priority (if different from that published):-**

**Planned action:**

The ONS Executive Board approved funding to develop the comprehensive business directory model for ONS purposes on 5 June 2001.

**Expected start date:** September 2001

**Expected end date:** September 2002

**Status:** On target

Last updated 12 October 2001

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Rec. No.	Summary of Recommendation	Review Priority
3	<p>Building on the existing relationships with HM Customs and Excise (HMCE), Inland Revenue (IR) and Companies House (CH), ONS should:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. seek to extend the range of data supplied by the administrative departments to include, from HMCE, company numbers and previous VAT registration details and, from all administrative sources, comprehensive contact information</li><li>2. seek to improve the method and frequency of transferring data from the administrative sources</li><li>3. consider, within the scope of the current legal framework, feeding back industrial classification data to the administrative departments; and</li><li>4. seek to improve the quality of industrial classification coming from administrative sources by using consistent data-collection and coding techniques, and by supporting those people who classify businesses.</li></ol>	<p>High</p> <p>Low</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>High</p>

**Priority adopted:** As in review

**Reason for different priority (if different from that published):-**

**Planned action:**

1. Transfer of VAT turnover monthly already implemented in May 2001. A project was set up in September 2001 to examine the possibility of additional flows of all necessary data permitted under existing legislation to ONS from HMCE, Inland Revenue and Companies House. Some testing of VAT source data, however, has indicated that the better use of administrative sources will not guarantee comprehensive contact information, such as telephone numbers. The use of commercial sources, both the BT and Yell databases will be evaluated to fill this gap.
2. Electronic transfers of VAT data have been implemented in May 2001. The systems for these transfers will be developed and extended to Companies House and IR by August 2002 as part of the Comprehensive Business Directory project
3. The legal issues are being reviewed within the Comprehensive Business Directory project.
4. Agree with HMCE, IR and Companies House consistent methods of Standard Industrial Classifications for individual business units by September 2002 within the Comprehensive Business Directory project.

**Expected start date:** May 2001 (3.1 and 3.2); October 2001 (3.3 and 3.4)

**Expected completion date:** September 2002

**Status:** On target (3.1 and 3.2); not yet started (3.3 and 3.4)

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Rec. No.	Summary of Recommendation	Review Priority
4	Quality standards for industrial classification, legal status, company number and address should be agreed and documented by ONS and the administrative departments.	High

**Priority adopted:** High

**Reason for different priority (if different from that published):-**

**Planned action:**

Recommendations from CLAMOUR project will be used to determine classification rules for ONS, HMCE, Inland Revenue and Companies House but this cannot be done until the CLAMOUR project is complete (March 2002). The earliest that agreement could be expected is September 2002 but this depends on the outcome of CLAMOUR.

**Expected start date:** March 2002

**Expected end date:** September 2002

**Status:** Not started

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Rec. No.	Summary of Recommendation	Review Priority
5	<p>ONS should revise the Annual Register Inquiry sample design and selection so that it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• completely enumerates enterprises with employment of 50 or more;</li><li>• includes a wider range of enterprises with conflicting auxiliary information;</li><li>• includes, every four years, enterprises with employment of 10 or more;</li><li>• includes enterprises with employment of less than 10 only to the extent that is necessary for adequate quality measurement; and</li><li>• can be used to update the IDBR in an unbiased way.</li></ul>	High

**Priority adopted:** Medium

**Reason for different priority (if different from that published):** Changes to the annual register inquiry, which were identified in the review as being of high priority, would increase the burden on businesses and also incur government expenditure next financial year (2002/3). For these reasons, the priority has been reduced in the implementation plan. The ONS will consider the possibility of finding resources both in terms of the compliance costs and the ONS internal costs in the coming business planning cycle, balancing the IDBR requirements against a range of other priorities for the organisation.

**Planned action:**

Sampling for the 2001 annual register inquiry (ARI2001) took place in August 2001. Full implementation of the proposals (for ARI2002) would increase the number of reporting units in the 50-99 employment range by 14,000, representing 31,000 local units. For the 10-49 employment band increasing the sample to 1 in 4 increases the number of reporting units by 20,000 each year currently representing 22,000 local units. The decrease in the number with <10 employment would be 10,000. This planned action will be considered against a range of other priorities for the organisation.

**Expected start date:** To be confirmed

**Expected end date:** To be confirmed

**Status:** Not started

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<b>Rec. No.</b>	<b>Summary of Recommendation</b>	<b>Review Priority</b>
6	In the Annual Register Inquiry  1. The response rate should be improved by following up non-response more effectively. The response rate for the largest enterprises should be 100 per cent.  2. The general procedures used by ONS to ensure compliance with the Statistics of Trade Act 1947 should be applied rigorously to the Annual Register Inquiry.	Medium  Medium

**Priority adopted:** Medium

**Reason for different priority (if different from that published):-**

**Planned action:**

A response chasing strategy has been formulated and a project has been set up to take forward a number of initiatives aimed at ensuring that response rate targets are met, and where possible exceeded, and with less resource. The range of initiatives is extensive and is targeted mainly at new contributors, key and large contributors and persistent non-responders. For new contributors we are piloting the inclusion of a flier when businesses are first recruited to an inquiry, that explains about the inquiry and ONS. We are also actively chasing new contributors to ensure that they continue to regularly respond. A different approach has been introduced with success for large contributors, approaching the chief executive directly for outstanding returns from key businesses. For ARI specifically a response chasing and enforcement plan will also be produced to comply with a response target of 97% for enterprises with 250 or more employment (current response target is 80%).

**Expected start date:** September 2001

**Expected end date:** December 2002

**Status:** On target

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<b>Rec. No.</b>	<b>Summary of Recommendation</b>	<b>Review Priority</b>
7	Questionnaire design for the Annual Register Inquiry should be given priority within ONS's proposed business-survey questionnaire design project. Among the particular topics that need to be addressed are omission of local units; delineation of business units; feedback of known industrial classification information; and efficient collection of business description information.	High

**Priority adopted:** High

**Reason for different priority (if different from that published):-**

**Planned action:**

Questionnaire design will be reviewed by May 2002 for the August 2002 annual register inquiry (ARI) selection. The ARI will also provide the option to all businesses to provide returns electronically. This recommendation will be built into the design for Internet collection. The extent of the changes will depend on progress on the Methodology Group questionnaire design project and the ONS Internet data capture project.

**Expected start date:** February 2002

**Expected end date:** August 2002

**Status:** Not started

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<b>Rec. No.</b>	<b>Summary of Recommendation</b>	<b>Review Priority</b>
8	ONS should continue to extend the present electronic data-collection arrangements for the Annual Register Inquiry.	Medium

**Priority adopted:** Medium

**Reason for different priority (if different from that published):-**

**Planned action:**

Large contributors will, with immediate effect, be actively encouraged to supply data in electronic form. This will immediately extend the number of such arrangements to the annual register inquiry. The electronic methods of collection of large contributors will be reviewed and web-collection for small contributors will be introduced when the technology will support them.

**Expected start date:** September 2001

**Expected end date:** March 2002

**Status:** On target

Last updated 12 October 2001

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<b>Rec. No.</b>	<b>Summary of Recommendation</b>	<b>Review Priority</b>
9	The Annual Register Inquiry, Business Profiling Team and the administrative sources should have highest priority for updating IDBR auxiliary information. In the case of industrial classification, this depends on improvements to the current level of quality of information from those sources. Other sources should be used by the Business Registers Unit to resolve uncertainty and ambiguity.	High

**Priority adopted:** High

**Reason for different priority (if different from that published):-**

**Planned action:**

Pending improvements to administrative classifications, existing rules will be applied rigorously and will be documented fully within the clerical manual and training documentation.

The ONS will also be improving classifications through the implementation of revisions to the Standard Industrial Classification. This will also require co-operation from the suppliers of data to the business register. The work is scheduled to be completed by September 2002.

The role of local authorities in checking local unit data from the annual register inquiry will be reviewed by March 2002

Recoding of business descriptions using the Precision Data Coder (PDC) will be done through Eurostat funding by September 2002.

**Expected start date:** September 2001

**Expected end date:** September 2002

**Status:** On target

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Rec. No.	Summary of Recommendation	Review Priority
10	The agreed electronic tool should be used to aid classifying business descriptions. All staff members should feed back information on deficiencies to those controlling the system to improve the quality of the coding tool. The use of expertise from outside ONS (for example, industry groups) should be considered as a way of improving coding quality. ONS should review the Precision Data Coder alongside other similar products to ensure that the most effective tool for the job is used.	Medium

**Priority adopted:** Medium

**Reason for different priority (if different from that published):-**

**Planned action:**

A Precision Data Coder (PDC) manager will be appointed with the objective of ensuring that the PDC is available to all users. That person will ensure that training is provided for all users. This will take effect from September 2001. Other tools will be reviewed in line with plans for procurement of the PDC or a replacement coding system and the ONS infrastructure project on corporate tools for classification. Any changes will be in line with ONS corporate objective on statistical infrastructure.

**Expected start date:** October 2001

**Expected end date:** August 2002

**Status:** Not started

Last updated 12 October 2001

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<b>Rec. No.</b>	<b>Summary of Recommendation</b>	<b>Review Priority</b>
11	The rules for updating the industrial classification and employment variables, set up to maintain stability of sample membership for short-period inquiries, should be reviewed to see if they could better accommodate register maintenance requirements and should be applied rigorously.	Low

**Priority adopted:** Low

**Reason for different priority (if different from that published):-**

**Planned action:**

This recommendation is an extension of the work planned under recommendation 9. It will be pursued with users through the IDBR Management Committee, which will revise its terms of reference.

**Expected start date:** April 2002

**Expected end date:** March 2003

**Status:** Not started

Last updated 12 October 2001

**Review of the Inter-Departmental Business Register - NSQR series No. 2. - Implementation Plan**

<b>Rec. No.</b>	<b>Summary of Recommendation</b>	<b>Review Priority</b>
12	A business profiling strategy should be agreed based on two objective measures: the level of secondary activity; and the impact on survey estimates and analyses. A solution should be developed to bring profiling and ARI operations together for the largest businesses. A trigger mechanism should be established for sub-annual profiling of the most complex enterprises.	High

**Priority adopted:** High

**Reason for different priority (if different from that published):-**

**Planned action:**

A revised structure for profiling has been put in place in April 2001. There will be a post-implementation review in November 2001.

**Expected start date:** September 2001

**Expected end date:** March 2002

**Status:** On target

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<b>Rec. No.</b>	<b>Summary of Recommendation</b>	<b>Review Priority</b>
13	The Business Profiling Team (BPT) should initially establish the correct structures of the businesses at the desk. For complex businesses, an agreed programme of profiling visits should be put in place, and this should be made available to survey managers in advance. The BPT should ensure that data collection and survey results managers are informed, in advance, of its updates to business structures on the IDBR.	Low

**Priority adopted:** Low

**Reason for different priority (if different from that published):-**

**Planned action:**

This is supported by a plan for systematic profiling of the largest businesses. There will be a post-implementation review in November 2001. The BPT will also make recommendation for improved information on business structures to be presented to businesses.

**Expected start date:** November 2001

**Expected end date:** March 2003

**Status:** Not started

Last updated 12 October 2001

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Rec. No.	Summary of Recommendation	Review Priority
14	To reduce the burden on business and improve coherence across National Statistics, ONS should explore with other government departments, opportunities, within the requirements for maintaining data confidentiality, to co-ordinate the collection of data relating to the structure of complex enterprises.	Low

**Priority adopted:** Low

**Reason for different priority (if different from that published):-**

**Planned action:**

This is a long-term task that will be taken forward bilaterally with DTI (industry including construction), DEFRA (Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs). Co-ordination will be the responsibility of the IDBR Management Committee, which will revise its terms of reference. In addition, we will review the role of local authorities in the process.

**Expected start date:** April 2002

**Expected end date:** March 2003

**Status:** Not started

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Rec. No.	Summary of Recommendation	Review Priority
15	A detailed review of the requirements for survey-specific reporting arrangements should be carried out with the aim of standardising reporting arrangements for all surveys. Where non-standard arrangements are necessary, the procedures for managing them should be simplified.	Medium

**Priority adopted:** Medium

**Reason for different priority (if different from that published):-**

**Planned action:**

ONS has recently started to strengthen its methodological support. Involvement of MG depends on recruitment. One priority will be sampling and estimation but a number of other competing projects could take precedence.

**Expected start date:** April 2002

**Expected end date:** March 2003

**Status:** Not started

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Rec. No.	Summary of Recommendation	Review Priority
16	ONS should work with the Department of Trade and Industry to improve the method of estimating the under-coverage that arises from businesses not required to register with HM Customs and Excise and Inland Revenue.	Low

**Priority adopted:** Low

**Reason for different priority (if different from that published):-**

**Planned action:**

Will be pursued when resources permit in DTI Small Business Service support.

**Expected start date:** April 2002

**Expected end date:** March 2003

**Status:** Not started

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<b>Rec. No.</b>	<b>Summary of Recommendation</b>	<b>Review Priority</b>
17	ONS should measure any bias that may arise because of the treatment of potential duplicate businesses, and revise the treatment of reporting units in surveys as appropriate.	Medium

**Priority adopted:** Medium

**Reason for different priority (if different from that published):-**

**Planned action:**

This will be actioned by reviewing the content of the monthly report that currently informs users about the size of the register and changes by July 2002

**Expected start date:** December 2001

**Expected end date:** July 2002

**Status:** Not started

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**Review of the Inter-Departmental Business Register - NSQR series No. 2. - Implementation Plan**

<b>Rec. No.</b>	<b>Summary of Recommendation</b>	<b>Review Priority</b>
18	The audit of on-line amendments should be more timely and frequent. The sample size of the audit should be reviewed and the audit should be focused on those amendments that can have material impact on the quality of the IDBR. Recommendations should be developed and agreed in partnership between the audit team and work areas.	Medium

**Priority adopted:** Medium

**Reason for different priority (if different from that published):-**

**Planned action:**

The audit process will be reviewed with the aim of reducing the work done on each sampled case. A revised audit plan, for monthly audits within 2 weeks of the end of the month will be produced by January 2002.

**Expected start date:** November 2001

**Expected end date:** January 2002

**Status:** Not started

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<b>Rec. No.</b>	<b>Summary of Recommendation</b>	<b>Review Priority</b>
19	Business Registers Unit should extend the range of validation checks on inputs to ensure that statistical data present on the IDBR are of adequate quality. (Priority: 3)	Low

**Priority adopted:** Low

**Reason for different priority (if different from that published):-**

**Planned action:**

ONS will conduct a systematic examination of all of its computer processes and identify changes that would address this recommendation, subject to programmer resources

**Expected start date:** April 2002

**Expected end date:** March 2003

**Status:** Not started

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<b>Rec. No.</b>	<b>Summary of Recommendation</b>	<b>Review Priority</b>
20	Business Registers Unit (BRU) should develop a specific recruitment policy and training programme that reflects its specialist function. This policy should include arrangements to make sure that members of staff are encouraged to move within BRU and across Prices and Business Group to ensure a breadth, as well as a depth, of expertise.	Medium

**Priority adopted:** Medium

**Reason for different priority (if different from that published):-**

**Planned action:**

The Data Analyst Scheme within the Business Data Division of the ONS provides the basis for a Business Registers Unit training programme.

The business plan for 2001/2 for BRU includes temporary secondment to the Business Profiling Team at B1 level.

**Expected start date:** January 2002

**Expected end date:** March 2003

**Status:** Not started

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Rec. No.	Summary of Recommendation	Review Priority
21	The Business Registers Unit should improve electronic communication with the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment Northern Ireland to ensure consistent practice is adopted in the two departments. This should include consideration of how present legal constraints can be overcome in future.	Medium

**Priority adopted:** Medium

**Reason for different priority (if different from that published):-**

**Planned action:**

Major developments in this area will depend on how the use of the government secure intranet (GSI) develops. Legal constraints are covered in the Comprehensive Business Directory (CBD) project report.

**Expected start date:** November 2001

**Expected end date:** June 2002

**Status:** Not started

Last updated 12 October 2001

**Review of the Inter-Departmental Business Register - NSQR series No. 2. - Implementation Plan**

Rec. No.	Summary of Recommendation	Review Priority
22	ONS should strengthen staff training with regard to the principles of maintaining and using a business register. The use of the Data Analyst and Statistical Analyst schemes for this purpose is endorsed.	Low

**Priority adopted:** High

**Reason for different priority (if different from that published):** Training through the Data Analyst Scheme has been accorded a high priority within the ONS work programme.

**Planned action:**

This is addressed by the planned introduction of the Data Analyst Scheme (DAS) for BRU staff for which funding has been allocated from the DAS project. We will also consider extension of training more widely within the ONS and other government departments once DAS for BRU is in place.

**Expected start date:** July 2001

**Expected end date:** March 2002

**Status:** On target

Last updated 12 October 2001

**Review of the Inter-Departmental Business Register - NSQR series No. 2. - Implementation Plan**

Rec. No.	Summary of Recommendation	Review Priority
23	Additional documentation should be produced for users of the Register. Part of this documentation should take the form of a frequently asked questions document.	High

**Priority adopted:** High

**Reason for different priority (if different from that published):-**

**Planned action:**

The clerical manual has been converted to the ONS new standards and is now being extended. The implementation will include a FAQ document, linked into the manual itself. We will make the register available to users in other government departments either through direct secure access or on CDROM, which ever is the appropriate technology at the time of completion. In addition, we will review documentation on the web-site by December 2001.

**Expected start date:** July 2001

**Expected end date:** December 2002

**Status:** On target

Last updated 12 October 2001

**Review of the Inter-Departmental Business Register - NSQR series No. 2. - Implementation Plan**

Rec. No.	Summary of Recommendation	Review Priority
24	The existing quarterly and monthly management reports should be focused on measuring the impact on quality of changes to the Register. Business Registers Unit should continue to develop its monthly report of changes to the size and structure of the register in consultation with users.	Low

**Priority adopted:** Low

**Reason for different priority (if different from that published):-**

**Planned action:**

This will be dealt with through a continuous improvement programme within the IDBR Management Committee, which will amend its terms of reference.

**Expected start date:** October 2001

**Expected end date:** March 2003

**Status:** Not started

Last updated 12 October 2001

**Review of the Inter-Departmental Business Register - NSQR series No. 2. - Implementation Plan**

Rec. No.	Summary of Recommendation	Review Priority
25	An improved on-line interface should be developed to make it easier for authorised users to access and update the register.	Medium

**Priority adopted:** Medium

**Reason for different priority (if different from that published):-**

**Planned action:**

This depends on the introduction of the next version of Ingres within the ONS, expected by the end of 2001. As well as improving quality, it is expected that efficiency will improve.

**Expected start date:** January 2002

**Expected end date:** March 2003

**Status:** Not started

Last updated 12 October 2001

**Review of the Inter-Departmental Business Register - NSQR series No. 2. - Implementation Plan**

<b>Rec. No.</b>	<b>Summary of Recommendation</b>	<b>Review Priority</b>
26	ONS should ensure that the impact on outputs is assessed for any proposed changes to the IDBR.	High

**Priority adopted:** High

**Reason for different priority (if different from that published):-**

**Planned action:**

ONS Methodology Group will identify the impact of proposals when making recommendations. The register analysis team in BRU has also already been strengthened to provide this role as part of the monthly report work. The reports will be presented to the IDBR Management Committee.

**Expected start date:** September 2001

**Expected end date:** March 2002

**Status:** On target

Last updated 12 October 2001

**Review of the Inter-Departmental Business Register - NSQR series No. 2. - Implementation Plan**

<b>Rec. No.</b>	<b>Summary of Recommendation</b>	<b>Review Priority</b>
27	ONS's Register strategy group should take responsibility for overseeing the implementation of recommendations from projects relating to the improvement of the IDBR. The membership of the group should be reviewed and include a non-ONS member.	High

**Priority adopted:** High

**Reason for different priority (if different from that published):-**

**Planned action:**

The IDBR Strategy Group has discussed and approved the implementation plan for ONS users. The project will report to the IDBR management committee and the ONS Economic Statistics Board. The IDBR Strategy Group will be discontinued.

**Expected start date:** September 2001

**Expected end date:** October 2001

**Status:** On target

Last updated 12 October 2001

**Review of the Inter-Departmental Business Register - NSQR series No. 2. - Implementation Plan**

Rec. No.	Summary of Recommendation	Review Priority
28	ONS should change sample selection procedures to ensure stability of sample membership for businesses newly included in samples.	Medium

**Priority adopted:** Low

**Reason for different priority (if different from that published):** This requires resources within ONS Methodology Group that will not be available until April 2002.

**Planned action:**

ONS Methodology Group has included this in their work programme.

**Expected start date:** April 2002

**Expected end date:** March 2003

**Status:** Not started

Last updated 12 October 2001

**Review of the Inter-Departmental Business Register - NSQR series No. 2. - Implementation Plan**

Rec. No.	Summary of Recommendation	Review Priority
29	ONS should set aside resources to study further the impact of births and deaths of enterprises on statistical outputs. (Priority: 1)	High

**Priority adopted:** Low

**Reason for different priority (if different from that published):** The work requires resources within the DTI and the ONS Methodology Group (MG). These resources will not be available immediately.

**Planned action:**

A project will be set up jointly between BRU and MG within the ONS. In addition, funding from Eurostat for development of analysis of demography of businesses has been requested. The DTI Small Business Service will collaborate in this work. Timing depends critically on resources within MG but, subject to this, the report initiating the work is expected by March 2002.

**Expected start date:** April 2002

**Expected end date:** March 2003

**Status:** Not started