

CARIBBEAN

COMMUNITY

SECRETARIAT

**TWENTY-EIGHTH MEETING OF THE
STANDING COMMITTEE OF
CARIBBEAN STATISTICIANS**

RESTRICTED

SCCS/2003/28/17

Providenciales, Turks and Caicos Islands

3-5 November 2003

1 November 2003

REVIEW JANUARY-SEPTEMBER 2003
WORK PROGRAMME 2004

Submitted by the Statistical Office, St. Vincent And The Grenadines

INTRODUCTION

The Statistical Office continues to play a pivotal role in the development of St. Vincent and the Grenadines by providing social and economic statistical indicators for planning purposes.

2. The specific objectives of the unit are as follows:
- (i) To ensure adherence to the provisions of the Census and Statistical Act of 1983;
 - (ii) To collect, compile and analyse statistical information relative to the agricultural, commercial, industrial, financial, social and general activities and condition of the inhabitants of St. Vincent and the Grenadines;
 - (iii) To tabulate statistical data and to publish reports including:
 - (a) The Digest of Statistics (annually);
 - (b) Trade Reports (annually and half-yearly);
 - (c) Balance of Payments Report (annually, in conjunction with the ECCB);
 - (d) National Accounts Report (annually);

- (e) Consumer Price Index bulletins (monthly, with half yearly and yearly reviews); and
 - (f) Vital Statistics Report (annually).
- (iv) To provide local, regional and international organisations with timely statistical data;
 - (v) To conduct surveys and censuses in order to improve the database;
 - (vi) To maintain a close working relationship with the Economic Planning Unit, Physical;
3. Planning Unit and other Government Departments to have available timely Statistical Information for planning purposes.

OVERVIEW - January 2003 - September 2003

4. During the period under review, the Statistical Office through the efforts of a hard working and productive staff, completed most of the major activities in the work programme.

NATIONAL ACCOUNTS

5. National Income estimates for the year 2001 were finalised during the week 17 – 21 March 2003 and preliminary estimates for 2002 were also done. The Statistical Office once again received technical assistance from the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank through the services of Mrs. Hazel Corbin and Mr. Ron Faria.

6. During this period also, the Statistical Office produced a National Accounts report. This publication contains a series of tables with data from 1990 – 2000. Some analysis was also done for the eleven year period.

7. During the period July – August, the establishment's register was updated to prepare for the next Survey of Establishments. Questionnaires for this survey were prepared and dispatched in the month of September with responses requested by the end of December 2003.

BALANCE OF PAYMENTS

8. The compilation of the Balance of Payments estimates was done during the week 15 – 18 July 2003. The Eastern Caribbean Central Bank again provided technical assistance through one of its Statisticians, Mr. Colin Cannonier. The results of the exercise were presented to senior members of staff in the Ministry of Finance and Planning.

INDEX OF RETAIL PRICES

9. A new basket of goods for the Index of Retail Prices was prepared. The new base year is January 2001. The collection of prices, compilation and the production of the monthly consumer price index continued during the period.

TRADE STATISTICS

10. Trade Statistics is basically up to date. At present we have Imports loaded for the month of September, however we are still working on the Exports for that month.

11. The unit was able to provide the International Monetary Fund with requested Trade data for the period under review. This information is usually sought prior to the visit of the mission towards the end of October.

12. The Annual Trade Reports for the years 2000 and 2001 have been completed and are now at the Government Printery. Some minor editing for the 2002 Trade data was completed a week ago and very shortly tables will be prepared for the 2002 publication.

SUMMARY OF CRITICAL ISSUES FACING THE STATISTICAL UNIT

13. The following critical issues are prioritized and need to be addressed to ensure the proper functioning of the unit.

- (i) The lack of adequate space and proper storage facilities for confidential statistical information - survey questionnaires, customs warrants;
- (ii) Soliciting the support of the Ministry of Finance to assist in getting all firms and establishments to respond to the National Accounts and Balance of Payments questionnaires;
- (iii) Devise ways and means for non-compliance to adhere to the Statistical Act No. 24 of 1983;
- (iv) To immediately train one staff member in computer programming;
- (v) To immediately address the shortage of computers and other training equipment in the unit as well as the servicing and subsequent replacement of outdated equipment;
- (vi) The preparation for and the conduct of the next Population and Housing Census.

STAFFING

14. The staffing arrangement within the unit is as follows:

	2003	2004	Remarks
Chief Statistician	1	1	
Senior Statisticians	2	2	
Statisticians	3	3	1 vacant
Senior Statistical Officers	2	2	2 vacant
Statistical Officers	2	2	1 vacant
Senior Statistical Assistants	3	3	1 vacant
Statistical Assistants	5	5	
TOTAL	18	18	

WORK PROGRAMME

15. The Statistical Office is divided into the following sections:

- (i) Balance of Payments, Trade Statistics and Prices;
- (ii) National Accounts, Social and Demographic Statistics.

BALANCE OF PAYMENTS, TRADE STATISTICS AND PRICES

16. The following activities will be undertaken during the next financial year:

- (i) Editing of Import and Export warrants;
- (ii) Compilation of Trade Statistics;
- (iii) Preparation of half yearly Trade reports;
- (iv) Preparation of Annual Trade Reports Part A and B;
- (v) Computation of Trade Indices;
- (vi) Public Relations Exercise for Balance of Payments;
- (vii) Annual Survey of Establishments for Balance of Payments;
- (viii) Data collection and Compilation of Balance of Payments Estimates;

- (ix) Price Collection for Consumer Price Index;
- (x) Compilation and Publication of monthly Consumer Price Index Bulletins;
- (xi) Mid-year and end of year reviews of Consumer Price Index.

NATIONAL ACCOUNTS, SOCIAL & DEMOGRAPHIC STATISTICS

17. The following activities will be undertaken in this section:
- (i) Annual Survey of Establishments;
 - (ii) Compilation of National Accounts Estimates;
 - (iii) Publication of National Accounts Report;
 - (iv) Data Collection and preparation of tables for Government Finance Statistics;
 - (v) Collection and tabulation of vital events (births and deaths);
 - (vi) Analysis of vital statistics and publication of an annual report;
 - (vii) Preparation of Population Estimates and Projections;
 - (viii) Conduct the 2001 Population and Housing Census.

TRAINING PLAN

- In-House:**
- (i) Training of all members of staff in Spreadsheet and Word Processing packages;
 - (ii) Training for new entrants to the Statistical Office in basic statistical methods;
- External:**
- (i) Training for a member of staff in Computer Programming;
 - (ii) Training in Sample Survey Design/Sampling Techniques/ Cartography;
 - (iii) Training in National Accounts, Government Finance Statistics. – IMF;

- (iv) Attachment at STATIN for training in trade by broad economic categories and end use;
- (v) Training in index construction and interpretation;
- (vi) Training at UTEC - Basic Statistics Summer Programme.

ACTION REQUIRED

18. **The Meeting** is invited to:

: **consider** the Review January to September 2003 and the Work Programme 2004, submitted by St. Vincent and the Grenadines.
