



Statistics
Canada

Statistique
Canada

Canada



Statistics Canada
www.statcan.gc.ca



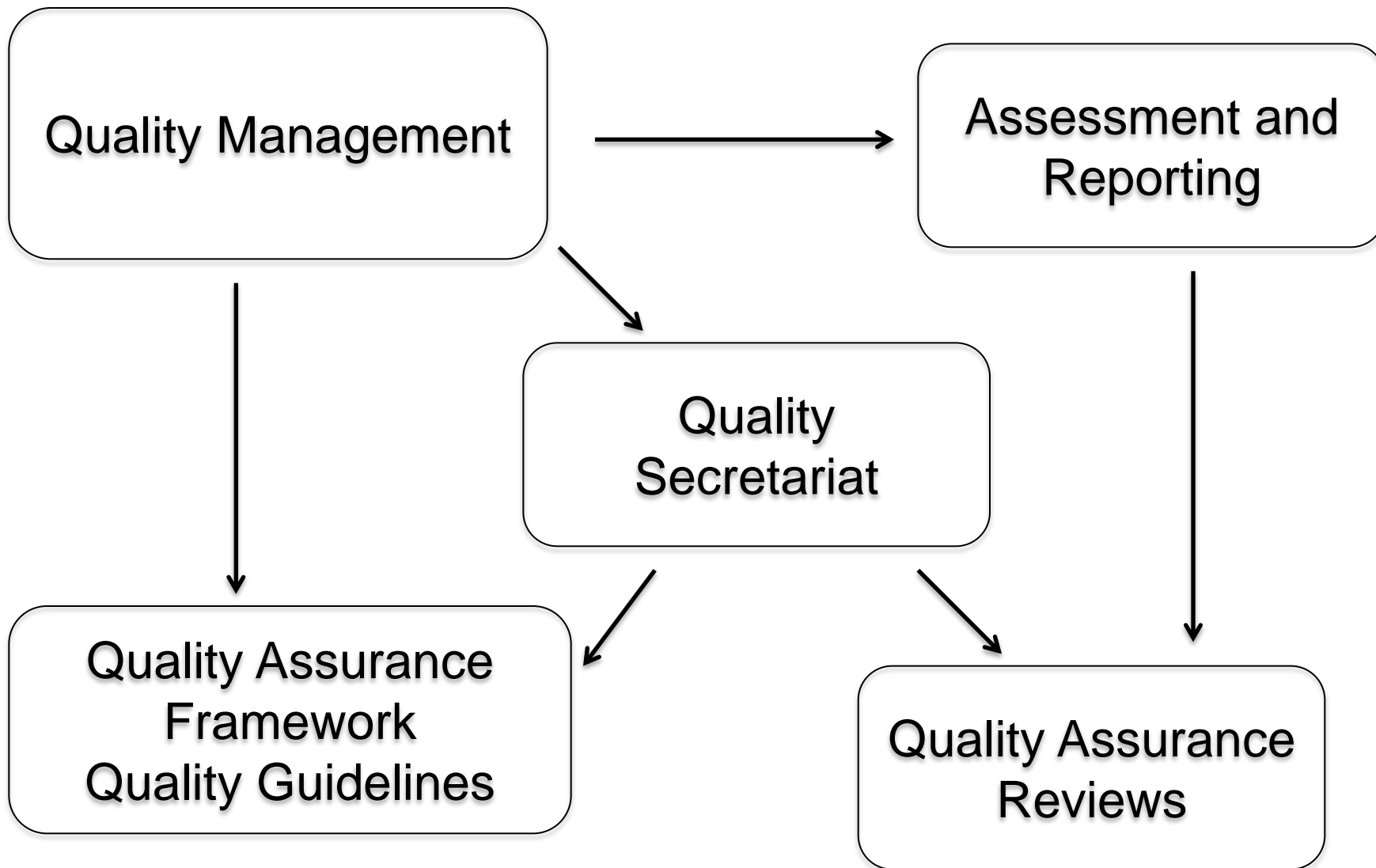
The Quality Assurance Reviews at Statistics Canada

Laurie Reedman



Outline

- The Big Picture
 - Quality management
- What are the quality assurance reviews
 - Benefits
 - Challenges
 - Findings
 - Next Steps



Role of the Quality Secretariat

- Promote and support the use of sound quality management practices
 - Support the development and implementation of policies and procedures
 - Design and manage studies related to quality management
 - Provide advice and assistance to programs
 - Support corporate management in the preparation of performance reports on quality
 - Answer requests from other agencies for information or assistance related to quality management

Role of the Quality Secretariat

- Promote and support the use of sound quality management practices
 - Support the development and implementation of policies and procedures
 - **Design and manage studies related to quality management**
 - Provide advice and assistance to programs
 - Support corporate management in the preparation of performance reports on quality
 - Answer requests from other agencies for information or assistance related to quality management



Quality Assurance Reviews

- Quality assessment
 - Peer review
 - Compliment to formal audit
- Internal
 - Not self assessment
- Low cost
- Flexible, adaptable
- Wide-spread benefits

Quality Assurance Reviews

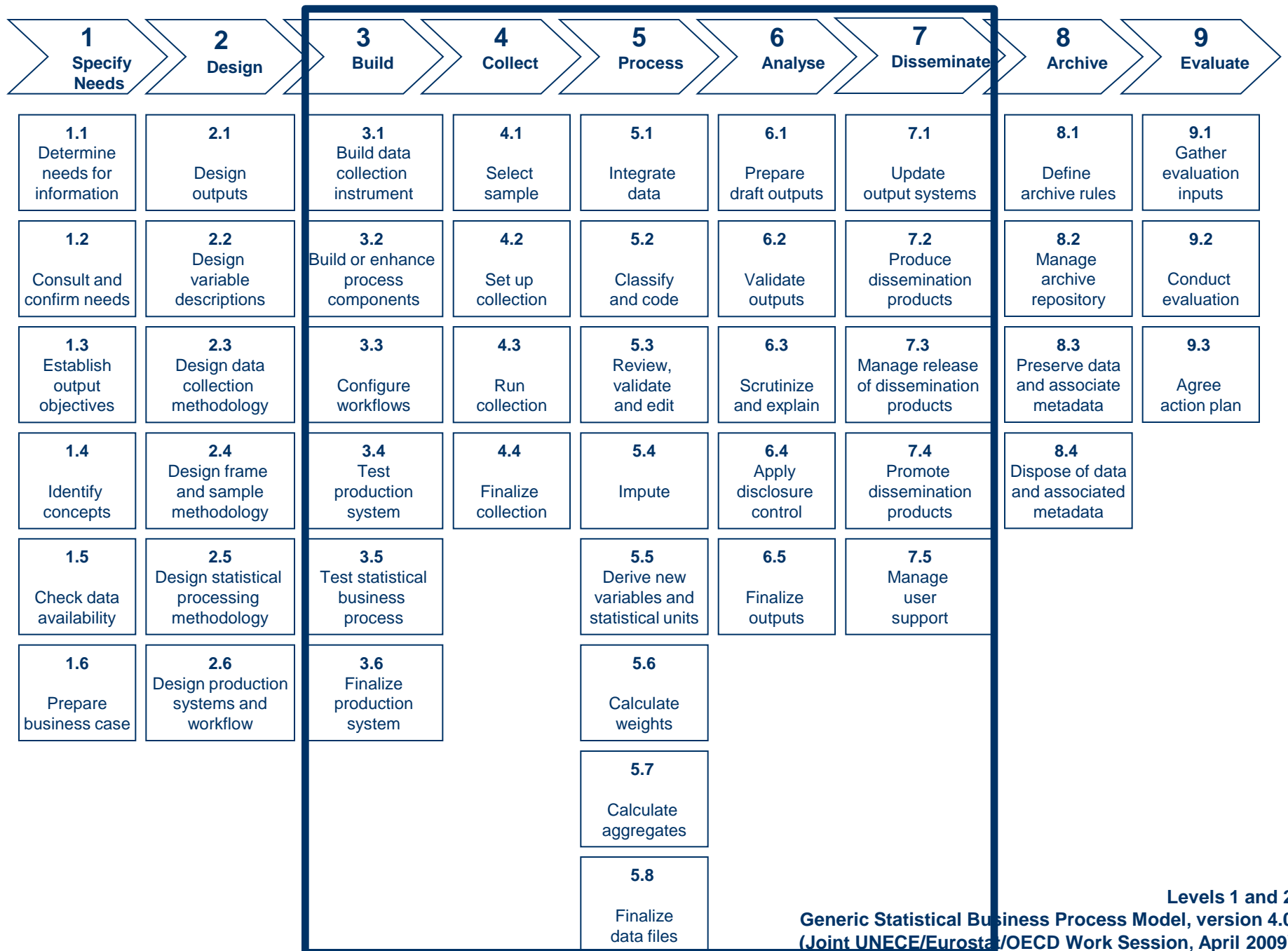
- Independent review of 5 or 6 statistical programs every year, since 2006
- Conducted through meetings and gathering of documentation
- Look at risks to the program delivering its usual product
 - Example of a risk: software system rusting out
- Highlight good practices and make recommendations
 - Example of a good practice: system renewal plan

Mandate and objectives

- Demonstrate how quality is being managed
- Demonstrate how risks are being controlled
- Spread knowledge of effective quality assurance practices and the risks they can mitigate
- Identify where resources should be used to reduce risks to quality

Scope

- Initially, only looked at processing steps
- Later, expanded to include implementation and analysis
- Programs
 - Sample survey, cost-recovery, admin data
- Functions
 - Knowledge transfer, coding methods, seasonal adjustment practices, certification practices



Reviewers

- Experienced middle managers
- Work in pairs
- Nominated by their superiors
- Review any program other than their own
- Typical workload – twelve working days, spread over an eight month period

Steering committee

- Senior managers
- Responsible for the programs under review
- Ensure relevant and timely information is shared
- Guide and facilitate the review process
- Support findings

Information Gathering

- Minimal burden on program being reviewed
- 3-5 meetings
 - Program manager
 - Team members
 - Service providers (collection specialists, methodologists, IT specialists)
 - Internal clients
- Tools:
 - Generic Statistical Business Process Model
 - Already existing documentation

Deliverables

- Summary presented to Policy Committee
 - “public” within Statistics Canada
- Formal report submitted to Director
 - Available upon request

- Catalogue of risks, quality assurance practices and recommendations
 - Maintained by Quality Secretariat



Benefits

- Reviewers
 - On-the-job training, networking
- Programs being reviewed
 - Free advice
 - Exposure
- The whole organization
 - Management training
 - Commitment to quality
 - Shared good practices

Challenges

- Choosing programs
 - Known (or suspected) risks
 - Redesign
 - Good coverage of sectors
- Governance
 - Transparency, availability
 - Sensitive information
 - Follow-up



Findings: Risks and Solutions

- Staffing
 - Corporate Staffing Plan
- Project management
 - Departmental Project Management Office
- Systems and processing
 - Corporate Business Architecture

Findings: Risks and Solutions

- Standardization
 - Harmonized questionnaire content, Architecture Review Board
- Documentation
 - Directive on the Management of Statistical Microdata Files

Next steps

- Assess the distribution of programs reviewed
 - Propose selection criteria
- Categorize the recommendations made to date
 - Propose a follow-up strategy
 - More promotion of risk mitigating solutions
- Look at what other NSOs are doing
 - Improve efficiency



Thank-you!

For more information, please contact:

Laurie Reedman

Statistics Canada

Laurie.Reedman@statcan.gc.ca