

Welcome Remarks
By ESO Director, Maria Zingapan
for the National Statistical Coordination Committee Launch
18 April 2013, 10:00-11:00 AM

Good morning. It's an honor to welcome the Honorable Premier, Mrs. Juliana Connor-Connolly; the Deputy Governor, Mr. Franz Manderson; Cabinet Secretary Mr. Samuel Rose; Acting Financial Secretary Mrs. Sonia McLaughlin; Department of Environment Director, Mrs. Gina Petrie-Ebanks, Fellow Workers in the Public Sector, Distinguished Guests.

Intro

We gather this morning to launch the National Statistical Coordination Committee (NSCC). This event is the logical follow-up of the consultation that ESO conducted last year with government data producers, and the subsequent submission of the final version of the terms of reference to the Cabinet in February of this year.

What is the NSCC? I would like to give you an overview of the vision, goals and functions, using the NSCC logo as visual aid.

Vision

To paraphrase the preamble of the UN Fundamental Principles of Statistics, the guiding vision in establishing the NSCC is to have an “information system of a democratic society, serving the Government and the public with data about the situation of the Cayman Islands in four areas - one, economic; two, demographic; three social, and four, environmental”¹ These four areas are symbolized by the four colored bars of the NSCC logo.

¹ Paraphrased from the UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics

The colored bars also give us a picture of the mix of agencies that will comprise the NSCC on a voluntary basis: agencies with innate peculiarities with regard to their statistical functions; however, together they comprise a system, united primarily by their adherence to the same purpose – which is to serve the Government and the public with data that are compliant to fundamental principles of statistics, and that by God’s grace will lead to the socio-economic development of all residents.

Where possible, key users of statistics in the private and public sectors may also be invited, such as business associations and schools.

Goal

From a high level vision, the NSCC’s goal is derived. The goal is to coordinate the development of the country’s statistical system. After all, systems are not born out of the blue, they must be developed. To put it simply, the goal is “networking for better statistics in the Cayman Islands.”

Functions

From the vision and the goals, four functions are spelled out in the terms of reference, which are also represented by the four bars in the logo. In summary, these are:

First, to foster closer linkages among data producers. This includes establishing agreements on sharing of data and statistical resources within the respective bounds of the agencies’ operational laws and policies.

The second function is to promote international statistical standards. This may specifically involve projects that can assist member agencies in adopting international standards.

The third function is to facilitate capacity building and statistical planning. This would include technical assistance and training for member agencies possibly from the CARICOM and ECLAC, and from among member agencies themselves.

In statistical planning, NSCC members shall be invited to serve as advisors of ESO in prioritizing its programs based on local data needs.

The fourth function is to conduct joint outreach activities that will broaden the understanding and use of data in the community, and facilitate improved response rates for surveys. Examples of outreach programs include the celebration of the Annual National Statistics Week and the International Year of Statistics 2013 which was launched in March.

Conclusion

To conclude, our prayer at ESO is that the NSCC will be embraced by all data-producing agencies. Some of you have already partnered with us in the past, serving as members of the Census Advisory Committee.

And most of you are in current partnership with us, as data sources of a number of our reports. Some of you are also clients, with ESO providing technical advice on your data collection activities.

Today, we invite you to become stronger partners as we network for better statistics in the Cayman Islands for the good of all to God's glory.

Without further ado, I welcome you anew, and sincerely hope that the messages in today's launch will enrich our common understanding of the NSCC and motivate us towards active membership.

Good day, and the Lord Jesus Christ bless us all.