EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

STATISTICAL OFFICIALS

HIGHLIGHTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

2023

INTRODUCTION

STATISTICAL OFFICIALS HIGHLIGHTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS provides an overview of the some of the ways Statistical Officials have improved the work and furthered the mission of the Federal statistical system and evidence-building infrastructure across the Federal government in 2023. The Foundations for Evidence-based Policymaking Act of 2018 (Evidence Act) established the Statistical Official role at each of the 24 Chief Financial Officers Act (CFO Act) agencies to advise on statistical policy, techniques, and procedures across the entire department or agency. The Evidence Act made the Statistical Official role separate and distinct from the responsibilities of OMB-Recognized Statistical Agencies and Units under the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act (CIPSEA), which was expanded in Title III of the Evidence Act, in order to expand the Federal government's capacity to produce high-quality evidence for policymakers.

In furtherance of the goals of the Evidence Act, OMB Memorandum M-19-23 described robust responsibilities for the Statistical Official role. Statistical Officials are the agency champions for data quality and confidentiality protections. They are charged with serving as the agency senior advisor for statistical policy, techniques, and procedures. As such, they are responsible for developing agency-wide standards for data quality and confidentiality.

Statistical Officials are leaders in each of their agency-wide data governance and across the Federal statistical system. They serve on the agency's Data Governance Body and are responsible for coordinating and collaborating with other senior leaders, like the Chief Data Officer, Evaluation Officer, Senior Agency Official for Privacy, and Chief Artificial Intelligence Officer. While some Statistical Officials also serve as the head of a Recognized Statistical Agency or Unit, the agency-wide role requires coordination and collaboration with other statistical components and programs, including any other Recognized Statistical Agency or Unit, within the agency. Statistical Officials serve on the Interagency Council on Statistical Policy. In 2023, the ICSP established a Subcommittee focused on Statistical Official roles and responsibilities to further develop, coordinate, support, and communicate standards, policies, and procedures related to the role of the Statistical Official.

Each Statistical Official has an important role to play not only for their own agency, but also to further the vision of a more seamless Federal statistical system. Effective expansion of the U.S. statistical and evidence-building infrastructure will require increasing the capabilities, capacity, and resources for the 24 Statistical Officials to serve their agencies and departments, and will require an initial investment of no less than two full-time equivalent positions to support these responsibilities. Some agencies may still be staffing the function to meet this initial minimum investment level. The activities of the Statistical Officials are varied in content and scope, and are expected to grow over the coming years. Nevertheless, in their current capacity, the Statistical Officials continue to play a pivotal role in the Federal statistical system and the Federal government, more generally.

Below are agency accomplishments, with future year reporting intended to more broadly represent key activities and accomplishments across all agencies.

- *Department of Agriculture (USDA).* The USDA Statistical Official engaged in several modernization efforts for USDA including the creation of 1) a single data platform for ingestion and integration of Census, survey, and non-survey data; 2) a single modularized and automated editing and imputation platform; 3) a high-performance, cloud computing environment; and 4) a modern data dissemination platform. Additionally, the USDA Statistical Official worked to allow producers to report online via the web and automated the collection of some non-survey data. Work has begun on identifying the features of a single data collection platform.

- *Department of Commerce (DOC).* The DOC Statistical Official, along with the CDO, led the Commerce Data Governance Board that adopted the [Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology's (FCSM) Data Quality Framework](#) as a resource and initiated a project to adapt Commerce data assets for better use by generative AI. The DOC Statistical Official also led the development and recruitment of a new role, an Evidence Act Implementation Coordinator, to lead data governance strategy within the Bureau of Economic Analysis and work with partners across DOC to embed Evidence Act principles within DOC's work processes. Additionally, the DOC Statistical Official worked with DOC leadership to charter a 2030 Census Advisory Committee, which will provide periodic reviews from more diverse perspectives on topics concerning the next decennial census.

- *Department of Defense (DOD).* The DOD established the Chief Digital and AI Officer (CDAO), which is also designated as the DOD Statistical Official, to advise DOD leadership, direct systemic DOD-wide strategy and policy and champion the data- and AI-related changes to DOD programs and culture. In this role, this Official facilitates the integration and fielding of data, analytics, and AI capabilities across DOD. As the Chair of the CDAO Council, the Statistical Official aligns best practices across DOD and promotes consistent and rigorous approaches to data-driven decision-making. The DOD Statistical Official has also advanced DOD's implementation of performance management and business analytics through the adoption of an enterprise analytics platform and common data models across the enterprise. This leadership guidance has established frameworks for data quality and governance that support statistical techniques and procedures across DOD. Additionally, the DOD Statistical Official has advocated and implemented best practices in the sharing and safeguarding of information that promotes and supports statistical competencies.

- ***Department of Education (ED).*** The ED Statistical Official hired a cybersecurity expert to enhance the capacities of the Statistical Official function and oversee an assessment of the National Center for Education Statistics' (NCES) provisions for data security and confidentiality. The Statistical Official initiated a revision process to revisit all of NCES's Statistical Standards, which were last updated in 2012, and will form the foundation of Statistical Official data quality work and produce an evergreen and accessible version of the Standards. These Standards will apply to NCES and across ED, as NCES supports many of the Department's program-focused data collection operations like the Civil Rights Data Collection. Addressing issues related to IT advances, technologies, and methodologies that did not exist when last revised, this revision of the NCES Standards is meant to keep NCES and ED in the vanguard of the Federal statistical system. In addition, the ED Statistical Official function provided the Department with guidance on cell suppression, quality control, and data processing procedures used to convert raw data from state respondents to data sets.

- ***Department of Energy (DOE).*** The DOE Statistical Official has been active in advancing the Evidence Act. The DOE Statistical Official serves as Co-Chair of DOE's Data Governance Board and is responsible for increasing awareness of best practices in data stewardship, data quality and reliability, and stakeholder interaction. The DOE Statistical Official has been advising the Secretary of Energy on strategies for building evidence to measure impacts of cryptomining and emphasizing the importance of using statistical principles in gathering, compiling, and releasing this type of data.

- ***Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).*** The HHS Statistical Official co-chairs the HHS Data Council and serves on the HHS Data Governance Board. Through these roles, significant progress was made in improving data discoverability and access, ensuring data quality, expanding data linkage, and enhancing privacy-preserving techniques—all key elements in making HHS's data well suited for evidence-based policymaking. Additionally, the HHS Statistical Official is coordinating with other Statistical Officials to design, develop, and implement the National Secure Data Service (NSDS) via the ICSP's NSDS subcommittee. This subcommittee continues to assess questions related to the function, structure, and governance of an NSDS, including data linkage across both statistical and non-statistical agencies, the potential use of data from private and administrative sources, and the incorporation of state, local, tribal, and territorial data.

- ***Department of Homeland Security (DHS).*** The DHS Statistical Official worked with DHS leadership to formally establish the new Office of Homeland Security Statistics (OHSS) and manages the standardization of statistical data formats, sharing of statistical data assets, and publication of statistical analyses and data assets for all DHS homeland security data. The DHS Statistical Official also established a DHS Statistical Official Council, with representative statistical officials from each of DHS's operational components, charged with supporting the DHS Statistical Officials role in statistical data governance and with validating independent OHSS reports.

- *Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).* The HUD Statistical Official was instrumental in identifying staff with appropriate expertise in the statistical community to participate in government-wide working groups. HUD statisticians served on OMB's Measuring SOGI Research Group, contributed to the Federal Evidence Agenda on LGBTQI+ Equity, and led the development of HUD's SOGI Data Action Plan. HUD statisticians participated in the White House Initiative on Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islanders (AANHPI) and advanced HUD's work on AANHPI data disaggregation. HUD staff also served as representatives to the Federal Interagency Technical Working Group on Race and Ethnicity Standards. Additionally, the HUD Statistical Official oversaw the production of numerous articles on various statistical issues in *Edge*, the online magazine published by the Office of Policy Development and Research at HUD.

- *Department of the Interior (DOI).* The DOI Statistical Official established a Statistics and Evidence Community of Practice within DOI, which is participating in working groups to help develop solutions for replicability of analyses, AI and statistics, improving communications with decision-makers, and more. The DOI Statistical Official made significant advances in building basic evidence capacity as DOI implements direction from its Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) Council and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) programs. Working with the Chief Data Officer and the Evaluation Officer, the DOI Statistical Official held training sessions for building basic capacity with DEIA Council working group leads. In addition, the DOI Statistical Official hired a detail to serve as the Senior Advisor for Statistics and Evidence to support BIL programs. That Senior Advisor has been instrumental in identifying data needs and developing program baselining metrics across DOI.

- *Department of Justice (DOJ).* The DOJ Statistical Official worked with several DOJ components on projects related to data collection, analysis, and reporting. In collaboration with the other Evidence Act Officials, the DOJ Statistical Official supported Department efforts to collect data on use of Bank Secrecy Act data by law enforcement agencies housed in DOJ. The DOJ Statistical Official also supported Department efforts to better collect data on corporate crime and sexual misconduct by employees of the Federal Bureau of Prisons. The DOJ Statistical Official has also consulted on ad hoc data collection and reporting efforts to improve both how data are collected and how they are shared. The DOJ Statistical Official also worked to develop Bureau of Justice Statistics staff knowledge, capacity, and expertise and identify additional resources to implement new requirements around disclosure risk and tiered access methods to strengthen confidentiality protections and expand secure access to restricted data.

- *Department of Labor (DOL).* The DOL Statistical Official provides statistical support to a variety of DOL agencies. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) computes weekly seasonal factors and provides additional technical support for the Employment and Training Administration's production of Unemployment Insurance weekly claims data and recently calculated and published new research data on earnings percentiles for non-hourly workers to support DOL-wide rulemaking. To inform DOL agencies about how BLS data can support their mission, the DOL Statistical Official function works closely with the DOL Chief Evaluation Office to host a series of seminars designed to showcase BLS data and related programs to a wider audience.

To support the Statistical Official function, a BLS senior executive served on the Interagency Scientific Integrity Fast-Track Action Committee, ensuring that all aspects of science and statistics were considered in drafting the report on Protecting the Integrity of Government Science. The DOL Statistical Official also played a key role in the development of the DOL scientific integrity policy and establishment of scientific integrity roles and responsibilities. As scientific integrity policy is implemented and becomes routine practice, the DOL Statistical Official will continue to champion scientific integrity at DOL.

- *Department of State.* The Department of State Statistical Official, as part of the Department's Enterprise Data Council, helps oversee the implementation of the Department's Enterprise Data and AI Strategies and their data and AI campaigns. These campaigns focus on some of the most pressing foreign policy and management priorities and utilize data and AI to support evidence-based policy and process improvements on behalf of the American people. The Department of State's DEIA Data Working Group, led by the Secretary's Office of Diversity and Inclusion and in consultation with the Statistical Official, released for the first time an interactive public dashboard, the DEIA Demographic Baseline Report, providing statistics on the Department's workforce broken down by race, ethnicity, sex, disability, grade/rank, and job series/skill codes.

- *Department of Transportation (DOT).* The DOT Statistical Official broadened support to Department and component leadership in 1) supporting the DOT's equity goals by advising on the Equity Action Plan and serving on the DOT Equity Council; 2) supporting the development and execution of DOT's Annual Evaluation Plan and Learning Agenda; 3) reviewing the statistical portions of every information collection request from DOT to OMB; 4) providing guidance on data management plans and open data access for all research programs funded by DOT; 5) representing the transportation community on the Federal Geographic Data Committee to assure effective incorporation of transportation features in the National Spatial Data Infrastructure; 6) verifying the accuracy of geospatial eligibility used to select grant programs under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and other grant programs; and 7) providing statistical expertise on data collection and analysis with other data components in DOT. The DOT Statistical Official will continue to improve disclosure avoidance procedures for the Department's confidential data, implement the Standard Application Process (SAP), and advise the Department on statistical aspects of AI.

- *Department of the Treasury.* The Treasury Department Statistical Official led a cross-Department working group to draft a proposal for the Department's Scientific Integrity Policy and continues to work with the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Management and Evaluation Officer to gain approval for this policy. The Statistical Official also worked to advise on new Department-wide AI-governance policies. These include developing an AI risk assessment tool that will be completed for all active AI projects, new requirements for twice-yearly updates of the Department's AI-inventory, and serving in an advisory capacity at monthly meetings of Treasury's AI-Governance Board. The Statistical Official also participated and provided leadership during monthly Department-level Data Governance Board meetings, a half-day data workshop that brought together data officials from across the Department, and

a performance review for Treasury leadership that focused on improving the use of data Department-wide.

- *Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).* The VA Statistical Official worked with VA leadership and stakeholders to help establish a Demographic Data Working Group (DDWG) under the VA Data Governance Council. The DDWG conducted data quality assessments, landscape analyses, and human-centered design research to assess the current state of demographic data collection and use across VA. That work culminated in a series of recommendations to standardize race and ethnicity data collection in VA. The VA Statistical Official also manages the National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics (NCVAS) and oversees the integration of VA's authoritative data sources, ensuring that trusted data are available for both operational and statistical purposes. NCVAS developed and maintains an integrated data asset comprised of data from across VA, which removed data siloes and ensures re-use of data to support evidence-based decision-making.

- *Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).* The EPA Statistical Official and the National Center for Environmental Economics have worked to advance EPA's capacity to produce and use statistical evidence through the provision of analytical support and consulting services. The EPA Statistical Official function has successfully provided guidance on the development of statistical surveys, conducted statistical analysis to support agency decision-making, and developed new statistical products to support key EPA priorities, including addressing climate change and advancing environmental justice. For example, EPA finalized new statistical estimates of the Social Cost of Greenhouse Gases to inform Agency decisions via evidence on the social benefits of mitigating climate change-inducing pollution. Via its Statistical Official, EPA has also supported the development of the SAP and NSDS to foster the sharing of new scientific information and to advance evidence-based decision-making.

- *General Services Administration (GSA).* The GSA Statistical Official worked with the GSA Office of Evidence and Analysis (OEA) to develop a Data Quality Index (DQI) pilot project to gauge the data quality of government-wide data assets and target areas for improvement. This survey tool was developed by OEA experts and is based on the FCSM's Data Quality Framework. The GSA Statistical Official is also working to roll out the survey in 2024 and will use the results of the DQI to develop a data strategy for all Office of Government-wide Policy Divisions and present results of the DQI pilot to the GSA Evidence-based Data Governance Executive Board for consideration for use across all of GSA's data assets. GSA also continues to work with FCSM on making open government data more findable, accessible, interoperable, and reusable through the FAIRness project. The GSA Statistical Official is also working with OMB and the Office of Personnel Management on a pilot project to integrate data across HR data systems and data collection efforts for the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey and Enterprise Human Resources Integration to improve analytical capabilities across the Federal government and save significant labor hours.

- *National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).* The NASA Statistical Official promoted statistical principles within NASA and enabled evidence-based decision-making. NASA made significant advancements in improving cost estimating capability and utilizing statistical best practices to enhance data-driven models. For example, NASA deployed an update to the NASA Instrument Cost Model (NICM). NICM is one of many parametric tools that NASA utilities for cost and schedule estimating. This year the tool was improved by increasing the amount of imputation utilized. Additionally, all existing Cost and Schedule Estimating Relationships (CERs/SERs), which are statistical regression analyses, were updated with new data. Six new modeling CERs/SERs were introduced to bring more predictive capacity to the modeling platform. All statistical results have been documented and distributed to the cost and schedule estimating community.

- *National Science Foundation (NSF).* The NSF Statistical Official, in response to NSF's Agency Priority Goal (APG) of improving representation in the scientific enterprise, co-led an APG effort to utilize internal NSF data to inform NSF's understanding of DEIA. The NSF Statistical Official's data quality expertise helped inform the choice of appropriate data sources to use within the APG, as well as with other NSF activities, and the Statistical Official's disclosure risk assessment expertise helped identify appropriate dissemination tools for evidence-building purposes that balanced utility and privacy. The NSF Statistical Official function provided methodological and statistical consultation by assessing an evaluation tool and data sources used as part of an initiative examining DEIA representation within the NSF workforce. The NSF Statistical Official also consulted with other offices within NSF on various data-related activities including survey development, disclosure avoidance, reliability requirements, privacy protections, and the collection of demographic data on application forms. Finally, the Statistical Official participated on NSF''s Data Governance Steering Committee which has the responsibility of setting data governance policies.

- *Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC).* The NRC Statistical Official helped NRC to launch the Strategic Planning Application (SPA). The interactive performance management tool provides a holistic view of strategic plan components to improve the way NRC approaches budgeting and performance planning processes. Users can seamlessly track, analyze, and monitor performance outcomes and trends with real-time updates to the system. The enhanced user experience not only streamlines and automates previously manual workflows but ensures data consistency through robust validation mechanisms. The new practice improves the quality of data and statistical procedures for deriving the results of the indicators. The SPA empowers NRC to make timely, evidence-based decisions and reinforces the agency's commitment to transparency in all aspects of operations.

- *Office of Personnel Management (OPM).* The OPM Statistical Official worked with agency leadership and the Data Governance Board to establish an enterprise-wide data strategy along with several working groups to help foster a data-driven culture, implement a strong data governance framework, improve technology and standards, and deliver high-quality Federal workforce statistics. These efforts complement the development of an enterprise analytics

platform and consolidated data ecosystem where the OPM Statistical Official can more efficiently and effectively help institute data quality, confidentiality, and privacy standards.

- *Small Business Administration (SBA).* The SBA Statistical Official established a data science/statistical branch to support the Statistical Official function; awarded a contracting vehicle for additional statistical support services, data analytics, and data quality assessments in support of evidence building; and drafted an NSDS proposal in consultation with the Statistical Official's multi-disciplinary staff of evaluators, data scientists, and economists, to conduct a program evaluation requiring data linkages across multiple agencies. Additionally, the Statistical Official provided strategic leadership and support for the development of the data layer of MySBA, a common framework for collecting and protecting administrative data and generated an AI trustworthy strategy for incorporating unsupervised and supervised machine learning into MySBA to prevent and detect fraud. Additional tasks performed by the Statistical Official include the coordination of statistical activities with Census Bureau, SOI, and BEA; participation in working groups to promote the use of administrative data for statistical purposes; and advising programs on third-party data requests regarding disaggregated data and privacy issues.

- *Social Security Administration (SSA).* The SSA Statistical Official supported the Evidence Act and Statistical Official function by hiring a Chief Mathematical Statistician to 1) guide Disclosure Review Board (DRB) members from across SSA components; 2) evolve data quality methods to ensure objectivity, credibility, accuracy and trust in SSA statistical data; and 3) apply innovative approaches and technologies to developing statistical data and corresponding metadata. The SSA Statistical Official also developed a new pathway to securely expand access to data for statistical purposes. The SSA Statistical Official created a simulated synthetic public use microdata file (PUF), which has been cleared by the SSA DRB. SSA has a long history of producing real data PUFs, but this was the first synthetic data PUF.

- *United States Agency for International Development (USAID).* The USAID Statistical Official served as champion for the Data Policy Working Group under the USAID Data Administration and Technical Advisory Board, which addresses complex and emerging policy questions. The USAID Statistical Official led efforts to update USAID Development Data policy, which provides the USAID workforce with standards and guidance for the submission and governance of quantitative data. The USAID Statistical Official led the efforts to draft data risk assessment model and data sharing agreements guidance. The Statistical Official also led an interagency group of experts in a rulemaking action that will incorporate new requirements into the Agency's supplement to the Federal Acquisition Regulation. The USAID Statistical Official created a Data Disclosure Review Team to formalize a new process for responsibly publishing data publicly through the review of informed consent documents to better protect the trust of information providers. The Statistical Official also provided leadership to build a Development Data Commons, a protected computing environment where analysts can conduct advanced statistical analyses on Agency data.