Official Statistics

Challenges for Urban & Regional Statistics
Importance of Official Statistics

A formal answer to the question "What are official statistics?" was given in July 1993 in the United Kingdom White Paper on Open Government where it said:

- "Official statistics are collected by government to inform debate, decision making and research both within government and by the wider community"
They provide an objective perspective of the changes taking place in national life and allow comparisons between periods of time and geographical areas.

Open access to official statistics provides the citizen with more than a picture of society. It offers a window on the work and performance of government itself, showing the scale of government activity in every area of public policy and allowing the impact of public policies and actions to be assessed.

Reliable social and economic statistics are fundamental to ... open government (and) it is the responsibility of government to provide them and to maintain public confidence in them."
NZ Context of Urban and Regional Trends

- In the 19th Century the majority of New Zealanders lived in rural areas.

- By 2001 New Zealand one of the most urbanised countries in the world.

- Over the 20th century, split of pop’n between islands went from 50/50 to 80/20.
Some Key Trends and Responses

- Demand for Detail v Tradition of Samples for Aggregate Statistics
- Growing Challenges for Population Censuses
- Deciding What Geography Matters
- Use of Administrative Data
- New Methods of Estimation and Modelling
- Brokering a 'Bottom to Top' approach