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Item 8 of the Provisional Agenda

COMMENTS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE
COMMON METADATA FRAMEWORK

Note prepared by the UNECE secretariat

I.   BACKGROUND

1.   The paper "Update on the Development of the Common Metadata Framework" (ECE/CES/BUR/2009/OCT/20), with addenda concerning Part A of that framework, and the Generic Statistical Business Process Model, were circulated to the CES Bureau for comments on 27 August 2009. Comments were received from Australia, Brazil, Slovenia and the United States, and have been summarised below.

II.   COMMENTS ON THE MAIN PAPER

2.   The comments on the main paper were supportive of the general approach. Australia "strongly supports both the concept of working toward a common framework and the progress and outputs so far". Australia highlighted the need to develop Parts B and C of the framework, stressing the need for documentation that "draws together - at a summary level and in a coherent manner - the detailed reference material". Australia expressed its willingness to participate in this work.

III.   COMMENTS ON ADDENDUM 1: COMMON METADATA FRAMEWORK PART A, STATISTICAL METADATA IN THE CORPORATE CONTEXT

3.   Australia confirmed its support for this text, adding that it is "successful in relating considerations of metadata to other aspects of corporate strategy" and "useful not only from a metadata perspective but (it) can also assist with developing strategies in other areas of the business (e.g. dissemination)". However, Australia also suggested that simplification of some of the content and terminology may help to make it more accessible to non-specialists. Australia also suggested adding explicit information on copyright.

4.   Slovenia provided a revision of the summary of its case study, and questioned the purpose and balance of the case study section. Slovenia proposed that statistical organizations "should be officially invited at the DG level to provide the case studies", rather than the current practice of inviting delegates to work sessions on statistical metadata (METIS) to prepare them.

5.   The United States Energy Information Agency suggested adding a brief executive summary (this was also supported by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics). They

also suggested adding more explicit information on cost/benefit analyses and potential resistance by managers and staff to a statistical metadata system.

6.   The United States Federal Reserve Board said that the text is "really well done". They provided several detailed observations, and "appreciated the case study comments and the fact that there is no 'official' SMS technology touted".

IV.   COMMENTS ON ADDENDUM II: THE GENERIC STATISTICAL BUSINESS PROCESS MODEL (GSBPM)

7.   Australia recognised the "relevance and value of the GSBPM as a reference model when communicating across statistical agencies", adding that it "could work as a reference model for business architecture within the ABS". Australia suggested adding discussion pages in the METIS wiki to support implementations and gather ideas for future revisions, and further work on the alignment of the GSBPM with the latest Data Documentation Initiative model (DDI v.3.0).

8.   Brazil said this paper was very useful for them in the context of the discussion of the Strategic Plan 2010-2014, where it provided a reference to "describe clearly and concisely" different areas of work. It was also useful in the elaboration of a project to revise the production process, and the program of economic statistics, where "having the generic model as a starting point has been very productive". Brazil would welcome more guidance of the treatment of National Accounts, consultation with respondents, and post-enumeration surveys within the model.

9.   The United States Federal Reserve Board questioned the need for the references to the SDMX (Statistical Data and Metadata eXchange) initiative in the text, and the relevance of SDMX to this model. The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics suggested adding text on translating the GSBPM to a data model.

V.   SUMMARY

10.   The UNECE Secretariat and the Steering Group on Statistical Metadata thank the Bureau for these supportive and constructive comments, which will be reflected in the next revisions of the various components of the Common Metadata Framework.

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