Productivity Gains in Statistical Data Processing

The Rightsizing Project has established a firmer foundation for continued operational excellence at the Singapore Department of Statistics. As part of the second and final phase of the Rightsizing Project, the Department re-developed the mainframe applications onto the client-server platform in September 2003.

The major productivity gains achieved in this phase are in the following four areas :

(i)   *Streamlined/New Work Processes*

◆   The processes to generate output files and consolidate validation rules are streamlined and resulted in reduced processing time.

◆   Users can submit batch jobs through a job booking system which retrieves the request faster, with less paper trail, and keeps a record of the batch job status.

◆   New housing-related time series data have been created directly from the relevant databases.

◆   "Range" checks on core variables and auto-generation of frequency tables on data items help ease the process of data verification and enhance the robustness of data integrity.

(ii)   *Online Data Access and Editing*

◆   Users are provided with friendly online inquiry screens and query tools.

◆   Users can correct data errors online.

◆   Users can create simple reports online using reporting tools.

The focus of the second phase project is to improve the flow of updating and verification of the household and dwelling databases as well as to provide facilities for easier data retrieval, updating and statistical tabulations. In order to consolidate the data within the core database, a more efficient database design is used instead of accessing different sources for related information.

◆   All reports are stored in softcopies, thereby reducing paper usage.

(iii)   *Sharing of Common/Standard Routines*

◆   Mainframe validation rules are rationalised and standardised, thereby creating common business rules.

◆   Concurrent submission of print jobs to network printers and routing to local printers provide flexibility and speed.

(iv)   *Improved Processing Time for Batch Jobs*

◆   Better performance timing has been achieved for batch jobs which require more than one day to complete in the existing environment.

◆   With the streamlining of data processing, significant time has been saved for some core jobs by 30%–80%.