

COVERING CONFIDENTIAL

Prime Minister ①

Agree this arrangement?
(Since the 1979 we have added
Ministers without portfolios to
those receiving RPI and
unemployment figures)

G065

MR A TURNBULL, PS (ECONOMIC AFFAIRS) PRIME MINISTER

cc Mr Dworkin (DE)
Mr Mansell (CSO)

Yes

AT
5/8

ADVANCE RELEASE OF INDEX OF PRODUCTION DATA

At present CSO circulates figures for the monthly Index of Production (IoP) in advance of publication to a restricted number of Ministers and senior officials in the Prime Minister's Office, the Treasury, the Department of Trade and Industry, the Bank of England and within the Cabinet Office.

We would like the Prime Minister's agreement to adding the Director of Statistics in the Department of Employment and his key officials to this list.

Each month the Department of Employment press notice on manufacturing earnings and employment includes information on productivity and unit wage costs which are compiled by CSO. Naturally, the most up-to-date information on production is used in the calculation of these measures.

Since these figures are published in a Department of Employment press notice, DE ministers need to be briefed on them. In those months of the year when the Index of Production figures are published in advance of this briefing there is no problem. However in some months the press notices are published on the same day or within a day or so of each other, and then advance notice of the productivity and unit costs figures would be helpful to DE, together with the underlying production figures.

I would be grateful if you could approve the arrangement whereby in certain months we send figures incorporating unpublished IoP data to the Director of Statistics in DE for use in ministerial briefing. The confidentiality of the data in advance of publication would be stressed.

You may wish to refer to the authority for the present arrangements - a minute from Tim Lankester to Tony Battishill on 22 June 1979 - and a copy is attached.

DW

D W FLAXEN

Central Statistical Office

2 August 1985



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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

MR. FLAXEN,
CENTRAL STATISTICAL OFFICE

Thank you for your minute of 2 August about the advance release of index of production data. The Prime Minister was content that in certain months you should send figures incorporating unpublished index of production data to the Director of Statistics in the Department of Employment as proposed.

(TIM FLESHER)

6 August 1985

JK

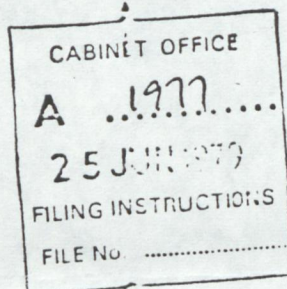


10 DOWNING STREET

Mr. S. L. Smith
 Mr. Boneham
 Mr. Le Chevalier
~~Mr. L. G. ...~~
 Mr. Mowbray

From the Private Secretary

22 June, 1979.



Dear Tony,

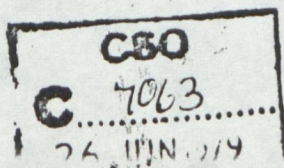
Security of Economic Statistics

You will be aware of the importance which is attached to the avoidance of premature disclosure of key economic statistics which could cause not only political embarrassment but also in some circumstances speculation on the foreign and domestic exchanges. The statistics involved are the trade figures, money supply, unemployment, retail price index, earnings index and the index of industrial production.

The Prime Minister therefore wishes to draw your Minister's attention to the current strict arrangements for guarding against the disclosure of these statistics in the usually short period between their being available within Departments and subsequent publication.

Pre-publication copies of the statistics are to be sent by originating Departments to the following Ministers and their Permanent Secretaries:-

<u>Trade figures</u>	Prime Minister Chancellor of the Exchequer Secretaries of State for Trade and for Industry
<u>Money supply</u>	Prime Minister Chancellor of the Exchequer
<u>Unemployment</u>	Prime Minister Chancellor of the Exchequer Secretaries of State for Employment and for Industry
<u>Retail price index</u>	Prime Minister Chancellor of the Exchequer Secretaries of State for Employment for Industry and for Trade

/ Earnings

CONFIDENTIAL

Earnings

Prime Minister
Chancellor of the Exchequer
Secretaries of State for Employment and for Trade

Industrial
production

Prime Minister
Chancellor of the Exchequer
Secretary of State for Industry

Copies should also go to the Governor of the Bank of England, the Secretary of the Cabinet, the Head of the Government Statistical Service, and the Chairman of the Board of Customs and Excise (trade figures only).

Only those in paragraphs 3 and 4 above have discretion to circulate figures to others in their Departments (whether Ministers or officials) on a strictly 'need to know' basis. No Press copies are to be released ahead of publication even under embargo.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries of all those mentioned in paragraphs 3 and 4.

han. ev.

T. Laker.

A.M.W. Battishill, Esq.,
H.M. Treasury.

