# A STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE STATISTICAL SYSTEM OF ANGUILLA

2005 - 9

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## 1 Background

#### 1.1 Mission Statement

The Mission of the Statistics Department is:

To produce relevant and quality statistics for use by both the private and public sectors of Anguilla and other interested parties in their decision-making.

#### 1.2 Vision

The Vision of the Statistics Department is:

To provide statistical services that maximize the appropriate use of statistics in Anguilla and overseas.

By being the authoritative source in Anguilla on all statistics and statistical methods, and producing the best quality official statistics for improved decision-making in all sectors of the economy, through sustained partnerships with business, government and society at large, while at the same time preserving and enhancing our integrity and professionalism.

## 1.3 History of Statistics in Anguilla

The Statistical history of Anguilla, until the 1980s, was similar to that of other territories colonised by Britain. That is, a history of the occasional census, detailed trade data collected for import duty purposes and a few other statistics that could be derived from administrative sources. Most of this data was published as part of the statistical programmes of St. Kitts Nevis Anguilla, of which Anguilla was a part from 1958 until 1967.

Starting in the early seventies, the Statistics Unit of the Government of Anguilla produced statistics about Anguilla's society and conducted censuses in 1974, 1984 and 1992. The Statistics Act of Anguilla was passed in 1971. The first Statistical Abstract was published in 1984 and covered the period 1960 – 82. Included in that Abstract were statistics that could be collected from administrative sources e.g.: vital statistics from

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The Anguilla Statistics Strategic Plan 2005.doc

court registry records, international trade data from import warrants etc.

When the Statistical Programmes were developed further in the early eighties, priority was given to the development of economic statistics. The first statistical surveys were conducted in 1985 when the Consumer Price Index was first published and a survey of business establishments was carried out to produce the National Accounts. This initiative was mainly as a result of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which funded an Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) statistician and United Nations (UN) volunteers to assist in the development of the economic statistics programme. UN volunteers continued to work on assignment during the nineties. The quality of their work and leadership varied and there was little training of the officers working in the Unit. The Unit consisted of 4 officers at this time.

In 1998, the first household sample survey was conducted by an external consultant hired by the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank but paid for by the Anguillian government. The survey collected information on household incomes and expenditures to produce weights for an updated Consumer Price Index (CPI). In 1999 a second household sample survey was conducted which was a Labour Force survey. Again an external consultant was hired on contract by the Anguillian government. These household surveys were constrained by the lack of a household register of Anguilla.

As part of an Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) initiative, Anguilla carried out a census of households and population in May 2001, which not only provided a rich database of Anguillian society, but also provided a household register from which samples could be drawn for Household Surveys. The Statistics Unit purchased a scanner with which the census questionnaires were scanned and the information was stored in an ACCESS database for tabulation.

The UK Department for International Development (DFID) provided funding for technical assistance, training and computers over a 4-year period from November 2000. Over this period the status of the Statistics Unit was upgraded to that of a department with its own budget and Chief Statistician. The size of the unit was increased with each staff member working with their own computer and the unit was rehoused in separate offices from the rest of the Ministry of Finance to give it an image of independence from the rest of the Government.

In January 2002, the Statistics Department stopped producing paper publications and published all statistics on the Government of Anguilla web site. In the same year, a business register was established and economic statistics were generally improved with the increased coverage of the business sector. In 2003 the Statistics Department carried out its first Computer Assisted Interview Survey (CATI), the topic being Reproductive Health. In January 2004 Anguilla appointed its first Anguillian Chief Statistician.

## 2 The Role of the Statistics Department

The duties of the Statistics Department are clearly outlined in section 2 of the Statistics Act which is contained in Chapter S60 of the REVISED STATUTES OF ANGUILLA

- (a) to collect, compile, analyse, abstract and publish statistical information relative to the commercial, industrial, social, economic and general activities and conditions of the people who are the inhabitants of Anguilla:
- (b) to collaborate with all other departments of Government and with local authorities in the collection, computation and publication of statistical records of administration;
- (c) to take any census in Anguilla; and
- (d) generally to organize a coordinated scheme of social and economic statistics and intelligence pertaining to Anguilla;

A policy paper entitled "A Statistical System for Anguilla" which has been discussed with all the Permanent Secretaries emphasises the role of the Statistics department as providing a service which will assist other parts of the Government to collect the raw data required to produce the Official Statistics with the Statistics Department being the source of all official statistics.

Anguilla is a small country and cannot afford duplication of effort especially in the area of scarce specialised resources such as statistical production. In addition a centralised statistical system reduces political influence in the decisions as to which statistics are produced, the definitions of what is produced and the release of statistics. A centralised statistical system is the one agreed to where each Ministry has one or more focal points that work with the Statistics Department to collect the raw data from which Statistics are produced and also

work with the Statistics Department on the analysis of the data. The Statistics Department remains however the official disseminator of Statistics and is responsible for the integrity of all official statistics.