Implementation Status of Recommendations

FINAL REPORT

Audit and Evaluation Division
July 2004

Statistics
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Audit and Evaluation Division

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide the Internal Audit Committee with a summary of the implementation status of recommendations from three reports:

1. Audit of Personnel Screening (December 2003)
2. Report of the Auditor General of Canada Chapter 6 - Statistics Canada—Managing the Quality of Health Statistics (December 2002)
3. Compliance Audit on the Policy on Informing Users of Data Quality and Methodology (June 2002)

The previous status report was December 2003.

It is part of the responsibilities of the Audit and Evaluation Division to monitor the implementation status of recommendations contained within audit reports tabled with the Internal Audit Committee as well as those made in management memorandums. This practice complies with Treasury Board's *Internal Audit Policy and Guidelines*. The Division also provides the Committee with updates on the status of other audit-related issues and recommendations affecting Statistics Canada such as those contained in Office of the Auditor General reports.

Scope and Methodology

Monitoring activity covered the extent and nature of action taken on all recommendations presented in the audit reports. It involved a review of the audit reports, an analysis of current plans, interviews as appropriate and an analysis of the actions that were taken. The monitoring also includes looking at the actions taken to address issues identified in management letters. Results are included in the next sections of this report.

I. Audit of Personnel Screening (December 2003)

Introduction

The audit report for the Audit of Personnel Screening was approved by the Internal Audit Committee on December 10, 2003. The report contained three recommendations and a management action plan.

Status

Recommendation	Monitoring Status
Recommendation 1: Data Access and Control Services Division revise Chapter 3 of the Statistics Canada *Security Practices Manual* in line with the revised *Government Security Policy* for approval by Policy Committee and widely communicate changes. A key item will be the review of the timing expected for reliability statuses with a view to improving current practices.	**Status: Incomplete—continue monitoring** DACS is preparing a first draft of Chapter 3. HR and ROB report that changes have been made so that the enhanced reliability status is obtained in advance of starting work. AED has confirmed this for new hires in Global, based on results for April 1 to June 30, 2004. A new committee has been established to provide guidance for exceptional circumstances (see recommendation 2). Discussion with 2006 Census team regarding their HR needs has been initiated. One aspect includes security clearance requirements for the 2006 Census enumerators although it will be some time before specifics of this nature are addressed.
Recommendation 2: Data Access and Control Services Division, Human Resources Operations Division and Regional Operations Branch partner to improve the monitoring and management of personnel screening, periodically reporting results to the Confidentiality and Legislation Committee.	**Status: Incomplete—continue monitoring** DACS reports that expired statuses have been eliminated in Global and a proactive process to do renewals in advance of expiry has been established. For interviewers, this is to be completed by August 2004, as part of work done towards recommendation 3. A Security Screening Review Committee has been established to handle issues around clearances in a consistent manner. It is chaired by the director of DACS, with key stakeholders as members. The committee has been discussed at the Confidentiality and Legislation Committee.

Recommendation 3:	**Status: Incomplete—continue monitoring**
Security status and expiry information about employees and deemed employees be entered into the relevant corporate database by security staff only, following the best practice in place for the Global database. The databases to which this practice should be extended are: Survey Operations Pay System (SOPS) for interviewers; and the RDC Project Management System Database, maintained under the direction of the Manager of the Research Data Centre Program and to include all deemed-employee researchers.	ROB and DACS report that work has now started for SOPS, somewhat later than initially expected, given other priorities for systems changes required as a result of new collective agreements.

DACS has not yet made progress with respect to the Research Data Centre Program. |
| Recommendations contained in management memorandums | **Status: Complete—no further monitoring required**

Outstanding items are covered in the recommendations above which we will continue to monitor. |

II. Report of the Auditor General of Canada Chapter 6 - Statistics Canada—Managing the Quality of Health Statistics (December 2002)

Introduction

Chapter 6—*Managing the Quality of Health Statistics* contained six recommendations for Statistics Canada. Audit and Evaluation Division (AED) coordinated the preparation of a management action plan and is monitoring it.

The Office of the Auditor General has cancelled its re-audit of this chapter that had been planned for reporting in February 2005.

Status

Recommendation	Monitoring Status
Recommendation 1: 6.34 Recommendation. Statistics Canada should provide better documentation and references to more complete documentation of the results of its data quality systems and practices in the Biennial Program Report and the Quadrennial Program Report.	**Status: Complete—no further monitoring required** In May 2004, Corporate Planning Committee approved the revised *Integrated Program Reporting A Guide for Managers.* The guide continues to use the Quality Assurance Framework as an integral component and raises the bar in placing a clearer emphasis on the requirement to provide trend information when discussing performance. QPR and BPR are intended for the Chief Statistician and designed to evaluate overall program performance. When it is relevant, program managers may choose to include documentation or references to more complete documentation of the results of data quality systems. Since it is not always relevant, it has not been included as a specific requirement in the revised guide. Health Statistics Division (HSD) improved its documentation and references in its last BPR (Dec 2003).

Recommendation 2:	**Status: Previously reported as complete**
6.41 Recommendation. Statistics Canada should continue to work with the provinces and territories to improve the quality of health statistics databases.	
Recommendation 3:	**Status: Complete—no further monitoring required**
6.59 Recommendation. Statistics Canada should ensure that the information in the Integrated Meta-database on data quality of health programs is complete.	The latest IMDB records completeness summary (May 2004) shows that Health Statistics Division is now 92% compliant.
Recommendation 4:	**Status: Incomplete, but no further monitoring required**
6.65 Recommendation. Statistics Canada should make a regular, formal determination of the quality of the hospital morbidity data it receives from the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI).	As reported last time, Health Statistics Division (HSD) and CIHI have agreed on data quality requirements and established a feedback and consultation process. Since then, most agreed-upon historical information has been received and data quality summaries accompanied the data received from CIHI for the two most recent data cycles. HSD is consulting with CIHI on data quality issues as they emerge to improve the data quality summary and resolve HSD edit failures.
	HSD reports that for the current data cycle, it is creating one summary document describing data quality issues that arise once HSD processes this data, the CIHI consultation results and subsequent HSD decisions taken. AED assesses that sufficient momentum exists and further monitoring is not needed.
Recommendation 5:	**Status: Complete—no further monitoring required**
6.71 Recommendation. Statistics Canada and Health Canada should formally monitor the requirements of their respective Health Information Contribution Program contribution agreements and ensure that requirements are met.	AED reported in the previous status report that it had monitored most aspects of the requirements. Remaining items were assessed using the independent evaluation report received in January 2004 from CIHI. Most requirements were met. Results were provided to the Director of Health Statistics Division and the Assistant Director of Operational Planning and Programming Division responsible for Treasury Board submissions for use in preparing the next agreement.
Recommendation 6:	**Status: Previously reported as complete**
6.76 Recommendation. Statistics Canada should provide information in its Departmental Performance Report on the key results of its work on health statistics, including work undertaken as part of the Health Information Roadmap Initiative.	

III. Compliance Audit on the Policy on Informing Users of Data Quality and Methodology (June 2002)

Introduction

The audit report for the Compliance Audit on the Policy on Informing Users of Data Quality and Methodology was approved by the Internal Audit Committee on September 4, 2002. The report contained three recommendations and a management action plan.

Status

Recommendation	Monitoring Status
Recommendation 1:	**Status: Previously reported as complete**
Recommendation 2: Directors of statistical program areas monitor compliance in accordance with their responsibilities under the policy and report on their performance in biennial and quadrennial program reviews; and the Methods and Standards Committee evaluate the quality of this reporting.	**Status: Complete—no further monitoring required** The Annual Consolidation of Indicators includes one for the IMDB that directors use for reporting purposes. This is included in the revised guidelines for integrated program reporting, approved in May 2004. The indicator continues to be available, most recently for May 2004. On behalf of the Methods and Standards Committee (MSC), Standards Division has had a second qualitative analysis of the IMDB done as of May 2004 and the report is being completed. It will permit comparison with the first analysis as of March 2003.
Recommendation 3: In program areas where the application of the policy is more challenging, divisions consult closely with Methodology Branch in interpreting the policy within their context. The Methods and Standards Committee can provide any additional guidance that may be required.	**Status: Incomplete—further monitoring required** AED continues to monitor SNA and Standards Division progress towards including SNA metadata in the IMDB. As reported to the Methods and Standards Committee (MSC) in May 2004, an SNA framework has now been developed and will be adopted as a way to organize the metadata for the National Accounts in the IMDB. The SNA Branch and Standards Division will work together to reach this objective, with a target date of May 2005. The next update to MSC is fall 2004.