

A statement from the Royal Statistical Society on the dismissal of the Commissioner of Labor Statistics, Dr Erika McEntarfer

The Royal Statistical Society (RSS) notes with concern the dismissal of Erika McEntarfer as Commissioner of Labor Statistics by US President, Donald Trump, at a time when the global economy is experiencing significant disturbance.

The United Nations' Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics establishes international professional and scientific standards for the production of official statistics. The RSS, as one of the world's leading statistical societies and with a membership that includes official statisticians from many countries, is keenly interested in the adherence to these standards across the world to ensure quality and integrity.

Any concerns regarding data or methodology should be independently evaluated to ensure credibility is maintained. The dismissal undermines international trust in US statistics, which has ramifications well beyond policy decisions within the US, with impacts on global confidence in the world economy.

The RSS is against all forms of political interference in the production of official statistics and urges President Trump to ensure that the nonpartisan integrity of the position is retained. Furthermore, reassurance is needed to ensure that statisticians working for federal agencies have confidence to continue producing the objective statistical information that enables those in power to gain the trust of their communities.

These actions are essential to ensure a healthy democracy in the US, and to maintain international credibility in its statistics.