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# Special Note
# Announcement

## *First Call for Presentations*
## DATA EDITING WORKSHOP AND EXPOSITION

Washington, D.C., U.S.A.
March 22, 1996

On March 22, 1996, the U.S. Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology (FCSM), the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Joint Program in Survey Methodology, and the Washington Statistical Society will jointly sponsor a one day workshop and exposition on the subject of editing survey data. This event will provide an opportunity for those with an interest in the field to demonstrate software, present findings, and discuss experiences in an informal setting. Note that the date is the Friday following the Census Bureau's Annual Research Conference and CASIC Seminar. The location is the Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference and Training Center across from Union Station.

Data editing is a key (and often costly) activity that takes place for almost all surveys. Advances in methodology, practice, and systems are not always published or known outside the agencies in which they take place. Yet there are many common needs and situations where solutions and approaches would be applicable to others. Here data editing is defined broadly as any procedure designed and used for detecting erroneous or questionable survey data with the goal of correcting erroneous data or identifying potential estimation problems that may be handled by other means such as reweighting. The procedure may be applied during data collection, after collection but before summarization, or after summarization.

Both software exhibits and talks are planned. Those exhibiting software will be given a three-hour slot to demonstrate their software and to discuss informally how it works and their experiences in the development process. The exhibitions will be primarily educational and presenters should be willing to share technical information. *Software exhibitors will be asked to provide their own projection panels and laptop computers.*

Other talks and presentations should last 15 minutes with 10 more minutes for discussion. Talks may or may not be accompanied by a paper, at the preference of the presenter. If a sufficient number of presenters prepare a paper, a proceedings volume may be issued. Presenters discussing a paper are asked to make copies available.

*Presentations concerning new or previously undocumented software systems or editing approaches and methodologies are especially encouraged.* Systems personnel, managers, subject matter specialists, and others who normally do not present at conferences or symposia are also encouraged to submit. (A nonexhaustive list of possible topics follows.)

Proposals for presentations, including a brief description of the presentation, the presenter's name, affiliation, and telephone number may be submitted any time before February 1, 1996. Early submissions are encouraged; selection for the program will be confirmed within four weeks of receipt.

Submit abstracts to:

David Pierce
Federal Reserve Board, Stop 401
Washington, DC 20551, U.S.A.

Use e-mail if you wish: MIDAP00@frb.gov

Questions may be directed to Mark Pierzchala at (703) 235-5218 (mpierzchala@ag.gov) or David Pierce at (202) 452-3895.

## POSSIBLE TOPICS FOR DATA EDITING WORKSHOP AND EXPOSITION PRESENTATIONS

*Methodological Topics*

- How editing does or does not contribute to data quality. How much editing is needed. Are we paranoid at times?
- Targeting edits to specific problems. Avoidance of overediting. Setting rational edit limits. Reducing the number of edits.
- Putting edits into data collection including mechanics, the kinds of edits that can be put into an interview, and training required for interviewers.
- Philosophy of editing, what editing can and cannot accomplish.
- Gaining information from editing systems to improve future surveys.
- New statistical techniques used for editing. New applications of previously known techniques.
- Relationship of imputation to editing.
- Implementation of top-down, macro, and statistical editing techniques including advantages and possible abuses of such methods.
- Testing of edits and edit systems and processes.
- Separating problems of detecting and correcting erroneous data from estimation problems that may be due to wrong stratification of a unit, etc.
- Assessing edits and procedures currently in use with an eye to rationalizing current processes.
- Using new technologies that allow new methods in editing.
- Implementation of Fellegi and Holt systems.
- Overview of editing methodology issues.

*Productivity Topics*

- Allocating resources to major problems including editing strategies, strategic editing and the like.
- Elimination of steps in the survey process.

- Putting edits into the interview to reduce post-collection processing.
- Implementation of interactive editing and related techniques.
- Leaving the old systems and techniques.
- Shifting resources from post-production review to pre-survey preparation.
- Multi-mode processing, using one system to handle both data collection and review.
- Reducing respondent burden.
- Documented gains and savings from implementation of new techniques.
- Overview of editing productivity issues.

*System Development Topics*

- Issues in use of generalized systems versus survey-specific systems.
- Whether to procure or build a system and are there any real choices.
- The design of survey systems in order to promote and facilitate methodological achievement.
- Use of graphical user interfaces and tables to present survey information to data editors.
- Design and execution of editing systems, list of needed and desired features. How to prioritize implementation of features. How to discern between needs and wants.
- Overview of kinds of editing and imputation systems.
- Programming truly reusable code that can be shared between surveys.

*Organizational and Management Issues*

- How to keep systems programmers and survey managers abreast of latest developments in editing techniques and systems. How to implement new ideas in ongoing operational programs.
- Assessing and critiquing your own organization's edit situation.
- Achieving and measuring productivity gains or losses. How to make the development of new procedures pay off.
- Avoiding the development of unnecessary systems.
- Avoiding and resolving software conflicts.
- Changing attitudes and procedures amongst production personnel. Getting buy-in for new ways of working.
- Overview of management issues.