Singapore Data Dissemination Policy

I Principles of Dissemination

- Relevance to policy issues: The mission of the Singapore Department of Statistics (DOS) is to provide reliable, relevant and timely statistics to support Singapore's social and economic development.

- Reliability and Timeliness of Data Disseminated: Many business decisions are based on the key economic indicators on the performance of the economy and specific industries. To facilitate business planning, the data disseminated must be the best available within reasonable timeframe.

- Transparency: The Advance Release Calendar (http://www.singstat.gov.sg/stats/arc.html), which covers key Singapore economic indicators, keeps the data users informed of the release dates of these indicators. Key statistical indicators released by the Singapore Department of Statistics (DOS) such as the Consumer Price Index and Retail Sales and Catering Trade Indices are also released according to scheduled release dates and times.

- Responsiveness to User Requirements: Data dissemination has to be "customer-centric", delivering what is needed by users in both the public and private sectors. Given an increasing need by users for existing data on more frequent basis and at more disagregated levels, and more new data, there is a need to manage user expectations while responding to those demands that can be met.

- Protection of Data - In order to maintain the trust of survey respondents, data disseminated must be made within a credible data protection framework. Protection of confidentiality of individual information is provided for under the Statistics Act.

II Statistical Dissemination Channels

- Statistical Publications:
a) general-purpose publications, eg Yearbook of Statistics, Monthly Digest of Statistics, Singapore in Brief, and Singapore In Figures;

b) industry-specific reports on the services sector and subject matter reports on national accounts, households and population; and

c) Occasional Papers series as informal means of disseminating new data.

d) Information Papers series and feature articles in the Statistics Singapore Newsletter to explain basic statistical concepts and statistical methods eg rebasing of Singapore’s National Accounts to Reference Year 2005, release of Singapore’s Input-Output Tables 2005 etc.

- Electronic Dissemination:

(a) The SingStat website serves as a portal to official statistics compiled by the Singapore Department of Statistics and other local government agencies. It contains a wide range of key indicators and general statistics on the Singapore economy, business performance, population

trends and household characteristics. Softcopies of publications released are available for free downloading. Media releases are uploaded in the Singstat website to keep users updated on the latest releases. The website also adopted a portal approach for official statistics posted by Research & Statistics Units of other Ministries and Statutory Boards.

(b) SingStat Time Series (STS) is a web-based time series retrieval system that includes more than 7,000 statistical time series on Singapore's society and economy from several domains, covering national accounts, balance of payments, investments, finance, labour, prices, business expectations, trade, manufacturing, tourism, demography, health and education. The STS is open for subscription by local and overseas users.

(c) “Data on SMS” is a free mobile service which allows data users in Singapore to retrieve the latest data for key indicators via SMS.

(d) SingStat Express service delivers press releases, notices of publication, occasional/information papers and newsletter via email. SMS alert service is also available to Singapore users.

(e) Really Simple Syndication (RSS) delivers the latest statistical news to subscribers through the RSS feeds.

III Strategies in Data Dissemination

- Holistic view of statistical data releases - Singapore has a decentralised statistical system. Data are compiled and disseminated by a large number of government agencies. By releasing data compiled by DOS together with the statistical series compiled by other government agencies, DOS enhances the quality of the Government Statistical Service as a whole.

- DOS uses the internet for the first release of statistical data. This improves the timeliness of data dissemination significantly.

- Value-added services such as email notifications and RSS are introduced to add to the convenience of the data users to assess latest available information quickly and easily.

- Adoption of Data Dissemination Standards - DOS publishes the following statistical standards and classifications:

- Singapore Standard Industrial Classification
- Singapore Standard Occupational Classification
- Singapore Standard Educational Classification
- Singapore Statistical Standard for Age

Since August 1996, Singapore has also subscribed to the Special Data Dissemination Standards (SDDS). Singapore met all SDDS requirements in January 2001.

SINGAPORE DEPARTMENT OF STATISTICS