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COMMUNICATIONS



**AT
YOUR
SERVICE**



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COMMUNICATIONS AT YOUR SERVICE

**A Guide to the products
and services of the
Communications Division**

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PROGRAM EXCELLENCE STARTS WITH GOOD COMMUNICATIONS

As the country's national statistical agency, Statistics Canada interacts with every level of government, with business, labour, academic and social institutions, with professional associations, the general public and the international statistical community.

In fulfilling our mandate, we must continually adapt to the changing expectations and information needs of these various groups. Good communications are, therefore, essential.

Effective communications require co-operation among senior management, Communications Division, regional offices, researchers, analysts and program managers. It is a shared responsibility.

Communications Division helps achieve corporate objectives through its core program and by assisting managers to develop and deliver the communications component of their programs.

We can help with your internal or external communications—with employees or respondents, media or the public.

This guide outlines Communications Division's corporate responsibilities and its products and services. Each communication function is explained, as is Communications Division's role in the functions and the policies we administer. Examples of the services offered by each area are also discussed. Most services are offered on a cost-recovery basis.

At the end is a list of resource people to assist you with precise communications issues, or with full support in planning and implementing your program.

We hope this guide will be useful and invite your comments and suggestions. We look forward to working with you.



PLANNING AND ADVICE

Well-planned communications improve the effectiveness, efficiency and economy of programs, and can improve employee morale. Accordingly, communications planning is an integral part of any project manager's work for either new or ongoing programs.

Proper communications planning helps managers anticipate issues, evaluate attitudes in external and internal environments, and identify appropriate communications options. As a result, managers are better able to make sound decisions based on the needs of the agency and its clients.

Communications Division supports the Chief Statistician in administering the *Government Communications Policy*, which ensures effective, consistent communications throughout the federal government.

Every year, we prepare, in co-operation with the Communications Committee, a *Strategic Communications Plan* for the agency, setting out broad objectives and communications priorities for the coming year.

Based on this plan and input from divisions throughout the agency, we prepare an *Operational Communications Plan*, which details the various communications activities (such as advertising, media monitoring, publishing and public relations) Statistics Canada envisions for the coming year. We also prepare the *Communications Synopsis and Plan for Memoranda to Cabinet*.

Communications Division offers a broad range of planning services—from comprehensive communications strategies to those focused on one program or project. These services are most often cost-recovered.

Examples of **planning and advice** at work...

- ✓ You are developing a new survey. We can help you to:
 - identify and analyze opinion trends among users, respondents and the general public
 - research and analyze issues to determine challenges and opportunities in the external and internal environments
 - determine appropriate and compatible communications objectives
 - identify communications messages and activities in line with program and agency objectives and resource allocations.

- ✓ You have been managing a survey program for a year and are not obtaining expected results from your communications activities. To improve response rates, we can:
 - update your communications plan to reflect changed conditions, or prepare one if none exists
 - offer suggestions to improve your external and internal communications
 - evaluate your communications strategies and activities and suggest alternative courses of action
 - recommend the most effective communications vehicles for reaching your target audiences.



For more information, contact
Daniel Scott (951-1121)



OFFICIAL RELEASES AND PUBLISHING

Dissemination of Statistics Canada's information to the public requires a great diversity of products and services, and an effective mechanism for announcing their availability. Communications Division is responsible for telling the public and clients when new information is available and for producing many general information products.

The Daily is Statistics Canada's official vehicle for releasing information to the public. The *Policy on The Daily (Official Release)* requires the availability of statistical information to be announced in *The Daily* before any further dissemination occurs. Announcements of an information release can range from articles summarizing major findings, accompanied by tables, charts and promotional information, to simple statements that a product is now available for sale.

Most reporting of Statistics Canada's information releases in the news media is based on *The Daily*. Well-written, well-presented release articles are essential to achieving broad and accurate media coverage. *The Daily's* staff assist subject-matter divisions in preparing effective announcements, as well as monitoring compliance with the related *Policy on Highlights of Publications*.

We also work with subject-matter divisions to schedule information releases. Planned release dates are publicized with the news media and other clients up to a year in advance for major indicators, with more comprehensive updates on a monthly, weekly and daily basis. *The Daily's* staff also monitor release performance, ensuring that announced release dates are met.

Other publications of Communications Division include:

- *Infomat*, a weekly summary of major data releases
- *Canada Year Book*, a biennial reference book—intended for the general public—that covers the full range of agency information
- *Canada: A Portrait*, a biennial publication with broad general appeal, providing statistical information about trends in society and the economy, as well as situating Canada in the international context
- *Canada at a Glance*, a brochure of general interest facts.

Example of **official releases and publishing** at work...

- ✓ You are responsible for the official release of a new publication produced in your division. Working with you throughout the official release process, we can:
 - plan for maximum media coverage of your data and create widespread interest in your publication
 - prepare a release announcement for *The Daily*, including text highlights complemented by charts and tables, as well as a front-page box with a publication photo
 - schedule your release to gain best exposure
 - alert the media and other users to the official release date through our release schedules and *The Daily Alert*
 - prepare a follow-up release for *Infomat*, along with a photo of your publication.



For more information, contact
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PUBLIC RELATIONS

Public relations programs seek to establish effective interaction and communication between Statistics Canada and its key publics. Among these publics are employees, members of Parliament, federal public servants, the media, respondents, clients and the general public. In view of their strategic importance, employee, media and respondent relations are presented in separate sections in this guide.

Public relations programs can serve various objectives. They may build support for Statistics Canada's role and programs or create awareness of those programs, a specific program component or an event. Public relations activities can create a receptive environment for marketing by informing clients and potential clients of programs, products or services and by educating them in the applications of statistical information. They also work to create a positive public image of the agency as relevant, accurate, reliable and objective.

Communications Division develops and implements a basic corporate public relations program. Some examples of key products and services include:

- *Overview*, a quarterly newsletter for data users
- *Who to Contact at Statistics Canada*, a list of key agency personnel
- *Release Dates Calendar*, an annual listing of release dates for selected economic indicators
- *Guides to Using Statistics Canada Data*, brochures that provide clients with helpful tips for finding and using Statistics Canada information
- *Focus for the Future*, a quarterly bulletin that provides information on census products and services
- *Corporate Displays* and *Interactive Computer Displays*, programs that reach out to clients and potential clients through trade shows, conferences, science centres, and other remote sites
- *Deputy Minister Letters*, a program that brings significant data releases to the attention of senior federal officials in departments with a corresponding policy interest
- *We are Statistics Canada*, a video production on Statistics Canada for external and internal audiences.

Communications Division also offers a broad range of public relations services to other divisions. Many of our products, such as *Overview*, are intended to assist you in achieving your public relations objectives. And our expertise is available to help you in planning, developing and carrying out specific public relations activities for your program, from producing a video to mounting a conference display, and from co-ordinating a mailing to all members of Parliament to producing a brochure.

Examples of **public relations** at work...

- ✓ You are conducting a survey that has important results or changes. If you meet the criteria for the program, Communications Division can assist you in creating awareness of the significant findings of your survey within government. We do this by preparing letters for the Chief Statistician's signature that tell deputy ministers about information relevant to their program areas.

- ✓ A member of Parliament has called to get some data from your survey. We can advise you about information entitlements for members of Parliament.

- ✓ You would like to display your products and explain your services at an upcoming conference. We can advise you on the content of your display, including audio-visual materials, suggest how to staff the booth, train your staff to be pro-active, and arrange material shipments.

- ✓ You are the manager of a new high-profile survey. To help explain the objectives of the survey to the collection staff, the media, and potential data users, you would like to produce a video. Communications Division will advise and actively participate in all aspects from scripting to final distribution.



For more information, contact
Suzanne Massie (951-8224)



MEDIA RELATIONS

At Statistics Canada, we work closely with the media to ensure widespread reporting of our information releases. The media provide the agency with an effective way of delivering our information to the broadest possible audience, and every media encounter is an opportunity to promote Statistics Canada to the public.

Communications Division administers the policies and delivers the programs which guide the agency's media relations efforts. We also provide program managers with a broad range of services to improve the level and nature of media coverage and enhance the quality of media interactions.

Through our media relations programs and services, we:

- plan and advise on media promotions
- administer the *Policy on Complimentary Distribution to the Media* and the *Policy on Responses to Erroneous Statements in the Media*
- manage the agency's media monitoring program (*News Briefs*)
- hold media lock-ups for the Labour Force Survey, Consumer Price Index, International Trade, and National Income and Expenditures Accounts releases
- develop and distribute schedules to provide the media with advance notice of releases
- operate a media inquiries referral service
- provide media training for agency spokespersons.

Communications Division develops media strategies tailored to specific programs or projects, assists in developing media materials, and co-ordinates Statistics Canada's media promotions across the country.

Examples of **media relations** at work...

- ✓ You are about to release survey results or you have decided to include a special study in your regular publication. To help promote your data releases or publications to the media, we can:
 - determine whether the material lends itself to a news release and help prepare and distribute a newsworthy text
 - identify reporters interested in your topic and develop strategies to generate coverage
 - liaise with regional communications officers to promote regional coverage
 - provide media training to your staff and set up interviews
 - work with you to anticipate media questions and develop responses to inquiries
 - monitor ensuing media coverage, through *News Briefs*, so you have early warning of potential problems or issues, and an evaluation of your strategy.

- ✓ You have identified media coverage which provides misleading or erroneous information about your survey or data release. In keeping with the *Policy on Responses to Erroneous Statements in the Media*, we can:
 - advise on whether and how you should respond so that the agency's image is protected and positive relations with the media are maintained
 - work with you to prepare the response, including securing the required approvals.



For more information, contact
Lyne Bélanger (951-1199)



RESPONDENT RELATIONS

The agency's respondent relations program supports survey managers in fostering and maintaining goodwill among survey respondents. Good relations and positive communications with respondents can secure participation, improve response rates and ultimately, improve data quality.

Effective communications activities encourage respondent co-operation and willingness to participate in surveys. Respondents must know what is expected of them and why, as well as their rights and obligations. Maintaining and enhancing good respondent relations is an integral part of the survey process.

Under the *Policy on Informing Survey Respondents*, Communications Division advises and assists survey managers in preparing communications materials. We also work with the Data Access and Control Services Division in reviewing communications materials produced under this policy. We are required to review statements of purpose for survey questionnaires to ensure that each clearly explains the uses and benefits of survey data.

We also undertake special projects funded by client divisions. These include initiatives such as the successful public communications program for the 1991 censuses of population and agriculture—a joint Communications Division and regional offices program.

Our staff can help prepare effective respondent relations material and provide advice about the language and best approach for survey documentation. In addition, when appropriate, we can inform respondents about surveys through media publicity, letters and brochures.

We also produce various materials (such as a monthly calendar of surveys in the field) to help Statistics Canada staff respond to data user and respondent questions.

Examples of **respondent relations** at work...

- ✓ You are developing a new survey. We can:
 - review your statement of purpose to ensure it complies with the *Policy on Informing Survey Respondents*
 - help you prepare information materials for respondents—from brochures and leaflets to introductory letters
 - inform respondents of surveys through media publicity or articles in selected association newsletters.

- ✓ You have been managing a survey for several years and wonder if it's time to re-evaluate the information you send to respondents. We can help review your materials with a view to improving response rates and maintaining positive relations with your respondents.



For more information, contact
Johanne Beckstead (951-1115)



FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL RELATIONS

As key partners in the national statistical system, the provincial and territorial governments are consulted and kept informed of plans and developments in the agency's statistical programs. Through provisions under the Statistics Act, they collect and transfer source information for some of our programs and participate in data sharing agreements with the agency.

To aid efficient communications, each provincial and territorial government has appointed a "Statistical Focal Point" to co-ordinate statistical activities with Statistics Canada. Along with the Chief Statistician of Canada, the provincial and territorial focal points form the Federal-Provincial Consultative Council on Statistical Policy, the umbrella organization responsible for federal-provincial relations on most statistical matters. To deal with various subject-matter areas, such as census or business statistics, 13 federal-provincial sub-committees were also created. As well, other special federal-provincial consultative arrangements exist in the areas of health, education and justice.

Communications Division contains the Federal-Provincial Relations Secretariat supporting the Council's Secretary (currently the Director General, Marketing and Information Services Branch). In this role, we administer the following policies:

- *Policy on Provincial and Territorial Travel Subsidies*
- *Policy on Distribution of Products to Provincial and Territorial Focal Points*
- *Policy on Informing Provincial and Territorial Statistical Representatives and Regional Directors*, which ensures that provincial and territorial governments are aware of each statistical activity within their jurisdiction.

Three documents are prepared regularly to keep the agency managers and the focal points themselves abreast of developments in federal, provincial and territorial programs:

- *Directory of Provincial and Territorial Programs, Products and Services*
- *Report on Routine Contacts with Provincial and Territorial Governments*
- Minutes of the annual meeting of the Federal-Provincial Consultative Council on Statistical Policy.

Communications Division can advise subject-matter managers on current policies and on all aspects of relations with the provincial and territorial governments. As well, we regularly distribute current lists of future federal-provincial committee meetings and of focal points with their addresses and telephone numbers, and can distribute information to them on your behalf.

Example of **federal-provincial relations** at work...

- ✓ You are planning a new survey (or evaluating and redesigning an existing one). You want to consult the provincial and territorial governments about their data needs. And you want to investigate the possibility of using provincial administrative data to create a new database. We can:
 - provide information on past and upcoming meetings of federal-provincial committees (such as dates and locations, delegate list, and minutes)
 - book you on committee agendas
 - help you co-ordinate your consultations through the provincial and territorial statistical focal points.



For more information, contact
Daniel Scott (951-1121)



EDITORIAL AND RELATED SERVICES

Statistics Canada produces more than 350 catalogued publications and numerous questionnaires, information bulletins and reports every year. Clear, concise language is essential in these documents if messages are to be effective.

Communications Division is committed to improving departmental writing standards and making Statistics Canada's publications and other communications products more accessible and understandable. We can assist in every step of the communication and publication process—from preliminary planning, to workshops on writing clearly and effectively, to the final proof.

Our staff write, edit, or rewrite texts in French and English. We manage many challenging projects—from editing and producing a series of articles to writing brochures, speeches and presentations. Other services include inputting text, advising on desktop publishing and designing colour overheads. (All of these services are cost-recovered).

The division also produces a valuable writing guide called *Tips for Effective Writing*, and provides advice and guidelines on the *Policy on Highlights of Publications*. This policy requires that all Statistics Canada publications contain highlights—to encourage accurate media coverage and to assist our users.

Examples of **editorial and related services** at work...

- ✓ You have assembled a team of analysts to write a series of articles on economic topics to be distributed as non-catalogued publications. We can:
 - help improve analysts' writing skills through workshops
 - set guidelines for the series
 - edit the analysts' texts
 - compare and revise texts translated from English or French
 - input text
 - correct and revise the final proof
 - desktop publish
 - advise on distributing the series.

- ✓ Your division would like to create more interest in your data within the business community, but cannot afford an expensive marketing campaign. We can:
 - help determine which communications tools are needed for your audience (in this instance, we might suggest a brochure and a presentation)
 - write the brochure
 - write the presentation
 - design and create colour overheads that can be used with your presentation to promote your division during conventions or symposiums.



For more information, contact
Brenda Babcock (951-6976)



INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

Good internal communications are central to excellence in communicating with the outside world and reinforce essential links within an organization.

Prime responsibility for effective internal communications lies with managers, supervisors, and employees themselves. The Personnel Branch and Communications Division support managers in their initiatives and undertake a core program of corporate initiatives.

Communications Division plays an active role in internal communications through the employee newsletter *SCAN*. We inform employees about the agency's objectives, programs, products and services, bridging the gap between Statistics Canada's many divisions. We also provide a critical link to the regions by maintaining regional information contacts.

SCAN encourages a two-way flow of information by asking staff to submit articles, suggest topics for articles and provide feedback through readership surveys. Every year, a special edition of *SCAN* features an interview with the Chief Statistician which outlines the accomplishments of the past year and directions for the coming year.

To support orientation and recruitment programs, we produce a variety of communications materials including the video, *We are Statistics Canada*. And to promote effective co-ordination between programs, we distribute materials developed for external audiences, such as the *Overview* newsletter and *Release Dates*, widely throughout the agency.

Communications Division also organizes lectures sponsored by other divisions. We arrange the facilities for these sessions and publicize the presentations both within the agency and externally.

Through a program of special events, we provide an opportunity for employees to meet in a social context. Currently, two annual events are sponsored—one for Christmas and one for Canada Day.

The full-range of expertise and services of Communications Division are available to managers to assist them in developing and implementing internal communications activities for their programs.

Examples of **internal communications** at work...

- ✓ A visitor from the United States will be coming to your division next month to discuss common areas of interest. She is widely recognized for her work, and since some is of broad interest to employees, she is willing to give a presentation. To help you, we can:
 - reserve the room and make related arrangements
 - arrange for simultaneous second-language and sign-language interpretation
 - handle all advertising and publicity
 - audiotape or videotape the lecture for future reference and for the regional offices.

- ✓ Your division is holding a special graduation ceremony for participants of a new training course. If you want photos of individuals receiving their course certificates to present to the graduates as a gift, we can arrange for a photographer at cost.



For more information, contact
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AT YOUR SERVICE DIRECTORY

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We welcome questions, suggestions and comments on this guide.
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