

United Nations Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific

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**Managing Issues Addressing the Challenges of Using Administrative
Data for Statistical Purposes**

Statement of Macao, China

Statistics and Census Service
Government of Macao Special Administrative Region
People's Republic of China

1. For the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC), administrative data is indispensable in enhancing the coverage of official statistics, improving the quality of statistical information and reducing the reporting burden of its respondents. At present, indicators such as Vital Events, External Merchandise Trade, Visitor Arrivals, Gross Gaming Revenue, Imported Workers, Health, Education, Environment, Transport and Communications, etc. are examples of the official statistics derived from administrative records.
2. On account that administrative data collected by different government offices aim to serve specific purposes other than record keeping, the information may or may not conform to the international statistical standards used. For instance, records on the number of births include all newborn babies delivered by residents and non-residents; records of merchandise trade exclude self-consumption goods brought in by Macao residents; records of business registration include all active and inactive companies, etc. With regard to the issue on incomplete or inaccurate records of administrative data, DSEC always conduct internal studies on the quality, consistency and sustainability of the data series concerned before releasing the information as official statistics.
3. Evaluation methods used to ensure quality of statistics from administrative sources vary depending on the type of data collected, usually, they include manual logical checks by internal staff, validity checks and comparisons by computer programmes developed in-house, as well as cross analysis with other sources of data when available.
4. Although there exists no formal coordination mechanism among government offices, yet most of the departments are very helpful in providing data to DSEC on a regular basis. To maintain close collaboration with them, DSEC have constantly organized workshops and discussions with these departments for which they are also users of the official statistics of Macao.
5. The major obstacle is the timeliness of data as some departments can only provide information to DSEC after all their internal processes have been completed. Besides, some of the administrative data are stated by law to be kept in strict confidence, e.g. taxation records; therefore, DSEC has to collect such information from surveys.