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NBRM

Dear David

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THE STATISTICAL SERIES PRODUCED IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT

A review has recently taken place of the security classification applied to pre-publication data from statistical series produced by the Department of Employment.

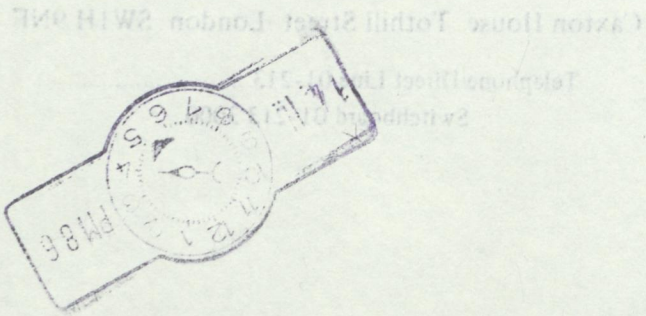
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Three series are covered by strict arrangements to guard against disclosure, as laid down in a letter from Tim Lankester on 22 June 1979. Pre-release data from these series are only seen by a named list of Ministers and officials. However, the security classification is not stipulated and we have discovered that there is no uniformity of approach, either between the departments involved, or even within this department. At present the unemployment figures are classified secret and the RPI and earnings index are confidential. We can see no justification for the difference in approach and, having considered advice from our security officer, propose to classify all three series as personal and confidential. The change in classification of the unemployment figures will be introduced for the February figures, which will reach you on Monday, 24 February.

John Lambert

JOHN LAMBERT
Principal Private Secretary

Security; Econ Stats June 79



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