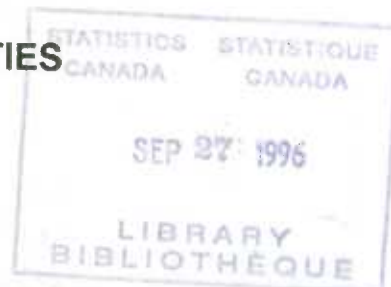


**POLICY TO PROVIDE REASONABLE ACCESS
TO STATISTICS CANADA INFORMATION AND SERVICES
IN ALTERNATIVE FORMATS
TO PERSONS WITH SENSORY DISABILITIES**



1. Introduction

Treasury Board's "*Alternative Formats - Access for All*" guidelines support the Government Communications Policy which states: "Institutions must pursue fair communications practices...by taking all reasonable measures to communicate effectively with disabled persons.". The Canadian Human Rights Act and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms reinforce this right "... to have access to government publications and information in a usable form ...".

Statistics Canada supports these guidelines and is committed to provide Statistics Canada information and services in alternative formats to persons with sensory disabilities. This Policy reaffirms the Agency's commitment to improve and publicize the availability of alternative formats and to ensure equal access to Statistics Canada information and services.

2. Policy

Statistics Canada will provide access to Statistics Canada information and services in acceptable and reasonable formats to serve the individual needs of persons with sensory disabilities.

Information in alternative format will be produced and provided upon request within a reasonable time-frame and in a format that best suits the nature of the information being requested and the individual needs of the client.

The Daily, Statistics Canada's official daily release of final data produced in highest abstract format will be provided in a variety of formats.

Statistics Canada TTY services will be provided by Statistics Canada Sales and Service Centres, the Regional Reference Centres and the Statistics Canada Library.

Statistics Canada information of narrative nature will be provided, upon request and after consultation with the client, in audio cassette or other reasonable alternative format that best serves the individual needs of the client.

Statistics Canada's tabular, graphical and illustrative information will be provided by a personalized telephone advisory service from Headquarters, Regional Offices and Subject Matter Areas.

Fees for these products and services will be the same as for standard STC products and services.

3. Definitions

For the purpose of this Policy and in order to ensure consistency, the following definitions are used:

Alternative Format

Alternative format refers to any format other than a standard print, video or film format that renders the information accessible to people who are unable to read standard print or hear audio track. Instead of standard print, the accepted formats include large print, braille, audio cassette, and electronically encoded diskettes which can be accessed through computers to reproduce voice, large print, or braille. In the case of film or video material, the alternative format is open or closed captioning.

The Daily

"*The Daily* includes the print publication and its electronically disseminated equivalents, released daily Monday to Friday

(except statutory holidays) and special supplements to *The Daily* that release Labour Force Survey and Consumer Price Index information."¹

Persons with Sensory Disabilities

Persons with sensory disabilities are persons who are print restricted and unable to read standard printed matter, and persons who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing.

Reasonable Access

Reasonable access refers to the production and provision of "selective" Statistics Canada information in a usable format that best serves the needs of the individual client.

Selective

Selective refers to the nature of the information. Information containing tabular data and charts does not convert or format well to all alternative format options. Statistics Canada will consult with the client, study the nature of the information, and decide with the client upon the alternative format that best serves the individual needs of the client and the nature of the information.

TTS

Text-To-Speech software to produce synthetic voice from electronic text.

TTY

Adaptive teletype equipment for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Voice Synthesizer

Adaptive computer technology that lets persons with visual impairments hear information through personal software with speakers or headsets.

4. Application

- a) Statistics Canada will provide *The Daily* in the following adaptive computer format options:

- Automatic 1-800 telephone service with voice synthesized, Text- to-Speech (TTS);
 - Personalized 1-800 telephone service. Advisory communication service provided by personnel in Headquarters, Regional Offices, and Subject Matter Areas interpreting narrative descriptions of tabular data, charts, and illustrations;
 - Computer diskettes will be provided upon request, as will electronic files. Both have been optimized for the following adaptive computer technology, and for retrieval on the World Wide Webb:
 - Voice synthesizer, Text-To-Speech (TTS);
 - Large print computer screen scanning;
 - Braille printing;
 - Large print paper format in 16 point.
- b) Personalized 1-800 telephone service. An advisory communication service will also interpret additional STC information. This service provided by personnel in Headquarters, Regional Offices and Subject Matter Areas will provide narrative descriptions of tabular data, charts, and illustrations.
- c) Other Statistics Canada information will be produced and provided upon request and consultation with the client to determine what alternative option best suits the individual needs of the client and the nature of the information being requested.

Note: It is recommended that this Policy be provided for a trial period of 12 months. At which time, the production costs, the level of demand and the Agency's ability to sustain these practices will be reviewed and evaluated.

Discussions with organizations such as Artemis Consultants, The Canadian National Institute for the Blind, the Public Service Diversity Management Directorate and Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat identified an interest in the following selective published data: The Daily, Perspectives on Labour and Income, Canadian Social

5. Fees and Charges

Fees for alternative format products and services will be the same as for standard STC products and services with the exception of:

The automated, voice synthesized option of *The Daily* and the personal advisory telephone communication service will be provided to the client at no charge.

The large print, 16 point paper format of *The Daily* will be provided daily at no charge to selected key sources such as the Statistics Canada Employee Resource Centre, The Canadian National Institute for the Blind, and The National Library of Canada.

See Appendix 1 for a list of proposed recipients.

The large print, 16 point paper format of *The Daily* will be provided to other clients at a nominal fee.

Computer diskettes developed to meet specific design specifications for adaptive computers will be provided to the client at a nominal fee.

Other alternative format options are to be provided at the same cost as the conventional published product.

6. Responsibilities

Dissemination Division will be responsible for:

- developing, producing, maintaining and distributing *The Daily* in diskette, large print, and automated telephone service in voice synthesized, Text-To-Speech formats;
- contracting alternative format producers for alternative options such as audio cassettes and braille labelling of cassettes;
- reviewing and approving quality control standards of alternative format options such as audio cassettes and braille labelling of cassettes;
- distributing, in cooperation with subject matter divisions, alternative format products such as audio cassettes upon discussion of the individual needs of

the client, and the nature of the information being requested.

Marketing Division will be responsible for:

- sales, service and marketing procedures;
- assessing potential market for alternative formats;
- maintaining inventory of requests, nature of requests, sales and nature of sales.

Communications Division will be responsible for:

- promoting awareness and accessibility of Statistics Canada alternative format information, services and procedures to Statistics Canada employees; other government departments, universities, interest groups and associations, the media, and alternative format users.

Library Services Division will be responsible for:

- assigning product registration numbers;
- obtaining ISSN and ISBN numbers for alternative format products such as audio cassettes;
- maintaining copies of all STC alternative format information;
- distributing copies to the National Library of Canada;
- listing with The National Library of Canada for CANWIP and CANUC:H selections;
- informing the Depository Services Program of the availability of alternative format copies.

Reference Centres in Regional Offices,
Author and Subject Matter Divisions will be responsible for:

- informing personnel of alternative format procedures;
- answering telephone inquiries.

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