Business Micro-data Linking

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Longitudinal database - Business Structures Database

• A copy of the business register is taken once a year.

• This is then linked to respondent data sets for the key business surveys – including financial and employment surveys - To create a longitudinal research database.

• Linking is facilitated by using the register enterprise/ local unit reference numbers.

• It is also possible to link external datasets by using the Register matching service.
Approved Researchers

• The BSD can be accessed by Approved Researchers in the Secure Research Service.

• The researchers can access the database from a safe setting in ONS offices and a few other government offices.

• They cannot take micro-data out of the research environment – only aggregated results.

• Their research has to be approved by ONS before the project starts and ahead of publication.
Future developments

• Developing a new approach – called IDEAS

• This will facilitate linking of the business and address registers to people.

• Will enable new research questions to be answered.

• Key to ensure security and de-identification when people are concerned.
New Statistical Business Register

- The existing BR was designed purely for business sampling, not research.

- This leads to some weaknesses in terms of variable periodicity and meta data for researchers.

- The new SBR is being designed to satisfy both sampling and research users.

- The new SBR will hold up to date variables, will have better consistency between variables and better meta data. A new Cloudera infrastructure will also facilitate better data linking.