

202 COORDINATION OF GOVERNMENT STATISTICAL PROGRAMS

(3) Preserve for continued use all or nearly all the relevant detailed information contained in the original data, as compared with the present situation in which much of the detailed information is irretrievably lost, or become retrievable only at prohibitive cost.

(4) Reduce the processing costs associated with the use of a given amount of information.

(5) Store information in more accessible forms at lower per unit costs and with a comprehensive index or bibliography.

(6) Make much information accessible to non-Government users which now is too expensive or too cumbersome for them to use, even though it is legally available and its use would benefit the general public. This is especially relevant to users in state and local governments, academic and other non-profit research users, and business users. In this connection, the Center should develop extensive working relations with academic users, of the sort which the Census has done to a much greater extent than other agencies. Even these are limited and currently are handicapped by lack of physical facilities, programming capacity, and organizational capacity for dealing with them. As the working relations of the physical science establishments of the Federal Government with the academic and industrial scientific communities demonstrate, such cooperation is of great benefit to the Government in performing its tasks effectively.

(7) Provide improved analyses of existing data for all users. The facilities for cooperative efforts are highly relevant to this point as well.

(8) Facilitate greatly improved coordination of statistical data between the Federal Government and the states and localities, and internationally as well.

(9) Create a repository of technical competence in statistical services, and computer software and hardware, that would be available to the whole Government establishment.

4. PROPOSED ORGANIZATION

In order for the National Data Center to function properly, it must be given a proper position in the Federal Statistical System, and sufficient authority, leadership, trained personnel, and funds to perform its mission. The Committee has given special attention to the problem of finding the organizational arrangement most conducive to the successful functioning of the Center, and attaches great weight to its organizational recommendations. We recommend the creation of a new position, Director of the Federal Statistical System, in the Executive Office, and the placement of the Census Bureau and the National Data Center as coordinate units under his direction.

The Bureau of the Census is the largest, most widely experienced, most professionally competent, and broadest in scope of all the present statistical agencies. To the extent that any agency in the System attempts to perform the functions described above, it is the Census. The data Center will require close cooperation and support from the Census in order to function effectively. For all these reasons, it appears desirable to put the Center in close organizational and physical proximity to the Census. On the other hand, the Center's tasks are not the present tasks of the Census; the Center will be a new organization with the difficult problem of establishing itself as a going concern and making its way in the complex of agencies producing and using large bodies of quantitative information—its suppliers and customers, so to speak. Thus it does not appear appropriate to subordinate the new agency to the existing Census organization. Further, the establishment of smooth working relations between the Center and the other elements of the Federal Statistical System might well be easier if the Center is a new, coordinate agency rather than a part of the Census Bureau.

If the new data Center is to have specially close but coordinate relations with the Census and similar, if organizationally less intimate, relations with other data collecting and using agencies, some method must exist to regulate and oversee these relations. This coordination function is now assigned to the Office of Statistical Standards, but in the Committee's judgment, that Office is not placed so as to be able to carry it out effectively. We propose that a new position be created with this function, entitled Director of the Federal Statistical System, to be filled by presidential appointment. The new Director would exercise, by delegation or new legislation, as seemed appropriate, the coordinating powers over Federal statistical programs provided for in Sec. 103 of the Budget and Accounting Procedures Act of 1950 (P.L. 784, 81st Congress). The Office of Statistical Standards would accordingly be transferred from the Bureau of the Budget to become a staff office of the new Director, to assist him in carrying