Checklist

Preparing annual benefit statements for public service pension schemes

This is not an exhaustive checklist but highlights the four steps in preparing to issue annual benefit statements and what type of issues you may need to consider at each stage.

Plan	
Identify data requirements	What information is needed and when is it needed by? Who provides it and in what format? What is the process for data quality assurance? Who owns and delivers this?
Identify critical dates	Identify the legislative deadline and then work backwards considering printing lead-in times, IT testing time, time for data testing and issue resolution, deadline for employer/payroll providers to provide data. When do data requirements need to be scoped and finalised?
Define communications plan	Who are your stakeholders? Do they know what they need to do and by when? Is any training required? How will you keep them informed? How will member queries be handled?
Identify risks to delivery and develop contingency plans	Identify potential risks to delivery, consider and document mitigation actions, identify points of contact and escalation and make them aware.
Define monitoring process	Who will monitor delivery processes and how? How will progress be reported and to whom?
Test	
Test systems and processes	You will need various systems and processes to deliver and these will need to be tested in advance. This could include, amongst other things, testing data files, ensuring compatibility between systems (eg payroll and other software), checking formulas for benefit calculation.
Review and update ABS format	Review the format of the statement itself. Is all the required information provided? Is it clear and easy to understand? Are arrangements in place to provide the statement in other formats due to accessibility issues?

Deliver	
Process data	Has data been checked against all member categories, have queries been raised with employers and resolved? Has the output of calculations been tested? Who will sign off clean data to be used by your printers or publishers?
Issue the ABS	Have you done a test run? Is there a process for following up on undelivered or returned statements?
Address member queries	Are you keeping appropriate records? Are processing time targets being met?
Review	
Identify lessons learned	What were the issues? How were they resolved? How will you prevent these happening next time?
Update plans and processes	Update your plans and processes accordingly for next time.
Report and communicate changes	Report and communicate any changes or lessons learned to relevant stakeholders. Where an issue resulted in a failure to comply with your legal duties and this is likely to be of material significance to us, ensure that you submit a breach of law report at: www.tpr.gov.uk/PS-breaches

The Pensions Regulator