



Statistics Canada

For the
period ending
March 31, 1997



Improved Reporting to Parliament —
Pilot Document

Canada

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Foreword

On April 24, 1997, the House of Commons passed a motion dividing what was known as the *Part III of the Estimates* document for each department or agency into two documents, a *Report on Plans and Priorities* and a *Departmental Performance Report*. It also required 78 departments and agencies to table these reports on a pilot basis.

This decision grew out of work by Treasury Board Secretariat and 16 pilot departments to fulfil the government's commitments to improve the expenditure management information provided to Parliament and to modernize the preparation of this information. These undertakings, aimed at sharpening the focus on results and increasing the transparency of information provided to Parliament, are part of a broader initiative known as "Getting Government Right".

This *Departmental Performance Report* responds to the government's commitments and reflects the goals set by Parliament to improve accountability for results. It covers the period ending March 31, 1997 and reports performance against the plans presented in the department's *Part III of the Main Estimates* for 1996-97.

Accounting and managing for results will involve sustained work across government. Fulfilling the various requirements of results-based management – specifying expected program outcomes, developing meaningful indicators to demonstrate performance, perfecting the capacity to generate information and report on achievements – is a building block process. Government programs operate in continually changing environments. With the increase in partnering, third party delivery of services and other alliances, challenges of attribution in reporting results will have to be addressed. The performance reports and their preparation must be monitored to make sure that they remain credible and useful.

This report represents one more step in this continuing process. The government intends to refine and develop both managing for results and the reporting of the results. The refinement will come from the experience acquired over the next few years and as users make their information needs more precisely known. For example, the capacity to report results against costs is limited at this time; but doing this remains a goal.

This report is accessible electronically from the Treasury Board Secretariat Internet site:
<http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/tb/key.html>

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Statistics Canada

Performance Report

**For the
period ending
March 31, 1997**

John Manley
Minister of Industry

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Executive Summary

Statistics Canada is Canada's central statistical agency with a mandate to collect, compile, analyse and publish statistical information on the economic, social and general conditions of the country and its citizens.

This report endeavours to provide an overview of the mission and priorities of the Agency as well as its activities carried out as part of its two business lines -- Economic and Social Statistics and Census of Population Statistics. The report then focuses on an assessment of Agency's performance through both quantitative and qualitative indicators.

In the fall of 1996, Statistics Canada was one of 16 pilot departments to develop an Annual Performance Report in response to the Government of Canada's Project to Improve Reporting to Parliament. While much was learned from that experience, the process of providing performance information is still transitional. Statistics Canada continues to make efforts to improve both its internal systems that support performance measurement and to hone its skills in developing and delivering reports that are informative.

Section I:

Message from the Minister

The Industry Portfolio brings together under the Minister of Industry 13 departments and agencies (see box) with responsibilities for science and technology (S&T), regional development, marketplace services and micro-economic policy. With many of the micro-economic levers available to government, as well as 41% of the S&T funding in the federal government, the Industry Portfolio offers a versatile tool kit for meeting the challenges of the knowledge-based economy as Canada moves into the 21st century.

The Industry Portfolio is ...

Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency
Business Development Bank of Canada*
Canadian Space Agency
Competition Tribunal
Copyright Board Canada
Federal Office of Regional Development - Québec
Industry Canada
National Research Council Canada
Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada
Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada
Standards Council of Canada*
Statistics Canada
Western Economic Diversification Canada

** Not required to submit Performance Reports*

The establishment of the Portfolio has also created a new capacity for partnership and innovation, both among its members and with stakeholders in the private and public sectors. This capacity can be exploited in every region of the country, since the Industry Portfolio provides programs and services to businesses and consumers with about 15,000 staff, over 500 points of service in every province and territory, and numerous sites in cyberspace.

As Minister responsible for the Industry Portfolio, I have directed the Portfolio members to actively seek opportunities to exploit the synergies available to them as

members of a team of organizations with similar objectives and complementary programs. This continuing emphasis on improving collaboration and partnership has helped to ensure that limited resources are focused more effectively on the priority areas identified for the Portfolio: promoting S&T, encouraging trade and investment, and helping small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to grow. Working in partnership in these areas has enabled the Portfolio to make a significant contribution to meeting government objectives.

Of the 13 members of the Portfolio, all except the two crown corporations (the Business Development Bank of Canada and the Standards Council of Canada) are required to provide annual Performance Reports. Reporting on performance is an important element of program management in the Portfolio. Identifying concrete objectives for programs and services, and measuring and reporting on progress over

time, provides an accountability framework that enables Portfolio members to assess their effectiveness. As the 11 individual Performance Reports demonstrate, the Portfolio members have solid results to report for 1996-97.

Taken together, these reports provide a comprehensive picture of the Industry Portfolio's performance. I would particularly like to highlight the following key Portfolio achievements:

- ▶ the 29 very successful SME Conferences and InfoFairs held across the country, attended by almost 51,000 Canadians;
- ▶ the publication of *Your Guide to Government of Canada Services and Support for Small Business 1996-1997*, a compendium of all the services and support available to small businesses from the federal government (over 250,000 copies in circulation);
- ▶ the strengthening of the Regional Trade Networks and Regional Trade Plans, which bring federal and provincial governments and the private sector together at the regional level to generate new international opportunities for local businesses;
- ▶ the coordinated approach to S&T across the Portfolio as reflected in the Portfolio S&T Action Plan—the Portfolio members have taken action on 45 of its 49 initiatives;
- ▶ the S&T Forum, which brought together, for the first time, the members of all the boards and councils providing expert advice to the Portfolio departments and agencies; and
- ▶ innovative approaches to service delivery building heavily on partnerships, such as the Canada Business Service Centres.

Statistics Canada highlights over this period include: launching a major project to improve provincial economic statistics following the 1996 sales tax harmonization agreement with New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Nova Scotia; data collection improvements in the censuses of Population and Agriculture, May 1996; release of the first year survey results for Labour Income Dynamics, including the first public-use data file and some analytical studies; and approval of the North American Industrial Classification System by the NAFTA signatories to facilitate trade and our understanding of Canada's competitiveness.

Over the coming year, the Industry Portfolio will continue to build on its synergies and to improve the services and support provided to its wide array of clients.

The Honourable John Manley

Section II: Departmental Overview

Statistics Canada's mandate derives primarily from the Statistics Act. The Act requires the Agency, under the direction of the Minister, to collect, compile, analyse and publish statistical information on the economic, social and general conditions of the country and its citizens. Statistics Canada is also mandated to provide coordination and leadership for the country's statistical system. Other federal legislation also requires Statistics Canada to produce data for specific purposes. (see Section IV-C Supplementary Information)

Mission Statement

Statistics Canada's mission is to inform Canadian citizens, businesses, and governments about the evolution of their society and economy and to promote a high-quality national statistical system.

Strategic Priorities

Historically, Statistics Canada's program has been structured to provide macro-economic, micro-economic and socio-demographic statistics, and statistical information on public institutions and programs. Such information continues to be relevant. However, emerging issues prompt demands for new kinds of data, (for example, needs have been expressed for improved information on the effects of globalization, the functioning of Canada's economy, the factors affecting Canada's competitiveness in world markets, the impact of science and technology, the outcomes of government programs and the status of various sub-populations within Canadian society). Maintaining the relevance of the Statistics Canada program by meeting such information needs continues to be a primary goal for the Agency.

Statistics Canada relies on several ongoing mechanisms which contribute to the assessment of the Agency's overall program. Given their nature and the breadth of their review, the impact of the advice received in the course of time affects virtually all Statistics Canada's programs. These consultation mechanisms include the following:

- ◆ *The National Statistics Council*
The National Statistics Council advises the Chief Statistician of Canada on the full range of Statistics Canada's activities, particularly on overall program priorities;
- ◆ *Professional Advisory Committees*
A network of Professional Advisory Committees in major subject areas ensures the continuous review of the Agency's statistical outputs and helps set priorities and foster program relevance;

- ◆ *Bilateral relationships with key federal departments*
 Statistics Canada maintains, on a continuing basis, a close bilateral relationship with key federal departments and agencies, including Industry, Health, Human Resources Development, Environment, Agriculture, Transport, the Canadian Transportation Agency, Revenue Canada/Taxation and Customs, Heritage, Canada Housing and Mortgage Corporation, Citizenship and Immigration and Justice. These bilateral relationships foster an awareness of each department's needs and their information priorities; and
- ◆ *Federal-Provincial-Territorial Consultative Council on Statistical Policy (and its subcommittees)*
 This Council and its subcommittees comprise a network of 12 provincial/territorial official representatives, who collaborate with Statistics Canada to determine data requirements, consult on current statistical activities and coordinate the dissemination of Statistics Canada products to provincial and territorial governments.

In the last instance, three special initiatives in the areas of Health, Education and Justice Statistics warrant mention:

Health: Statistics Canada priorities are developed with the assistance of the Board of Directors of the Canadian Institute for Health Information. The Board comprises senior provincial and private sector representatives and the Chief Statistician;

Education: the Canadian Education Statistics Council is a joint creation of Statistics Canada and the Council of Ministers of Education. The Council, comprising the Chief Statistician and Provincial/Territorial Deputy Ministers of Education, advises the Chief Statistician on the Education Statistics Program at Statistics Canada; and

Justice: The Justice Information Council comprises federal and provincial Deputy Ministers responsible for justice policies and programs and the Chief Statistician, and provides advice to the Chief Statistician on the Justice Statistics Program at the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics within Statistics Canada.

In addition to these consultation mechanisms, the Agency conducts special program reviews to monitor the continued relevance of its products and to enhance its understanding of client needs.

Reducing and controlling respondent burden is a high priority of the Agency. Accordingly, research and other efforts are undertaken continually to control the degree of burden imposed.

Statistics Canada's Business Lines

Objective

Statistics Canada's objective is to provide comprehensive and relevant statistical information on the economic, demographic and social structure of Canada in order to support the development, implementation and evaluation of policies, programs, and decision-making.

Description

To facilitate the understanding of Statistics Canada's program, its activities have been grouped into two Business Lines -- Economic and Social statistics, and the Census of Population statistics.

1. Economic and Social Statistics Business Line

Objective

The objective of this Business Line is twofold. It provides statistical information and analysis relating to the measurement of the international and domestic components of Canadian economic performance. The business line also provides statistical information on the social, economic and physical well-being of individuals and families, their labour market participation, as well as on the justice, health, education systems and institutions which serve them.

Description

This Business Line is best described through the activities of its two subsidiary Service Lines - economic statistics and social statistics. It must be emphasized that the boundary between these subsidiary service lines is blurred: e.g. employment and unemployment are both social and economic phenomena, as is education, the cost of living and inflation, etc.

1. Economic Statistics

The Economic Statistics Service Line provides information and analysis on the entire spectrum of Canadian economic activity, both domestic and international, through a set of macro-economic statistics. The organisation of economic statistics is guided, in large measure, by frameworks which constitute the Canadian System of National Accounts. The system makes it possible to measure both the current performance and the structural make-up of the Canadian economy by type of

economic transaction and by sector. This set of accounts is designed to provide information on the Canadian economy in direct support of fiscal, monetary, human resource, industrial and international economic policy formulation and adjustment. The System of National Accounts also serves as a framework within which individual statistical series are compared to assess their reliability and as an analytic tool to identify shifts in the economic importance of various sectors.

Another component of the service line focuses on the business, trade and tourism sectors of the Canadian economy. Information includes measures of the value of production, cost structures, commodities produced and consumed, the flows and stocks of fixed capital assets employed in the economy, the degree of capacity utilization, estimates of planned annual capital expenditure of businesses and governments, and measures of price changes for industrial goods, capital expenditures and construction.

In addition, information is provided on the volume and financial implications of international travel to and from Canada, on measures of change in retail prices, on the science and technology activities of the federal and provincial governments, and on research and development in government and other sectors of the economy.

2. Social Statistics

The first component of this service line provides information on the economic and social characteristics of individuals, families and households in Canada, and on the major factors which can contribute to their well-being. It includes measures of household income and expenditure; of employment, unemployment, their associated costs and benefits, labour income and factors affecting labour supply; and information on topics of specific social policy concern.

The second component of this service line provides information and analysis on the facilities, agencies and systems which are publicly funded to meet the socio-economic and physical needs of Canadians. It encompasses the justice, health care, education systems, and cultural institutions and industries. Information is provided on the nature and extent of their services, and operations, and the characteristics of the individual Canadians and families whom they serve. Increasingly, the Agency is attempting to go beyond the institutional orientation of this component, and to portray the impacts on Canadians of the health, education and justice systems.

2. Census of Population Statistics Business Line

Objective

The objective of this business line is to provide statistical information on the Canadian population, its demographic characteristics and conditions, and their change over time.

Description

This business line provides statistical information from the quinquennial Census of Population. The Census provides benchmark information on the structure of the Canadian population and its demographic, social and economic conditions. It provides the detailed information on sub-populations and for small geographic areas, which cannot be generated through sample surveys. Estimates of the size of the population and its demographic structure between Censuses, as well as population projections, are dependent on Census information.

Population counts and estimates are required to determine electoral boundaries, the distribution of federal transfer payments, and the transfer and allocation of funds among regional and municipal governments, school boards and other local agencies within provinces.

Organization and Business Line Matrix

The Minister of Industry is responsible for Statistics Canada. The Agency is headed by the Chief Statistician of Canada, supported by six Assistant Chief Statisticians (ACS's); three are responsible for statistical programs and three for technical support and management services. The following table displays the relationships between the two principal Business Lines of Statistics Canada's Program and the Agency's organizational structure. It also details the 1996-97 resources by organization and business line.

Table 1. 1996-97 Resources by Organization and Business Line (Comparison of Total Planned Spending to Actual Expenditures)

Business Lines								Sub-Totals	Vote Netted Revenues	Totals	Percentage of TOTAL
		ACS Social, Institutions and Labour Statistics	ACS Business and Trade Statistics	ACS National Accounts and Analytical Studies	ACS Communications and Operations	ACS Informatics and Methodology	ACS Management Services				
Economic and Social Statistics	millions of dollars	36.5 36.4	49.4 54.8	23.1 24.6	68.6 76.1	36.6 43.5	58.8 59.4	273.0 294.8	43.8 47.9	229.2 246.9	54.0 56.0
Census of Population Statistics	millions of dollars	64.2 57.5	0.0 0.0	0.0 0.0	98.6 99.9	39.0 37.5	4.5 4.6	206.3 199.5	12.6 8.6	193.7 190.9	46.0 44.0
Total Program	millions of dollars	100.7 93.9	49.4 54.8	23.1 24.6	167.2 176.0	75.6 81.0	63.3 64.0	479.3 494.3	56.4 56.5	422.9 437.8	100.0 100.0

Bold numbers denote actual expenditures/revenues in 1996-97

Section III: Departmental Performance

A. Performance Expectations

Table 2. Comparison of Total Planned Spending to Actual Expenditures, 1996-97 by Business Line

Business Lines (millions of dollars)	Human Resources (Full Time Equivalent)	Operating ¹	Voted Grants and Contributions	Total Gross Voted Expenditures	Less: Revenue Credited to the Vote	Total Net Expenditures
Economic and Social Statistics	3,700	273.0	0.0	273.0	43.8	229.2
	3,732	293.9	0.9	294.8	47.9	246.9
Census of Population Statistics	1,306	206.3	0.0	206.3	12.6	193.7
	1,272	199.5	0.0	199.5	8.6	190.9
	5,006	479.3	0.0	479.3	56.4	422.9
	5,004	493.4	0.9	494.3	56.5	437.8
Other Revenues and Expenditures						0.0
Revenue credited to the Consolidated Revenue Fund						0.2
Cost of services by other departments						40.8
						41.2
Net Cost of the Program						463.7
						479.2

Bold numbers denote actual expenditures/revenues in 1996/97.

¹ Operating includes contributions to employee benefit plans.

Table 3. Departmental Planned versus Actual Spending by Business Line

Business Lines <i>(millions of dollars)</i>	Actual 1995-96	Total Planned 1996-97	Actual 1996-97
Economic and Social Statistics	222.4	229.2	246.9
Census of Population Statistics	92.3	193.7	190.9
Total	314.7	422.9	437.8

Explanation of Variance between 1996-97 Planned and Actuals

Economic and Social Statistics

The 1996-97 actual expenditures were \$17.7 million or 7.7% higher than planned. Additional resources were obtained through Supplementary Estimates to improve provincial economic statistics, to conduct the National Population Health Survey as well as to purchase a new mainframe computer.

Census of Population Statistics

The 1996-97 actual expenditures were \$2.8 million or 1.4% lower than planned expenditures. This surplus is the result of delays in the development of dissemination systems, and delays in various analytical programs.

Summary of Performance Expectations

Key Results

Statistics Canada's *raison d'être* is the production of statistical information. The effectiveness of the Agency depends on its credibility, the relevance of its information, the quality and accessibility of its products, the attainment of high professional standards, and the control of the burden on survey respondents.

The Agency is committed to the achievement of the following key results in both of its business lines. The table highlights also the nature of the performance measures by which Statistics Canada monitors progress in achieving key results.

Table 4.

Statistics Canada	
to provide Canadians with:	to be demonstrated by:
a) Statistical information relevant to current and future needs	Feedback from formal consultation mechanisms Market tests Client satisfaction Use of statistical products Measures of quality Measures of timeliness
b) Controlled respondent burden	Levels of Reporting Burden Use of administrative data Ease of response Use of new methods and technologies

B. Performance Accomplishments

Departmental Performance

Ensuring program relevance in the face of economic, social and demographic change requires constant attention. As a client-oriented organization, the Agency has established a wide range of both formal and informal processes to ensure feedback from its clients, the continuous review of its information programs and the products and services they deliver, as well as the effectiveness of the technical activities which support them.

The following performance measures review Statistics Canada's achievements for the year 1996-97.

Statistical information relevant to current and future needs

Statistics Canada is committed to producing statistical information that is relevant to current and future needs of Canadians. Several performance measures have been designed and are presented to report on the Agency's achievements.

⇒ Feedback from formal consultation mechanisms

◆ *Changes to statistical programs based upon external advice and program reviews*

Statistics Canada relies on numerous consultative processes which contribute to the continuous review of the Agency's statistical outputs. The following examples provide an indication of their impact on Statistics Canada's program.

The *Labour Force Survey* (the source of monthly measures of employment and unemployment) was revised in January, 1997, following extensive consultation with data users and after review by the Labour Statistics Advisory Committee. The survey now provides important new information on earnings, union membership and aspects of job quality.

Asset and Debt Survey - Plans for an asset and debt survey were discussed at the Social Conditions Advisory Committee's spring 1997 meeting. Members offered a number of suggestions that will help in the development and implementation of this survey. For example, planners were cautioned on the difficulties in concepts, definitions, and potential problems in respondents providing detailed financial information.

Census of Agriculture: The 1996 Census of Agriculture product line and dissemination plans were reviewed by the Federal-Provincial Committee on Agriculture Statistics. This review, completed in 1996-97, resulted in a revised dissemination program which will place more emphasis on new electronic products and will be better adapted to users' needs.

Services Statistics: The Advisory Committee on Services Statistics has played a major role in the implementation of improved service sector statistics and was particularly effective in helping to establish priorities for development. The committee also advises on matters related to questionnaire content and data quality.

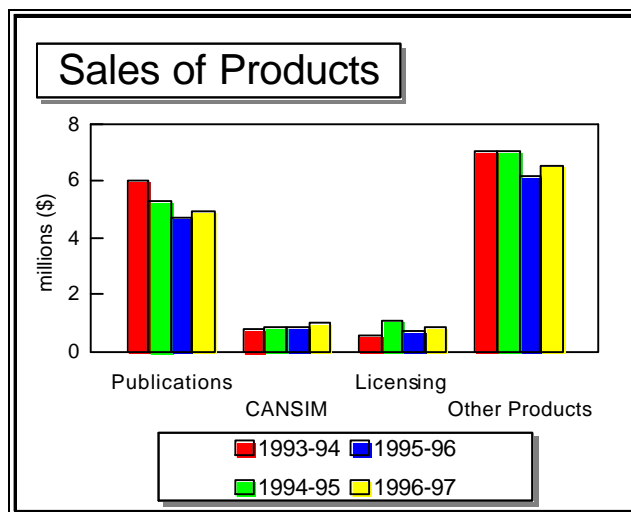
Census of Population Statistics: Before each census, Statistics Canada reviews and analyses statistical needs based on extensive consultations with data users about the information they would like in the Census database. Statistics Canada must ensure that the content of the Census complies with legislative requirements as well as users' data needs. For the 1996 Census, Statistics Canada received a total of 166 written submissions containing over 1,500 comments from more than 1,100 groups and organizations in the public and private sectors. In addition, two international conferences were held, one on the collection of ethnic origin data and the other on the measurement of the value of unpaid work. Subsequent to this process, options were prepared and presented to Cabinet for approval of final Census content.

⇒ Market tests

◆ *Market tests as demonstrated by sales of statistical products and services*

Client feedback and market research studies indicate the following trends in the information market for Statistics Canada products.

- Clients indicate a strong preference for custom tailored solutions to their information needs and an increasing preference for electronic products. The declining sales of print publications reflect this changing preference.



- Clients place a high degree of importance on the immediacy of service and many purchase information only on a "when needed" basis. Technological developments have equipped information consumers to search for and retrieve the latest information on a topic, often from a variety of sources. In response to these expectations, Statistics Canada has introduced online access to trade statistics and CANSIM - the Canadian Socio-economic Information Management System - via the Internet and a private telecommunications carrier. The Agency has created an Internet site¹ that makes freely available basic statistical information on Canada, as well as access to more detailed data on a cost-recovery basis.

¹ Statistics Canada's Internet site address is [HTTP://www.statcan.ca](http://www.statcan.ca)

- Many information users also indicate a preference for information products provided by secondary distributors of Statistics Canada data. Statistics Canada has developed new licensing arrangements to facilitate access to its data by firms now entering the information marketplace. Partnerships with public and private sector organizations delivering information services to specialized audiences are an important element of the Agency's dissemination strategy.
- A recently-completed research study found that 85 percent of Statistics Canada's paying clients use the Internet and 42 percent of these have visited the Agency's web site. The study also found that if current print products were available electronically, clients would prefer to receive them in that format. In the coming year, a number of publications will become available in electronic form although print versions will continue to be available where demand justifies.
- Further evidence of the premium clients place on immediacy and their readiness for electronic services is provided by the growing interest in The Daily, an electronic journal which highlights newly released data, new products and services and scheduled release dates. As well as being accessible through the Statistics Canada Internet site, The Daily may be received by electronic mail. Over twice the number of clients (v.i.z., 2500) now receive this publication by electronic mail than when it was a print product.

⇒ Client satisfaction

Over the past year, the following initiatives have been undertaken to improve and measure the quality of the Agency's products and services:

- ◆ *Client satisfaction as influenced by Service Standards*
 - Corporate Service Standards have been established and a “Service Standards” brochure is now available to customers. Training is being provided to Agency employees in the standards’ application.
 - To ensure professional response to client needs, guidelines have been developed for employee - client communication.
 - Periodic audits of compliance with its announced standards will be conducted by the Agency’s Audit and Evaluation Division.

◆ *Client satisfaction as influenced by Service Improvements*

- A client service “hot line” is now provided for all users of Statistics Canada electronic products.
- A client contact database is continually maintained to compile corporate intelligence on clientele and to enable the delivery of superior client services.
- An electronic catalogue of Statistics Canada products and services and a list of Statistics Canada key contact points have been added to the Agency’s Internet site.

◆ *Client satisfaction measurement*

- Market research related to product development and market readiness for electronic information products is conducted, on an ongoing basis. The results are used to guide the reshaping of products to better meet user requirements. Examples of this are an action plan to restructure the Agency web site and move from print to electronic products;
- Surveys are conducted of clients who do not re-subscribe to Statistics Canada publications to ascertain reasons for non-renewal. Three general reasons emerge: clients no longer have a budget for subscriptions, the mode of delivery is no longer suitable and the product no longer meets user needs. Results of such surveys are used to redesign or to improve products;
- Nine separate market sectors were identified for the 1996 Census, and separate marketing approaches developed for each. Each potential market sector for census data was analysed; users' needs were identified, media preferences ascertained and their data preferences examined to determine if the Agency was providing maximum benefit. It was concluded that more information was required in various electronic media. As a result, the Agency developed a number of new CD-ROM products as well as strengthening services which permit clients to chose the electronic format best suited to their needs. Even the library sector, which cautioned that they needed support to handle the shift from paper to electronic products, indicated a preference for increased electronic accessibility to information; and
- Employees are being given training in the conduct of customer satisfaction measurement.

⇒ Use of statistical products

◆ *Use of statistical products as demonstrated by media citations*

The news media are a key link in informing the broader Canadian public. The Agency regularly monitors media coverage of its products and data releases in newspapers, radio and television.

The average number of citations per month is estimated to be 1200. (Statistics Canada has only started in 1996-97 to fully track media citations)

◆ *Use of statistical products as demonstrated by free access to basic statistics*

The accompanying chart illustrates the increase in the use of Statistics Canada's web site during the past year. Traffic of Statistics Canada's web site has almost tripled between June 1996 and April 1997 with the average number of user sessions per day growing from 956 to 2800 (and the total number of "hits"² at the site reaching approximately 80,000 per day). Total user sessions this year could reach one million. Statistics Canada expects to report, in future years, accesses on an annual basis. Total user sessions this year could reach one million. Statistics Canada expects to report, in future years, accesses on an annual basis.

The most frequently visited parts of the site are those containing 200 regularly updated tables of key social and economic information (46% of all visitors), The Daily (45% of all visitors), and the module where users can find information on Canada's leading indicators such as the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and the Employment/Unemployment statistics. (39% of all visitors). Those modules of the site making detailed information available on a cost-recovery basis are less frequently visited (14%). The foregoing provides a strong indication that the Internet is rapidly becoming a key tool in fulfilling Statistics Canada's mandate.

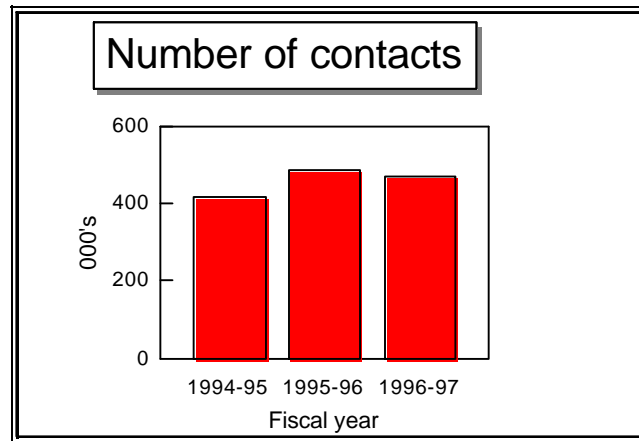
Another service development related to technology is the provision of information in alternate formats to meet the needs of persons with disabilities. A voice-synthesized version of The Daily is now available via a 1-800 number for use by persons who are visually impaired. Other Internet content can be reproduced in large print or braille formats or by computer synthesized voice.

² *Visitor sessions* represents an estimate of the number visitors entering the Statistics Canada web site from other parts of the Internet while the number of *hits* represents the number of hypertext links activated within the site by visitors.

◆ *Use of statistical products as demonstrated by client contacts with Regional Offices*

The policy of Statistics Canada is to provide information free of charge to those requests which are of a routine nature. For more complex inquiries, Regional Offices provide cost recovered consultative services to clients.

Visitors to our Regional Office Reference Centres are provided free access to Statistics Canada publications. A toll-free inquiry service and electronic messaging services respond to frequently asked questions to ensure that non-visitors have equal access.



In 1996-97 contacts with Regional Offices continued to exceed 400,000 but were marginally fewer than the preceding year.

⇒ Quality

◆ *Quality as demonstrated by availability of quality descriptors and technical notes*

For many years, Statistics Canada has placed, in its publications, indicators of the quality of the data disseminated as well as descriptions of the underlying concepts, definitions and collection and processing methods.

◆ *Quality as demonstrated by product review and verification*

The Agency also audits information disseminated orally to clients using a sample of questions with known answers to verify that information provided is accurate and factual. This permits Statistics Canada to assure the quality of service and products provided and to identify knowledge gaps that are subsequently redressed through staff training.

In addition, all hard copy and electronic data releases undergo intensive “institutional” quality verification to ensure that data users obtain sound products.

◆ *Quality as demonstrated by measures of timeliness*

The relevance of the Agency’s information products depends in large measure on an appropriate balance between timeliness and statistical reliability. In striking this balance, Statistics Canada takes into account the preferences of users. For example, timeliness might be improved by issuing statistical estimates based upon preliminary (versus final) survey results. However, clients have consistently preferred to maintain existing timeliness, if improved timeliness implies larger subsequent statistical revisions or a reduced level of statistical detail.

◆ *Quality as demonstrated by measures of elapsed time between reference period and release dates*

The elapsed time between reference period and release dates for selected major surveys is a timeliness measure which serves to test the relevance of the statistics in terms of the “freshness” of the information released. Table 5 below highlights the timeliness of a selection of major releases.

Table 5. Elapsed time between reference period and release dates (selected major surveys)

<i>Major Survey</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Timeliness Target*</i>	<i>Target Met</i>
<i>Labour Force Survey</i>	<i>Monthly</i>	<i>14 days</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Consumer Price Index</i>	<i>Monthly</i>	<i>18 days</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Monthly Survey of Manufacturers</i>	<i>Monthly</i>	<i>48 days</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>International Trade</i>	<i>Monthly</i>	<i>50 days</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Retail Trade</i>	<i>Monthly</i>	<i>50 - 55 days</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Quarterly Gross Domestic Product</i>	<i>Quarterly</i>	<i>60 days</i>	<i>Yes</i>

* Timeliness targets indicate the planned elapse time between the last day of the reference period to which the results refer and the day on which the data are released to the public.

- ◆ *Quality as demonstrated by measures of incidence of adherence to pre-established release dates*

Statistics Canada maintains a pre-established schedule of data releases for its major statistical products. The following table highlights the major products and their periodicity.

Table 6. Major Subject Areas, Selected Outputs, Level of Service

Major Subject Areas and Selected Outputs	Level of Service
	Frequency
Balance of international payments	Monthly
National economic and financial accounts	Quarterly
Real gross domestic product	Monthly
Canada's international transactions and securities	Monthly
Composite index	Monthly
Private and public investment in Canada	Quarterly
Consumer price index	Monthly
Canadian international trade	Monthly
Field crop reporting	Seasonal
Building permits	Monthly
Retail trade	Monthly
Monthly survey of manufacturing	Monthly
New motor vehicle sales	Monthly
Business conditions survey, Canadian manufacturing industries	Quarterly
	Monthly
Wholesale trade	Quarterly
Farm cash receipts	Annual
Net farm income	Quarterly
Industrial capacity utilization rates	Monthly
Industrial products price index and Raw materials price index	Monthly
Labour force survey	Monthly
Employment, earnings and hours	Monthly
Travel between Canada and other countries	Quarterly
International travel account	Quarterly
Characteristics of international travellers	

With one exception, products have met their release date targets. In the case of Canadian International Trade, which relies on the exchange of data with the United States, the target was late one month as a result of a U.S. Federal employee strike.

Reporting Burden

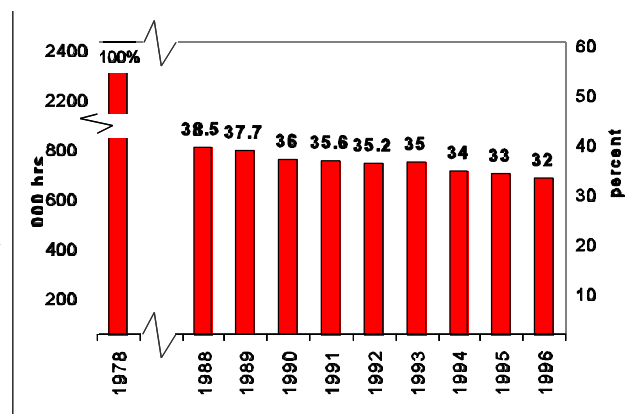
The Agency's second Key Commitment is to control respondent burden. Statistics Canada continually strives to control the burden on respondents.

⇒ Reporting Burden

◆ *Reporting burden as represented by Calculated Burden*

Business Statistics

An indicator of response burden is calculated each year using the estimated average time to complete each business questionnaire, the frequency of the survey and the number of respondents. The calculation excludes the quinquennial Census of Agriculture and other one-time or occasional surveys.



In 1996, the response burden on all businesses decreased by 3 percent (for small business alone, the decline was 5 per cent), thus reducing the burden associated with business surveys to approximately one-third of its 1978 level (the first year for which such a measure was calculated). Reductions in respondent burden are associated mainly with the greater use of administrative data. This trend has slowed in recent years as the opportunities of tapping into new sources of administrative data have diminished. On the respondent side, Statistics Canada has established an ombudsman for small business relations in order to provide an additional channel for feedback and to help ensure that any complaints are dealt with appropriately.

Social Statistics

There is growing interest in the survey response burden placed on individual Canadians. Accordingly, the following initiatives to develop indicators will be undertaken in the 1998-1999 fiscal year. An indicator will be developed to capture the aggregate burden of household surveys by measuring the average per capita time required to participate in all Statistics Canada household surveys. The second indicator will measure the average completion time required per person selected to participate in the survey process.

Census of Population Statistics

Considerable effort was taken in the 1996 Census of Population to make the questionnaire and instructions as clear to understand as possible. The short form questionnaire in 1996 was reduced from nine to seven questions, the smallest number since 1966. The long form, although similar in length to previous censuses, was improved by making it far easier for respondents to complete. Four new questions were added while questions on fertility and religion were dropped. Information on the Census toll free Help Line was included on both the short and long form.

⇒ Use of administrative data

◆ *Shift to the use of administrative data*

Improvements in the control of respondent burden are largely the result of increased use of administrative records in lieu of direct surveys of respondents. In the past, the Agency has made valuable use of T1 /T2 tax data and employer Payroll Deduction files to substantially decrease the sample size for some of its surveys while maintaining the quality of estimates produced. Currently, the feasibility of using the Goods and Services Tax files (GST) and the use of the newly-developed Business Number (BN) is being explored. The Agency is working in close collaboration with Revenue Canada to eventually exploit the General Index of Financial Information (GIFI) which is currently under development. (It is to be noted that while administrative records are used for the purpose of producing aggregate statistical estimates, the contents of the individual returns are held in strictest confidence as required by the Statistics Act). In future years, the Agency's Annual Performance Report will track and report on gains made in the use of administrative data.

⇒ Ease of response

◆ *Ease of response as implied by response rates*

If surveys are difficult to complete, respondents will generally not provide the information required. Thus response rates are a proxy for the ease with which information is provided. Table 7 below provides a measure of response rates for selected major surveys.

Table 7.

<i>Selected Major Survey</i>	<i>Response rate</i>
<i>Labour Force Survey</i>	<i>95%</i>
<i>Monthly Survey of Manufacturers</i>	<i>97%</i>
<i>International Trade</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Retail Trade</i>	<i>94%</i>

Statistics Canada is continually conducting research to minimize difficulties associated with survey responses.

⇒ Use of new methods and technologies

◆ *Incidence of respondents reporting by electronic means*

Technology in Data Collection

The Agency has also made significant progress in facilitating electronic reporting as a potential replacement for paper questionnaires completed by respondents. Its use has the potential of substantially reducing reporting burden by having information transferred directly and automatically to Statistics Canada from business data systems. Development has commenced of a basic infrastructure to allow electronic reporting. Work has been undertaken to receive quarterly financial data from major banks electronically in a standardized format. At the same time, computer self-administered questionnaire applications were also developed for specific surveys. In particular, respondents to the Annual Retail Chain Survey were offered the possibility of filling out the questionnaire on their computers. Over 20% of the retail chain units, representing well over 65% of the locations, are now providing their data in this format.

Building on the experience and on the infrastructure in place, Statistics Canada is addressing the need to offer electronic collection options to increasing numbers of businesses across Canada. The Agency is confident that, in the long run, these activities will lead to significant advances in furthering the use of technology and reducing reporting burden on respondents. However, it must be emphasized that the pace at which these developments take place will be very much governed by the technological readiness of respondents to adopt such methods.

C. Key Reviews

Key Reviews
<p>Review of Government Sector Statistics (in progress): <i>Developing a better understanding of provincial public accounts and their relationship to the federal accounts. Previously, differing ways of presenting this information have made it difficult to provide a consistent view of provincial debt and deficit positions.</i></p>
<p>Implementation of the revised United Nations System of National Accounts (SNA) 1993 and the revised IMF Balance of Payments Manual 1993 in the Canadian System of National Accounts (in progress): <i>The magnitude of the changes involved is described in a detailed set of Record of Issues, Discussion Notes and Decisions regarding the implementation of the SNA 1993 which was released in August 1996. At the same time, the opportunity has been taken to reconcile and harmonize the public sector universe, valuation principles and consolidation rules in the SNA and the Financial Management System (FMS) used for the Government sector in Canada.</i></p>
<p>Agriculture Statistics - Census of Agriculture Products (completed): <i>This review, completed in 1996-97, resulted in a revised dissemination program which will place more emphasis on new electronic products and will be better adapted to users' needs.</i></p>
<p>Agriculture Statistics - Redesign of the Regular Agriculture Surveys (in progress): <i>The redesign, after consultations with major users, is conducted after each Census to ensure that the regular program reflects the structural changes in the industry identified by the Census. The intercensal revisions has also been initiated. This review process involves the reconciliation of the regular data series with the benchmark data provided by the Census of Agriculture. This essential activity preserves the integrity of regular agriculture data series.</i></p>
<p>Voorburg Group on Services and on Common Product Classification(CPC) (continuing): <i>Canada leads a group of some forty experts from a dozen countries continually reviewing methods and techniques to improve the measurement of production, trade, and prices of the Services Sector of the economy. In September 1996, the Voorburg Group approved and forwarded to the United Nations Statistical Department (UNSD) a draft CPC version 1.0 for submission to the UN Statistical Commission. Sharing research and development activities with others should save resources and ensure internationally comparable results.</i></p>
<p>North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) (completed): <i>The structure of NAICS was formally approved by the Heads of the statistical agencies of the three NAFTA countries (Canada, Mexico and the United States) on December 10, 1996. The structure, codes, titles and descriptions of NAICS Canada will be published by year end.</i></p>
<p>Project to Improve Provincial Economic Statistics (PIPES) (in progress): <i>Late in 1996, Statistics Canada commenced a project to upgrade substantially the quality and detail of Canada's system of provincial economic statistics. Work on the project will extend over three years. The ultimate objective is to produce annual interprovincial input-output tables of approximately equal quality for each of Canada's provinces and territories. This goal must be realized without adding unduly to the form filling burden imposed on Canadian citizens and businesses. New and improved survey vehicles will be developed and a much broader use will be made of administrative data from Revenue Canada and other sources, as an alternative to statistical surveys.</i></p>
<p>Survey of Employment, Payroll and Hours Redesign (in progress): <i>Redesign methodology to use Revenue Canada payroll deduction data as a substitute for surveying. Nearing completion, this work has already achieved substantial reductions in survey costs and reporting burden as well as significant improvements to estimates of payroll employment and labour income estimates.</i></p>
<p>Review of all income data (in progress): <i>Examining possibilities for harmonizing and integrating the use of personal income data holdings continues with a proposal due for the Agency's Fall 1997 Planning Session. It is expected that this will reduce both costs and respondent burden.</i></p>
<p>Labour Force Survey Redesign (completed): <i>The survey redesign has been completed, resulting in substantial reductions in ongoing costs, and a significantly enhanced range of labour market information.</i></p>
<p>Census of Population - Cyclical Review (continuing): <i>Before each Census, Statistics Canada asks data users and other interested parties across Canada what type of census and post-censal survey information they need. This ensures that Statistics Canada takes account of emerging social and economic issues and where appropriate, uses the Census and post-censal surveys to shed light on them.</i></p>
<p>Health, Education and Justice Statistics (continuing): <i>Joint Councils comprising Statistics Canada and federal/provincial/ territorial officials oversee issues and develop priorities in each of these sectors with the view to facilitating data exchange and ensuring relevancy of products delivered.</i></p>

Section IV: Supplementary Information

A. Contacts for further information

Atlantic Region

Serving Newfoundland and Labrador,
Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and
New Brunswick

Advisory Services
Statistics Canada
North American Life Centre
1770 Market Street
HALIFAX, Nova Scotia
BJ 3M3
Local calls: (902) 426-5331
Fax: (902) 426-9538

Quebec Region

Advisory Services
Statistics Canada
200 René Lévesque Blvd. W.
Guy Favreau Complex
4th Floor, East Tower
MONTRÉAL, Quebec
H2Z 1X4
Local calls: (514) 283-5725
Fax: (514) 283-9350

National Capital Region

Statistics Reference Centre (NCR)
Statistics Canada
R.H. Coats Building Lobby
Holland Avenue
OTTAWA, Ontario
K1A 0T6
Local calls: (613) 951-8116
Fax: (613) 951-0581

Ontario

Advisory Services
Statistics Canada
Arthur Meighen Building, 10th Floor
25 St. Clair Avenue East
TORONTO, Ontario
M4T 1M4
Local calls: (416) 973-6585
Fax: (416) 973-7475

Prairie Region

Serving Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta
and the Northwest Territories.

Advisory Services
Statistics Canada
MacDonald Building, Suite 300
344 Edmonton Street
WINNIPEG, Manitoba
R3B 3L9
Local calls: (204) 983-4020
Fax: (204)983-7543

Advisory Services
Statistics Canada
Avord Tower, 9th Floor
2002 Victoria Avenue
REGINA, Saskatchewan
S4P 0R7
Local calls: (306) 780-5405
Fax: (306) 780-5403

Advisory Services
Statistics Canada
First Street Plaza, Room 401
138-4th Avenue South East
CALGARY, Alberta
T2G 4Z6
Local calls: (403) 292-6717
Fax: (403) 292-4958

Advisory Services
Statistics Canada
Park Square, 9th Floor
10001 Bellamy Hill
EDMONTON, Alberta
T5J 3B6
Local calls: (403) 495-3027
Fax: (403) 495-5318

Pacific Region

Serving British Columbia and the Yukon
Territory.

Advisory Services
Statistics Canada
Library Square Tower
#600-300 West Georgia Street
VANCOUVER, British Columbia
V6B 6C7
Local calls: (604) 666-3691
Fax: (604) 666-4863

*Toll-free national enquiries line:
1-800-263-1136*

*Telecommunications device for the hearing
impaired: 1-800-363-7629*

*Toll-free national order-only line:
1-800-267-6677*

B. Financial Summary Tables

B-1 Summary of Voted Appropriations

Authorities for 1996-97 - Part II of the Estimates

Financial Requirements by Authority

Vote <i>(millions of dollars)</i>		Main Estimates 1996-97	Actuals 1996-97
Statistics Canada			
120	Program Expenditures	388.5	402.1
(S)	Contributions to employee benefit plans	34.4	35.7
Total Agency		422.9	437.8

Votes - Wording and Amounts

Vote	<i>(millions of dollars)</i>	Main Estimates 1996-97
Statistics Canada		
120	Statistics Canada - Program expenditures, the grants listed in the Estimates and authority to spend revenue received during the year	388.5

B-2 Revenues Credited to the Vote by Business Line

Business Lines <i>(millions of dollars)</i>	Actual 1995-96	Total Planned 1996-97	Actual 1996-97
Economic and Social Statistics			
Sales of publications	4.6	4.9	4.9
Special statistical services	38.8	38.9	43.0
	43.4	43.8	47.9
Census of Populations Statistics			
Sales of publications	0.1	0.1	0.1
Special statistical services	0.8	0.4	1.4
Census cost sharing	7.1	12.1	7.1
	8	12.6	8.6
Total Program			
Sales of publications	4.7	5.0	5.0
Special statistical services	39.6	39.3	44.4
Census cost sharing	7.1	12.1	7.1
Total Revenues Credited to the Vote	51.4	56.4	56.5

B-3 Transfer Payments by Business Line

Business Lines <i>(thousands of dollars)</i>	Actual 1995-96	Total Planned 1996-97	Actual 1996-97
Grants			
Economic and Social Statistics			
Inter-American Statistical Institute	14.2	8.5	8.2
Conference of Commonwealth Statisticians	4.1	5.5	5.5
Total Grants	18.3	14	13.7
Contributions			
Economic and Social Statistics			
Health Information Program	378.1	0	885
Total Contributions	378.1	0	885
Total Grants and Contributions	396.4	14	898.7

C. Legislated Requirements

In addition to the Statistics Act, the following Federal Acts give the Chief Statistician or Statistics Canada responsibility for the collection or provision of specific information:

Banks and Banking Law Revision Act, 1980
Canada Council Act
Canada Elections Act
Canada Pension Plan Act
Canada Student Loans Act
Children's of Deceased Veterans Education Assistance Act
Children's Special Allowances Act
Competition Act
Constitution Act
Corporation and Labour Unions Returns Act
Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act
Excise Tax Act
Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements and Federal Post-Secondary
Education and Health Contributions Act, 1977
Employment Equity Act
Income Tax Act
Judges Act
Municipal Grants Act
Official Languages Act
Old Age Security Act
Pension Act
Parliament of Canada Act
Railway Relocation and Crossing Act
Salaries Act
Supplementary Retirement Benefits Act
Unemployment Insurance Act, 1971
War Veterans Allowance Act