

Report on the use of PC-Axis in Statistics South Africa

International PC-Axis Reference Group Meeting

Helsinki, Finland

05–07 September 2007

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Introduction

Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) decided to use PC-Axis (including PX-Make and PX-Web) as dissemination tools for census results by December 2001. The use of the software has been extended to disseminate all kinds of statistics produced by the organisation. Currently, Stats SA uses PC-Axis to disseminate Census 1996, Census 2001, time series and other survey data by means of the website. PC-Axis software has proved to be popular with users of Stats SA's website. This paper will outline the following topics.

- Use of PC-Axis in Statistics South Africa
- PC-Axis databases currently on the website
- PC-Axis databases planned for the near future
- PX-Web statistics
- Use of PC-Axis family tools
- Progress since the last meeting in 2006
- Wish list for the next 12 months
- Challenges
- PC-Axis resources within Statistics South Africa

The data currently disseminated on the Stats SA website are at national, provincial and district municipality level for censuses, and at provincial level for surveys. Time series data are mostly disseminated at national level.

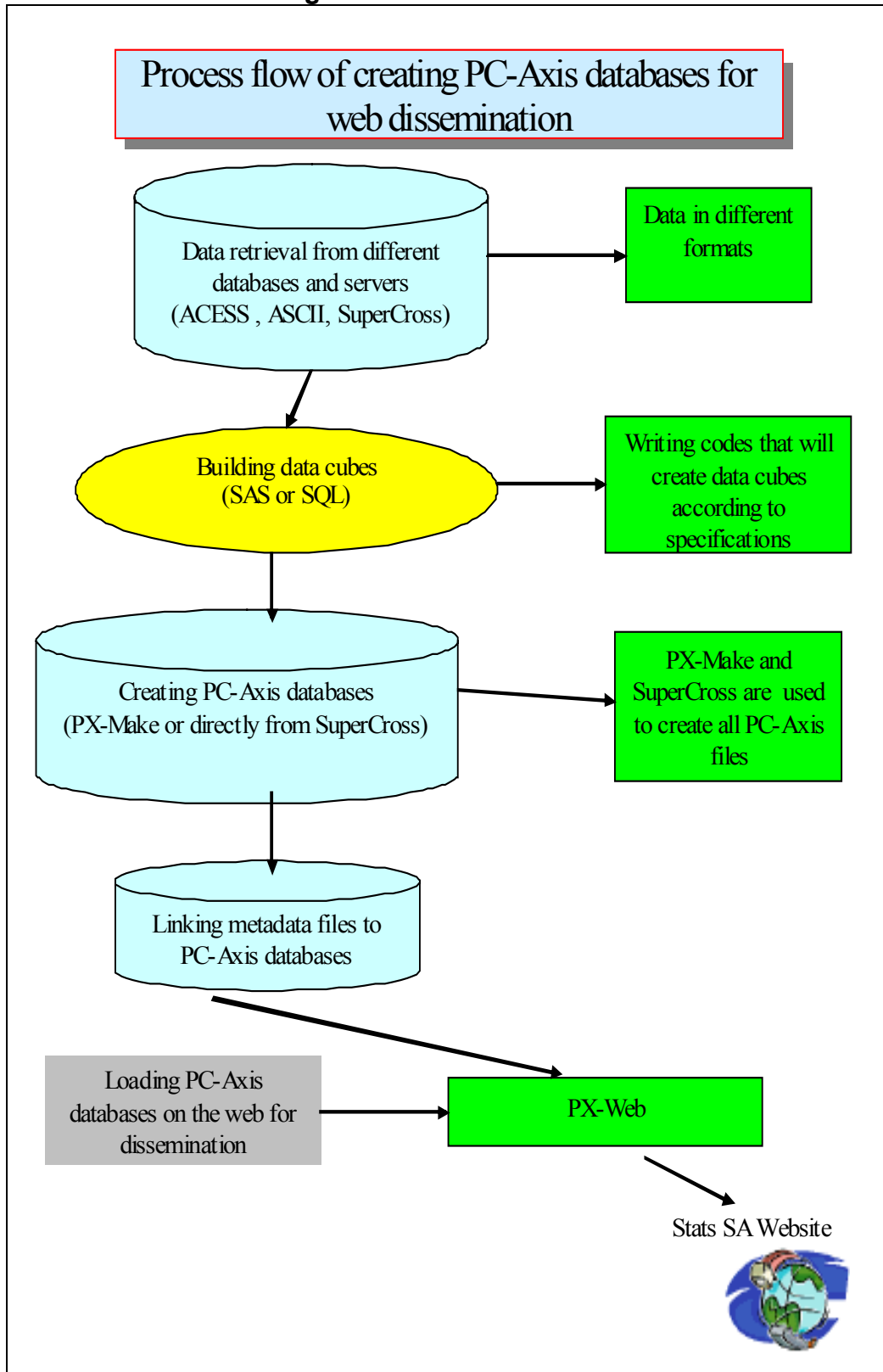
Use of PC-Axis in Statistics South Africa

Data disseminated by PC-Axis are firstly retrieved from different databases in different formats. The following steps take place in the process:

- Data retrieval from different databases and servers
- Conversion of data into SAS format
- Building data cubes using SAS
- PX-Make to create PC-Axis databases
- Linking metadata files with PC-Axis databases
- Loading PC-Axis databases on the web for dissemination

Data are received from different sources within the organisation and also in different formats. Building data cubes for PC-Axis, the data are firstly converted into SAS datasets according to user needs and specification. There are plans to build PC-Axis databases for all surveys in the organisation as time series data, and these will include key indicator variables only. These databases will be disseminated on the website by means of PX-Web and will be accessed by external users for different purposes.

Process flow of creating PC-Axis files or databases for dissemination



PC-Axis databases currently on website

Economic and Social Series	Building statistics Civil cases for debt Consumer Price Index (CPI) Electricity generated and available for distribution Food and beverages Gross Domestic Product (GDP) Liquidations and insolvencies Manufacturing: Production and Sales Manufacturing: Utilisation of production capacity Mining: Production and sales Motor trade sales Production Price Index (PPI) Retail trade sales STEE (Discontinued) Tourist Accommodation Wholesale trade sales
Mid-year Estimates	2001–2007
Population Census	Census 1996 Census 2001 – Demarcation boundaries as at 10 October 2001 Census 2001 – New demarcation boundaries as at 9 December 2005 Equitable share grant formulae

PC-Axis databases planned for the near future

- General Household Survey: 2002–2006
- Community Survey 2007
- Census of Agriculture
- Development frame index
- Time series databases for 1996, 2001 and 2007

PX-Web statistics

- Total number of PC-Axis files on website: 331
- Average number of retrievals per month: >5,000

Use of PC-Axis family tools

Product	Comment
PC-Axis	One of the main tools used to disseminate data in the organisation
PX-Web 2006	Website dissemination tool of Stats SA data
i-Graph	Used in conjunction with PX-Web 2006
PX-Make	Used to create PC-Axis data cubes in the organisation
PX-Map	Hope to implement soon / require assistance
PX-Edit	Have tried it but we still need guidance on the efficient use of the tool

Progress / improvements since the last reference group meeting in 2006

- Centralised all PX-Web files into one central location onto its website
- Upgraded from PX-Web 2002 to PX-Web 2006 (latest version)
- Have tried to use PX-Edit to create PC-Axis data cubes but still need guidance

Developments / improvements / 'wish list' for the next 12 months

- Implement PX-Map
- Considerably expand the dissemination of statistics using PX-Web
- Enable the automatic flow of data from SAS to PC-Axis through PX-Edit
- Use the PC-Axis reference group meeting to observe all the possible usages of the PC-Axis software family, and create a working group at Statistics South Africa to re-focus its energy on promoting and expanding the usage of PC-Axis within and outside the organisation

Challenges

- No representation from the Stats SA web team at the PC-Axis reference group meetings for a number of years.
- Manual updating of PC-Axis data
- Limited resources at Statistics South Africa to expand / investigate usage of PX-Web on website
- Having to reproduce own styles, graphics, etc. when upgrading between different versions of PX-Web.

PC-Axis resources within Statistics South Africa

Name	Rank	PC-Axis responsibility
Neville du Preez	Webmaster: Statistics South Africa	PX-Web
Piet Alberts	Manager: Data integration	PX-Make, PC-Axis, PX-Edit
Mathews Phiri	Consultant : Data integration	PX-Make, PC-Axis, PX-Edit
Veli Mahlangu	Professional: Data integration	PX-Make, PC-Axis, PX-Edit
Wanda Steyn	Professional: Data integration	PX-Make, PC-Axis, PX-Edit
Norman Mabena	Professional: Data integration	PX-Make, PC-Axis, PX-Edit