

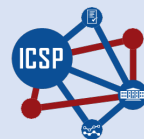
Roles and Responsibilities of Statistical Officials



Interagency Council on
Statistical Policy

Today's Panel Members

- Jacob Malcom, Department of Interior
- Anna Maria Calcagno, Small Business Administration
- Kevin Scott, Bureau of Justice Statistics
- Peggy Carr, National Center for Education Statistics
- Amy Ritualo, State Department
- Alex Marten, Environmental Protection Agency
- Todd Coleman, General Services Administration
- Bill Wiatrowski, Bureau of Labor Statistics
- Deborah Bryant, Office of Management and Budget



Introduction

Jacob Malcom



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The ICSP Strategic Goals and Objectives propel the [U.S. Federal statistical system](#) toward our vision of operating as a seamless system - to become more efficient and effective in providing useful, objective, high quality statistical data and meaningfully and safely expanding access to these data for evidence building purposes

1

STRENGTHEN FSS' ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES, & CAPACITY TO ENSURE DATA QUALITY & ACCESSIBILITY

Strategic Objectives:

- Strengthen the Statistical Official role and capacity
- Implement the *Fundamental Responsibilities of Statistical Agencies and Units* regulation per [CIPSEA 2018](#)

Sustainment-Focused Objectives:

- Provide expertise for effective and up-to-date Government-wide statistical and classification standards

2

CREATE SHARED INFRASTRUCTURE, TOOLS, & SERVICES TO BROADEN SAFE ACCESS TO DATA

Strategic Objectives:

- Launch the NSDS 1.0, including clarifying linkages with [FSRDCs](#), [SAP](#), and additional key infrastructure
- Provide expertise to data regulations' development, i.e., *Expanding Secure Access to CIPSEA Data Assets and Presumption of Accessibility for Statistical Agencies and Units* per [CIPSEA 2018](#)

Sustainment-Focused Objectives:

- Lead and advance the following shared FSS resources, i.e., [ACS](#), [FSRDCs](#), [SAP](#)

3

BUILD COMMUNICATIONS & COMMUNITY OUTREACH TO STRENGTHEN THE VALUE OF FEDERAL DATA FOR DIVERSE DATA PROVIDER & USER NEEDS

Strategic Objectives:

- Build unified and integrated communications and stakeholder engagement across the [FSS](#) to better identify and meet data provider and user needs

Sustainment-Focused Objectives:

- Advance communications and engagement via:
 - [StatsPolicy.gov](#)
 - Resource-focused communications and engagement, e.g., [NSDS](#), [SAP](#)



S-SORR is chartered

Charter of the Interagency Council on Statistical Policy Subcommittee on Statistical Official Roles and Responsibilities

1. Establishment

The [Interagency Council on Statistical Policy \(ICSP\)](#) establishes this Subcommittee on Statistical Official Roles and Responsibilities Subcommittee (S-SORR) to develop, coordinate, support, and communicate policy, techniques, and procedures related to the role of the Statistical Official (SO).

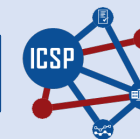
<https://www.statspolicy.gov/assets/files/S-SORR%20Charter%202024-02-07%20signed.pdf>



A great team

Membership

- Jacob Malcom, DOI, Chair
- Bill Wiatrowski, BLS/DOL, Co-Chair
- Patricia Abaroa, BEA/DOC
- Anna Maria Calcagno, SBA
- Pat Hu, DOT
- Alex Marten, EPA
- Amy Ritualo, State
- Lisa Sinow, ONDCP/EOP
- Marc Sinofsky, SSA
- Todd Coleman, GSA
- Matt Childers, GSA
- Eddie Thomas, VA
- Charles Hunt, NASA
- Melissa Jennings, DOI, Admin Specialist
- Deborah Bryant, OMB, Staff Lead (1st)
- Bev Pratt, OMB, Staff Lead (2nd)



What do existing documents say about the role of the Statistical Official – from the Evidence Act and M-19-23

Anna Maria Calcagno



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Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking

- Established by 2016 bipartisan law (Speaker Paul Ryan and Senator Patty Murray)
- Experts in Program Evaluation, Statistics, Economics, Data Governance, and Privacy produced 22 recommendations to support:
 - 1) Systematic Planning for Evidence-Building
 - 2) High Quality Data Governance
 - 3) Coordinated Support for Privacy-Protected Data Sharing



Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018 (Evidence Act)

- Introduced by Speaker Paul Ryan and Senator Patty Murray and addresses 11 of the Commission's recommendations
- Signed by the President and enacted into law on January 14, 2019 as P.L. 115-435
- Includes three Titles:
 - Title 1—Federal Evidence-Building Activities
 - Title 2—Open Government Data Act
 - Title 3—Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency (CIPSEA)



Title 1 Designates 3 New Senior-Level Positions



- Emphasizes collaboration and coordination across functions within agencies
- Calls on agencies to build evidence systematically



Title 1 Statistical Official Role

“§ 314. Statistical expertise

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The head of each agency shall designate the head of any statistical agency or unit within the agency, or in the case of an agency that does not have a statistical agency or unit, any senior agency official with appropriate expertise, as a statistical official to advise on statistical policy, techniques, and procedures. Agency officials engaged in statistical activities may consult with any such statistical official as necessary.

“(b) MEMBERSHIP ON INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON STATISTICAL POLICY.—Each statistical official designated under subsection (a) shall serve as a member of the Interagency Council on Statistical Policy established under section 3504(e)(8) of title 44.

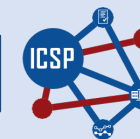
5 USC 314.
Designation.

Two Types of SOs in CFO-Act Agencies

Head of a recognized statistical agency or unit (RSAU)

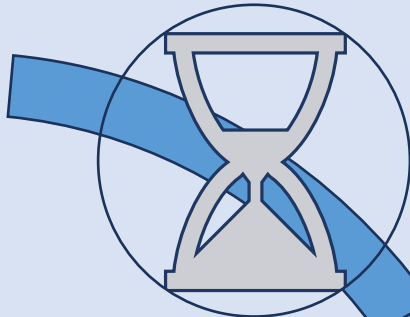
In non-RSAUs, an official with appropriate expertise

In Summer 2019, the head of each CFO-Act agency designated a senior staff person in the agency with the required qualifications

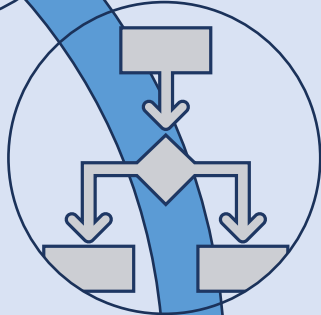


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**Heads of
RSAUs have
additional
Responsibilities
in Title 3**



Provide **relevant and timely** statistical information; conduct **credible, accurate, and objective** statistical activities; and **protect the trust** of information providers



Adopt **policies, best practices, and procedures** to **implement** actions described above



Make any data asset **available** upon request to any RSAU for evidence-building



Expand **access to data** assets to develop evidence while **protecting** such assets from inappropriate access and use

Title 3 Responsibilities



SO Qualifications per M-19-23

Ability to plan and execute statistical programs

Demonstrated experience in research and statistics

Demonstrated ability to build and maintain productive relationships with high-level officials

Outstanding communication and analytical capabilities

Knowledge of Federal privacy and confidentiality laws and regulations

Technical knowledge of statistical principles, theory and methodology

Extensive knowledge of statistical programs



SO's Role from OMB Guidance (M-19-23)

- Serve as agency advisor for:
 - **Statistical policy**
 - **Statistical techniques**
 - **Statistical procedures**
- Serve as agency champion for **data quality** and **confidentiality** protection to oversee the development of agency standards
- Serve on agency Data Governance Body
- Serve on Interagency Council on Statistical Policy



Experience of Statistical Officials that are also head of a Statistical Agency

Kevin Scott
Peggy Carr



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Statistical Official and RSAU Head: Opportunities and Challenges

- Obligations as RSAU Head
- Obligations as Statistical Official
- Tensions and Opportunities



Obligations as an RSAU Head

- produce and disseminate relevant and timely statistical information;
- conduct credible and accurate statistical activities;
- conduct objective statistical activities; and
- protect the trust of information providers by ensuring the confidentiality and exclusive statistical use of their responses.



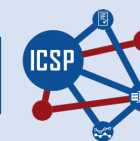
Obligations as Statistical Official

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Opportunities for RSAU Heads as Statistical Officials

- Role in agency Data Governance body provides a “seat at the table.”
- Opportunities to influence agency uses of data for evidence building and decision making.
- When outside entity specifically tasks Statistical Official, agency leadership will incorporate SO and team in processes.



Tensions for RSAU Heads as Statistical Officials

- RSAUs are tasked with conducting objective statistical activities; this can create tensions with agency priorities.
- There can be a tradeoff between accuracy and timeliness; agency priorities tend to favor timeliness.
- RSAU policy directives, including widest possible dissemination of findings (SPDs 3 and 4), can be in tension with policy deliberations in agency.
- Data collected by RSAU for “exclusive statistical use” is often also data that agency may view as helpful for policy formulation.



Experiences as the DoED Statistical Official

Obligations

- Mandate is **hard to fulfill** because the role does not have clearly defined responsibilities
- **Does not have authority** over the agency, other than as a statistical advisor and leader

Opportunities

- Opportunity to **influence how agency data are collected, evaluated, and understood**
- Gives agency the opportunity for **statistical oversight to improve their products**

Tensions

- Needs to be **skilled and thoughtful about communicating** statistical recommendations to guide agency toward success



Experience of Statistical Officials that are not head of a Statistical Agency

Amy Ritualo



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Type of Work

Role: Dual hatted as *Statistical Official (SO)* & *Deputy Chief Data and AI Officer (DCDAO)* under the *Chief Data and AI Officer (CDAO)* in the Office of Management Strategy and Solutions, Center for Analytics.

RESPONSIBILITIES

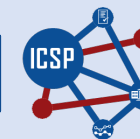
Statistical Official (SO)

- Overseeing enterprise-wide statistical standards, policy, statistical methods, data quality and data access activities.
- Overseeing 1 staff supporting part-time statistical activities.

Deputy Chief Data & AI Officer (DCDAO)

- Overseeing enterprise-wide data and AI implementation at State, including governance, innovation, and policy.
- Overseeing a team of 200+ data scientists, data management analysts, AI developers, and communications experts.

- Evidence Act Title I and Title II coordination activities with DOS Chief Data Officer and Evaluation Officers, including capacity building assessments and learning agendas.
- Member of data and AI governance bodies, including the Enterprise Data & AI Council and the AI Steering Committee.
- Visibility and input into Department-wide data, analytics, and policies (e.g., DEIA).
- Methodological development, testing, and evaluation for AI implementation.
- Hiring and workforce development.



Deep Dive | Role of the SO in AI

Responsibility: Lead the DOS's [Enterprise AI Strategy](#) implementation to support of [Secretary's Modernization Agenda](#). Implemented AI pilots to enable experimentation with secure AI technology; develop testing frameworks, policies, and guidelines; ensure responsible AI implementation; and advance AI use in our global mission.



AI policy & innovation

- AI innovation pilots, including the Department's first secure AI chatbot (StateChat).
- Input on 12 AI policies, including on content labeling, and upcoming RISI policy.

DEVELOP

In collaboration with CIO, CDO, CPO



AI testing

- Test and operationalize the NIST AI Risk Management Framework.
- Assess bias in data, algorithms, and output.
- Embed human reviewers and devise a sampling method to review outputs.

MONITOR

In collaboration with CIO, CDO, RAIO

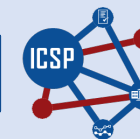


AI Assessment

- Assessment of impact of GenAI on users (GWU partnership).
- AI strategic reviews (impact, resources, scalability).
- GenAI model assessment.

EVALUATE

In collaboration with CDO, RAIO, CEO



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Refining Understanding of Statistical Official Responsibilities

Alex Marten



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Refining our Understanding...

- Statutory definition of roles and responsibilities is broad
- OMB added some clarity and new responsibilities (M-19-23)
- Agency missions and statistical needs/capacity differ
- We are not alone (e.g., CDOs, EOs, CIOs, CAIOs, Privacy Officials)
- Reality (e.g., budget, staff, organizational structure) shapes actions

Can we refine the SO's roles and responsibilities?



Approaches to Serving Agency

Approach	Description
Proactive	Provide regular opportunities for agencies to consult with Statistical Official (Statistical Official council, committees, boards, etc.); actively engage in and/or support in evidence building activities; engage in development of agency-wide guidance/policy
Middle Ground	Hold regular Statistical Official office hours; may establish a statistical community of practice for informal discussion and information sharing; engage with other Evidence Act officials and groups (e.g., Data Governance Board) as requested; let agency decisionmakers know the Statistical Official is available on request
Reactive	Let the agency's decisionmakers know Statistical Official is available on request; responds to requests on an ad hoc basis; few if any organized groups or activities initiated



Possible Organizational Structures

- Agency-wide Statistical Official council
- Agency-wide Statistics Committee
- Provide statistical staff on detail throughout the agency
- Routine coordination between Statistical Official, Chief Data Officer, and Chief Evaluation Officer
- Statistical Official may also serve as the Chief Data Officer and/or the Chief Evaluation Officer
- Statistical Official, Chief Data Officer, and Chief Evaluation Officer may be in the same organization, and one may report to another



Responsibilities Relative to Other Officials

- Executive branch is full of officials with overlapping responsibilities (e.g., Data, Evaluation, Privacy, and Information Officers)
- Engagements with other officials to discuss relative roles, opportunities for coordination, and challenges
- Feedback on role of Statistical Official
 - Value from consultation on collections, analysis, dissemination, privacy, and confidentiality
 - Mixed perspectives on formal review role



Coordination with Other Officials

- Coordination with other officials

- Need (explicit or implied) to coordinate on aspects of data governance, inventory, collection, access, and dissemination; learning agendas; evaluation; privacy and confidentiality
- In reality... heterogeneity on interaction/coordination
- Opportunity for communication on what support/services the SO can provide
- Focus on overall goal and how different roles can contribute instead of responsibilities

- Challenges to Coordination

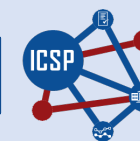
- Resources: bandwidth/resources might not match need for support
- Authority: SO's statutory authority is to advise
- Undefined Responsibilities: coordination can be tough if others don't know SO responsibilities
- Territory: focus on "who does what" can risk a territorial environment



Refined Roles and Responsibilities

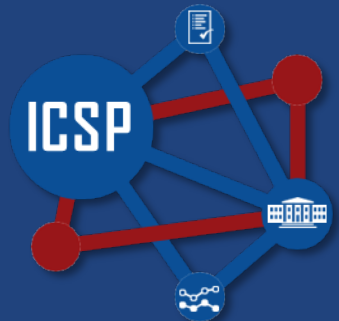
1. First and foremost, to be a **trusted advisor** to agency decisionmakers on matters of statistical policies, techniques, and procedures.
2. **Provide leadership and support** on statistical methods, data quality, and data confidentiality matters that relate to building and using evidence.
3. **Advocate strongly for statistics, data quality, and confidentiality.**
4. **Build appropriate statistical capacity** to meet the agency's needs.
5. Monitor whether the agency can benefit from establishing an RSAU, and if so, providing guidance and support

Roles and responsibilities vary from agency to agency, unit to unit, shaped by statutory authorities and direction, historical contingency, and other factors.



Comparing SOs of RSAUs and non-RSAUs

Jacob Malcom



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RSAUs vs. non-RSAUs

- Recognized Statistical Agency or Unit; for example:
 - Census Bureau
 - Bureau of Labor Statistics
 - ...13 in total...
- Non-RSAUs; for example:
 - Department of the Interior
 - Department of State
 - Department of Defense
 - ...many others.



S-SORR Priority Learning Question 2

“ What roles and responsibilities do SOs from agencies with OMB recognized statistical agencies or units (RSAUs) have that are (a) shared with SOs of non-RSAUs or (b) unique to RSAU responsibilities? Are there non RSAU-specific responsibilities?



Title I SO Responsibilities

- No distinction spelled out between RSAU/non-RSAU SOs:

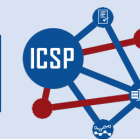
“§ 314. Statistical expertise

5 USC 314.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The head of each agency shall designate the head of any statistical agency or unit within the agency, or in the case of an agency that does not have a statistical agency or unit, any senior agency official with appropriate expertise, as a statistical official to advise on statistical policy, techniques, and procedures. Agency officials engaged in statistical activities may consult with any such statistical official as necessary.

Designation.

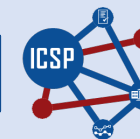
“(b) MEMBERSHIP ON INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON STATISTICAL POLICY.—Each statistical official designated under subsection (a) shall serve as a member of the Interagency Council on Statistical Policy established under section 3504(e)(8) of title 44.



Title II SO Responsibilities

- No distinction spelled out between RSAU/non-RSAU SOs (examples):

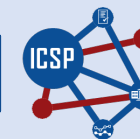
Task	Primary	<u>SO</u> Consultation	Source
Manage data assets, incl. format, sharing, and publication	CDO	Yes	44 USC 3520(c)(4)
Information resource management	CDO	Yes	44 USC 3520(c)(4)
Information resource inventories	CDO	Yes	44 USC 3520(c)(4)
Information collections (=PRA)	CDO (CIO)	Yes	44 USC 3520(c)(4)
Ensure timely and equitable access to information	CDO (CIO)	Yes	44 USC 3520(c)(4)
Archiving data in electronic format	CDO	Yes	44 USC 3520(c)(4)
Support the PIO, EO with data for performance and evaluation	CDO	Implied ¹	44 USC 3520(c)



Title III (CIPSEA) Responsibilities

- Specific RSAU req's, separate from non-RSAUs (examples):

Provide relevant and timely statistical information, conduct statistical activities, and protect trust of information providers	RSAUs	Yes	44 USC 3563(a)(1)
Adopt policies, best practices, and appropriate procedures to implement the responsibilities described 3563(a)(1)	RSAUs	Yes	44 USC 3563(a)(3)
Enable, support, and facilitate statistical agencies or units in [providing relevant and timely statistical information, conduct statistical activities, and protect trust of information providers].	Agency head	Implied	44 USC 3563(b)
Make data assets of an agency accessible to RSAUs for developing evidence	Agency head	Implied	44 USC 3581(a)
Expand secure access to data for evidence, while protecting such assets from inappropriate access and use	RSAUs	Implied	44 USC 3582(a)

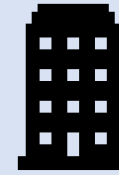


Fundamental / structural consequences

Subject	RSAU SO	Non-RSAU SO
Role in an organization	The head of a work unit, the RSAU, with associated supervisory or leadership responsibilities	May or may not be the head of a work unit; home unit may or may not have a statistical focus or mandate
Role in budgetary matters	May be directly responsible for RSAU budget and, by extension, budget for SO responsibilities	May or may not be responsible for budget; may advise others on SO budget as part of other budget / organizational needs
Responsibility for statutory or regulatory requirements specific to RSAUs	Specific requirements such as Trust Regulation, Standard Application Process, and SPD1	RSAU requirements do not apply, even if using such requirements as best practices in non-RSAU; other SPDs are relevant
Responsibility to advise decision makers on statistical matters while managing risk	Added legal, reputational, privacy, and other risks to RSAU that extend to SO role of advising on statistical matters; less readily advice on non-“statistical purpose” matters	Risks exist, but may be of lesser impact to mission and outcomes given different nature of non-RSAUs; more readily advise on non-“statistical purpose” matters
Advise and guide agency decision makers on need for establishing an RSAU	Limited since there is already ≥ 1 RSAU, but may be consulted if another added	Necessary guidance and facilitation for agencies lacking but needing an RSAU
Responsibility to support a community of statisticians	Yes, within the context of a well-defined mission of the RSAU	Yes / maybe: responsibility to support / develop community under uncertainty

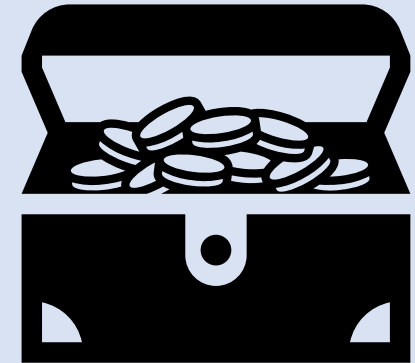
Role in an organization

- RSAU SO == head of work unit
 - Management and leadership responsibilities
 - Not dual-hatted (e.g., CDO)
 - Do not report to CDO or EO
- Non-RSAU SO ?=? Head of work unit
 - May have mgmt. & leadership responsibilities
 - Several are dual-hatted
 - Some report to other EA officials



Role in budgeting

- RSAU SOs
 - Some (higher percentage?) have budget control
 - Support larger statistical staff for advising
- Non-RSAU SOs
 - Often have no budget control
 - Generally fewer staff for advising



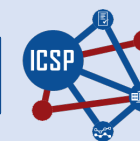
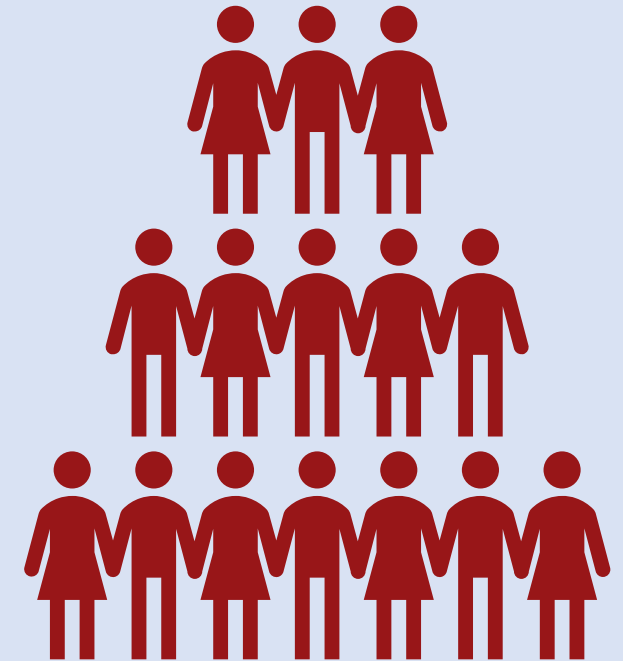
Enterprise risk management

- Compliance risk
 - Legal risk
 - Operational risk
 - Reporting risk
 - Reputational risk
-
- Advising on statistics in non-statistical matters?



Institutional & cultural considerations

- RSAU SOs
 - Statisticians / stats-minded staff for mission
 - Built-in statistical community
 - Statistical culture
- Non-RSAU SOs
 - Highly varied staff for mission
 - May not have a statistical community
 - May not have a statistical culture



In sum

- RSAU and non-RSAU SOs are similar in:
 - Responsibility to advise on statistics
 - Responsibility to consult on data matters
- RSAU and non-RSAU SOs differences in:
 - CIPSEA responsibilities
 - Head of work unit, budget
 - Enterprise risks
 - Institutions / cultures

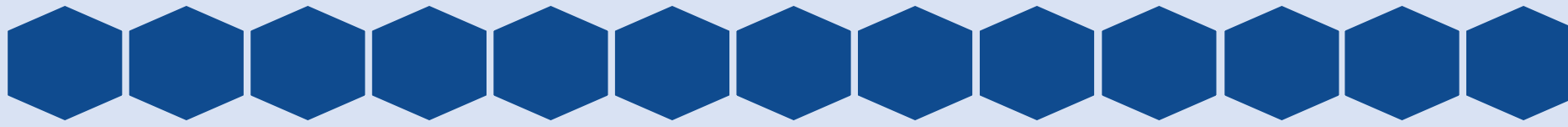


Statistical Official Skills and Qualifications

Todd Coleman

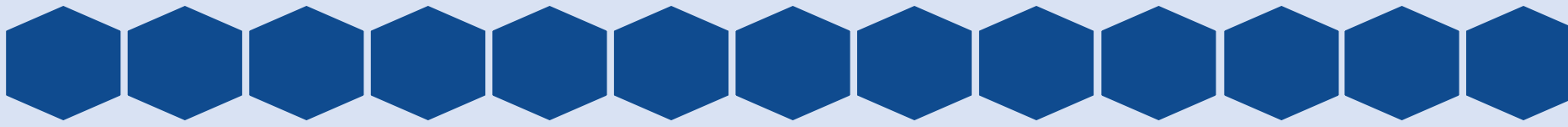


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Background | Statistical Officials Skills and Qualifications Survey

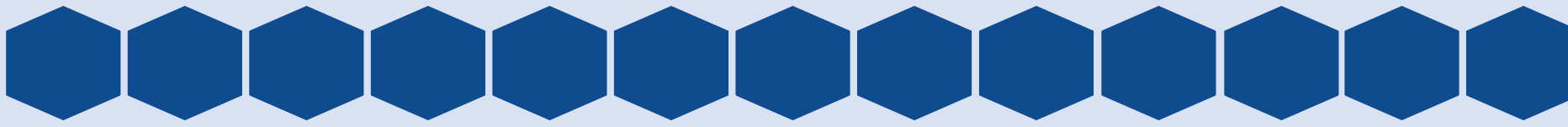
- Government-wide Survey of Statistical Officials (SOs) about their backgrounds
 - Education, Training, Skill Sets
 - Professional experiences
 - Engagement with professional scientific or research organizations
- 15 of 25 SOs responded to the survey
 - 7 from Recognized Statistical Agencies and Units (RSAUs)
 - 8 from Non-RSAUs
- Survey was open from July 31 through August 23



Highlights | Statistical Officials Skills and Qualifications Survey

SOs have the expertise, skills, and experience to competently execute the role, as prescribed by OMB M-19-23

Top Skills Overall	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leadership• Descriptive Statistical Analysis• Research Methodology• Statistical Modeling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scientific Writing• Project Design• Research Management



Highlights | Statistical Officials Skills and Qualifications Survey

SOs in RSAUs and Non-RSAUs differ in Education and Engagement

RSAUs

Non-RSAUs

Education

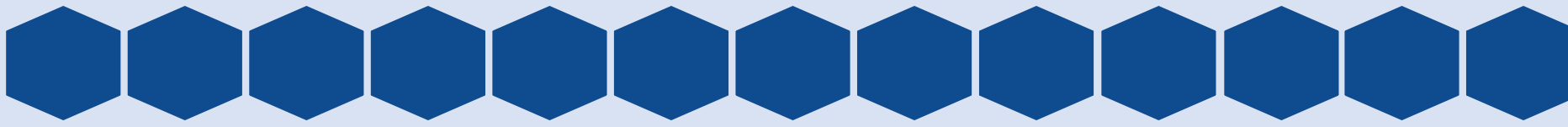
Over 80% of RSAU SOs have PhDs

50% of Non-RSAU SOs have PhDs, 50% have Masters degrees

Engagement

- RSAU SOs are more likely to be members of professional research or scientific organizations
- RSAU SO's more regularly attend scientific conferences

- Non-RSAU SOs are less likely to be members of professional research or scientific organizations
- Non-RSAU SO's less regularly attend scientific conferences



Education

“What is the highest degree that you have received?”



	Non-RSAU		RSAU		All	
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
Master's	4	50	1	14	5	33
Doctorate	4	50	6	86	10	67
Total	8		7		15	

Survey Results | Skill Sets

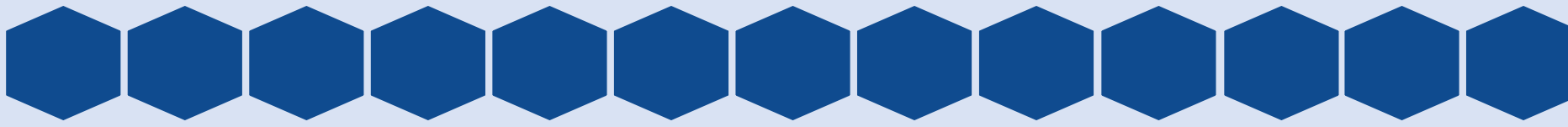
Experience

Skill Sets

Which of the following research- or analysis-related skill sets do you have hands-on experience with? (Please select all that apply)

Skill	Non-RSAU		RSAU		All	
	<i>N</i>	%*	<i>N</i>	%*	<i>N</i>	%*
Leadership	8	100	7	100	15	100
Descriptive statistical analysis	8	100	6	86	14	93
Research methodology	6	75	7	100	13	87
Statistical modeling	7	88	6	86	13	87
Scientific writing	6	75	7	100	13	87
Project design	6	75	7	100	13	87
Research management	5	63	7	100	12	80
Survey design	6	75	3	43	9	60
Grant writing	2	25	2	29	4	27

* Percentages will not sum to 100 because this is a multi-select question.

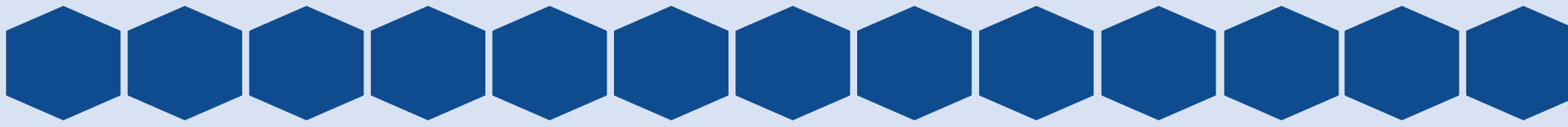


Survey Results | Professional Associations

Professional Associations

Are you a member of a major professional organization for individuals engaged in research within your field of study?

	Non-RSAU		RSAU		All	
Role	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
Yes	1	12	5	71	6	40
No	7	88	2	29	9	60



Survey Results | Conference Attendance

Conference Attendance

How often do you attend scientific meetings or research conferences?

	Non-RSAU		RSAU		All	
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
More Than Once <u>A</u> Year	1	13	3	43	4	27
Once a year	1	13	3	43	4	27
Once every two years	1	13	0	0	1	7
Once every few years	5	63	0	0	5	33
Less frequency than once every few years	0	0	1	14	1	7
I do not attend	0	0	0	0	0	0

Looking Ahead

Bill Wiatrowski



**Interagency Council on
Statistical Policy**

S-SORR to the rescue

- Budget – matching Statistical Official responsibilities to resources
- Communications – how to spread the word about the role and responsibilities of Statistical Officials
- Training – helping new Statistical Officials



Discussant

Deborah Bryant



Interagency Council on
Statistical Policy

Questions? Comments? Concerns?

