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# Setting Statistical Priorities

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## Introduction

Priorities among its statistical activities are difficult for a government agency to consider rationally. A report<sup>1</sup> on this subject has recently been issued by a panel of the Committee on National Statistics of the National Academy of Sciences with the sponsorship of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

This article presents the Panel's summary of its recommendations and an outline of *Setting Statistical Priorities*. A critique is offered in lieu of an extended summary to stimulate others to read the full report. The critique focuses on topics that will arise in using the report to set statistical priorities.

## Summary of Recommendations and Outline of Report

The Panel's work is best introduced in the words of *Setting Statistical Priorities* (pp. 1-2):

### "SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

"RECOMMENDATION 1: *The assignment of priorities among data packages and programs should involve explicit considerations of anticipated benefits and costs.*

"The annual cost to the federal government of the principal data programs for acquiring and providing data now exceeds \$545 million (OMB 1976). The priority issues inherent in this figure are unavoidable and important. They are unavoidable because the need for statistical services exceeds the resources to provide them and actions taken to alter or to continue statistical programs represent judgments made about priorities. They are important because much of our understanding of circumstances and events in our society and many of our decisions depend on data emerging from these programs. Judgments regarding data priorities are sometimes made by

legislative bodies, but most often the choices rest with the executive branch. The role of methodology in making these choices wisely is the focus of this report.

"A principle emerges: the choices of which data to produce, and how elaborate they should be, ought to depend on the data's importance to public and private decisions, that is, on the benefit to be derived from the use of the data. Consideration of this principle has, on a largely implicit basis, played an important part in determining the nature and extent of statistical programs within the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW).

"The Panel believes that this principle, benefit analysis, should be used consistently in all federal agencies to determine data plans. Even though it may be difficult to estimate anticipated benefits to be derived from data use, the methodology of benefit analysis should be adopted and supported by management as the basis for setting statistical priorities. Continued application of benefit analysis of data should develop into a powerful management device that will strengthen statistical services.

"RECOMMENDATION 2: *Each statistical agency should have budgeted activities to support analyses (a) to be used in setting the agency's priorities and (b) to improve the collection, analysis, and dissemination of data.*

"Statistical agencies at present have limited planning and analytic ability, and sometimes inadequate contacts with users. In HEW as elsewhere, policy analysis activities have characteristically been located near high-level decisionmakers, remote from the statistical units, which often have difficulty in securing

<sup>1</sup> Copies of the report are available from Joan Turek, Director, Division of Simulation and Modeling, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, Rm. 447 D, 200 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C., 20201.

resources for their traditional missions of collection and analysis of data. The agencies, moreover, do not assign sufficient resources to gaining familiarity with the needs of these and other users and to analyzing issues of statistical priorities. Inadequate communication with users and insufficient resources devoted to analysis inhibit efficient exploitation of available data for decisionmaking purposes. An adequate capability for data benefit analysis within a statistical agency will support other analytic work as well as help produce a good statistical product.

*"RECOMMENDATION 3: The statistical centers and HEW itself should sponsor research on (a) measuring the benefits of data, (b) current practices for using data in policy decisions, and (c) methods for incorporating benefit analysis into statistical priority setting.*

"To establish a sound basis for applying benefit analysis to the process of setting statistical priorities, further research is needed in three areas. The first is research on the methodology for identifying and measuring the benefits of data. Additional theory and case studies of practical applications are both needed.

"Secondly, to apply benefit analysis to data packages in the process of setting statistical priorities, studies are also needed of how data are or might better be used in policy decisions. Possible approaches include in-depth interviews, case studies, observation, and simulation.

"Thirdly, research is needed to devise imaginative ways to use techniques for benefit analysis of data in the statistical priority-setting process.

*"RECOMMENDATION 4: Each major statistical center should provide leadership in its field and should constitute a focal point for information and activities concerning data assembly and dissemination in that field.*

"Data are gathered by and stored at a large number of government and nongovernmental institutions. Many of these data appear useful for decisionmaking but are unknown and inaccessible to many policymakers. Consequently, statistical centers should undertake to catalogue, index, and where possible make accessible the broad range of statistics related to particular sectors."

The main body of *Setting Statistical Priorities* is organized in three chapters. The first supports the recommendation for benefit analysis of data packages, and stresses the importance of tying analysis of the benefits of data as closely as possible to the value of the data in decisionmaking. The second chapter supports the other three recommendations, not only on their own merits but also as means of implementing benefit analysis of data. In the third chapter, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) forms the basis of a case study. Special emphasis is given to identifying users of data, to specifying the major data characteristics (for example, the levels of detail, categories of data, and access to knowledgeable respondents), and to the importance of an appropriate analytic framework in which to consider decisionmakers' needs for data.

The body of *Setting Statistical Priorities* is followed by appendixes that include papers about setting priorities for government in general, and for NCES in particular; an exploratory analysis of the use of social statistics by Federal executives; a review of the methods used to identify users and to set priorities; background papers on activities of HEW statistical centers, with particular reference to education statistics; and finally, an annotated bibliography on the value of information in decisionmaking.

*Setting Statistical Priorities* describes an exploratory investigation of an extremely difficult subject. The Committee on National Statistics hopes that *Setting Statistical Priorities* will stimulate further dialogue, and serious efforts to engage in benefit analysis. As a start in this direction, the remainder of the present article lists some frequently heard observations on benefit analysis, together with comments by me.

### *Critique*

(1.) *At first reading the recommendations appear trite.*

Of course, there is now a general concern for benefits of action taken and recognition of the need for more research. Also, the Congress has mandated that NCES, for example, should have analytic ability as well as play a coordinating role in statistics for education. The evidence suggests, however, that present efforts to seek out and understand the benefits of data packages are often weak in organization, depth, support, documentation, and use. (See *Setting Statistical Priorities*, Appendixes A and D.)

(2.) "Benefit analysis" can give the impression of some grand formal scheme to solve the Nation's problems.

The term is meant to suggest an attitude or guide for action. The problems of setting statistical priorities are complex because of the many uses (even within national decisionmaking) and the many users with their conflicting economic-political interests. Because of the complexity, it is important for those who provide statistical service to have a guide responsive to the legitimate needs of prime users. Further, it is important that the guide encourage disciplined work and forthright analysis. The contention is that benefit analysis is such a guide. (See *Setting Statistical Priorities*, p. 7.)

(3.) At the present time, it is difficult to give a substantial collection of good examples of the benefit analysis of public data.

Three efforts are of interest: (a) Hayami and Peterson (1972) is an economic analysis of the value of reducing the standard error of crop forecasts; (b) Jabine and Schwartz (1974) consider the benefit analysis of data in the administration of some aspects of social security; and (c) Redfern (1974) gives a schematized analysis to justify a mid-decade census. These examples suggest that the benefit analysis of public data can be done and the results of the analysis can be useful in setting statistical priorities. (See *Setting Statistical Priorities*, pp. 9-13.)

(4.) Because there is so little experience in the analysis of benefits of data, it is advisable to proceed slowly and tackle easier problems first.

(5.) Review of a data package provides a good opportunity for benefit analysis.

Some leading questions are: Would it be more beneficial to collect more or fewer of these data? Should the data be collected more or less frequently? Should the data package be more closely linked to other packages? How should they be published? How much analysis should be made? These questions and their responses must be formulated in terms of the benefits that can be anticipated from the data. The decisions to be made are *quantitative*. Thus, it is never appropriate to say merely that such data should be collected because they were mandated. The mandate always leaves room for choice of accuracy, detail, timeliness, etc. (See *Setting Statistical Priorities*, pp. 28-29.) Work on these questions with a benefit framework will force more than superficial answers and should give the concerned parties a better understanding of their interests.

(6.) There are many technical issues in applying benefit analysis. (See *Setting Statistical Priorities*, Appendix K.)

The correct response is not despair but a sincere effort to attack problems such as

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(a) *Benefit analysis is hard to implement because economic and statistical concepts are to be used in working with non-experts. It takes thought, care, and research to communicate accurately but it is necessary. The statistical services cannot do an adequate job if they do not have the ability to talk to data users.*

(b) *It is very hard if not impossible to find all the uses and users of a data package. And there is little reason to do that. Samples certainly can be used of users and possibly of uses. In some cases, a few major uses will dominate the picture. In all cases, it would seem wise to emphasize the development of good understanding of a few uses rather than broad superficial understanding.*

(c) *Very little is known about the decisionmaking process so that the benefit analysis cannot begin. Actually, our knowledge of how decisionmakers use data is uneven. Little may be known about the work of the President. On the other hand, some technical uses of data in policy analysis, in administration, and in evaluation are relatively straightforward.*

(d) *It is difficult to compare apples and oranges. In terms of a larger framework, it is possible, that is in food value. By considering data within a relatively narrow area, such as education or education of the disadvantaged, these issues can be reduced. Later, with experience we can discuss—if necessary because of budgeting procedures—the comparison of benefits of data on education and data on the incidence of cancer.*

(e) *It is not clear who benefits from data, the people, the Congress, the President, etc.. This issue does not need resolution. It would be advantageous for the political system to understand the benefits to the different participants. Activities that are shown to be mutually beneficial will be of particular interest.*

(f) *Benefit analysis cannot be made because utility functions are not linear; some things—human life, for example—cannot have their values measured; one cannot add utilities of several participants; the utilities of several programs cannot be simply added; etc. Experience and theory have taught us of the existence of these issues and ways to overcome them.*

Again, the basic strategy is to first work with smaller problems. Large sums of money can be easily considered so long as we are not concerned with comparisons over a great range of dollar amounts. The value of a human life need not be

a pressing issue. There are many aspects of humans which can be approximately measured and compared with money. To avoid the intercomparisons of utility, one could concentrate on Congressional intent and measurements of the consequences of departures from Congressional intent. By looking at a restricted area with few relevant programs, it should be possible to explore the interactions of competing programs.

(7.) *Clearly, a complete analysis of the benefits of data cannot be made.*

Nevertheless, a good approximation is likely to be better than nothing or the superficial.

(8.) *A benefit analysis is needed to see how much to spend on the benefit analysis of public data.*

If large sums are spent on the benefit analysis of data this should no doubt be done. At the outset, it seems wise to proceed informally, work on smaller problems, and live with approximations.

(9.) *Although the advice has been to work on small problems, one should select problems where the results of the analysis can be significant.*

For example, the data problems associated with allocation formulas are relatively small but the consequences of variation in data quality can make substantial differences in the allocation.

(10.) *Documentation of benefit analysis of public data and of uses of public data in policy work is useful.*

If nothing else, documentation clarifies how the responsible people think the data are used. It gives the observer the opportunity to see how comparisons were made. It would expose the statistical agencies so that their analyses would be explicit and hopefully penetrating. This documentation should appear in scholarly journals, journals of public concern, and similar public forums. Although this work would be expensive, it is appropriate to inform the public, it will help the professional standards of the statistical civil servants, and it is likely to attract good ideas and people to the agencies.

(11.) *Benefit analysis of data for decisionmaking appears to exclude basic research and well-rounded data collections; benefit analysis of public data for policy questions will result in a helter-skelter of data.*

This is not being advocated; it does not appear to be a likely consequence of benefit analysis.

Certainly, benefit analysis of data as described here must be supported by knowledge of the areas to which the data apply. Research to obtain that knowledge must be performed. It is the concern of the statistical agencies but it need not be sponsored by the agencies. (See *Setting Statistical Priorities*, pp. 30-31.)

A compatible alternative to benefit analysis is to make the data system rely heavily on the marketplace for data. This technique is not likely to serve the national interests; marketplace response would scatter the data into highly specific interests and would destroy the series useful in national policymaking. (See *Setting Statistical Priorities*, p. 40.)

(12.) *Other issues, such as politics, are overriding and, therefore, benefit analysis of public data is inappropriate.*

This seems farfetched. It is hard to think of situations where the people concerned do not wish to know the consequences of actions. Further, if efficiency is of some concern then the benefit analysis of data is relevant.

Benefit analysis of public data is difficult but should result in data that are useful and used. Some questions to be asked are simple, but serious answers would give much insight: For example, what are the consequences (a) of present underenumeration in the U. S. Census of Popu-

lation? (b) of doubling (or halving) the standard error of the Consumer Price Index?

In summary, as A. Ross Eckler commented to the Committee on National Statistics, "... benefit considerations are an element implicit in practically all government decisions regarding choices among competing statistical packages. Little has been done to data in quantifying these decisions, and the recommendations in the report represent an effort to move in this direction. Rapid progress is not to be expected, and great advances may prove to be impossible, because of what has been referred to as the intractable difficulties of this approach, but the importance of the goals is great enough to justify taking all the risks that may be involved." (See *Setting Statistical Priorities*, p. 8.)

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## User Access—Data Banks

### EDITOR'S NOTE

In previous issues of *Statistical Reporter* there have been several discussions of the planning process associated with preparing *A Framework for Planning U.S. Federal Statistics, 1978-1989*. The text of the Framework will be reviewed and revised by statistical agencies during the balance of this year. A revised draft will be the subject of public review and comment during 1977.

Selected drafts of various sections of the Framework will appear in *Statistical Reporter* during the coming months. While preliminary in nature, these drafts will be published in order to facilitate wide review of these materials. The chapter on User Access—Data Banks, which is a crosscutting issue of Section IV of the Framework, is published in this issue. The following chapters have appeared in previous issues: Federal-State Cooperative Systems of Data Collection (November); Long-Term Economic Growth Models (October); Section I—The Nature of the Plan (September). For a full outline of the overall Framework, see pages 207 and 208 of *Statistical Reporter* for May 1976.

For background statements on the planning process, see Joseph W. Duncan, "Developing Better Long Range Plans for Federal Statistics," *Statistical Reporters*, No. 75-4, October 1974; Robert W. Raynsford, "The Interagency Statistical Planning Effort, 1975," *Statistical Reporter*, No. 76-3, September, 1975; Paul O'Neill, "OMB's Role in Planning and Coordination of Federal Statistics," *Statistical Reporter*, No. 76-11, May, 1976.

Comments on these materials should be sent to the Statistical Policy Division, Office of Management and Budget, 726 Jackson Place, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20503.

### Introduction

Most agencies in the Federal Government which are engaged in extensive statistical work use electronic computers for this task. This wide acceptance of electronic data processing equipment and the increasing demand for statistics for research and policy formation have resulted not only in a growing volume of statistics from these agencies, but also in a new storage medium, the machine-readable data file. Easy access to computerized data files is essential for purposes of research, policy formulation, and publication. Consequently, the importance of guides to computerized data files has increased.

The following summarizes what some of the agencies have done to facilitate access to their data whether available in published form or on computer tape.

### Description of Major Agency Guides and Indexes

*Bureau of Labor Statistics.*—The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) in the Department of Labor is the principal data gathering agency of the Federal Government in the field of labor statistics. BLS collects, organizes, and disseminates data relating to employment and unemployment, productivity, prices, family expenditures, wages, industrial relations, and occupational safety. BLS has issued several publications which are aids in accessing information available in published form. These include the following:

—*Major BLS Programs* which is an annual list of BLS programs giving characteristics of the collection and presentation of data, nature of the series, references to full descriptions of the projects, uses, and publications reporting the findings;

—*Publications of the Bureau of Labor Statistics* which is a semiannual catalog having an annotated listing of bulletins, reports, releases, and *Monthly Labor Review* articles and reprints; and

—*Publications of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1886-1971* which contains a listing of all numbered bulletins and reports issued by BLS since 1886, containing selected annotations and a subject index. These reference materials are excellent guides to accessing BLS data available in published form.

Some BLS data are also available in machine-readable form. BLS has established a data bank containing summary data generated from its statistical surveys. The BLS data bank is divided into a number of separate data files, each containing BLS statistics on a particular subject, for example, the Consumer Price Index, labor force,



and Wholesale Price Index. A description of data and analytical routines contained in its data bank and other machine-readable data files can be found in a 10-page publication issued in 1971 entitled, *BLS Data Bank Files and Statistical Routines*. This booklet contains data file descriptions which summarize published data stored in each file. Brief notes on the nature and scope of the statistical programs which yield these data are also provided as a guide to prospective users. BLS publications in which the data appear also are indicated. This booklet also includes documentation pertaining to BLS computer equipment and file format so as to help potential users evaluate the Bureau's data holdings in light of their research requirements and the processing capabilities available to them.

Since *BLS Data Bank Files and Statistical Routines* was last issued in 1971, a more current guide to BLS computerized data files is needed.

BLS is one of those agencies registered with the National Technical Information Service. BLS tapes available through NTIS are listed in the *NTIS Directory of Computerized Data Files and Related Software*. Tapes are available on such subjects as labor force, employment and earnings, area wage surveys, and Survey of Consumer Expenditures.

*Bureau of the Census.*—The Bureau of the Census in the Department of Commerce is the largest agency of the Federal Government involved in the collection, compilation, and publication of general-purpose statistics. In addition to its responsibility for taking all censuses authorized by law, the Census Bureau also collects and publishes statistics on construction activity and personal income. The Census Bureau also conducts sample surveys on a weekly, monthly, quarterly, and annual basis. These surveys encompass some of the same subjects as the major censuses, and provide more current information on social and economic conditions.

The Bureau of the Census publishes only the most essential and most widely useful data in its printed reports of censuses and surveys. As an aid to accessing Census data, the Bureau has published a wide variety of guides, reference works, and explanatory material, some of which are described below.

—*Index to 1970 Census Summary Tapes* (March 1973) contains a cross-reference guide to all tab-

ulations in all six counts of the 1970 census summary data, organized alphabetically by subject. This index helps identify and locate specific tables (on the tape) for specific subjects:

—*Index to Selected 1970 Census Reports* (1974) is an index to the tables found in selected series of reports: Population Volume I; Housing Volumes I, II, and III; and Census of Population and Housing I and II. It does not include subject reports and only final reports are indexed.

—*Bureau of the Census Guide to Programs and Publications: Subjects and Areas, 1973* (March 1974) provides a review of the Bureau's programs and published reports for each subject area. Reports, presented in tabular format, are listed by title, geographic areas, and principal subjects.

—*Bureau of the Census Catalog* contains a listing of reports on all subjects, an index to their contents, and a description of available data files, special tabulations, and other unpublished materials. An historical volume, *Bureau of the Census Catalog of Publications, 1970-1972*, presents a compilation of all material issued during that period.

—*Mini-Guide to the 1972 Economic Census* (November 1973) is a valuable reference to each of the nine economic census programs, to the data collected, and publications programs.

—*Guide to the 1972 Census of Governments* (February 1975) gives a summary description of each subject volume from the 1972 Census of Governments.

—*Guide to Recurrent and Special Governmental Statistics* (May 1972) summarizes the tabular and graphic presentations found in the recurrent reports and special studies series of the governmental statistics programs. It also includes a listing of all special studies since 1936, and examples of tables.

—*Census Bureau Guide to Transportation Statistics* (March 1976) describes the 1972 Census of Transportation. It contains descriptions or lists of the data contained in the published reports, indicates availability of unpublished data and of survey results, and describes record content of the public-use tapes.

—*Guide to Foreign Trade Statistics: 1975* (July 1975) describes content and format of individual reports, tabulations, computer tapes, punch cards, and microfilm on exports, imports, and shipping statistics.

—*1970 Census User's Guide, Part I and II* (October 1970) is a guide to the 1970 Census of Population and Housing, containing information on the background, collection, processing, and output (data products) of the 1970 census.

—*Census Bureau Methodological Research* is an annual annotated list of staff papers and publications on methodological research.

Further information on means of access to Census Bureau data is provided by the series entitled *Data Access Descriptions*. These are topical, user-oriented reports on accessing and using census data and products. Each issue deals with a specific topic such as census geography, 1970 census summary tapes, Spanish ancestry population, and selected racial groups. Availability of Census data in published form or on computer tape is indicated for each subject.

In addition to published reports, the Census Bureau has extensive tabulations of data available on computer tape. The majority of these files are products of the Bureau's regular data processing and tabulation programs. Other files and special tabulations are prepared at users' requests. Availability of Census data on computer tape is described in detail in *Data Access Descriptions*, *Data Users News* (a monthly newsletter), and Part II of the *Bureau of the Census Catalog*.

The Customer Services Branch of the Data User Services Division has also compiled a xeroxed listing entitled "Computer Tape/Files Available from the Bureau of the Census." This is a list of currently available tape files arranged under four categories—data files, special tabulations, geographic reference files, and computer program tapes. A short narrative highlights the content of each file.

The Census Bureau also has registered some of its public-use tapes with NTIS. A listing of these can be found in the NTIS *Directory*.

From the foregoing discussion, it can be seen that the Bureau of the Census has ample reference material to aid in accessing its data. To facilitate access to its computerized data files Census should investigate the possibility of compiling one guide to Census data available on tape.

*National Technical Information Service.*—The National Technical Information Service (NTIS) of the Department of Commerce is a central source for federally generated machine process-

able data files. Many Federal agencies have registered their reports with NTIS. NTIS has compiled a *Directory of Computerized Data Files and Related Software* as a guide to machine-readable data files, data bases, and related software available from these agencies. This *Directory* is a bibliographic reference which lists and describes more than 500 data files and bases. NTIS data files are available only in summary form and do not identify individuals or reporting units. All data released by NTIS meets the confidentiality requirements of the generating agencies. A detailed description of NTIS products and services can be found in a booklet entitled *NTIS Information Services*.

The NTIS *Directory* provides an excellent description and technical documentation for the tape files registered with NTIS. NTIS provides an excellent service to users of public-use tapes. NTIS should continue to add to their tape collection and update their *Directory* regularly.

*Social Security Administration.*—In administering the social security systems, a large volume of basic economic and demographic data is collected by the Social Security Administration (SSA) in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Much of this data is summarized in the monthly *Social Security Bulletin*, its *Annual Statistical Supplement*, and in special releases and reports.

*Some Statistical Research Resources Available at the Social Security Administration* provides a description of the available lifetime covered earnings data files, the procedures used in their compilation, and how they may be obtained. The SSA has developed and is using a computer-based system for storage and retrieval of these data. This pamphlet gives a description of the general-purpose research files making up the Continuous Work History Sample (CWHHS). These files contain data such as estimated total wages paid to a worker by his employer, personal characteristics (age, sex, race) of the individual receiving these wages, and characteristics of the employer (geographic location, industrial activity, coverage group) paying the wages.

The Social Security Administration should investigate whether there are any social and economic data in addition to the CWHHS files which could be made available to users on computer tapes. If so, then a guide to accessing these files should also be developed.

*National Center for Health Statistics.*—The National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) in the Health Resources Administration, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, is the primary source of statistical data on vital events, health, and related matters pertaining to the American people. Data are obtained from a number of statistical data collection systems: the national vital registration system, covering births, deaths, fetal deaths, marriages, and divorces; surveys based on samples of birth and death records; a continuing nationwide health survey of households by means of interviews; a series of national surveys based on physical examinations of samples of the population; periodic surveys of institutions and records on their patients or residents; a continuous national sampling of short-stay hospital records; and surveys of various categories of health manpower based on license renewals, reports from establishments, and other sources.

The published report is the primary method used to distribute data collected by NCHS. These reports are in several series including the annual volumes *Vital Statistics of the United States*, the *Monthly Vital Statistics Report*, and the *Vital and Health Statistics* series.

In addition to publishing reports, NCHS also makes data available on computer tapes. NCHS has recently published a new edition of *Standardized Micro-Data Tape Transcripts*, a catalog of the data tapes currently available. This catalog describes approximately 80 data sets, lists the contents of each, and provides information on format and documentation. Data now available on tape include statistics on health manpower and facilities, health resources utilization, and vital events, and data from the National Natality and Mortality Followback Surveys, the Health Interview Survey, and the Health Examination Survey.

NCHS should investigate the possibility of putting additional health data on computer tape. Their catalog of data tapes should be updated regularly to facilitate user access.

*National Center for Education Statistics.*—The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) in the Education Division, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, is responsible for statistics relating to the educational system of the United States. It publishes data relating to public elementary and secondary schools and in-

stitutions of higher education covering enrollments, graduates and degrees granted, personnel, and school facilities and finances. It also collects information on adult education, including vocational education, and on public and school libraries.

Since 1962 the data obtained in NCES surveys, and much related education information, have been summarized in an annual publication entitled *Digest of Educational Statistics*. This publication provides information on a variety of subjects, including the number of schools and colleges, enrollment, teachers and other instructional staff, high school graduates and earned degrees conferred, revenues and expenditures of educational institutions, Federal funds for education, libraries, international education, and research and development. The *Digest* also serves as a guide to sources for those who want more detailed information in the field of education statistics.

Also since 1974, NCES has issued an annual report, *The Condition of Education* which provides a general overview of education. The 1976 edition presents, through summary statistics, trends in participation, expenditures, and educational attainment levels. The report also contains more detailed data on the expansion of postsecondary education, the role of educational personnel, the history of elementary and secondary school finance, the relationships between education and work, and comparisons of education in the United States and other countries.

NCES has published the first edition (1976) of its *Directory of Federal Agency Education Data Tapes*. The *Directory* describes education-relevant statistical data bases available on magnetic computer tapes from 13 agencies of the Federal Government. The tapes contain information on elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education, and libraries and media centers as well as related demographic, vital, health, and welfare data; manpower supply and demand data; and Federal outlays for education. The *Directory* provides descriptions for 78 national, nonconfidential data bases, consisting of more than 200 data files which include time-series as well as one-time data studies.

The *Directory* is an outgrowth of an inter-agency consortium composed of more than 40 agencies. The following agencies list tapes in the *Directory*: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Census

Bureau, Civil Service Commission, Energy Research and Development Administration, National Archives and Records Service, National Science Foundation; and from the Health Resources Administration, National Center for Education Statistics, National Center for Health Statistics, National Center for Social Statistics, National Institute of Education, Office for Civil Rights, and the Office of Education of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

*Law Enforcement Assistance Administration.*—The Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) of the Department of Justice has awarded a grant to DUALabs to distribute and technically support new uses of the National Crime Survey victimization tape files. DUALabs is presently: (1) reformatting the files for ease of access by readily available software systems; (2) checking and correcting errors on the files and developing technical documentation in hardcopy and machine-readable forms; (3) preparing guides to the use of the survey data tapes; (4) providing data use training in working with the tapes; (5) consulting with users on technical problems and special data needs; and (6) assisting users in planning custom extracts and tabulations on request.

These products and services will be of special value to data users within the criminal justice system. LEAA should consider whether there are data from any other of its surveys which could be made available on tape. If so, then appropriate technical documentation and guides for using these tape files should also be developed.

*National Archives and Records Service.*—The National Archives and Records Service (NARS) in the General Services Administration preserves Federal agency records deemed to be permanently valuable and assists as many researchers as possible in using the records. Until the early 1960's, most of the records preserved and made available for use were paper records. Computer technology introduced a new medium of recordkeeping—the magnetic tape. NARS began to make a complete survey of magnetic tape libraries in all Federal agencies and Departments, to develop an inventory of all magnetic tape record files, and to identify the files of possible archival value. By 1975 NARS has acquired 1,150 inactive magnetic tapes.

*The Catalog of Machine-Readable Records in the National Archives of the United States* describes the

magnetic tape holdings of NARS and how they may be obtained. The Executive Departments indexed in this catalog include: Treasury (Internal Revenue Service); Agriculture (Foreign Agricultural Service and Economic Research Service); and Labor (Manpower Administration, now renamed the Employment and Training Administration). The following independent agencies are indexed: Civil Aeronautics Board, Federal Home Loan Bank Board; National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Office of Economic Opportunity, and the Securities and Exchange Commission. The overall organization of the material in the catalog follows that of the recently published *Guide to the National Archives of the United States* (1974), in which record groups are the basic organizational unit (e.g., records of the Internal Revenue Service).

NARS is a depository for inactive records, both paper and magnetic tape. As noted earlier, most agencies engaged in statistical activities use computers for this work. Many of these tape files contain valuable information which should be archived when the files become inactive, so that they will be available to researchers. NARS should continue to work with the agencies to identify currently active tape files of archival value. As their collection of inactive tapes increases, their *Catalog* should be updated accordingly.

### *Summary and Recommendations*

The Statistical Policy Division has responsibility for improving the dissemination of statistical information on a timely basis. (See Section 103 of Budget and Accounting Procedures Act of 1950 and Circular No. A-91). Data dissemination comprises all activities concerned with promoting widespread distribution and use of the results of statistical surveys. Improving access to information in data files will facilitate its dissemination. Once the agencies have taken an inventory of their computerized data files and have indexed them, or otherwise developed guides to using them, the information will be more readily accessible. It is hoped that this *Framework for Planning U.S. Federal Statistics* will improve the organization of Federal statistical operations, and thereby the accessibility of statistical information.

What is needed at present is an inventory of the computerized statistical data files by each

agency having such files. These files should then be indexed, especially those files which are available for public use. Agencies should also provide adequate technical documentation for these files and a detailed description of the contents of the tape file. Such documentation would aid in accessing and disseminating the data, as well as in the sharing and transfer of data where permissible.

The Statistical Policy Division should provide overall policy guidance so that data stored in computerized files can be more readily accessible and hence available for dissemination to the public. Policy guidance would be useful in the following areas: (1) better documentation of computerized data files so as to facilitate data access and transfers where permitted; (2) on the question of whether more data should be made available on tape and (3) the development of a comprehensive guide to agency computerized data files which are available to the public.

It is obvious that the Federal Government cannot possibly meet all needs of users of Federal statistics when it comes to analyzing data. What the Federal Government can do is to make readily available to users summary and public-use data tapes along with any necessary documentation.

The foregoing has discussed the need for improving access to data files in the context of our present statistical system. Since the U.S. statistical system is decentralized, a decentralized system of computerized data files, as now exists, is a natural outgrowth of the statistical activities of the various agencies. Were the Federal statistical agencies to consider a centralized data bank, the Canadian Socio-Economic Information Management System (CANSIM) could be used as a model.

This management information system is a computerized time series data bank consisting of the CANSIM Main Base and the CANSIM Mini Base. The CANSIM Main Base currently contains more than 130,000 time series and is updated on a daily basis. Major blocks of data are included for national accounts, prices, labor, agriculture, manufacturing and primary industries, capital and finance, construction, health and welfare, population estimates and projections, merchandising and services, and external trade. The contents of the CANSIM Main Base are constantly growing as new blocks of

data are being added. The *CANSIM Summary Reference Index* contains an up-to-date summary of the contents by subject and source publication. The *Index* also provides primary identification numbers which form the key to the *CANSIM Main Base Series Directory*. This *Directory* is a detailed guide to the data on the CANSIM Main Base; for each series it gives the title, start date, source of data, etc. Data may be retrieved from the CANSIM Main Base by two means: (1) terminal access using a card-reader printer or a typewriter terminal; and (2) services from Statistics Canada. All series listed in the *CANSIM Main Base Series Directory* are available on computer printouts, cards, or tapes.

The CANSIM Mini Base is a standard subset of data which originates from the CANSIM Main Base. Currently, the CANSIM Mini Base contains approximately 21,000 of the most widely used time series. It is available at several Secondary Distributors and updated on a daily basis; updates are one working day late relative to the CANSIM Main Base. The *CANSIM Mini Base Series Directory* provides, for each series on the *CANSIM Mini Base*, the title, start date, source of the data, etc. Information on the accessibility of the CANSIM Mini Base is available directly from the Secondary Distributors, a current list of which is published by Statistics Canada.

Statistics Canada, the Canadian central statistical office, pays for all costs (e.g., loading the data bank and storage). The end user pays for the computer time used plus the cost of terminal connection. As indicated above, the end user has various choices in accessing CANSIM and the cost will vary. Access is available to the public with the exception of confidential data; the base does not contain micro data. All sectors of the Canadian economy access CANSIM and currently the biggest users are found in the business sector. The CANSIM data base is housed in a commercial service bureau so that it is separate from the Statistics Canada computer which stores individual census returns.

Were the Federal Government to develop a computerized national data bank, the project should be undertaken in additive phases. After each phase an administrative review should be undertaken, an evaluation of the project made, and allocation of resources for the next phase made. An initial sizeable investment would be required for the original entry of the data. Hav-

ing data which is free from error is a major problem. All data to be entered would be subject to certain edits during the storage operation. Resolution of any inconsistencies in the data might also involve additional research and cost. Safeguards with respect to confidentiality of data would have to be observed.

There are a number of advantages that could be derived from a computerized national data bank. First, since such a bank would include published statistics from the various Federal agencies, it would be a central source of data dissemination. Second, a national data bank offers the potential to increase productivity of all statisticians and economists. Third, a reduction in research costs might also result since one of the

largest expenses in research is the preparation of data for computer. Fourth, through more efficient management of data files, there should be improved timeliness, efficiency and lower costs in the disseminating of information.

To work out the specific details of a computerized national data bank, it is recommended that an interagency committee be created and chaired by the Statistical Policy Division. The Federal statistical agencies represented on this committee would decide which statistical series would be entered into the data bank. Members of the public who are users of Federal statistics would also have to be contacted so that their demands for machine-readable information could be fulfilled.

## CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS

### AMENDMENT TO CIRCULAR NO. A-40

On November 5, 1976 the Office of Management and Budget issued Transmittal Memorandum No. 2 to Circular No. A-40, entitled Management of Federal Reporting Requirements. Reprinted below is Transmittal Memorandum No. 2.

### INTERPRETATION OF THE REQUIREMENT OF CLEARANCE FOR PROPOSED COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION FROM THE PUBLIC (44 U.S.C. 3509)

The purpose of this memorandum is to clarify the requirement for clearance of proposed collections of information from the public in those cases in which the sponsoring agency and the collecting agency are different and one of the agencies is not subject to the provisions of the Federal Reports Act.

44 U.S.C. 3509 states that no agency shall collect or sponsor the collection of information upon identical items from 10 or more persons unless the Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall have indicated that he does not disapprove the collection.

According to the provisions of 44 U.S.C. 3502, the following organizations are not "agencies"

within the meaning of the Federal Reports Act.

- Civil Aeronautics Board
- Commodity Futures Trading Commission
- Consumer Product Safety Commission
- Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
- Federal Communications Commission
- Federal Maritime Commission
- Federal Power Commission
- Interstate Commerce Commission
- National Labor Relations Board
- Securities and Exchange Commission
- Federal Energy Administration

The following units within the Department of the Treasury:

- Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms
- Bureau of Government Financial Operations
- Bureau of the Public Debt
- Comptroller of the Currency
- Internal Revenue Service
- General Accounting Office
- District of Columbia

An agency subject to the provisions of the Federal Reports Act may enter into an arrangement with an organization not subject to the Act whereby the organization not subject to the Act collects information on behalf of the agency subject to the Act. The reverse also occurs.

The provisions of 44 U.S.C. 3509 apply to both of these situations.

Any collection of information upon identical items from 10 or more persons made by an agency subject to the provisions of the Federal Reports Act is subject to the requirement of clearance by the Office of Management and Budget, whether or not the sponsor of the collection is an agency subject to the Act. Example: the collection of information by the Bureau of Mines for the Federal Energy Administration is subject to clearance even though the data collection activities of the Federal Energy Administration are not subject to clearance by OMB under the Federal Reports Act.

Any collection of information upon identical items from 10 or more persons sponsored by an agency subject to the Federal Reports Act is subject to the requirement of clearance by the Office of Management and Budget whether or not the agency collecting the information is subject to the Act. Example: the collection of information for the Bureau of the Census by the Internal Revenue Service is subject to clearance by the Office of Management and Budget even though the data collection activities of the Internal Revenue Service are not subject to clearance by OMB under the Federal Reports Act.

In each case, the agency which is subject to the provisions of the Federal Reports Act will submit a request for clearance to the Office of Management and Budget as required by Attachment A to OMB Circular No. A-40. (ROYE L. LOWRY, STATISTICAL POLICY DIVISION, OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET, telephone (202) 395-3772.)

#### **MANUFACTURING CAPACITY UTILIZATION RATES REVISION**

A major revision of the Federal Reserve Board's series for capacity utilization in manufacturing—including subtotals for primary and advanced processing—has just been completed. All the estimates have been revised from 1948 to the present. According to the new series, manufacturing capacity utilization in the third quarter of 1976 has been estimated at 81.0% in contrast to the formerly published rate of 73.6%. This rate is up from the last cyclical low in the new series of 71% in the second quarter of 1975, but is still more than 9% below the new 1973 quarterly cyclical peak of 88%. Both advanced

and primary processing industries are significantly below their 1973 peak rates indicating that a margin equal to nearly one-tenth of manufacturing capacity is available to meet the needs of further peacetime expansion.

A description of the Federal Reserve's manufacturing materials capacity utilization series will be published in the November Federal Reserve *Bulletin*. A more detailed methodological description is scheduled to be published next spring. (RICHARD RADDOCK, FEDERAL RESERVE BOARD, telephone (202) 452-3197.)

#### **NCES FAST RESPONSE SURVEY SYSTEM**

The National Center for Education Statistics recently initiated the Fast Response Survey System (FRSS) to serve urgent needs of education planners and policymakers for timely data. FRSS is designed to provide sound national estimates speedily and economically with minimal response burden.

The FRSS has the capability of reaching six major educational sectors. Probability sampling was used to select respondent panels for the following sectors: local school districts, public elementary and secondary schools, non-public elementary and secondary schools, institutions of higher education, and non-collegiate post-secondary schools with occupational programs.

The universe of State Education Agencies constitutes a sixth sector. A one-stage sample selection procedure is used in all sample sectors except the Public Elementary and Secondary Schools. In this sector, the sample selection is conducted in two stages, the first being the Local School Districts and the second, individual schools.

Data collection procedures were pre-arranged and respondents pre-designated in coordination with the States. Data are collected by mail, telephone, or mailgram, depending upon the nature of the request. In keeping with the objectives of the FRSS, the questionnaires are restricted to one page and burden is limited to one-half hour per respondent.

The first fast-response survey, conducted this past August at the request of the National Institute of Education, was addressed to the State Education Agencies on the topic of "Statewide Developments in Performance-Based Educa-

tion." Responses were collected from all 50 States and the District of Columbia within a few weeks.

The findings showed that 28 States and the District of Columbia are currently planning or operating performance-based education (PBE) programs that involve PBE standards for promotion or graduation from elementary or secondary schools. About two-thirds of the Nation's public school enrollment are included in these States. The survey also provided information on the type of programs or plans and the States' perceived needs for further research development in the area. A limited number of copies of the report are available for distribution.

The second FRSS survey was initiated this October. Addressed to the Local School Districts, this survey requested data on formal job placement assistance provided by school districts to high school students. Information about the type and amount of such assistance is needed to help Federal planning on the transition from school to work. (JEAN BRANDES, NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE, telephone (202) 245-8834.)

#### NCHS FLU REPORTS

Beginning the week of November 2, 1976 the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) will publish weekly reports on flu-like illnesses, based upon information collected in the Health Interview Survey. A special influenza supplement has been incorporated in the survey since late September and will be continued through March 1977. The weekly reports will include data on the incidence of flu-like diseases which required medical attention or involved at least one day of restricted activity, the average number of persons in bed each day because of these illnesses, and the number of people who report having any type of flu shot. The flu supplement was undertaken in cooperation with the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the interview data will complement the information from CDC's communicable disease reporting system in describing the extent and pattern of any flu epidemic this year. To receive copies of the flu reports, call the NCHS Scientific and Technical Information Branch, telephone (301) 443-1200. (ALICE HAYWOOD, NATIONAL CENTER FOR HEALTH STATISTICS, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE, telephone (301) 443-1329.)

#### VA DOMICILIARY PROGRAM REPORT

The Veterans Administration has recently released a report entitled *Social, Demographic, and Medical Characteristics of Patient-Members in Veterans Administration Domiciliaries: 1967-1975 Profile*.

The VA domiciliary program is directed toward those veterans who are disabled by age, disease, or injury and are in need of care, but require neither hospitalization nor the skilled services of a nursing home. This report presents annual data on selected social, demographic, and medical characteristics of patient-members in VA domiciliaries for the years 1967 through 1975. The time period covered represented a change in treatment emphasis from custodial care to a therapeutic community concept stressing preventive health services and rehabilitation.

There were 12,775 patient-members in VA domiciliaries in 1967 and 9,222 in 1975. The average age remained at about 61 during the period. The proportion whose principal diagnosis was psychiatric related rose from 36% in 1969 to 51% in 1975.

Single copies of *Social, Demographic, and Medical Characteristics of Patient-Members in Veterans Administration Domiciliaries: 1967-1975 Profile* are available from Reports and Statistics Service (042A2), Office of the Controller, Veterans Administration, Washington, D. C. 20420. (LOUIS MESARD, VETERANS ADMINISTRATION, telephone (202) 389-3458.)

#### VA EXTENDED CARE FACILITIES REPORT

The Veterans Administration has recently released a report entitled *Veterans Administration Department of Medicine and Surgery Census Data for Extended Care Facilities, 1967 through 1975*. This report described social, demographic, and medical characteristics of patient-members in the Veterans Administration Department of Medicine and Surgery's Extended Care Program. The types of facilities covered include VA domiciliaries, VA nursing homes, and State home domiciliaries, nursing homes and hospitals in part paid for by the Veterans Administration. Data on age, sex, race, period of military service, receipt of compensation or pension from the Veterans Administration, diagnoses, and attained stay of patient-members are also in-



cluded. VA facilities, and costs for the fiscal years 1969 through 1975 are also discussed.

Single copies of *Veterans Administration Department of Medicine and Surgery Census Data for Extended Care Facilities, 1967 through 1975* are available from Reports and Statistics Service (042A2), Office of the Controller, Veterans Administration, Washington, D. C. 20420. (LOUIS MESARD, VETERANS ADMINISTRATION, telephone (202) 389-3458.)

#### **DATA ON VIETNAM ERA VETERANS**

The Veterans Administration has recently released a report entitled *Data on Vietnam Era Veterans*. This is an annual publication which provides VA statistical data on Vietnam era veterans. Areas covered are veteran population, health care, compensation and pension, education, and housing assistance. Department of Defense information on casualties and Department of Labor information on employment and unemployment are also included. There are now an estimated 8 million Vietnam era veterans in civilian life, with an average age of 30.3 years. Almost 2.7 million of them had seen service in the Vietnam theatre.

Single copies of *Data on Vietnam Era Veterans* (June 1976) are available from Reports and Statistics Service (042B2), Office of the Controller, Veterans Administration, Washington, D. C. 20420. (ROBERT W. SCHULTZ, VETERANS ADMINISTRATION, telephone (202) 389-3677.)

#### **SPANISH-SURNAMED AMERICANS EMPLOYMENT STATUS REPORT**

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission recently released a report entitled, *The Employment Status of Spanish-Surnamed Americans in the Chicago SMSA*. The report traces the employment progress of Chicago's Spanish-surnamed Americans (SSA) over a seven-year period from 1966 to 1973. According to the report the SSA population in the Chicago area continues to suffer the consequences of job discrimination—low educational attainment, poor occupational placement, and small family incomes. The report was based primarily on statistics from the Employer Information Reports (EEO-1) which were filed with the EEOC by private employers.

A limited number of single copies of the publication, *The Employment Status of Spanish-Surnamed*

*Americans in the Chicago SMSA* are available without cost from the Publications Unit, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 2401 E Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20506. (ALFRED L. SWEENEY, EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION, telephone (202) 634-6930.)

#### **APPEAL BY DENIED DISABILITY CLAIMANTS**

Claimants who have been denied disability insurance benefits make up a burgeoning proportion of all social security appeals. In fiscal year 1975, over 300,000 disability decisions were reviews of prior denials. About one-third of all reconsideration reviews and nearly one-half of all hearing reviews reversed initial decisions.

*Appeal by Denied Disability Claimants* profiles the demographic and disability characteristics of a cohort of disabled worker applicants whose claims were initially denied in 1967. It further examined their earnings and benefit experience through 1973.

The rate of appeal was somewhat greater for workers who were in their fifties, had dependent children, musculoskeletal or respiratory disorders, and resided in the East South Central States. Men, older workers, those with circulatory disorders, and those with limited mobility won more appeals and entitlements to benefits.

Single copies of *Appeal by Denied Disability Claimants* (HEW Publication No. (SSA) 76-11858) are available from the Publications Staff, Office of Research and Statistics, Social Security Administration, Room 1120, Universal North Building, 1875 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009, telephone (202) 673-5209. Copies may also be purchased from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402, Stock No. 017-070-00289-7 for \$1.10 each. (ROBERT ROBINSON, SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE, telephone (202) 673-5576.

#### **EXPERIENCE OF RECENT RETIREES**

The Social Security Administration (SSA) has released a research report which compiles findings from SSA's Survey of Newly Entitled Beneficiaries (SNEB). This volume, *Reaching Retirement Age: Findings From a Survey of Newly Entitled Workers 1968-70*, draws together the 15 separate SNEB reports issued between November 1970

and September 1974 together with a summary chapter and a previously unpublished chapter on earnings replacement from pensions and social security.

The findings show that people claim reduced benefits under circumstances ranging from severe hardship to relative comfort and free choice. Data are presented under such major topics as: reasons for stopping work; sources of income; influence of public and private pensions on income levels; the effect of reduced benefits on retirement status of beneficiaries; rates at which benefits replace previous earnings; social security benefit levels; impact of the earnings test on working beneficiaries; characteristics of women who qualify for benefits on their own work records; compulsory retirement; and the economic status of newly entitled black workers.

Single copies of *Research Retirement Age: Findings From a Survey of Newly Entitled Workers 1968-70* (Research Report No. 47, HEW Publication No. (SSA) 76-11804) are available for official use from the Publications Staff, Office of Research and Statistics, Social Security Administration, Room 1120 Universal North Building, 1875 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009, telephone (202) 673-5209. The report may be purchased from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402, GPO Stock Number 017-070-00287-1 for \$3.70. (ROBERT E. ROBINSON, SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE, telephone (202) 673-5576.)

#### PHYSICIAN INCOME DATA

The Office of Research and Statistics in the Social Security Administration has released a 188-page report entitled *Study of Physicians' Income In the Pre-Medicare Period—1965*. The report presents baseline data designed to help measure Medicare and Medicaid's impact on physicians' income.

The data, when compared with more recent data, permit analyses of physicians' income by such factors as specialty, mode of practice, geographic location, and years in practice. This data, previously unavailable in such detail, should also be useful to researchers in analyses of the determinants of physicians' income and as inputs in econometric models of the total health

care system. The source of income data used in the study was individual income tax returns. Major areas covered include net income of physicians, income by type of practice and specialty, income by age and sex, earnings by years since graduation, earnings by region, county and city size, State, graduation from foreign or domestic medical schools, income distribution, source of income, business expenses, and tax liability of physicians.

Single copies of *Study of Physicians' Income in the Pre-Medicare Period—1965* (HEW Publication No. (SSA) 76-11932) are available from the Publications Staff, Office of Research and Statistics, Social Security Administration, Room 1120, Universal North Building, 1875 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009, telephone (202) 673-5209. The report is on public sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402 for \$3.10, Stock Number 017-070-00288-9. (ROBERT E. ROBINSON, SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE, telephone (202) 673-5576.)

#### RECENT NSF REPORTS

The National Science Foundation has recently released three *Science Resources Studies Highlights*:

"Energy Increase of 18 Percent Paces Industrial R&D Spending in 1975" (NSF 76-324) summarizes data from the annual survey of industrial research and development conducted for NSF by the Bureau of the Census. R&D funds are shown by industry, source, and character of work with particular emphasis on energy and pollution abatement by type. Also included is information on R&D scientists and engineers.

"Largest Increase in Employment of Doctoral Scientists and Engineers is in Industrial Sector: 1973-75" (NSF 76-326) reports on the second survey of doctorate-holding scientists and engineers conducted for the NSF by the National Institutes of Health and the National Research Council. Characteristics such as sex, age, employment status, type of employer, primary work activity, and Federal support are all given for these doctoral scientists and engineers in this bulletin.

"Federal Agencies Allocated Over \$4.5 Billion to Universities and Colleges in FY 1975" (NSF 76-327) highlights information from the annual

survey of Federal funds obligated to universities and colleges for research, development, and other scientific activities. Data are given by agency, type of activity, and field of science. Also included is a table showing the 100 universities and colleges receiving the largest amounts of Federal funds for fiscal year 1975.

Also available are the *Detailed Statistical Tables for Manpower Resources for Scientific Activities at Universities and Colleges, January 1976* (NSF 76-321).

Copies of *Science Resources Studies Highlights* and the *Detailed Statistical Tables* are available from the Division of Science Resources Studies, National Science Foundation, 1800 G Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20550. (CHARLES E. FALK, DIVISION OF SCIENCE RESOURCES STUDIES, NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION, telephone (202) 634-4622.)

#### RECENT SOCIAL SECURITY REPORTS

The Office of Research and Statistics in the Social Security Administration has announced the availability of the following reports which are briefly described.

*Characteristics of Student OASDI Beneficiaries in 1973: An Overview* (*Social Security Bulletin*, November 1976). Unmarried, full-time student children aged 18-21 of deceased, retired, or disabled workers receive monthly benefits under the social security program. These student beneficiaries, surveyed in the 1972-73 school year were more likely to be black, to have parents who had worked at blue-collar occupations, and to come from families with incomes lower than family income nationally. The family income of those who were in college was much lower than the income levels of other families with children in college. About a fifth were completing secondary education: most of the remainder were in college. A third felt they would not be in school full time were they not receiving benefits.

*Age Differences in Health Care Spending, Fiscal Year 1975*. Of the \$103.2 billion spent by the Nation for personal health care in fiscal year 1975, 15% was spent for those under age 19, 56% for persons aged 19-64, and 29% for those aged 65 or older. Public funds paid for one-fourth of the average \$212 expenses of the young, nearly one-third of the average \$472 health bill of the intermediate age group and two-thirds of the av-

erage \$1,360 bill of the aged. Medicare alone paid 72% of the aged's hospital expense and 54% of their doctor bills.

*Ten Years of Medicare: Impact on the Covered Population* (*Social Security Bulletin*, July 1976). This article provides a 10-year review of Medicare program data and focuses on the impact of Medicare as insurance. Conclusions are that implementation of Medicare did not result in a period of unbounded utilization of covered services. Major concerns arise from the rapid and persistent increase each year in the price or unit costs of medical care during Medicare's first decade. Thus, although Medicare has succeeded in accomplishing its primary goal of paying the major portion of large hospital and medical bills, the out-of-pocket costs that enrollees face for their total health care needs are still likely to be a considerable burden to many beneficiaries.

*Impact of Substantial Gainful Activity Level on Disabled Beneficiary Work Patterns* (*Social Security Bulletin*, August 1976). A 12-year series on earnings and quarters of employment for disabled workers derived from the 1-percent Continuous Work History Sample provides information to determine whether work incentives stimulating labor-force participation are the same for the disabled as for the retired. Several factors could have affected persons receiving disability benefits during the period 1960-71: changes in the earnings level used to measure substantial gainful activity (SGA), legislative amendments, rising wage levels, and a fluctuating unemployment rate. The findings indicate that the major determinant of labor force behavior on the part of disabled beneficiaries seems to be the trial work period, not the SGA level.

*Twenty-Five Years of Employee-Benefit Plans* (*Social Security Bulletin*, September 1976). The Social Security Administration has prepared annually statistics on coverage, contributions, and benefits under employee-benefit plans, starting with data for 1950. The 25-year series has now been reviewed and revised in accordance with the latest source material. Accompanying the revised data is a discussion of the characteristics of and trends in health and welfare plans. The June 1976 issue of the *Bulletin* contained a similar review of private pension plans. (ROBERT E. ROBINSON, SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE, telephone (202) 673-5576.)

### **BLS REPORT ON 50 YEARS OF DATA PROCESSING**

*Data Processing at BLS* is probably the first report of its kind for an agency of the Federal statistical system. This report portrays the increasingly important role machines have played in processing BLS data for the past 50 years and, particularly, the impact of the electronic computer over the past 25 years. Although the report does not make a serious attempt at measuring productivity improvements, it does give an interesting examination of the effect computers have had on a major BLS program in reducing staff and spending the compilation of data. The findings are believed to be fairly typical of other statistical data processing tasks in BLS.

Copies of *Data Processing at BLS*, (1976) are available from the Office of Systems and Standards, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 441 G Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20212. (RUDOLPH C. MENDELSSOHN, BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS, DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, telephone (202) 523-1040.)

### **1975 GENERAL AVIATION ACTIVITY SURVEY**

The Federal Aviation Administration has recently released the report of the 1975 General Aviation Activity Survey conducted by the Civil Air Patrol at 245 airports throughout the country and in Puerto Rico on August 23 and 26, 1975. The report was based upon the data from more than 7,000 interviews of general aviation pilots and 35,500 records of aircraft operations.

The data is presented in terms of aircraft profile, pilot profile, aviation fuel consumption, and airport traffic.

A limited number of copies of the report, *1975 General Aviation Activity Survey* are available by writing the Federal Aviation Administration, Information and Statistics Division, Office of Management Systems, AMS-230, 800 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20591, or by calling (202) 426-3266. Additional copies are available through the National Technical Information Service, Springfield, Virginia 22161. (SHUNG-CHAI HUANG, FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION, DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, telephone (202) 426-3266.)

### **NEW JERSEY ECONOMIC REPORT**

The Economic Policy Council of New Jersey has recently published its *9th Annual Report*. The publication contains several chapters on New Jersey's economy. In addition to the regular review of the state of the economy, several chapters are devoted to technical innovation, zero growth at the State level, business tax reform, the effects of migration on the New Jersey economy, and an assessment of New Jersey's agricultural sector. The report is available on request, free of charge. For copies write to the Office of Economic Policy, 142 West State Street, Trenton, New Jersey 08625, or call (609) 292-1890. (ADAM BRONER, OFFICE OF ECONOMIC POLICY, STATE OF NEW JERSEY.)

## NEW REPORTING PLANS AND FORMS

The following listing gives brief descriptions of a selected group of new reporting plans and forms approved between October 14 and November 17, 1976 by the Office of Management and Budget under the provisions of the Federal Reports Act. The description refers to surveys and data collection programs which are just being started or are soon to be started so results are not yet available.

### Department of Health, Education, and Welfare

#### Office of Education

*National Evaluation of Title I Programs for Neglected and Delinquent Children in State Institutions* (singletime).—This study represents the first attempt at describing the Title I (compensatory education) program at institutions for neglected or delinquent youths and determining the effectiveness of such programs. The study will include 100 facilities in 50 States and one territory and will examine: (1) program administration, (2) teacher practices and (3) impact on students. (For further information: JAN ANDERSON, OFFICE OF EDUCATION, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE, telephone (202) 245-7875.)

### Department of Transportation

*Survey of Transportation Handicaps* (singletime).—This survey is designed to yield data on the number of persons with transportation handicaps, develop estimates of their transportation usage, provide inputs into models for estimating the number of such persons at the local area level, and estimate their demand for additional urban and interurban travel by mode and trip type. In addition, the survey is designed to obtain data for use in evaluating possible solutions toward meeting the unsatisfied travel demands of the transportation handicapped.

The survey will be conducted using probability procedures to draw a sample representative of the U.S. urban population in areas with mass transit facilities as well as areas that do not have such facilities. In addition to obtaining data about and from the transportation handicapped, data will also be obtained from a representative sample of persons who are not transportation handicapped. These data will provide a comparison base against which to compare the handicapped information. (For further information: PATRICIA CASS, URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATION, DOT, telephone (202) 426-4984.)

## OTHER REPORTING PLANS AND FORMS

Shown below, by agency, is a list of *new* forms approved between October 14 and November 17, 1976 excluding those described above. Request for copies of these reports should be addressed to the public reports clearance officer of the sponsoring agency. A list of agency clearance officers may be obtained by writing to Marsha Traynham, Statistical Policy Division, Office of Management and Budget, Washington, D.C. 20503.

During October approximately 60 forms reached their expiration dates and are no longer approved for use.

### DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Boll Weevil Control Survey

### DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Current Retail Trade Report  
Survey of Hired Farm Workers—December 1976 Current Population Survey  
Survey of Regional Organizations  
Reinterview Schedule—Special Enumeration of Navajo Reservation  
Record of Your Daily Expenses, Household Characteristics Questionnaire, Quarterly Questionnaire, Respondent Letters  
Survey of Farm or Ranch Partnership Operations  
Edible Characteristics of Commercial Aquatic Species  
Private Sector Research and Development Management Interview Guide

### DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Increased Readiness Information System

### DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE

Common Core of Data (Pretest)  
Classroom Perception Inventory  
Survey of State Title I Administration  
California Beginning Teacher Evaluation Study  
Application for Federal Assistance (Nonconstruction Programs)—Instructions for Library Training Programs, Title II-B, Higher Education Act 1965  
"Peanuts" Career Education Materials Assessment  
Intensive Community Influenza Surveillance  
Motivations for Parenthood, Decisionmaking, and Fertility Regulation  
Dental Caries Prevention Programs in U.S. Communities

Current Medicare Survey—Influenza Supplement  
Ombudsman Demonstration Project  
Records of Supplemental Security Income Inquiry  
Child Support Program Reporting  
Annual Report on State Vocational Rehabilitation Agency Reviews  
Instruction for Completing Application for Federal Assistance for Rehabilitation Services Administration Special Projects and Facilities Grants  
Longitudinal Study of Functions and Education of Nurse Practitioners  
Women's Community Health Care Survey

### DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Evaluation of Housing Assistance Plans Field Interview Guides  
Operating Subsidy Monthly Billing Report

### DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Report of Public Safety Officer's Death  
Claim for Death Benefit

### DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Standard Questionnaire for Manufacturing Firms  
Survey of Hours and Earnings of Employees in Selected Occupations in Selected Transportation Industries  
Complaint of Violation of Affirmative Action Obligations by Federal Contractors  
Administrative Committee Quarterly Report

### DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Highway Needs and State Reviews from Energy Resource Activities  
Re-Use of Abandoned Railroad Rights-of-Way

### ENERGY RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

Data Sheet for Operational Solar Energy Systems

### COMMUNITY SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

Energy Data Form  
National Program Survey

### NATIONAL FOUNDATION ON THE ARTS AND THE HUMANITIES

Notice of Intent to Submit Application to National Endowment for the Arts for a Challenge Grant

#### GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

Annual Summary of Records Holdings

#### NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Questionnaires to U.S. Participants and U.S. Hosts of Soviet Participants in U.S.-U.S.S.R. Interacademy Exchange Program

Pre-College Science Education Needs Assessment

#### ACTION

ACTION Cost-Sharing Study Project

#### RAILROAD RETIREMENT BOARD

Protected Employee Inventory Record and Claims for Reimbursement Allowances

#### SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Survey of Women Business Owners

#### U.S. CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

Test Study of Paid Leave Provisions

#### U.S. INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION

Producers' Questionnaire (Portland Hydraulic Cement)

Mushroom Canners' Questionnaire

Importers' Questionnaire (Melamine Crystals)

Purchasers' Questionnaire (Melamine Crystals)

Importers' Questionnaire—Footwear

Producers' Questionnaire—Footwear

Corn Sweetener Producers

Sugar Cane Millers and/or Growers

Sugar Beet Growers

Sugar Cane Refiners

Sugar Beet Processors

Sugar Cane Growers

Questionnaire for Importers of Cast-Iron Household Stoves, Cast-Iron Parts of Household Stoves, Steel Stove-Top Grates

Importers' Questionnaire—Permanent Magnet Direct Current Motors

Producers' Questionnaire—Permanent Magnet Direct Current Motors

Questionnaire for Producers of Cast-Iron Household Stoves, Cast-Iron Parts of Household Stoves, and Steel Stove-Top Grates

Producers' Questionnaire—Watches

Importers' Questionnaire—Watches

#### VETERANS ADMINISTRATION

Request to Lender for Status of Loan Account—Loan Claims Section

#### AMERICAN REVOLUTION BICENTENNIAL ADMINISTRATION

1976 National Travel Survey

Cost Benefit Analysis, an Interview Guide for Gathering of Sample Data

## PERSONNEL NOTES

#### DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

*Bureau of the Census:* EMANUEL A. LIPSCOMB has been appointed Chief, Foreign Trade Division. He replaces LEONARD R. JACKSON who retired after 33 years of Government Service. HOWARD FLETCHER is designated EDP Coordinator for the Office of the Assistant Director for Field Operations. PETER A. BOUNPANE is designated Assistant Division Chief for Census Programs, Statistical Methods Division.

The following staff assignments have been made in the Agriculture Division: JOHN A. BLACKLEDGE is designated Chief, Farm Economics Branch. JOSEPH A. HORAK is designated Chief, Irrigation and Drainage Branch. STEPHEN M. SCHOBEL is designated Chief, Programming Branch. JOHN C. WOMACK is designated Chief, Agricultural Services Branch.

The following staff assignments have been made in the Geography Division: RICHARD TROIS has been designated Chief, GBF/DIME and Special Systems Coding Branch. ALICE M. WINTERFELD has been designated Chief, Geographic Statistical Areas Branch. DAN N. HARDING has been designated Chief, Methodology, Technical Evaluation and Quality Control Branch.

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ROBERT N. SCHELLER is designated Assistant Division Chief, Administrative Services Division. WILLIAM K. MITTENDORF is designated Chief, Construction Starts Branch, Construction Statistics Division. REBECCA M. NESBITT is designated Chief, Economic Operations Branch, Data Preparation Division.

The following staff assignments have been made in the Field Division: FORREST P. CAWLEY, JR. is designated Assistant Division Chief for Economic Programs, STANLEY D. MOORE is designated Regional Director, Chicago Regional Office, JAMES L. JOHNSON is designated Assistant Regional Director, Chicago Regional Office and JOHN H. KUNTZ is designated Assistant Regional Director, Philadelphia Regional Office.

The Overseas Consultation and Technical Services Branch of the International Statistical Programs Center reports the following changes in its overseas advisory staff: assigned to the Central Department of Statistics, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, under the auspices of the U.S. Saudi Arabian Joint Economic Commission is KENNETH BRIMMER as Foreign Trade Statistics Adviser; assigned to the National Computer Center, Central Department of Statistics, Riyadh,

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Saudi Arabia are: GEORGE COLDREN as Systems Programmer, and ANDREW WROBLEWSKI and BYRON WEBB as Computer Programmers.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE

*National Center for Health Statistics:* JOHN MOUNTS has joined the staff as Chief, Publications Branch, Division of operations.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

*Bureau of Labor Statistics:* ALFRED J. MCKEON, formerly Director of the Office of Statistical Programs and Standards,

U.S. Postal Service, has joined the Office of Survey Design as Chief of the Industrial Price Survey Techniques staff.

FEDERAL RESERVE BOARD

*Division of Research and Statistics:* JOHN H. KALCHBRENNER, formerly an Adviser has been named as Associate Director in the Division. ELEANOR S. FRASE, formerly an Associate Adviser has been named as Adviser. J. CORTLAND G. PERET, an Assistant Adviser has been named an Associate Adviser. DAVID F. SEIDERS, Economist in the Mortgage and Consumer Finance Section, has been promoted to Senior Economist in that Section.

## SCHEDULE OF RELEASE DATES FOR PRINCIPAL FEDERAL ECONOMIC INDICATORS

January 1977

Release dates scheduled by agencies responsible for the principal economic indicators of the Federal Government are given below. *These are target dates* that will be met in the majority of cases. *Occasionally agencies may be able to release data a day or so earlier or may be forced by unavoidable compilation problems to release a report one or more days later.*

month covering release dates for the following month. The indicators are identified by the title of the releases in which they are included; the source agency; the release identification number where applicable; and the *Business Conditions Digest* series numbers for all BCD series included, shown in parentheses. Release date information for additional series can be found in publications of the sponsoring agencies.

A similar schedule will be shown here each

(Any inquiries about these series should be directed to the issuing agency.)

Date	Subject	Data For
January 3	Construction Expenditures (Press release), Census, C-30 (69) .....	November
3	Manufacturers' Shipments, Inventories, and Orders, Census, M3-1 (20, 65, 852) .....	November
5	Open Market Money Rates and Bond Prices, Federal Reserve Board (FRB) G. 13 .....	December
5	Manufacturers' Export Sales and Orders, Census M4-A (506) .....	November
5	Condition Report of Large Commercial Banks, FRB, H.4.2. (72) .....	Week Ending December 29
6	Money Stock Measures, FRB, H.6 (85, 102, 103) .....	Week Ending December 29



<i>Date</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Data For</i>
January 6	Factors Affecting Bank Reserves and Condition Statement of Federal Reserve Banks, FRB, H.4.1 (93) .....	Week Ending January 5
7	The Employment Situation (Press release) Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) (1, 21, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 740, 841-848) .....	December
7	Consumer Credit, FRB, G. 19 (66, 113) .....	November
10	Advance Monthly Retail Sales (Press Release), Census (54) .....	December
10	Monthly Wholesale Trade (Press release), Census, BW .....	November
12	Wholesale Price Index (Press release), BLS (55, 58, 750, 751, 752) .....	December
12	Condition Report of Large Commercial Banks, FRB, H.4.2. (72) .....	Week Ending January 5
13	Money Stock Measures, FRB, H. 6 (85, 102, 103) .....	Week Ending January 5
13	Factors Affecting Bank Reserves and Condition Statement of Federal Reserve Banks, FRB, H.4.1 (93) .....	Week Ending January 12
14	Yields on FHA Insured New Home 30-Year Mortgages, HUD (118) .....	January 1
14	Manufacturing and Trade: Inventories and Sales, Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) (31, 56, 71, 851) .....	November
14	Industrial Production and Related Data, FRB, G. 12.3 (47, 853) .....	December
14	Food Assistance Programs Results (Agriculture) .....	November
18	Housing Starts (Press release), Census, C-20 (28, 29) .....	December
18	Capacity Utilization in Manufacturing, FRB, E.5 (850) .....	4 Q '76
18	Gross National Product (Preliminary), BEA (200, 205) .	4 Q '76
19	Personal Income, BEA (52, 53) .....	December
19	Consumer Price Index (Press release), BLS (781, 782, 783, 784) .....	December
19	Real Earnings (Press release), BLS (741,859) .....	December
19	Condition Report of Large Commercial Banks, FRB, H.4.2. (72) .....	Week Ending January 12
20	Money Stock Measures, FRB, . H.6 (85, 102, 103) .....	Week Ending January 12
20	Factors Affecting Bank Reserves and Condition Statement of Federal Reserve Banks, FRB, H.4.1 (93) .....	Week Ending January 19

<i>Date</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Data For</i>
January 24	Advance Report on Durable Goods, Manufacturers' Shipments and Orders (Press release), Census M3-1, (6, 24, 25, 96, 647, 648) .....	December
25	Average Yields of Long-Term Bonds, Treasury Bulletin (115, 116) .....	November
26	Productivity and Costs: Private Economy, Nonfarm Business, and Manufacturing Sectors (Press release), BLS .....	4 Q '76
26	Work Stoppages (Press release), BLS .....	December
26	Condition Report of Large Commercial Banks, FRB, H.4.2. (72) .....	Week Ending January 19
27	Money Stock Measures, FRB H.6 (85, 102, 103) .....	Week Ending January 19
27	Factors Affecting Bank Reserves and Condition Statement of Federal Reserve Banks, FRB, H.4.1. (93) .....	Week Ending January 26
27	Export and Import Merchandise Trade, Census, FT-900 (500, 502, 512) .....	December
27	Housing Vacancies (Press release), Census, H-111 (857) .....	4 Q '76
28	Major Collective Bargaining Settlements (Press release), BLS (748) .....	4 Q '76
28	Labor Turnover in Manufacturing (Press release), BLS (2,3) .....	December
28	Merchandise Trade Balance, Balance of Payments Basis, BEA, (536, 537) .....	4 Q '76
28	Advance Business Conditions Digest, BEA, (12, 33, 69, 813, 817) .....	November
	(5, 10, 17, 45, 59, 62, 810, 811, 814, 815, 816 820, 825, 830, 853, 860) .....	December
31	Defense Indicators, BEA .....	December
31	Agricultural Prices (Agriculture) .....	December

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