

Dated the 4<sup>th</sup> day of April 2018

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

---

between

(1) **ESB NETWORKS D.A.C.**

and

(2) **THE CENTRAL STATISTICS OFFICE**

---

THIS MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING is agreed the 29 day of March 2018

**BETWEEN:-**

- (1) **ESB NETWORKS D.A.C.**, a company registered in Ireland (company registration number 465172 having its registered office at Clanwilliam House, Clanwilliam Place, Dublin 2, Ireland (hereinafter referred to as “**ESBN**”);
- (2) **THE CENTRAL STATISTICS OFFICE** an office established pursuant to Section 8 of the Statistics Act, 1993, whose principal office is at Skehard Road, Cork T12 X00E (“**the CSO**”);

1. **Definitions and Interpretation**

- 1.1 In this MoU, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

“**Act**” means the Statistics Act 1993 as may be amended from time to time;

“**MoU**” means this Memorandum of Understanding and the terms and conditions therein, including the Schedule;

“**Commissioner**” means the Data Protection Commissioner;

“**Data**” means data relating to electricity connections completed by ESBN, being the data sets identified in Appendix 2.

“**Data Controller**” has the meaning given to “data controller” in the Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003 and “controller” in the GDPR

“**Data Processor**” has the meaning given to “data processor” in the Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003 and “processor” in the GDPR

“**Data Protection Laws**” means the DPA, the GDPR (with effect from the date it becomes effective in Ireland), any primary or secondary legislation enacted by the government of Ireland pursuant to the GDPR and any other statute, statutory instrument, rule, order, directive regulation, of any competent national or supra national authority relating to the protection of personal data or the privacy of individuals as may be enacted from time to time;

“**DPA**” means the Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003

“**GDPR**” means the General Data Protection Regulation (Regulation 2016/679/EU);

“**Law**” means the laws of Ireland and includes any laws of the European Union having direct effect in Ireland,

“**MPRN**” means a Meter Point Reference Number, and is a unique eleven digit number assigned to each electricity connection and meter in the Republic of Ireland;

“**Personal Data**” has the meaning assigned to that term in the Data Protection Laws;

**“Processing”** has the meaning given to it in the Data Protection Laws and “process”, “processes” and “processed” shall be construed accordingly

**“Protocol”** means the Data Protection Protocol agreed between the CSO and ESNB a copy of which is attached at Appendix 3 hereto

**“Purpose”** means the production, development and improvement of data and statistics relating to housing completions in Ireland (being a purpose within the functions of the CSO under the Act)

**“Request”** means a request made in writing pursuant to Section 24 of the Act and in accordance with the Protocol by the CSO.

1.2 When used in this MoU:

- (a) the terms and expressions set out in the Appendices shall have the meanings ascribed therein;
- (b) the masculine includes the feminine and the neuter; and
- (c) the singular includes the plural and vice versa.

1.3 A reference to any statute, enactment, order, regulation or other similar instrument shall be construed as a reference to the statute, enactment, order, regulation or instrument as amended by any subsequent statute, enactment, order, regulation or instrument or as contained in any subsequent re-enactment thereof.

1.4 The index and headings are included in this MoU for ease of reference only and shall not affect the interpretation or construction of this MoU.

1.5 References to Clauses and the Appendices are, unless otherwise provided, references to clauses of and the appendices to this MoU.

## 2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 The objective of this Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is to set out areas of mutual responsibility and shared interest between the Central Statistics Office (CSO) and ESB Networks D.A.C. (ESBN) in the use of administrative data for statistical purposes in accordance with Section 24 of the Act.

2.2 The CSO has requested ESNB to provide certain information relating to electrical connections (the Data) to it on an ongoing basis, in accordance with the Act. The Data requested comprises data at the level necessary for the CSO to gather, compile and improve data and statistics on new housing.

2.3 The CSO shall ensure that all Data requested from ESNB by way of a formal notice under section 24 of the Act is necessary and proportionate, having regard to the statistical outputs which need to be produced.



- 2.4 ESNB acknowledges the requirement of the CSO to continue to receive Data requested by way of a notice under section 24 of the Act and undertakes to provide the Data at the required frequency. A list of files, with delivery frequency, reason required, file format and transmission method shall be maintained by both Offices and is included in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2. During the lifetime of this agreement, ESNB and the CSO agree that this list of data files shall be periodically reviewed and amendments thereto shall be made with the consent of both parties.
- 2.5 Access to the Data supplied by ESNB will be restricted to CSO personnel involved in the production of the relevant statistics. Data files provided by ESNB to the CSO will be deleted by the CSO when they are no longer needed for statistical production.

### **3 MANDATE AND MISSION**

- 3.1 The CSO is an independent Office and the Director General of the CSO has sole responsibility in relation to professional statistical matters.
- 3.2 The CSO's Mission is to provide high quality information, both for evidence based decision-making and to support accountability.
- 3.3 The CSO's mandate is built on the Act and on EU Regulation 223/2009 and allows for;
- The collection, compilation, extraction and dissemination for statistical purposes of information relating to economic, social and general activities and conditions in the State.
  - The co-ordination of official statistics compiled by public authorities.

### **4 LEGAL OBLIGATIONS**

- 4.1 All data provided to the CSO under this agreement shall be treated as strictly confidential, and be used solely for statistical purposes and in line with this agreement.
- 4.2 The data will not be used for any other purpose. Transfer and processing of data shall be done only in accordance with the Act<sup>1</sup> ; the Data Protection Laws; EU statistical law<sup>2</sup> and in accordance with the CSO's Code of Practice on Statistical Confidentiality<sup>3</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.cso.ie/en/media/csoie/census/documents/statsact93.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX%3A32009R0223>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.cso.ie/en/aboutus/lgdp/csodatapolicies/statisticalconfidentiality/>



- 4.3 In particular, the parties recognise that they are bound to carry out the transfer and processing of data in accordance with Sections 32 and 33 of the Statistics Act 1993 concerning protection of information.
- 4.4 Any data produced by the CSO from ESNB administrative data will be published in an aggregated form which does not identify, or permit the identification of, any individuals or businesses. Raw data will not be disclosed to any other party.
- 4.5 Data will be retained and processed by the CSO in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Laws.

## **5 SECURITY**

- 5.1 The CSO confirms and agrees that the information required to be provided by ESNB under the Act for the Purpose is limited to the Data.
- 5.2 The CSO acknowledges that it requires the Data for its own purposes and therefore that it is the Data Controller in respect of all Data received by it pursuant to a Request
- 5.3 The Data will be managed in line with the CSO's obligation under the Data Protection Laws and in the light of operational experience to ensure (among other things) that: a) appropriate security arrangements are in place and regularly reviewed; b) retention and deletion policy is regularly reviewed; and, c) data will be suitably destroyed when no longer needed.
- 5.4 Upon receipt of a Request, ESNB shall provide the Data to the CSO in accordance with Appendix 1. The Data is provided "as is". Without prejudice to ESNB's obligations under the Data Protection Laws, ESNB shall not be obliged to verify, and makes no warranties, representations or undertakings whatsoever (express or implied) in respect of the accuracy, completeness or currency of the Data, or any information which ESNB may be required to provide pursuant to the Act. The CSO shall not be entitled to assume that the Data is accurate, complete or up-to-date at any time.
- 5.5 ESNB shall provide the Data using secure channels and in accordance with its highest security standards as set out in Appendix 2. The CSO confirms that it is capable of receiving the Data in such format and will apply rigorous information security standards in respect of the manner in which it receives, stores and processes the Data.

## **6 USE OF DATA OR INFORMATION UNDER THE ACT**

- 6.1 The CSO have in place with the Data Protection Commissioner, an agreed protocol for data matching. All linking of the Data with other sources, both CSO and non-CSO, shall be done in accordance with this protocol, and documented on the CSO website.

- 6.2 The CSO agrees that any Data disclosed or provided by ESNB shall be requested in accordance with the Act and be used by it solely for the Purpose, and further agrees that ESNB shall have no responsibility in respect of the CSO's use of the Data.
- 6.3 Other than for purposes of carrying out its statutory functions (and then, only to the extent strictly necessary), the CSO agrees that it shall not modify any Data disclosed or provided to it by ESNB.
- 6.4 Save as required during data processing and analysis or for the performance of its functions under the Act the CSO agrees that it will not copy any Data disclosed or provided to it by ESNB, and that it will destroy Data and copies of same once possession is no longer necessary for the Purpose.
- 6.5 In the event that ESNB is required pursuant to the Act to disclose or provide any information in addition to the Data, in connection with the Purpose, this MoU shall apply equally to such other information.

## **7 PROCEDURE FOR DATA LOSS/BREACH**

- 7.1 In the event of a breach of information which has been supplied by the ESNB, the CSO will refer to their own data breach procedures and report the breach to the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner's Office as appropriate. The CSO will use reasonable endeavours to ensure that ESNB will not be held liable for any loss, damage or injury caused as a result of such data breach.
- 7.2 The CSO will, indemnify and keep indemnified ESNB against all actions, claims liabilities and direct damages, cost charges and expenses which it may incur or suffer (whether through third party action or otherwise) arising out of or in connection with any breach by the CSO of any of the terms of this Agreement. For the avoidance of doubt, the indemnity the CSO provides under this clause shall only apply to those actions, claims, liabilities, direct damages, costs, charges and expenses which directly arise from a breach of this Agreement.

## **8 COMMUNICATION**

- 8.1 The CSO shall appoint a Liaison Officer as the main point of contact with ESNB; this role shall encompass a Data Custodian function, with responsibility for the management and use of ESNB Data by the CSO. ESNB shall likewise appoint a Liaison Officer with the CSO.
- 8.2 It shall be the responsibility of the liaison officers to consider all administrative data matters and related issues of mutual interest.
- 8.3 Any proposed changes to the data collected by the ESNB shall be communicated to the CSO in a timely fashion.

## 9 GENERAL

- 9.1 This Memorandum of Understanding will come into force on the date of signing and may be reviewed at any time, at the request of either party. Any changes to the Memorandum of Understanding shall be effected only with the mutual agreement of ESNB and the CSO.
- 9.2 It is understood that this MoU is not intended to, and does not, obligate the Parties to enter into or create any MoU, partnership or agency relationship or to proceed with any possible relationship or other transaction.
- 9.3 In the event that any provision of this MoU is declared by any judicial or other competent authority to be void, voidable, illegal or otherwise unenforceable or indications of the same are received by either of the Parties from any relevant authority the Parties shall amend that provision in such reasonable manner as achieves the intention of the Parties without illegality or it may be severed from this MoU and the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this MoU on the date first set forth above.

**SIGNED, for and on behalf of  
ESB NETWORKS D.A.C. by**

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Conor Healy', written over a horizontal line.

**Conor Healy,  
Manager, Systems & Sustainability**

**SIGNED, for and on behalf of  
THE CENTRAL STATISTICS  
OFFICE by**

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Pádraig Dalton', written over a horizontal line.

**Pádraig Dalton  
Director General**



## Appendix 1

### 1. Domestic MPRN (Meter Point Reference Number) :

- This is the Unique Identifier for each Service delivery Point
- Providing the domestic MPRN to CSO will allow the CSO to compile statistics on the number of new connections that have taken place (if used in conjunction with current meter point status) as each new house is allocated a unique MPRN.
- The MPRN can be used to cross reference with other databases held by CSO and verify the quality of the data.

### 2. Address

- Gives location of the property
- This will allow CSO to compile statistical outputs by relevant Local Authority.
- The Address can be used to cross reference with other databases held by CSO and verify the quality of the data.

### 3. Generic Longitude and Latitude

- Provides actual/approximation of property on maps
- This will allow CSO to use with other sources such as Geodirectory to derive data points.
- For rural addresses can be used to cross reference with other databases held by CSO to determine more specific information in relation to builds per Local Authority.

### 4. Created date , Authorised date, Energised date and Current Meter Point Status

These relate to the lifecycle of the MPRN and indicate the different stages that an MPRN can go through

| Status | Description of Dates |
|--------|----------------------|
| C      | Created              |
| A      | Authorised/Assigned  |
| E      | Energised            |
| D      | De-energised         |
| T      | Terminated           |

- Created will allow the CSO to determine how many new connections were requested from ESNB in a given period. Application made, no payment received.
- Authorised/Assigned will allow the CSO to determine how many of the requested new connections progressed to the point where the customer

accepted terms and conditions of the request from ESNB in a given period. Payment received.

- Energised will allow the CSO to determine how many new connections were energised in a given period. Wiring certs provided/duct ready.
- De-energised and Terminated will allow the CSO to determine how many connections terminate or are de-energised in a given period. This will allow CSO to exclude households from connections statistics.
- Differences in these dates will allow the CSO to compile statistics on the time between created and energised and on housing “pipeline”

#### **5. DUoS Group**

- DUoS Group is a code which denotes the distribution use of system tariff applying to the MPRN.
- This will allow the CSO to determine if a meter point is an urban or rural site enabling classification of statistics into urban and rural, an important distinction for housing policy.

#### **6. Dwelling Indicator**

- Indicates if a site is a dwelling or non-dwelling (although not a mandatory field)
- This can be used in conjunction with address information to determine if MPRN's should be excluded from new completions statistics as they are not dwellings.
- Only relevant for domestic houses – single (NC10) and will only be supplied if populated

#### **7. Connection type (NC no.)**

| Connection Type | Description                   |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| NC10            | New connect – Domestic Single |
| NC20            | New connect – Domestic Scheme |
| Nc40            | New connect – Apartments      |

- This is required as it will allow the CSO to classify the completions statistics into one –off/single dwelling, scheme/estate dwelling and apartment dwelling, an important distinction for housing policy.

8. **Comments Field**

- This field can identify reconnections after two years and will only be supplied if populated

9. **Eircode File**

- An historical file with mappings of ESN address to Eircodes when available.
- The Eircode can be used to cross reference with other databases held by CSO and verify the quality of the data.



## Appendix 2

### Data & Transfer

#### Data:

The Data to be transferred to the CSO, and the explanation of the requirement for each data set, is set out at Appendix 1 and will be extracted from ESBN systems;

#### Requests:

A Request for data sets pursuant to this MoU shall comply with the following requirements:

- It shall be signed by an authorised officer of the CSO and sent to **Manager, Systems & Sustainability\***, ESB Networks DAC, Clanwilliam House, Clanwilliam Court, Clanwilliam Pl, Grand Canal Dock, Dublin D02 CV61 or such other address as ESBN may notify to the CSO in writing from time to time
- It shall specify the legislative basis for the request
- It shall specify the data sets required (which shall be limited to the data sets specified in Appendix 1) and the period for which the Data is to be furnished

#### Frequency:

The CSO may submit Requests quarterly or at such other frequency as the parties may agree in writing

ESBN shall not be required to furnish Data more than once in respect of any period.

#### Data Transfer:

The Data transfer from ESB to the CSO will be via an encrypted file stored on an encrypted USB key. The encryption method used will be 256bit AES. The Data will be transported to the CSO premises by the CSO staff. The Data will then be imported into the CSO systems. Once the import has completed the CSO will return the encrypted key to ESB. The method of transfer will be reviewed regularly and updated if a more secure method becomes available.

**\*Currently Mr. Conor Healy**

## Appendix 3

**Protocol agreed between CSO and ESNB**  
(based directly on the notice published on [www.cso.ie](http://www.cso.ie) of 28/3/2018)

### Official Statistics and Data Protection Legislation

#### 1. Role of Official Statistics

The mandate and role of official statistics is defined in the [UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics](#) and in the [European Statistics Code of Practice](#). Both the UN Principles and the European Code identify the role of official statistics in a modern democracy as an impartial and accurate source of the information needed for decision-making.

The UN Principles and the European Code both recognise that the following are essential for the compilation of official statistics:

- Professional independence and impartiality of statistical authorities
- The right of statistical authorities to collect information in surveys and censuses
- The right of statistical authorities to use administrative records for the purpose of compiling statistics
- The obligation to respect statistical confidentiality – identifiable information may not be disclosed and the information may only be used for the compilation of statistics
- Respect for data providers – wherever possible, the burden on data providers should be kept to a reasonable minimum by utilising and linking existing data sources.

Statistical results are published in aggregate form and enable governments and citizens to make informed choices.

#### 2. Mandate and statutory functions of the Central Statistics Office

##### *Mandate and functions*

The Central Statistics Office (CSO) is established by Section 8(1) of the Statistics Act, 1993. Section 10(1) of the Act specifies the functions of the CSO as follows:

*“The functions of the Office shall be the collection, compilation, extraction and dissemination for statistical purposes of information relating to economic, social and general activities and conditions in the State.”*

### *Statistical purposes*

In exercising its functions, the CSO obtains information from a wide range of sources. Under the Statistics Act, the CSO's mandate and the restrictions on use of information (Sections 10(1) and 32 of the Act) make it clear that the information collected by the CSO is used solely for statistical purposes. It may not be used for any other purpose.

### *Statistical work programme*

The CSO publishes a [Statistical Work Programme](#) on its website, which contains the list of statistical outputs and projects conducted by the Office. This gives practical meaning to the functions described in Section 10(1):

### *Independence*

The Director General of the CSO has sole responsibility for and is independent in relation to the statistical methodology and professional statistical standards applied by the CSO, and the contents of statistical releases and publications, under Section 13 of the Act.

### *Confidentiality and use of information for statistical purposes*

Information obtained under the Statistics Act is strictly confidential, under Section 33 of the Statistics Act, 1993. It may only be accessed by Officers of Statistics, who are required to sign a Declaration of Secrecy under Section 21.

The CSO only publishes aggregate statistical data; statistical tables and results may not, and do not, disclose details relating to any identifiable person or business.

The full suite of legal protections accorded to data providers is set out in Part V of the Statistics Act, 1993.

### *Co-ordination*

Under Section 10(2) of the Statistics Act, 1993 the CSO has the authority to co-ordinate official statistics compiled by public authorities to ensure, in particular, adherence to statistical standards and the use of appropriate classifications. Under Section 10(3) the CSO has the authority to assess the statistical potential of the records maintained by public authorities and, in conjunction with them, to ensure that the statistical potential is realised.

Under Section 31 of the Act, the Director General of the CSO may request any public authority to consult and co-operate with him for the purpose of assessing the potential of the records of the authority as a source of statistical information and, where appropriate and practicable, developing its recording methods and systems for statistical



purposes. Public authorities must comply with such a request and must also consult the CSO if they propose to introduce, revise or extend their information systems or plan to conduct a statistical survey.

### **3. Legal mandate to collect data**

The CSO collects data under Sections 24, 26 and 30 of the Statistics Act, 1993:

- Section 24 relates to voluntary surveys or censuses.
- Section 26 relates to compulsory surveys or censuses (i.e. where a Ministerial Order made under Section 25 specifies that the statistics must be provided to the CSO).
- Section 30 enables the CSO to have access to the records of public authorities for statistical purposes.

Traditionally, most of the statistics compiled by the CSO have been based on surveys and censuses – i.e. on information collected under Sections 24 and 26 of the Statistics Act. However, the CSO is making increasing use of administrative records to reduce costs, to reduce the imposition of surveys on data providers, and to produce new statistical analysis and outputs.

This increasing use of administrative sources for statistical purposes is founded on the powers of access under Section 30 of the Statistics Act and the provisions for co-ordination in Sections 10(2), 10(3) and 31.

The shift from survey collection to greater use of existing data sources is not unique to Ireland. This is reflected in EU legislation on official statistics: In 2015, the basic EU regulation on European Statistics was amended to enable greater access to administrative data sources for statistical purposes (Article 17a of Regulation 223/2009 as amended by Regulation 2015/759).

Worldwide, official statisticians are making increasing use of administrative data and “big data”. In some EU Member States (e.g. the Nordic countries, the Netherlands) the national statistical system relies almost exclusively on administrative data sources. In these states, data protection law derives from the same EU data protection requirements, i.e. Directive 95/46/EC. From May 2018 the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) will apply equally in all Member States.

Recital 29 of Directive 95/46/EC foresaw the secondary use of administrative data for statistical purposes:

*“29. Whereas the further processing of personal data for historical, statistical or scientific purposes is not generally to be considered incompatible with the purposes for which the data have previously been collected provided that Member States furnish suitable safeguards; whereas these safeguards must in particular rule out the use of the data in support of measures or decisions regarding any particular individual”.*

Section 6 of this note gives further details of the safeguards applied by the CSO in relation to all data collected for statistical processing, including data from administrative sources.

Statistical results are aggregates: tables of statistics do not disclose identifiable information about any individual and they cannot be used “in support of measures or decisions regarding any particular individual”.

#### **4. Statistics and Data Protection Law**

Data protection law places an emphasis on *fair obtaining* and *data security*. These requirements apply equally to statistical processing of personal data.

The use of information for statistical purposes only, as required by Section 32 of the Statistics Act, reflects the *fair obtaining* requirement of the Data Protection Act. The information is only used for the purpose for which it was obtained, i.e. the processing of statistics.

Similarly, statistical confidentiality as required by Section 33 of the Statistics Act matches the requirement in data protection law to respect *data security*.

The Data Protection Act also recognises the use of data for statistical purposes and includes the following specific provisions relating to statistics:

- It allows the further processing and retention of data for statistical purposes, where the data was originally obtained for another purpose. This applies, for example, to the use of administrative data to compile official statistics. *Section 2(1)(5)(a) of the Data Protection Act.*
- It allows sensitive data to be processed for statistical purposes under the Statistics Act, 1993. *Section 2B(1)(b)(ix) of the Data Protection Act.*
- It provides an exemption, in respect of statistical processing, from the obligation to inform the data subject about the use of the data (where providing the information would be impossible or involve disproportionate effort). *Section 2D(4)(a) of the Data Protection Act.*
- It provides an exemption from the obligation to supply information to the data subjects in relation to data processing where the processing is for statistical purposes and is necessary for compliance with CSO’s legal obligations. *Section 2D(4)(b) of the Data Protection Act.*
- The data subject’s right of access under the Data Protection Act does not apply where the data are kept for statistical purposes. *Section 5(1)(h) of the Data Protection Act.*



## 5. How the CSO upholds the principles of Data Protection

At the heart of data protection is the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms of data subjects – i.e. rights of individual persons. In every step of processing data for statistical purposes, the CSO aims to uphold these rights.

In particular, this means the following:

- **Fair Obtaining:** All information obtained under the Statistics Act will be used for statistical purposes only. It will not be used for any other purpose. Guaranteed by law under Section 10(1) and Section 32 of the Statistics Act, 1993.
- **Confidentiality:** All information obtained for statistical purposes is treated as strictly confidential and may only be accessed by Officers of Statistics. Statistical results may not disclose details of any identifiable person or business. Guaranteed by law under Section 33 of the Statistics Act, 1993.
- **Transparency:** On the CSO website, we provide information about the statistics we produce, the statistical sources and methods used by the CSO, and how we use administrative data sources:
- CSO will publish and regularly update its [Statistical Work Programme](#) which contains the list of statistical outputs and projects conducted by the Office:
- CSO will continue to implement the [Data Matching Protocol](#) and publish on its website a [Register of Data Matching Projects](#).
- **Necessity and proportionality:** The CSO must produce a wide range of statistics while minimising the burden on citizens of completing surveys and the cost to the taxpayer. Our aim is to ensure that the data obtained by CSO is necessary and proportionate, having regard to the statistical aggregates which need to be produced. To this end we ensure:
- Continuous engagement with public authorities under Sections 31 and 30 of the Statistics Act.
- Formal assessment processes in relation to necessity and proportionality for each source of personal data used in the production of statistics.
- Privacy risk assessment for each stage of statistical collection and processing of personal data, using the UN Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM) as a standard template.
- Implementation of data lifecycle: Information will be deleted when no longer needed for statistical production.
- Continuous review of the data sources used for statistics, to reduce the burden of surveys and censuses and to identify potential to re-use existing data sources. This includes the continuous review of the potential of administrative data sources to meet new needs for statistics or to produce estimates more efficiently. It also includes the use of Big Data for the same purposes. The CSO is committed to



complying with the Statistics Act 1993 and the Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003 in its use for statistical purposes of these data sources.

- **Safeguards:** The CSO implements a comprehensive set of safeguards to ensure the security and good governance of the data entrusted to the CSO, as set out in Section 6 below.

## **6. Safeguards in place to protect data collected by the CSO**

Confidentiality is a core value of the CSO. The Office places a very high value on its obligation to respect statistical confidentiality and has put an extensive system of safeguards in place to protect the data which the Office receives.

**Legal:** All information obtained by the CSO under the Statistics Act is strictly confidential and may only be used for statistical purposes. This is specified in Sections 32 and 33 of the Act; any breach of those sections is an offence subject to significant penalties.

**Personnel:** All staff of the CSO are Officers of Statistics under the Statistics Act 1993 and have signed a Declaration of Secrecy under the Act. The data provided to the CSO may only be processed by Officers of Statistics and only for statistical purposes. All staff must attend regular training on statistical confidentiality and data security, including mandatory refresher courses.

**Governance:** The CSO's governance structure for data protection comprises: the Confidentiality and Data Security Committee (CDSC) which reports to the Management Board; the Data Protection Officer at Director level who oversees compliance with statistical confidentiality and data protection requirements; and the Data Office which provides support in relation to policies, awareness, training and compliance.

**Data Office:** The CSO's Data Office has the pivotal role of managing policies in relation to data protection and statistical confidentiality, promoting awareness, providing training, and assuring compliance. The Data Office provides advice to CSO statistical areas on all issues related to data protection and statistical confidentiality.

**Policies:** The CSO has a comprehensive suite of policies in relation to roles, responsibilities and corporate rules in relation to statistical confidentiality, data security and data protection. These policies are currently being consolidated into a single Data Management Policy, which will be a central reference point for all statistical processing.

**Data Classification Scheme:** This is a corporate confidentiality classification system that allocates a confidentiality level (A to D) to all data held by the CSO. Detailed management rules and procedures are assigned depending on the level given. Statistical micro-data has the highest level of security (A) and the strictest rules and procedures with regard to processing of the data.

**Access limitations:** Staff access to CSO buildings is controlled electronically. Visitors to the CSO must be signed in and accompanied at all times.

**IT Security:** Staff access to IT systems is password-controlled. Staff only have access to the data or systems relevant to their work and these access rights are regularly reviewed. The IT systems and hardware are thoroughly protected by firewall and anti-virus security. No external access is allowed.

**Tables and publications:** The CSO implements thorough Statistical Disclosure Control procedures to ensure that the tables and reports it publishes do not identify any individual or business.

**Administrative Data Centre:** All administrative data received by the CSO is transmitted via a secure IT link to the CSO's Administrative Data Centre (ADC). In the ADC, identifying details such as name, address, date of birth, PPSN are removed before the data is used for statistical analysis. The statisticians processing the data work with anonymous data and do not see the person's identity.

**Data Lifecycle:** When survey forms or other data records are no longer required for statistical purposes, they are securely destroyed. The only identifiable records retained by the CSO are Census of Population forms – under Section 35 of the Statistics Act, these become public records after 100 years. All other forms are securely destroyed.

**Data Linkage:** All statistical projects that involve linkage between administrative data sources are subject to the [CSO's Data Linkage Policy](#) and must meet a Privacy Impact Assessment. The CSO publishes a [register](#) of all projects in which it links administrative data.

**Formal Assessment Processes:** The CSO undertakes a Data Necessity and Proportionality Assessment for each source of personal data used in the production of statistics. In addition, the CSO undertakes a Privacy Risk Assessment for each stage of statistical collection and processing of personal data, using the UN GSBPM as a standard template. The aim of these two assessment processes is to identify risks at each stage and make sure that confidentiality and data protection are respected and well-managed at every stage of collecting and producing statistics.

## **7. Further information or assistance**

For further information or assistance on matters relating to *Official Statistics and Data Protection Legislation* within the CSO contact:

*Data Office, Central Statistics Office, Skehard Road, Cork, T12 X00E. Tel +353 (21) 453 5386 or +353 (21) 453 5387*