

UNITED NATIONS

Group of Experts on
Geographical Names

For *ninth Session*
Geneva, 17-26 May 1989

WORKING PAPER

No. 38
17 May 1989

Agenda item 6(a)

TOWARDS MARCHING CULTURAL TOPONYMS RECORDED BY STATISTICS
CANADA WITH THE OFFICIAL TOPONYMS OF THE
CANADIAN PERMANENT COMMITTEE ON GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

Submitted by Helen Kerfoot, CPCGN Secretariat, Canada

**TOWARDS MATCHING CULTURAL TOPONYMS RECORDED
BY STATISTICS CANADA WITH THE OFFICIAL
TOPONYMS OF THE
CANADIAN PERMANENT COMMITTEE ON GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES**

**Paper prepared by Geography Division,
Statistics Canada**

Submitted by Helen Kerfoot, CPCGN Secretariat, Canada

Statistics Canada now has a 1986 vintage database containing approximately 30,000 toponyms to support the census and other surveys. This database contains only cultural toponyms and they are basically of two kinds:

- (i) municipalities, referred to as census subdivisions (CSDs), covering the entire land area of Canada; and
- (ii) unincorporated places (UPs) that are locally known by specific names but lack local governments or legal limits.

This database currently comprises 6009 CSDs, as identified by the provincial and territorial departments of municipal affairs and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, and 23,984 UPs of which 10,500 were reported by 1986 Census enumerators but which are not always toponyms which have the approval of the Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names.

As part of the 1986 Census of Canada, Statistics Canada recently released four publications and a digital Place Name Master File that present locational, population and dwelling count data for 16,500 place names.

For each UP reported by the 1986 Census a seven-digit code, called the Standard Geographical Classification (SGC) code, identifies the census subdivision in which each UP is located. In preparation for the 1991 Census of Canada it is intended to assign and maintain the SGC code for all UPs on the database and furthermore to identify those place names on the file that are recognized by the Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (CPCGN).

The goal of Statistics Canada, however, is eventually to replace our UP names with those CPCGN approved cultural toponyms on the Energy, Mines and Resources (EMR) National Toponymic Data Base (NTDB) so that the two databases will be consistent. This would then be the most comprehensive list of approved cultural toponyms possible.

Efforts to link these two databases have not yet been successful because the NTDB latitude and longitude values, currently only in degrees and minutes, are not precise enough to permit automatic location coding using the digital CSD boundary file from Statistics Canada.

Resources have not yet been made available to link the information from these two separate databases of two different government departments. It is hoped that they will become available in 1990-91 so that it will enable the production of a most comprehensive list of approved cultural toponyms - much needed input to the 1991 edition of the Standard Geographical Classification which will support many programs including the 1991 Census of Canada.