

## **Notes from a User of Statistics Canada Data**

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## **Clients of SC**

- **Federal Government Departments**
- **Provincial Governments**
- **International Agencies**
- **Others**
  - Corporations
  - Labour unions
  - NGOs
  - Research institutes
  - People

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## Types of Users

- **Media**
- **Governments, Direct**
- **Governments, Indirect**
- **Financial Community**
- **Econometric Modellers**
- **Research Institutes**
- **Academics**
- **Consultants**
- **Corporate Economists, Strategic Planners, etc.**
- **Labour Unions**
- **NGOs**
- **Others( e.g., Lawyers, SIGs)**

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## Corporate Interests

- **Marketing Interests**
- **Industrial Relations**
- **Procurement (indexing)**
- **Strategic Planners**
- **Government Relations**

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## Demand for Data

- **Typical demand function – income and price**
- **Additional characteristics**
  - Timeliness
  - Frequency
  - Accuracy
  - Length
  - Format
  - Relevance
- **Comparability**
  - over time
  - across countries
  - across data sets

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## What Do They Want?

- **Timely Response to Queries**
- **Clear understanding of what they are given**
- **Inexpensive**
- **machine-readable form**
- **Internet**

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## Why Do They Seem Unreasonable?

- Expect you to “read their minds” and anticipate their “real needs”
- When they pay they expect service
- Expect to find data for 2002, on or about 1 January 2003 - some as of 1 January 2002!
- Leading edge measurement
  - How many Java programmers are there?
  - What is the population in Nunavut and its unemployment rate? Its CPI?
  - How many educated Canadians are leaving for the US? Why?

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## Why are Users Important?

- Who else are you working for?
- Nature of “national” institution
- Their questions might help to guide new data collection or presentation
- Their support might help when budget cuts arise
- They may use the data for decisions that make Canada a better place to live
- Other Channels -
  - National Statistics Council
  - User Advisory Groups
  - Intergovernmental linkages

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## Other Influences

- **Macroeconomic Environment**
  - Inflation
  - Debts and Deficits
  - Environment
  - Tax policy
- **International Agreements**
  - Kyoto
  - FTA and NAFTA
  - UN-SNA
- **Federal & Provincial Agreements**
- **Academic Research**
- **Contract Work**

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## What Should You Do?

- **What is analysis?**
- **Where is Hand-off Point?**
- **Should you forecast?**
- **Should you interpret and answer public policy issues?**
- **Conflict of asking and answering in same organization**

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## Multiple Needs

- **Modelling**
- **Forecasting**
- **Monitoring**
- **Consulting projects**
- **Public commentary**
  - Labour Force Survey - M
  - CPI - M
  - GDP - M
  - SNA-Q
  - Budgets – A

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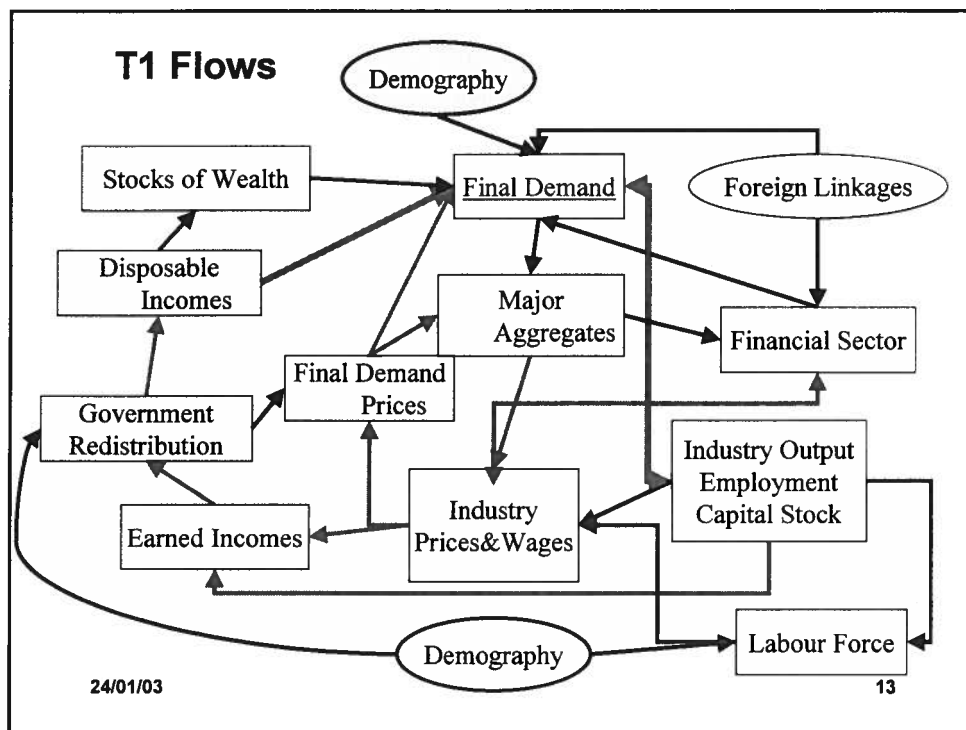
## Data Breadth

- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| • <b>Census</b>                      | • <b>Bank of Canada</b>  |
| • <b>Labour Force Survey</b>         | • <b>CMHC</b>  |
| • <b>CSNA</b>                        | • <b>NRCan</b>   |
| • <b>IO Tables – CSNA</b>            | • <b>Health Canada</b>   |
| • <b>SNA – supplementary</b>         | • <b>CIHI</b>  |
| • <b>Trade (exports and imports)</b> | • <b>Provincial Governments</b>  |
| • <b>Public Institutions Div.</b>    | • <b>Other StatsCan</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Business Register</li><li>– SHS</li><li>– SPSPD/ Model</li></ul> |
| • <b>Wealth &amp; Capital Stocks</b> |  |
| • <b>SEPH</b>                        | • <b>International</b>   |

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## Qualities of Data

- Plural Nature of Qualities
- Producer Qualities
- User Qualities
- Societal Qualities

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## Producer Qualities

- **Accessibility**
- **Accuracy**
- **Coherence**
- **Interpretability**
- **Relevance**
- **Timeliness**

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## Qualities for Users

- **Six producer qualities PLUS**
- **Consistent time series**
- **Well-documented for user**
- **Suggestions for obtaining approximate coherence**
- **Low cost**
- **Detail available**

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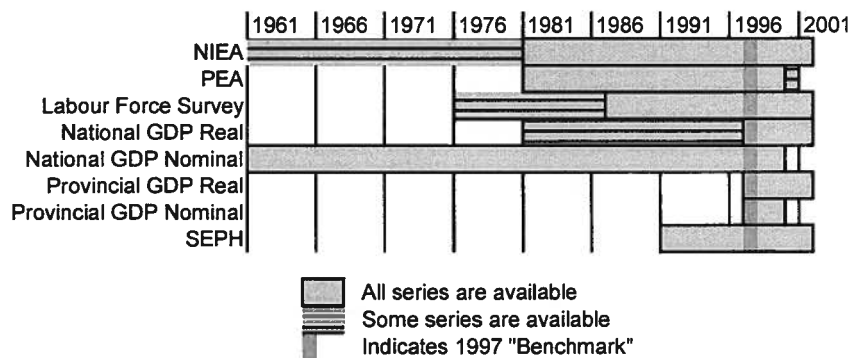
## Meta Issues

- The “Ragged Edge” Problem
- Confidentiality Constraints
- Vintage Problem
  - Within SNA
  - SNA & other systems
- Data Gaps
  - Functional Breakdown of Govt. Expenditures
  - Environmental data
  - Valuation of Wealth
  - Households

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## The “Ragged Edge”



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## Conclusions

- **Best system we have seen**
- **Can be improved**
- **Producers care**
- **Users will always want more**
- **International pressures can help**

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**Some Statistics Canada Data Sets to illustrate the "Ragged Edge" problem**

<b>Data Source</b>	<b>Start</b>	<b>Notes</b>	<b>End</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b><u>System of National Accounts</u></b>				
<i>NIEA</i>	1961-81 1981	Main aggregates All series	2001	Quarterly
<i>PEA</i>	1981	All Series	2000 1999	GDP and detail Government revenue and outlay
<i>Industry GDP</i>				
Real National	1981 1997	Link Level (113) Full Detail (215+)	2001	Full Detail (215+)
Nominal National	1961	Link Level (113)	1999	Link Level (113)
Real Provincial	1997	Suppressed Cells	2001	Suppressed Cells
Nominal Provincial	1997	Suppressed Cells	1999	Suppressed Cells
<i>Input-Output Tables &amp; Gross Output</i>				
National				
S-Level (25 industries)	1961		1998	
M-Level (64 industries)	1961	Suppressed Cells	1998	Suppressed Cells
L-Level (113 industries)	1961	Suppressed Cells	1998	Suppressed Cells
W-Level (299 industries)	1997	Suppressed Cells	1998	Suppressed Cells
Provincial				
S-Level (25 industries)	1997	Suppressed Cells	1998	Suppressed Cells
National Balance Sheet	1961	Certain item start later	2001	
<b><u>Labour Force Survey</u></b>				
Major aggregates	1976		2001	
Detail	1987		2001	Different treatment of OAC than Industry GDP
Households	1997		1998	
<b><u>Education</u></b>	1976		1999	
<b><u>Employment by Establishment</u></b>	1991		2001	
<b><u>Consumer Price Index</u></b>	1981		2001	
<b><u>Producer Price Index</u></b>	1981		2001	
<b><u>Investment</u></b>				
Public & Private Investment	???		2001	
Wealth & Capital Stock	1961		2001	

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- ✓ ● **2001** - Chapter 12 - Follow-up of Recommendations in Previous Reports: Statistics Canada - Managing the Quality of Statistics
 

Chapter	PDF	News Release
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- ✓ ● **1999** - Chapter 3 - Statistics Canada - Managing the Quality of Statistics
 

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- **1995** - Chapter 26 - Follow-up of Recommendations in Previous Reports: Merchandise Trade Statistics - 1993, Chapter 23
 

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