



HM Revenue
& Customs

Indirect Taxes National Statistics

User Consultation 2016 on Stamp Duty and Property Publications

Results

Knowledge, Analysis and Intelligence

HM Revenue & Customs

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Summary

HMRC ran a consultation between 19 November 2015 and 11 February 2016 which asked users for their views on a number of issues relating to the Indirect Taxes bulletins. The response to the consultation on the other Indirect Taxes will be published in due course.

There were eight responses to the section on Stamp Duty Land Tax and Property Releases, and this report summarises the results and our proposals.

In summary:

- We have decided to go ahead with our proposal to discontinue the June “Annual UK Property Transactions Statistics” publication.
- We intend to increase the scope of our Quarterly Stamp Duty Statistics and annual UK Stamp Tax Statistics bulletins to meet user demand, and to include the majority of the data currently released in the June publication in other publications. The Quarterly Stamp Duty Statistics bulletin will include data on transactions incurring the higher SDLT rate on additional properties. These publications will not include statistics on property transactions in Scotland, which were devolved in April 2015.
- We will be making no changes to our monthly UK Property Transaction Statistics bulletin on property transactions, which will continue to provide high-level statistics on transactions at a UK level.

These decisions were based on the responses to the User Consultation, the devolution of Stamp Duty Land Tax in Scotland, the resource required, and the consideration of the overlap which already exists between some of the other tables in this bulletin and those in other publications.

Background

HMRC ran a consultation between 19 November 2015 and 11 February 2016 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/user-consultation-hmrc-indirect-tax-receipts-statistics>) which asked users for their views on a number of issues relating to the Indirect Taxes bulletins.

The survey was in three sections, Monthly Releases, Quarterly Releases and the Stamp Duty and Property Releases; this response only covers the third of these sections, Stamp Duty and Property Releases. The response to the consultation on the other Indirect Taxes will be published in due course.

Currently, HMRC publish five regular statistical bulletins on Stamp Duty and Properties.

- UK Property Transaction Statistics (“the Monthly bulletin”) is published monthly on the 21st of each month, unless that day or the one preceding it is a non-working day; <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/monthly-property-transactions-completed-in-the-uk-with-value-40000-or-above>
- Quarterly Stamp Duty Statistics (formerly SDLT Liable and Non-Liable Property Transactions or Table 16.5 – “the Quarterly bulletin”) is published quarterly; <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/quarterly-stamp-duty-statistics>
- Annual UK Property Transaction Statistics (“the June bulletin”) is published annually in June; <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/annual-uk-property-transactions-statistics-2013>
- UK Stamp Tax Statistics (“the September bulletin”) is published annually in September; <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-stamp-tax-statistics>
- Annual Tax on Enveloped Dwellings Statistics (“the ATED bulletin”) is published annually in January. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-ated-statistics>

Following the devolution of Stamp Duty Land Tax to Scotland from 2015/16 onwards, substantial changes are essential to all of the property bulletins based on SDLT data. In the case of the June bulletin, some tables will be partly or entirely obsolete. This is because HMRC are no longer responsible for the administration of property taxes in Scotland.

We had already made the following change to the Stamp Duty and Property publications:

- More detailed breakdowns by residential/non-residential and price band in the Quarterly bulletin.

- The inclusion of high-level statistics on transactions in Scotland in the Monthly bulletin, to continue to be able to publish UK level data on a monthly basis.

We proposed to make the following changes to the Stamp Duty and Property publications:

- Moving “Purchase Statistics” from the June bulletin to the September bulletin;
- Discontinuing the June bulletin;

The purpose of this consultation was to ascertain what impact our recent and proposed changes would have on users of the Stamp Duty and Property publications.

Responses

We had 31 responses to the consultation, of whom eight said that they used at least one of the Stamp Duty and Property bulletins. Respondents were encouraged to leave their details, so we have some information regarding which individuals responded and from which organisations. We invited organisations that had previously contacted us to take part in this survey and we are content that we gave all interested parties an opportunity to respond.

Eight respondents said that they used the Monthly bulletin, five that they used the Quarterly bulletin, five that they used the June bulletin, three that they used the September bulletin and two that they used the ATED bulletin.

Five respondents said that they used Stamp Duty and Property publications on a monthly basis, two that they used the publications on a quarterly basis, and one that they used them annually. Respondents were from a range of organisations and individuals.

Views of the recent and proposed changes to the Quarterly and June bulletins were mixed, with five respondents considering these changes to have a net negative impact and three that they have a net positive impact. Two respondents requested that Table 6 from the June bulletin be retained, and one that the data from Table 8 be included in another publication. Respondents also asked for more data on SDLT liabilities (rather than receipts), second homes, first-time buyers, and transactions worth over £1.5m.

The proposed change to the Monthly bulletin, delaying publication by a week to allow for transfer of new Scotland data, also had a mixed reception. Four respondents found the inclusion of Scotland data useful or very useful, and three of these said that they would rather wait a week to have UK-level statistics, while one said they would rather the publication remained on the 21st of the month, even if it meant including estimates of Scottish or other transactions.

Outcomes

In deciding what changes, if any, to make to the Stamp Duty and Property publications, we took into account the following factors:

- Devolution of Stamp Duty Land Tax to Scotland from 2015/16: this meant that substantial changes would be required to all of the property bulletins based on SDLT data. Some tables would become obsolete, while others would have to change in scope.
- Results of the user consultation: reactions to the proposed changes were mixed. Tables 6 and 8 from the June bulletin were identified as those which would be most missed if this were to be discontinued. As a result, we intend to publish comparable information within our September publication.
- User demand: the Monthly bulletin is the most popular publication, attracting around 1,000 unique page views a month. The annual June and September bulletins peak at around 600 and 250 unique monthly page views respectively. The ATED attracts a peak of 250 page views a month, whilst the Quarterly bulletin averages around 80.
- Overlap between publications: some data, in particular that about the number of transactions taking place and the SDLT yield resulting from them, is included in multiple publications, with only minor differences in presentation. We intend to reduce unnecessary duplication.

Bearing these factors in mind, we have decided to discontinue the **June bulletin**, but aim to include as much of the data currently included in this publication as possible in other bulletins. Respondents to the user consultation have indicated that tables 6 (Analysis by type of property and Government Office Region) and 8 (Analysis by type of buyer and range of price – England and Wales) are particularly useful, so we intend to include these tables in the September bulletin.

The new **September bulletin** will still include break-downs of property transaction values and SDLT yield by local authority and parliamentary constituency, and data on Stamp Duty Reserve Tax paid on stocks and shares and other liable securities. Annual totals will be reported by tax year, as in the current September bulletin, rather than by calendar year, as in the June bulletin; however, by including data on past years we hope to enable historical comparisons. All data will be on transactions liable for stamp duty in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and excluding transactions in Scotland.

The recent changes to the **Quarterly bulletin**, of more detailed breakdowns by residential/non-residential and price band, will be continued. The Quarterly bulletin will also include data on transactions involving additional properties at the new, higher SDLT rate.

The **Monthly bulletin** will continue to be published at the same time in the month as it is now and will continue to include Scottish transactions.

The **ATED bulletin** will be unchanged.

Thank you for participating in our consultation. If you have any questions regarding this document, do not hesitate to contact us at the following email address:

revenueMonitoring@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk

Indirect Taxes

KAI

May 2016

Annex A: Consultation Questions

SECTION 3

Do you use any of the following bulletins?: (a) Monthly Property Transactions, (b) Annual Property Transactions, (c) Annual Stamp Duty Statistics, (d) Annual Tax on Enveloped Dwellings (ATED) Statistics

Yes or No

Which of the following publications on Stamps and Property do you use? Please select all those that apply to you.

Monthly Property Transactions

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/monthly-property-transactions-completed-in-the-uk-with-value-40000-or-above>

Quarterly Property Transactions (formerly known as Table 16.5)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/numbers-of-uk-property-transactions-by-liable-and-non-liable>

Annual Property Transactions

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/annual-uk-property-transactions-statistics-2013>

Annual Stamp Duty Statistics

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/stamp-duties-statistics>

Annual Tax on Enveloped Dwellings (ATED) Statistics

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-ated-statistics>

How often do you use these bulletins? Please select one option.

Monthly

Quarterly

Annually

Less than once a year

Don't know

For what purpose(s) do you use these tables? Please select all the options that apply to you/your organisation.

Policy Development
 Research & Analysis
 Monitoring and Forecasting economic trends
 Media or other commentary on property transactions
 International Comparisons
 Educational use/academic research
 Other (please specify)

What sector do you work in?

Central Government
 Local Government
 Academia
 Private Sector
 Personal Capacity
 Other:

We have recently improved the Quarterly Property Transactions publication to include more detailed breakdowns by residential/non-residential and price band. We plan to move the 'Purchase Statistics' (Table 7) from the Annual Property Transactions publication to the Annual Stamp Duty publication. We intend to discontinue the Annual Property Transactions publication, as most of the content will be included in our other publications. What is your view of these changes?

Positive
 Negative
 Don't know

Since April 2015, taxes on property transactions in Scotland have been devolved to the Scottish Government and are no longer administered by HMRC. At the moment we are still including these Scottish transactions in our Monthly Property Transactions statistics. How useful is this to you?

Very useful
 Useful
 Might be useful
 Don't need it

We are also proposing to delay the Monthly Property Transaction publication by one week in the future (this is currently published on the 21st of every month). This is to

give us more time to include the new Scotland data within the publication and quality assure ahead of publication. What is your view of this change?

Positive (I would rather wait a week to have UK level statistics)

Negative (I would rather the publication remained on 21st every month, even if it meant including estimates of Scottish or other transactions)

Don't mind

If you have any suggested improvements to the publication(s) above, please describe them in the box below. This could include data items related to the bulletins that you would find useful, but that are not included in these tables.