**Revised Guidelines on the Modification of Designated Statistics
(as updated on 21 June 2018, and per PSA Board Resolution No. 01, s.2017 – 190)**

Objectives
I. To enhance the implementation of the SDS by setting quality standards in the designation of new statistics and modification of existing designated statistics;
II. To ensure the responsiveness of the SDS to evidence-based governance by integrating proactive consultation with data user groups, government, research community and the business sector; and
III. To promote accountability in the recurrent delivery of quality designated statistics.

Definition of Terms:
I. **Designated statistics** (*per Memorandum Circular 01, Series of 1994*)
    -most critical and essential statistics required for social and economic analysis/planning based on approved criteria
II. **Modification**
    Modification refers to any of the following:
    A. Designation of new statistics;
    B. Changes/improvement in the attributes of designated statistics:
        1. periodicity of statistics
        2. disaggregation (e.g. geographic, grouping, etc.)
        3. schedule of data release/time lag
        4. methodology
        5. title of designated statistics
    C. Delisting of statistics which are no longer considered priority/relevant, or that had been discontinued.

Criteria for Modification
The following criteria must be satisfied before any statistics may possibly be included in the System of Designated Statistics:

I. **Data quality** - must be consistent with the generally accepted data quality assurance frameworks and standards such as, but not limited to General Standards on Statistical Information Dissemination (GSSID) per PSA Board Resolution No. 01, Series of 2017 - 062 and 063 (Annex BR-07-20130322-01a), as well as the National Quality Assurance Framework (NQAF) endorsed by the United Nations Statistics Commission on 8 February 2012 (Annex BR-07-20130322-01b) where statistics produced are fit for use and fit for purpose. The quality standards are the following:

    A. **Relevance**
        1. Data requirements of key or primary stakeholders are addressed with the following as priority:
            a. Essential in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of major government policies and programs, especially those embodied in the Philippine Development Plan (PDP), Philippine Statistical Development Program (PSDP), and laws, and in the delivery of government services at the national and local levels

b. Widely or significantly used data series in social, economic, and environmental analysis
c. Vital input/basic data in the compilation of key statistical frameworks and indicators (derived data systems) such as, among others, the national accounts, input-output tables, price indices, balance of payments and poverty statistics
d. Necessary indicators to measure progress towards international commitment (e.g., Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), etc.)
2. User requirements are taken into account with regard to the periodicity and disaggregation of the designated statistics (NQAF 16)
3. User satisfaction is regularly measured and systematically followed up (NQAF 14)

B. **Reliability and Accuracy**
1. Reliability of the data is appraised using statistical measures (GSSID)
2. A revision policy documenting the principles and procedures exists and are made public (NQAF 15)
3. Preliminary data are clearly identified as such and users are provided with information to be able to assess the quality of the preliminary data (NQAF 17)

C. **Timeliness and punctuality**
1. A release calendar, disseminating the pre-announced dates and time, is in place and published, and is made in consultation with users (NQAF 16, GSSID)
2. Deviations from the release calendar are announced in advance and justified to the users (NQAF 16)
3. Procedures are in place to regularly monitor and evaluate the punctuality of every release according to the information in the release calendar (NQAF 16)
4. Action plans are developed and followed if the timeliness targets are not met (NQAF 16)

D. **Accessibility and clarity**
1. A data dissemination policy strategy is in place to promote proper use of statistics (NQAF 17)
2. Data is disseminated using various media/forms to reach more users: (GSSID)
    a. Print media
    b. Electronic media
    c. E-mail
    d. Worldwide web
    e. CD-rom
3. Metadata and documentation of methodologies, including changes in methodologies as well as on-going activities and plans for improvement, data revisions and anticipated delays in release are provided and clearly explained to users to facilitate proper interpretation and meaningful comparison (GSSID, NQAF 17)
4. Data should be easy to find on websites
5. Data must be in user-friendly and downloadable format such as excel
6. Microdata are easily accessible to users (GSSID)
7. Contact information is provided upon release of data for queries
8. Historical data is periodically archived (GSSID)

     E. **Comparability and Coherence**
        1. It is possible to compare the statistics derived from the different sources or with different periodicities (e.g. monthly, quarterly, and yearly), and differences are explained and reconciled (NQAF 18)
        2. Breaks in the series are explained and the methods for ensuring reconciliation over a period of time are made publicly available (NQAF 18)
        3. Common international standards are complied with (NQAF 18)

II. **Regularity of the data series** – the indicator/statistics has been generated for over a period of time and there is an existing established data series

III. **Cost effectiveness** – in terms of the following:
    A. Optimal use of current technologies in all aspects of the statistical process (NQAF 11)
    B. No duplication of existing statistical activities
    C. Costs are based on or are comparable with those with similar statistical activities and are well documented (NQAF 11)

IV. **Actual and potential use of data** - significantly demonstrated and key users are clearly identified

V. **Extent of response burden** – information for the generation of statistics is obtained with minimum burden upon respondents

VI. **Legal mandate** - the agencies have legal basis/bases for the compilation of designated statistics

General Standards on Statistical Information Dissemination (GSSID)

Set of Standards

I. Standards to Promote Reliability, Transparency, and Integrity of the Philippine Statistical System

   A. Provide all appropriate metadata – The key to user's awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the data lies on the availability of info about the data such as concepts and definitions, purpose, coverage, units of measure, frequency or periodicity of data, documentation of methodology, sources of the data and other attributes on data quality.

   B. Label statistics accordingly.

   C. The title of a statistical table should include
      1. subject matter and unit of measure
      2. disaggregation, if any
      3. geographic coverage
      4. reference period

   D. The reference period or cut-off date for the data must be shown in the statistical table/report/publication/website. Preliminary figures must be noted as such.

   E. When presenting statistical information, a clear distinction must be made between actual data and interpretations drawn from it. Hence, forecasts and projections must be clearly labelled as such.

   F. Acknowledge the original sources of the data. Secondary data or those taken from other sources should be indicated as such, or if they are disseminated in agency websites, it is encouraged that they be hyperlinked to the source agency website for notification. Producers of the primary data should also be cited.

   G. Appraise reliability of the data using statistical measures – results from surveys and censuses should indicate sampling and non-sampling errors, percentage of compliance achieved, definition of terms, limitations of the data generated and administrative practices.

   H. Keep the users informed of revisions, anticipated delays in release, and changes in methodology as well as on-going activities and plans for improvement

II. Standards to Improve Timeliness and Accessibility of Government Information

   A. Keep the public informed and disseminate the data at the earliest time
      1. Provide advance information about upcoming data

2. Disseminate in advance a calendar of release
    a. Data release, as well as schedule of dissemination at the subnational level, to the public must be set at the start of the year showing the exact date of release
3. Disseminate statistical information in any form immediately upon availability or even before release of the formal publication
4. Undertake simultaneous release of information at the national and local level by national agencies with regional or provincial units

B. Promote the use of of all available data
    1. Disseminate all available disaggregations
    2. Make available the use of the most micro level summary statistics through Public Use Files

C. Reach out to more users using various media
    1. Disseminate statistics widely using both print and electronic mediua
    2. Conduct user awareness programs

D. Provide the users with utmost service and opportunities to feedback
    1. Establish a focal point for data inquiries in every agency
    2. Respond to reasonable data requests within a period of 15 working days
    3. Act upon complaints on access within a period of 15 working days
    4. Solicit and record feedback from data users

E. Develop and maintain a data archiving system

National Quality Assurance Framework

NQAF 11: ASSURING COST-EFFECTIVENESS

11.1   Guidelines for assuring cost-effectiveness are available.

11.2   The agency promotes and implements standardized solutions that increase effectiveness and   efficiency.

11.3   The agency's use of resources is monitored both by internal and independent external measures.

11.4   Sample surveys are used instead of censuses when it is appropriate and possible.

11.5   The costs of producing the statistics are well documented at each stage of statistics production to assess their effectiveness.

11.6   The costs of producing the statistics are regularly reviewed to assess optimization across the office.

11.7   Proactive efforts are made to improve the statistical potential of administrative data and to limit recourse to direct surveys.

11.8   Administrative data are used instead of sample surveys when it is appropriate and possible.

11.9   Cost–benefit analyses are carried out to determine the appropriate trade-offs in terms of data quality.

11.10   The respondent burden is managed. (See also NQAF13)

11.11   Reports on cost-effectiveness are made available to the public.

11.12   Clear and documented justification for each specific programme exists.

11.13   Before contemplating a new data collection, a review of whether current data sources can be utilized with minimal impact on their current purpose and quality is undertaken.

11.14   Ongoing review processes are in place to consider whether a particular programme is still operating in the most cost-effective way to meet its stated requirements.

11.15   The productivity potential of information and communications technology is optimized for data collection, processing and dissemination.

11.16   Every effort is made to minimize the reporting burden, consistent with the principal purposes for which the statistics will be used.

11.17   Routine clerical operations (e.g. data capture, coding, validation, etc.) are automated wherever possible.

11.18   The cost-effectiveness of every statistical survey is assessed.

11.19   Mechanisms exist for assessing whether the outputs produced meet the needs of the key users so as to justify the collection of the data.

NQAF 14: ASSURING RELEVANCE

14.1   Procedures are in place to consult users about the content of the statistical work programme.

14.2   Strategic goals and work programme plans are developed in such a way that judgments are able to be made about competing user needs and these goals and plans are made public on a regular basis.

14.3 Agreements have been laid down with the main users of the statistics (e.g. with respect to what will be supplied by the agency, the product quality of the statistics, the dissemination format, etc.).

14.4 A policy has been formulated on the type of statistics that the statistical agency wants to produce and does not want to (or cannot) produce.

14.5 Procedures are in place to prioritise between different users' needs in the work programme, and data on the use of the statistics are analysed to support priority setting.

14.6 The statistical agency has an advisory council to advise on overall statistical priorities.

14.7 Periodic reviews are undertaken of the continuing relevance and cost-effectiveness of individual statistical programmes/domains.

14.8 There is a thorough understanding of any legislative or regulatory requirements to compile particular statistics.

14.9 There is a good understanding of the interdependencies between individual statistical programmes/domains.

14.10 Procedures are in place to ensure coordination, harmonisation and full coverage of statistical information produced by the national statistical system.

14.11 Mechanisms are in place to identify users' needs and to describe how the data relate to their needs.

14.12 The users and how they use the statistical products are known and regularly tracked.

14.13 Procedures are in place to gather information on potential needs of users of statistics.

14.14 The survey objectives are set out in written form specifying: the population of interest; the geographic level of detail required; the intended reference period; the frequency and timeliness; the main data items/outputs required; the type of analysis intended to be conducted on the data; and other necessary quality attributes the statistics need to meet to be consistent with users' expectations of fitness for purpose.

14.15 User satisfaction is regularly measured and systematically followed up.

14.16 The editing and other statistical quality control processes in place for managing operations are consistent with the resultant statistics meeting users' priority needs.

14.17 The statistical dissemination products are aligned with users needs.

14.18 The users are informed about known gaps between the measured statistical concepts and the users' concepts of interest.

14.19 Metadata are described and made available to the users.

14.20 Arrangements are in place for post-collection evaluations to: take stock of outcomes as compared with user needs; highlight any issues upon which users should be informed; and to provide users ways to give feedback that can be taken into account in the planning for future such collections.

14.21 Action plans are implemented to improve relevance and meet emerging needs.

NQAF 15: ASSURING ACCURACY AND RELIABILITY

15.1 Systems for assessing and validating source data, intermediate results and statistical outputs are developed and managed.

15.2 Source data, intermediate results and statistical outputs are regularly assessed and validated.

15.3 Procedures and guidelines for data quality assessment are in place and address accuracy issues.

15.4 Procedures and guidelines are available on how to measure and reduce errors.

15.5 A revision policy is in place that documents the principles and procedures and it is made public.

15.6 Explanations about the timing, reasons for and nature of revisions are made available.

15.7 A quality assurance plan is in place that describes the quality control actions to prevent, monitor and evaluate non-sampling errors.

15.8 The revision policy follows standard and transparent procedures in the context of each survey.

15.9 Statistical procedures (e.g. compilation, data adjustments and transformations, and statistical analysis) employ internationally recognized statistical techniques.

15.10 Data sources (e.g. registers) are systematically checked, and the data that are used are compared with data from other sources.

15.11 Results are compared with other existing sources of information in order to ensure validity.

15.12 Periodic quality reporting on accuracy, serving both producer and user perspectives, is put in place.

15.13 Methods and tools for preventing and reducing non-sampling errors are in place and are used.

15.14 Sampling and non-sampling errors are measured, evaluated and systematically documented.

15.15 Statistical discrepancies in intermediate data are assessed and investigated.

15.16 Preliminary and revised data are clearly identified.

15.17 Information on the size and direction of revisions for key indicators is provided and made public.

15.18 Errors that are discovered in published statistics are corrected at the earliest possible date and are publicized.

15.19 An analysis of revisions is performed and used to improve the statistical process.

15.20 The sampling and non-sampling estimates are analysed over time and improvement actions are taken as a result.

15.21 User feedback is solicited to assess the fitness for purpose of the statistics.

NQAF 16: ASSURING TIMELINESS AND PUNCTUALITY

16.1 A release policy is defined and published; it distinguishes between different kinds of statistical outputs (press releases, statistics specific reports or tables, general publications, etc.) and their corresponding release procedures and timeliness targets.

16.2 The timeliness of the agency's statistics comply with IMF data dissemination standards or other relevant timeliness targets.

16.3 Action plans are developed and followed if the timeliness targets are not met.

16.4 A published release calendar announces in advance the dates that statistics (at least the major ones) are to be released.

16.5 The release calendar is made in consultation with users.

16.6 Procedures are in place to regularly monitor and evaluate the punctuality of every release according to the information in the release calendar.

16.7 Users are informed of any divergences from the advance release calendar.

16.8 Divergences from pre-announced times are published in advance; a new release time is then announced with explanations on the reasons for the delays.

16.9 User requirements are taken into account when the periodicity of the statistics is being decided.

16.10 Statistics are made available to all users at the same time.

16.11 Explicit consideration is given to overall trade-offs between timeliness and other dimensions of quality (e.g. accuracy, cost and respondent burden).

16.12 The possibility and usefulness of releasing preliminary data is regularly considered, while at the same time taking into account the data's accuracy.

16.13　Contingency plans exist to deal with emerging problems that could delay the release of data.

16.14　Attainable schedules are defined for the production processes.

16.15　The maximum acceptable amount of time that can elapse - between the end of the reference period and the availability of the data – is specified and is known to staff and users.

16.16　Agreements on the planned delivery dates with data providers are made.

16.17　Procedures exist that ensure the effective and timely flow of data from providers.

16.18　Follow-up procedures are in place to ensure timely receipt of data.

16.19　When preliminary data are released, they are clearly identified as such, and users are provided with appropriate information to be able to assess the quality of the preliminary data.

16.20　A published policy exists that describes the revisions for those key outputs that are subject to scheduled revisions.

16.21　Quality indicators on timeliness and punctuality are regularly calculated, monitored, published and followed up.

NQAF 17: ASSURING ACCESSIBILITY AND CLARITY

17.1　Policies and processes are in place to ensure that the statistical results are released with readily accessible and up-to-date documentation.

17.2　Statistics and the corresponding metadata are presented and archived in a form that facilitates proper interpretation and meaningful comparisons.

17.3　Guidelines that describe the appropriate content and preferred formats and style (layout and clarity of text, tables, and charts) of the agency's outputs are available to authors of statistical publications/databases.

17.4　Staff training and development programmes are in place on writing about statistics (for press releases, publication highlights or other explanatory texts).

17.5　The regular production of up-to-date methodological documents (on concepts, scope, classifications, basis of recording, data sources, compilation methods and statistical techniques), as well as quality reports, is part of the work programme of the agency, and the documents and reports are made available to the public.

17.6　A data dissemination strategy and policy exists, as well as a clear pricing policy (if applicable) governing the dissemination, and the policies are made public.

17.7　Modern information and communication technology (ICT) is used for dissemination (i.e. statistical databases and the agency's website as the main means of dissemination of statistics) in addition to traditional hard copy when appropriate.

17.8　Users are able to generate their own tables in the most appropriate formats (xls, html, etc.).

17.9　The statistics are disseminated in ways that facilitate re-dissemination by the media.

17.10　The agency consults users on a regular basis to find out about the formats of dissemination that they most prefer.

17.11　Catalogues of publications and other services are made available.

17.12　There is a well-publicized information or user support service, centre or hotline available for handling requests for data and for providing answers to questions about statistical results.

17.13　The public is informed about the agency's data outputs and services, and made aware that custom-designed outputs, statistics not routinely disseminated and longer time series can be provided on request when feasible, and they are instructed how the data can be ordered. These outputs are made public where possible.

17.14   Access to microdata is allowed for research purposes, subject to specific rules and protocols on statistical confidentiality that are posted on the agency's website.
17.15   The agency controls or monitors the access by researchers to microdata by providing them in a secure environment.
17.16   Remote access facilities are also available for accessing microdata, with appropriate controls.
17.17   Researchers are consulted regularly about the effectiveness of the microdata access arrangements.
17.18   Explicit consideration has been given to trade-offs between accessibility and confidentiality during the programme design stage.
17.19   A strategy has been developed and agreed upon with stakeholders for the release of data, metadata and (possibly) microdata from the data collection.
17.20   Processes are in place to ensure that metadata are documented according to standardized metadata systems, and are regularly updated.
17.21   Procedures are in place to ensure that any differences from internationally accepted standards, guidelines, or good practices are consistently annotated.
17.22   The mix of printed publications, electronic releases and data available on request is considered to be appropriate, given the principal user needs.
17.23   Statistics are presented in a clear and understandable manner.
17.24   The explanatory texts that accompany the data are reviewed for clarity and readability.
17.25   Meaningful comparisons are included in the publications when appropriate.
17.26   The users are informed about the methodology of the statistical processes and the use of administrative data.
17.27   Different levels of metadata detail are made available to users to meet their requirements.
17.28   Preliminary data are clearly identified as such when released, and users are provided with appropriate information to be able to assess the quality of the preliminary data.
17.29   Revised data are identified.
17.30   Policies are in place for archiving statistics and metadata.
17.31   Assessments are undertaken to ensure that the dissemination arrangements are meeting user needs.
17.32   Users are kept informed about the quality of the statistical outputs.

NQAF 18: ASSURING COHERENCE AND COMPARABILITY

18.1   Procedures or guidelines are in place to ensure and monitor internal coherence (e.g. observance of arithmetic and accounting identities) and consistency.
18.2   Procedures or guidelines are in place to ensure and monitor cross-sectoral coherence and consistency.
18.3   Statistics are kept comparable (availability of time series) over a reasonable period of time.
18.4   There is a common repository of concepts, definitions and classifications available or other mechanisms for promoting coherence and consistency.
18.5   Common standards exist with regard to definitions, units and classifications in order to enhance the comparability of the statistics.
18.6   Compliance with international or national standards for statistical production is periodically assessed.
18.7   Deviations from international or national standards are made explicit, and users are informed about the reasons for such deviations.

18.8   It is possible to compare statistics derived from different sources or with different periodicities (e.g. monthly, quarterly and yearly); differences are explained and reconciled.

18.9   Cooperation and the exchange of knowledge between individual statistical programmes/domains is promoted.

18.10   Specific procedures and guidelines for individual statistical programmes/domains are available to ensure that outputs obtained from complementary sources are properly combined.

18.11   The international and national standards concerning definitions, units and classifications are known and followed.

18.12   The common repository of concepts, definitions and classifications is consulted when designing a new individual statistical programme/domain.

18.13   Before a new individual statistical programme/domain is designed, the major related statistics are analysed.

18.14   Process-specific procedures and guidelines are available to ensure that outputs are internally coherent.

18.15   Changes in methods are clearly identified and measured to facilitate reconciliation.

18.16   Breaks in the series are explained and the methods for ensuring reconciliation over a period of time are made publicly available.

18.17   Effects of changes in methodologies on final estimates are assessed and appropriate information is provided to users.

18.18   Statistical outputs are compared with other statistical or administrative sources that provide the same or similar information on the same subject matter, and divergences are identified and explained to users.

18.19   Quality reporting includes a section on the assessment of internal consistency and comparability over time and with other subject matter related statistics.