

**Sri Lanka: Report on the Observance of Standards and Codes—Data Module;
Response by the Authorities; and Detailed Assessments Using the Data Quality
Assessment Framework**

This Report on the Observance of Standards and Codes on Data Module for **Sri Lanka** was prepared by a staff team of the International Monetary Fund as background documentation for the periodic consultation with the member country. It is based on the information available at the time it was completed on **December 13, 2001**. The views expressed in this document are those of the staff team and do not necessarily reflect the views of the government of **Sri Lanka** or the Executive Board of the IMF.

The Response by the Authorities on this report, and the Detailed Assessments Using the Data Quality Assessment Framework (DQAF) are also included.

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SRI LANKA

**Report on the Observance of Standards and Codes (ROSC)
Data Module**

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December 13, 2001

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FOREWORD

The data module of the Report on Observance of Standards and Codes (ROSC) has evolved significantly since its inception in early 1999. The early ROSCs focused on the disclosure elements of the international standard—that is, the requirements to make information available to the public. However, experience showed that the reports would be more useful if they also addressed the quality of the information provided. This need to focus on the quality of data more broadly is addressed by integrating an assessment methodology developed by the Statistics Department—the Data Quality Assessment Framework (DQAF)—into the structure of the ROSC.

The DQAF is a methodology for assessing data quality that brings together best practices and internationally accepted concepts and definitions in statistics, including those of the United Nations *Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics* and the Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS). The DQAF methodology aims to provide structure and a common language for the assessment of data quality. It facilitates a comprehensive view of data quality, one that recognizes interrelations, including tradeoffs, among elements of quality and allows emphasis to vary across data categories and uses/users. It facilitates dialogue with national statistical agencies and country authorities, more generally.

Integration of the DQAF within the ROSC is only one of the potential uses of this assessment methodology. It can also be used to help guide data users to gauge data quality for their own purposes, it can be useful to guide countries' efforts to strengthen their statistical systems by providing a self-assessment tool, and it can be used as a diagnostic tool for technical assistance and statistical capacity building.

ACRONYMS

<i>1968 SNA</i>	<i>System of National Accounts 1968</i>
<i>1993 SNA</i>	<i>System of National Accounts 1993</i>
BOI	Board of Investment
BOP	Balance of Payments
<i>BPM5</i>	<i>Balance of Payments Manual (Fifth edition)</i>
CBSL	Central Bank of Sri Lanka
CCPI	Colombo Consumer Price Index
CD-CPI	Colombo District Consumer Price Index
COFOG	Classifications of the Functions of Government
COICOP	Classification of Individual Consumption by Purpose
CPC	Ceylon Petroleum Corporation
CPI	Consumer Price Index
CSE	Colombo Stock Exchange
DCS	Department of Census and Statistics
DER	Department of Economic Research
DFI	Development Finance Institutions
DMBs	Deposit Money Banks
DBU	Domestic Banking Units
DQAF	Data Quality Assessment Framework
DSBB	Dissemination Standards Bulletin Board
FCBUs	Foreign Currency Banking Units
GCPI	Greater Colombo Price Index
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GFS	Government Finance Statistics
IAS	International Accounting Standards
IIP	International Investment Position
IFD	International Finance Division
<i>IFS</i>	<i>International Finance Statistics</i>
ITD	International Trade Division
ITRS	International Transactions Reporting System
LCBs	Licensed Commercial Banks
LSBs	Licensed Specialized Banks
<i>MFSM</i>	<i>Monetary and Financial Statistics Manual</i>
MLA	Monetary Law Act
MOFP	Ministry of Finance and Planning
MSD	Monetary Statistics Division
NFPEs	Non-financial Public Enterprises
NRFC	Non-Resident Foreign Currency Accounts
PERC	Public Enterprise Reform Commission
PPI	Producer Price Index
ROSCs	Reports on the Observance of Standards and Codes
SLAS	Sri Lanka Accounting Standards
STA	Statistics Department
SDDS	Special Data Dissemination Standard

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is a summary assessment of Sri Lanka's data dissemination practices against the IMF's Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS), complemented by an in-depth assessment of the elements of data quality that underlie the national accounts, prices, government finance, monetary, and balance of payments statistics. Sri Lanka's statistical agencies, that produce these statistics are the Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL), the Ministry of Finance and Planning (MOFP), and the Department of Census and Statistics (DCS). The Sri Lanka authorities have expressed a desire to subscribe to the SDDS as soon as possible. This assessment was carried out by a mission that visited Colombo during June 7–22, 2001.¹

The mission concluded that:

- **SDDS observance:** Sri Lanka has made good progress in meeting most of the SDDS specifications on coverage, periodicity, and timeliness of data categories. Shortcomings exist in the access, integrity, and quality dimensions compared with the SDDS.
- **Prerequisites of quality:** The statistical agencies have a legal foundation and institutional framework that fosters quality. However, a rationalization of responsibilities for consumer price indices and national accounts is needed. Moreover, the routine independent evaluation of quality indicators could strengthen statistical processes.
- **Integrity:** All agencies demonstrate professionalism, are generally transparent in their practices and policies, and provide ethical guidelines to their staffs. Nonetheless, the provision of advance notice to users in the event of key statistical changes is required.
- **Methodological soundness:** Improvements could be made in all statistical programs starting with the implementation of the *1993 SNA*. The scope and weights of the price indices are in need of review. Enhancements are also needed in monetary, balance of payments and government finance statistics in line with new international guidelines.
- **Accuracy and reliability:** Strengthened source data and statistical techniques would benefit datasets. Also, the establishment of revision studies and analyses are needed.
- **Serviceability:** Most data are relevant, timely, and consistent with the SDDS periodicity. However, ongoing consultations are needed with data users.
- **Accessibility:** More comprehensive and easily accessible metadata are needed to facilitate understanding and data analysis. There is a complementary need to establish and publicize advance release calendars for all datasets to ensure data timeliness.

¹ The mission was led by Emmanuel O. Kumah and comprised David V. Pritchett, Gary Barinshtein, Manik Lal Shrestha, Elva Harris (all of the IMF's Statistics Department), and David Hughes (Expert).

I. INTRODUCTION

1. This data dissemination module of the Report on Observance of Standards and Codes (ROSC) covers a summary of Sri Lanka's practices on the coverage, periodicity, and timeliness of the data categories specified in the IMF's Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS), practices on the provision of advance release calendars for these categories, and an assessment of the quality of national accounts, prices, government finance statistics, monetary, and balance of payments statistics. This assessment is based on information (data and metadata) provided to the Statistics Department (STA) prior to and during a staff mission, and it also relies on publicly-available information.

2. Section II includes an overview of the SDDS and an assessment of Sri Lanka's data dissemination practices against the SDDS. A summary assessment of the quality of the principal macroeconomic statistical datasets, following the assessment framework that has been developed by STA, is presented in Section III. Section IV summarizes the views of a cross section of users on the usability of Sri Lanka's statistical data. Section V lists the recommendations made by the Fund staff for improving the quality of these data.

II. DATA DISSEMINATION PRACTICES AND THE SDDS

A. Overview of the SDDS

3. The standard against which Sri Lanka's data dissemination practices are assessed is the IMF's SDDS² which is a "best practice" standard. It covers four sectors of the economy (real, fiscal, financial, and external), as well as population, and identifies four dimensions (data, access, integrity, and quality) of data dissemination for each sector. For each of these dimensions, the SDDS prescribes two to four monitorable elements, or good practices, that can be observed or monitored by the users of statistics (See Box 1). However, the IMF staff monitoring of the SDDS, as authorized by the Fund's Board of Executive Directors, is limited to the coverage, periodicity and timeliness, and access (advance release calendars) dimension. Moreover, it should be emphasized that the SDDS is a disclosure standard, i.e., it aims to encourage the authorities to provide information to users, including information they can use to assess the suitability of the data for purposes that they identify. The SDDS itself does not aim to assess the quality of data for any specific or predetermined use.

² A detailed description of the SDDS can be found on the IMF's Dissemination Standards Bulletin Board (DSBB) on the Internet at <http://dsbb.imf.org>.

BOX 1. DIMENSIONS AND ELEMENTS OF THE SPECIAL DATA DISSEMINATION STANDARD (SDDS)

Data dimension (coverage, periodicity and timeliness)

- the dissemination of 18 data categories, including component detail and tracking categories, covering the four main sectors of the economy, with prescribed periodicity and timeliness.

Access dimension

- the dissemination of advance release calendars (ARCs) providing at least a one-quarter ahead notice of approximate release dates, and at least a one-week ahead notice of the precise release dates; and
- the simultaneous release of data to all users.

Integrity dimension

- the dissemination of the terms and conditions under which official statistics are produced and disseminated;
- the identification of internal government access to data before release;
- the identification of ministerial commentary on the occasion of statistical release; and
- the provision of information about revision and advance notice of major changes in methodology.

Quality dimension

- the dissemination of documentation on statistical methodology and sources used in preparing statistics; and
- dissemination of component detail and/or additional data series that make possible cross-checks and checks of reasonableness.

Subscribers are required:

- to post descriptions of their data dissemination practices (metadata) on the IMF's Dissemination Standards Bulletin Board (DSBB). Summary methodologies, which describe data compilation practices in some detail, are also disseminated on the DSBB.
- to maintain an Internet website, referred to as the National Summary Data Page (NSDP), which contains the actual data described in the metadata, and to which the DSBB is electronically linked.

At the March 29, 2000 meeting of the Executive Board, Directors approved the incorporation of a new SDDS data category on external debt. The transition period for implementing this data category expires in March 2003.

As a result of the Third Review of the SDDS in March 2000, IMF staff began monitoring observance of the Standard through NSDPs maintained on the Internet. Monitoring commenced at the end of June 2000, and is limited to the coverage, periodicity, and timeliness of the data and to the dissemination of advance release calendars.

B. Current Dissemination Practices

4. Sri Lanka was one of the earliest countries to express strong interest in the GDDS and one of the countries for which experimental metadata were produced in 1997. Sri Lanka has adopted the GDDS as an interim stage before meeting the more demanding requirements of the SDDS. Following substantive collaboration between the Fund staff and the authorities, Sri Lanka's metadata were posted on the GDDS website of the Fund's Dissemination Standards Bulletin Board (DSBB) in July 2000.

5. The three institutions responsible for the compilation and dissemination of the prescribed SDDS data categories are the CBSL, the MOFP, and the DCS. The compilation and, particularly the dissemination of economic and financial statistics in Sri Lanka is highly concentrated in the CBSL. Of the data categories and indicators covered by the SDDS, CBSL is involved in all areas with the exception of employment and unemployment data, which are produced by the DCS. The DCS and the CBSL prepare independent estimates of annual national accounts and consumer prices, while the CBSL produces quarterly national accounts estimates, producer prices, production index, and wage indices. The CBSL is the primary disseminator of detailed fiscal data although the MOFP has recently expanded its dissemination of analytical fiscal data. The CBSL is also responsible for the compilation and dissemination of the analytical accounts of the banking sector, the analytical accounts of the central bank, interest rates, share price indices, balance of payments, the international reserves, merchandise trade, and exchange rates.

6. Sri Lanka provides access to these data through a variety of publications and the following Internet websites:

The CBSL's website <http://www.centralbanklanka.org/>

The MOFP's website <http://www.EUREKA.LK/FPEA>

The DCS's website <http://www.statistics.gov.lk/index.html>

7. The coverage, periodicity, and timeliness of macroeconomic data in Sri Lanka are summarized and compared with SDDS specifications in Table 1. As Sri Lanka is not yet an SDDS subscriber, it has not yet compiled some data in the prescribed SDDS categories.

8. Sri Lanka meets the majority of the SDDS specifications for the data coverage dimension. However, the published analytical accounts of the banking sector do not cover all depository corporations; the production index does not conform to international guidelines; the data template on international reserves and foreign currency liquidity is not fully developed; and the data on the international investment position (IIP) is not yet compiled. Furthermore, the production index, the producer price index, the central government operations, the analytical accounts of the banking sector, and the analytical accounts of the central bank do not meet the SDDS timeliness requirements. However, Sri Lanka exceeds the SDDS specifications for timeliness for CPI, merchandise trade and central government debt.

Access dimension

9. The CBSL does not at present issue Advance Release Calendars (ARCs) for the release of its weekly and monthly data. However, its *Annual Report*, by law, has to be published within four months from the end of the reference year. As all CBSL data series are produced under specific schedules, it is feasible to disseminate ARCs. The CBSL data are released to users through press releases, publications, and posting on the Internet. The DCS has no ARC for price statistics. However, there is a legal requirement to publish the official CPI (CCPI) on the last day of the reference month. Data published by the DCS are released via press releases, publications and on its website.

Integrity dimension

10. The SDDS requires the disclosure of information on laws, regulations and decrees, etc. that govern the collection, compilation and dissemination of data, as well as the confidentiality of the data collected. The terms and conditions under which most official statistics are compiled and disseminated in Sri Lanka are governed by the Monetary Law Act (MLA), the Statistical Ordinance, and the Census Ordinance. These are available to the public in electronic and non-electronic formats; they provide a legal framework, with appropriate responsibilities and corresponding penalties, that supports the integrity of the statistical system.

11. The DCS releases the official CPI (CCPI) through press releases simultaneously to all users. However, for other statistics, the DCS automatically provides finalized data to government users before publication, but will also supply these data to other users on request, and the public is not informed of this practice. The CBSL and the MOFP do not provide data to government officials before their public release, and data are disseminated without ministerial commentary. All the statistical agencies do not provide advance notification of major changes in methodology, source data, and statistical techniques. In many cases involving major changes in methodology, however, released data are accompanied by a detailed technical commentary in statistical publications.

Quality dimension

12. The SDDS requires dissemination of documentation on methodology and sources, as well as component detail, reconciliations with related data, and statistical frameworks that support statistical cross-checks and provide assurance of reasonableness. Summary methodology statements and statistical techniques for the data published by CBSL, the MOFP, and the DCS are outdated, limited in coverage, and unavailable to the public for most data sets. Plans are underway at CBSL to either update or create publicly accessible metadata in the near term.

Table 1. Sri Lanka: Overview of Current Practices regarding Coverage, Periodicity, and Timeliness of Data Compared to the SDDS

SDDS Data Category	Coverage (meets SDDS requirement)	Periodicity		Timeliness		Comments
		SDDS	Sri Lanka ¹	SDDS	Sri Lanka ¹	
Real Sector						
National accounts	Yes	Q	Q	Q	Q	Quarterly GDP estimates by five major activities at current and constant (1996) prices. No quarterly expenditure estimates.
Production index/indices	No	M		6W (M encouraged)		Not a conventional index compiled in conformity to international guidelines.
Employment	Yes	Q	Q	Q	Q	Based on quarterly labor force surveys.
Unemployment	Yes	Q	Q	Q	Q	Based on quarterly labor force surveys.
Wages/earnings	Yes	Q	M	Q	Q	Two minimum wages-based indices: one for government employees and the other for workers under Wages Boards.
Consumer price index	Yes	M	M	1M	End of reference month for official CPI (CCPI)	Three consumer price indices with limited coverage.
Producer price index	Yes	M	M	M	2M	This index is a wholesale-cum-producer price index. Out of date sample.
Fiscal sector						
General government operations	Yes	A	A	2Q	2Q	Data on local government operations, while not of major importance, are not included.
Central government operations	Yes	M	M	M	2M	Timeliness does not meet SDDS requirements.
Central government debt	Yes	Q	2	Q	2M	Timeliness exceeds SDDS requirements.
Financial sector						
Analytical accounts of the banking sector	No	M	M	M	4-6W	Monthly monetary survey (M2b), available within 4-5 weeks, does not cover all depository corporations. M4 survey, which covers all depository corporations provides only annual data.

Table 1. Sri Lanka: Overview of Current Practices regarding Coverage, Periodicity, and Timeliness of Data Compared to the SDDS

SDDS Data Category	Coverage (meets SDDS requirement)	Periodicity		Timeliness		Comments
		SDDS	Sri Lanka ¹	SDDS	Sri Lanka ¹	
Analytical accounts of the central bank	Yes	M (W recommended)	M	2W (W encouraged)	4-6W	Selected weekly data available (e.g., reserve money). CBSL's comprehensive accounts available at the end of the month.
Interest rates	Yes	D	D	²	1-5D	
Stock market	Yes	D	²	CBSL redisseminates data on two share price indices of the Colombo Stock Exchange (CSE's web site is www.cse.lk).
External sector						
Balance of payments	Yes	Q	Q	Q	Q	
International reserves	Yes	M (W recommended)	M	W	W	Published gross and net, including bilateral and clearing union balances.
Reserves template	No	M	...	M	...	Basic data available, and authorities to commence soon the compilation of the reserves template.
Merchandise trade	Yes	M	M	8W (4-6W encouraged)	4-6W	Timeliness exceeds SDDS requirements.
International investment position	No	A (Q recommended)	...	2Q (Q encouraged)	...	An IIP is under development.
Exchange rates	Yes	D	D	²	D	No regular quotations for forward exchange rates.
Addendum: population	Yes	A	A	...	6M	

Periodicity and timeliness: (D) daily; (W) weekly or with a lag of no more than one week from the reference data or the closing of the reference week; (M) monthly or with a lag of no more than one month; (Q) quarterly or with a lag of no more than one quarter; (A) annually; and (...) not applicable.

¹ Refers to current practices in Sri Lanka.

² Given that the data are broadly disseminated by private means, the timeliness with which official data are published is not so important. Although dissemination is recommended via recorded telephone messages or by fax, the dissemination of these data may form part of other dissemination mechanisms (preferably, high frequency).

III. SUMMARY ASSESSMENT OF DATA QUALITY

A. The Framework for Assessing Data Quality

13. Work toward a framework for assessing the quality of data has been under way in the IMF's Statistics Department for some time. This initiative responds to a number of needs, in particular, to complement the quality dimension of the SDDS, to focus more closely on the quality of the data provided by countries to the IMF that underpin the institution's surveillance of their economic policies, and to assess systematically the quality of the information provided for the IMF's ROSCs. Against this background, the Statistics Department of the IMF has developed a tool that would provide a structure and a common language to efforts to assess data quality and establishes a link with the SDDS. The data quality assessment framework that has emerged comprises a generic framework that brings together internationally accepted core principles for official statistics and serves as the overarching structure for dataset-specific frameworks (for national accounts, balance of payments, monetary, government finance, and price statistics) that are organized around selected indicators of quality.

14. The Data Quality Assessment Framework (DQAF) covers five dimensions of quality and a set of prerequisites for the assessment of data quality (see below). The coverage of these dimensions recognizes that data quality encompasses quality of the institution or system behind the production of the data as well as the quality of the individual data product. Within this framework, each dimension comprises a number of elements, which are in turn associated with a set of desirable practices. The following are the statistical practices that are associated with each dimension.

- **Prerequisites of quality**—the environment is supportive of statistics; resources are commensurate with needs of statistical programs; and quality is the cornerstone of statistical work.
- **Integrity**—professionalism in statistical policies and practices is a guiding principle; statistical policies and practices are transparent; and policies and practices are guided by ethical standards.
- **Methodological soundness**—concepts and definitions used are in accord with standard statistical frameworks; the scope is in accord with internationally accepted standards; classification and sectorization systems are in accord with internationally accepted standards; and flows and stocks are valued and recorded according to internationally accepted standards.
- **Accuracy and reliability**—source data available provide an adequate basis to compile statistics; statistical techniques employed conform with sound statistical procedures; source data are regularly assessed and results validated; and revisions, as a gauge of reliability, are tracked and mined for the information they may provide.

- **Serviceability**—statistics cover relevant information on the subject field; timeliness and periodicity follow internationally accepted dissemination standards; statistics are consistent over time, internally, and with major data systems; and data revisions follow a regular and publicized procedure.
- **Accessibility**—statistics are presented in a clear and understandable manner, forms of dissemination are adequate, and statistics are made available on an impartial basis; up-to-date and pertinent metadata are made available; and prompt and knowledgeable support service is available.

15. A central feature of this framework is its structure, which focuses on principles of quality that are organized in an orderly progression from the abstract to the more specific. Thus, for each of the five dimensions and the set of prerequisites, a set of elements, indicative of desirable practices, and a group of indicators or pointers to these practices have been developed.

16. The findings from the application of this framework to the Sri Lanka statistical system are presented below. Assessments of six macroeconomic datasets (national accounts, consumer and producer prices, government finance statistics, monetary statistics, and the balance of payments) were conducted using information provided to STA and official information publicly available. The mission's findings are also presented in the form of summary tables using a four-part scale (Tables 2.a–2.f.).

B. Summary Findings

17. Sri Lanka has a broad-based macroeconomic database for economic and financial analysis. Nevertheless, the mission found shortcomings in some statistical practices that have the potential for complicating the accurate and timely analysis of economic and financial developments. The main findings below are presented following the structure of the data quality assessment framework.

Prerequisites of Quality

18. The **DCS** prepares the annual national accounts, the official CPI, called the Colombo CPI (CCPI), as well as the Greater Colombo CPI (GCPI) (which has slightly larger geographical coverage and more up-to-date weights). The responsibility to compile national accounts is not clearly specified and the **CBSL** also produces annual and quarterly national accounts. This results in duplication of efforts by the two agencies. The **DCS** has the legal obligation, under the Statistics Ordinance, to produce CPIs. However, the **CBSL** also produces a Colombo District CPI (CD-CPI) as well as a producer price index (PPI). This also results in a significant duplication of activities in prices. Both organizations also operate independent household income and expenditure surveys, which are used to derive the weights for the various CPIs. The resources within the **DCS** are adequate to meet the existing work program. The management of **DCS** has a positive attitude towards quality, but the organization does not have formal quality assessment programs, and does not conduct regular meetings with users to discuss their needs.

19. The **CBSL** produces and disseminates statistics under the provisions of Section 35 of the **MLA** (Monetary Law Act), which stipulates that the **CBSL** submit to the Minister of Finance and Planning, and publish in its *Annual Report*, a range of economic statistics including monetary, balance of payments, and government finance statistics (**GFS**). The **MLA** empowers the **CBSL** to collect data needed to carry out its mandate, which the **CBSL** uses to justify the compilation of prices and national accounts. The **MLA** obligates financial institutions to provide data to the central bank and specifies penalties for noncompliance. Similar arrangements exist for providing data for balance of payments compilation. The **CBSL** has a workable framework for discussions with other data producing agencies such as the **DCS** and the General Treasury of the **MOFP**. Statutory requirements ensure that respondents' data are kept confidential. Staff, financial, and computing resources appear adequate to undertake existing statistical programs and regular budgetary reviews focus on efficient resource allocation. Overall, the a perspective obtained perhaps by a public body outside the **CBSL**, for reviewing data quality indicators would buttress the overall reputation of the compilation agency.

20. The **MOFP** and the **CBSL** work together closely to collect, compile, and disseminate the **GFS**. The **CBSL**, mandated with the debt management responsibility for central government, is required by law to collect and disseminate **GFS**. The **MOFP**, the source of most transaction data on the budgetary central government, has an inadequate accounting system for recording (cash or accrual) data, and its compilation procedures, conducted manually, are not sufficient for ensuring accurate data. Staff is not adequately trained in the new **GFS** methodology, which concerns the compilation of complete balance sheets as well as transactions based on accrual accounting. Quality processes are primarily driven by the accuracy required under budget reporting systems, to ensure accurate and internally consistent fiscal data at all levels of government. The review of fiscal data quality, however, is not seen as a routine and timely process.

Integrity

21. Practices are in place at the **CBSL**, **DCS**, and the **MOFP** to help ensure professionalism in statistical policies and practices, transparency, and ethical standards. The documentation on the legal basis under which the **CBSL** and **DCS** operate is available publicly. Both organizations operate in a largely autonomous fashion, though this is not formally established. The **CBSL** compiles statistics on an impartial basis and the staff is free to choose the most appropriate data sources and methods. The **DCS**, however, has not been able to update the weights for the **CCPI**, which relate to 1949/50, even though they have made numerous attempts to do so, due to pressures from some influential quarters. All agencies scrutinize all media comments on their statistics and follow up on any observed instances of misrepresentation. Documented guidelines of the **MOFP** call for the proper use of data sources in compiling **GFS**. None of the compiling agencies give advance notification of major changes in methodology, source data, and statistical techniques. The **CBSL** does not allow, pre-release access to senior government officials. The **DCS** does not allow pre-release access to government officials for the **CCPI** but for other statistics, the **DCS** automatically provides finalized data to government users before publication but will also supply these data

to other users on request, although the public is not informed of this practice. All CBSL's staff are subject to the code of conduct and ethical standards for staff clearly specified in the CBSL's *Handbook/Manual*. The CBSL and DCS's training programs for new staff cover the required ethical standards.

Methodological Soundness

22. The overall structure of the **national accounts**³ generally follows the *System of National Accounts 1968 (1968 SNA)*. No specific plan exists for implementing the *1993 SNA*. The delineation of the economy and the production and asset boundary are, in principle, in line with the *1968 SNA*. Although the International Standard Industrial Classification of all Activity, Rev.2, is followed, other standard classifications are not used. Regarding valuation, no clear conceptual approach is followed, and the basis for valuation differs across economic activities. For example, gross value added is denoted as factor cost values, manufacturing output is valued at ex-factory prices, while agricultural output is valued at producer prices.

23. The CPIs measure the changes in price of a representative basket of goods and services purchased by the represented households and prices are actual transaction prices paid by consumers. The classifications of goods and services used in all CPIs are not compatible with current internationally recommended practices and the weights for the CPIs are extremely out of date. The scope of all the CPIs is restricted to the Colombo area and to households with the lowest 40-50 percent of income.

24. The **PPI's** methodology, set up in 1974, was lost in a bomb blast and no attempt has been made to update this methodology. The prices collected represent transactions at producer prices. The scope and the classification of establishments of the PPI covers all domestic industrial activities, but it has not been updated since 1974. This means that the number of enterprises included has been reduced over the years as businesses have ceased to operate and no new enterprises have been added. Also, the PPI excludes free trade zones and bonded warehouses.

25. The classification and sectorization systems for **government finance statistics** align with internationally accepted guidelines. Concepts and definitions in the central government finance statistics generally follow the recommendations of the 1986 *A Manual on Government Finance Statistics (GFSM)*. All transactions are valued at current market prices and are recorded on a cash basis. Transactions in foreign currency are converted to local currency using the exchange rate for the day on which they take place. Debt stocks are valued at face value, and those denominated in foreign currency are converted to a domestic currency basis using the mid-point exchange rate in the market at the end of the reporting period. The MOFP and the CBSL are addressing how to report GFS (and to provide more

³ For the purpose of the Data Quality Assessment Framework for national accounts, the assessment focuses on the annual and quarterly national accounts compiled by the CBSL. However, an assessment of the DCS national accounts is also provided in the Appendix I on detailed assessment using DQAF.

conventional fiscal presentations) in accordance with the new GFS methodology to be published by the IMF in 2001, which entails accrual accounting and completely integrated stocks and flows.

26. The analytical framework for compiling **monetary statistics** used by CBSL is based on the IMF's *Guide to Money and Banking Statistics in International Financial Statistics* (draft, 1984). The coverage of the Consolidated Monetary Survey M2b, which is used for policy purposes, is not complete. It excludes positions of two categories of deposit-taking institutions, namely Licensed Specialized Banks and Finance companies (whose quasi-monetary liabilities were, at end-2000, approximately 22 percent of broad money in the more comprehensive Financial Survey (see below)). The institutional coverage and sectorization of the Financial Survey is more in line with the recommendations in the *Guide* and the Monetary and Financial Statistics Manual (*MFSM*). However, some deviations are apparent for example in the treatment of repurchase agreements, and restricted deposits. Valuation principles follow Sri Lanka Accounting Standards, but are not uniformly on a market or fair value basis, as recommended in the *MFSM*. Accrued amounts (except for overdrafts) are on separate accrual accounts rather than incorporated in the underlying instrument. Also unlike the experimental financial survey, the monetary and financial surveys in CBSL publications do not include the full range of instrument and sectors recommended in *MFSM*. However, the source data obtained through the collection system generally contain adequate detail on stocks, that may permit compilation of sectoral balance sheets and the sectoral surveys as presented in *MFSM*.

27. Sri Lanka's **balance of payments** statistics are compiled in broad conformity with guidelines presented in the *Balance of Payments Manual, Fifth Edition (BPM5)*. Resident institutional units are in line with *BPM5* concepts of economic territory and residence; however, there are some exceptions. Transactions relating to construction services and reinvested earnings are not covered, and only partial data are available on communication, computer and information services, and compensation of employees. Some differences exist with *BPM5* with regard to classification of transactions (e.g., imports are on a c.i.f. basis, and the classification of goods does not identify repair on goods). The classification and sectorization of the financial account are not in line with the standard components of *BPM5*. Transactions are recorded at market prices, and statistical techniques exclude valuation changes from measures of financial flows derived from changes in stock data for CBSL accounts, as called for in the *BPM5*. As the CBSL relies on the International Transactions Reporting System (ITRS) for a large part of its services, income, and capital and financial account data, the reported transactions are recorded on a cash, rather than accrual basis.

Accuracy and Reliability

28. The accuracy of the **national accounts statistics** suffers from lack of sufficient data sources and statistical techniques. Sri Lanka does not have periodic comprehensive benchmarks and a system for conducting regular annual establishment surveys. A statistical business register, which would serve as the main basis for conducting sample surveys, is not available. As a result, the few surveys that are conducted do not have good sample frames. Most of the data used for regular compilation are obtained on a timely basis. However, detailed data needed to measure both output and intermediate consumption are mostly

unavailable or not collected. As a result, the estimates for gross value added are prepared directly relying heavily on fixed ratios established for the 1996 base year, often with outdated studies or ad-hoc assumptions. Quarterly indicators are used for compiling quarterly value added estimates. Except for a few key activities, the quarterly data collection procedure is essentially ad hoc. The methodology for deriving GDP at constant prices is not satisfactory. Expenditure estimates are available only annually and rely mostly on commodity flow techniques. Wherever possible, estimates are validated and checked with other sources. Analysis of revisions is made as a part of compilation process.

29. The **CPIs** are unreliable due to outdated weights and limited coverage. However, data collection procedures and aggregation techniques are sound. The household expenditure surveys operated by the DCS and the CBSL are based on multistage probability sample designs. Both surveys are run every five years and provide detailed data on household consumption to derive the weights of the CPIs. As noted above, the weights for the CCPI have never been updated. Also, there is no laid down policy for updating the weights for the other two CPIs, which still relate to 1985/86 for the GCPI and 1996/97 for the CD-CPI.

30. The **PPI** weights still relate to 1974 and the basis of their derivation is not known. Price data are collected on a monthly basis from an outdated enterprise list. Though the enterprise list is never changed, products which cease to be produced are replaced with similar ones. There are no validation procedures for the source data and the PPI is never revised even though some price quotes are late in arriving.

31. With regard to **government finance statistics**, annual data on budgetary central government and provincial councils are reported separately. The reason is that the provincial council data do not include data on functional classifications. The data available by economic type of transaction on budgetary central government and provincial governments permit the consolidation of data on general government for inclusion in the GFS annual compilation cycles. Annual data on local governments, which comprise a small part of general government operations and are based on accrual accounting, are not routinely collected. The integrity of GFS, as related to other statistical areas, such as monetary data, is not routinely validated. There are incomplete explanations for divergences between fiscal and monetary statistics on government financing by banks. Accordingly, the associated steps needed to report reconciled statistics are not identified. In any event, the revisions of monthly and annual fiscal data are not routinely analyzed to assess the appropriate use of provisional data.

32. A comprehensive data collection program is in place for **monetary statistics** covering all deposit-taking institutions. Accounting records form the basis for the reported balance sheets and supplementary tables. The reported data cover a broad range of financial instruments and economic sectors. Moreover, the balance sheets generally contain sufficient detail for classifying assets and liabilities by financial instrument and by economic sector, as defined in the *MFSM*. Nevertheless, a review for consistency with its recommendations may yield enhancements; for example, by seeking a separate identification of securities and shares, households/individuals and private enterprises, and, to the extent possible, disaggregation of some "other" reported items, where they are relatively large. Procedures are in place for checking monetary data for internal consistency with other datasets. The

timeliness of reporting to CBSL by banks by the 20th of the subsequent month is generally in line with the CBSL directives. Delays arise due to inadequate communication links between outlying bank branches and regional offices, so that comprehensive bank data are generally available within 4-6 weeks from the end of the month. Regional development banks' and finance companies' data are currently available 8-9 weeks and 7-8 weeks, respectively, after the end of the reference month because of compilation and communication problems.

33. Although a data collection system has been developed for **balance of payments statistics**, there are some weaknesses in source data, techniques, validation and revisions' studies. For example, the ITRS and surveys do not cover all institutions, enterprise accounts with banks abroad, and non-cash transactions (e.g., intercompany accounts, reinvested earnings etc.). The CBSL has developed some statistical techniques (price/value analysis, trend analysis, and timing adjustments to trade statistics etc.) to improve the accuracy and reliability. Although some service items (transport, travel, and government) are compared with ITRS data, there is no systematic estimation of undercoverage, non-surveyed or nonrespondent components for survey data. The ITRS does not systematically require financial institutions to reconcile reported transactions data with stock data. Revision studies are not a regular procedure in data compilation. The *Annual Report* tries to determine major factors contributing to errors and omissions in the accounts, but it is not clear to what extent this information guides compilation policy, or is made available to guide users.

Serviceability

34. An informal mechanism is used to identify users' needs, but explicit reviews or consultations are not conducted to monitor the relevance with respect to **national accounts** to the users. Periodicity and timeliness are in line with the SDDS. Although the time series are usually consistent over time it is not possible to analyze structural ratios because of limited data. Also, a proper reconciliation framework such as supply and use tables is not produced. The quarterly figures are made consistent with the annual estimates by simple proration of the differences between the sum of four quarters and independent annual values. The revision practice is reasonably consistent from year to year, but a revision calendar is not publicized. Preliminary data are indicated as such.

35. There is no systematic approach to assess the needs of users for either the **PPI** or the **CPIs**. Periodicity and timeliness of the CCPI and the CD-CPI are in line with the SDDS. The timeliness of the PPI does not meet the SDDS requirements. The CPIs and PPI are consistent over time. CCPI is not consistent with the other CPIs because of the outdated weights. No checks are made to ensure that movements in the PPI are consistent with that of other price indices.

36. The MOFP and the CBSL prepare comprehensive **government finance statistics** on an annual basis with a lag of two quarters. Budget management and accounting systems provide summary records of monthly budgetary central government transactions and debt in two months after the end of the reference month, as against the one month timeliness in the SDDS. Fiscal data for "other expenditure" of central government is calculated as a residual; they do not reflect actual data and thereby promote transparency. MOFP's processes for gauging relevance and practical utility of its statistics in meeting users' needs are limited, and

no routine surveys or reviews of users take place. The procedure of reporting monthly fiscal data as soon as data are available is not documented and reported. GFS data are not reviewed adequately to ensure consistency with other data such as monetary data.

37. The CBSL assesses on an ongoing basis the analytical relevance of the **monetary** and statistical compilation methods for appropriately capturing macroeconomic, institutional and financial sector developments. Two major studies (in 1997 and in 1999) led to a revision in the coverage of monetary surveys and initiated publication of broader money aggregates (monthly M2b and annual M4, respectively). Data periodicity, but not the timeliness, follows the SDDS recommendations. Interbank positions among commercial banks, and data reported for statutory reserve purposes, show that there are no large variations among data. In particular, the CBSL has a policy for checking monetary data on net foreign assets and net claims on government for consistency with balance of payments and government finance statistics. The general CBSL policy is that major data revisions, arising from methodological changes, are first published in the CBSL's *Annual Report*, along with extensive methodological commentary and background analysis on the factors that led to the revisions.

38. The CBSL organizes monthly meetings with banks to gauge users' views about the usefulness of **balance of payments**. The statistics are disseminated on a quarterly basis with a two-month lag, that meets the periodicity and timeliness prescribed by the SDDS. Trade data also meet the SDDS periodicity and timeliness requirements. International reserves data are compiled and disseminated on a weekly basis with one week lag. Comprehensive external data are compiled on a yearly basis. The balance of payments statistics are generally consistent over time and with other datasets, although there is a variable errors and omissions item in the BOP statistics. When the CBSL implemented the *BPM5* framework in 1997, the annual and quarterly data were revised and disseminated in the *Annual Report*, and on the CBSL's website (including a comparison table with the old data). Revisions do not follow a regular schedule. The causes of the revisions are sometimes explained in the reports.

Accessibility

39. The dissemination of **national accounts** statistics is generally satisfactory. However, the quarterly GDP estimates are published by grouping all activities into five groups. Data are usually released on a regular basis, but advance notification of release dates is not practiced. Additional non-published detailed data are not provided due to concerns about the quality of the disaggregated data. Some internal documentation on sources and methods exists, but metadata on data compilation is not prepared for publication. A list of publications is included in most CBSL publications and at its website. A central contact point for users is available, but no specific contact point for national accounts is publicized.

40. There is no advance release calendar for price statistics. However, there is a legal requirement to publish the **CCPI** on the last day of the reference month. Data are disseminated via press releases, publications, and on each organization's website. Certain data, such as the **PPI**, are not published as press releases. Only limited metadata is available for the CPIs and there is nothing for the PPI. Additional non-published detailed data are not

provided due to concerns about the quality of the disaggregated data. The CBSL has a help desk, but users often find that it is difficult to get through to the appropriate official.

41. Annual **government finance statistics** on central and provincial governments are disseminated by both the CBSL and the MOFP. The annual comprehensive GFS in the CBSL *Annual Report* allows major aggregates and balancing items to be identified and related to detailed underlying data. This information is equivalent in detail to that set out in the *GFS* tables. The dedicated annual government finance publication is the MOFP's *Trends in Public Finance*, the most recent issue of which is for 1999. It covers summary annual and sub annual data on budgetary central government and provincial councils. Monthly and quarterly GFS, in summary presentations, are published in the CBSL *Monthly Statistical Bulletin*. The actual date of official publications with GFS is not pre-announced. Statistical publications are made available to all users simultaneously. Reported metadata on definitions, concepts, and compilation procedures are not sufficient. No specific contact person for GFS is publicized.

42. Presentation of **monetary statistics** is analogous to the presentation in *IFS*. Monetary data are disseminated in CBSL's *Annual Report*, *Monthly Bulletin*, *Monthly Indicators* and *Selected Weekly Indicators* releases. Data are also posted on the CBSL's website. More comprehensive data are published in the *Monthly Bulletin* and the *Annual Report*, which also carry detailed footnotes and commentary. A CBSL document *Notes on Statistical Tables in the Monthly Bulletin* (1980) provides a comprehensive description of the data published in the *Monthly Bulletin*. Monetary statistics are released by CBSL to all users simultaneously, but there is no pre-announced schedule for release of weekly and monthly data. Only CBSL senior management can sanction provisions of any unpublished information. The Director of Information Department is available to clarify issues relating to press releases and published data; however, this information is not publicized. A list of CBSL publications is printed in the back of every *Monthly Bulletin*.

43. Preliminary quarterly **balance of payments** statistics are disseminated via a press release, by posting on the CBSL's website, and in the *Monthly Bulletin*. The presentation broadly follows *BPM5* standard categories with debit and credit items provided separately for all components. Data in the *Monthly Bulletin* and the *Annual Report* carry detailed footnotes. More comprehensive and detailed balance of payments data are published in the *Annual Report*, which, by law, has to be published within four months from the end of the reference year. Some components of the BOP statistics are disseminated more frequently in the *Selected Weekly Indicators* (exchange rates, international reserves), and *Monthly Indicators* (external trade and some services). In principle, attempts are made to assist users with non-published sub-aggregates subject to the approval of CBSL management. The BOP statistics are released by CBSL to all users simultaneously with no regularly publicized schedule. The documentation on methodology is not easily accessible. Assistance to users is through the Information Department, although the contact person is not publicly identified.

**Table 2.a. Data Quality Assessment Framework:
Summary Presentation of Results**

Country: Sri Lanka

Dataset: National Accounts Statistics⁴

Elements	NA	Assessments				Comments
		O	LO	LNO	NO	
Prerequisites of quality						
0.1 Legal and institutional environment				X		0.1 As responsibility is not clearly specified two agencies compile own annual national accounts.
0.2 Resources			X			0.2 Dual sets of accounts represent inefficient system-wide use of scarce resources.
0.3 Quality awareness			X			0.3 Processes foster quality, but feedback from users are not undertaken on a regular basis.
1. Integrity						
1.1 Professionalism		X				1.2 Advance notice of major changes is lacking.
1.2 Transparency			X			
1.3 Ethical standards		X				
2. Methodological soundness						
2.1 Concepts and definitions			X			2.1 Based on the 1968 SNA.
2.2 Scope			X			2.2 Based on the 1968 SNA.
2.3 Classification/sectorization				X		2.3 Industrial classification close to ISIC. No other standard classifications are used (e.g., COICOP,).
2.4 Basis for recording				X		2.4 Mixture of valuation concepts. Measures of gross value added (GVA) are inappropriate.
3. Accuracy and Reliability						
3.1 Source data				X		3.1 No statistical business register, no comprehensive benchmarks and annual business statistics. No proper quarterly surveys.
3.2 Statistical techniques				X		3.2 Techniques for estimates of GVA rely mostly on inappropriate fixed ratios and single indicator method.
3.3 Assessment and validation			X			3.3. Data gaps constrain data assessment and validation.
3.4 Revision studies		X				
4. Serviceability						
4.1 Relevance			X			4.1 Information content of users' views are not used to improve compilation practice.
4.2 Timeliness and periodicity		X				
4.3 Consistency				X		4.3 Lack of proper procedures to derive GVA. Lack of proper reconciliation frame (supply and use table).
4.4 Revision policy and practice			X			4.4 No revision calendar publicized.
5. Accessibility						
5.1 Data accessibility				X		5.1 Only 5 industry groups are published for quarterly data. No advance release calendar. Non-published details are unavailable.
5.2 Metadata accessibility					X	5.2 No metadata published.
5.3 Assistance to users			X			5.3 The only central contact given is hard to reach.

Note: NA= Not Applicable; O = Practice Observed; LO = Practice Largely Observed; LNO = Practice Largely Not Observed; NO = Practice Not Observed

⁴ The assessment covers the CBSL's quarterly and annual national accounts.

**Table 2.b. Data Quality Assessment Framework:
Summary Presentation of Results**

Country: Sri Lanka

Dataset: Consumer Price Statistics⁵

Elements	NA	Assessments				Comments
		O	LO	LNO	NO	
Prerequisites of quality						
0.1 Legal and institutional environment			X			Though the DCS has the legal requirement to produce a CPI, the CBSL produces its own version.
0.2 Resources				X		Problem of system-wide resource use and poor physical infrastructure for the DCS.
0.3 Quality awareness			X			Quality awareness is encouraged, but reviews and feedback from users are not undertaken on a systematic and regular basis.
1. Integrity						
1.1 Professionalism				X		The DCS has not been allowed to update the weights of the official CPI. Some unpublicized pre-release access is given to some government officials; neither agency gives advance notification of major changes to users.
1.2 Transparency			X			
1.3 Ethical standards		X				
2. Methodological soundness						
2.1 Concepts and definitions		X				Coverage is restricted to Colombo and low income households. Classifications are not in line with current international standards.
2.2 Scope				X		
2.3 Classification/sectorization			X			
2.4 Basis for recording		X				
3. Accuracy and Reliability						
3.1 Source data		X				The 1949/50 weights for the CCPI are extremely out of date. Data are not revised.
3.2 Statistical techniques			X			
3.3 Assessment and validation		X				
3.4 Revision studies	X					
4. Serviceability						
4.1 Relevance				X		No attempt is made to regularly and consistently ascertain users' needs. Users informal views have changed compilation practice. There is little consistency between the CCPI and the other CPIs. There is no established revisions policy for the CPI base year.
4.2 Timeliness and periodicity		X				
4.3 Consistency			X			
4.4 Revision policy and practice	X					
5. Accessibility						
5.1 Data accessibility		X				Most documentation is too brief to meet user needs. It is difficult to contact the appropriate official to obtain explanations about data and metadata..
5.2 Metadata accessibility				X		
5.3 Assistance to users			X			

Note: NA= Not Applicable; O = Practice Observed; LO = Practice Largely Observed; LNO = Practice Largely Not Observed; NO = Practice Not Observed

⁵ The assessment covers the official CPI (CCPI).

**Table 2.c. Data Quality Assessment Framework:
Summary Presentation of Results**

Country: Sri Lanka

Dataset: Producer Price Statistics

Elements	NA	Assessments				Comments
		O	LO	LNO	NO	
Prerequisites of quality						
0.1 Legal and institutional environment		X				Resources have not been applied efficiently to produce a good PPI. No attempt has been made to update the compilation system since it was destroyed .
0.2 Resources			X			
0.3 Quality awareness				X		
1. Integrity						
1.1 Professionalism		X				
1.2 Transparency		X				
1.3 Ethical standards		X				
2. Methodological soundness						
2.1 Concepts and definitions				X		Compilers have scant knowledge of concepts and definitions (basic methodology was destroyed by a bomb). The enterprise list is totally out of date. There is no evidence that the classification system is in line with current international standards. There is no evidence that the output weights conform to international guidelines.
2.2 Scope					X	
2.3 Classification/sectorization				X		
2.4 Basis for recording				X		
3. Accuracy and Reliability						
3.1 Source data				X		Coverage of enterprises is incomplete, and some data arrive late. There is no evidence that the techniques, including those for constructing weights and their coverage conform to international guidelines. No assessments or checks are undertaken. Data are not revised.
3.2 Statistical techniques				X		
3.3 Assessment and validation					X	
3.4 Revision studies	X					
4. Serviceability						
4.1 Relevance				X		No attempt is made to regularly and consistently ascertain users' needs. Published two months after end of period. Coverage of products is not consistent over time. The weights have not been revised since 1974.
4.2 Timeliness and periodicity			X			
4.3 Consistency				X		
4.4 Revision policy and practice	X					

5. Accessibility						
5.1 Data accessibility				X		No advance release calendar; data released prior to publication, if requested. No methodology is available.
5.2 Metadata accessibility					X	
5.3 Assistance to users		X				

Note: NA= Not Applicable; O = Practice Observed; LO = Practice Largely Observed; LNO = Practice Largely Not Observed; NO = Practice Not Observed

**Table 2.d. Data Quality Assessment Framework:
Summary Presentation of Results**

**Country Sri Lanka
Statistics**

Dataset: Government Finance

Elements	NA	Assessments				Comments
		O	LO	LNO	NO	
Prerequisites of quality						
0.1 Legal and institutional environment		X				Inadequate accounting and inefficient manual compilation system affect timely and accurate compilation. Staff is not trained for new GFS methodology. Data quality review is not a routine process.
0.2 Resources			X			
0.3 Quality awareness			X			
1. Integrity						
1.1 Professionalism		X				
1.2 Transparency		X				
1.3 Ethical standards		X				
2. Methodological soundness						
2.1 Concepts and definitions		X				
2.2 Scope		X				
2.3 Classification/sectorization		X				
2.4 Basis for recording		X				
3. Accuracy and Reliability						
3.1 Source data			X			General government data do not cover local government operations.
3.2 Statistical techniques	X					No sample surveys or estimates are used.
3.3 Assessment and validation			X			Source data and other secondary related data are not routinely assessed and reported.
3.4 Revision studies			X			Revisions of data are not routinely identified and studied.
4. Serviceability						
4.1 Relevance			X			Review of users is not a routine process.
4.2 Timeliness and periodicity			X			Data timeliness does not meet SDDS.
4.3 Consistency			X			No routine review of data on government subsectors and on related variables in different statistical areas, in order to ensure consistency.
4.4 Revision policy and practice			X			No documentation on policy and practice.
5. Accessibility						
5.1 Data accessibility			X			The date of official publications with GFS is not pre-announced.
5.2 Metadata accessibility				X		No proper documentation on concepts, definitions, and compilation procedures.
5.3 Assistance to users			X			No contact person or publicly usable e-mail address is in annual publications or at website.

Note: NA= Not Applicable; O = Practice Observed; LO = Practice Largely Observed; LNO = Practice Largely Not Observed; NO = Practice Not Observed

**Table 2.e. Data Quality Assessment Framework:
Summary Presentation of Results**

Country: Sri Lanka

Dataset: Monetary Statistics

Elements	NA	Assessments				Comments
		O	LO	LNO	NO	
Prerequisites of quality						
0.1 Legal and institutional environment		X				Processes foster quality, but routine reviews of quality or a use of an outside body to evaluate quality indicators may strengthen these processes.
0.2 Resources		X				
0.3 Quality awareness			X			
1. Integrity						
1.1 Professionalism		X				No advance notice is given on methodological changes, but once implemented, they are clearly identified.
1.2 Transparency			X			
1.3 Ethical standards		X				
2. Methodological soundness						
2.1 Concepts and definitions			X			Analytical framework is generally consistent with the internationally-recognized principles, but a program is not yet in place for implementing recommendations of <i>MFSM</i> . Coverage of M2b broad money excludes some deposit-taking institutions. Data on private sector aggregate positions of households, private enterprises, and nonprofit institutions. Certain asset securities and shares are valued at cost or market, whichever is lower, rather than on fair values. Liability positions on securities and shares are at face value. Except for overdrafts, accrued amounts are on separate accrual accounts.
2.2 Scope			X			
			X			
			X			
2.3 Classification/sectorization						
2.4 Basis for recording						
3. Accuracy and Reliability						
3.1 Source data			X			Data on private sector combines positions, while separate data are preferred. Monthly data for M2b are compiled within 4-6 weeks from the end of the reference month. Only final end-month balance sheet data are used for data compilation.
3.2 Statistical techniques		X				
3.3 Assessment and validation		X				
3.4 Revision studies	X					
4. Serviceability						
4.1 Relevance		X				M2b monetary survey is compiled within 4-6 weeks; however it does not cover positions of all depository corporations as defined in <i>MFSM</i> .
4.2 Timeliness and periodicity				X		
4.3 Consistency		X				
4.4 Revision policy and practice		X				
5. Accessibility						
5.1 Data accessibility			X			Gross data underlying net positions are not clearly identified. There is no pre-announced timetable for releasing weekly and monthly data. Unpublished data can be released only with approval of senior CBSL staff. The usefulness of available documentation is uncertain. A contact person is not publicized.
5.2 Metadata accessibility				X		
5.3 Assistance to users			X			

Note: NA= Not Applicable; O = Practice Observed; LO = Practice Largely Observed; LNO = Practice Largely Not Observed; NO = Practice Not Observed

**Table 2.f. Data Quality Assessment Framework:
Presentation of Results**

Country: Sri Lanka

Dataset: Balance of Payments

Elements	NA	Assessments				Comments
		O	LO	LNO	NO	
Prerequisites of quality						
0.1 Legal and institutional environment		X				Processes foster quality, but use of an outside body to evaluate quality indicators may strengthen process.
0.2 Resources		X				
0.3 Quality awareness			X			
1. Integrity						
1.1 Professionalism		X				Advance notice is not given to the public of changes in the methodology.
1.2 Transparency			X			
1.3 Ethical standards		X				
2. Methodological soundness						
2.1 Concepts and definitions			X			Concepts and definitions are broadly in line with <i>BPM5</i> , but exceptions exist.
2.2 Scope			X			Coverage problems exists in ITRS, and in some services and income categories.
2.3 Classification/sectorization			X			Imports are classified on c.i.f. basis. Inadequate classification of goods. Financial account does not follow standard classification in <i>BPM5</i> .
2.4 Basis for recording			X			Some items are recorded on a cash basis.
3. Accuracy and Reliability						
3.1 Source data			X			Some activities are not captured (computer, non-cash, etc.)
3.2 Statistical techniques			X			No systematic estimation techniques to account for undercoverage and nonrespondent problems.
3.3 Assessment and validation			X			Surveys are not assessed for their adequacy.
3.4 Revision studies			X			Revision studies and analysis are not normally undertaken.
4. Serviceability						
4.1 Relevance		X				Variable errors and omissions in BOP. Revisions do not follow a regular and transparent schedule.
4.2 Timeliness and periodicity		X				
4.3 Consistency			X			
4.4 Revision policy and practice				X		
5. Accessibility						
5.1 Data accessibility			X			Data release date is unpredictable. Documentation is not publicly available. Contact person is not easily accessible to the public.
5.2 Metadata accessibility				X		
5.3 Assistance to users			X			

Note: NA= Not Applicable; O = Practice Observed; LO = Practice Largely Observed; LNO = Practice Largely Not Observed; NO = Practice Not Observed

IV. USERS' VIEWS

44. With the help of the IMF's Senior Resident Representative in Colombo, the mission organized a survey of data users, followed by a meeting with a cross-section of data users in Sri Lanka to ascertain their views on the relevance and usability of published macroeconomic statistics. About twenty five participants from banks, the stock market, rating agencies, academia, the financial press, and research institutions participated in the discussion at the CBSL. While users are generally satisfied with the broad range of statistics being disseminated by the CBSL (and to a smaller extent the DCS and MOF), they expressed several concerns with the coverage, timeliness, reliability, and accessibility of macroeconomic statistics. Many users were concerned about the lack of timeliness of the *Monthly Bulletin*, particularly the delays and uncertainties about its actual release date. Some delays result in the late release (2-3 months) of key data essential for market efficiency and performance, particularly affecting monetary and government finance statistics. Users also questioned the overall accuracy and reliability of the data in the absence of up-to date and pertinent metadata. In particular, many users called for comprehensive documentation on data sources and techniques to be made easily accessible.

45. An additional concern was their apparent inaccessibility to reports and/or personnel of compiling agencies. Users frequently had difficulty contacting appropriate personnel of CBSL to provide clarifications of data, as the Information Department of the CBSL could not provide prompt responses. Users also expressed concerns about the unreliability of data and, inconsistencies, and nontransparency within datasets such as national accounts, prices, fiscal and trade data. Further, users pointed to duplication of effort, with compiling agencies (CBSL and DCS) producing similar statistics (CPI) with sometimes different results. All participants strongly advocated the implementation of advance release calendars by the CBSL and DCS as a way of ensuring data timeliness and equal access by data users.

V. FUND STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

46. Based on the results of the data quality assessments and subsequent technical discussions with the Sri Lankan authorities in the respective statistical agencies, the mission proposes the following measures for their consideration to bring Sri Lanka's statistical practices into greater compliance with international guidelines and improve the usefulness of the data for users:

National accounts

- As an overriding step, clarify responsibility for compiling national accounts statistics.
- Develop plans for implementing the *1993 SNA*. Build into the plan the following:
 - Standard classification of individual consumption by purpose (COICOP).
 - Standard classification of the functions of government transactions (COFOG).
 - Consistent valuation and basic prices for valuing output and value added.

- Recognizing that source data development is a long-term undertaking, develop an action plan to strengthen existing statistics but with a view to implement the 1993 SNA. Key features could include:
 - Create a statistical business register covering private non-agriculture business establishments with information from the population census (2001).
 - Establish a system for the annual establishment surveys covered in the register.
 - Institutionalize quarterly surveys based on proper sampling methods.
 - Strengthen the capacity of the DCS to collect primary data.

- Strengthen statistical techniques including:
 - Improve methods for constant price estimates.
 - Calculate explicitly output and intermediate consumption.
 - Use proper benchmarking techniques to remove discrepancies between quarterly and annual national accounts.

- Implement in the near term dissemination policy changes that increase the transparency, serviceability, and accessibility of the national accounts data. Key among these changes are:
 - Publish, in consultation with users, more detailed quarterly GDP estimates.
 - Implement and publicize advance release calendars.
 - Prepare and publish detailed metadata on sources and methods.

Consumer price index

- As an overriding objective, rationalize the CPI program to remove the current duplication of effort resulting from multiple CPIs.
- Recognizing that user involvement could be an important force for innovation and change, set up regular meetings/seminars with users and/or undertake surveys to obtain user views on the CPI and ideas for its improvement.
- Develop medium-term plans to improve source data.
- Implement dissemination policy changes in the near-term such as publicizing an advance release calendar, and the production and publication of detailed metadata for the CPI.

Producer price index

- Recognizing that user involvement could be an important force for innovation and change, set up regular meetings/seminars with users and/or undertake surveys to obtain user views on the CPI and ideas for its improvement in the near term.

- Recognizing that the development of source data is a long-term undertaking, make plans to develop a new PPI, including current weights and a viable collection system.
- Implement dissemination policy changes such as publicizing an advance release calendar for the CPI, in line with the IMF's SDDS.
- Produce and publish detailed metadata for the PPI.

General government finance statistics

- As an overriding objective, make plans to implement an automated management and accounting system, recognizing its resource-intensive dimensions. Build into that plan:
 - Accurate and timely reports with cash and accrual data, including those for the new GFS methodology.
 - Complete compilation of balance sheets of government activities.
- Improve source data and statistical techniques for the existing statistics including:
 - Report separately data on residual calculations to allow observers and analysts to examine more transparent fiscal data.
 - Examine the 2000 survey of all local government activities, with a view to collecting and including these in the consolidated data on general government.
- Improve in the near term, the reported metadata on the concepts, definitions, and classification systems used in compiling government finance statistics.

Monetary statistics

- As an overriding objective, and taking into account the institutional and resource dimensions of the situation, develop plans for implementing fully the recommendations of the *MFSM*, including:
 - Review data collection systems with the view to obtaining, where needed, sufficient instrument and sectoral detail recommended in *MFSM*.
 - Review valuation procedures for consistency with the market or fair value basis.
- In the immediate term, establish a policy for providing advance notice to the public regarding near term methodological revisions.
- Improve source data and statistical techniques over the medium term including:
 - Review data collection procedures with a view to obtaining, where needed, sufficient instrument detail recommended in the *MFSM*.
 - Ascertain, in consultation with the Fund's Treasurer's Department, accounting procedures for the Fund accounts.

- Implement dissemination policy changes over the coming months to improve the transparency and serviceability of monetary statistics including:
 - Investigate and take the steps leading to the publication of Financial Survey on a regular monthly basis with a 4-week timeliness.
 - Expedite publication of updated methodological manual, discussing sources and methods employed in compiling monetary statistics.
 - Establish and publicize an advance release calendar.
 - Publicize the CBSL's program for assisting data users, including contact person.
- Establish an advisory body charged with reviewing the quality of monetary statistics.

Balance of payments statistics

- In the near term, strive to obtain consistency with the *BPM5* in the sectorization and classification of transactions for the current (e.g., imports f.o.b) and financial account.
- Recognizing that source data development is a long-term undertaking, develop a plan to strengthen and improve the current BOP statistics including:
 - Expand the coverage of BOP statistics to remedy inadequate coverage of services (e.g., construction, communications, and computers) and income (compensation of employees and reinvested income).
 - Compile the data template on International Reserves and Foreign Currency Liquidity.
 - Develop and compile the International Investment Position (IIP).
- Strengthen statistical techniques including:
 - Adopt procedures to remedy reporting weaknesses in the ITRS.
 - Improve the reconciliation of reported transactions data with changes in stocks of financial claims.
 - Supplement partial sample surveys with periodic benchmark surveys.
 - Use good estimation techniques to adjust for undercoverage and nonresponse.
- Implement dissemination policy changes to improve the transparency and serviceability of balance of payments statistics including:
 - Develop comprehensive metadata on BOP sources, concepts, and methods.
 - Develop an Advance Release Calendar (ARC) for the BOP statistics.

INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND

SRI LANKA

**Report on the Observance of Standards and Codes (ROSC)—Data Module
Response by the Authorities**

December 13, 2001

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I. REACTIONS FROM THE SRI LANKAN AUTHORITIES ON FUND STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

A Staff Mission from the IMF, which was in Sri Lanka from 7 June – 21 June 2001, has sent a revised version of the draft Report on the Observance of Standards and Codes (ROSC) for our comments. The report has identified weaknesses in number of areas where statistical practices can be improved. Comments were received from Statistics Department, Central Bank, and the Census and Statistics Department on National Accounts and Prices, while the Ministry of Finance submitted comments on Fiscal Statistics. The Economic Research Department, CBSL has prepared comments on Monetary Statistics and Balance of Payments. A summary based on these comments is given below.

A. National Accounts

National Accounts are compiled by the Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL) and by the Department of Census and Statistics (DCS). The comments for National Accounts by the CBSL and DCS are given below.

Responses to Staff Recommendations

Develop plans for implementing the 1993 SNA

- ***Standard classification of individual consumption by purpose***
- ***Standard classification of the functions of government transactions.***
- ***Consistent valuation and basic prices for valuing output and value added.***

Central Bank of Sri Lanka

- The CBSL had assessed the possibility of implementing the SNA 1993, subject to availability of the required resources. As a first step, the CBSL is currently engaged in converting its industry classification to suit the SNA 1993. In addition, the currently used classification for composition of private consumption expenditure is expected to be replaced by the standard classification of individual consumption by purpose (COICOP) as suggested by the Mission. The CBSL will prepare an implementation plan for other components of the SNA 1993.

Census and Statistics Department

- With regard to moving into SNA 93 for the preparation on national accounts, the DCS has indicated that it has a specific plan to implement 1993 SNA within five-year period. This programme has been prepared by the DCS for ESCAP. In addition to ISIC Rev. 2, for classification of economic activities, the COICOP, is now used for the Colombo Consumers' Price Index (CCPI) and classification of Private consumption and Classification of Functions of Government (COFOG) are already used to prepare Expenditure tables for government expenditure in National Accounts publication of DCS.

The DCS compiles both supply and use tables separately and those are included in its annual publication on National Accounts. With regard to the valuation, the adopted procedure for National Accounts is producers' prices in all production accounts to comply with 1968 SNA. The data collection and surveys are being designed and conducted with a view to obtaining producer prices from the respondents. As there are limitations in obtaining data in some sectors, particularly in informal agriculture, services and industry, these surveys and data collection are designed to get the most reliable data, keeping the accessibility to obtain required producers prices. In certain cases, re-designing questionnaires is needed to comply with the GST system.

Strengthen statistical techniques including:

- ***Improve methods for constant price estimates.***
- ***Use proper benchmarking techniques to remove discrepancies between quarterly and annual national accounts.***
- ***Calculate explicitly output and intermediate of consumption.***

Central Bank of Sri Lanka

- The CBSL agrees with the recommendation of the Mission on strengthening statistical techniques. The CBSL is currently concentrating on improving the methodology of computing both current and constant price estimates. As the first step, beginning 2001 the value addition of the commercial banking sector has been estimated with the output method, using the methodology suggested in the SNA 1993. This sector was chosen for this experimental estimation due to availability of the required data. It is expected to extend this exercise to the entire financial intermediation, real estate, other business services sector. Inadequacy of data however, will be a major obstacle in extending this exercise to other sub sectors in the financial sector. Value added of some sectors will also be estimated explicitly using output minus intermediate consumption approach. Extension to all sectors is not yet possible due to inadequacies of available data.

Census and Statistics Department

- Sri Lanka does not conduct regular establishment surveys. The establishment surveys consist mainly data for manufacturing industries and wholesale and retail trade. At present, DCS conducts regular annual surveys on manufacturing industries, another separate annual survey to capture construction activities. Therefore, input and output details can be obtained from those surveys even though those are not framed under one establishment survey. There are some issues with wholesale and retail trade data collection. At present, the Trade Division of DCS is in the process of developing a sampling frame for trade surveys. A more detailed listing based on recent Census of Population and Housing 2001 was done to include all economic activities in all the buildings and dwellings to get complete frame for all economic activities of the economy.

- The DCS has informal/ formal quality assessment programs with the surveys conducted and data collection. For example: in surveys, there are cross checks by which a sample of the collected perfected questionnaires are checked by another independent group; similar practices are there in most of the other data collection activities. (Post enumeration surveys/checks).

Implement in the near term dissemination policy changes that increase the transparency, serviceability, and accessibility of the national accounts data.

Key among these changes are:

- *Publish, in consultation with users, more detailed quarterly GDP estimates.*
- *Implement and publicise advance release calendars.*
- *Prepare and publish detailed metadata on sources and methods.*

Central Bank of Sri Lanka

- The CBSL expects to publish quarterly GDP estimates with a detailed sectoral breakdown shortly.
- A release calendar, although not published, is already implemented in line with the SDDS requirements. However, this can be publicised in the CBSL web site. Also, local users can be informed through the media.
- It is expected to publish the metadata on sources and methods once the relevant revisions to the current methodology are finalised.

Census and Statistics Department

- With regard to provision of information to data users, the DCS does provide notification of those changes in methodology, data source, statistical techniques and regulations in the relevant publications. User meetings are designed at the very beginning of the surveys before finalisation of data collection questionnaires and for National Accounts before redesigning its contents and for CPI before introducing/releasing of CPI.
- DCS has already made arrangements to compile quarterly national accounts estimates. This work was however delayed due to the Population Census conducted in 2001.

B. Consumer Price Index

Rationalise the CPI programme to remove the current duplication of effort resulting from multiple CPIs.

Observations by the CBSL and DCS

- At present, the Department of Census and Statistics, in collaboration with the Central Bank, is working on a project to construct an island-wide CPI with a wider demographic coverage using the COICOP classification for expenditure items before end 2001. Once it is finalized and accepted, it will replace all other multiple CPIs. With the introduction of the new CPI, steps are being taken to improve source data.
- The weights in the existing Colombo Consumers' Price Index (CCPI) have been updated at several stages to compensate for drastic changes that occurred in the economy. This was essentially needed to continue the CCPI by replacing its old and depleted consumer items in the market by similar items in the current market and by inter-changing certain essential weights to comply with expenditure surveys. The weights of a particular item that is not available in the market would be replaced with similar goods, assessing the importance of the new item in the consumption basket. However, the weight of the related subgroup would not be changed due to changes of an item within the subgroup. The CCPI, accordingly, reflects somewhat the current consumption pattern.

C. Producer Price Index

Recognising that the development of source data is a long-term undertaking, make plans to develop a new PPI, including current weights and a viable collection system.

- The Statistics Department of the CBSL expects to begin work in 2002 on the construction of a PPI that would incorporate recent structural changes in the economy.

D. General Government Finance Statistics

As an overriding objective, make plans to implement an automated management and accounting system, recognising its resource-intensive dimensions. Build into that plan:

- ***Derive accurate and timely reports with cash and accrual data, including those for the new GFS methodology.***
- Compile complete balance sheets of government activities

Implementation of a new system of automated budgetary management and accounting system is currently being studied. The scope of the new system is to upgrade the presently used Computerised Integrated Government Accounting System (CIGAS) to enable deriving accurate and timely reports.

Data reporting on accrual basis is under consideration.

Implementation of automated budgetary management and accounting system will facilitate compiling complete balance sheets of government activities.

Report separately data on residual calculations to allow observers and analysts to examine more transparent fiscal data.

Major components of residual calculations can be reported separately on an annual basis.

Examine the 2000 survey of all local government activities, with a view to collecting and including these in the consolidated data on general government.

Data on local government activities are not significant as compared to the operations of the central government as per survey of activities of the local government bodies conducted in 2000.

Improve in the near term, the reported metadata on the concepts, definitions, and classification systems used in compiling government finance statistics.

The above improvements can be undertaken in the near future taking into consideration the classification suggested in the GFS.

E. Monetary Sector

The mission has recommended that plans be developed for implementing fully the recommendations of the *MFSM*, including:

- **Review data collection systems with a view to obtaining, where needed, sufficient instrument and sectional detail recommended in *MFSM*.**
- **Review valuation procedures for consistency with the market or fair value basis.**

At present, information on all common types of instruments as indicated in Section 134 of *MFSM* are obtained, though this information is not made available in detail. Information on issuance facilities and securitised mortgage loans are not currently obtained, though these items may not be substantial. Accordingly, desegregate information on these variables could be obtained when revising data collection procedures. A revision of monthly data collection will be undertaken in early 2002.

For the purpose of providing a sectoral breakdown as suggested in the *MFSM*, by including information on financial institutions, non financial corporations, general government, house holds and non-profit institutions serving household, the CBSL need to amend the monthly assets and liabilities statement, to include a sectoral breakdown. This too could be undertaken simultaneously when revising the monthly data collection system.

With regard to valuation procedures, banks value their foreign exchange positions and securities on market value. However, there are some differences. This needs to be discussed with the banks and the Bank Supervision Department. The Central Bank has taken action to change the compilation of its accounts on fair value basis and this is to be implemented.

It is also proposed that a policy for providing advance notice to the public regarding near term methodological revisions be established.

Major data revision are always indicated in Central Bank publications. Major revisions are indicated as separate notes in the Annual Report and as foot notes in the Analytical Tables as soon as they are done. However, the proposal to provide an advance notice can be implemented for future changes.

For the purpose of improving source data and statistical techniques over the medium-term, it has been recommended that the Fund's Treasurer's Department be consulted regarding accounting procedures for the Fund accounts.

A letter will be sent to the Fund Treasurers Department requesting details on the implications of authorities account. Any revisions would then be carried out in consultation with the Banking Department.

The mission has also recommended implementing changes to data dissemination over the coming months to improve the transparency and serviceability of monetary statistics including :

- **Investigate and take the steps leading to the publication of Financial Survey on a regular basis with a 4-week timeliness.**
- **Expedite publication of updated methodological manual, discussing sources and methods employed in compiling monetary statistics.**
- **Establish and publicise an advance release calendar.**
- **Publicise the CBSL's programme for assisting data users, including contact person.**

Our recommendations on the above proposals are as follows:

Publication of Financial Survey on a regular basis with a 4-week timeliness

Annual figures on the Financial Survey are currently published, and publication of the monthly data will be started in 2002. There are on going discussions with banks and other financial institutions to speed up the process of obtaining data to reduce the existing time lag of 7-8 weeks. It is however strongly recommended that the provisional estimates should not be published prior to the receipt of data for the relevant period.

Publication of updated methodological manual

This is being finalised and could be published before June 2002.

Publication of advance release calendar

This too has been prepared and can be published by end 2001. Publication of the contact person can also be done along with the above.

With regard to reviewing the quality of monetary statistics, the CBSL would make necessary steps to establish a committee which could look into monetary statistics and other statistics as well.

F. Balance of payment statistics

The mission has proposed to strive to obtain consistency with the *BPM5* in the sectorisation and classification of transactions for the current (e.g. imports for f.o.b.) and financial account.

In the current account of the BOP standard presentation, concepts and definitions are in line with *BPM5* except for imports. To be consistent with *BMP5* format, imports should be reported on an fob basis. At present, imports are reported on a c.i.f. basis. In order to convert data to f.o.b. basis, a survey needs to be undertaken to estimate insurance and freight components in c.i.f. data.

In the financial accounts, components need to be reclassified according to the *BMP5*. The present format is a combination of *BMP5* and *BMP4* formats.

To expand the coverage in the service account, new surveys need to be carried out to capture sectors such information technology, communication and construction services. The recently undertaken survey on software exports indicated that export proceeds from software was still insignificant.

The compilation of International Investment Position (IIP) has been planned to be undertaken from the year 2002. In this regard, a comprehensive survey needs to be undertaken to measure the foreign assets and liabilities position of the private sector.

Strengthening statistical techniques including:

- **Adopt procedures to remedy reporting weaknesses in the International Transactions Reporting System (ITRS).**
- **Improve the reconciliation of reported transactions data with changes in stocks of financial claims.**
- **Supplement partial sample surveys with periodic benchmark surveys.**
- **Use good estimation techniques to adjust for undercoverage and nonresponse.**

The major weakness in the International Transactions Reporting System (ITRS) is the large volume of transactions reported under the 'other' category. New codes for different purposes could be introduced to minimise amounts reported under the other category.

INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND

SRI LANKA

Detailed Assessments Using the Data Quality Assessment Framework

Prepared by the Statistics Department

Approved by Carol S. Carson and Yusuke Horiguchi

December 13, 2001

This document contains a detailed assessment by dataset of the elements and indicators that underlie the data quality dimensions discussed in Section III of the data module; the generic framework used for the assessment of the quality of Sri Lanka's data (Appendix I), a letter from the Senior Resident Representative in Sri Lanka to Survey Participants (Appendix II), and a short questionnaire for Users of Sri Lanka's Economic Data (Appendix III).

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Detailed Assessments Using the Data Quality Assessment Framework

I. NATIONAL ACCOUNTS ESTIMATES (ANNUAL AND QUARTERLY)

0. Pre-requisites of quality

0.1 Legal and institutional environment—The environment is supportive of statistics.

0.1.1 The responsibility for collecting, processing, and disseminating statistics is clearly specified.

The CBSL and DCS independently prepare annual national accounts estimates. The quarterly GDP estimates are prepared by the CBSL only. The DCS's compilation includes GDP by activities and by expenditure categories at current and constant(1990) prices, consolidated accounts for the nation, partial accounts for the government and households, and components of gross value added. The CBSL compiles annual GDP by activity and expenditure categories at current and constant (1996) prices and quarterly GDP by activity at current and constant (1996) prices.

The CBSL operates under the Monetary Law Act (MLA), last amended in 1998. Sections 24A and 26 of the MLA respectively give authority to the Deputy Governor and to the Director of the Department of Economic Research to require any person (defined to include individuals, government departments, and corporate and unincorporated entities) to furnish information as necessary for the purpose of the proper discharge of the functions and responsibilities of the Central Bank.

The DCS produces and disseminates data under the Statistical Ordinance, last amended in 1955, and the Census Ordinance (1981). Section 2 of the Statistics Ordinance states that the Minister may, by Order published in the Gazette, apply the provisions of this Ordinance to any matter relating to the economic conditions of Sri Lanka. Section 5 gives authority to the Director to require information relating to any matter to which the Ordinance applies.

However, neither the MLA nor the Statistics Ordinance specifies the responsibility for producing national accounts. The DCS started compiling the national accounts in the early 1950s while the CBSL started to compile them in 1959 mainly due to the lack of the timeliness of the DCS estimates. The CBSL is required to produce its annual report within four months (Section 35 of the MLA). The CBSL has also been involved in primary data collection partly in the course of improving the national accounts and also to produce short-term indicators.

As a result, there are significant duplications in primary data collections and compilation of annual national accounts. The CBSL and DCS coordinate to reconcile the results of the two independent annual estimates. However, efforts to harmonize sources and methods seems to be minimal.

0.1.2 Data sharing and coordination among data producing agencies are adequate.

The CBSL and DCS both have arrangements with suppliers of data and maintain close contacts. As mentioned above, however, there are duplications of efforts as many similar data are obtained by both of the agencies independently.

0.1.3 Respondents' data are to be kept confidential and used for statistical purposes only.

Confidentiality of reporting to the CBSL is ensured under the MLA (section 45), and there have never been any known infringements of this responsibility. The CBSL "Handbook/Manual" (Section 36) covers imposition of penalties for non-compliance with staff conduct (including for disclosure of confidential data) up to the dismissal of employment. Computer systems are also tightly controlled with individual passwords only allowing access to relevant data.

Confidentiality of data reported to the DCS is guaranteed under the Statistical Ordinance. It requires that every person engaged in the collection and preparation of statistics must make a declaration in the prescribed form that he/she will not disclose or make use of any information supplied under this Ordinance. Staff of the DCS is subject to a maximum penalty of one year in jail and/or a 1,000 rupee fine if they disclose confidential data. Anyway, the DCS are not aware of any such breaches having taken place. Only authorized staff is allowed access to the computer installations and systems.

0.1.4 Statistical reporting is ensured through legal mandate and/or measures implemented to encourage voluntary response.

The MLA and Statistical Ordinance both require respondents to supply data on request. Section 122 (2A) of the MLA mentions imposition of a fine not exceeding 3000 rupees, or imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years, or both fines and imprisonment for non-compliance with the provisions of the MLA. Unfortunately, the Ordinance only imposes a fine for non-response of 50 rupees. However, both the CBSL and the DCS prefer to use persuasion rather than prosecution against non-respondents.

0.2 Resources—Resources are commensurate with needs of statistical programs.

0.2.1 Staff, financial, and computing resources are commensurate with institutional programs.

The CBSL has adequate, and well qualified, staff to undertake the existing national accounts program and believes that it could obtain additional resources, if required. A comprehensive internal training program has recently been created. Staff is also encouraged to attend international training courses and seminars. The incentive structure is very good compared to that of the civil service.

The DCS has no problem in recruiting the qualified staff it needs, but has difficulty in retaining staff because of the low rates of pay in the civil service. This means that there is a risk of not having sufficient staff with a real depth of knowledge of the national accounts system. Furthermore, the DCS recruitment policy is biased toward recruiting mathematicians rather than economists; this problem is now being addressed. The DCS national accounts staff have hardly attended international courses and seminars.

The resource allocation for both organizations is sufficient for current needs and could be increased if a justifiable expansion in the work program was made. However, the DCS's accommodation in Colombo is of particularly poor quality and widely dispersed, but it is expected to move into a new building in a few years time.

Both organizations have sufficient computer resources to meet their current needs. However, in the DCS they are centralized with few PCs in individual work areas.

0.2.2 Measures to ensure efficient use of resources are implemented.

Both agencies make efforts to harmonize data collections within their institutions. However, there are duplication in the data collection which is clearly not cost-effective.

0.3 Quality awareness—Quality is recognized as a cornerstone of statistical work.

0.3.1 Processes are in place to focus on quality, to monitor the quality of the collection, processing, and dissemination of statistics, to acknowledge and deal with tradeoffs within quality, and to guide planning for existing and emerging needs.

All managers in the CBSL are expected to take into account quality considerations in their activities. The newly implemented management training program addresses the need for quality awareness. In the DCS, quality awareness is encouraged by increasing the motivation of staff. This is achieved by making staff feel important and valued by giving them as much responsibility as possible. Also, some posts are being re-graded to improve the esteem of the staff.

There is no independent user or advisory council for either organization. The CBSL makes occasional requests for feedback to specific users while the DCS undertook a user survey two years ago.

New requirements were identified through the requests for feedback from users. However, for the CBSL, the policy departments are the main source of new requirements.

1. Integrity

The principle of objectivity in the collection, processing, and dissemination of statistics is firmly adhered to.

1.1 Professionalism—Professionalism in statistical policies and practices is a guiding principle.

1.1.1 Statistics are compiled on an impartial basis.

The CBSL and DCS are not subject to any interference from outside in the compilation of national accounts statistics. Neither the MLA nor the Statistical Ordinance explicitly guarantees the professional independence of the statistical activities of the CBSL or the DCS. However, in practice, both institutions compile national accounts independently without external influences.

1.1.2 Choices of sources and statistical techniques are informed solely by statistical considerations.

The compilers of the national accounts in both organizations are free to choose the most appropriate data sources and methods.

1.1.3 The appropriate statistical entity is entitled to comment on erroneous interpretation and misuse of statistics.

Both organizations comment on erroneous interpretation and misuse of the statistics whenever necessary.

1.2 Transparency—Statistical policies and practices are transparent.

1.2.1 The terms and conditions under which statistics are collected, processed, and disseminated are available to the public.

The terms and conditions under which data are produced and disseminated are contained in the MLA and the Statistical Ordinance, both of which have been published.

1.2.2 Internal governmental access to statistics prior to their release is publicly identified.

There is no pre-release access to the CBSL data by any other government agency. The DCS does not issue press releases, so there can be a delay between the finalization of data and its eventual publication. The DCS provides data to government users as soon as they are finalized, but will make them also available to non-government users on request. The public is not made aware of this fact.

1.2.3 Products of statistical agencies/units are clearly identified as such.

The CBSL and DCS are clearly identified on all of their own products. They also acknowledge when data come from other sources, but only as a footnote to the tables, but not for the specific series.

1.2.4 Advance notice is given of major changes in methodology, source data, and statistical techniques.

The CBSL and the DCS do not give advance notice of major changes in methodology as they cannot be precise about when the change will be implemented. Such changes are explained when data are released.

1.3 Ethical standards—Policies and practices are guided by ethical standards.

1.3.1 Guidelines for staff behavior are clear and publicized.

All of the CBSL's staff are governed by the code of conduct contained in the "Handbook/Manual". The DCS's training program for new staff covers the required ethical standards.

2. Methodological soundness

The methodological basis for the statistics follows international standards, guidelines, or agreed practices

2.1 Concepts and definitions—Concepts and definitions used are in accord with standard statistical frameworks

2.1.1 The overall structure in terms of concepts and definitions follows international standards, guidelines, or agreed practices: see data set specific framework

The national accounts compiled by both the CBSL and DCS are, in general, based on the *System of National Accounts 1968 (1968 SNA)*.

2.2 Scope—The scope is in accord with internationally accepted standards.

2.2.1 The scope is broadly consistent with international standards, guidelines, or agreed practices.

In principle, the delimitation of the constituent units is in accordance with the *1993 SNA*. In particular, the national accounts cover territorial enclaves and activities in the free zones.

The production boundary is generally based on the *1968 SNA*. Own-account production of agricultural goods for own final consumption is included. Output of goods for own-account fixed capital formation, particularly construction, is included to the extent they are captured through indirect methods. Expenses related to mineral exploration and production of literary

and artistic originals are not treated as output as these are *1993 SNA* concepts. Expenses on mineral exploration are in principle considered as intermediate consumption. Explicit calculation for illegal output is not made. In few cases, indirect methods might capture some illegal transactions. Informal activities are included in principle. However, their coverage is poor due to data problems. Non-profit institutions serving households are not covered.

The asset boundary follows the *1968 SNA* principles. Therefore, all defense related expenditures are treated as intermediate consumption, and hence government final consumption expenditure. Intangible assets are not identified. The CBSL uses work-in-progress concept for measuring crop production in the quarterly GDP estimates. However, crops are recorded at the time of harvest in the annual accounts.

2.3 Classification/sectorization—Classification and sectorization systems are in accord with internationally accepted standards

2.3.1 Classification/sectorization systems used are broadly consistent with international standards, guidelines, or agreed practices: see dataset-specific framework.

CBSL: A national classification of industrial activity, which is close to the International Standard Industrial Classification of all Activities, Rev. 2 (ISIC, Rev.2), is used. Other standard classifications, such as Classification of Individual Consumption by Purpose (COICOP) and Classification of the Functions of Government (COFOG) are not used. A different classification than the COICOP is used for compiling and publishing household consumption expenditures.

DCS: The transactions in the national accounts are in accordance with the classifications of the *1968 SNA*. The ISIC, Rev. 2 is followed for industrial classification. A classification of consumer goods and services of the *1968 SNA* is used for household consumption expenditures.

2.4 Basis for recording—Flows and stocks are valued and recorded according to internationally accepted standards

2.4.1 Market prices are used to value flows and stocks.

CBSL: No clear conceptual approach for valuation is followed and the basis for valuation in different activities differs. The published series on gross value added is denoted as factor cost values. Agricultural output, including production for own-use, is valued at producer prices. Manufacturing output is valued at ex-factory prices (excluding all taxes). Gross value added in many cases is derived from income approach based on business accounting data on wages and salaries, depreciation, and profits before taxes. The value added estimates for government services include only wages and salaries. Intermediate consumption, where calculated, is derived at purchasers' prices. Final uses follow purchasers' prices, and when needed, transport and trade margins are added to derive values at purchasers prices particularly when commodity flow techniques are used. No information is available on transfer prices. Imports are valued at c.i.f. and exports are valued at f.o.b. basis. International trade denominated in foreign currencies is converted to the national currency by the Custom

Authorities using weekly average selling exchange rates for the previous week (Monday – Friday) provided by the CBSL.

DCS: The gross value added series is derived at producer prices. Output estimates are prepared for all activities. Agricultural output is valued at producer prices. However, in other industries, it is not always clear whether GST (VAT) is excluded from the output values and deductible GST is excluded from intermediate consumption. For example, it is not clear whether the industrial surveys exclude GST from output and whether deductible GST is excluded from intermediate consumption, as the survey instructions that were prepared before the GST was introduced had not been revised. Inter- establishments transactions are valued at prices charged for similar products for sale outside the enterprise. Output for government services does not include consumption of fixed capital. Final uses follow purchaser prices. For international trade, same data as those used by the CBSL are used.

2.4.2 Recording is done on an accrual basis.

Government-related transactions are recorded on a cash basis. All other transactions are in principle recorded on an accrual basis. In some cases output estimates are based on export data, in which case output might not be recorded on an accrual basis. Annual estimates of both the CBSL and the DCS record crop production in the period of harvest. However, the CBSL's quarterly national accounts follow work-in-progress concept for crop production.

2.4.3 Grossing/netting procedures are broadly consistent with international standards, guidelines, or agreed practices.

Grossing/netting procedures are broadly consistent with the 1993 SNA.

3. Accuracy and reliability

Source data and statistical techniques are sound, and output data sufficiently portray reality.

3.1 Source data—Source data available provide an adequate basis to compile statistics.

3.1.1 Source data are collected from comprehensive data collection programs that take into account country-specific conditions.

- i. Are reliable sample frames used for conducting surveys of statistical units?

Sri Lanka does not have a statistical business register. Comprehensive benchmarks and a system for conducting regular annual establishment surveys are not in place.

CBSL: The sample frame for the industrial survey covering large and medium factory establishments is based on registration information and yellow pages. The CBSL also collects data for many services activities, for which no reliable sample frames exist. The sample frame for the CBSL's consumer finances and socio-economic survey is based on population census (the latest being 1981 and the current census is being conducted) together with "village list" compiled by the DCS.

DCS: The DCS conducts industrial surveys (from 1978), for which the sample frame was obtained from the population census (1981) list of activities updated for large establishments. The updating procedure is not satisfactory. A construction survey was introduced in 1993, for which the sample frame is derived from the list of contractors registered with the Institute for Construction Training and Development (ICTAD) and Provincial Councils. Population censuses and demographic survey of 1994 are used as sample frame for the five yearly household income and expenditure surveys, and quarterly household labor force survey respectively.

ii. Are annual business statistics collected through a regular establishment/enterprise survey program?

A regular system for collecting comprehensive annual business statistics does not exist.

Both CBSL and DCS use mostly similar sources for agriculture. For export crops and export processing, comprehensive data are available from relevant authorities. The DCS has a good annual survey for paddy production. The DCS also collects data on other crop and livestock production; however, they are based on outdated frames (1992 agricultural census, next census being planned for 2002) and on subjective estimates on changes on areas under cultivation and yield rates provided by DCS field workers. Cost of production surveys for agricultural products are conducted by the Ministry of Agriculture, but are not available on a timely basis.

The wholesale and retail trade and construction are covered through commodity flow techniques in both the CBSL and DCS estimates. In transportation, the organized sector is well covered by obtaining data directly from enterprises or regulatory authorities. Comprehensive data on organized mining and export processing industries (tea, rubber, coconut) are available from relevant authorities.

CBSL: The CBSL has an annual survey of factory manufacturing (defined to include establishments with 15 or more employees), for which an attempt is made to obtain a complete coverage. The CBSL also collects enterprise data for several business and personal services. These surveys focus mainly on large units, and samples are usually fixed. As there are no appropriate sample frames, the approach is to cover as many establishments as can be identified. These surveys are mostly used to measure changes rather than the levels of economic activities.

The CBSL and the DCS have their own data collection system for some activities as described below.

Mostly the CBSL surveys do not collect data on intermediate consumption. The industrial survey collects the quantity and value of production, which is recorded at ex-factory prices. Most other CBSL data collection obtains business accounting data on wages and salaries, depreciation, and profit before taxes, and thus can lead to a highly biased measure of gross value added.

DCS: The industrial and construction surveys of the DCS collect information on output as well as inputs. The DCS industrial survey data are often not used due to coverage problems. In such cases, the CBSL survey data are used. The construction survey data can only be used to derive ratios rather than the estimates. While obtaining data from enterprises directly or from regulatory authorities, the DCS requests information on both production/revenues and inputs.

iii. Are household surveys conducted on regular basis?

CBSL: The consumer finances and socio-economic survey conducted every five years (except for 1986/87) has a comprehensive coverage of geographic regions and socio-income groups. The latest survey was conducted for 1996/97, which excluded Northern and Eastern provinces due to security concerns. The survey uses proper sampling and estimation techniques. Data are collected on employment, incomes (including agricultural production for own consumption), consumption (both from purchases and own production), consumer durable goods, and valuables.

DCS: Both the household income and expenditure and labor force surveys use appropriate sampling methods. The Northern and Eastern provinces are excluded. The income and expenditure surveys include all variables similar to those covered in the CBSL's survey.

iv. Are periodic (two or more years) surveys/censuses conducted on a regular basis?¹

Except for the household surveys mentioned above and agricultural censuses of the DCS (conducted every ten years – latest being 1981/82), no other periodic censuses/surveys are conducted.

v. Are sub-annual (monthly/quarterly) data collected?

CBSL: The sources of quarterly indicators used for compiling quarterly value added estimates are described below. Except for crop production, industrial survey, and in cases of activities where a few large enterprises dominate, the data collection procedure is essentially ad hoc.

Agriculture: Quarterly data on quantity of production for tea, rubber, and coconut available from relevant authorities are considered to be comprehensive. The DCS agricultural surveys provide good data on paddy production, which are allocated to quarters on the basis of cost incurred. This source is also used for other food crops (see also 3.1.1). For sugarcane and tobacco, information on their purchases by processing factories is collected. Comprehensive quarterly data on livestock production are not available. Milk collection by large milk processing factories, number of chicks sold by breeders, production of eggs from Ministry of Livestock and Rural Development,

¹ This question is applicable to situations where annual censuses/surveys are not available and annual estimates are made by extrapolating benchmark data using indicators.

animal slaughter statistics obtained from large scale firms are used for covering animal husbandry. The Ministry of Fisheries collects data on fish production. Producer prices collected by the CBSL are mostly used for the valuation of production.

Mining and quarrying: Value of exports for gems and production values for other minerals obtained from large mining companies are used. No information is available on quarrying activity.

Manufacturing: Export processing industries are covered by obtaining information from large processing establishments. The CBSL conducts a monthly survey of factory manufacturing for compiling industrial production index. However, this index does not conform to international standards. Electricity sales to small industry is used for small scale manufacturing.

Electricity and water: Quarterly data (revenues and quantity) obtained from electricity companies and National Water Supply and Water Board are used.

Construction: Sales of main construction materials obtained from major producers of construction materials and imports of construction materials are used.

Wholesale and retail trade: Imports and exports values and volume indices and agricultural and industrial production are used as indicators.

Transport and communication: Information on physical indicators and wages and salaries, depreciation, and profits before taxes are collected from major enterprises providing these services.

Financial services: Information on wages and salaries, depreciation, and profits before taxes are collected from banking and insurance companies.

Government services: Base year value added estimates are based on wages and salaries of central and local government; government employment and CCPI are used as extrapolators for other years.

Private services: (including hotels and business services): For certain type of services (hotels, private schools, private health, etc.), quarterly data on wages and salaries, depreciation, and profits before taxes are collected from a sample of enterprises. In other cases, data on GST (VAT) are used.

vi. Are there provisions to conduct ad-hoc surveys?

The CBSL undertakes ad hoc surveys/studies occasionally. For example, it plans to conduct a survey of small businesses. The DCS focuses on regular programs and usually does not conduct ad hoc surveys.

3.1.2 Source data reasonably approximate the definitions, scope, classifications, valuation, and time of recording required.

The surveys that have established procedures (such as household surveys, industrial surveys) use concepts generally consistent with the requirements of national accounts. Some problems in valuation were noted earlier.

Most of the CBSL's data collections that are used solely for national accounts compilation (particularly in air, railway, and port transports, communication, hotels, and services) ask for business accounting information on wages and salaries, depreciation, and profits to estimate gross value added. These data do not conform to the national accounts definition of value added.

The reference period for national accounts (calendar year), and fiscal year used by most businesses differ. Efforts are made to collect data according to the calendar year. Collection of calendar year-based information may be feasible for data on production or certain costs, but would be difficult for profits.

3.1.3 Source data are timely.

The CBSL's annual and sub-annual data used for national accounts are timely. The DCS's annual data are usually timely. Periodic surveys are usually available with a significant lag.

Price statistics, international trade statistics, balance of payments, and data for central government are available on a timely basis and in sufficient detail.

3.2 Statistical techniques—Statistical techniques employed conform to sound statistical procedures.

3.2.1 Data compilation employs sound statistical techniques

Production approach

i. Are the output estimates compiled at a sufficient level of industrial detail?

CBSL: Output estimates for agriculture are prepared at a detailed product level by obtaining quantity of production from DCS and other sources and producer prices collected by the CBSL. For factory manufacturing, output is compiled at the total level. In other activities, estimates of output are not prepared for regular annual compilation.

For deriving GVA in the non-agricultural sector in the base year, and regular annual and quarterly compilation, about 45 activity groups are distinguished (mining and quarrying - 3, export manufacturing - 3, factory manufacturing - 1, small manufacturing -1, construction - 1, electricity and water - 2, transport and communication - 10, trade - 3, financial services - 3, dwelling services - 1, government services - 1, and about 16 other private services).

DCS: The output estimates for agriculture are prepared at a detailed product level by obtaining quantity of production from DCS and other sources; producer prices are collected by the DCS.

For deriving output estimates in the non-agricultural sector in the base year and regular annual compilation, about 63 activity groups are distinguished (mining and quarrying - 3, export manufacturing - 3, factory manufacturing - 9 two-digit ISIC, Rev. 2, small manufacturing -1, construction - 1, electricity and water - 2, transport and communication - 10, wholesale and retail trade and hotels - 7, financial services - 3, dwelling services - 1, government services - 8, and about 15 other private services).

ii. Are the estimates of intermediate consumption compiled at a sufficient level of detail?

CBSL: Estimates of intermediate consumption were calculated only for the base year (1996). For other years, separate estimates for intermediate consumption are not derived.

DCS: Similar breakdowns of activities like those used for output estimates are followed for derivation of intermediate consumption.

iii. In compiling GDP by activities like those used for output estimates are followed for derivation of intermediate consumption.

CBSL: The annual value added estimates for 1996 for most activities were derived using input/output ratios for that year (such as for agriculture based on cost of production surveys) or from studies conducted earlier. In several service activities, information on wages, depreciation, and profits are collected regularly (see also 2.4.1 and 3.1.1 on the appropriateness of valuation). In general, about 80 percent of total value added estimates at current prices are derived using fixed ratios from 1996 or earlier. The value added estimates for 1996 are carried forward using changes in values of output or related value indicators (or volume times price indicators) to derive value added at current prices.

The quarterly GDP estimates for 1996 were derived by distributing the 1996 gross value added, using indicators at a detailed level of classification used in the annual compilation (see 3.2.1.i for classification). Preliminary quarterly value added estimates at current prices are obtained by extrapolating the quarterly value added at current prices in the same quarter of the previous year, using changes in values of output or related value indicators (or volume times price indicators). These procedures assumes fixed ratios implied in the base year estimates (1996).

DCS: The annual compilation system makes explicit calculation for output, intermediate consumption, and gross value added. The DCS explained that, where possible, it uses current

information on inputs or latest available cost structure to derive value added estimates. In agriculture, organized mining, export processing, and factory manufacturing, the value added estimates are derived either by using current information or fixed ratios from the most recent period (usually less than five years). For construction, annual surveys are used to obtain input-output ratios. In activities where few producers dominate (such as electricity, water, organized transport and communication), current information is collected. The estimates for wholesale and retail trade and most private services are based on fixed ratios that are older than five years. On average, about 50 percent of total value added may have been estimated on the basis of current information or fixed ratios that are less than 5 years old.

iv. Are proper techniques used to address specific issues of GDP compilation?

CBSL

Owner-occupied dwellings: Output for 1996 is valued on the basis of the CBSL's consumer finances and socio-economic survey (1996/97), which uses market rent for imputing rent for owner-occupied dwellings. The estimates for other years are extrapolated using population growth rates and overall CCPI.

Work-in progress: Annual estimates record crop production at the time of harvest. However, work-in-progress is calculated for crop production in the quarterly estimates.

Inventory valuation adjustment: Data on inventories are not used. Output values used to extrapolate base year GVA at current prices are based on data on quantity of production and prices.

Consumption of fixed capital: For several service activities, information on business accounting depreciation is used.

Cash versus accrual: Government operations data compiled on a cash basis are used.

DCS

Owner-occupied dwellings: DCS income and expenditure surveys, which use market rent for imputing rent for owner-occupied dwellings are the basis for output estimates. Household growth rates and rental component of the CCPI are used for other years.

Work-in progress: Work-in-progress is not calculated.

Inventory valuation adjustment: The output from the DCS's industrial survey is based on sales and changes in inventories, but are not adjusted for holding gains/losses.

Consumption of fixed capital: Information from business accounting depreciation is used.

Cash versus accrual: Government operations data compiled on a cash basis are used.

v. Are proper procedures followed for compiling volume measures of GDP according to the production approach?

CBSL

The volume measures for GDP are calculated using a fixed base year (currently 1996). There are no policy for changing the base year (the previous base years being 1959, 1970, and 1982). A single indicator method, involving either extrapolation by a volume index/data or deflation of value added by producer or consumer prices, is followed to calculate GVA at constant prices. The GDP at constant market prices is not calculated. Only total GVA at constant prices is calculated. Taxes less subsidies at constant prices are not estimated. The procedures used in the compilation of GVA at constant prices are as follows:

Agriculture: Changes in quantities of production for each type of product are used to extrapolate the GVA of base year. For export crops, export volume index for minor export crops is used, while for forestry the population growth rate is applied. In the quarterly estimates, similar procedures are followed except that the GVA for paddy and other food crops are deflated by producer prices for each crop collected by the CBSL. The same quantities data are used for deriving current and constant measures.

Mining and quarrying: Export volume index for gems and quantity of production obtained from large companies for other minerals are used. Growth rates in the construction value added at constant prices are used to extrapolate GVA of quarrying.

Manufacturing: GVA by export processing, factory manufacturing, and small industry is extrapolated by production of plantation crops, production index for factory manufacturing compiled by the CBSL, and units of electricity sold to the small industry respectively. Similar approach is used for quarterly estimates. The data for export processing is considered comprehensive.

Electricity and water: In both annual and quarterly estimates, GVA is deflated by price indices of electricity and water constructed specifically for this purpose, based on rates for different uses.

Construction: Current GVA is deflated by a price index for major construction materials collected by the CBSL both in the annual and quarterly compilation.

Wholesale and retail trade: Three categories are distinguished: imports, exports, and domestic trade in locally produced goods. Import volume index and export volume index respectively are used to extrapolate GVA originating from trades serving imports and exports. The GVA in the domestic trade of local goods is deflated by the overall CCPI. A similar approach is followed in the quarterly estimates.

Transport and communication: For most transport activities, volume indicators (passenger kilometers and cargo handled) are obtained annually and quarterly. Annual and quarterly GVA for telecommunication and postal services are deflated by the overall CDCPI.

Financial services: Current GVA is deflated by the overall CCPI in both annual and quarterly compilation.

Government services: The GVA for 1996 is extrapolated by the employment in government sector in both annual and quarterly estimates.

Private services (including hotels and business services): Current GVA is deflated by the overall CDCPI.

DCS

The volume measures for GDP are calculated using a fixed base year (currently 1990). There is no policy for changing the base year. A single indicator method, involving either extrapolation by a volume index/data or deflation of value added, is follow to calculate GVA at constant prices. The procedures used in the compilation of GVA at constant prices are as follows:

Agriculture: Changes in quantities of production for each type of product are used to extrapolate the GVA of base year. For export crops, the export volume index for minor export crops is used.

Mining and quarrying: Export volume index and quantity of production obtained from large companies for other minerals are used.

Manufacturing: GVA of the export processing manufacturing is extrapolated by the quantity of production. The GVA in factory manufacturing and small industry are deflated by relevant components of CCPI.

Electricity and water: Quantity of electricity supplied through national grid and volume of water supplied are used as extrapolators.

Construction: Current GVA is deflated by a cost of construction index compiled by the ICTAD.

Wholesale and retail trade and hotels: For trade in exports, exports of volume indices of relevant major items, such as tea and rubber are used to extrapolate the base year GVA. GVA in trade for all other goods are deflated using components of wholesale prices. GVA in hotels is deflated by a sub-component of the CCPI.

Transport and communication: In some cases, quantity indicators are used to extrapolate GVA of the base year. GVA in private bus transport is deflated by wholesale prices for petroleum products. In telecommunication and postal services, GVA is deflated by the minimum wage rate index for government employees.

Financial services: Current GVA is deflated by the overall CCPI.

Government services: The GVA for the base year is extrapolated by the employment in government sector.

Private services: Current GVA is deflated by the overall CCPI.

Import duties: Base year values are extrapolated by the import volume index.

Expenditure approach

i. Are the GDP estimates by expenditure components derived independently?

CBSL: GDP estimates by expenditure categories at current prices are compiled independently.

DCS: The total household consumption expenditures are determined as a residual. Estimates for household consumption by a detailed product breakdown are also compiled using commodity flow techniques.

ii. What is the level of detail for which the GDP estimates are compiled?

CBSL: Household consumption expenditures are calculated through a commodity flow approach for imported consumer goods and domestic supply of consumer goods. Consumption of services are calculated for the base year on the basis of the CBSL's consumer finances and socio-economic surveys; for other years the base year values are extrapolated using population growth rates and overall CCPI.

Government consumption is prepared at the total level only as the sum of current expenditure on goods and services and wages and salaries.

Gross fixed capital formation is estimated by broad type of assets using commodity flow methods. Government gross fixed capital formation is obtained from government budgets. The gross fixed capital formation for the rest of the economy is derived as a residual. The breakdown by type of assets for the rest of economy is based on ad hoc assumptions. Changes in inventories include only a few agricultural and mineral products.

DCS: Although household consumption is calculated by about 40 groups of products using commodity flow methods, the total is determined as a residual.

Government consumption expenditures are calculated by 8 broad groups of COFOG, as a sum of current expenses on goods and services and wages and salaries.

Gross fixed capital formation is estimated by broad type of assets using commodity flow methods. These estimates are classified also by government and other sectors, using available data on government purchases and building permits and deriving some items as a residual. Changes in inventories include manufacturing industry and agricultural products.

iii. In compiling GDP by expenditure components, what is the degree of reliance on fixed ratios derived from benchmarks or other sources that are more than 5 years old?

Household consumption and gross fixed capital formation estimated by both the CBSL and DCS are derived using commodity flow techniques. The input data for these estimates in many cases are also derived using commodity flow techniques and outdated fixed ratios. No explicit estimates are made for consumption of non-profit institutions serving households.

iv. Are proper techniques used to address specific issues of GDP compilation?

The derivation of government final expenditure does not exclude receipts from the incidental sales of government non-market services. Expenses of residents abroad are included in household final consumption expenditure. Expenditures on jewelry are included in the estimates of household consumption.

v. Are adequate procedures followed to compile volume measures of the expenditure components of GDP?

CBSL: The GDP by expenditures at constant prices is not calculated independently, but by applying growth rates of total value added at constant prices. Household consumption expenditures at constant prices are derived as a residual.

DCS: Detailed components of household consumption expenditures (the total is determined as a residual) are deflated by relevant components of the CCPI. Gross fixed capital formation is deflated by type, using cost of construction index and wholesale prices. Number of employment is used to extrapolate base-year government consumption. Export and import volume indices are used for exports and imports. Changes in inventories are deflated by overall CCPI.

3.2.2 Other statistical procedures (e.g., data adjustments and transformations, and statistical analysis) employ sound statistical techniques.

There is no official information on the size of the economy not covered by the national accounts compilation. However, the national accounts are believed to exclude small scale activities. Indirect compilation techniques are used to capture many activities. The indirect indicators are mostly derived from ad hoc sample frames. There are no proper benchmarks for most of the activities.

The DCS is conducting a population census in 2001, which collects information on production units. This information can and should be used to create a statistical business register, and an appropriate procedure should be developed for updating it. Based on the business register, a comprehensive census or survey of business establishments should be conducted to provide a benchmark estimate for national accounts. At the same time, a regular annual survey of business establishments should be institutionalized. Quarterly surveys should be linked to the annual surveys. Coverage for small businesses and informal activities can be achieved using labor force surveys, data from the population census, household income and expenditure surveys, and small ad hoc studies to fill data gaps.

3.3 Assessment and validation—Source data are regularly assessed and results validated.²

3.3.1 Source data—including censuses, sample surveys and administrative records—are routinely assessed, e.g., for coverage, sample error, response error, and non-sampling error; the results of the assessments are monitored and made available to guide planning.

i. Is information available for sampling errors, non-sampling errors and non-response of the surveys/censuses?³

Household income and expenditure surveys, particularly the CBSL's consumer finances and socio-economic surveys, provide detailed analysis of errors and response rates. Other surveys do not include such information.

ii. In compiling GDP estimates by activities, what is the degree of reliance on the source data obtained from surveys/censuses or appropriate administrative records?

Data obtained from appropriate administrative sources and surveys cover less than 50 percent of output estimates. The CBSL's national accounts do not calculate intermediate consumption. In the DCS's national accounts, although intermediate consumption are calculated, very few sources are adequate (mainly information obtained from large producers). In other cases, ratios are used, and wherever possible, attempts are made to use the latest available data.

iii. In compiling GDP estimates by expenditure components, what is the degree of reliance on the source data obtained from surveys/censuses or appropriate administrative records?

As mentioned above, both household consumption and fixed capital formation are derived using commodity flow techniques. The capital formation in construction is particularly weak. Even when commodity supply data are reasonably good (such as imported consumer items), the adjustments for trade and transport margins are not satisfactory, which may cause biases in the consumption estimates or capital formation (such as machineries).

² As footnote 25.

³ Ideally, this would apply to surveys mentioned in 3.1.1.ii.

iv. Are appropriate measures taken to validate the source data and make them consistent with national accounts?

Source data are cross-checked with other indicators. In general, source data are adjusted to make them consistent with national accounts (such as adjustments for trade and transport margins to calculate consumption expenditures from imports).

3.3.2 Main intermediate results are validated against other information where applicable

Wherever possible, estimates are validated and checked with other sources. Particularly, plausibility of growth rates are routinely checked.

3.3.3 Statistical discrepancies and other potential indicators of problems in statistical outputs are investigated and made available to guide users

The CBSL does not derive GDP at market prices from the production approach (only at factor cost). However, independent estimates are shown for GDP by production and expenditure approaches and a statistical discrepancy is shown in a table comparing resources and uses of GDP. Potential discrepancies are analyzed to improve the estimates as a part of the compilation process.

The DCS does not show statistical discrepancy, but adjusts household consumption expenditure.

3.4 Revisions—as a gauge of reliability, are tracked and mined for the information they may provide.

3.4.1 Studies and analyses of revisions are carried out routinely and used to inform statistical processes.

Data are usually revised once after they have been released as preliminary estimates. If required, further revisions may be introduced. The revision cycle is reasonably consistent over time.

The CBSL's national accounts data release and revisions dates are coordinated with the availability of major data sources, and guided by the requirement of producing its annual reports.

The DCS also compiles the preliminary estimates at the same time as the preliminary estimates of the CBSL, so that both estimates can be discussed and reconciled with each other, particularly with regard to overall growth rates.

3.4.2 Revision studies and analyses are made public and used to guide data users.

Analysis of revisions is not available. Usually, such analysis is made as a part of the compilation process only.

4. Serviceability

Statistics are relevant, timely, consistent, and follow a predictable revisions policy.

4.1 Relevance—Statistics cover relevant information on the subject field.⁴

4.1.1 Processes to monitor the relevance and practical utility of existing statistics in meeting users' needs are in place.

There is a public meeting open to all users at the time of the CBSL annual publication in April. Users are free to ask questions at this meeting, but these are invariably focused on the actual numbers rather than users' needs from the statistics.

The DCS organized a users' meeting in 1990, but only informal contacts have taken place since then.

4.2 Timeliness and periodicity—Timeliness and periodicity follow internationally accepted dissemination standards.

4.2.1 Periodicity follows dissemination standards.

The CBSL publishes annual estimates of GDP from both the production and expenditure approaches; quarterly estimates are also released, but only for the production approach.

The DCS publishes annual estimates from production and expenditure approaches, and figures for the first half of the year. A breakdown of the components of GVA is also prepared.

4.2.2 Timeliness follows dissemination standards

The CBSL's quarterly GDP estimates are published within three months of the end of the reference quarter – conforming to SDDS standards. The annual GDP estimates are first published within four months after the end of the year.

The DCS publishes its annual estimates at the end of April, or early in May of the following year. The figures for the first half of the year are released at the end of August of that year, to fit in with the budget preparation by the MOFP.

4.3 Consistency—Statistics are consistent over time, internally, and with major data systems.

4.3.1 Statistics are consistent or reconcilable over a reasonable period of time.

⁴ Relevance reflects the degree to which the program addresses the issues of most concern to the users.

For the CBSL the time series are usually consistent over time, but occasional breaks are introduced when major changes in methodology cannot be easily carried back. The latest such break took place between 1995 and 1996, but prior to that the figures are consistent back to 1982. Such breaks are clearly identified in the publications; in fact the latest annual publication only shows the estimates from 1996. A commentary is provided with the quarterly figures which would explain any unusual movements. Analyzing structural ratios is not really possible given the limited datasets produced by the CBSL. As both output and intermediate consumption are not estimated, input/output ratios and value added/output ratios can not be evaluated for accuracy. Many of structural ratios are fixed.

The DCS occasionally have breaks in their time series, the last being in 1976. However, they supply linking factors which allow users to adjust the previous figures onto the new basis. As far as possible, ratios are monitored over time to maintain consistency.

4.3.2 Statistics are internally consistent (e.g., accounting identities observed).

i. Are the annual accounts internally consistent?

For the CBSL, there is a statistical discrepancy between GDP from the production and expenditure approaches, which is published. Supply and use tables are not produced, but the CBSL does review the differences between the production and expenditure figures. They resolve any large differences to get the statistical discrepancy down to 2-3 percent of GDP. No other reconciliation is possible due to the limited data available to the CBSL. The DCS does not have a statistical discrepancy since total GDP from the expenditure approach is made equal to that from the production figures. The total for household consumption expenditures are constrained to the GDP derived from the production approach.

ii. Are the quarterly estimates of GDP consistent with the annual estimates?

The quarterly estimates produced by the CBSL are made consistent with their annual estimates by simple prorating of the differences between the sum of quarters and annual estimates.

The DCS does not produce quarterly estimates; figures for the second half of the year are derived by subtracting the values for the first half from the annual total.

4.3.3 Statistics are consistent or reconcilable with those obtained through other data sources and/or statistical frameworks.

The CBSL and the DCS use the data on trade and services from the balance of payments.

4.4 Revision policy and practice—Data revisions follow a regular and publicized procedure.

4.4.1 Revisions follow a regular, well-established and transparent schedule.

For both the CBSL and the DCS, the revision practice is reasonably consistent from year to year. However, no advance information is given of expected release dates.

The CBSL produces the quarterly estimates as soon as possible after receipt of the source data. Normally revisions to the figure for a particular quarter takes place at the time of publication of the same quarter of the following year, and when annual estimates are prepared. The annual GDP figures have to be produced in time for inclusion in the CBSL annual publication published in April of the following year.

The DCS produces its annual estimates as soon as possible after the end of the year. Revisions to the production figures are only made in the following year when revised data are collected through the industry survey. The only other possible revisions are to the international trade data which are incorporated into the accounts whenever they occur, leading to counter-adjustments to other expenditure components.

4.4.2 Preliminary data are clearly identified.

Preliminary data are identified in the publications of both the CBSL and DCS, by flagging the set of figures for the relevant time period. Revised figures are not identified.

4.4.3 Studies and analyses of revisions are carried out routinely and made public.

Changes in the estimates due to revisions are routinely examined as a internal process of compilation. Neither the CBSL nor the DCS publish any general documentation on revisions, but major changes are explained.

5. Accessibility

Data and metadata are easily available and assistance to users is adequate.

5.1 Data accessibility—Statistics are presented in a clear and understandable manner, forms of dissemination are adequate, and statistics are made available on an impartial basis.

5.1.1 Statistics are presented in a way that facilitates proper interpretation and meaningful comparisons (layout and clarity of text, tables, and charts).

For the CBSL, the annual GDP figures are published at the most detailed level appropriate to the quality of the data. However, the quarterly GDP estimates are published only by five major industrial activities.

The DCS publishes fairly detailed breakdowns as time series.

5.1.2 Dissemination media and formats are adequate.

The CBSL produces a dedicated quarterly press release for the GDP estimates and these figures are also included on its website. The figures are also incorporated in the CBSL's annual and half-yearly economic publications.

The DCS publishes its annual estimates in a dedicated national accounts publication, and no press releases are produced.

5.1.3 Statistics are released on a pre-announced schedule.

Neither the CBSL nor the DCS publish an advance release calendar, but release dates do not vary much from year to year.

5.1.4 Statistics are made available to all users at the same time.

The CBSL releases all data simultaneously to all users. The DCS provides the finalized data to government users as soon as they are ready. It also supplies the data to other users on request. However, the publication on national accounts comes out with some delay.

5.1.5 Non-published (but non-confidential) sub-aggregates are made available upon request.

The CBSL never supplies unpublished data to users because of concerns about the quality of such figures. The DCS will supply additional non-confidential breakdowns on request.

5.2 Metadata accessibility—Up-to-date and pertinent metadata are made available.

5.2.1 Documentation on concepts, scope, classifications, basis of recording, data sources, and statistical techniques is available, and differences from international standards are annotated.

Both the CBSL and DCS do not publish documentation on sources and methods.

5.2.2 Different levels of detail are provided depending on intended audience and type of collection.

Both the CBSL and DCS do not publish documentation on sources and methods.

5.3 Assistance to users—Prompt and knowledgeable support service is available

5.3.1 Contact person for each subject field is publicized.

The CBSL has a central contact point. A specific contact point for national accounts is not actively publicized, but regular users get to know the phone number. The DCS does not publicize any contact phone numbers; users are left to obtain their number from the telephone directory.

5.3.2 Catalogues of publications, documents, and other services, including information on any charges, are widely available.

The CBSL publishes a catalog of their publications, including prices. The DCS includes such a catalog in its publications.

II. CONSUMER PRICE INDEX

0. Pre-requisites of quality

0.1 Legal and institutional environment—The environment is supportive of statistics.

0.1.1 The responsibility for collecting, processing, and disseminating statistics is clearly specified.

The DCS produces and disseminates data under the Statistical Ordinance (Ordinance), last amended in 1955. An Order was issued under this Ordinance specifically requiring the DCS to produce both the CCPI and the GCPI. The Monetary Law Act (MLA), Section 35, requires the CBSL to present (but not necessarily produce), as a minimum, a monthly index of the cost of living. So, the DCS clearly has the primary role in compiling CPI estimates. However, the CBSL feels that the Act also gives it the right to produce its own CPI.

0.1.2 Data sharing and coordination among data producing agencies are adequate.

This is not relevant since both the DCS and the CBSL are totally self-sufficient when it comes to the compilation of the various versions of the CPI. This means that each agency not only collects its own data on price movements, but also the expenditure data used to construct the weights.

0.1.3 Respondents' data are to be kept confidential and used for statistical purposes only.

Confidentiality of data reported to the DCS is guaranteed under the Ordinance. It requires that every person engaged in the collection and preparation of statistics must make a declaration in the prescribed form that he will not disclose or make use of any information supplied under this Ordinance. Staff of the DCS is subject to a maximum penalty of one year in jail and/or a 1,000 rupee fine if they disclose confidential data. Anyway, the DCS is not aware of any such breaches having taken place. Only authorized staff is allowed access to the computer installation and systems.

Confidentiality of reporting to the CBSL is ensured under the MLA and there have never been any known infringements of this responsibility. Computer systems are also tightly controlled with individual passwords only allowing access to relevant data.

Both the DCS and the CBSL make clear statements on all survey forms that the data will only be used for statistical purposes and will be kept confidential.

Both the DCS and CBSL have established rules to ensure that none of their disseminated data is disclosed. The DCS accommodation is not very secure, but completed forms are kept as

safe as possible and no losses have ever been reported. Documents due for destruction are shredded before they leave the DCS's control. The CBSL has a very secure site and completed forms are tightly controlled with access restricted to authorized personnel. There are also strict rules for the disposal of documents.

0.1.4 Statistical reporting is ensured through legal mandate and/or measures implemented to encourage voluntary response.

The Ordinance and the MLA both require respondents to supply data on request. Unfortunately, the Ordinance only imposes a fine for non-response of 50 rupees. However, both the DCS and the CBSL prefer to use persuasion rather than prosecution against non-respondents.

0.2 Resources—Resources are commensurate with needs of statistical programs.

0.2.1 Staff, financial, and computing resources are commensurate with institutional programs.

The DCS has no problem in recruiting the qualified staff it needs, but has difficulty in retaining staff because of the low rates of pay in the civil service. This means that there is a risk of not having sufficient staff with a real depth of knowledge of the CPI system, but this is not a problem at present. The DCS undertakes basic internal training of its staff, including those engaged in data collection. Staff is encouraged to attend international courses and seminars, but the CBSL seems to be more successful in gaining places.

The CBSL has adequate, and well qualified, staff to undertake the existing PPI program and believes that it could obtain additional resources, if required. A comprehensive internal training program has recently been created. Staff is also encouraged to attend international training courses and seminars. The incentive structure is very good compared to that of the civil service. On the other hand, there is concern that the expanding commercial sector may be prepared to offer better remuneration packages to experienced staff.

The resource allocation for both organizations is sufficient for current needs and could be increased if a justifiable expansion in the work program was made. However, the DCS's accommodation in Colombo is of particularly poor quality and widely disbursed, but it is hoped to move into a new building in a few years time.

Both organizations have sufficient computer resources to meet their current needs. However, in the DCS they are centralized with few PCs in individual work areas, restricting analysis.

0.2.2 Measures to ensure efficient use of resources are implemented.

In the DCS, each work area is given a specific budget within which it must work. In the CBSL, self-contained systems such as the PPI are given their own budgets, allowing close monitoring of costs. The fact that both agencies produce different versions of the CPI, and each is planning additional versions, is clearly not cost-effective. Additionally, they both operate separate household expenditure surveys to generate the weights for their CPIs.

0.3 Quality awareness—Quality is recognized as a cornerstone of statistical work.

0.3.1 Processes are in place to focus on quality, to monitor the quality of the collection, processing, and dissemination of statistics, to acknowledge and deal with tradeoffs within quality, and to guide planning for existing and emerging needs.

In the DCS quality awareness is encouraged by increasing the motivation of staff. This is achieved by making staff feel important and valued by giving them as much responsibility as possible. Also, some posts are being re-graded to improve the esteem of the staff. All managers in the CBSL are expected to apply quality considerations to the activities of their workgroups. The newly implemented management training program addresses the need for quality awareness.

There is no independent user or advisory council for either organization. The DCS undertook a user survey two years ago while the CBSL makes occasional requests for feedback to specific users.

New requirements were identified through the requests for feedback from users. However, for the CBSL the policy departments are the main source of new requirements.

1. Integrity—The principle of objectivity in the collection, processing, and dissemination of statistics is firmly adhered to.

1.1 Professionalism—Professionalism in statistical policies and practices is a guiding principle.

1.1.1 Statistics are compiled on an impartial basis.

The DCS is not free to compile the official CCPI on an impartial basis because all attempts to update the weights for the CCPI have been overruled by other agencies. The CBSL is not subject to any interference from outside in the compilation of price statistics.

Neither the Ordinance nor the MLA guarantees the professional independence of the statistical activities of the DCS or the CBSL.

The DCS encourages staff to attend conferences and meetings. The management of the CBSL encourages the publication of methodological papers, but this rarely happens because of other commitments.

1.1.2 Choices of sources and statistical techniques are informed solely by statistical considerations.

The compilers of the CPI in both organizations are free to choose the most appropriate data sources.

1.1.3 The appropriate statistical entity is entitled to comment on erroneous interpretation and misuse of statistics.

Both organizations comment on erroneous interpretation and misuse of the statistics whenever necessary.

1.2 Transparency—Statistical policies and practices are transparent.

1.2.1 The terms and conditions under which statistics are collected, processed, and disseminated are available to the public.

The terms and conditions under which data are produced and disseminated are contained in the Ordinance and the MLA, which have both been published.

1.2.2 Internal governmental access to statistics prior to their release is publicly identified.

There is no pre-release access to other government agencies for the CPIs produced by the DCS or the CBSL.

1.2.3 Products of statistical agencies/units are clearly identified as such.

The DCS and CBSL are clearly identified on all of their own products. The CBSL also acknowledges when data comes from other sources, but only as a footnote to the tables, not for the specific series.

1.2.4 Advance notice is given of major changes in methodology, source data, and statistical techniques.

The DCS will discuss forthcoming methodological changes with government users, but not those in the private sector. The CBSL does not give advance notice of major changes in methodology as it cannot be precise about when the change will be implemented. However, when introducing such a change, it publishes the old and new versions to allow users to see its impact.

1.3 Ethical standards—Policies and practices are guided by ethical standards.

1.3.1 Guidelines for staff behavior are clear and publicized.

The DCS's training program for new staff covers the required ethical standards. All of the CBSL's staff is governed by the code of conduct contained in the "Handbook".

The staff of both organizations is aware of their responsibilities and no breaches are known to have occurred.

2. Methodological soundness—The methodological basis for the statistics follows international standards, guidelines, or agreed practices

2.1 Concepts and definitions—Concepts and definitions used are in accord with standard statistical frameworks

2.1.1 The overall structure in terms of concepts and definitions follows international standards, guidelines, or agreed practices: see dataset-specific framework

The CCPI produced by the DCS incorporates weights derived from the DCS's Family Budget Survey (FBS) conducted in 1949/50. Clearly, the concepts and definitions underlying the FBS do not conform to current international standards. However, the FBS did collect data on purchases for consumption and production for own final use, but excluding purchases for production. The concepts and definitions of the 1985/86 Labor Force and Socio-Economic Survey (LFSES), used to derive the weights for the Greater Colombo CPI (GCPI), followed those of the 1949/50 FBS.

The staff of the CBSL followed the concepts and definitions of the DCS's CCPI when setting up the CD-CPI.

2.2 Scope —The scope is in accord with internationally accepted standards.

2.2.1 The scope is broadly consistent with international standards, guidelines, or agreed practices.

i. Is the delimitation of the constituent units of the economy in accordance with the 1993 SNA?

The CCPI only covers the city of Colombo while the GCPI additionally covers the suburbs of Colombo. All sizes and types of household are covered in the DCS's FBS and LFSES, on which the weights for the two CPIs are based, including the personal consumption of household producers. Only households whose income is in the lowest 52 and 40 percent of the reference population are covered in the CCPI and GCPI, respectively. The DCS is working on the design of a new CPI covering the whole of Sri Lanka. Additionally, they will produce a sub-index conforming to the coverage of the GCPI.

The CD-CPI covers the district of Colombo, which includes Colombo city and some surrounding rural areas. All sizes and types of household are covered in the CBSL's Consumer Finance Survey, on which the weights for the CD-CPI are based, including the personal consumption of household producers. Only households whose income is in the lowest 40 percent of the reference population are covered. The CBSL regional offices in Matara, Anuradhapura and Matale have also developed CPIs for those regions, but these have not been published because of concerns over quality.

ii. Are there differences in the scope of coverage between the CPI and the household sector in the 1993 SNA and are the differences known by users?

The weights used for each of the CPI's produced by the DCS and the CBSL are basically the same. They represent all consumption purchases of market goods, and also incorporate own-account production of marketable goods for own final consumption. This includes, as far as

possible, marketable goods produced illegally, such as alcoholic beverages, but not those for which free market prices are not available, e.g. narcotics. Services are also covered, but only those used by the lower income families. So, for instance, hairdressing and laundry services are included, but bank charges are excluded or, more correctly, are not covered because they have a negligible weight.

2.3 Classification/sectorization—Classification and sectorization systems are in accord with internationally accepted standards

2.3.1 Classification/sectorization systems used are broadly consistent with international standards, guidelines, or agreed practices: see dataset-specific framework.

The product classification used for the CCPI is a national classification in use in the 1950s. That used for the GCPI is the UN product classification. The DSC is planning to use COICOP, adapted to national needs, as the basic classification for the new national CPI.

2.4 Basis for recording—Flows and stocks are valued and recorded according to internationally accepted standards

2.4.1 Market prices are used to value flows and stocks.

Both the consumption expenditure used for the weights in each of the CPIs, including production for own final use, and the prices used in the index are actual purchaser prices paid at markets. In fact, the DCS, but not the CBSL, provides some money to their price collectors to enable them to actually purchase goods. This improves the quality of the price quotations used by the DCS.

2.4.2 Recording is done on an accrual basis.

The prices used in each of the CPIs are the actual purchaser prices on the day of collection.

2.4.3 Grossing/netting procedures are broadly consistent with international standards, guidelines, or agreed practices.

Not applicable as used goods are not covered by any of the CPIs.

3. Accuracy and reliability—Source data and statistical techniques are sound, and output data sufficiently portray reality.

3.1 Source data—Source data available provide an adequate basis to compile statistics.

3.1.1 Source data are collected from comprehensive data collection programs that take into account country-specific conditions.

i. Are reliable frames used for conducting surveys of statistical units?

The household surveys, used to derive the weights for each of the CPIs, are sample surveys selected using household lists obtained from the population census. They are not updated during intervening years except that a special census was undertaken in 1994 as it was not possible to run the normal census in 1991. Prices are only collected from a limited number of markets and fairs by each organization. However, these are the main retail outlets used by the lower income households covered by the CPIs. Both organizations are aware that their planned expansion to cover households with the lowest 80 percent by income will require a wider selection of retail outlets. The intention is to build up lists of retailers from the business register and retailer organizations.

ii. Are consumer expenditure statistics collected through a regular household budget survey program for compiling CPI expenditure weights?

The LFSSES is run by the DCS every five years; currently the CFC is run by the CBSL every ten years, following the population census, but there are plans to run it every five years. The DCS select households from the census lists, while the CBSL selects families. If a household/family is no longer resident at a particular location, a replacement is selected. The surveys cover all households in Sri Lanka, except for those in the strife-torn regions.

Proper random sampling techniques are used to select the households to be surveyed. Both the DCS and the CBSL firstly randomly selects a number of census blocks (groups of villages). Then a number of villages are randomly selected from each census block. Finally, an interval sample is taken from a fixed number of families in each village, starting from a randomly selected point on each list. Expenditure on marketed goods and services at purchaser prices is collected – purchases for production purposes are separately identified. The value of goods produced for own final consumption is also collected at estimated market prices. In the past expenditure was only collected for 187 product groups, but the DCS and the CBSL are planning to increase the number in their next survey. Consumption is built up for each month of the chosen year from regular (three a week) visits by the interviewer. Non-response is negligible and is ignored. The rental value of owner occupied dwellings was obtained by asking households what they thought it would be or, if this was not possible, the rent in the surrounding area.

iii. Is a regular price survey conducted to collect consumer prices?

For the CCPI, prices for food and energy products are collected weekly; clothing twice a month; household goods and health expenditure monthly; education, transport and communications twice a year; and recreation annually. Approximately 9,000 individual price observations are taken per month from 7 markets. Items are subject to purposive selection depending in importance in household expenditure, representatively of the price movement of the basic class and availability for a reasonable length of time. The same price collection system is used for the GCPI. In fact, the DCS collect prices throughout the country using their regional and local staff. This means that they already collect most of the prices required for the new national CPI. However, some of the items in the basket for the new index are not currently collected.

Prices for foods are collected once a week for the CD-CPI. Prices for non-food commodities are collected once a month, during the third week. The frequency of collection of prices for services varies depending on their changeability, e.g. tuition fees are only collected once a year when they are fixed for the year ahead. Price collectors are given detailed specifications of the products to be priced, covering characteristics such as brand, model, etc. When replacement products are needed they are selected centrally by CBSL staff. Around 1,800 price quotations are collected each month – 27 for each food item and 5 for each non-food items. The number of price quotations for each non-food item may not be sufficient to produce a reliable average price for every item. Prices for consumer durables are not collected because such items are not often purchased by low income households. For the same reason, prices for certain services are not collected, e.g. financial and communication services.

iv. Are there provisions to conduct ad-hoc surveys?

There is no requirement to run ad-hoc surveys.

3.1.2 Source data reasonably approximate the definitions, scope, classifications, valuation, and time of recording required.

The household surveys provide the data required to derive proper weights for each of the CPIs. The coverage, valuation and timing of price collection completely conform to the needs of the CPIs.

3.1.3 Source data are timely.

The full set of results of the 1995/96 LFSES did not become available until early in 1999 though they are normally available within one to two years. The results of the CBSL's CFS also become available within one to two years. The price quotations used in the existing CPIs are all available on a timely basis, even though the CCPI and the CD-CPI are published on the last day of the month of collection. However, the proposed extension to cover the whole country could create problems in that, some of the data already collected by the DCS is not available in time to meet this tight schedule. For this reason, the DCS is considering only publishing the new CPI quarterly on a more relaxed timetable.

3.2 Statistical techniques—Statistical techniques employed conform to sound statistical procedures.

3.2.1 Data compilation employs sound statistical techniques

i. Are the consumption expenditure estimates compiled at a sufficient level of commodity and service detail?

The existing CPIs are only compiled for 187 items. However, the DCS and the CBSL will collect more detailed product breakdowns in their upcoming household expenditure surveys, which will allow the development of a more detailed CPI in the future.

ii. Are proper techniques used to address specific issues of consumption measurement for CPI weights?

The weights used in the various CPIs conform to the *1993 SNA* in that they cover own account production for final consumption as well as purchases. The weights for owner-occupied housing are estimated as the market rental value of the dwelling. Price quotations are the actual purchaser prices on the day, regardless of the method of payment. Own-account production for final use is included indistinguishably in the weights, and is valued using the prices of equivalent products on the market.

iii. What statistical techniques are used to compile the CPI estimates?

In all three CPIs, the lowest level indices are constructed by taking the ratio of the average price over that of the previous month. The resulting short-term price relative is then applied to the long-term change for the previous month. These elementary indices are then aggregated to higher levels using the Laspeyres formula. The weights for the CCPI relate to 1949/50 and these were adjusted for price changes to align them with the price reference period of 1952. Numerous attempts have been made to update these weights, but these have all been turned down under pressure from those with a vested interest in overstating inflation, e.g. trades unions. The weights for the GCPI cover the year 1985/1986; they were not updated following the 1995/96 LFSES because of resource constraints. The weights were revalued to match the price reference period of January-June 1989. The weights and price reference period for the CD-CPI are both October 1996-September 1997. New weights have not so far been introduced for any of the CPIs.

iv. What statistical methods are used to handle missing prices and the introduction of new products that are within the scope of the CPI?

In all cases, temporary missing prices are dealt with by carrying forward the last reported price. If an item becomes permanently unavailable, a suitable replacement is selected by specialist staff. The DCS do not make any adjustments for quality changes but if there is a significant price difference between the old and new items, this is phased in over several months. If possible, the CBSL does make adjustments for significant quality changes by overlap linking. New products will usually only be introduced when the weights are updated. However, the DCS has occasionally introduced new items into the CCPI, but only by adjusting the weights within a group.

3.2.2 Other statistical procedures (e.g., data adjustments and transformations, and statistical analysis) employ sound statistical techniques.

No comparison between movements in the CPIs and that for the household final consumption implicit deflator has yet been made, but it is now planned to do so.

3.3 Assessment and validation—Source data are regularly assessed and results validated.

3.3.1 Source data—including censuses, sample surveys and administrative records—are routinely assessed, e.g., for coverage, sample error, response error, and non-sampling error; the results of the assessments are monitored and made available to guide planning.

i. Is information available for sampling errors, non-sampling errors and non-response of the surveys/censuses?

Sampling errors for the household expenditure surveys are available, but are not published. Non-sampling errors are known to apply to the household expenditure surveys, particularly for consumption of alcohol and tobacco, but no adjustments are made to the weights. The results of the household expenditure surveys are adjusted for non-response. Price collectors have to justify significant monthly changes reported for any items. Supervisors verify a random selection of price quotations.

ii. In compiling CPI estimates, what is the degree of reliance on the source data obtained from surveys/censuses or appropriate administrative records?

The weights used in the existing CPIs account for over 90 percent of the household consumption of the reference population.

iii. Are appropriate measures taken to validate the source data and make them consistent with CPI?

Consumption expenditure collected through the household surveys is compared between household types and across areas. Imputations are made for non-responding households. Repeated visits by interviewers are believed to reduce misreporting, but it is known that certain products such as alcohol and tobacco are under-reported. There is close alignment between the household expenditure surveys and the requirements of the CPIs. Price quotations are checked with each other and significant differences are followed-up.

3.3.2 Main intermediate results are validated against other information where applicable

The CBSL makes checks between its sub-indices and the comparable ones independently produced by the DCS.

3.3.3 Statistical discrepancies and other potential indicators of problems in statistical outputs are investigated and available to guide users.

None of the CPIs are revised once published.

3.4 Revision studies —revision, as a gauge of reliability, are tracked and mined for the information they may provide.

3.4.1 Studies and analyses of revisions are carried out routinely and used to inform statistical processes.

No revisions are made to any of the CPIs.

4. Serviceability—Statistics are relevant, timely, consistent, and follow a predictable revisions policy.

4.1 Relevance—Statistics cover relevant information on the subject field.⁵

4.1.1 Processes to monitor the relevance and practical utility of existing statistics in meeting users' needs are in place.

The DCS meets with users, but only when it wishes to discuss a particular issue, e.g. in its attempts to persuade users of the need to update the weights for the CCPI. The CBSL has no formal contact with users; it just responds to queries as they are made. Both organizations take every opportunity to attend international meetings and seminars.

4.2 Timeliness and periodicity—Timeliness and periodicity follow internationally accepted dissemination standards.

4.2.1 Periodicity follows dissemination standards.

Each of the existing CPIs is published monthly in line with the SDDS. However, the new national CPI being developed by the DCS may only be published quarterly, since many price quotations arrive too late for the proposed publication date of the end of the reference month.

4.2.2 Timeliness follows dissemination standards

The CCPI and the CD-CPI are published on the last day of the reference month, while the GCPI is published in the middle of the following month. The new national CPI being developed by the DCS could be published monthly, if this was allowed to happen in the middle of the following month rather than at the end of the reference month.

4.3 Consistency—Statistics are consistent over time, internally, and with major data systems.

4.3.1 Statistics are consistent or reconcilable over a reasonable period of time.

All of the CPIs are consistent over time. Erratic changes are explained when they occur; in particular, significant changes in growth between the various CPIs are explained in terms of the different weights being used. No changes in methodology or data sources have been made to any of the CPIs.

4.3.2 Statistics are internally consistent.

⁵ Relevance reflects the degree to which the program addresses the issues of most concern to the users.

Not applicable since each of the existing CPIs only covers a single geographic area.

4.3.3 Statistics are consistent or reconcilable with those obtained through other data sources and/or statistical frameworks.

There can be significant differences in growth between the various versions of the CPI, particularly between the CCPI and the other two. The problem of the outdated weights in the CCPI has even resulted in it moving in the opposite direction to the other two.

The PPI is of such poor quality that there is no point in making any comparisons with it.

4.4 Revision policy and practice —Data revisions follow a regular and publicized procedure.

4.4.1 Revisions follow a regular, well-established and transparent schedule.

i. Do revisions (of provisional estimates, weight updates, and methodology) follow a regular, well-established and transparent schedule?

There is no established revisions policy for any of the CPIs.

ii. Are the release and revision dates coordinated with the arrival of major data sources and the timing of preparation of important official economic policy documents?

Not applicable to prices since no revised figures are received. On the other hand, the suppression of revised weights for the CCPI has seriously distorted growth in this index.

4.4.2 Preliminary data are clearly identified.

Not applicable as the indices are never revised.

*4.4.3 Studies and analyses of revisions are carried out routinely and made public.
(See also 3.4)*

Not applicable since the CPIs are not revised.

5. Accessibility—Data and metadata are easily available and assistance to users is adequate.

5.1 Data accessibility—Statistics are presented in a clear and understandable manner, forms of dissemination are adequate, and statistics are made available on an impartial basis.

5.1.1 Statistics are presented in a way that facilitates proper interpretation and meaningful comparisons (layout and clarity of text, tables, and charts).

All of the CPIs are published as a time-series – the CCPI for 5 sub-groups, the GCPI for 8 sub-groups and the CD-CPI for 9. All of the versions are published with an analysis of current developments and a comparison between them. The data are well laid out and indexed.

5.1.2 Dissemination media and formats are adequate.

Both the DCS and CBSL release their CPI figures in press releases, their websites, monthly and annual publications.

5.1.3 Statistics are released on a pre-announced schedule.

No advance release schedules are published because the release dates are on the same day every month, which is well known to users.

5.1.4 Statistics are made available to all users at the same time.

Both organizations release their data to all users at the same time.

5.1.5 Non-published (but non-confidential) sub-aggregates are made available upon request.

The DCS supply non-published, but non-confidential data, on request. The CBSL will not supply any non-published sub-indices because of concerns about the quality of the data.

5.2 Metadata accessibility—Up-to-date and pertinent metadata are made available.

5.2.1 Documentation on concepts, scope, classifications, basis of recording, data sources, and statistical techniques is available, and differences from international standards are annotated.

The DCS publishes a fairly detailed methodological guide whenever a new version of the CPI is first published. When a guide goes out of print they will still provide a photocopy on request – this is stated on their website. The CBSL has only produced a short guide for the CD-CPI. Some commentary on differences from international standards is included – in particular, the DCS discuss the issue of the outdated weights in the CCPI. The GDDS metadata was last updated in June 2000.

5.2.2 Different levels of detail are provided depending on intended audience and type of collection.

Both the DCS and CBSL provide summary methodologies in their publications and on their websites.

5.3 Assistance to users—Prompt and knowledgeable support service is available

5.3.1 Contact person for each subject field is publicized.

Contact points are provided in both organizations publications and website, as well as on the DSBB.

5.3.2 Catalogues of publications, documents, and other services, including information on any charges, are widely available.

The CBSL publishes a catalogue of publications quoting prices. The DCS publishes such details in each of its publications.

III. PRODUCE PRICE INDEX (PPI)

0. Pre-requisites of quality

0.1 Legal and institutional environment—The environment is supportive of statistics.

0.1.1 The responsibility for collecting, processing, and disseminating statistics is clearly specified.

The Monetary Law Act (MLA) gives the CBSL the right to collect and disseminate any data it feels necessary for setting economic policy. It does not specifically mention a PPI, but no other institution (including the DCS) produces a PPI.

0.1.2 Data sharing and coordination among data producing agencies are adequate.

No data is collected from other agencies to produce the PPI. The CBSL also produces a related index on import prices using data from Customs, but this is not required specifically for the PPI.

0.1.3 Respondents' data are to be kept confidential and used for statistical purposes only.

Confidentiality of reporting to the CBSL is ensured under the MLA and there have never been any known infringements of this responsibility. Computer systems are also tightly controlled with individual passwords only allowing access to relevant data.

The CBSL make clear statements on all survey forms that the data will only be used for statistical purposes and will be kept confidential.

The CBSL has established rules to ensure that none of its disseminated data are disclosed. The CBSL has a very secure site and completed forms are tightly controlled with access restricted to authorized personnel. There are also strict rules for the disposal of documents.

0.1.4 Statistical reporting is ensured through legal mandate and/or measures implemented to encourage voluntary response.

The MLA requires respondents to supply data to the CBSL on request. However, the CBSL prefers to use persuasion rather than prosecution against non-respondents.

0.2 Resources—Resources are commensurate with needs of statistical programs.

0.2.1 Staff, financial, and computing resources are commensurate with institutional programs.

The CBSL has adequate, and well qualified, staff to undertake the existing PPI program and believes that it could obtain additional resources, if required. A comprehensive internal training program has recently been created. Staff is also encouraged to attend international training courses and seminars. The incentive structure is very good compared to that of the civil service. On the other hand, there is concern that the expanding commercial sector may be prepared to offer better remuneration packages to experienced staff.

The resource allocation is sufficient for current needs and could be increased if a justifiable expansion in the work program was made.

Computer resources are good, fully meeting the needs of the PPI program.

0.2.2 Measures to ensure efficient use of resources are implemented.

Self-contained systems such as the PPI are given their own budgets, allowing close monitoring of costs.

0.3 Quality awareness—Quality is recognized as a cornerstone of statistical work.

0.3.1 Processes are in place to focus on quality, to monitor the quality of the collection, processing, and dissemination of statistics, to acknowledge and deal with tradeoffs within quality, and to guide planning for existing and emerging needs.

All managers are expected to apply quality considerations to the activities of their workgroups. The newly implemented management training program addresses the need for quality awareness. However, no attempt has been made to update the PPI system even though there is no information on how the existing system was constructed.

There is no independent user or advisory council. Occasional requests for feedback are made to specific users.

New requirements will be identified through the occasional requests for feedback. However, the policy departments of the CBSL are the main source of new requirements.

1. Integrity—The principle of objectivity in the collection, processing, and dissemination of statistics is firmly adhered to.

1.1 Professionalism—Professionalism in statistical policies and practices is a guiding principle.

1.1.1 Statistics are compiled on an impartial basis.

There is no interference from outside in the compilation of the PPI. However, the staff is continuing to use the old methodology even though its details have been destroyed.

The MLA does not guarantee the professional independence of the statistical activities of the CBSL.

The management of the CBSL encourages the publication of methodological papers, but this rarely happens because of other commitments.

1.1.2 Choices of sources and statistical techniques are informed solely by statistical considerations.

The compilers of the PPI are free to choose the most appropriate data sources.

1.1.3 The appropriate statistical entity is entitled to comment on erroneous interpretation and misuse of statistics.

The PPI staff is encouraged to comment on erroneous interpretation and misuse of the statistics, and do so whenever necessary.

1.2 Transparency—Statistical policies and practices are transparent.

1.2.1 The terms and conditions under which statistics are collected, processed, and disseminated are available to the public.

The terms and conditions under which data are produced and disseminated are contained in the MLA which has been published.

1.2.2 Internal governmental access to statistics prior to their release is publicly identified.

There is no pre-release access to the CBSL data by any other government agency.

1.2.3 Products of statistical agencies/units are clearly identified as such.

The CBSL is clearly identified on all of its products.

1.2.4 Advance notice is given of major changes in methodology, source data, and statistical techniques.

Advance notice is not given of major changes in methodology as the CBSL cannot be precise about when the change will be implemented. However, when introducing such a change it publishes the old and new versions to allow users to see its impact.

1.3 Ethical standards—Policies and practices are guided by ethical standards.

1.3.1 Guidelines for staff behavior are clear and publicized.

All of the CBSL's staff is governed by the code of conduct contained in the "Handbook".

All staff complies with the "Handbook".

2. Methodological soundness—The methodological basis for the statistics follows international standards, guidelines, or agreed practices

2.1 Concepts and definitions—Concepts and definitions used are in accord with standard statistical frameworks

2.1.1 The overall structure in terms of concepts and definitions follows international standards, guidelines, or agreed practices: see dataset-specific framework

The concepts and definitions for price quotations conform to international standards, but those underlying the constructions of the weights are unknown as the documentation was destroyed by a bomb explosion. However, it is believed that some details were published when the index was created.

2.2 Scope—The scope is in accord with internationally accepted standards.

2.2.1 The scope is broadly consistent with international standards, guidelines, or agreed practices.

i. Is the delimitation of the constituent units of the economy in accordance with the 1993 SNA?

The list of enterprises from which producer prices are collected is that created when the PPI was set up in 1974. When enterprises cease to operate they are simply removed from the list, no replacements are included. It is known that free zones and bonded warehouses are not covered in the PPI.

ii. Are there differences in the scope of coverage between the PPI and the 1993 SNA and are the differences known to users?

The PPI only records the prices of market goods. Services are not covered and neither is output for own use or illegal activities.

2.3 Classification/sectorization—Classification and sectorization systems are in accord with internationally accepted standards

2.3.1 Classification/sectorization systems used are broadly consistent with international standards, guidelines, or agreed practices: see dataset-specific framework.

The classifications used are national ones created when the index was developed.

2.4 Basis for recording—Flows and stocks are valued and recorded according to internationally accepted standards

2.4.1 Market prices are used to value flows and stocks.

The prices collected are producer prices obtainable on the market. No information is available on the valuations used to derive the weights for the PPI.

2.4.2 Recording is done on an accrual basis.

It is not known if the weights are based on output or sales. Prices are actual sale prices during the period.

2.4.3 Grossing/netting procedures are broadly consistent with international standards, guidelines, or agreed practices.

Stage of processing indices are produced, but the derivation of the weights is not known.

3. Accuracy and reliability—Source data and statistical techniques are sound, and output data sufficiently portray reality.

3.1 Source data—Source data available provide an adequate basis to compile statistics.

3.1.1 Source data are collected from comprehensive data collection programs that take into account country-specific conditions.

i. Are reliable frames used for conducting surveys of statistical units?

The list of enterprises surveyed for the PPI is that developed in 1974. Enterprises which cease activity are simply removed from the list and no new enterprises are added.

ii. Are annual business statistics collected through a regular establishment/enterprise survey program for compiling output weights (PPI), intermediate input weights (input price and stage of processing output price indices), and product prices?

The weights relate to 1974 and the basis for their derivation is not known. There are regular enterprise surveys, but the results have not been used to update the weights for the PPI. A very detailed number of prices are collected for agricultural goods. However, for manufacturing, only 20 establishments are covered providing around 200 price quotations in total.

iii. Are surveys of household unincorporated enterprises conducted on regular basis for

The PPI does not cover unincorporated enterprises.

iv. Are periodic (two or more years) surveys/censuses of output and intermediate

consumption conducted on a regular basis?⁶

Not relevant since the PPI weights have never been updated.

v. Are there provisions to conduct ad-hoc surveys?

Not relevant since the PPI weights have never been updated.

3.1.2 Source data reasonably approximate the definitions, scope, classifications, valuation, and time of recording required.

The collected price data conform to the requirements of the PPI, but it is not known if this applies to the weights.

3.1.3 Source data are timely.

The prices for the fishing industry and foreign trade are late in arriving. This means that the PPI cannot be published until two months after the reference period.

3.2 Statistical techniques—Statistical techniques employed conform to sound statistical procedures.⁷

3.2.1 Data compilation employs sound statistical techniques

i. Are the output estimates compiled at a sufficient level of industrial and commodity detail?

Prices are collected for 136 products and these are aggregated into 13 industry groups for publication. The classifications used are nationally produced and do not conform to any international standards.

ii. Are proper techniques used to address specific issues of Output measurement for PPI weights?

The concepts, coverage or valuation principals for the PPI weights are not known.

iii. What statistical techniques are used to compile the PPI estimates?

⁶ This question is applicable to situations where annual censuses/surveys are not available and annual estimates are developed by extrapolating benchmark data using appropriate indicators.

⁷ This section concerns the source data for the annual PPI as defined in the IMF SDDS.

Basic price observations are combined as weighted averages of short-term price relatives. Aggregation is undertaken using the Laspeyres formula. Both the weight and price reference periods are 1974. New weights have never been introduced for the PPI.

- iv. What statistical methods are used to handle missing prices and the introduction of new products that are within the scope of the PPI?

Prices for temporarily missing products are dealt with by carrying forward the last reported price. If a product becomes permanently unavailable it is replaced by a similar product. If there is a significant quality difference between the old and new products, overlap linking is performed, if possible. New products can only be incorporated when the weights are updating, so none have been introduced.

3.2.2 Other statistical procedures (e.g., data adjustments and transformations, and statistical analysis) employ sound statistical techniques.

It is not known how well the 1974 weights covered the economy.

3.3 Assessment and validation—Source data are regularly assessed and results validated.

3.3.1 Source data—including censuses, sample surveys and administrative records—are routinely assessed, e.g., for coverage, sample error, response error, and non-sampling error; the results of the assessments are monitored and made available to guide planning.

- i. Is information available for sampling errors, non-sampling errors and non-response of the surveys/censuses?⁸

Given the outdated enterprise list, it is not possible to work out sampling errors. Neither is there any information on non-response. No checks are undertaken on the reported data.

- ii. In compiling PPI estimates by activities, what is the degree of reliance on the source data obtained from surveys/censuses or appropriate administrative records?

It is not known how well the weights cover output in the base period.

- iii. Are appropriate measures taken to validate the source data and make them consistent with PPI?

No checks are applied to the source data.

3.3.2 Main intermediate results are validated against other information where applicable

No such checks are undertaken.

⁸ Ideally, this would apply to surveys mentioned in 3.1.1.ii.

3.3.3 Statistical discrepancies and other potential indicators of problems in statistical outputs are investigated and available to guide users.

No discrepancies exist between PPI for economic activities and the PPI for products.

3.4 Revision studies—revision, as a gauge of reliability, are tracked and mined for the information they may provide.

3.4.1 Studies and analyses of revisions are carried out routinely and used to inform statistical processes.

The PPI is never revised even when data are reported late.

4. Serviceability—Statistics are relevant, timely, consistent, and follow a predictable revisions policy.

4.1 Relevance—Statistics cover relevant information on the subject field.⁹

4.1.1 Processes to monitor the relevance and practical utility of existing statistics in meeting users' needs are in place.

There is no formal contact with users of the PPI; queries from users are dealt with when they occur. In particular, no attempt has been made to raise with users the serious weaknesses in the PPI.

4.2 Timeliness and periodicity—Timeliness and periodicity follow internationally accepted dissemination standards.

4.2.1 Periodicity follows dissemination standards.

The PPI is produced monthly.

4.2.2 Timeliness follows dissemination standards

The PPI is only published two months after the end of the reference period – this does not conform to the SDDS standard.

4.3 Consistency—Statistics are consistent over time, internally, and with major data systems.

4.3.1 Statistics are consistent or reconcilable over a reasonable period of time.

⁹ Relevance reflects the degree to which the program addresses the issues of most concern to the users.

Enterprises which have ceased operating are simply excluded from the PPI when this occurs, and new enterprises are never added. So, the PPI cannot be considered to measure real changes in producer prices over time. No adjustments are made to back series for any reason.

4.3.2 Statistics are internally consistent.

There is no discrepancy between the total PPI and its components.

4.3.3 Statistics are consistent or reconcilable with those obtained through other data sources and/or statistical frameworks.

No comparisons are made between the PPI and any other price indices.

4.4 Revision policy and practice—Data revisions follow a regular and publicized procedure.

4.4.1 Revisions follow a regular, well-established and transparent schedule.

The PPI is never revised; the weights have not been revised since 1974.

4.4.2 Preliminary data are clearly identified.

The PPI is never revised.

*4.4.3 Studies and analyses of revisions are carried out routinely and made public.
(See also 3.4)*

The PPI is never revised.

5. Accessibility—Data and metadata are easily available and assistance to users is adequate.

5.1 Data accessibility—Statistics are presented in a clear and understandable manner, forms of dissemination are adequate, and statistics are made available on an impartial basis.

5.1.1 Statistics are presented in a way that facilitates proper interpretation and meaningful comparisons (layout and clarity of text, tables, and charts).

The PPI is published as time-series, but only 13 sub-indices are included.

5.1.2 Dissemination media and formats are adequate.

The PPI is not published as a press release, but is included in the CBSL's monthly publication. However, the data is supplied on demand prior to the monthly publication.

5.1.3 Statistics are released on a pre-announced schedule.

There is no advance release calendar, but the CBSL's monthly publication is released at the same time every month.

5.1.4 Statistics are made available to all users at the same time.

5.1.5 Non-published (but non-confidential) sub-aggregates are made available upon request.

The CBSL never releases unpublished details because of concerns about the quality of the data.

5.2 Metadata accessibility—Up-to-date and pertinent metadata are made available.

5.2.1 Documentation on concepts, scope, classifications, basis of recording, data sources, and statistical techniques is available, and differences from international standards are annotated.

No detailed documentation is available because the basic methodology is not known.

5.2.2 Different levels of detail are provided depending on intended audience and type of collection.

Not relevant.

5.3 Assistance to users—Prompt and knowledgeable support service is available

5.3.1 Contact person for each subject field is publicized.

A contact person is identified.

5.3.2 Catalogues of publications, documents, and other services, including information on any charges, are widely available.

The CBSL publishes a catalogue of publications quoting price

IV. GOVERNMENT FINANCE STATISTICS

0. Pre-requisites of quality

0.1 Legal and institutional environment—The environment is supportive of statistics.

0.1.1 The responsibility for collecting, processing, and disseminating statistics is the Ministry of Finance and Planning (MOFP) and the Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL).

The **MOFP** and the **CBSL** work closely to collect, compile and disseminate government finance statistics (GFS). The CBSL, mandated with a debt management responsibility for central government, is required by law to collect and disseminate GFS and has significant authority to collect data needed to match this responsibility. Legislation does not assign primary responsibility for the compilation of fiscal statistics to a single agency. Comprehensive detailed annual GFS is published by the CBSL in its *Annual Report* in accordance with the only national law mandating the collection and reporting of fiscal data,¹⁰ and consistent summary and selected annual fiscal data are published in the MOFP *Trends in Public Finance*.

0.1.2 Data sharing and coordination among data producing agencies are adequate.

Fiscal information published in the CBSL *Annual Report* has broadly the same scope as GFS, and can be reconciled to GFS.

There are strong arrangements for cooperation between the agency responsible for collecting and compiling most GFS financing data (CBSL) and the agency responsible for compiling other transactions of covered government units (MOFP). These two agencies also cooperate in the purpose of making consistent fiscal, monetary, and balance of payments data.

There is close cooperation between the agencies responsible for compiling GFS (MOFP and CBSL) and the agencies that use the same data sources to compile national accounts data (Census and Statistics Department as well as the CBSL Statistics Department).¹¹ Opportunities are in place to maintain close liaison between GFS compilers and important users of the statistics (e.g., through EUREKA.LK/FPEA for analytical groups and institutions, etc.).

0.1.3 Respondents' data are not kept confidential (upon release) as data on public entities are appropriately and freely made available to the public.

0.1.4 Statistical reporting for all levels of government is authorized through legal mandate.

There are legal provisions for the CBSL that authorize access to all data required for reporting GFS. The mandate does not specify that audited fiscal data must be reported.

¹⁰ The CBSL, under section 35 of the Monetary Law Act (chapter 422), requires the Monetary Board of CBSL to submit an annual report on the state of the economy, mandated to include data on government receipts and payments and public debt. Also, the CBSL, under section 26 of the Monetary Law Act, is authorized to collect any relevant financial data from any public authority.

¹¹ Reported fiscal data (in the CBSL *Annual Report*) cover budgetary central government and provincial councils. Annual national accounts data represent a wider coverage of general government activities.

Legal (Monetary Law Act) or regulatory provisions mandate that data are reported by April after the financial year (calendar year). However, actual annual data on local governments are not collected for routine use in compiling fiscal data.

0.2 Resources—Resources are not yet commensurate with needs of statistical programs and associated accounting programs.

0.2.1 Staff, financial, and computing resources are not yet commensurate with institutional programs.

The staff and other resources dedicated to compiling GFS according to the 1986 methodology in the MOFP and the CBSL is adequate. In view of an inadequate accounting system for recording (cash or accrual) data, compilation is manual and not adequate for ensuring accurate and timely data.

Internal and external training is not adequate in accrual accounting, in balance sheet valuation procedures, or in the new GFS methodology, elements needed for the new GFS.

The accounting system is not automated and does not make the best-use of modern technology for compiling cash or accrual data, due mainly to resource constraints. It is not able to assist in automatically compiling GFS and is not adequate for accurate and timely reporting. The extent to which efforts are being made to make the best use of modern technology, which could automatically provide a variety of reports on government activities and balances, is unclear.

0.2.2 Measures to ensure efficient use of resources are largely not implemented.

The costs associated with compiling GFS are not yet measured.

The existing limited but adequate resources assigned to compilation of GFS, given the accounting system, seem to be cost effective.

0.3 Quality awareness—Quality is recognized as a cornerstone of statistical work.

0.3.1 Processes are not fully in place to focus adequately on quality, to monitor the quality of the collection, processing, and dissemination of statistics, to acknowledge and deal with tradeoffs within quality, and to guide planning for existing and emerging needs.

Quality is recognized as the cornerstone of statistical work.

Processes are not fully in place to monitor and improve adequately the quality of compiled and disseminated GFS.

Trade-offs between quality and other considerations (e.g., timeliness), where relevant, are acknowledged. (Monthly customs data represent an example of where source data are not provided in the required framework or made available in a timely manner.)

Quality is taken into account in statistical planning.

Fiscal data are not compiled and audited against published accounting standards (or in an adequately timely manner), although auditing by the Accountant General is based on general accounting and auditing principles. The audit report for 1999, as of June 2001, has not yet been published.

1. Integrity—The principle of objectivity is firmly embedded in the collection, processing, and dissemination of statistics.

1.1 Professionalism—Professionalism in statistical policies and practices is a guiding principle.

1.1.1 Statistics are compiled on an impartial basis.

Data collection, compilation, and dissemination of consistent GFS by the MOFP and the CBSL are supported by specific laws and guidelines.

MOFP guidelines call for the proper use of data sources in compiling GFS (see *Guidelines in Estimation, Collection, Monitoring, and Reporting of Government Revenue*). The MOFP collects revenue and expenditure data and grant and external financing data.

The CBSL is an independent agency that impartially compiles GFS that is consistent with the summary fiscal data reported by MOFP.

1.1.2 Choices of sources and statistical techniques are informed solely by statistical considerations.

There is no evidence that statisticians are subject to political influence in choosing the most appropriate sources and methods for compiling GFS.

There is no evidence that changes to statistical processes are subject to political considerations.

The CBSL compiles government financing and debt data, based in part on MOFP records data on the non-cash exchange of equipment or other goods for government liabilities for external liabilities (typically on concessional terms).

1.1.3 The appropriate entities that compile statistics (the MOFP and the CBSL) are entitled to comment on erroneous interpretation and misuse of statistics.

GFS compilers can provide advice on technical (not policy) aspects of GFS. Public response to mis-interpretation of GFS is permitted.

1.2 Transparency—Statistical policies and practices are largely transparent.

1.2.1 The main terms under which statistics are collected and disseminated are available to the public.

Laws (specifically the Monetary Law Act) and regulations (*Financial Regulations of the Government of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka*) broadly governing the collection of source data and dissemination of the comprehensive annual GFS are freely disseminated to the public.

There is no restriction to public access to GFS.

1.2.2 Data are released simultaneously to all interested parties.

The government has access to the fiscal data that the MOFP and the CBSL compile.

Unless otherwise indicated, data are released simultaneously, e.g., through the MOFP website, to all interested parties.

Approval by Secretary of Finance for MOFP is required before MOFP publication of fiscal data, although this clearance is not explicitly made public.

1.2.3 Products of statistical agencies/units are clearly identified as such.

The CBSL lists its publications in its monthly *Bulletin*.

1.2.4 Notice is given of major changes in methodology, source data, and statistical techniques.

Explanation (but not advance notice) is given in GFS publications, and/or in special publications directed to the same audience as the GFS publications, of methodological or other changes (such as introduction of accrual accounting) that materially affect the published data. Prominence is given in the publication of GFS to any changes which cause a break in the time series. There is no evidence that major changes have been preceded by advance notice.

1.3 Ethical standards—Policies and practices are guided by ethical standards.

1.3.1 Guidelines for staff behavior are publicized.

Clear and publicized guidelines on code of conduct and conflicts of interest (*CBSL Manual*) cover the independent CBSL. The CBSL staff terms of employment, stated in the *CBSL Manual*, includes prescribed code of conduct for conflicts of interest and use of confidential information and data. Also, section 46 of the Monetary Law Act states that any officer or auditor who knowingly certifies or verifies any false statement or account to the Minister shall be guilty of offence.

While the compilation and dissemination of GFS by MOFP are not governed by a published 'code of conduct' that ensures that data are compiled and the results presented according to strictly professional considerations, the summary MOFP fiscal data are consistent with the comprehensive GFS that is compiled by CBSL.

Reasonable and systematic efforts are made to promote professionalism—through analytical work, training,¹² publication of methodological papers,¹³ holding of lectures/seminars/conferences¹⁴—and to benefit from methodological and organizational developments elsewhere.

2. Methodological soundness—The methodological basis for statistics during the ongoing transition phase to prospective GFS methodology follows for the most part international standards, guidelines, and agreed practices for other countries in transition.¹⁵

2.1 Concepts and definitions—Concepts and definitions used are in accord with the GFS methodology (1986), and considerations are underway, following a reasoned migration path—to be documented—for an automated management and accounting system, for compiling complete stock and flow fiscal data on an accrual basis in accordance with the new GFS methodology.

2.1.1 The overall structure in terms of concepts and definitions follows in large part international standards, guidelines, and agreed practices.

GFS compilation and dissemination of GFS in the CBSL *Annual Report* are based on the 1986 methodology of the International Monetary Fund as promulgated in *A Manual on Government Finance Statistics* (1986), and plans are underway for compiling and reporting fiscal data on the basis of the revised *Manual on Government Finance Statistics (GFS Manual 2001)*.

¹² Two Sri Lankan officials have attended the GFS course at the IMF Institute. Additional training in the new GFS methodology is appropriate.

¹³ See, for example, "Incidence of Indirect Taxes in Sri Lanka—An Empirical Analysis of Tax Incidence," Yuthika Indraratne, CBSL *Staff Studies*, Vol. 22 and "An Analysis of Fiscal Sustainability in Sri Lanka, K. M. Mahinda Siriwardana, CBSL *Staff Studies*, Vol. 23.

¹⁴ The CBSL sponsored a financial programming course in May 2001.

¹⁵ This framework is based on the existing GFS methodology as well as the new accrual GFS system that is being finalized. The draft *GFS Manual* (IMF, December 2000) for the new system is available on the Fund website (<http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/gfs/manual/index.htm>), and a final manual is to be released in 2001.

An appropriate 'migration path' from the GFS framework based on the 1986 *GFS Manual* to the revised GFS system is tentatively being planned. The first steps envisioned are the reporting of modified cash (or modified accrual basis) accounting transactions and financial balance sheets. There are no documented plans for a migration path establishing in 2002, for example, a reporting system (not necessarily an accrual recording system) consistent with the new GFS methodology.

2.2 Scope—The scope for government transactions and debt is broadly in accord with internationally accepted standards, and plans are underway for reviewing the prospects for compiling data more completely on general government in accordance with the new GFS methodology.

2.2.1 The scope is consistent with international standards, guidelines, and agreed practices.

The scope for compiling GFS is consistent with the 1986 GFS methodology, and the sectorization is consistent with the 1993 *SNA*. Data routinely available on general government, (for which unconsolidated data only cover consolidated data on budgetary central government and provincial governments) do not cover local government operations, which are relatively small (See Section 3.1.1).

Provisional GFS data, based on full coverage of the budgetary central government sector, is replaced by data based on final accounting data as soon as they become available. GFS as reported in the *CBSL Annual Report* and the *GFS Yearbook* covers all transactions and debt within its scope—to the standard specified under the 1986 methodology (tables A through F).

As in other countries, reported stock and flow data do not yet conform to the following tables referenced for the new GFS methodology:

- a) Classification of Revenue (Table 1, draft GFS Manual)*
- b) Economic Classification of Expense (Table 2)¹⁶*
- c) Classification of Transactions in Assets and Liabilities (Table 3)*
- d) Classification of Holding Gains in Assets and Liabilities (Table 4)*
- e) Volume Changes in Assets and Liabilities (Table 5)*
- f) Classification of Assets and Liabilities (Table 6)*
- g) Classification of Outlays by Functions of Government (Table 7)*
- h) Classification of Transactions in Financial Assets and Liabilities by Sector (Table 8)*

¹⁶ The ideal for the new GFS methodology is for transaction data to be provided for a cross classification of functional (COFOG) and economic classifications of expense.

2.3 Classification/sectorization—Classification and sectorization systems are in accord with internationally accepted standards, and active considerations are being given to compiling completely integrated stock and flow data, where stocks are valued at market prices, in accordance with the new GFS methodology.¹⁷

2.3.1 Classification/sectorization systems used are broadly consistent with international standards, guidelines, and agreed practices.

Institutional sectors are defined consistently with the *SNA 1993*. While sectorization in principle is appropriate, actual GFS covers the budgetary central government sector and provincial government sector, sectors accounting for 97 percent of general government transactions. This coverage does not include annual data on extrabudgetary central government and local governments; the annual compilation of GFS on consolidated general government operations, including operations of provincial councils, could include data on local governments (although a consolidation of general government operations on an annual basis would not currently cover expenditure by function as provincial and local government data are not classified by function).¹⁸

Revenue, expenditure, and financing stocks and flows are broadly classified using the methodology set out in the 1986 *GFS Manual*. (Considerations are underway to classify stocks and flows in accordance with the new GFS methodology.) Data are collected for compiling and reporting data on contingent government liabilities (although not contingent liabilities of the CBSL) for annual publications, and data on government contingent liabilities are included as a memorandum item in the government balance sheets that are made public through gazettes.

No public corporations or other non-government entities are covered in reported GFS.

2.4 Basis of recording—Transaction and debt data are valued and recorded according to internationally accepted standards (1986 GFS methodology), and work has begun on an accounting framework for compiling complete stock and flow data on an accrual as well as cash basis, consistent with the new GFS methodology.

¹⁷ The mission ensured that the authorities had the latest version of the classification system to be included in the 2001 *GFS Manual* to ensure that any revisions to the national classification system could take into account the new GFS classification system.

¹⁸ Local government operations represent about 2 percent of general government operations according to a 2000 CBSL survey of all local government activities in 1999. The revenue of extrabudgetary units (Tea Board and Rubber Research Board) and local governments account for about 3 percent of general government revenue according to a CBSL survey of local governments in 2000 and data on extrabudgetary funds.

2.4.1 Market prices are used to value flows.

All transactions are valued on a current market basis. Transactions in foreign currency are converted to local currency using the mid-point exchange rate prevailing in the market at the moment they take place.

Stocks of financial instruments outstanding are valued at values at maturity (par values), and those denominated in foreign currency are converted to local currency basis using the mid-point exchange rates in the market at the end of the reporting period. This valuation procedure conforms with the 1986 GFS methodology.

2.4.2 Recording of transactions of budgetary central government and provincial councils is done on a cash basis.

- i. Transactions of budgetary central government and provincial councils, consistent with the 1986 GFS methodology and with some aspects of the new GFS methodology, are recorded on a cash basis (rather than an accrual basis, defined as when economic value is created, transformed, exchanged, transferred, or extinguished).
- ii. A move to an accrual accounting/budgeting basis (with supplementary cash based data) and a migration path to the new GFS methodology have not been documented.

2.4.3 Grossing/netting procedures are broadly consistent with international standards, guidelines, and agreed practices.

All transactions are shown on a gross basis, except for revenue (where refunds have been netted in reported data).

3. Accuracy and reliability—Available source data and statistical techniques are sound, and compiled fiscal data adequately portray reality in conformity with the existing GFS methodology.

3.1 Source data—Source data made available to compilers provide a basis to compile useful fiscal statistics.

3.1.1 Source data are collected from customary data collection programs that take into account country-specific conditions and take advantage of existing data sources.

- i. Data covering the full range of economic stocks and flows are provided from administrative systems for budgetary central and provincial governments. No fiscal data are yet made available routinely to fiscal compilers on local governments. Data on these three types of units cover over 99 percent of entities of the general government.¹⁹

¹⁹ Extrabudgetary funds (Tea Board and Rubber Control Board) are also part of general government, but their activity represents less than 1 percent of general government operations. The Employees' Provident Fund (EPF) and the Employees' Trust Fund (ETF) are public financial corporations, in accordance with the GFS methodology (1986). These funds

(continued)

- ii. Data for the central government sector comprise data on budgetary central government, which represent 99 percent of central government operations.
- iii. Data are not yet consolidated for the general government sector, but available information of budgetary central government and provincial governments allow such consolidation for these two subsectors.
- iv. No concrete plans are in place to routinely collect annual fiscal data on local governments.

3.1.2 Source data acceptably approximate the definitions, scope, classifications, valuation, and time of recording required.

- i. Charts of accounts for budgetary central government and provincial governments align with GFS categories except for grants, borrowing, and changes in cash balances. These time series are identified in transaction data even though no formal national classifications for them are existent. The definitions and scope of documented source data should be more comprehensive.
- ii. Budget management and accounting systems do not include provision for automatic derivation of GFS items from budget items.
- iii. The timing of recording, and valuation, of operational source data being sent to compilers are consistent with GFS (1986) concepts.

3.1.3 Source data are not as timely as preferred.

- i. Budget management and accounting systems provide comprehensive and up-to-date records of monthly budgetary central government transactions and debt which are available in two months, while data collection for these series within one month is preferred in the SDDS context.

are government controlled schemes that receive mandatory contributions (EPF contributions totaled 17 billion rupees in 2000) from the bulk of the non-government sector, have their own set of separate accounts for the individual contributors, represent defined contribution schemes (the terms of which are set by the central government), and invest nearly all their resources in government securities. The Employees' Provident Fund, managed by the Monetary Board of the CBSL for non-government sector employees, mandates contributions of 12 percent of wages from employers and 8 percent of wages from employees (and 97 percent of financial assets at the end of 2000 were in government securities). The much smaller Employees' Trust Fund, administered for non-government sector employees, mandate a contribution of 3 percent of wages (and the bulk of financial assets were in government securities). Reports on these funds, scheduled to be merged, should be routinely made available for fiscal analysis.

- ii. Data for provincial governments are available in sufficient detail and timeliness for inclusion in GFS annual compilation cycles.

3.2 Statistical technique—Statistical techniques employed where needed conform with sound statistical procedures. No sample surveys or data estimates occur in GFS.

3.2.1 Data compilation employs needed statistical techniques

A comprehensive CBSL survey (in 2000) for local government data (based on accrual recording) covered operations of all local governments. Such data collection for aggregate series on a routine annual basis is feasible.

3.2.2 Other statistical procedures (e.g., data adjustments) employ sound statistical techniques.

No sample surveys or data estimates occur in GFS.

3.3 Assessment and validation—Source data are assessed and results validated as needed.

3.3.1 Source data—including administrative records—are assessed, e.g., for coverage; the results of the assessments as needed are monitored and made available to guide planning. These actions occur as needed although not on a routine basis.

- i. Problems with gaps in coverage and/or completeness of data collection are identified and addressed.
- ii. There is a recognized balance between accuracy and timeliness. In any event, the cause of some delays in source data do not seem to be related to accuracy.
- iii. There are internal (MOFP) audits of budgetary central government operations and external audits by the Auditor General on all central government and public enterprises to assess the accuracy of the data.
- iv. GFS published annual data follow for each period a regular cycle, where provisional data are subsequently replaced by final audited data.
- v. The most timely data that are sufficiently accurate for fiscal policy development and analysis are used for provisional GFS.
- vi. The data sources used are indicated in CBSL *Annual Reports*.
- vii. All fiscal data are corrected as soon as later source data become available, and this policy is not documented.

3.3.2 Main intermediate results are largely validated against other information where applicable.

GFS major aggregates are similar to but not always consistent with those for series published in other macroeconomic statistics areas. The annual 1999 data on budgetary central government operations were found not to have been verified for the consistency of macroeconomic statistics in the case of money and banking balance sheet data.

3.3.3 Statistical discrepancies and other potential indicators of problems in statistical outputs are investigated and made available to guide users as needed.

- i. Material differences between GFS financing data and corresponding monetary data are addressed, and the importance of routine reviews and the adoption of procedures to help ensure consistency in reporting macroeconomic statistics is not adequately emphasized.
- ii. Where financing flows differ from changes in stocks, the data are identified and investigated. See, for example, Table 8.7 on the effect of exchange rate variation on the value of foreign loans in the CBSL *Annual Report 2000*.

3.4 Revision studies—Revisions, as a gauge of reliability, are tracked.

3.4.1 Studies and analysis of revisions are carried out largely as needed and used to inform statistical processes.

Revision studies and analyses have been made, but there is no evidence that they were made public and used to guide data users.

4. Serviceability—Statistics are relevant and, in most cases, timely and consistent, and are revised when source data are revised.

4.1 Relevance—Statistics Cover Relevant Information On The Subject Field.

4.1.1 Processes to monitor the relevance and practical utility of existing statistics in meeting users' needs are not routine, although some review of users take place.

- i. Annual GFS (transactions and debt) covering budgetary central government is compiled within the same time frame as budget preparation and monitoring, and is used in the process of determining/evaluating fiscal policy.
- ii. Monthly GFS for the budgetary central government is available with a timeliness of two months, to allow users to assess the degree to which government is achieving its stated overall fiscal policies.

4.2 Periodicity and timeliness—Periodicity and timeliness for reported data on selected government sectors follow in part internationally accepted dissemination standards.

4.2.1 Periodicity for available data follows part of SDDS dissemination standards.

- i. Budgetary central government operations data in a summary format are published monthly and, in significant detail, annually.
- ii. General government operations data, while not consolidated, are published annually. Annual consolidated data covering the bulk of general government operations—budgetary central government and provincial councils—on the basis of the classification system could be compiled (within two quarters of the fiscal year with minimal difficulty), although the data would not include functional data as functional data on provincial councils are not made available in the current reporting system.²⁰
- iii. Central government debt is published in a summary format at least monthly, and the reporting in the *Annual Report* covers contingent liabilities.

4.2.2 Timeliness largely follows part of SDDS dissemination standards.

- i. Timeliness of monthly budgetary central government operations data is within two months (rather than within the preferred one month) after the reference period.
- ii. General government operations data on an annual unconsolidated basis, separately covering two government subsectors, are published within two quarters of the fiscal year.
- iii. Timeliness of quarterly central government debt data is within 2 months (rather than the longer 1 quarter) after the reference period.

4.3 Consistency—Statistics are consistent in part over time, internally, and with major data systems.

4.3.1 Available statistics are consistent in several regards over time.

- i. Divergences from the expected trend in the revenue and/or expenditure monthly time series seem to be related to the underlying fiscal policy and/or economic developments.
- ii. Previous data in time series are adjusted to account for discontinuities arising from methodological developments, changes in the statistical system, etc.
- iii. Where the previous data in the series have not been adjusted as in (ii) above, the breaks in time series are clearly identified and the reasons fully explained.

²⁰ Provincial council expenditure by function is scheduled to be collected in 2002.

4.3.2 Statistics are internally consistent.

Statistics on consolidated fund cash-based transactions, in accordance with 1986 methodology, are questionably consistent--while accounting identities for data are observed, data for other expenditure is a calculated residual.²¹ Fiscal data on the budgetary central government are based on transactions of the consolidated fund, including its transactions with budgetary units, rather than only the transactions of all budgetary units with units outside of the budgetary central government.

In any event, the authorities, subsequent to the prospective implementation of compiling data in line with the new GFS methodology, plan to ensure the following:

The difference between the opening and closing balance sheets, for each asset/liability category, equals the sum of transactions, net holding gains and losses, and other changes to the volume of assets for that category.

- i. Consistency as defined above is achieved by deriving any component residually, and an annotation to this effect or, preferably, an adjustment line comprising the calculated residual, is published.
- ii. Net operating balance less net acquisition of nonfinancial assets equals net lending/borrowing.
- iii. Net lending/borrowing, derived from revenue less expenses less net acquisition of nonfinancial assets, equals financing.
- iv. Components of revenue, expenditure, net acquisition of nonfinancial assets, and financing add to aggregates.
- v. Detailed revenue, expenditure, net acquisition of nonfinancial assets, and financing table data agree with the aggregates in the government operations table.
- vi. Procedures are in place to benchmark monthly and quarterly data to annual data.
- vii. Revisions due to annual benchmarking are within acceptable limits.
- viii. Information on revisions due to benchmarking is provided to users.
- ix. The sum of GFS aggregates for component levels of government, or other sub-sectors of GFS, equal aggregates for the consolidated combination of those subsectors, less

²¹ Any time series reflecting adjustments or residual calculations should be separately identified to ensure transparency. Preferably, an adjustment line comprising the residual calculation would be separately reported to conform with transparency goals.

consolidation adjustments. The net operating balance, net lending/borrowing, change in net worth, and net worth, should add across all sub-sectors of GFS.

4.3.3 Statistics are in part consistent with those obtained through other data sources and/or statistical frameworks in view of available accrual data.

- i. GFS data, representing a data source for national accounts, are consistent with related national accounts aggregates, such as net lending/borrowing, government consumption, and net acquisition of non-financial assets.
- ii. Data for one time series (other expenditure) on budgetary central government is a calculated residual. The calculated residual is not annotated and the option, a published line with that residual series, is not published. The approach in current reporting is consistent with transparency.
- iii. Annual fiscal data on the central government is based on transactions of the consolidated fund of the budgetary central government rather than transactions of all budgetary as well as extrabudgetary units. The basis for reporting in other related statistical areas such as monetary data cover all budgetary and extrabudgetary units of central government.
- iv. GFS financing data in 1999 according to fiscal and monetary statistics are not consistent.
- v. GFS foreign debt, and foreign grants and financing transactions, elements used in compiling BOP data, are consistent with BOP data.

4.4 Revision policy and practice—data revisions do not follow a regular and publicized procedure.

4.4.1 Revisions do not follow a regular, well-established, and transparent schedule.

- i. The release of revised data does not follow a well established schedule.
- ii. The revisions are provided when revised source data become available.

4.4.2 Provisional annual data are clearly identified.

- i. Provisional and revised annual data are identified in the CBSL *Annual Reports*.
- ii. The revised data are disseminated in the same way, and at the same level of detail, as the original data.
- iii. The coherence between provisional and final annual data is sufficient to allow provisional data to be used with confidence for policy determination and analysis.

4.4.3 Studies and analyses of revisions, as they may be needed, are expected to be carried out and made public.

- i. Revisions (typically comprising minor changes) incorporate all material data changes resulting from available up-to-date data.
- ii. No time series of the extent to which data are revised are made available.
- iii. The reasons for revisions are not documented.

5. Accessibility—Data and metadata are available and assistance to users is not fully adequate.

5.1 Data Accessibility—Statistics in the CBSL Annual Report are presented in a comprehensive manner; forms of dissemination in the CBSL Annual Report are largely adequate, and statistics are made available on an impartial basis.

5.1.1 Statistics are presented in a way that for the most part facilitates proper interpretation and meaningful comparisons (layout and clarity of text and tables).

- i. The annual GFS in the CBSL *Annual Report* are presented in a way which broadly allows major aggregates/balancing items to be identified, and related to detailed underlying data.
- ii. The information presented in the CBSL *Annual Report* is suitable for use in the budget development and monitoring process, and other government economic and fiscal policy development.
- iii. The CBSL *Annual Report* provides detail broadly equivalent to that set out in the *GFS Manual* tables and does not provide consolidated data on the general government.²² Presentations and details in reporting lending minus repayments are not fully in accordance with GFS.

5.1.2 Dissemination media and formats are adequate.

- i. The dissemination policy relating to GFS (the CBSL *Annual Report* fills a reporting requirement of the Monetary Law Act) and is clearly publicized.

²² There is separate reporting of central government and provincial governments. Reporting on general government do not include data on local governments, which have relatively small operations.

- ii. There is a dedicated annual government finance publication (MOFP *Trends in Public Finance*). (It has been agreed that data on provincial governments will be included in future submissions for the *GFS Yearbook*.)
- iii. Monthly/quarterly government finance statistics are published in a sub-annual statistical publication (CBSL monthly statistical *Bulletin*). (All monthly data on the budgetary central government, as agreed, will be submitted in the future for publication in *IFS*.)
- iv. There is provision for disseminating annual fiscal data at the CBSL website and selected and limited monthly/quarterly GFS data at the MOFP website.

5.1.3 Statistics in publications with GFS are not released by a pre-announced schedule.

The CBSL *Annual Report*, in accordance with the Monetary Law Act, is published by April 30 of each year.

The actual date of official publications with GFS is not pre-announced.

5.1.4 Statistics are made available to all users at the same time.

Statistical publications are made available to all users simultaneously, and without preferential treatment of selected users.

5.1.5 Non-published sub-aggregates are not made available upon request.

5.2 Metadata accessibility—Up-to-date, comprehensive, and pertinent metadata are not made available.

5.2.1 Documentation on concepts, definitions, classifications, basis of recording, data sources, and compilation procedures is not adequately available, and differences from international standards often are not annotated.

- i. Concepts, sources, and methods (C, S, & M) are in part documented, and revisions to C, S, & M are in part published at the same time as the data they affect.
- ii. C, S, & M documentation in part identifies differences from internationally accepted standards and provides some description of coverage.
- iii. Bridge tables showing the links between national source data and GFS, while not available, can be made available as needed according to MOFP officials.
- iv. Documentation on concepts, definitions, compilation procedures, including the bridge table between the similar national and GFS classification systems, and differences between national reporting and GFS reporting is not complete and available. The main data sources for fiscal data are identified in the CBSL *Annual Report*. The terms used by the MOFP for revenue compilation are described in the MOFP *Guidelines on*

Estimation, Collection, Monitoring, and Reporting of Government Revenue are not made available to the public. Full descriptions of concepts, data sources, compilation procedures, and dissemination arrangements and timing are not available for data users. A separate document outlining concepts, definitions and compilation procedures, after progress is made on reporting according to the new methodology, would be helpful.

5.2.2 Different levels of metadata detail depending on intended audience and type of collection are not typically provided.

- i. Detailed technical descriptions of C, S, & M, which are sufficient to allow expert users to assess the strengths and weaknesses of GFS, are not published.
- ii. Less detailed C, S, & M information is provided to general users in the *CBSL Annual Report*, to allow them to understand largely the basic framework under which the statistics are produced.

5.3 Assistance to users—Prompt and knowledgeable support service is available.

5.3.1 Contact person for subject fields of budgetary central government operations and debt is not publicized.

- i. Contact directly through phone or fax numbers is available. See, e.g., MOFP website (EUREKA.LK/FPEA). No contact person through an email address at this site is identified. The email address at this site is not publicly usable.
- ii. Prompt and knowledgeable service and support when contact is made by phone is available.
- iii. The contact person for GFS in the General Data Dissemination System (GDDS) of the Dissemination Standards Bulletin Board (DSBB) is publicized.
- iv. There are policies to allow responding promptly to the misuse of government finance data, and to educate the GFS users.

5.3.2 Catalogues of publications, documents, and other services, including information on any charges, are widely available.

V. MONETARY STATISTICS

0. Prerequisites of quality

0.1 Legal and institutional environment.

0.1.1 The responsibility for processing, and disseminating statistics is clearly specified.

Section 35 of Monetary Law Act²³ states that Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL) submit to the Minister of Finance and Planning and publish in its annual report a range of economic statistics. In the area of monetary statistics, the CBSL *Annual Report* must present, as a minimum, the monthly movements in money supply, distinguishing between movements in currency and in demand deposits and the monthly movements in purchases and sales of the international reserves of the bank. Compilation of monthly monetary statistics is implicit in these requirements. The CBSL is fully compliant with the statutory requirements concerning compilation and dissemination of monetary statistics. The CBSL's Department of Economic and Research is the unit within CBSL that is the designated compiler of monetary statistics.

0.1.2 Data sharing and coordination among other data producing agencies are adequate.

Source data for monetary statistics are reported by responding institutions directly to DER. At present, data are reported in hard copy (but plans are underway for reporting on computer diskettes).²⁴

Cross-checks between monetary data and data on government operations are conducted on a weekly and monthly basis during meetings between CBSL and the Ministry of Finance's General Treasury staff. Data reconciliations are conducted on a monthly as well as weekly basis during the meetings of CBSL's Domestic Debt Management Committee which includes staff of the General Treasury. Verifications of specific data relating to government positions with the CBSL and the two state-owned banks²⁵ are also carried out on a daily basis. Since DER is also responsible for compiling balance of payments statistics, consistency checks between BOP and monetary data are conducted on a regular basis, including for end-of-month data.

0.1.3 Respondents' data are to be kept confidential and used for statistical purposes only.

Section 45 of the Monetary Law Act states that every officer and servant of the Central Bank shall preserve and aid in preserving secrecy with regard to all matters (books, papers or other records) relating to the affairs of any data provider or of their clients. Infractions are considered an offence punishable by law.

²³ The Monetary Law Act (1949, with amendments through December 31, 1998) governs activities and operations of the Central Bank of Sri Lanka.

²⁴ Since 1996, reported data are entered into electronic database by DER staff, while prior to 1996, it was done by the Data Processing Department. This procedure achieves several aims, among them, data entry is expedited and quality control is began at a data entry stage (*viz.* DER staff are familiar with the particular institutions, their activities and data, so that large movements in the data can be identified at the data entry stage, and inquiries are promptly made to the reporting institution).

²⁵ Government accounts are concentrated at the CBSL and at the two state-owned commercial banks.

Internal rules of conduct for CBSL staff and management, including preservation of confidentiality of data, are contained in the *CBSL Manual*. All CBSL staff sign a declaration to maintain secrecy with regard to any information or data that they will be in contact with during performance of their duties. The general guideline is that only CBSL senior management can, subject to disclosure rules in the *CBSL Manual*, sanction provisions of any unpublished information.

CBSL maintains secure computer-based communication with external networks connecting the central bank with commercial banks. Within the central bank, there are secured local area networks and password-protected stand-alone personal computers.

0.1.4 Statistical reporting is ensured either through legal mandate and/or measures implemented to encourage voluntary reporting.

Section 26 of the Monetary Law Act empowers the Director of DER to request information or data from any legal, physical, or public entity or person that is considered necessary, for the purposes of proper discharge of the functions and responsibilities of the central bank. These requests are in the form of CBSL directives to the relevant entity or person.

Section 34 of the Banking Act No. 30 of 1988, obligates all banking institutions to provide data to CBSL. Although legislation does not explicitly specify the format, periodicity, and timeliness for data reporting, all banking institutions have complied fully with CBSL data reporting directives. In this regard, the working relationship between CBSL and the banking institutions is considered to be entirely cooperative. Sections 79, 79a, 80, and 81 of the Banking Act specify penalties for non-compliance with CBSL directives.

Section 12 of the Finance Companies Act No. 77 of 1988 (with amendments through 1991) obligates finance companies to provide data to CBSL. Section 38 of that Act specifies penalties for noncompliance.

0.2 Resources.

0.2.1 Staff, financial, and computing resources are commensurate with institutional programs.

The Money and Banking Statistics division of DER is responsible for compiling monetary statistics. Currently, this division has 6 Staff Officers (including 2 division chiefs) and 8 support staff. All Staff Officers have had at least 4 years of work experience in the area of monetary statistics. Five Staff Officers have post-graduate degrees.

New staff are exposed to work practices and trained in methodology in the course of their mentoring period. Training in monetary statistics is available and is perused from the IMF's Institute in Washington and in Singapore (several staff attended courses there), as well as at foreign central banks (*viz.* U.S. Federal Reserve, Bank of England, Swiss National Bank). The CBSL's Center for Banking Studies conducts courses on the various aspects of financial

sector, including monetary statistics. These courses are attended by CBSL staff, staff of other banking institutions, and some members of the public.

The South-East Asian Central Banks' Research and Training Center (SEACEN) in Kuala Lumpur offers seminars, organizes conferences and research/discussion workshops that are regularly attended by CBSL staff. CBSL also maintains professional/consultative links with a number of central banks (*viz.* Swedish Riksbank and the Bank of England). Conferences and professional visits to other institutions are a venue for exchanging ideas and comparing statistical methodologies. They also establish grounds for future professional contacts.

DER's computer software and hardware resources for compilation of monetary statistics are deemed sufficient: each Staff Officer has a computer (some are linked by a local-area network) and there is a pool of desk-top computers for the support staff. Developmental work on wider local area networks is in progress.

0.2.2 Measures to ensure efficient use of resources are implemented.

An internal budgeting process is in place. An annual budget is prepared at a departmental level, and it is discussed in the CBSL-wide Budget Review Committee prior to submission to the governing board (the Monetary Board) for approval. The budget is monitored and reviewed on a monthly and quarterly basis. Resources allocated for compilation of monetary statistics are used efficiently and are deemed adequate.

0.3 Quality awareness.

0.3.1 Processes are in place to focus on quality, to monitor the quality of the collection, processing, and dissemination of statistics, to acknowledge and deal with tradeoffs within quality, and to guide planning for existing and emerging needs.

Quality is recognized as a cornerstone of statistical work. DER staff strongly view that preservation of user's trust in monetary statistics is central for any decision leading to changes in proven compilation practices. Accordingly, changes in statistical methodologies (*viz.* classification, coverage) are undertaken after a thorough review and an adequate trial/development period. These attitudes are implicitly communicated by senior DER staff in the course of their daily interaction with the subordinates and during departmental/divisional meetings. New staff internalize good working habits by observing the management/peer behavior and their work practices.

Weekly CBSL department directors' meeting provides a formal opportunity for establishing efficient information flows and for avoiding duplication of effort within the central bank. It should be noted that in the case of monetary statistics, the same balance sheet data as reported to DER are also reported to the Bank Supervision Department (with additional details needed for prudential analysis) and processed there. But this duplication is considered as providing an opportunity to cross-check the data.

There is no body outside the central bank that reviews the accuracy, timeliness, and comprehensiveness of monetary statistics. However, a series of monthly Bank Managers'

Meetings are held between the CBSL management and senior management of banking institutions (as well as with financial auxiliaries). These meetings provide a forum for the banks to express their views on the various aspects of the CBSL's publication policy for monetary and financial statistics. Contacts with data users, and in response to their requests, have led CBSL to the expand publication and revise methodology for some financial statistics (*e.g.*, Sri Lanka Interbank Offer Rate). Processes are generally in place to foster quality, however, routine reviews of quality or a use of an outside body to evaluate quality indicators may strengthen these processes.

1. Integrity—The principle of objectivity in the collection, processing, and dissemination of statistics is firmly adhered to.

1.1 Professionalism.

1.1.1 Statistics are compiled on an impartial basis.

Specific authority vested in Director of DER by Monetary Law Act (see section 0.1.4) underpins integrity in data collection and compilation. Internal regulations (*CBSL Manual*) ensure that staff in each department are responsible for professional conduct to the head of their department. Appointments for technical positions are made after applications are considered by the intra-department review committee. Appointments of department directors are made by the CBSL Governor and the Deputy Governor. Specific authority vested in DER Director by Monetary Law Act (see section 0.1.4) underpins integrity in data collection and compilation.

To promote professionalism, CBSL organizes public lectures and seminars at the Center for Banking Studies on a range of issues, including in monetary policy. Moreover, several times a month, CBSL staff are invited to make presentation at private fora (the Chamber of Commerce, Bankers' Association) and at the universities. (Commentary by CBSL staff on CBSL policies, however, are subject to approval by the CBSL senior management.)

As part of staff development, DER staff are encouraged to conduct research and publish research studies, which are attributed to the authors (staff studies and research paper series are available from CBSL for a nominal fee).

1.1.2 Choices of sources and statistical techniques are informed solely by statistical considerations.

Only accounting/balance sheet records are used for compiling monetary statistics. Statistical methods and definitions are based solely on methodological considerations (see Section 3.4), and are based on internationally-accepted statistical methodologies. Staff are encouraged to defend choice of methodologies through published revision studies, and contacts with the media and the public (see sections 0.3.1 and 1.1.3).

1.1.3 The appropriate statistical entity is entitled to comment on erroneous interpretation and misuse of statistics.

The media are surveyed on a routine basis by the CBSL Information Department (ID), which is responsible for external relations. ID staff identify instances of misinterpretation in the media of the data that had been compiled and disseminated by the CBSL, and these are either handled by the ID staff or forwarded for a reply to the relevant CBSL department. Even without requests from the ID staff, department directors, including DER Director, reply to the media, either directly or through ID, on the observed instances of data misinterpretation.

The DER seeks to prevent misinterpretation or misuse of monetary statistics by providing explanatory materials. Extensive methodological/explanatory notes are appended to the tables in the CBSL monthly bulletins and the annual reports. As applicable, data are identified as provisional or revised in all CBSL publications. Major changes in methodology are usually introduced in the CBSL *Annual Report* and these changes are accompanied by detailed commentary.

A CBSL publication *Notes on Statistical Tables in the Monthly Bulletin (1980)* provides a detailed description of the data published in CBSL monthly bulletins. An update, containing all revisions since its publication, is planned for release in the near term, including a posting on the CBSL's Web page.

1.2 Transparency.

1.2.1 The terms and conditions under which statistics are collected, processed, and disseminated are available to the public.

The Monetary Law Act and the Banking Act, which contain the terms and conditions under which the CBSL collects, compiles, and disseminates data, are available to the public. The CBSL *Annual Report* contains directives issued to banking institutions during the year including those that relate to revisions in data reporting.

1.2.2 Internal governmental access to statistics prior to their release is publicly identified.

End-of-month and end-of-week monetary statistics are released simultaneously to all users after clearance by Director of DER or other CBSL senior staff. Inherent to the process of verification, the routine cross-checks of the General Treasury's government finance data with the banks' balance sheet data, make some positions of the banking system with the government available to the General Treasury prior to general release.

1.2.3 Products of statistical agencies/units are clearly identified as such.

CBSL publications clearly identify CBSL as the publisher. Each set of data in the CBSL publications identifies the original source of data (*viz.* General Treasury and CBSL for data on government operations, or the Ceylon Tourist Board for data on tourist arrivals by region).

1.2.4 Advance notice is given of major changes in methodology, source data, and statistical techniques.

Data compiled under major methodological change are typically first presented in the CBSL *Annual Report*. For a number of periods, data compiled under previous methodology continues to be presented along side and in parallel with the data compiled under revised/new methodology. No advance notice is given to the public on methodological revisions, but once implemented, they are clearly identified.

1.3 Ethical standards

1.3.1 Guidelines for staff behavior are clear and publicized.

CBSL staff duties and terms of employment are stated in *CBSL Manual*, which is provided to all staff. The manual includes administrative policies and a code of conduct prescribed for all CBSL staff. The code of conduct includes clear guidelines for the staff to deal with the situations of potential conflict of interest and the guidelines for guarding against misuse of confidential information and data (Conduct and Discipline, and Classification, Control, and Appeal rules in the *CBSL Manual*). All new staff members, as part of their introductory training, are briefed on the expected code of conduct while in the employ of CBSL.

2. Methodological soundness—The methodological basis for the statistics follows international standards, guidelines, or agreed practices.

2.1 Concepts and definitions

2.1.1 The overall structure in terms of concepts and definitions follows international standards, guidelines, or agreed practices.

IMF's *Guide to Money and Banking Statistics in International Financial Statistics*, draft 1984 (the *Guide*) is the basis for the statistical framework used by CBSL for compiling monetary accounts of the central bank and monetary accounts of other deposit-taking institutions (which comprise deposit money banks (DMBs) and other banking institutions (OBIs)²⁶) (see sections below on scope and classification).

Published monetary accounts appear to deviate from the recommendations in the *Guide* insofar as the *Guide* recommends compilation of *monetary authorities'* accounts which would fully incorporate Sri Lanka's financial relationship with IMF. This is more germane since CBSL is the designated depository and fiscal agent for Sri Lanka's financial relationship with IMF, yet notes in the *CBSL Monthly Bulletin* indicate that Government has

²⁶ The *Guide* identifies *other banking institutions* (OBIs) as financial institutions that accept deposits other than demand deposits. That is, unlike *deposit money banks*, OBIs do not issue demand deposits (transferable deposits).

positions with IMF and, moreover, some Fund accounts (viz.. IMF Securities Account) are off-(CBSL's) balance sheet.

The analytical framework for monetary surveys (M2, M2b, M4) published by CBSL engender presentation of the data on money supply and the factors affecting it through the positions of the resident banking institutions vis-à-vis the rest of the resident and non-resident sectors. Stock data in millions of Sri Lanka rupees are shown in the surveys. The major aggregates are: (i) net foreign assets, (ii) claims on government (net), (iii) claims on public corporations (non-financial public enterprises (NFPEs)), (iv) claims on private sector, and (v) money (narrow money, quasi-money, M2b, and M4 in the Financial Survey).

In several instances, definition of sectors deviates from the recommendations in the *Guide* and the IMF's *Manual on Monetary and Financial Statistics, 2000 (MFSM)*, thus resulting in imperfect coverage (see section 2.2 and 2.3). Monetary and financial surveys in CBSL publications do not include the full range of instrument and sectors recommended in *MFSM*. However, the source data obtained through the collection system generally contain adequate detail on stocks that may permit compilation of sectoral balance sheets and the sectoral surveys as presented *MFSM*. The Financial Survey that is currently compiled by CBSL on experimental/developmental basis (and published in the *CBSL Annual Report*) is consistent in scope with the Broad Money survey recommended in *MFSM* (see section 2.2).

2.2 Scope (also refer to section 3.1.1 on the structure of Sri Lankan banking system)

2.2.1 The scope is broadly consistent with international standards, guidelines, or agreed practices.

CBSL publishes on a regular monthly basis a Monetary Survey (M1) and a Consolidated Monetary Survey (M2b). The Consolidated Monetary Survey M2b is used for analysis and for formulating policy. A monthly Financial Survey is currently compiled on experimental/developmental basis and is published in the *CBSL Annual Report*. Only positions of resident (see section 2.3.1) financial institutions vis-à-vis the rest are covered by monetary and financial surveys.

The Monetary Survey, and M1 narrow money and M2 broad money aggregates compiled within it, cover consolidated activities of the central bank (CBSL) and the deposit money banks (Domestic Banking Units (DBUs)). The M2 money aggregate is the sum of narrow money and saving, time/fixed, and notice deposits issued by DBUs. Residents' foreign currency-denominated deposits at DBUs are included in foreign liabilities (this deviation from the *Guide* is addressed by M2b (see below); also see section 3.2.2)).

The Consolidated Monetary Survey and the M2b broad money aggregate compiled within it cover consolidated activities of CBSL, deposit money banks (DBUs), and of one category of other banking institutions namely, (FCBUs), which in the Monetary Survey were treated as nonresident units. Broad money aggregate M2b is the sum of M2 broad money aggregate and foreign currency-denominated deposits of residents at DBUs and FCBUs (see section 3.2.2). The broad money aggregate M2b does not include quasi-monetary liabilities (savings, time/fixed, and notice deposits) issued by other categories of deposit-taking financial

institutions in Sri Lanka (at end-2000, these deposits accounted for approximately 22% of M4 broad money (see below)).

The scope of Financial Survey, which is presently in the experimental/developmental stage, covers consolidated activities of central bank, deposit money banks, and of all other deposit-taking institutions (FCBUs, Licensed Specialized Banks, and deposit-taking Finance Companies). M4 broad money aggregate compiled within the Financial Survey is the sum of M2 and of quasi-monetary liabilities issued by other banking institutions (these quasi-monetary liabilities comprise foreign currency-denominated, saving, time/fixed, and notice deposits of residents outside public and banking sectors). By covering positions of all depository corporations, the Financial Survey is therefore analogous in scope to Broad Money Survey (*MFSM*).

Restricted and import deposits, although relatively small, are included in the measures of money despite their limited encashability.

2.3 Classification/sectorization

2.3.1 Classification/sectorization systems used are broadly consistent with international standards, guidelines, or agreed practices.

Transactors are classified as resident based on the center of economic interest concept defined in the IMF's *Balance of Payments Statistics Manual*, 5th edition; all others are considered non-resident. Resident non-bank transactors are classified into the following sectors, which are broadly in accord with the recommendations in the *Guide*: government, public corporations, and private sector.

The scope of public corporations (NFPEs) sector is identified in consultation with Ministry of Finance and Planning. Based on these discussions, a list of public corporations is provided to the reporting financial institutions as a reference for consistent data compilation and reporting.²⁷ Procedures are also in place for identifying institutional coverage of government.²⁸ Specifically, *Financial Regulations of the Government of Sri Lanka* (1992), which governs financial activities of administrative units of the government (*viz.* ministries and departments), states in section F.R. 381 that application to open bank account must be made through the Chief Accounting Officer of the General Treasury and overdrafts are prohibited (section F.R. 387). These regulations immediately identify a client as being part of the government sector.

²⁷ Sri Lanka Airlines and Sri Lanka Telecom (since end-2000), although majority-owned by the government, are classified in private sector because their management is in private hands.

²⁸ For the purpose of monetary statistics, government sector in Sri Lanka comprises central government budgetary units (ministries and department), central government extrabudgetary units (the Tea Fund and the Rubber Fund), and provincial authorities (provincial authorities are not permitted to borrow and their funding is provided by the central government).

Data (*viz.* claims and deposits) on *Private Sector* presented in CBSL monetary/financial surveys are more accurately described as “Other resident sectors” or “Non-public sector” because coverage of private sector in CBSL surveys is broader than what is recommended in the *Guide* or *MFSM*. Depending on the survey, *Private Sector* includes transactors that should be classified in other sectors: (i) in Monetary Survey it comprises all resident transactors outside government, public corporations, CBSL and DBUs, and thus includes other categories of deposit-taking institutions (LCBs, and Finance companies (FCBUs are treated as nonresidents)) and other financial institutions (e.g., insurance companies, financial auxiliaries) in addition to the recommended coverage; (ii) in Consolidated Monetary Survey, it comprises all resident transactors outside government, public corporations, CBSL, DBUs, and FCBUs, and thus *Private Sector* includes a number of other deposit-taking institutions (LCBs, and Finance companies) and other financial institutions; (iii) in Financial Survey, *Private Sector* comprises all resident transactors outside government, public corporations, CBSL, and all other deposit-taking financial institutions. Thus, in Financial Survey, *Private Sector* comprises households/individuals, private companies,²⁹ non-profit institutions, and other financial institutions (insurance companies, leasing companies, financial auxiliaries), and therefore is closer in coverage of private sector, as recommended in the *Guide* and *MFSM*, than in the Monetary Survey or the Consolidated Monetary Survey. Nevertheless, positions with other (non-deposit taking) financial institutions should be separately identified.

Positions with government corporations (NFPEs) published in the monetary/financial surveys include positions with local authorities, which due to their relatively small level are not separately identified.³⁰ Claims arising from the holdings of government-guaranteed securities are appropriately attributed to the issuer rather than to the government.

Balance sheets reported by financial institutions generally contain sufficient detail to distinguish positions on the following financial instruments: transferable deposits (demand deposits), saving, time/fixed, notice deposits, foreign currency deposits, investments in shares, securities, and bonds. However, in some instances data on investments may combine positions on shares, securities and bonds (see section 3.1.1). SDR allocation is included in CBSL’s other liabilities, although recommended classification is in capital accounts (alternatively, SDR allocation can be separately identified). At the lowest level of disaggregation, data on private transactors aggregate positions with individuals/households, private enterprises, and non-profit institutions may also include positions with other financial institutions (see section 3.1.2).

²⁹ Private companies are registered in the Register of Companies (the Register of Companies is maintained at the Ministry of Trade) and must provide a registration number for initiating transactions with a bank.

³⁰ Based on data analysis, expenditures of local authorities’ (*viz.* municipal and urban councils, and pradeshiya sabbas) are less than 2.5 percent of central government’s expenditures.

The CBSL does not engage in swap transactions. Overnight repurchase agreements between CBSL and the banks are the main instrument of monetary policy, and these are extendible for longer periods based on CBSL's policy considerations. Repurchase agreements between CBSL and the banks are on the change of ownership basis rather than being treated as collateralized loans. Based on the ruling by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Sri Lanka, repurchase agreements between commercial banks are treated as collateralized loans. However, for a consistent treatment, adjustments are made to the data on interbank repo transactions so that all repurchase agreements in CBSL's monetary statistics are treated on a change of ownership basis³¹, although the recommended practice calls for their treatment as collateralized loans.

2.4 Basis for recording

2.4.1 Market prices are used to value flows and stocks.

Valuation of financial assets and liabilities is governed by the *Sri Lanka Accounting Standards*, which generally follows internationally recommended practices. Monetary gold is valued at market prices. SDRs are valued at the rate supplied by the IMF's Treasurer's Department. Prior to January 23, 2001, foreign currency-denominated assets and liabilities were converted into rupees using the mid-point between the official buying and selling exchange rate prevailing on the balance sheet date.³² Since January 23, 2001, positions on foreign currency denominated assets and liabilities at end-period are valued at the rate quoted by CBSL for that end-period.³³

Holdings of government securities (in rupees) are valued at cost or market value whichever is lower, except at the CBSL where they are valued at cost; foreign government securities are valued at cost, which is converted into rupees at the prevailing exchange rate (see above). Other asset securities (i.e., non-government) are at market price if traded in the markets or at cost for non-traded securities. Asset shares and other equities in trading portfolio are valued at cost or market value whichever is lower; shares and other equities in investment portfolio are at cost unless a "permanent decline in market value" calls for a revaluation, as discussed in SLAS. Liability securities and shares of own issue are at face value. Some of these practices deviate from the fair value valuations.

³¹ Detailed data reported by the banks on interbank repos are used to make the adjustment.

³² The Sri Lanka Rupee (LKR) was floated on January 23, 2001. Prior to floatation, the CBSL announced the official buying and selling rates for the US dollar. The cross rates for other currencies were calculated using the dollar rates for other currencies as quoted by Reuters.

³³ This rate is calculated by CBSL as a weighted average LKR/US dollar rate in transactions at the interbank foreign exchange market on the previous day. The cross rates for other currencies are calculated using the dollar rates for other currencies as quoted by Reuters.

Loans are valued at current book value and without adjustment for provisions arising from expected loan losses or defaults by borrowers. For capital adequacy purposes, commercial banks are permitted to revalue fixed assets every seven years. CBSL's fixed assets are not revalued.

Valuation adjustments, when they arise, are recorded in revaluations accounts.

2.4.2 Recording is done on an accrual basis.

Transactions are recorded at the time they occur. Before the due date, the accrued amounts are recorded on separate accrual accounts rather than incorporated with the underlying instrument, except for overdrafts. In the case of overdrafts, which are callable instruments, all accruing interest, fees, and commissions are continuously added to the principal. For all other instruments, accrued amounts are added to the principal on the date they are due.

SLAS allows interest accrual on overdue loans that are less than 90 days overdue. For loans overdue more than 90 days accrual is permitted but accrued amounts are placed in suspense accounts.

2.4.3 Grossing/netting procedures are broadly consistent with international standards, guidelines, or agreed practices.

In accordance with international principles, data are collected and compiled on a gross basis, in particular, claims on a transactor or group of transactions are not netted against the liabilities to that transactor or group of transactions.

When consolidated monetary accounts for a group of financial institutions are prepared, the intra-group positions are netted. This principle is implemented for the compilation of the Monetary Survey (interbank positions between CBSL and DBUs are netted), the Consolidated Monetary Survey (interbank positions between CBSL, DBUs and FCUBUs are netted), and the Financial Survey (interbank positions between CBSL and all deposit-taking financial institutions are netted). Other positions of depository institutions are aggregated by specific category (instrument, counterparty sector) for the purpose of presenting their outstanding claims and liabilities vis-à-vis the rest of the resident and non-resident sectors.

3. Accuracy and reliability—Source data and statistical techniques are sound, and output data sufficiently portray reality.

3.1 Source data

3.1.1 Source data are collected from comprehensive data collection programs that take into account country-specific conditions.

A comprehensive data collection program in Sri Lanka covers all deposit-taking institutions that comprise the banking system. In Sri Lanka the four components of the banking system are:

- (1) Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL)
- (2) Licensed Commercial Banks (LCBs)
 - (2a) Domestic Banking Units (DBUs)³⁴
 - (2b) Foreign Currency Banking Units (FCBUs)
- (3) Licensed Specialized Banks (LSBs)
 - (3a) National Savings Bank (NSB)
 - (3b) Development Finance Institutions
 - (3b1) National Development Bank (NDB)
 - (3b2) DFCC Bank
 - (3c) Private Savings and Development Banks
- (3d) State Mortgage and Investment Bank (SMIB)
- (3e) Regional Development Banks (RDBs)
- (4) Finance companies.

Only DBUs issue transferable deposit liabilities (*viz.* demand deposits/current accounts) to the public and enterprises; FCBUs accept only foreign currency-denominated deposits; LSBs and Finance companies accept saving, time/fixed, and notice deposits.

CBSL collects balance sheet and supplementary detailed data from all deposit-taking institutions in Sri Lanka. These data are the source data for compiling monetary accounts. End-month data are due at the CBSL by the 20th of the subsequent month.

Accounting records form the basis for the reported balance sheets and supplementary tables. The balance sheets and supplementary tables cover a broad range of financial instruments and economic sectors, as needed for compiling monetary statistics. Moreover, the balance sheets contain generally sufficient detail for classifying assets and liabilities by financial instrument and by economic sector, as defined in *MFSM*.^{35,36}

³⁴ At present, only DBUs are subject to statutory reserve requirements.

³⁵ A review of the composition of some reported balance sheet accounts and their classification by financial instrument relative to the guidelines in *MMFS*, Chapter 4 may yield enhancements. For example, classification of some items in the balance sheet group *Investments* (e.g., *Other securities* in the DBU balance sheet) could be ascertained and components identified according to whether they are *Securities other than shares* or *Shares and other equity*, as discussed in *MFSM* (Chapter 4).

³⁶ A review of the composition of some reported balance sheet accounts and their classification by sector of counterparty relative to the guidelines in *MMFS*, Chapter 3 may yield enhancements. For example, institutional coverage of *Government* and *Public Nonfinancial Corporations* sectors should be reviewed for consistency with the recommendations in *MMFS* (pp. 22-23) and in the Fund's *Manual on Government Finance Statistics* (for additional details also see government finance statistics section in this report); also, banks' positions with *Nonprofit institutions serving households* should be excluded from those of the enterprises and could be either separately identified or included in the positions with *Households*.

3.1.2 Source data reasonably approximate the definitions, scope, classifications, valuation, and timing of recording required.

All financial institutions in Sri Lanka follow accounting principles stated in *Sri Lanka Accounting Standards* (SLAS, revision 1999), which contains sections specifically dedicated to accounting practices relevant for financial institutions. SLAS was prepared by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Sri Lanka and is harmonized with *International Accounting Standards* (IAS). Where pertinent, SLAS contains notes on the deviations from IAS.

Reported source data provide a reasonably good approximation for the concepts, definitions, scope, and recording principles for compiling monetary statistics (also see Section 2 and other subsections in Section 3). One apparent deviation concerns aggregated end-month data on private sector (e.g., *customers resident in Sri Lanka*), which combines positions with individuals/households, private enterprises, non-profit institutions, and may also include positions with other financial institutions. To meet the guidelines in *MMFS*, more detailed data may be necessary from Licensed Specialized Banks and deposit-taking Finance Companies.

To insure sound data reporting, a breakdown of *other assets* and *other liabilities* is required. There are several supplementary sub-items identified as *other* that may be usefully disaggregated for improved classification by instrument and sector of counterparty.

Guarantees extended by CBSL to clients are included in its balance sheet (in *other liabilities*), with the appropriate contra-entries (in *other assets*). Since in published monetary statistics *other assets* and *other liabilities* are netted in *Other items net*, inclusion of the guarantees has no effect. (Nevertheless, whether on a gross or net basis, since these positions do not relate to transactions, they should be excluded from monetary statistics and presented as memorandum items.) Guarantees extended by commercial banks are recorded as off-balance sheet items and are excluded from monetary statistics.

Transactions in derivative instruments are negligible. However, to reflect developments in financial instruments and intermediation, a revision of SLAS, based on IAS 39, is being prepared.

3.1.3 Source data are timely.

The timeliness of source data is as follows:

- (1) CBSL data are available by 8th day following the end of each month.
- (2) LCB data (both DBU and FCBU) are available within 4 - 5 weeks.
- (3) LSB data, except for RDB data, are available within 4 - 5 weeks.
- (4) RDB data are available within 8 - 9 weeks.
- (5) Finance company data are available with 7 - 8 weeks.

Regional development banks' and Finance companies' data are currently available 8-9 weeks and 7-8 weeks, respectively, after the end of reference month, because of compilation and communication problems afflicting outlying branches.

(At present, only the Consolidated Monetary Survey, which covers positions of CBSL and LCBs, is published on a monthly basis.)

3.2 *Statistical techniques.*

3.2.1 *Data compilation employs sound statistical techniques.*

Each category of banking institutions uses a uniform balance sheet report form (supplementary notes provide guidance for completing the report forms). Data are reported in hard copy format and entered into electronic database at CBSL. The report forms' format follows a logical structure designed to facilitate data processing and compilation. Cross-checking is carried out at data entry stage and subsequently with the parallel data reported to the Banking Supervision Department. Add-checks for total asset/liability equality assist in detecting input errors. There are no other documented data management procedures.

3.2.2 *Other statistical procedures (e.g., data adjustments and transformations, and statistical analysis) employ sound statistical techniques.*

In compiling the Consolidated Monetary Survey, the deposits in Non-Resident Foreign Currency Accounts (NRFC) have been disaggregated into resident and non-resident categories based on a survey carried out by the banks. No other adjustments or transformations of source data are performed, except for adjusting interbank repo transactions to the change of ownership bases from the collateralized loan basis (see section 2.3.1) Seasonally adjusted monetary aggregates are not currently calculated.

3.3 *Assessment and validation.*

3.3.1 *Source data—including censuses, sample surveys and administrative records—are routinely assessed, e.g., for coverage, sample error, response error, and non-sampling error; the results of the assessments are monitored and made available to guide planning.*

Monetary statistics are based on a complete balance sheet data rather than samples or estimates. Source balance sheet data are extensively verified. Balance sheet data reported to CBSL Bank Supervision Department are used by DER for cross checking and verification of data reported directly to DER. Individual bank data are used for cross-checking interbank positions. Moreover, CBSL Banking Supervision Department carries out extensive continuous off-site inspection and verification of data for prudential purposes. On-site inspections are carried out on a two-year cycle.

3.3.2 *Main intermediate results are validated against other information where applicable.*

Cross-checks between monetary data and data on government operations are conducted on a weekly and monthly basis during meetings between CBSL and the Ministry of Finance's

General Treasury staff. Data reconciliations are conducted on a monthly as well as weekly basis during the meetings of CBSL's Domestic Debt Management Committee which includes staff of the General Treasury. Verifications of specific data relating to government positions with the CBSL and the two state-owned banks³⁷ are also carried out on a daily basis.

Since DER is also responsible for compiling balance of payments statistics, consistency checks between BOP and monetary data are conducted on a regular basis, including for end-of-month data.

3.3.3 Statistical discrepancies and other potential indicators of problems in statistical outputs are investigated and made available to guide users.

Procedures are in place to investigate classification/sectorization errors or omissions as a source of fluctuations or discrepancies. In particular, since 1996, reported data are entered into electronic database by DER staff, while prior to 1996, it was done by the data processing department. This procedure achieves several aims, among them, data entry is expedited and quality control is began at a data entry stage (*viz.* DER staff are familiar with the particular institutions, their activities and data, so that large movements in the data can be identified at the data entry stage, and inquiries are promptly made to the reporting institution).

3.4 Revision studies

3.4.1 Studies and analyses of revisions are carried out routinely and used to inform statistical processes.

Only final balance sheet data are used as a source for compiling monetary accounts. However, in a number of instances, for reasons of caution, published monetary accounts are labeled as provisional. Revisions, when they arise, result from routine accounting practice. Any corrections in the accounting records are reflected in monetary statistics. Oversight of revisions in the accounting records is under the purview of accounting and bank supervision departments.

4. Serviceability—Statistics are relevant, timely, consistent, and follow a predictable revisions policy.

4.1 Relevance

4.1.1 Processes to monitor the relevance and practical utility of existing statistics in meeting users' needs are in place.

To increase awareness of changes in the financial markets and institutions, central bank staff participate in conferences and seminars organized by SEACEN and other regional and local

³⁷ Government accounts are concentrated at the CBSL and at the two state-owned commercial banks.

bodies on a range of issues in financial sector, including compilation and reporting monetary statistics (see sections 0.2.1 and 0.3.1). CBSL conducts a regular public seminar series where the general public could raise issues on data dissemination practices. Request are taken into account when dissemination practices are reviewed (see section 0.3.1).

The CBSL assesses on an ongoing basis the analytical relevance of the reported data and statistical compilation methods for appropriately capturing macroeconomic, institutional and financial sector developments. In particular, CBSL staff conduct studies to gauge potential improvements that may be forthcoming from revisions in statistical methodologies. Two major examples are as follows:

Until 1997, FCBUs were treated in monetary statistics as pure off-shore (nonresident) units. As their transactions with the residents grew, the coverage of monetary survey was revised and expanded to include FCBUs. The resulting monetary statistics, M2b Consolidated Monetary Survey, is now used for policy purposes (monthly data have been compiled for January 1995 and onward).

With the expansion of LSBs' and of their activities, a need arose to develop a monetary aggregate more comprehensive than M2b. Hence, from 1999, the Financial Survey, covering activities of CBSL, LCBs, LSBs and Finance companies is compiled (monthly, on a developmental/experimental basis, with end-year data from 1997 and onward, published in *CBSL Annual Report*).

Thus, there is an unambiguous recognition within the CBSL that these studies have resulted in improved compilation of monetary statistics.

4.2 Timeliness and periodicity

4.2.1 Periodicity follows dissemination standards.

Monthly data on monetary aggregates Narrow Money (M1), Broad Money (M2) and Consolidated Broad Money (M2b) are published. Only annual data on Financial Survey (M4 survey) are currently published, but in a near term it is envisaged to commence publication of M4 survey on a monthly basis.

4.2.2 Timeliness follows dissemination standards.

Monetary Survey and Consolidated Monetary Survey are published within four to six weeks from the end of the respective month. Monthly M4 survey is currently compiled on experimental/developmental basis, with timeliness of about eight weeks after the end of reference month.

4.3 Consistency

4.3.1 Statistics are consistent or reconcilable over a reasonable period of time.

Detailed methodological notes are provided for time series data, describing main breaks and discontinuities in time series, their causes, as well as adjustments made to maintain consistency over time.

4.3.2 Statistics are internally consistent.

Interbank position among commercial banks, and data reported for statutory reserve purposes show that there are no large variations.

4.3.3 Statistics are consistent or reconcilable with those obtained through other data sources and/or statistical frameworks.

Sectorisation principles followed in money and banking, government finance, and balance of payment statistics are broadly consistent, thus promoting consistency in the coverage of the data. CBSL cross-checks data on net foreign assets positions and government finance statistics for consistency with balance of payments and government finance data (see sections 0.1.2 and 3.3.2).

4.4 Revision policy and practice

4.4.1 Revisions follow a regular, well established, and transparent schedule.

Only final balance sheet data are used as a source for compiling monetary accounts. However, in a number of instances, for reasons of caution, published monetary accounts are labeled as provisional. Revisions, when they arise, result from routine accounting practice. Any corrections in the accounting records are reflected in monetary statistics. Oversight of revisions in the accounting records is under the purview of accounting and bank supervision departments (see section 3.4.1).

Based on the ongoing studies (see section 4.1.1), revision arise, in due course, to reflect improved classification and coverage, in which case past data are typically revised to ensure comparability (e.g. reclassification of data on Sri Lanka Telecom).

4.4.2 Preliminary data are clearly identified.

Preliminary data are not used as a basis for end-month monetary statistics.

4.4.3 Studies and analyses of revisions are carried out routinely and made public.

When there is a methodological change, both revised data and data based on the previous format are published for a number of periods for comparison purposes, and detailed commentary notes are also provided (see section 4.4.1).

The general CBSL policy is that major data revisions are first published in the CBSL *Annual Report*, along with extensive methodological commentary and background analysis that led to revisions. Recently this policy was applied in the case of (a) expanding coverage of monetary survey to include operations of FCBUs and the regular monthly compilation of the

Consolidated Monetary Survey; and (b) expanding the coverage of monetary statistics to include operations of LSBs and Finance companies, as presented in the Financial Survey first published in the CBSL 1999 *Annual Report*.

5. Accessibility—Data and metadata are easily available and assistance to users is adequate.

5.1 Data accessibility

5.1.1 Statistics are presented in a way that facilitates proper interpretation and meaningful comparisons (layout and clarity of text, tables, and charts).

Presentation of monetary/financial surveys is analogous to the presentation in *International Financial Statistics (IFS)*. Additional detailed data are also published in the CBSL *Monthly Bulletin* and the *Annual Report*. One issue concerns presentation of net positions. When net positions (*viz.* net foreign assets, claims on government (net)) are shown in CBSL's monetary/financial surveys, the underlying gross data are not provided along side. Although gross data are shown in the separately published tables for the central bank's and the commercial banks' monetary accounts, the method for using these data to derive the net positions in the consolidated surveys is not readily apparent.

5.1.2 Dissemination media and formats are adequate.

Monetary data are disseminated in CBSL *Annual Report*, *Monthly Bulletin*, *Monthly Indicators* and *Weekly Indicators* releases. Data are also posted on the Web site maintained by the CBSL (www.centralbanklanka.org). Recently released data and longer time series can be accessed (*e.g.*, annual data from 1950 and onward), and work is underway to expand this database. Detailed analysis and commentary are presented in the *Annual Report*.

5.1.3 Statistics are released on a pre-announced schedule.

By law, the CBSL *Annual Report* has to be published within four months from the end of the reference year. There is no pre-announced schedule for release of weekly and monthly data. Nevertheless, CBSL strives to publish these data on a regular basis, since in case of a delay, inquiries are promptly received from regular users, which has influenced CBSL to adhere to an informal regular release timetable.

5.1.4 Statistics are made available to all users at the same time.

Monetary statistics are released by CBSL to all users simultaneously (see section 1.2.2).

5.1.5 Non-published (but non-confidential) sub-aggregates are made available upon request.

The general guideline is that only CBSL senior management can, subject to disclosure rules in the *CBSL Manual*, sanction provisions of any unpublished information (see section 0.1.3).

5.2 Metadata accessibility

5.2.1 Documentation on concepts, scope, classification, basis for recording, data sources, and statistical techniques is available, and differences from international standards are annotated.

Whenever the scope and methodology of monetary statistics are revised, the details are published in the CBSL *Annual Report*. Data in *Monthly Bulletin* and *Annual Report* carry detailed footnotes .

A CBSL document *Notes on Statistical Tables in the Monthly Bulletin* (1980) provides a comprehensive description of the data published in the *Monthly Bulletin*. However, based on discussion with users, its availability and usefulness (in view of its age) is questionable. CBSL staff noted that an update is planned for publication in the near term.

As a participant in GDDS, the metadata for Sri Lanka statistics, including for monetary statistics, are posted on the IMF's DSBB.

5.2.2 Different levels of detail are provided depending on intended audience and type of collection.

Only selected indicators are included in the weekly data releases. More comprehensive and detailed monetary/financial surveys and supporting data are published in the *Monthly Bulletin* and the *Annual Report*.

5.3 Assistance to users

5.3.1 Contact person for each subject field is publicized.

Name of the GDDS contact is posted in the IMF's DSBB. The Director of Information Department is available to clarify issues relating to press releases, published data etc. (see section 1.1.3), however, this information is not publicized.

5.3.2 Catalogues of publications, documents, and other services, including information on any changes, are widely available.

A list of CBSL publications is printed in the back of every *Monthly Bulletin*. CBSL publications are available for purchase from CBSL by mail or directly from CBSL's Center for Banking Studies.

VI. BALANCE OF PAYMENT STATISTICS

0. Prerequisites of quality

0.1 Legal and institutional environment

0.1.1 The responsibility for collecting, processing, and disseminating balance of payments statistics is clearly specified.

The Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL) is responsible for collecting and compiling Sri Lanka's balance of payments (BOP) statistics. The Monetary Law Act (MLA), Section 35, (Chapter 422) of the CBSL identifies BOP statistics among those that the CBSL may submit to the minister in charge of Finance and Planning and to publish in an annual report. Article 26-(a) of the Act empowers the CBSL to require any person to furnish such information as necessary for the discharge of this function. Although the MLA specifies annual BOP statistics, quarterly BOP statistics are compiled and published. Also monthly BOP statistics are compiled but not published.

0.1.2 Data sharing and coordination among data producing agencies are adequate.

Arrangements have been put into place among data producing agencies for the provision of statistical data to the CBSL for BOP compilation and these are adequate. There are timely arrangements for the provision of monthly administrative and other data to the CBSL, including data on goods from customs declarations; government payment and receipts, and defense imports from the Treasury/Ministry of Finance (MOF) and Ministry of Foreign Affairs(MFA); wheat imports obtained from the Cooperative Wholesale Establishment, crude oil from the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation (CPC), and aircraft imports from Sri Lanka Airlines (SLA). Services transactions are mostly from the International Transactions Reporting System (ITRS) supplemented with information directly from surveys of the major transport enterprises such as SLA, Sri Lanka Shipping Corporation and Mercantile Shipping company; regulatory agencies such as Sri Lanka Port Authorities (SLPA), the Department of Civil Aviation (DCA), and the Department of Immigration and Emigration; insurance from the insurance companies, and travel from the Ceylon Tourist Board (CTB). Official transfers is obtained with information from External Resources Division (ERD) of the (MOF), while direct investment flows are obtained from the Board of Investment (BOI), and foreign exchange outflows from the Exchange Control Department of the CBSL. Portfolio investment is from the Colombo Stock Exchange (CSE), while other investment from ITRS is supplemented with the information from the survey of companies and reports from commercial banks. Reserve transactions are obtained from CBSL and Treasury records. The CBSL conducts meetings with some of the agencies notably customs, ERD and BOI to discuss data reporting and other issues. Discussions are underway to obtain more comprehensive reporting of enterprises under BOI.

0.1.3 Respondents' data are to be kept confidential and used for statistical purposes only.

The confidentiality of individual respondents' data collected by the CBSL is guaranteed by the MLA, Section 45, which imposes the duty on every officer and servant of the CBSL to maintain the secrecy of all matters relating to the affairs of any banking institution, or any client of such institution or any department of the Government. The MLA specifies that, an officer who communicates such information to any person other than the Monetary Board or duly authorized officer of the CBSL shall be guilty of an offence. Also the Banking Act guarantees the confidentiality of banking returns to CBSL. In the surveys administered by the CBSL's Department of Economic Research (DER), respondents are informed that the data requested will be held in confidence and used only for statistical purposes. In new surveys, respondents are informed of the purpose of the survey, the importance of the balance of payments statistics, and the legal basis for the collection. Telephone follow-ups are held with new and regular reporters to explain changes to survey questionnaire. Computer-based storage and retrieval processes through passwords protect the integrity of data.

The CBSL has no formal guidelines on compilation and dissemination of statistics, though practices have evolved over the years which form the basis of the work. New staff, including temporary staff, learn these practices through formal and on-the-job-training, including the confidentiality of statistical work. Also, the conditions of the letter of appointment require staff to fully comply with these guidelines, by signing the "Handbook of the Code of Conduct" Sanction provisions exist for the release of unauthorized data.

0.1.4 Statistical reporting is ensured through legal mandate and/or measures implemented to encourage voluntary response.

The MLA form the legal basis for the collection of statistical information for compiling BOP statistics. Article 26 (b).2 specifies that failure to comply with this requirement to furnish information or to report shall constitute an offense. The CBSL has the legal authority to impose penalties. Moral suasion is also relied upon to ensure compliance.

In surveys, the CBSL explains to respondents the importance of the data being sought for policy formulation in order to encourage voluntary response.

0.2 Resources

0.2.1 Staff, financial, and computing resources are commensurate with institutional programs.

There are two Divisions involved in the compilation of BOP namely, the International Trade Division (ITD) and the International Finance Division (IFD). The ITD is responsible for compiling the international trade data and comprises a staff of 3 professionals and 4 support staff. It is equipped with 5 personal computers, and other data processing equipment. The IFD is responsible for income, services and the capital and financial account. It has 7 professional staff and 8 support staff. It has access to 10 personal computers and other smaller data processing equipment. There are also a pool of desk top computers for the support staff. The IFD has the responsibility for collecting and processing a large segment of

the data employed in compiling the BOP statistics, and manages the International Transactions Reporting System (ITRS). The ITRS is based on the reporting by domestic financial institutions of all foreign currency transactions that result in changes in the banks' foreign currency position in Sri Lanka. Generally, the DER strives to ensure that each staff member has access to a personal computer.

The staff is knowledgeable in balance of payments concepts and compilation methods, and most have several years of compilation experience, including training on the IMF's *Balance of Payments Manual*, fifth edition (*BPM5*). Many staff have been sponsored by the CBSL to travel abroad to study compilation methods in IMF organized courses or other centers. Many staff are required to participate in on-the-job training at the Center for Banking Studies (CBS), a department in the bank that provides training in commercial banking and other studies. New staff often undergo attachment training with commercial banks, port authorities, customs, and the CSE. Staff are also required to take continuing courses in statistics, money, banking and economics offered by the CBSL's Training Department (TD). New staff undergo formal training at the TD and on the job-training under the direction of experienced staff (mentoring). In 2000, the CBS organized a one-day seminar on 'Network/Internet/E-mail Training' for 270 CBSL officers, and an orientation program for 60 newly recruited staff.

Given these arrangements, the staffing is adequate to perform existing tasks, including processing of data from a number of small surveys administered by the IFD.

0.2.2 Measures to ensure efficient use of resources are implemented.

The DER compiles a yearly budget that is discussed in the CBSL-wide budget review committee, prior to submission to the Monetary Board for approval. The ITD and IFD provide estimates of their budget to the DER (taking into account previous year's budget), that is discussed and approved within the overall framework of the DER's budget. In the course of the year meetings are held between the DER and the ITD and IFD to review resource use in terms of the budget allocations, as well as methods for deriving efficiency in the work processes. To ensure efficient use of staff resources, assessment of staff performance is undertaken once a year by DER to identify areas of weaknesses in overall performance and recommend actions for improvement.

To improve information processing in the CBSL, a Local Area Network (LAN) was established linking 250 personal computers. The LAN is currently used for better dissemination of information and data-sharing between departments and thereby reducing duplication of efforts. A Wide Area Network connecting the head offices of all commercial banks and primary dealers to the CBSL was established and made functional in 2000. To facilitate fast, easy and economical communication within CBSL and with outside institutions, the E-mail facilities are provided to officers, while the internet facilities is extended to senior officers. These new facilities have enhanced efficiency in the operational work of the ITD and IFD, cutting down the time for communications among relevant staff.

0.3 Quality awareness

0.3.1 Processes are in place to focus on quality, to monitor the quality of the collection, processing, and dissemination of statistics, to acknowledge and deal with tradeoffs within quality, and to guide planning for existing and emerging needs.

There is no oversight or advisory body to evaluate quality indicators but the DER has established an institutional structure and culture that enables it to compile and disseminate statistics in a more transparent and reliable manner. The emphasis on comprehensive training of staff to be familiar with the best methods of data collection, compilation and dissemination, produces an environment that promotes quality. Peer pressure and mentoring of new staff foster data quality. The quality of the work is enhanced by the processes in place for data entry, verification and a series of divisional and departmental reviews of the output of the ITD and IFD. The CBSL's data is highly regarded by users and the CBSL strives to maintain this reputation through measures to ensure the dissemination of reliable data. Consequently, changes in statistical methodologies are subject to thorough review and long development periods. The CBSL organizes meetings with data users (Bankers Association, Chamber of Commerce, etc.) to get some feedback on the reliability and usefulness of the data. For example, heads of commercial banks and the CBSL management hold monthly meetings to discuss data and policy issues. Also, the CBSL holds monthly public lectures, where members of the public have the option to comment on economic matters including their views on data dissemination by CBSL.

1. Integrity

1.1. Professionalism

1.1.1 Statistics are compiled on an impartial basis.

The CBSL has a large degree of autonomy in its work including on data compilation. Staff of the DER are only guided by professional considerations in their assignment on data compilation and dissemination, and only report their work to their respective division heads, who in turn report to the Director of Research. The CBSL encourages its staff to undertake research studies, which include policy oriented studies and others covering macroeconomic statistics. Also, the DER encourages its staff to prepare research papers for circulation within the Department, as a means of spreading knowledge. Some of these studies are published in the "Staff Studies" of the CBSL. Weekly seminar series are conducted at the DER to promote scholarly exchanges and professional development. The CBSL also organizes lectures, in which outside experts are invited to give presentations on statistical and other economic issues. For example, to disseminate new ideas and to provide a forum for professionals and academics to exchange views and share experiences on economic and financial sector developments, the CBSL organized the four commemoration Lectures in 2000. Section 27 of the MLA enjoins the CBSL to promote and sponsor the training of technical personnel on statistical and other subjects, and the CBSL is authorized to defray the costs of study of employees either locally or abroad. The Training Department (TD) promotes post-graduate training, such as Masters and Ph.D programs for staff in economics, computer technology and statistics. The TD also nominated staff in 2000 to participate in short-term

training programs abroad, including those organized by the IMF, Bank of England, Federal Reserve Board, World Bank and the Swiss National Bank.

Section 12 of the MLA states that in order to devote his full professional time to the business of the CBSL, the Governor shall not accept or hold any other office or employment whatsoever, whether public or private and whether remunerated or not. The Governor's has a fixed term of six years, which is renewable.

1.1.2 Choices of sources and statistical techniques are informed solely by statistical considerations.

The choices of data sources and statistical techniques for BOP compilation are determined entirely by the CBSL staff. The choice of new surveys is determined by market factors such as the growing significance of an activity, as evidenced by the recent decision of IFD to start surveying information technology firms and internet payments. Revision studies also determine new statistical sources and statistical techniques, and provide a basis for new validation procedures. Analysis in reports is objective and relate to current developments in the balance of payments.

1.1.3 The appropriate statistical entity is entitled to comment on erroneous interpretation and misuse of statistics.

The CBSL provides regular press briefings/technical commentary in connection with the release of the annual balance of payments statistics. It regularly monitors national press coverage of its statistical products and where there is an erroneous interpretation of the balance of payments statistics, the Head of the Information Department (ID) will issue a response, after consultations within the CBSL. In cases of responses to major policy issues, clearance is obtained from the Governors.

1.2 Transparency

1.2.1 The terms and conditions under which statistics are collected, processed, and disseminated are available to the public.

The terms and conditions for the collection processing and disseminated of statistics are governed by the MLA, which specifies the minimum data to be presented. Confidentiality of reporting is ensured by Section 45 of the MLA which enjoins every officer of the CBSL to preserve and aid in preserving secrecy with regard to all matters relating to the affairs of any banking institution or of any client of such institution. The statement of methodology and methods used for compilation are outdated, partially documented and not disclosed to the public. These are being revised and it is expected that they will be published in the future CBSL publications and on the CBSL website.

1.2.2 Internal governmental access to statistics prior to release is publicly identified.

There is no internal governmental access before they are released to the public. The Governors have access to the *Monthly Bulletin* and *Annual Report* before they are released.

1.2.3 Products of the CBSL are clearly identified as such.

The CBSL's statistical publications are clearly identified as products of the CBSL, including contact address, price, volume number and others (ISBN and ISSN).

1.2.4 Advance notice is given of major changes in methodology, source data, and statistical techniques.

Data are indicated as provisional or revised in all CBSL publications. There is no advance notice given of major changes in methodology but any changes in methodology are usually introduced in the CBSL *Annual Report*, accompanied by detailed methodological commentary. The CBSL also provides a comparative table showing old and new methodology. Sometimes meetings are held with data providers and respondents to apprise them of changes in data requirements, following methodological changes.

1.3 Ethical standards

1.3.1 Guidelines for staff behavior are clear and publicized.

Guidelines for staff behavior are contained in the MLA, Sections 45—47. Also the CBSL's Manual outlines required behavior which are furnished to all new staff, but these guidelines are not disseminated to the public. This internal document is explained to all staff including part time workers. In order to avoid conflict of interest, staff of CBSL is prohibited from owning shares in financial institutions under the supervision of the CBSL. High professional standards are expected and observed by the staff of ITD and IFD.

2. Methodological soundness

2.1 Concepts and definitions

2.1.1 The overall structure in terms of concepts and definitions follows international standards, guidelines, or agreed practices.

In 1997 CBSL began the dissemination of an analytical presentation of balance of payments in broad conformity with the guidelines presented in the *BPM5*. The CBSL's Annual report for 2000 notes that the presentation of the balance of payments conforms as far as possible to the *BPM5*, although the financial account does not follow *BPM5* standard classification. Furthermore, all income, including interest and dividend income, is recorded on a payment basis.

2.2 Scope

2.2.1 The scope is broadly consistent with international standards, guidelines, or agreed practices.

The BOP statement covers activities of the Sri Lanka economy with the rest of the world. It covers all entities operating in the geographical territory of Sri Lanka, including Foreign Currency Banking Units and the Duty Free Zones. No estimates are made of smuggling, under invoicing of imports or over invoicing of exports. Also, no data are compiled on construction services, and reinvested earnings. Partial data is available on communication services and compensation of employees. The international Transactions Reporting System (ITRS) does not cover Licensed Specialized Banks (LSBs) and finance companies. Deviations from the *BPM5* guidelines are not clearly identified in public sources.

2.3 Classification/sectorization

2.3.1 Classification/sectorization systems used are broadly consistent with international standards, guidelines, or agreed practices.

The CBSL's classification of balance of payments transactions is broadly consistent with the *BPM5*, although there are some exceptions. The current account follows the *BPM5* in identifying transactions in goods, services, income, and current transfers.

The values of goods exported and imported are recorded on f.o.b. and c.i.f. basis respectively. Estimates are made of the insurance and freight part of c.i.f. imports, but these are not used in the BOP presentations of the CBSL as their reliability is not certain. In terms of goods, the classification does not identify goods procured in ports by carriers, or repairs on goods.

The capital and financial account is divided into capital account (composed mainly of capital transfers) and financial account composed of three categories, private investment, central government and the monetary sector. Though this classification is not in line with the standard classification of financial account under *BPM5*, the components can be reconciled with the *BPM5* categories of direct investment, portfolio investment other investment and reserves.

In the financial account, private investment is classified into short and long term. Short-term includes portfolio, other private short-term, and commercial banks. Long-term includes direct investment, privatization proceeds, and other private long-term (loans received by Sri Lanka Airlines). Central government is classified into long term (including long-term supplier's credit for defense imports), other long term, and short-term. The monetary sector is composed of government sector, central bank, transactions with IMF, valuation adjustments, monetary gold, allocation of SDRs, and errors and omissions. The reporting on foreign direct investment is based on the information from the Board of Investment (BOI), which is responsible for approving nonresident long-term direct investment in Sri Lanka in the form of equity. Income from direct investment such as profits and dividends of companies controlled by nonresidents—mainly foreign incorporated companies—are obtained from the ITRS, which records all Share Investment External Rupee Account Transactions (SIERAT) in Sri Lanka. Reinvested earnings on direct investment are not captured and the IFD intends to develop a system to measure reinvested earnings on inward direct investment.

The Colombo Stock Exchange (CSE) provides data on sales and purchases of shares, bonds, debentures, etc. quoted in companies. Nonresident transactions in domestically issued money market instruments cannot be separately identified. Nonresidents are not allowed to invest in Treasury bills.

With regard to other investment, the Public Enterprise Reform Commission (PERC) provides data on the foreign stake in the privatized public enterprises, while the External Resources Department (ERD) of the MOF provides the main information on disbursements and repayments of government debt.

Data on commercial banks' assets and liabilities are obtained from their balance sheets provided at the end of each month. Transactions are estimated as the change in stock levels and therefore include valuation changes.

The reserve assets and liabilities (referred to as the monetary sector) reflect the changes in foreign assets and liabilities of the government and the CBSL. The reserve assets include Gold, SDR holdings, liquid balances abroad, bilateral credit balances, foreign securities, Asian Clearing Union Assets, Reserve position in the Fund, and foreign currency deposits. The changes are estimated as differences in stocks and therefore include valuation changes, which are separately identified in the BOP statements.

The *BPM5* contains a sectoral classification—monetary authorities, general government, banks, and other sectors—for selected current and financial account items. The *Monthly Bulletin* and *Annual Report* provides, for selected financial account items, only a partial sectoral classification and instrument classification. For example, no sectorization and instrument is provided for portfolio investment. No instrument classification is available for central government transactions in the financial account. Also, no instrument and sector classifications are available for other private long-term and short term transactions in the financial account.

Deviations from the *BPM5* guidelines are not clearly identified in public sources.

2.4 Basis for recording

2.4.1 Market prices are used to value flows and stocks.

Transactions are valued at market prices

The units of account are both Sri Lanka rupee and the U.S. dollar. All data are collected in Sri Lanka rupees and the conversion takes place at period average exchange rates. For the most part, conversion is done on a monthly basis. Where actual rates are known these are used.

Reserve transactions in foreign exchange are also derived from stock data and are adjusted to remove the effects of exchange rate fluctuations. Conversion of foreign exchange balances into Sri Lanka rupee is at the end of month market exchange rate.

2.4.2 Recording is done on an accrual basis.

Transactions in goods, are largely recorded on an accrual basis, while those on services, income, transfers are on a cash (payment) basis Data on reinvested earnings are not compiled.

2.4.3 Grossing/netting procedures are broadly consistent with international standards, guidelines, or agreed practices.

Current account items are recorded on a gross basis, while financial account items are recorded on a net basis, separately for asset and liability components.

3. Accuracy and reliability

3.1 Source data

3.1.1 Source data are collected from comprehensive data collection systems that take into account country-specific conditions.

The primary data sources for Sri Lanka's balance of payments are: (1) custom's declarations; (2) the ITRS for data from the banking system (3) administrative records of the government; (4) CBSL; (5) and surveys carried out by CBSL and other agencies. Data on goods are based on customs' declarations, supplemented by CBSL data on wheat imports obtained from the Cooperative Wholesale Establishment, on crude oil from the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation (CPC), on defense imports from the government, and on aircraft imports from Sri Lanka Airlines. Data on exports are based on customs declarations, supplemented by information on petroleum exports from CPC, and diamond exports from the National Gem and Jewellery Authority. Also, the ITD conducts a monthly survey on industrial production to cross-check customs information on industrial exports such as textile and garment exports.

These primary source data are supplemented with information from several secondary data sources namely, transport services obtained directly from the major transport enterprises, insurance services directly from the insurance companies, travel services from the Ceylon Tourist Board, administrative data on foreign direct investment in Sri Lanka from the BOI, data on nonresident sales and purchases of domestic securities compiled by the CSE, information on international aid from the ERD of the MOF, and several small surveys in communication, and credit card companies. The surveys have been designed to take account of compilation needs, with some surveys being monthly and others quarterly or annual.

3.1.2 Source data reasonably approximate the definitions, scope, classifications, valuation, and time of recording required.

The ITRS reporting system does not cover the operations of Licensed Specialized Banks and finance companies. The ITRS does not cover foreign account bank accounts of key enterprises. The reporting system does permit netting and the IFD does not adjust the data to a gross basis. The surveys administered by the IFD do not cover construction activities, and foreign embassies and international organizations to obtain information on compensation of

employees. Also, surveys do not cover equity (including capital goods) and short and long-term loans and trade credits between affiliated companies

There is no reporting mechanism to systematically record non-cash transactions in BOP statistics such as exports and imports financed by loans via banks abroad, intercompany transactions, migrants effects, reinvested earnings, stock dividends and debt to equity conversions. However, the ITD makes a timing adjustment in the goods merchandise for petroleum and others, when the change of ownership and the payment for these goods are recorded in different periods.

3.1.3 Source data are timely.

The source data are generally timely. The ITD and the IFD follow-up with late respondents via telephone, in order to collect information to meet publication deadlines.

3.2 Statistical techniques

3.2.1 Data compilation employs sound statistical techniques.

Professional staff are required to document their work practices, with regard to coding of data, adjustments of primary data, and verification procedures, which serve as a practical training tool for new staff. Other techniques used include trend analysis to isolate data outliers, verification of relations between component and totals, and price/value analysis of some merchandise trade data. But the BOP worksheets do not systematically include systematic estimation of undercoverage and nonsurveyed components.

3.2.2 Other statistical procedures (e.g., data adjustments and transformations, and statistical analysis) employ sound statistical techniques.

For goods transactions, several adjustments are made to the trade statistics to improve coverage and timing.: The survey information is used to construct timing adjustments with respect to petroleum imports delivered outside the customs boundary, and for the delivery of aircraft imports. Imports recorded on a c.i.f basis are converted to an f.o.b basis, through the application of a factor that is determined on the basis of volume and freight earnings information periodically obtained from periodic surveys, although the f.o.b imports is not used in CBSL presentations. However, there are no systematic procedures to take account of nonresponse, partial coverage, and below threshold items.

Data on receipts and payments for communication services are sourced from the ITRS, which records net settlements for such transactions. Credit card transactions are recorded on a net basis in the ITRS reporting system and a survey of banks is now undertaken to validate the ITRS data. The data on travel receipts are also augmented with information from the domestic airlines on passenger fares for domestic flights (rupee-denominated transactions).

3.3 Assessment and validation

3.3.1 Source data—including censuses, sample, surveys and administrative records—are routinely assessed, e.g., for coverage, sample error, response error, and non-sampling error; the results of the assessments are monitored and made available to guide planning.

The ITD and IFD mainly undertake a periodic survey of key enterprises, regulatory organizations, and trade and industrial association through a collections register. This partial coverage collection has been determined by factors such past significance, the growth and the impact of transactions of the respondents on the BOP. To obtain current data however, the IFD undertakes regular telephone surveys. The Industrial Division of the DER does a more comprehensive survey including sample surveys and census. Data are sometimes analyzed to explain large abnormalities, which provide an opportunity for bilateral discussions with survey respondents. However, no systematic monitoring of assessments are undertaken.

3.3.2 Main intermediate results are validated against other information where applicable.

High-value or other unusual transactions identified in primary or secondary data sources are queried with respondents or with the agency responsible for the data. The stock data reported on the portfolio investment survey by financial institutions is checked against information in the ITRS. Some checks between the stock and flow data reported in the ITRS are made by the IFD Division. The data on the volume of international travelers as compiled by the airlines and civil aviation is compared with the recorded data on travel receipts and payments each month, emanating from the ITRS.

3.3.3 Statistical discrepancies and other potential indicators of problems in statistical outputs are investigated.

Statistical discrepancies are normally investigated.

3.4 Revision studies

3.4.1 Studies and analyses of revisions are carried out routinely and used to inform statistical processes.

Revisions studies are not routinely studied but may be undertaken on a case by case basis. If necessary, these could lead to a review of the statistical techniques and source data. See item 3.3.3, above.

4. Serviceability

4.1 Relevance

4.1.1 Processes to monitor the relevance and practical utility of existing statistics in meeting users' needs are in place.

The CBSL organizes monthly meetings with banks and primary dealers to discuss new policy initiatives, statistical products and CBSL's data requirements. It is the intention to hold

similar meetings in the future with other users. In the past year, CBSL staff participated in international statistical meetings that dealt with international trade in services and a seminar on external debt statistics.

4.2 Timeliness and periodicity

4.2.1 Periodicity follows dissemination standards.

The CBSL disseminates quarterly BOP statistics, thereby meeting the quarterly periodicity prescribed by the SDDS for BOP statistics. The CBSL also disseminates a range of other external sector statistics on a monthly basis—trade statistics, and data on international reserves. The CBSL also disseminates some statistics in the Selected Weekly Economic Bulletin (exchange rates, reserves)

4.2.2 Timeliness follows dissemination standards.

The CBSL disseminates preliminary quarterly BOP statistics no later than one quarter after the end of the reference quarter, thereby meeting the timeliness of one quarter prescribed by the SDDS for BOP statistics. The CBSL also compiles monthly merchandise trade data with a lag of 4-5 weeks.

4.3 Consistency

4.3.1 Statistics are consistent or reconcilable over a reasonable period of time.

When the BOP statistics were converted to a *BPM5* basis in early 1997, the annual data were revised and disseminated back to 1993, and quarterly data were revised back to 1997, and made available in the Annual Bulletin (including a comparison table with the old data) and on the CBSL website. The publication provided an overview of the major changes in moving to *BPM5*.

Any unusual changes in economic trends—such as the large increase in errors and omissions are identified and explained in a footnote in the CBSL reports to the public.

4.3.2 Statistics are internally consistent (e.g., accounting identities observed).

The IFD normally reviews the methods, processes and output to make sure that the statistics are internally consistent.

4.3.3 Statistics are consistent or reconcilable with those obtained through other data sources and/or statistical frameworks.

The data on the foreign assets and liabilities of financial institutions from the ITRS are normally reconciled with the money and banking statistics. The external debt flows are normally reconciled with the external debt statistics compiled by the ERD. The current account statistics are consistent with the data on the external sector in the national accounts.

4.4 Revision policy and practice

4.4.1 Revisions follow a regular, well-established and transparent schedule.

There is no regularly publicized schedule for revisions. In practice, preliminary quarterly BOP statistics which are available at the end of the second month following the reference quarter, may be revised in the subsequent quarters. The annual BOP statistics of the previous year are published during the second quarter of the following year in the Annual Report. These preliminary annual data may be revised for one more year, after which no more revisions may be made to the data. The causes of significant revisions are explained to users in the publications.

4.4.2 Preliminary data are clearly identified.

In the CBSL's statistical publications, the preliminary data are identified with the letter "p."

4.4.3 Studies and analyses of revisions are carried out routinely and made public.

Studies of revisions are not routinely carried out. Where there are significant revisions, factors contributing to the difference with the preliminary statistics are analyzed and explained in the published reports. In most cases, they result from the revision of the import-export statistics, additional data collected from companies or related associations, and the correction of errors.

5. Accessibility

5.1 Data accessibility

5.1.1 Statistics are presented in a way that facilitates proper interpretation and meaningful comparisons (layout and clarity of text, tables, and charts).

In the *Monthly Bulletin*, which is normally released with a month's lag, the BOP statistics are presented in a way that facilitates proper interpretation and meaningful comparisons of the preceding year's series. The data are presented in columnar form in a series of tables in rupees and US\$, and then progressively provide additional component detail. However, there are only four quarters of data. In contrast, the *Annual Report* contains several years of annual data for several years (ten) depending on the relevant component. The presentation of the BOP statistics is broadly in line with the standard components presented in the *BPM5*, except in the financial account. Direction of trade statistics and a commodity breakdown of exports and imports, as well as unit value and volume indices provide additional analytical information.

5.1.2 Dissemination media and formats are adequate.

The dissemination formats for the BOP statistics are adequate. The *Monthly Bulletin* contains BOP data for 4 quarters, two of which refer to the current year, and the other two to the previous year for comparison purposes. The BOP data in the *Annual Report* are first

published in a press release and made available at the same time on the CBSL's website. Data back to 1991 are available in the *Annual Report* for most series.

5.1.3 Statistics are released on a pre-announced schedule.

The BOP statistics are not released according to an advance release calendar (ARC).

5.1.4 Statistics are made available to all users at the same time.

The data are released simultaneously to all interested users on the day of the release

5.1.5 Non-published (but non-confidential) sub-aggregates are not made available upon request.

The CBSL tries to accommodate requests from users for non-published (but non-confidential) sub-aggregates.

5.2 Metadata availability

5.2.1 Documentation on concepts, scope, classifications, basis of recording, data sources, and statistical techniques is available, and differences from international standards are annotated.

Documentation of methodology and statistical techniques is available but incomplete, and is not published. The 1997 Annual Report however provided some documentation on the methodology, concepts, scope and classification of the BOP statistics in connection with conversion to *BPM5*. The *Monthly Bulletin* does not provide methodological notes about BOP statistics. The CBSL also provides methodological information for publication in the IMF's *Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbook*.

5.2.2 Different levels of detail are provided depending on intended audiences and type of collection.

Unpublished (but non-confidential) series or tabulations can be provided. Seasonally adjusted BOP statistics are not compiled, and there are no plans to develop such statistics.

5.3 Assistance to users

5.3.1 Contact person for each subject field is publicized.

The ID of the CBSL offers assistance in replying to requests from users of statistics. No contact person for balance of payments statistics is provided in the *Monthly Bulletin*. The Bulletin only states that it is issued monthly by the DER under the direction of a Staff Editorial Committee. The DER encourages the public to contact it for assistance through its outreach programs.

5.3.2. Catalogues of publications, documents, and other services, including information on any charges, are widely available.

A list of the statistical products produced by the CBSL is presented in its website. The CBSL does charges for its monthly publications at subsidized rates.

**Data Quality Assessment Framework—Generic Framework
(March 2001)**

Quality Dimensions	Elements	Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prerequisites of quality 	<p>0.1 Legal and institutional environment – <i>The environment is supportive of statistics.</i></p> <p>0.2 Resources – <i>Resources are commensurate with needs of statistical programs.</i></p> <p>0.3 Quality awareness – <i>Quality is recognized as a cornerstone of statistical work.</i></p>	<p>0.1.1 The responsibility for collecting, processing, and disseminating statistics is clearly specified.</p> <p>0.1.2 Data sharing and coordination among data producing agencies are adequate.</p> <p>0.1.3 Respondents' data are to be kept confidential and used for statistical purposes only.</p> <p>0.1.4 Statistical reporting is ensured through legal mandate and/or measures implemented to encourage voluntary response.</p> <p>0.2.1 Staff, financial, and computing resources are commensurate with institutional programs.</p> <p>0.2.2 Measures to ensure efficient use of resources are implemented.</p> <p>0.3.1 Processes are in place to focus on quality, to monitor the quality of the collection, processing, and dissemination of statistics, to acknowledge and deal with tradeoffs within quality, and to guide planning for existing and emerging needs.</p>
<p>1. Integrity</p> <p><i>The principle of objectivity in the collection, processing, and dissemination of statistics is firmly adhered to.</i></p>	<p>1.1 Professionalism – <i>Professionalism in statistical policies and practices is a guiding principle.</i></p> <p>1.2 Transparency – <i>Statistical policies and practices are transparent.</i></p> <p>1.3 Ethical standards – <i>Policies and practices are guided by ethical standards.</i></p>	<p>1.1.1 Statistics are compiled on an impartial basis.</p> <p>1.1.2 Choices of sources and statistical techniques are informed solely by statistical considerations.</p> <p>1.1.3 The appropriate statistical entity is entitled to comment on erroneous interpretation and misuse of statistics.</p> <p>1.2.1 The terms and conditions under which statistics are collected, processed, and disseminated are available to the public.</p> <p>1.2.2 Internal governmental access to statistics prior to their release is publicly identified.</p> <p>1.2.3 Products of statistical agencies/units are clearly identified as such.</p> <p>1.2.4 Advance notice is given of major changes in methodology, source data, and statistical techniques.</p> <p>1.3.1 Guidelines for staff behavior are clear and publicized.</p>

**Data Quality Assessment Framework—Generic Framework
(March 2001)**

Quality Dimensions	Elements	Indicators
<p>2. Methodological soundness</p> <p><i>The methodological basis for the statistics follows international standards, guidelines, or agreed practices.</i></p>	<p>2.1 Concepts and definitions – <i>Concepts and definitions used are in accord with standard statistical frameworks.</i></p> <p>2.2 Scope – <i>The scope is in accord with internationally accepted standards.</i></p> <p>2.3 Classification/sectorization – <i>Classification and sectorization systems are in accord with internationally accepted standards.</i></p> <p>2.4 Basis for recording – <i>Flows and stocks are valued and recorded according to internationally accepted standards.</i></p>	<p>2.1.1 The overall structure in terms of concepts and definitions follows international standards, guidelines, or agreed practices: see dataset-specific framework.</p> <p>2.2.1 The scope is broadly consistent with international standards, guidelines, or agreed practices: see dataset-specific framework.</p> <p>2.3.1 Classification/ sectorization systems used are broadly consistent with international standards, guidelines, or a agreed practices: see dataset-specific framework.</p> <p>2.4.1 Market prices are used to value flows and stocks. 2.4.2 Recording is done on an accrual basis. 2.4.3 Grossing/netting procedures are broadly consistent with international standards, guidelines, or agreed practices.</p>
<p>• 3. Accuracy and reliability</p> <p><i>Source data and statistical techniques are sound, and output data sufficiently portray reality.</i></p>	<p>3.1 Source data – <i>Source data available provide an adequate basis to compile statistics.</i></p> <p>3.2 Statistical techniques – <i>Statistical techniques employed conform with sound statistical procedures.</i></p> <p>3.3 Assessment and validation – <i>Source data are regularly assessed and results validated.</i></p> <p>3.4 Revision studies – <i>Revisions, as a gauge of reliability, are tracked and mined for the information they may provide.</i></p>	<p>3.1.1 Source data are collected from comprehensive data collection programs that take into account country-specific conditions. 3.1.2 Source data reasonably approximate the definitions, scope, classifications, valuation, and time of recording required. 3.1.3 Source data are timely.</p> <p>3.2.1 Data compilation employs sound statistical techniques. 3.2.2 Other statistical procedures (e.g., data adjustments and transformations, and statistical analysis) employ sound statistical techniques.</p> <p>3.3.1 Source data—including censuses, sample surveys and administrative records—are routinely assessed, e.g., for coverage, sample error, response error, and non-sampling error; the results of the assessments are monitored and made available to guide planning. 3.3.2 Main intermediate results are validated against other information where applicable. 3.3.3 Statistical discrepancies and other potential indicators of problems in statistical outputs are investigated.</p> <p>3.4.1 Studies and analyses of revisions are carried out routinely and used to inform statistical processes.</p>

**Data Quality Assessment Framework—Generic Framework
(March 2001)**

Quality Dimensions	Elements	Indicators
<p>4. Serviceability</p> <p><i>Statistics are relevant, timely, consistent, and follow a predictable revisions policy.</i></p>	<p>4.1 Relevance – <i>Statistics cover relevant information on the subject field.</i></p> <p>4.2 Timeliness and periodicity – <i>Timeliness and periodicity follow internationally accepted dissemination standards.</i></p> <p>4.3 Consistency – <i>Statistics are consistent over time, internally, and with major data systems.</i></p> <p>4.4 Revision policy and practice – <i>Data revisions follow a regular and publicized procedure.</i></p>	<p>4.1.1 Processes to monitor the relevance and practical utility of existing statistics in meeting users’ needs are in place.</p> <p>4.2.1 Periodicity follows dissemination standards. 4.2.2 Timeliness follows dissemination standards.</p> <p>4.3.1 Statistics are consistent or reconcilable over a reasonable period of time. 4.3.2 Statistics are internally consistent (e.g., accounting identities observed). 4.3.3 Statistics are consistent or reconcilable with those obtained through other data sources and/or statistical frameworks.</p> <p>4.4.1 Revisions follow a regular, well-established and transparent schedule. 4.4.2 Preliminary data are clearly identified. 4.4.3 Studies and analyses of revisions are made public.</p>
<p>5. Accessibility</p> <p><i>Data and metadata are easily available and assistance to users is adequate.</i></p>	<p>5.1 Data accessibility – <i>Statistics are presented in a clear and understandable manner, forms of dissemination are adequate, and statistics are made available on an impartial basis.</i></p> <p>5.2 Metadata accessibility – <i>Up-to-date and pertinent metadata are made available.</i></p> <p>5.3 Assistance to users – <i>Prompt and knowledgeable support service is available.</i></p>	<p>5.1.1 Statistics are presented in a way that facilitates proper interpretation and meaningful comparisons (layout and clarity of text, tables, and charts). 5.1.2 Dissemination media and formats are adequate. 5.1.3 Statistics are released on a pre-announced schedule. 5.1.4 Statistics are made available to all users at the same time. 5.1.5 Non-published (but non-confidential) sub-aggregates are made available upon request.</p> <p>5.2.1 Documentation on concepts, scope, classifications, basis of recording, data sources, and statistical techniques is available, and differences from international standards are annotated. 5.2.2 Different levels of detail are provided depending on intended audience and type of collection.</p> <p>5.3.1 Contact person for each subject field is publicized. 5.3.2 Catalogues of publications, documents, and other services, including information on any charges, are widely available.</p>

¹ The elements and indicators included here bring together the “pointers to quality” that are applicable across the five identified dimensions of data quality.

June..., 2001

[Address]

Dear []:

At the request of the Sri Lanka authorities, the IMF is conducting a review of Sri Lanka's economic statistics in the context of the Fund's *Reports on Observance of Standards and Codes* (ROSCs), and a description of ROSCs and some recent country examples, can be found on the Fund's website at <http://www.imf.org/external/standards/index.htm>). One important aspect of conducting ROSC is a determination of the usefulness of a country's macroeconomic statistics to users of those statistics. To that end, we are conducting an informal survey of key users of Sri Lanka's economic statistics among the media, financial institutions, rating agencies, and academia, and your response would be greatly appreciated. Your response will be treated confidentially and the final report will not refer to any institution or respondent by name.

If the Sri Lanka authorities agree, the final report will be published. The IMF strongly encourages publication. To guide your response, I am attaching a short questionnaire, but please do not feel constrained by the scope of the issues presented therein. It would be appreciated if your response could be sent by facsimile to [], if possible by []. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me via email (NHaque@imf.org) or telephone [].

Sincerely yours,

Nadeem Ul Haque
IMF Senior Resident Representative in Sri Lanka

Short Questionnaire for Users of Sri Lanka's Economic Data

1. **Coverage:** Are you satisfied with the coverage of Sri Lanka's economic statistics? Do they cover all the areas that are relevant for economic analysis? Is the level of detail, for example of the monetary and fiscal data, sufficient? Is the institutional coverage, for example of the fiscal data, satisfactory?

2. **Periodicity and Timeliness:** Are you satisfied with the frequency (i.e. weekly, monthly, quarterly, annual) of Sri Lanka's economic statistics? Are there any that you would like to see at higher frequency? Are data released soon enough? Which data would you like to see sooner?

3. **Advance Release Calendars:** Sri Lanka does not adhere to advanced release calendars for its core economic statistics. Would you like to see this practice implemented? Would this practice help to ensure equal access to data once they are released?

4. **Accessibility:** Can you get easy access to information about the full spectrum of statistics produced and published? Does the available metadata (information and explanation about the data) enhance the analytical usefulness of the data? In which data sets do you see room for improvement?

4. **Overall Quality:** How do you assess the overall quality of Sri Lanka's economic statistics? Is the underlying methodology sound and clearly described? Are the statistics impartial and accurate? In which areas do you see room for improvement? How would you compare Sri Lanka's statistics with those of other countries in the region?