

Employment
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Programme
d'équité en
matière d'emploi

**Report on a series of Workshops on Data Collection
Among Aboriginal and Other Hard-to-Enumerate Populations**

STATISTICS STATISTIQUE
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in Urban Areas

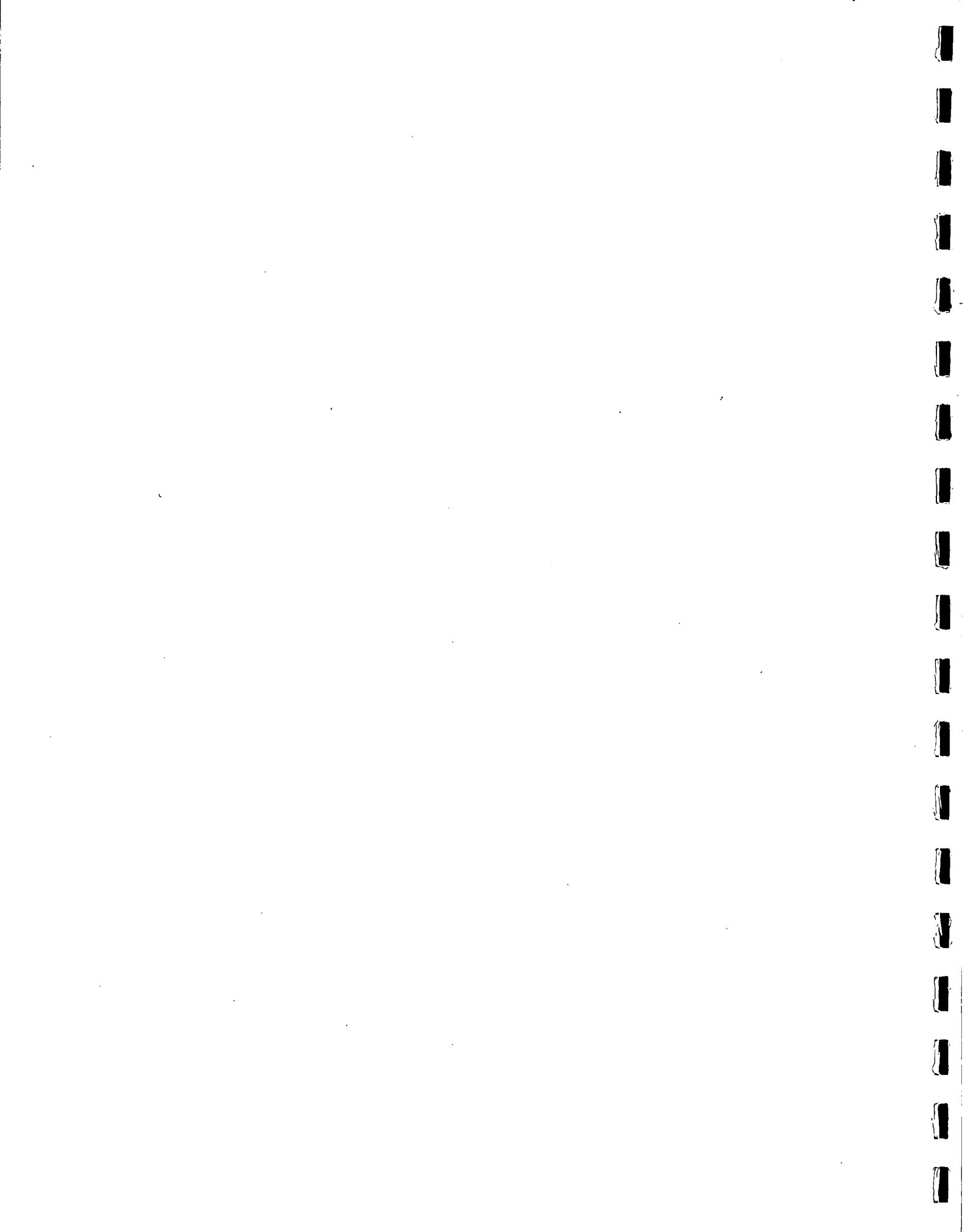
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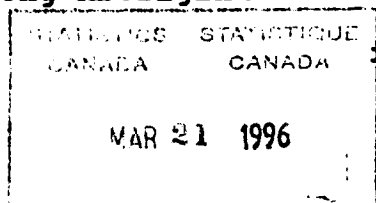
Statistics
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**Report on a series of Workshops on Data Collection
Among Aboriginal and Other Hard-to-Enumerate Populations**



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Prepared by
Wally Boxhill

Egalement disponible
en français

Employment Equity Program
Housing, Family and Social
Statistics Division

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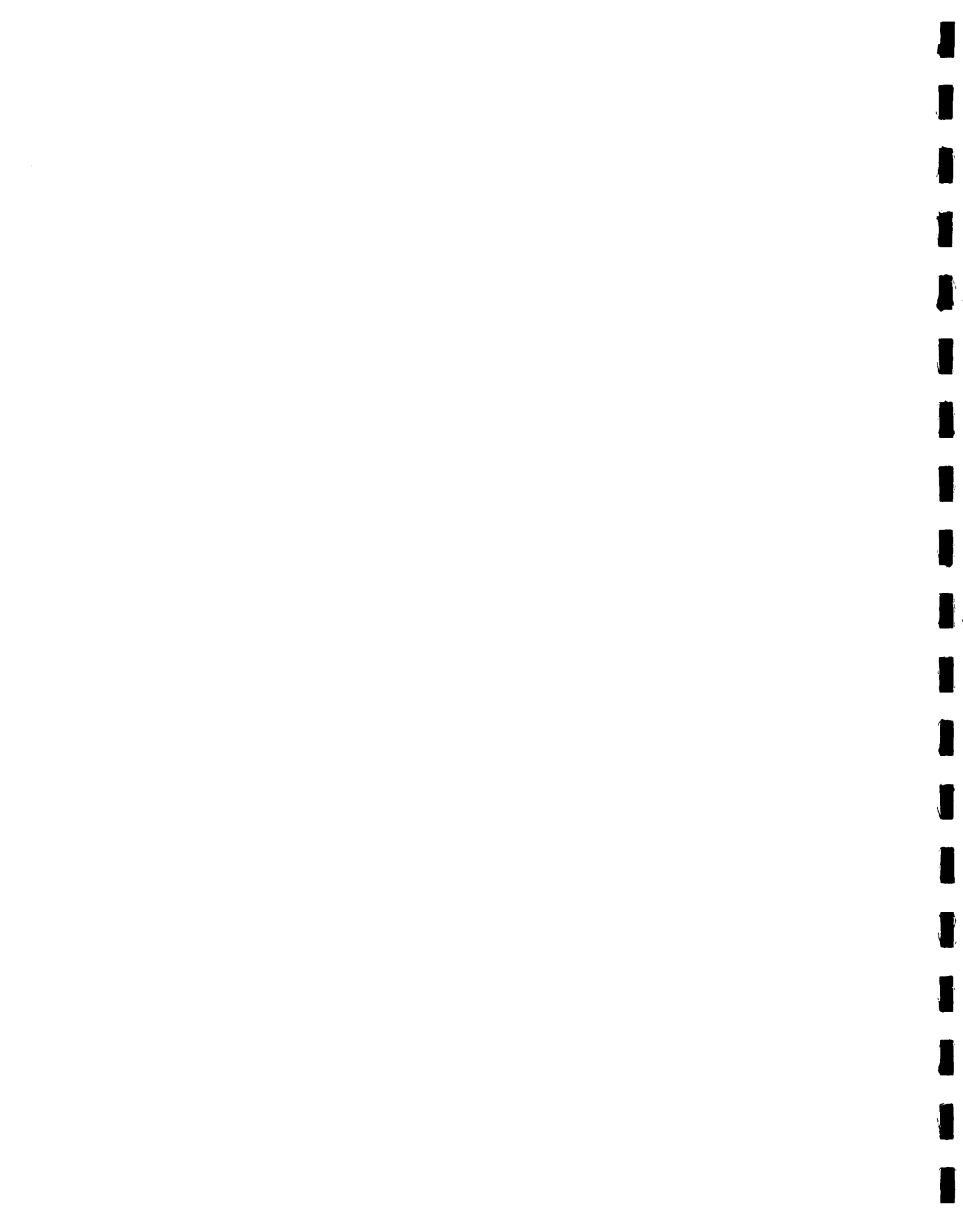
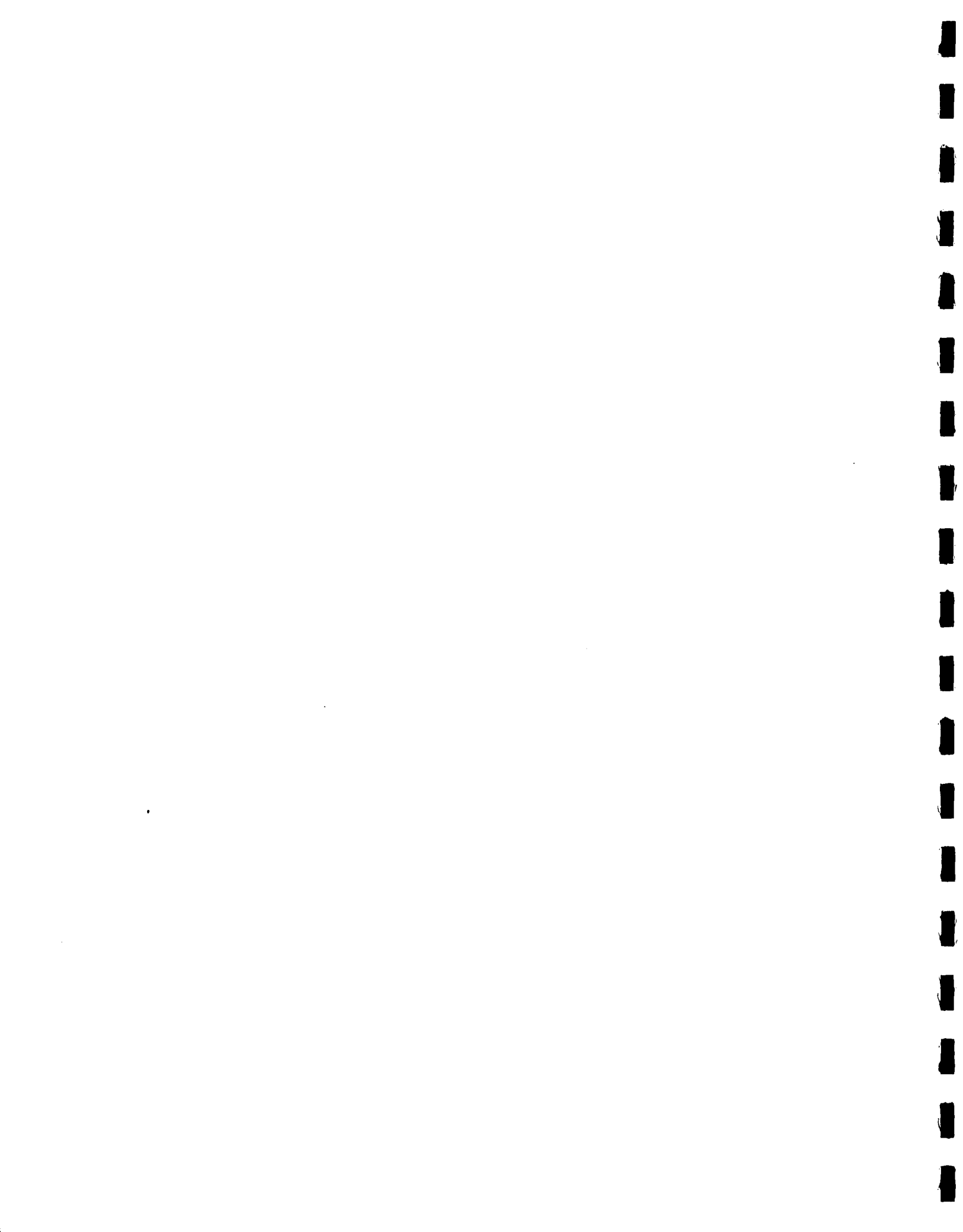


TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	1
Determining and Transmitting the Census message(s).....	5
Ethnic Diversity in the Target Communities.....	6
Language Difficulties with some persons in the target group.....	8
Security and Personal Safety of Staff.....	9
Delivery of Census Questionnaires.....	9
Personnel Recruitment.....	10
The Aboriginal Population.....	11
The Homeless.....	16
Illiterate.....	17
Youth.....	18
Illegal Suites.....	20
Conclusion.....	21
Appendix A.....	23

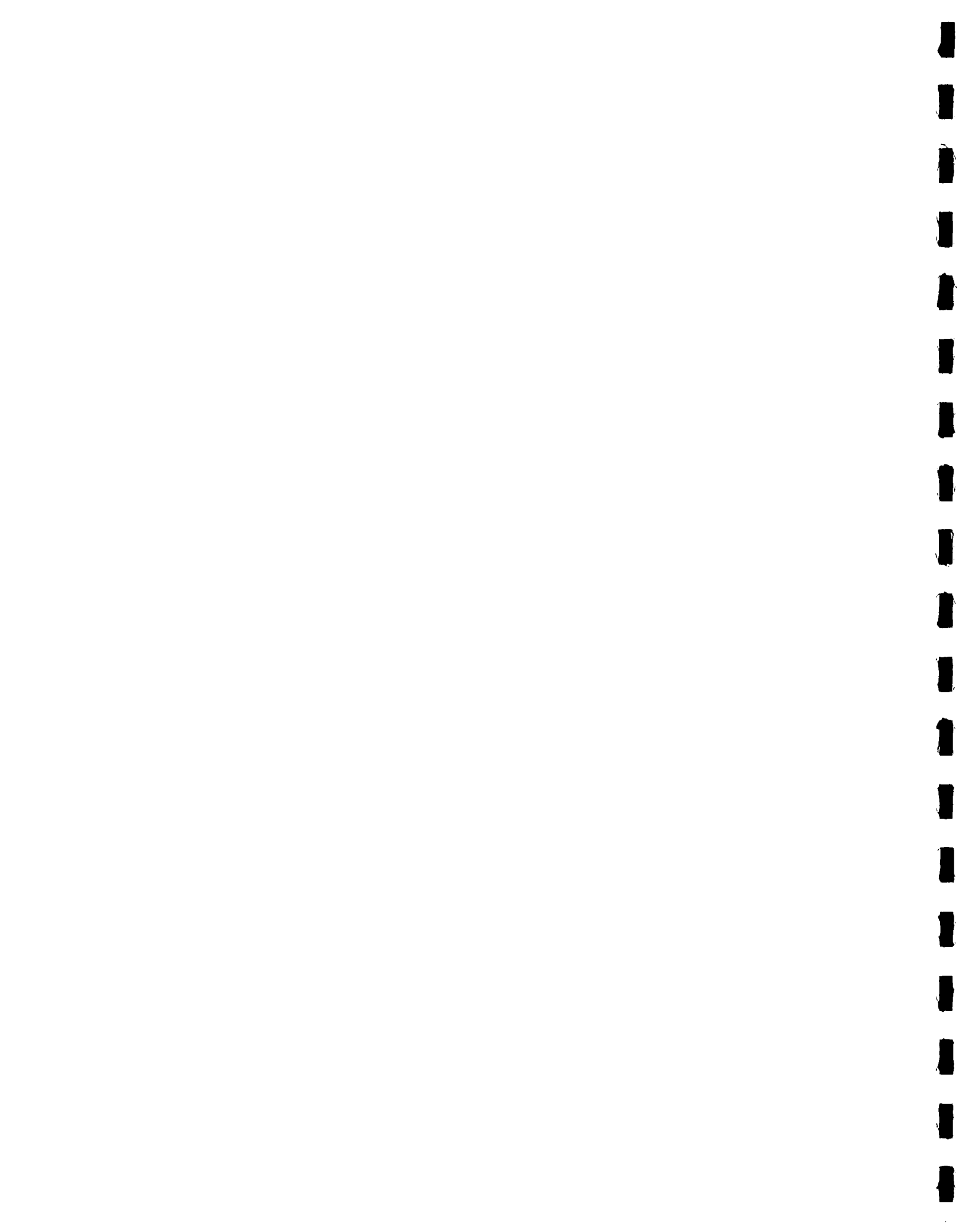


Introduction

The decision by 136 Indian reserves not to participate in the 1986 Census has generated much activity at Statistics Canada, in its preparations for enumeration of Canada's aboriginal population in 1991. Among the initiatives, in 1987, a special task team on data collection among aboriginals was set up. In October 1988, a questionnaire based on the National Census Test document, but adapted for use on Indian reserves, was tested in reserves at Kasabonika and Constance Lake (Ontario) and God's Lake (Manitoba). In March 1989, after further modifications, the questionnaire was tested in Membertou (Nova Scotia), Pine Creek (Manitoba) and Nain (Labrador). In November 1988, three consultative sessions (workshops) were held in Toronto, Edmonton and Vancouver for Statistics Canada staff to interact with academics and private sector consultants. Persons who had undertaken primary data collection on Northern reserves, or who might be able to provide suggestions or facilitate enumeration on reserves were invited to share ideas with Statistics Canada personnel from Head Office and the Pacific, Prairie and Ontario Regions.

As a follow-up to this last activity, a proposal was made by the Interdepartmental Working Group on Employment Equity¹ that these consultations be extended to the search for measures to accomplish the enumeration of aboriginals off-reserve and in particular, those who may be in hard-to-enumerate sectors of urban areas. Statistics Canada's regional offices - with responsibility for collection activities in connection with the census - were directly involved in the process of planning and conducting these workshops. Unlike the previous series, which witnessed most decisions - including

¹ This group comprises representatives from the Canadian Human Rights Commission, Employment and Immigration Canada, the Public Service Commission, Statistics Canada and the Treasury Board Secretariat.



whom to invite - being made from Head Office, operational plans for this round of consultations were put in place by Statistics Canada's regional offices in Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver, Edmonton and Halifax.

As a result of discussions between Statistics Canada staff at Head Office and in the regions, a decision was made to expand the scope of the proposed workshops to encompass what were broadly defined as hard-to-enumerate populations in urban areas. These included aboriginals off-reserve, as well as members of another Employment Equity designated group (visible minorities). In addition, since aboriginals in urban areas comprise some persons who are homeless, residents of public housing and youth, these were targeted as special interest groups and covered in some sessions.

In response to the Interdepartmental Working Group's interest in the enumeration of aboriginals off-reserve, one session (in Calgary) was devoted entirely to issues concerning the aboriginal population in Prairie cities - particularly Winnipeg, Calgary and Regina. In Montreal, separate sessions were organised for representatives from aboriginal groups and for invitees from the Black, Chinese and Southeast Asian communities in that city. In Vancouver, participants included representatives from aboriginal agencies, associations dealing with the homeless, the Vancouver Police Department, and agencies working towards facilitating the adjustment of recent immigrants to Canada, particularly those with limited English language skills. Sessions in Toronto included representatives from the Chinese and Italian communities, Public Housing projects and organisations which work with the homeless. In Halifax-Dartmouth attendees were drawn from provincial and municipal government bodies, Immigrant Settlement associations and other service agencies. Although representatives from the Black community in the Halifax-Dartmouth area did not attend the sessions, follow-up telephone contact between Statistics Canada



staff and invitees left the impression of a strong interest in working with Statistics Canada to reduce undercoverage for that group in the 1991 Census.

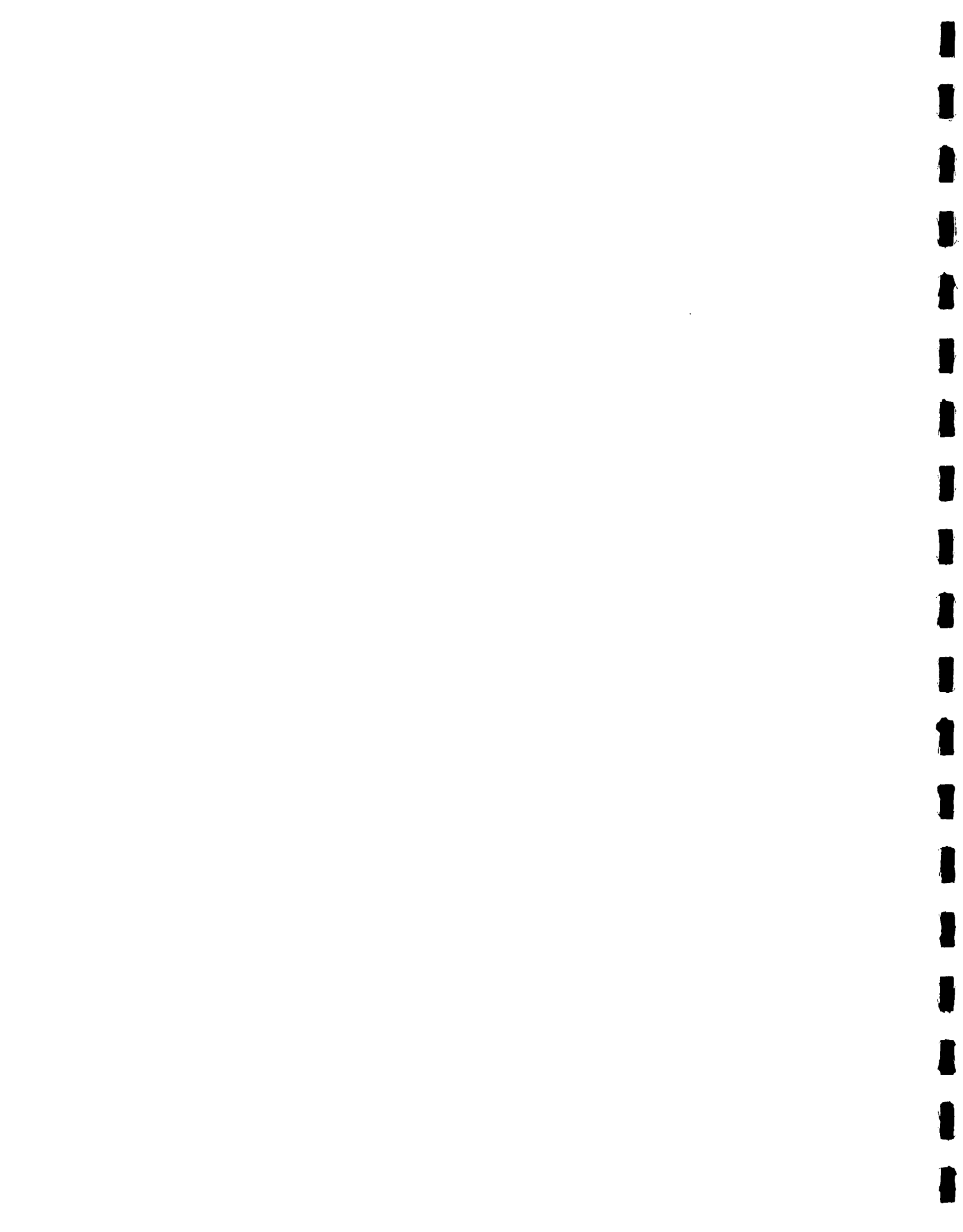
Funds for conducting these workshops (to a maximum of \$20,000) were provided by the Interdepartmental Working Group on Employment Equity. The allotment of funds was to cover costs associated with the travel and other arrangements for participants at the several sessions. Although all expense claims have not yet been processed, the project was completed under budget.

In addition to the contribution of non-salary dollars by the Working Group, note must be made of the input by Statistics Canada officers in a variety of roles. These included organising the sessions and guiding discussions in a way which would benefit both Statistics Canada - in preparing for the 1991 Census - and participants, some of whom were unfamiliar with the intricacies of census data collection, but whose help and advice in the process were being sought. The contributions of a Head Office Planning Team, comprising subject-matter officers and staff from within the Census Activity Structure must also be acknowledged.

In total, ten sessions were conducted - August 22 and 23 in Montreal, August 22, 23 (2 sessions) and 24 in Toronto, September 12 in Halifax, September 14 in Vancouver, September 15 in Dartmouth and September 18 in Calgary. A complete list of participants is included as Appendix A.

General Issues arising from the sessions

The sessions were designed for Statistics Canada to obtain input from invited participants on how it should proceed in obtaining co-operation and what were the best ways to get the census message



through to the various target groups. At all sessions, Statistics Canada staff provided an overview of the census programme. This covered both the 1986 approaches and experiences and issues of relevance in 1991 preparations, such as the need to identify difficult-to-enumerate areas² and the process of determining and transmitting messages of value to the public communications effort.

The discussions which followed covered three basic themes:

Theme 1: Collection and Coverage issues - including strategies for reaching aboriginals and other hard-to-enumerate populations in urban areas;

Theme 2: Public Communications Activities and Measures for Reaching out to the Target Populations; and

Theme 3: The Political Context and possible conflicts over the sizes of particular ethnic groups.

Concern about undercoverage as it affects aboriginals and other minority populations remains strong. The measures being taken by Statistics Canada to work with representatives of the target communities were lauded as being a valuable series of first steps. Participants stressed that improvements in communications between Statistics Canada and the target communities were goals which could only be achieved through co-operation. Statistics Canada staff were invited to visit with some agencies in order to obtain first hand information on the problems and likely obstacles to the census effort. The Regional office staff will be following up on these invitations.

² As a result, some areas, such as St. Jamestown in Toronto and the Downtown east side of Vancouver, were identified.

Determining and Transmitting the Census message(s)

Participants were all willing to bring the resources of their respective organisations into co-operating with Statistics Canada at Census time. However, appropriate messages would have to be devised to indicate that **the census matters to everyone**. These basic messages should come from Statistics Canada and could be transmitted to the groups working with the target populations and from these groups to the respondents themselves. Where community groups volunteer and provide census support during enumeration, it was deemed to be essential that appropriate training be provided for these persons and that kits be available to assist them in delivering good service.

Many felt a need for it to be made clearer that the **census is for everyone - not just white Canadians**. New-comers from some societies where there is not complete enumeration of the population - rather only sample surveys - may feel that the census does not concern them. These persons therefore end up among the undercovered population. It was suggested that background information on the Canadian Census be included in orientation material for new immigrants and prospective citizens and that Statistics Canada work closely with the Department of the Secretary of State towards achieving this goal.

It was pointed out that while the census is a big event in the lives of many persons at Statistics Canada, the same importance does not exist for many other Canadians, particularly those in the groups identified as hard-to-enumerate. A message indicating the importance and relevance of the census to them is therefore essential. Most participants recognised that while a general message might be prepared to indicate the benefits of the census to participant groups, the translation of that message into benefits for individuals was infinitely more difficult.

Representatives from the public housing authority, in particular, underscored this difficulty in finding an appropriate message for many persons whom they described as 'down on themselves'.

Use of local cable TV channels was recommended as a useful strategy for sending the census message, in support of radio and print media communications. Newsletters of some associations were noted as having wide distribution among the target communities and established credibility. However, too much emphasis on the print media should be avoided because of illiteracy problems.

The census message might also be sent via religious and educational institutions (particularly those involved in programmes Teaching English as a Second Language) and through 'offices' set up in shopping centres close to census time. Many felt that it was good to have an 'office' - something visible to the target community.

It was recommended that Census Day not be viewed as a sort of D-day, when everything is to be given a sense of relevance. Rather most participants felt that there should be follow-up activities for potentially missed populations, with a message indicating that "It's not too late to be counted".

Ethnic Diversity in the Target Communities

The diversity within many of the target communities was also pointed out. For example, public housing projects encompassed every ethnic group and possibly every linguistic element in Canada. Residents included refugees and new immigrants, as well as aboriginal persons and persons who can trace their association with Canada back several generations. Many communities cannot be taken as being homogeneous. It was pointed out, for example, that in the Chinese community in Ontario, there is considerable diversity. The same situation exists among the homeless and the illiterate.



Representatives from the Chinese community indicated that persons who are Chinese would have no difficulty reporting this in response to a question on ethnic origin, particularly if a mark-in option is presented for recording this information. However, reaching all persons might require special measures. The elderly were viewed as a population requiring such special measures, particularly in cases where they speak neither English nor French.

The Black community in Montreal was identified as being diverse and includes persons from the English and French speaking Caribbean, English and French speaking Africa and descendants of these persons. The community is not concentrated in any particular section of the city, although sizeable numbers of Blacks are found in such areas as N.D.G., Côte-de-Neiges and West Island.

There appeared to be differences between the Black Anglophone and Francophone community in Montreal in their approach to relationships with government and allegiances to the province of Quebec. While the interests of the Francophone community were rooted in Quebec, the Anglophones viewed linguistic developments with some trepidation and were concerned at a possible exodus. The Francophone community, particularly persons of Haitian ancestry, intimated a suspicion of government. By contrast, many in the Anglophone community were noted as coming from backgrounds with a tradition of parliamentary democracy, with the resulting perception that openness and good relationships with government can be beneficial. This latter group felt that a clear indication of the legal requirement to complete the census would be positive in motivating its membership to participate in the Census. It was felt that the Census message should be transmitted by community leaders and that Statistics Canada work closely with these persons in preparing an appropriate message.



The Southeast Asian community in Montreal was even more suspicious of and intimidated by governments than Haitian Blacks and were very afraid of the possibility that they could be identified to governments in their native lands. Similar concerns were noted by the Chinese community in Montreal, in light of the events leading up to and following what occurred in Tianmen Square. Although there was no expression of being suspicious at the Canadian government, there remained a general fear of providing names and other information considered personal and private.

Language Difficulties with some persons in the target groups

An inability to function in either English or French was noted as a major problem in some communities, and particularly among elderly persons in the Chinese and Southeast Asian communities. Many would require significant help come census time.

To deal with an inability of some persons to function in either English or French, it was suggested that a short paragraph (only a few lines) should be prepared in several non-official languages for inclusion in the census documentation received by householders in communities where the prevailing language was not one of Canada's official languages. This paragraph should include basic information on the census and where additional information could be obtained for those not able to read or write English or French. However, it was also pointed out that many persons whose mother tongue is neither English nor French and who are illiterate in these two languages, might also be illiterate in their native language. A simple drop-off of additional information would not solve all the problems of such individuals regarding what to do at census time.

In households comprising new immigrants from countries where the native language is neither English nor French, the person

completing the questionnaire is usually determined by language ability. Among some groups there is also a tendency to exclude some persons for a variety of reasons (particularly those considered to be too young or too old). Again it would be important to stress that **everyone matters in the census.**

Participants were supportive of the Telephone Assistance Service and indicated a willingness to communicate its existence to their constituents come enumeration time. The provision of this service in several languages was viewed as a measure which could address the language difficulties faced by some respondents. In addition, it was suggested that "help centres" be established in areas where linguistic inabilities can be identified.

Security and Personal Safety of Staff

This was stressed as one of the most serious problems likely to face the enumeration process in 1991. The sale and use of narcotics (sometimes in public view), the physical abuse of residents and other forms of violent crime were indicated as posing major obstacles to work in some neighbourhoods and around "welfare cheque time". In addition, enumerating some "street persons" with serious psychiatric problems was indicated as being fraught with risks. Working in pairs was suggested as an unavoidable option for census staff. While this did not guarantee that staff would always be safe, it was felt to be a measure which significantly increased the security of drop-off and other census staff.

Delivery of Census Questionnaires

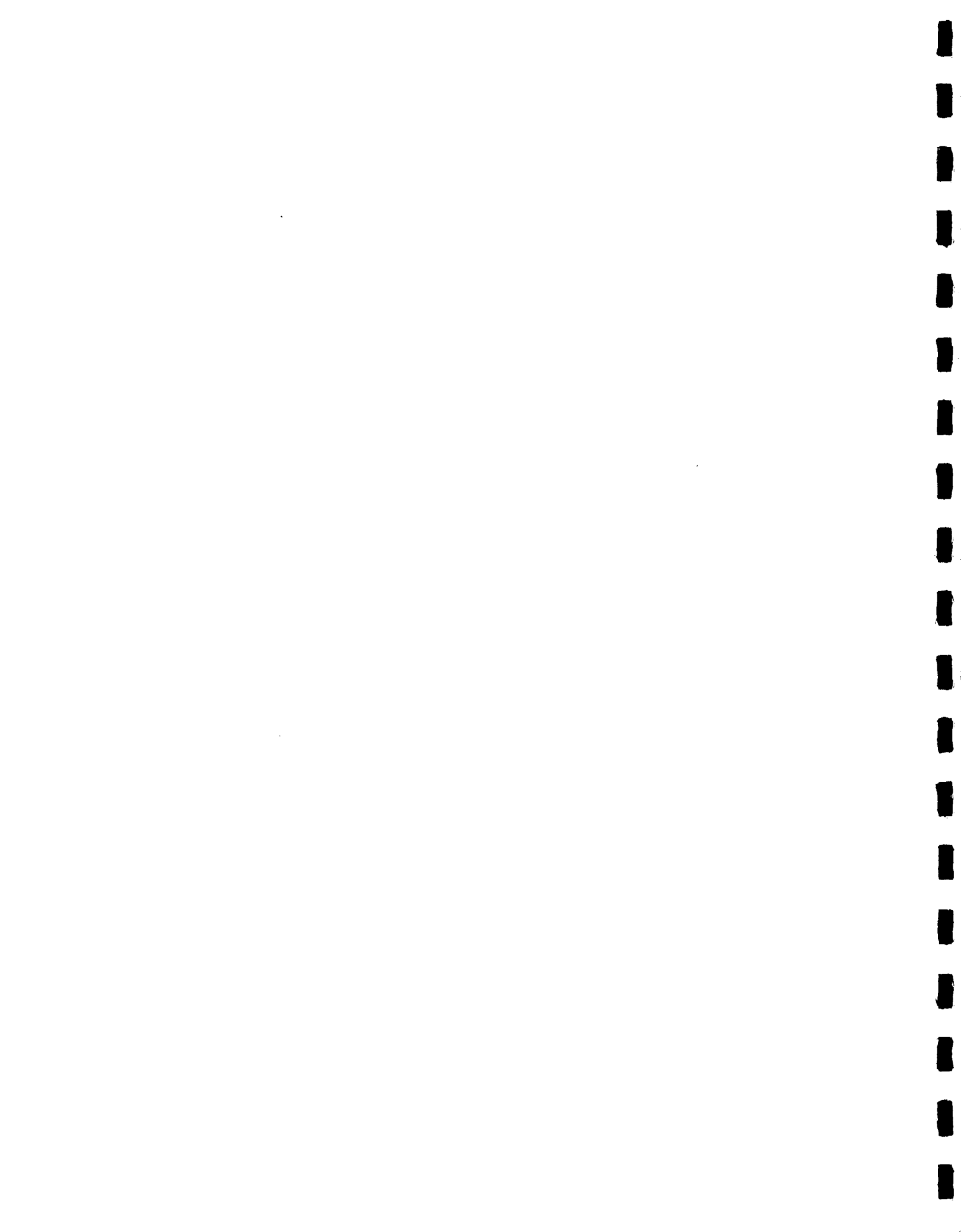
In certain neighbourhoods, practices such as leaving census documents hanging from a bag on door knobs would probably not work very well - for several reasons. Firstly, some door knobs might have been removed by vandals. Secondly, if bags with census

documents are left hanging on those doors which have knobs, they would in all likelihood be removed and junked by children roaming the hallways. An additional consideration related to security is that census bags left hanging from door knobs is an indication of who may not be at home and therefore an invitation to break-in and vandalism. Where doors possess mail slots, one has to take into consideration the size of these slots in relation to the size of the census package. In addition, the notion was expressed that some persons simply throw away mail that is not directly addressed to them. Major challenges would therefore remain for census staff in ensuring delivery of the census questionnaires to householders and their completion and return to Statistics Canada.

Personnel recruitment

Hiring from target communities was recommended as a means of reaching out to and obtaining support from within the selected communities. Although it was recognised that certain constituencies, such as public housing projects, were ethnically diverse and not every element could be represented in hiring, some representation was viewed as desirable. It was acknowledged that finding quality people who would remain on the job for its entirety posed a challenge to Statistics Canada. Financial incentives were thought to be not too attractive and might be part of the problem in finding quality staff, for only a short term and for long hours each day. Welfare recipients would not find census employment attractive because of upper limits on remuneration which they can receive. Participants indicated that they could play a role in identifying suitable candidates for hiring and in ensuring that credibility and acceptability in target communities are enhanced.

There was some discussion of output issues and the associated loss of detail in connection with some minority groups. Questions arose as to what should be done for persons who are away from Canada for



extended periods (sometimes up to 6 months a year). The enumeration message is not always clear enough regarding how these persons should be treated in the enumeration process. In rooming houses (and particularly in the host of illegal ones which have sprung up in recent times) landlords may not accept responsibility for ensuring that tenants are counted. Census staff, for their part may not be aware that what on the outside looks like a single family dwelling houses several persons sharing accommodation because of a housing crunch.

The Aboriginal Population

Some participants were aware of the efforts being made by Statistics Canada to obtain co-operation from aboriginal communities and groups and lauded these. A re-visiting of initiatives undertaken in 1986 helped to provide a focus for discussions, particularly regarding what was good and what bad. Some felt that continual tinkering with the questions used to identify the aboriginal population would perpetuate problems for researchers and the aboriginal population, as well as weakening the credibility of Statistics Canada in providing definitive data. Mention was made of the lack of comparability between 1981 and 1986 data and data corruption (the East Indian problem in 1981; Question 7 in 1986) which seemed to be generated by the non-aboriginal population. At all sessions where the issue was raised, the published counts of aboriginal persons in major urban areas were viewed as being wrong.

Both participation and self-identification were determined to be important issues. Although many of Canada's aboriginal peoples may currently reside off-reserve, they still identify with a particular band and reserve and might have difficulty in determining whether their on-reserve or off-reserve location should be considered their usual residence. It was noted that many aboriginals in urban areas

who maintain close ties with their "home" reserve and band feel that by identifying themselves as residents of urban areas, they are in some way penalising their reserve and band. As many government funding programs are tied to band membership, the higher the membership lists the more financially rewarding will be the band's situation. Some persons assume that they do not have to count themselves where they are on Census day, since somebody back on the reserve will be taking care of them. This does not always happen. The possible confusion could be dealt with in the instructions regarding where people should count themselves and in working with home reserves to get residents there to understand who should be counted and where.

An unwillingness of the band/reserve to participate in the census may result in similar action being taken by its off-reserve members. An unwillingness to self-identify as being aboriginal was thought to be associated with what was described as shabby treatment of natives in urban areas. However, by contrast, it was also observed that many persons may be willing to self-identify as aboriginal because it is a fashionable thing to do, as well as symbolising a sense of pride in being aboriginal.

Some participants felt that despite the attractiveness of the two-tiered consultative approach, whereby Statistics Canada conducts both "grass roots" and high profile consultations with native groups, the blessing of the Assembly of First Nations was essential to a successful enumeration process in the 1991 Census.

A general distrust of government was mentioned from time to time. Efforts must continue to be made to deal with a credibility issue and the impartiality of Statistics Canada in its data gathering and data production activities. Canada's aboriginal population requires continuing assurances that data collected will not be used against them and a demonstration that these data can be used by



aboriginals for their own benefit. Reference was made to how the Lubicon Band used statistics to win a reserve. Many other groups may require "demonstration" sessions in order to become conversant in the values of census data. It was clear from participants that the aboriginal population needs to be convinced that there is something in the census for them.

While in Montreal, the Employment Equity Act was perceived as having the potential to convey benefits to the aboriginal community, in Calgary, the reaction was not quite as optimistic. Some participants felt that despite all the talk about Employment Equity, the only way for aboriginal hiring to improve is for aboriginals to hire their own. The Multiculturalism Act was viewed with disfavour. Some participants felt that aboriginals are not part of the multicultural heritage of Canada; rather they are quite distinct as Canada's First Peoples.

There were mixed signals on the issue of aboriginals joining the staff of Statistics Canada and working on collection activities in the Census. Some felt that working for government is viewed as selling out, with the associated notion that those who do must be getting some big pay-off from the government for their involvement. Others felt that aboriginals must be involved in the process at all stages. In this connection, one of the objectives of Statistics Canada's Aboriginal Peoples Co-operation Strategy is the recruitment of Aboriginal persons to function as liaison officers with aboriginal communities and organisations. It was also suggested that census data collection among aboriginal communities be contracted out to appropriate native bodies, a move which it was believed would encourage co-operation and permit aboriginal persons off-reserve to be "found".

In Calgary, comments were made about the lack of aboriginal persons among the Statistics Canada delegation at the session and there was

a feeling that it would help if aboriginal persons were involved in the data collection process. Both in Calgary and Vancouver, Statistics Canada staff were sufficiently impressed by the contributions of some aboriginal persons to consider recruiting them for involvement in census preparations.

Some issues which the census might not be able to address remain important for aboriginal groups. In particular, there was interest in the identification of native businesses and in health conditions. Indeed, content issues are still very much of concern to native groups, as are terminological issues. One participant suggested that the term Metis conveys the idea of a French/native mixture and many aboriginals of mixed ancestry (with the non-native ancestry not being French) do not relate to the term. "Half-breed" was ventured as a more recognisable and accepted term in the community of mixed ancestry.

Getting the census message across to aboriginals in urban areas may require the involvement of a well-known, respected aboriginal person in census "media-type" events. There was no agreement on the right type of person, although political types and native elders were ruled out. M.P.s and M.L.A.s could send a signal of too close a link between the census and "government". Elders were indicated as giving advice on things reflecting wisdom - not in broadcasting messages such as Support the Census. Theoren Fleury of the Calgary Flames was mentioned as one possibility of a media-type person with acceptability. The upcoming North American Aboriginal Games scheduled for 1990 was suggested as a route which may also be utilised for promotion of the 1991 Census. The sponsoring of lunches at Native Friendship Centres and of 'potlatches' were suggested as measures which may enable Statistics Canada to get the census message into aboriginal communities.

The problem of illiteracy among aboriginals was indicated as something that Statistics Canada should not forget. Although the illiterate population in general will be discussed later, Native Friendship Centres were suggested as an avenue through which word-of-mouth information on the census may be communicated.

In Montreal, aboriginals were noted as being highly transient and there were no obvious areas in which they were concentrated. Almost 95% of the aboriginals in Montreal can be considered as just "passing through" rather than being established residents of the city. In Western cities, aboriginals constitute a significant portion of the homeless and "main-street" population as well as persons with well established residences. The target groups include persons who are affluent and upwardly mobile, as well as single-parent, low-income and welfare families who are overly represented in public housing. The latter, in particular, may assign a very low priority to completing census or other forms which have no direct bearing on their day-to-day existence. It was suggested that aboriginal groups in urban areas may be reached by appropriate census messages, although finding such was acknowledged as an extremely difficult task. Measures being prepared by Statistics Canada to deal with the homeless will be of relevance in addressing some aboriginals off-reserve. However, many will probably be difficult to reach without support from native social service agencies and friendship centres.

Census products were noted as being inadequate for most meaningful forms of research on the aboriginal population. The cost of special tabulations was also observed as being prohibitive. More creative, low cost ways of providing census data on aboriginals to the user community need to be found.

The Homeless

Since the census enumeration is tied to locating people at a specific address, persons who neither occupy a permanent dwelling nor stay in other recognised forms of shelter, such as hotels, motels and hostels, may be missed during the process. There is believed to be considerable variation and fluctuation in the size of the population considered homeless. The group includes drifters and "street people", families living in cars and businessmen who occupy office locations which do not conform to the census definition of dwelling (= private residential or collective unit). On September 23, the day of the Toronto workshop session on the homeless, both CBC radio and the Toronto Sun carried a news item on a "homeless" person whose domicile had been discovered earlier in the week; it was an "apartment" in a manhole.

Most of the homeless are very mobile, shifting locations for a variety of reasons - being on the run, time to move on, try my luck elsewhere. Major cities are not alone in possessing homeless and it was suggested that Statistics Canada rethink the cities identified as being the focus for activities in connection with enumerating the homeless population. Locations in New Brunswick and Northern Ontario were mentioned.

There was a strong feeling that roaming the streets at night and using a SWAT team or round-up approach would not be effective in enumeration of the homeless. These persons know where to hide if they have to and the efforts involved in trying to track them down at night simply would not be worth it, nor would they work. It was suggested that the homeless can be reached through the agencies which serve them - through hostels, native friendship centres, the Salvation Army, soup kitchens, street nurses, etc. They should be enumerated at the places where they are likely to go for a meal and spend time with people they trust. Corporate sponsorship should be



sought for a free meal program for those who count themselves in. Indeed, it was strongly recommended that this target community be given something (a meal, a trinket, a button with a logo) as a token of appreciation and for counting themselves in as part of the census.

Some participants felt that a video could be prepared for use at centres which provide services for the homeless, although it was acknowledged that preparing a video was costly. This video could show how the homeless are being counted and indicate that everyone matters.

Statistics Canada was advised not to be rigid on the subject of names. This is one item that the homeless feel is very private. Statistics Canada should not expect to get much information during the enumeration process. Obtaining anything beyond tombstone date (excluding name) should be considered a major achievement.

Illiterate

Since these persons cannot read, there are obvious obstacles to receiving the census message via the printed media. Some have suggested that even simple posters might not work, because the illiterate are often intimidated by paper. While television or radio can be used in delivering the census message, word-of-mouth via support groups, community leaders and educators involved in literacy programs was suggested as the most effective means of ensuring that the illiterate are made aware of the census. Public relations material provided to these leaders and support organisations must emphasise how Census data will help them in addressing the financial and other aspects of literacy programs.

Completion of the census questionnaire would obviously pose another problem for the illiterate. Recent estimates of the extent of

illiteracy among the Canadian population generated concern for a few participants about the quality of census information provided by some Canadians. For the illiterate, assistance would be required from children or other relatives, a good friend, church leader, literacy program worker or other individual with whom the illiterate person has close contact and trusts. Seeking such assistance is a strategy used by many persons whose mother tongue is not English or French and who are not comfortable completing forms in these languages. It is one which should be brought to the attention of the illiterate. Trust is crucial in this and the persons requesting/requiring assistance must trust both the person completing the document and Statistics Canada officials. Since the latter are sworn to secrecy under the Statistics Act, a help programme which involves Statistics Canada staff can remove any issues associated with confidentiality of information. Placing emphasis on the confidentiality of the information once provided to Statistics Canada and ways in which the data might be used in support of literacy programs was viewed as essential in gaining the trust of the illiterate population. It was also pointed out that many persons whose mother tongue is neither English nor French and who are illiterate in these two languages, might also be illiterate in their mother tongue.

Youth

Four subsets of this target population were identified as requiring special attention and possible strategies for reaching them were put forth.

- (1) University students (particularly those who do not usually reside with their parents). Communication with university student groups should be undertaken during the academic year, preferably in April, just before classes end. The message should stress the importance of census information on this



group and the benefits of accurate counts. Campus newspapers and radio should be the media for conveying the census message and public speaking engagements by census staff may also be appropriate.

(2) Students at High school or Community College

This group will still be in classes on census day and may be reached via the general census message. Since some of these students do not live with their parents, a specific census education project directed at them while in school was suggested as a route with some value.

(3) Street Youth

This group which includes many runaways was identified as one which would be extremely difficult to reach. Nonetheless, there were suggestions on possible measures for reaching them. These included word-of-mouth communications and posters placed at social service agencies from which street youth obtain support. The identification of prominent sports or music personalities to transmit the census message was also recommended. Many teenagers may listen to the census message if delivered by persons whom they idolise. This message must show the benefits to street youth for counting themselves in.

(4) Other Youth living on their own (many of these persons are enroled in some type of educational enrichment or involved in self employment programs funded by C.E.I.C or provincial bodies).

These youth may be reached through their program leaders and agencies which fund their programs.



Illegal Suites

These were identified as forms of accommodation set up in a way that their existence is concealed and their owners avoid the payment of municipal taxes. Also by-laws may prevent the establishment of rental units in certain parts of the city. Because of the housing crunch and the cost of accommodation in many cities, conversions have been made to existing dwelling units, such that basements, attics, laundry rooms, spare rooms and all forms of existing space are now occupied by tenants. There was a feeling that this situation would worsen thereby increasing the difficulty for census staff to reach some persons. The fear that information collected during the census would be shared with municipal authorities was indicated as being strong among the owners of illegal suites. However, it was felt that any public statements by Statistics Canada to deal with this fear element might only worsen the situation.

With illegal suites, there is the likelihood that some residents might not receive the census questionnaire and therefore cannot count themselves in. Since they are not likely to be identified by the landlord, these persons would probably be missed during enumeration, therein exacerbating the extent of undercoverage. As a consequence, the need for enumerators to have very good instructions and training in order to determine the possible existence of illegal and other secondary suites was stressed. Statistics Canada should also work with city planning departments and other municipal agencies to achieve the objective of identifying the possible location of these units thereby facilitating enumeration of their occupants.



Conclusion

In responding to a request from the Interdepartmental Working Group on Employment Equity to conduct workshops on the enumeration of aboriginals and other hard-to-enumerate populations in urban areas, ten sessions were held over a four week period from late August to late September. More than seventy persons attended to share experiences with Statistics Canada staff from Head Office and the regions. The discussions provided some valuable insights and generated useful suggestions for Statistics Canada staff required to deal with the operational requirements of data collection for the 1991 Census. As a consequence of the expanded scope of these workshops to encompass hard-to-enumerate populations in urban areas, a number of target communities in which aboriginals might be found were covered.

The sessions indicated that work still lies ahead for Statistics Canada in refining collection strategies and preparing appropriate messages on the value of the Census. However, the contacts established and the offer of assistance from participants could make the tasks somewhat easier. Statistics Canada's regional offices will be responding to a number of invitations and offers of assistance in strengthening the entrées provided to some of the target communities. In addition, participation of representatives from the Census Public Communication and the Census Collection and Coverage teams in all aspects of the workshop activities provided direct links to the census management system. As with the previous series of workshops, action on the suggestions from participants rests with Statistics Canada. Where concrete suggestions and recommendations have been made for addressing problems, a strategy for considering the implications of proposed measures must be reviewed in the census activity structure.



Addressing some recommendations requires the commitment of both financial and human resources by Statistics Canada. A case in point is the recommendation that the personal security of census staff working in some neighbourhoods requires that persons be assigned in pairs. The preparation of information leaflets in non-official languages for targeting towards areas with high concentrations of these languages also has cost implications, as do most of the other recommendations. It is important that the suggestions be evaluated in order to determine what are practical and cost effective measures for addressing them. Perhaps some alternative courses of action to those put forward during the workshops may also be identified.



APPENDIX A

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Toronto Workshops (August 22, 23 and 24, 1989)

*Ms. Elaine Li
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