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Administrative Boundaries National Dataset User Guide

Version 2.0.5
26th July 2015

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1.0 Record of amendment

Version number	Section number	Amendment description	Date
2.0.5	6.3.5	New text added	26/06/15
2.0.5	2.1	Text amendments	26/06/15
2.0.5	4.0	Text amendments	26/06/15

2.0 Introduction

This document provides information to accompany our Administrative Boundaries dataset. It can be used to gain a better understanding of the data when used in conjunction with the current data release. For information relating to national datasets in general, please refer to the National Dataset Generic Text document.

Details of our distribution policy are included in the National Dataset Generic Text document, along with relevant contact details for the Environment Agency.

Information about our web site can also be found in the National Dataset Generic document.

2.1 Description of the dataset

The Environment Agency was formed on 1st April 1996. It combined the National Rivers Authority, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Pollution and approximately 80 Waste Regulation Authorities throughout England and Wales.

For administrative purposes, the Agency splits England into 16 Areas. There are two types of boundaries between these areas: Public Face and Water Management (also known as operational boundaries).

The Environment Agency used to cover England and Wales, however on 1st April 2013 Natural Resources Wales (NRW) was formed, taking on the duties previously carried out by Environment Agency Wales. As of 1st April 2015 this dataset no longer includes Welsh data.

Prior to 1st April 2014, the Environment Agency had regional administration boundaries as well as areas. The regions are no longer used for operational or administrative purposes. For this reason the administrative boundaries for regions are no longer supplied.

The Environment Agency's Public Face and Water Management boundaries for areas and regions are available as 1:10,000 scale polygon shapefiles. They use British National Grid projection. The shapefile contains contact details for Area Offices. Please note that these polygons have been produced in ArcGIS and have no topology.

2.2 Related data sources

The Administrative Boundaries shapefile is designed to be used alongside any of the other spatially enabled National Datasets.

3.0 Public Register and non Public Register Data

For a general description of what constitutes public register and non-public register data please refer to the National Dataset Generic Text document.

3.1 Administrative Boundaries Public Register data

All Administrative Boundaries data are Public Register data

3.2 National Security

A discussion of national security issues can be found in the National Dataset general information document.

There have been no exclusions from this dataset due to National Security issues.

3.3 Legislation relevant to Administrative Boundaries

There is no legislation relevant to Administrative Boundaries

4.0 Data structure

The detailed data structure of the Administrative Boundaries dataset is given in the Administrative Boundaries Attribute document.

The Administrative Boundaries data are supplied as four shapefiles:

- **Public face boundaries** (areapf_10k, regionpf_10k)

These boundaries are aligned to Local Authority boundaries.

- **Water management boundaries** (areawm_10k, regionwm_10k)

These boundaries align to catchment boundaries. They are developed by hydrological modelling of catchments using a 10k river network and the NextMap DTM. Some discrepancies occur where small changes have been made to a boundary for operational reasons, such as to ensure some sites are contained within one area/region. Water Management boundaries reflect the way the Environment Agency is divided for operational purposes.

5.0 Data quality

5.1 Data standards

For general data standards that apply to a number of national datasets, refer to the National Dataset Generic Text Document.

5.1.1 Precision of locational data

The boundaries are all created to 1:10k scale.

5.2 Reporting errors

Methods of reporting errors are included in the Generic Text document. Information on providing feedback can be found at the end of this user guide.

5.3 Validation rules and completeness checks

Every effort is made to minimise data errors occurring in the Administrative Boundaries data release. For background information on the data validation process and general completeness checks carried out, please refer to the national dataset generic document.

5.4 Validation checks specific to the Administrative Boundaries data layer

The boundaries were agreed by the Regional GIS Principals at the time that the layers were created. Amendments to boundaries are checked by regional staff when changes are made.

6.0 Useful information when using the data

You should take into account the following information when analysing the data. This section also points out information that is not included in the data, as well as any limitations on interpreting the data.

6.1 What is not included in the Data

The entire Administrative Boundaries dataset is included in this supply.

6.2 Recommendations on how to use or analyse the data

The Environment Agency has many different boundaries that cover its roles and responsibilities. These are based on existing administrative areas (counties/districts) and hydrological areas (catchments) or combinations of these with alterations for local management reasons. The type of boundaries used should therefore be considered carefully. For example, when data is compared for different Local Authorities, Public Face boundaries are more appropriate. When hydrological data is being analysed the Water Management boundaries may be more appropriate.

6.3 Changes in the data

Any major changes identified in the Administrative Boundaries data will be highlighted in this section. An explanation of why the change occurred is also provided; if you have any questions relating to these changes please contact us.

6.3.1 Change to Midlands and South West Area boundaries

Midlands region has been merged from four areas into three to reflect a change in the organisation of the Environment Agency. South West region has also been merged from four areas into two.

Old Area		New Area
Midlands		
Lower Trent	–	East
Upper Trent	–	Central
Upper Severn	–	West
Lower Severn	–	Merged into West, Central and East
South West		
South Wessex	–	Wessex
North Wessex	–	Wessex
Devon	–	Devon & Cornwall
Cornwall	–	Devon & Cornwall

6.3.2 Merge of Southern and Thames Region to form South East Region

Old Region		Old Area
Southern		
Southern	–	Solent and South Downs
Southern	–	Kent & East Sussex
Thames		
Thames	–	North East
Thames	–	West
Thames	–	South East
New Region		New Area
South East		
South East	–	Solent and South Downs
South East	–	North East Thames
South East	–	Kent & South London
South East	–	West Thames

6.3.3 Change dataset name

Prior to January 2009, this dataset was known as EA Area and Regional Boundaries.

6.3.4 Removal of Regions and change of Area names

Old Region	Old Area name	New Area name
Anglian	Central	Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire
	Eastern	Essex Norfolk and Suffolk
	Northern	Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire
Midlands	Central	Staffordshire Warwickshire and West Midlands
	East	Derbyshire Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire
	West	Shropshire Herefordshire Worcestershire and Gloucestershire
North East	North East	Northumberland Durham and Tees
	Yorkshire	Yorkshire
North West	North	Cumbria and Lancashire
	South	Greater Manchester Merseyside and Cheshire
South East	Kent & South London	Kent and South London
	North East Thames	Hertfordshire and North London
	Solent and South Downs	Solent and South Downs
	West Thames	West Thames
South West	Devon and Cornwall	Devon and Cornwall
	Wessex	Wessex

6.3.5 Change of dataset coverage

From the 1st of April 2015 this dataset includes only data relating to England. The Environment Agency no longer supplies data on behalf of Natural Resources Wales.

7.0 Glossary

EA	Environment Agency
GIS	Geographic Information System
IEC	Information Enterprise Centre
PF	Public Face
WM	Water Management

8.0 Feedback

We welcome feedback on our data. If you have any comments please send us an email at the address below with the following details

The National Dataset to which the feedback relates.

Any feedback on the contents of the documentation

Any feedback on the data content

Any general feedback

**Data Sharing and Access
Environment Agency
Deanery Road
Bristol
BS1 5AH**

Tel: 0117 9344241
E-mail: data.info@environment-agency.gov.uk

9.0 Appendix 1

Complete list of all amendments ever made to the document

Version number	Section number	Amendments Description	Date
2.0.5	6.3.5	New text added	26/06/15
2.0.5	2.1	Text amendments	26/06/15
2.0.5	4.0	Text amendments	26/06/15
2.0.4	6.3.4	Table of new Area names	16/07/14
2.0.4	2.1	Details of Environment Agency structure changes	16/07/14
2.0.3	2.1	Minor text amendment	03/01/13
2.0.3	5.2	Amendment of feedback advice	03/01/13
2.0.3	All	Text reviewed for layout & punctuation	03/01/13
2.0.2	8	Change to feedback process	20/06/11
2.0.2	6	Addition of South East change note	20/06/11
2.0.1	6	Removal of FAQ	11/08/10
2.0.0	All	Amendment of dataset name	01/01/09
1.2.0	All	General review of document	30/03/08
1.1.6	2.1	Minor text revision	16/10/07
1.1.6	3.1	Text revised	16/10/07
1.1.6	3.3	Text revised	16/10/07
1.1.6	4.0	Text revised	16/10/07
1.1.6	5.1.1	Minor text revision	16/10/07
1.1.6	5.5	Section removed	16/10/07
1.1.6	6.0	Screenshots updated	16/10/07
1.1.6	7.3.1	Minor text revision	16/10/07
1.1.6	7.3.2	Section added	16/10/07
1.1.5	2.0	Minor text revision	20/04/06
1.1.5	4.0	Text revised	20/04/06
1.1.5	5.1.1	Minor text revision	20/04/06
1.1.5	7.3.1	Minor text revision	20/04/06
1.1.4	2.1	Text revised	20/01/06
1.1.4	4.0	Text revised	20/01/06
1.1.4	5.4	Paragraph inserted.	20/01/06
1.1.4	5.1.1	Text added	20/01/06
1.1.4	5.4.1	Section removed	20/01/06
1.1.4	5.4.2	Section removed	20/01/06
1.1.4	5.4.3	Section removed	20/01/06
1.1.4	5.5	Text added	20/01/06
1.1.4	6.0	Text added	20/01/06
1.1.4	7.0	Text revised	20/01/06
1.1.4	7.1	Text added	20/01/06
1.1.4	7.2	Text added	20/01/06
1.1.4	7.3	Text added	20/01/06
1.1.4	7.3.1	Section added	20/01/06
1.1.3	2.0	Text revised	21/07/05
1.1.3	2.1	Text revised	21/07/05
1.1.3	2.2	Text revised	21/07/05
1.1.3	4.0	Text revised	21/07/05
1.1.3	4.1	Section removed	21/07/05
1.1.3	5.3	Section re-named NDU Validation rules and completeness checks.	21/07/05
1.1.3	5.4	Section number changed from 5.3.1 to 5.4	21/07/05
1.1.3	5.4.1	Section number changed form 3.3.1.1 to 5.4.1	21/07/05
1.1.3	5.4.2	Section number changed from 5.3.1.2 to 5.4.2	21/07/05
1.1.3	5.4.3	Section number changed from 5.3.1.3 to 5.4.2	21/07/05
1.1.3	5.5	Section number changed form 5.4. to 5.5	21/07/05
1.1.3	7.4	Section removed	21/07/05

1.1.2	2.0	Text updated	22/04/05
1.1.2	5.2	Text updated	22/04/05
1.1.2	5.3	Text updated	22/04/05
1.1.2	8.0	Text updated	22/04/05
1.1.2	9.0	Text updated	22/04/05
1.1.2	10.0	Table added	22/04/05
1.1.2	Multiple	Replaced reference to EDU/DIEU with NDU	22/04/05