



*What's the scoop on ...*

## Statistical Standards & Classification Structures

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*"The need for users to know exactly what data represent, and to be able to compare statistics from different sources, makes it necessary for the people collecting statistics to use reasonably consistent definitions of the various characteristics being measured. Our job in working with Statistics Canada products is made easier by the availability and use of standard classifications."*  
*Finding and Using Statistics (Statistics Canada 1980)*

A good classification guide can go a long way in helping a user understand the world as seen by Statistics Canada.

The following classification guides are currently among those in use by Statistics Canada. Canada is part of a wider trading community and comparisons are easier with common terminology. It should be remembered that transitions from a predominately national system take time because of the number of sectors involved and because of the desire not to lose comparability within Canada over time.

STC Standard Classifications	
<b>* NAICS:</b>	<b>North American Industry Classification Standard</b>
SIC-E (1980)	Standard Industrial Classification-E (Enterprise)
SIC-C (1980)	Standard Industrial Classification-C (Company)
<b>* SCG (2000)</b>	<b>Standard Classification of Goods</b>
<b>* SGC</b>	<b>Standard Geographical Classification</b>
<b>* NOC-S (2001)</b>	<b>National Occupational Classification for Statistics</b>
SOC (1991)	Standard Occupational Classification
SCTG	Standard Classification of Transported Goods
SCS	Standard Classification of Services
CSNA [CIS]	Classification of Institutional Sectors, System of National Accounts

\* Descriptions follow

Statistics Canada provides a good introduction to classification systems under the "Statistical Methods" link on the STC home page:

<http://www.statcan.ca/english/concepts/index.htm>

New classifications do emerge from time to time. The most recent classifications under development include the *North American Product Classification System* for service commodities; information on the development of that system is provided on the "Statistical Methods" page.

There are a few other useful classification systems that are worth knowing about:

Selection of Other Classifications		
ICD	International Classification of Diseases	<p>The International Classification of Diseases (ICD) is designed to promote international comparability in the collection, processing, classification, and presentation of mortality statistics and diseases (CM). The Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) currently uses ICD-9-CA in mortality tables but will be moving to ICD-10 (10th edition) when Canadian modifications are complete. One handy link for ICD is found on the US CDC site:</p> <p><a href="http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/about/major/dvs/icd10des.htm">http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/about/major/dvs/icd10des.htm</a></p>
HS	Harmonized System	<p>The Harmonized System (HS) is an international commodity classification (with six-digits codes) developed under the auspices of the World Customs Organization. HS is based on the principle that goods are classified by what they are and not according to their stage of fabrication, use, "made in Canada" status, or any other such criteria. HS is logically structured by economic activity or component material. For example, animals and animal products are found in one section; machinery &amp; mechanical appliances, grouped by function, are found in another. The Trade Database which found on the STC web site (\$) and Strategis (free) is organized by HS</p> <p><a href="http://www.statcan.ca/trade/scripts/trade_search.cgi">http://www.statcan.ca/trade/scripts/trade_search.cgi</a></p>
NOC	National Occupational Classification	<p>National Occupational Classification is a 4-digit coding system developed by HRDC for classifying occupational categories. STC has a variation on NOC for occupational classification, using an occupational grouping and called NOC-S to avoid confusion between the two. HRDC's NOC is available electronically at:</p> <p><a href="http://www.worklogic.com:81/noc/home.html">http://www.worklogic.com:81/noc/home.html</a></p>
	Variable level classifications	<p>Various classification systems have been implemented for the handling of data such as Census data. To see an example of some of these standard classifications, click on "Concepts and Variables" from the "Statistical Methods" page:</p> <p><a href="http://www.statcan.ca/english/concepts/index.htm">http://www.statcan.ca/english/concepts/index.htm</a></p> <p>From the list of variables, select "Religion". Following basic information on the variable, a link is provided to Standard Classification: Religious Denomination."</p>

## North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)

### What is it?

Take one big step forward as SIC yields the floor to NAICS. The Canadian version of NAICS gives us a new classification system for economic and financial data, grouping economic activity into 20 sectors and 921 industries. The impetus for NAICS was NAFTA and the intent with NAICS is not only to recognize new areas of economic activity, but to provide some common definitions between Canada, the United States and Mexico. NAICS differs conceptually from the Standard Industrial Classification and its use will gradually supplant the role of the SIC-E and SIC-C.

### Why do I need it?

- 325620 : Toilet Preparation Manufacturing;  
[includes make-up and contact lens solutions but excludes toothpaste]
- For Balloon-o-gram service industry, use 812990

Products that provide industry-level statistics such as the *Financial Performance Indicators of Canadian Business* are often organized by SIC codes. Knowledge of the codes has allowed users to back up one step if the level of detail is not available. Using the classification guide, the user could refer to data for 3256, "Soap, cleaning compound and toilet preparation manufacturing", if statistics for 32562 were not available. In the Census, the data may classify the person simply as working in the chemical manufacturing sector (325).

Using the concordances to the NAICS, it is possible to trace relationships between the different classification systems. In the case of the toilet preparation manufacturing industry, the user may obtain the data for 325620, but want earlier data. The NAICS-SIC concordance provides the information that NAICS 325620 was formerly classified a SIC E1994, "Hygiene Products of Textile Materials" for dental floss and E3771, "Toilet Preparations Industry".

### Where can I find NAICS?

In print: 12-501 1997; or

On the web: <http://www.statcan.ca/english/Subjects/Standard/tabcon.htm>

Note that the alphabetical index is not available on this site.

Or search on the web: <http://stds.statcan.ca/english/industry/searchdatabase.htm>

Products such as *Canadian Business Patterns* have incorporated NAICS into the program, and other sites such as HRDS and Strategis have elements of NAICS/SIC in their sector-specific search engines:

### Where can I find out more information?

This is a complex document but the introduction in NAICS 1997 is very readable. As well, the "Definitions and Concepts used in the Business Register" document provided on the *Canadian Business Patterns* product, has an excellent comparison of NAICS and SIC and has an equally strong section on the use of concordances in tracking industries over time. NAICS is in an evolving state and the STC NAICS home page allows you to keep up to date:

<http://www.statcan.ca/english/Subjects/Standard/index.htm>

This site includes a lot of valuable information, including changes, new features, and links to the U.S. and Mexican versions of NAICS

## Standard Classification of Goods (2000)

### What is it?

The Standard Classification of Goods (SCG) is used to classify goods and commodities, and is based on the international Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System (HS). The SCG is organized primarily by component material: it begins with crude products and proceeds through further stages of processing to mixtures and products made from a variety of materials.

The HS number makes up the first six digits of the SCG code and up to three digits are added to reflect statistical requirements for import, export and production statistics.

#### *Sockeye salmon in airtight containers*

16	Chapter	Preparations of meat, fish or crustaceans, mollusks or other aquatic invertebrates
16.04	Heading	Prepared or preserved fish, caviar and caviar substitutes prepared from fish eggs
	Subheading	Fish, whole or in pieces, but not minced
1604.11	Subheading	Salmon
1604.11.1		In airtight containers
1604.11.14		Sockeye

### Why do I need it?

The SCG is used to collect and organize products and commodities in Canada—but you will also want to become familiar with the HS system as used on the Trade Database sites.

### Where can I find SGC?

The SCG is updated each year, the most recent changes being for 1998, but that version is only available in electronic format.

In print: 12-580 (1996)

On the web: <http://www.statcan.ca/english/Subjects/Standard/scg/2000/scg00-index.htm>

### Where can I find out more information?

The SCG 2000 home page on the STC site is useful:

<http://www.statcan.ca/english/Subjects/Standard/scg/2000/scg00-index.htm>

There is also a good reference to classification systems used for trade data (including HS) on the Industry Canada site:

[http://strategis.ic.gc.ca/sc\\_mrkti/tdst/tdo/tdoDefinitions\\_30.php](http://strategis.ic.gc.ca/sc_mrkti/tdst/tdo/tdoDefinitions_30.php)

## Standard Geographical Classification (SGC)

### What is it?

The SGC provides unique numeric identification (codes) for three types of geographic areas: provinces and territories, census divisions (counties, regional municipalities), and census subdivisions (municipalities). The relationship between each geographic area is reflected in the seven-digit code [PR-CD-CSD]. The classification manual is issued every five years with the Census of Population, but the updates happen continuously through those five years (updates upon request or via the web). For detailed Census geography, the best summary is to be found in the 1996 *Census Handbook*, with more detail in the *Census Dictionary* and the *Geography Catalog*—but the SGC provides a base framework.

### Why do I need it?

13 is New Brunswick. Don't ask me why, I just accept it.

Actually, 1 indicates an Atlantic province and the movement in numbering goes from east to west. Codes usually follow a serpentine pattern beginning in the southeast corner of each Province/Census Division. All of this, and more, is detailed in the SGC. Other geographic units, such as CMA/CA, urban/rural, and economic region are described in the SGC as well.

Why do you need it? STC products use standard geographies and geographic code when collecting and disseminating data. The SGC is the framework to help you understand what the differences are between the many geographical entities called "Saint John". The SGC tells us that 1301 is the unique identifier for Saint John County and 1301006 is the number for the subdivision of Saint John (city) in Saint John County—and all of these are contained within the province of New Brunswick.

The SGC is also a very convenient place to find the complete list of codes for Economic Regions (ER) which one encounters in Labour Force Survey publications and in CANSIM.

### Where can I find the SGC?

In print: 12-571 (2 big binders, one of which is maps); or

On the web: <http://www.statcan.ca/english/Subjects/Standard/sgc/sgcintro.htm>

Geosuite includes SCG labels, and the codes are included in Census 96 tables in Beyond 20/20 format.

### Where can I find out more information?

The Census Handbook and Census Dictionary provide definitions and an overview of census geography, but you can find more on geographical concepts used by Statistics Canada through the Geography Division's working paper series:

<http://www.statcan.ca/english/research/92F0138MIE/92F0138MIE00001.htm>

Geographic variables are also provided through the following site:

<http://www.statcan.ca/english/concepts/definitions/geography.htm>

## National Occupational Classification for Statistics (NOC-S) 2001

### What is it?

Statistics Canada has used a standard classification for occupations since the 1940s; the National Occupational Classification for Statistics 2001 (NOC-S 2001) is the most recent revision and replaces the 1991 Standard Occupational Classification as the standard occupational classification in Statistics Canada. The revisions were relatively minor, predominately involving the Information Technology sector occupations. The concordance for the NOC-S and SOC 91 is therefore brief since the vast majority of occupational groups remained the same.

The basis of the NOC-S classification is the kind of work performed. The NOC-S structure identifies broad occupational categories within a particular industry or type of economic activity; the numbers after the decimal point (.7241 below) indicate the classification within the HRDC NOC structure.

- H Trades, Transport and Equipment Operators and Related Occupations
  - H2 Stationary Engineers, Power Station Operators and Electrical Trades & Telecommunications Occupations
    - H21 Electrical trades and telecommunications occupations
      - H211.7241 Electricians
      - H212.7242 Industrial Electricians
      - H213.7243 Power System Electricians
      - Etc..

### Why do I need it?

- Is there an occupational code for “cyberian”?
- C181 or F011? Where do we belong?

Users interested in occupational analysis can use the codes and descriptions in NOC-S to define and refine the statistics they need. The 1996 Census provided us with SOC breakdowns at the general level (11 occupational groupings), by major groups (60) and sometimes at the detailed level (711 occupations). Again, knowing the hierarchy of the classification system means that, if the detail was not provided or available for the occupation, the user could find an alternative occupational group with which to work.

### Where can I find NOC-S?

In print: 12-583 2001; or

On the web: <http://www.statcan.ca/english/Subjects/Standard/nocs/nocs2001toc.htm>

With a searchable database or as Adobe Acrobat files

### Where can I find out more information?

The introduction to the NOC-S is extremely well written and is worth reading. With the 2001 Census Dictionary, it is likely that an explanation of codes used will be available, similar to the explanation of SOC 1991 in the 1996 Census Dictionary. And, you can never go wrong by posting to the DLI List!