

New UK-wide methodology agreed to record COVID-19 deaths

- New methodology introduced following urgent review
- Deaths in people with COVID-19 that occurred within 28 days of testing positive will be published daily
- The approach, endorsed by the four UK Chief Medical Officers, will be used by all 4 UK nations

The 4 UK Chief Medical Officers have recommended that a single, consistent measure is adopted for [daily reporting of deaths](#) across the UK. The UK government and the devolved administrations have agreed to publish the number of deaths that occurred within 28 days of a positive lab-confirmed COVID test result on a daily basis.

This will provide accurate data on the immediate impact of recent epidemic activity. The methodology has been peer reviewed by independent academics to ensure that the best possible indicators are used, and that the methods are applied consistently across the nations of the UK.

PHE and the devolved administrations have worked closely with the UK Statistics Authority on these new measures and the new approach is in line with advice from the statistics regulator.

In their review, Public Health England considered epidemiological evidence to see how likely it was that COVID-19 was a contributory factor to a death at different points in time after a positive test.

Analysis of data in England found 96% of deaths occurred within 60 days or had COVID-19 on the death certificate. 88% of deaths occurred within 28 days.

As of Wednesday August 12, the number of all deaths in patients testing positive for COVID-19 in the UK within 28 days was 41,329.

Professor John Newton, Director of Health Improvement at Public Health England, said:

The way we count deaths in people with COVID-19 in England was originally chosen to avoid underestimating deaths caused by the virus in the early stages of the pandemic.

Our analysis of the long-term impact of the infection now allows us to move to new methods, which will give us crucial information about both recent trends and overall mortality burden due to COVID-19.

In England, a new weekly set of figures will also be published, showing the number of deaths that occur within 60 days of a positive test. Deaths that

occur after 60 days will also be added to this figure if COVID-19 appears on the death certificate. This will provide an additional measure of the impact of the disease over time.

This follows concerns raised by academics from the Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine about the original measure, which counted anyone who had ever tested positive as a COVID-associated death. They called for the introduction of a 21-day measure in order to accurately assess the impact of the virus on mortality rates.

[GAD actuary helps produce guide for users of climate-related financial disclosures](#)

News story

An actuary has helped produced a guide for individuals wanting insights into climate-related financial disclosures – organisations' assessments of financial risks they face.



An actuary from the Government Actuary's Department (GAD) has helped produce a [guide](#) for users of disclosures made under the [Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures \(TCFD\)](#) recommendations. The guide can help individuals gain insights from TCFD disclosures.

Global support

These are assessments by organisations of the financial implications of the climate-related risks and opportunities they face. There are now more than 1,000 organisations globally who support the TCFD recommendations including governments, central banks, regulators, asset managers and asset owners as well as a range of industries.

User guide

GAD actuary Sara Ronayne was part of a joint working party set up by the [Institute and Faculty of Actuaries \(IFoA\)](#) and [Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment \(IEMA\)](#). The joint working party recently published a [user guide](#) which:

- provides an overview of climate-related financial disclosures and TCFD recommendations
- outlines how users of disclosures can set effective objectives
- provides practical guidance to help users interpret disclosures organisations have made

Collaboration between specialists

Speaking about the release of the guide, lead author, IFoA President-elect Louise Pryor, said:

“There are already many resources for those who prepare climate-related disclosures, but much less focus on the users of the disclosures.

“This guide reflects the fruitful collaboration between actuaries and sustainability specialists who utilise their complementary experience for the benefit of all potential users of TCFD disclosures. We hope this guide supports users to feel confident in understanding disclosures and in applying the insights obtained.”

Sara added:

“Disclosing under TCFD recommendations is increasingly prevalent and in future may become mandatory for some organisations.

“This means the ability to effectively use and interpret other organisations’ TCFD disclosures looks set to be a key skill for both government and the private sector. I’m very pleased to have played a part in the production of a guide to help users with that goal.”

Published 12 August 2020

[GAD reviews Flood Re’s first self-assessment](#)

The Government Actuary’s Department (GAD) has analysed the first [Quinquennial Review of Flood Re](#). The organisation is a joint initiative between the insurance industry and the government.

Affordable insurance

Flood Re, established by the Water Act 2014, is a reinsurance company which aims to make the flood cover part of household insurance policies more widely available and affordable.

The scheme is funded by home insurance providers who must pay into Flood Re. Householders buy their home insurance in the usual way and in turn Flood Re covers flood risks.

The organisation sets out several plans to make the UK more resilient to flooding. It has a range of proposals including, for example, its suggested approach to [build back better](#) . This is where claims payments can include an additional amount for resilient or resistant repair beyond the cost of original damage.

On 14 July 2020, the government announced [a number of specific changes](#) to the Flood Re scheme – some which go further than Flood Re’s proposals. Subject to consultation, these will aim to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Flood Re scheme and encourage greater uptake of Property Flood Resilience among UK households at high risk of flooding.

GAD’s work

As part of its remit, Flood Re is required to review its work at least once every 5 years and report the results to the government. The 2019 Quinquennial Review (QQR) was its first such assessment. It was carried out before the end of the 5-year period and reported in July 2019.

GAD reviewed the detailed supplemental report ‘Actuarial Analysis of QQR Proposals’ on behalf of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. We scrutinised and reviewed the methodology and assumptions Flood Re applied in its QQR testing.

Feasibility testing

Nick Clitheroe, who oversaw GAD’s review said: “This was an important milestone for Flood Re. It marked the midway point of the organisation’s first 5 years. It also set out recommendations and plans for the second QQR period from 2021 to 2026.

“We analysed and tested the feasibility of the package of proposals. We found that based on the modelling and wide range of scenarios, the financial elements of the QQR recommendations are affordable.

“GAD’s role was central to the financial probity of Flood Re’s Quinquennial Review. We also looked at investment proposals and agreed with Flood Re that some changes could help mitigate the impact of inflation.”

[Derailment near Stonehaven, 12 August 2020](#)

News story

Investigation into a derailment near Stonehaven, Aberdeenshire, 12 August 2020.



Derailment near Stonehaven, 12 August 2020

The Rail Accident Investigation Branch has sent a team of inspectors to the site of a derailment near Stonehaven. We have launched an investigation and will provide an update in the coming days.

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[P-8 Poseidon aircraft to support Border Force operations in the Channel](#)

News story

A Royal Air Force P-8 Poseidon patrol aircraft has flown from its base at Kinloss Barracks this morning to support Border Force Operations in the Channel.



Stock image of a RAF P-8 Poseidon

This is part of a package of assistance from the Ministry of Defence to the Home Office as they tackle small boats crossing in the Channel.

The Defence Secretary has also authorised the use of the Shadow R1 aircraft. Both the P-8 Poseidon and the Shadow R1 will provide further essential support to the UK Border Force over the coming weeks subject to weather conditions and the Border Force's requirements.

The aircraft will track vessels and pass information to the Border Force who will then take any appropriate further action. This task was initially undertaken on Monday by an Atlas A-400M aircraft, which flew from RAF Brize Norton to provide surveillance over the Channel.

Group Captain Chris Layden, Station Commander RAF Lossiemouth, said:

The Home Office has requested support and the RAF has responded quickly again with the deployment of a Poseidon MR1 aircraft, flown by a team of personnel from RAF Lossiemouth.

The aircraft has significant range and endurance, as well as the ability to support command and control and search and rescue operations, should the Border Force or UK Coastguard require it.

The P8 Poseidon is a multi-role maritime patrol aircraft. It is equipped with a maritime search radar and delivers a highly-sophisticated search and tracking capability. The Shadow R1 is an intelligence gathering aircraft and is equipped with Electro Optical and Infra-Red sensors.

The height at which an aircraft operates allows for a greater field of vision and can cover a larger area, making it a more effective wide-area surveillance platform than a ship doing the same task.

The Poseidon made its operational debut last week supporting the Royal Navy to track a Russian vessel close to UK waters and follows shortly after the Prime Minister's visit to Kinloss Barracks last month. It heralds a

significant development in the UK's Maritime offensive and defensive capabilities. The P-8 offers a potent blend of tracking options and associated weapons able to find surface and sub-surface vessels, once more allowing the RAF to complete effective joint maritime operations with the Royal Navy.

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