

Modernization and Reengineering the Census of Governments

Presented to the Association of
Government Accountants

Professional Development Conference

July 13, 2010

Disclaimer: This report is released to inform interested parties of research and to encourage discussion of work in progress. The views expressed are those of the author and not necessarily those of the U.S. Census Bureau.

U S C E N S U S B U R E A U

Helping You Make Informed Decisions

Introduction to Governments Division

- Main Purposes of Governments Division Programs
 - Provide economic statistics about governments
 - Are the public counterpart to business, industry, and services economic data
 - Follow the activity of governments over time
- Response is Voluntary
- Virtually no Confidentiality Restrictions

Base Programs

- Oldest programs in Governments Division, often called the “base programs”
 - Census of Governments
 - Annual and Quarterly Surveys
- Census of Governments and related programs
 - Organizational Data – number of governments & characters
 - Employment Data – number of employees & payroll
 - Finance Data – revenues, expenditures, debt, & assets

Base Programs

Frequency	Survey/Program	Data Available For:				Data Items Included
		US	State*	County*	Place	
Every 5 Years	Census of Governments	X	X	X	X	Number of Units, Employment, Finance
Annual	Annual Survey of Public Employment and Payroll	X	X	X	X	Employment, wages, etc.
	Annual Survey of State and Local Government Finances	X	X		X	Revenue, expenditures, etc.
	Annual Survey of State Government Finances	X	X			Revenue, expenditures, etc.
	Consolidated Federal Funds Report	X	X	X		Federal expenditures, obligations, & contingent liabilities
	Federal Aid to States Report	X	X			Federal expenditures
	Public Elementary-Secondary Education Finance Survey	X	X	X	X	Revenue, expenditures, etc.
	State and Local Government Public-Employee Retirement System Survey	X	X	X	X	Contributions, assets, etc.
	State Government Tax Collections Survey	X	X			Tax revenue
Quarterly	Quarterly Public-Employee Retirement Systems Survey	X				Contributions, assets, etc.
	Quarterly Tax Survey	X	X			Tax revenue

The Census of Governments:

- Identifies the scope and nature of the nation's state and local government sector
- Provides authoritative benchmark figures of public finance and public employment
- Classifies local government organizations, powers, and activities
- Measures federal, state, and local fiscal relationships
- Supplies a unique profile of the public sector
- Primary inputs into Gross Domestic Product and Flow of Funds

Reimbursable Programs

- Because of Government's Division expertise in the public sector, we conduct surveys on behalf of other agencies
- Historically the surveys compliment the work of the base programs
- Cover such topics as:
 - Education
 - Criminal Justice
 - Federal funding

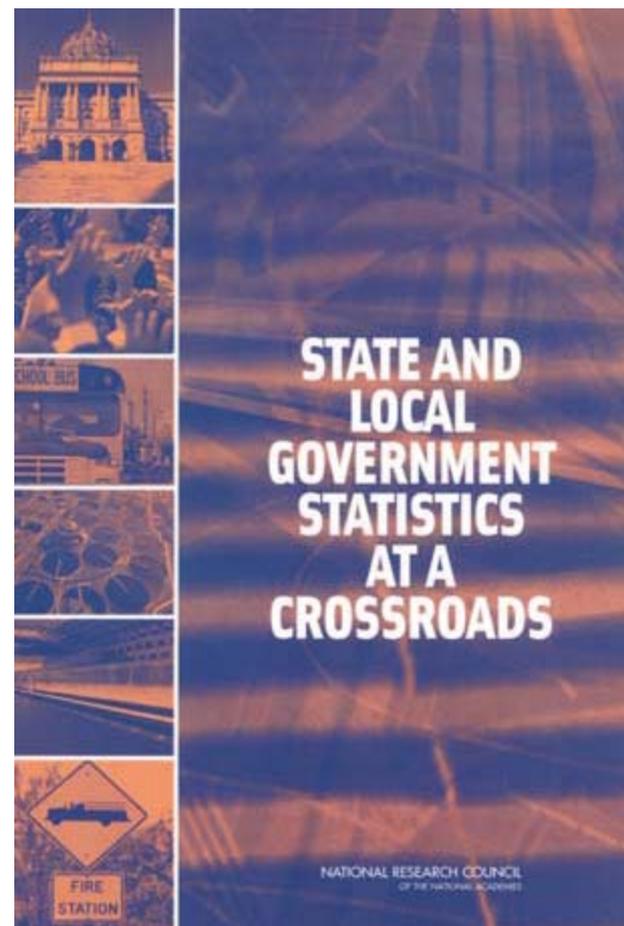
Reimbursable Programs

Frequency	Survey/Program	Data Available For:				Data Items Included	Sponsoring Agency
		US	State *	County *	Place		
Biennial	Academic Libraries Survey	X	X			Expenditures, staffing, circulation, etc.	NCES - (Dept of Education)
	Juvenile Residential Facility Census	X	X			Facility characteristics	OJJDP - (DOJ)
Annual	Annual Survey of Jails	X		X	X	Jails and inmates	BJS - (DOJ)
	Criminal Justice Expenditure and Employment Survey	X				Finance and employment	BJS - (DOJ)
	Medical Expenditure Panel Survey Health Insurance Cost Study	X	X	X	X	Health plans, premiums, benefits, and enrollment	AHRQ
	National Public Education Financial Survey	X	X	X	X	Revenue, expenditures	NCES - (Dept of Education)
	Non-fiscal surveys of the Common Core of Data	X	X			Directory, membership, teachers, staff, dropouts, graduates	NCES - (Dept of Education)
	State Library Agencies Survey	X	X			Expenditures, staffing, governance, etc.	Institute of Museum and Library Services
Quarterly	Federal Assistance Award Data System	X	X	X	X	Federal expenditures or obligations.	OMB

Modernization and Reengineering

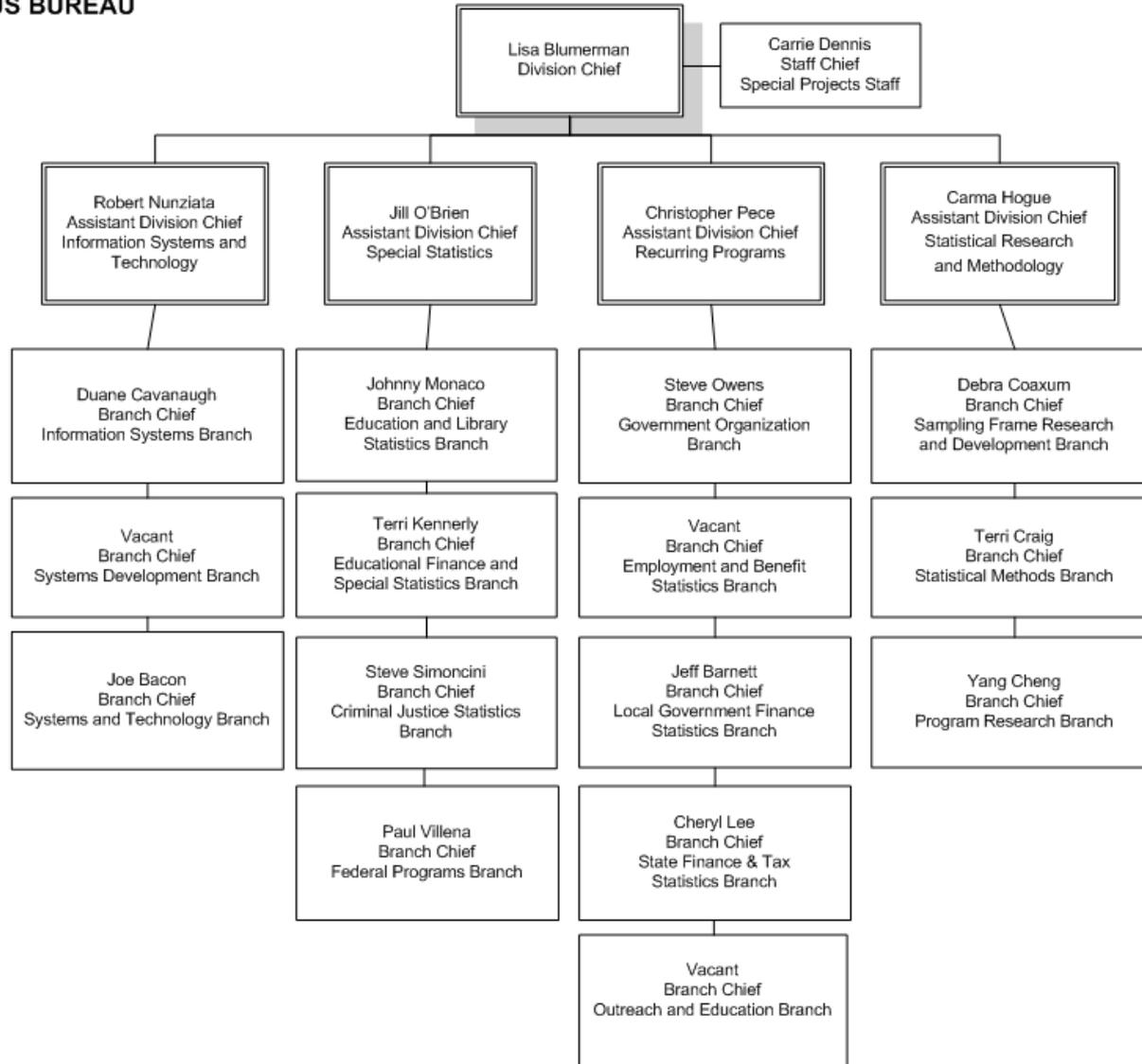
State and Local Government Statistics at a Crossroads

- 2007 report issued by the Committee on National Statistics (CNStat)
- Suggested 21 recommendations for improving existing programs
- Working toward addressing the majority of recommendations by the 2012 Census of Governments



**GOVERNMENTS DIVISION
US CENSUS BUREAU**

Updated:2/18/10



Modernization and Reengineering

U.S. Census Bureau

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Modernization & Reengineering

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Census of Governments Modernization & Reengineering

In response to the 2007 [Committee on National Statistics](#) (CNSTAT) report (*State and Local Government Statistics at a Crossroads*), we have begun a major program reengineering effort with the goal of implementing the majority of changes by the 2012 Census of Governments. This program reengineering addresses all facets of the Census of Governments from content, to business analysis, to infrastructure, to dissemination and outreach. In recognition of the need to preserve the integrity of the historical data with the need for more relevant data, we have implemented a strategy to re-engineer our collections and processes while strengthening our relationships with our data users.

Data User Exchanges

In order to ensure the relevance and usability of our programs, the Governments Division has implemented a series of data user exchanges. These exchanges will begin with a series of five small workshops in the fall and winter and will culminate with a large data user workshop planned for the spring of 2010.

These exchanges will explore the varying needs of the data user community as we address potential changes to the content of the Census of Governments, and its related annual & quarterly programs.

Please select the workshop you will be attending:

Select a Data User Exchange

Research Program

Our research program addresses the research that is needed to improve the quality, timeliness, and relevance of the statistics on state and local governments. It chronicles known current and future research projects for the Census of Governments and related surveys as well as the known research needs of our sponsors. The program also establishes a research report series and addresses issues of developing mathematical statisticians and analysts.

[Governments Publications](#)

Process Modernization & Reengineering

Working in consultation with the MITRE Corporation, we completed an evaluation of our survey business process, corresponding infrastructure, and technology used to operate the Census of Governments.

Comments or Suggestions?
Please contact us by [email](#).

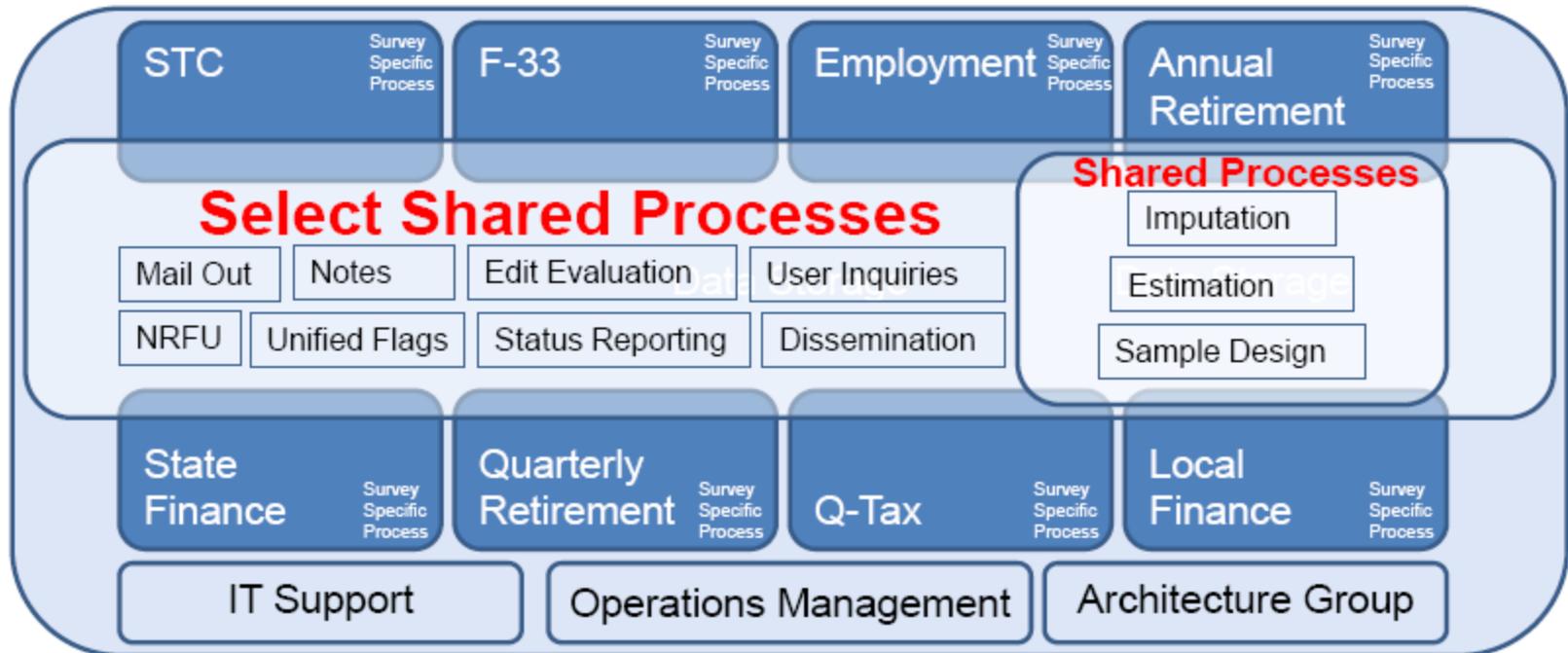
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Last Revised: September 25, 2009

Process Modernization and Reengineering



- Addresses all facets of the Census of Governments from content, to business analysis, to information technology infrastructure, to dissemination and outreach.
- Effort for the full system integration of the business processes and information technology to address program inefficiencies.

Research Program

- Research projects (sample design, dashboards, “design-based” estimation, small area estimation, nonresponse bias studies)

- Governments Division Report Series

– Available at:

<http://www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/govern.html>



- Training and development of staff through conference attendance, seminars, courses

Data User Workshops

- 6 Data User Workshops
 - 5 small exchanges in the fall and winter
 - 1 data user conference March, 2010
- Workshops explored the varying needs for data on government statistics, specifically:
 - research questions and data needs and uses;
 - identified government statistics data that are most useful;
 - identified additional data needs;
 - identified potential data quality issues; and
 - assisted in prioritizing future data needs.

Summary of CNSTAT Recommendations

CNStat Report Themes

- Data Quality, Relevance, and Utility
- Dissemination
- Timeliness

CNStat Theme: Data Quality, Relevance, and Utility

- Recommendations in Chapter 3: Get feedback from users
- Progress Update:
 - Increasing participation in user meetings
 - Series of focus groups with variety of data users in both the Federal statistical community and the private research community
 - Presentation to the Census Bureau's Professional Advisory Committee, April 22

CNStat Theme:

Data Quality, Relevance, and Utility

- Recommendations in Chapter 4: Conduct research on existing methods to identify efficiencies and improvements
- Progress Update:
 - Re-organized the division to develop an area devoted to research and methodology
 - Redesigning all aspects of the Quarterly Tax survey
 - Local Finance Central Collection Evaluation
 - Expanded the Annual Survey of Public-Employee Retirement Systems to collect additional information on OPEBs and additional asset holdings

CNStat Theme: Dissemination

- Recommendations in Chapter 5: Facilitate wider dissemination of products by issuing press releases; add value to existing data by providing simple derived measures; provide users with tools and documentation
- Progress Update:
 - Regular press releases began in October 2008 with the release of 2007 Census of Employment data
 - Introduction of quarterly surveys to “Tip Sheets” and planning on developing quarterly press releases
 - Introduced new analytical material to accompany releases
 - Availability through Build-A-Table and website redesign

Build-A-Table



There are three basic categories of data:

- **Level of Government:** State government data (all 50 states), local government data (county, special district, and school district data) or state and local government data combined.
- **State:** Data for a specific state or DC.
- **Government Function:** Data on a specific government function e.g., education, health, etc.

Please select which category you would like to base your table on. You must make one selection from one of the three basic categories.

Level of Government
 State

Next

Select category

Please select the variables you would like the table to display

Year

2002 1997 Add All >> Add > < Remove << Remove All 2007

Variables

Full-Time Employees Add All >> Add > < Remove << Remove All Total Employees
 Full-Time Pay
 Part-Time Employees
 Part-Time Pay
 Total Pay
 Full-Time Equivalent

Level of Government

State and All Local Add All >> Add > < Remove << Remove All State
 All Local

Government Function

Add All >> Add > < Remove << Remove All
 Total Education Total
 Higher Education Instructional Employees
 Elementary and Secondary Instructional
 All Other Elementary and Secondary Education

Submit

Select variables

U.S. Census Bureau

Public Employment and Payroll Build-a-Table

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Click your browser's back button to update selection criteria or [Start Over](#)

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 (Excel) or the letters (xls) indicate a document is in the Microsoft® Excel® Spreadsheet Format (XLS). To view the file, you will need the [Microsoft® Excel® Viewer](#) available for free from Microsoft®.

US Total Government Employment and Payroll Data
 By Level of Government and By Government Function: 2007
 SOURCE: The table was user generated from the Census Bureau's Build-a-Table tool with data from the [Census of Government Employment](#). For information about the data's sampling error, nonresponse error, and definitions, select the appropriate link.
 Note: Data is in whole numbers.

Function	2007 Total Employees
Total	5,201,871
Education Total	2,538,370
Higher Education Instructional Employees	768,228
All Other Higher Education	1,607,066
Elementary and Secondary Instructional Employees	45,622
All Other Elementary and Secondary Education	18,013
Other Education	99,441
Libraries	778
Public Welfare	239,834
Hospitals	444,148
Health	189,970
Social Insurance Administration	81,378
Highways	241,483
Air Transportation	3,443
Water Transport and Terminals	4,993
Police Protection Total	108,672
Police Officers Only	67,724
Other Police Employees	40,948
Fire Protection Total	N/A
Firefighters Only	N/A
Other Fire Employees	N/A
Corrections	475,022
Natural Resources	159,218
Parks and Recreation	40,725
Housing and Community Development	0
Sewerage	1,765
Solid Waste Management	1,975
Financial Administration	177,339
Judicial and Legal	177,423
Other Government Administration	61,811
Water Supply	721
Electric Power	4,073
Gas Supply	0
Transportation	0
State	0
All	0

 N/A: Data is not applicable

Retrieve data

Summary Briefs

02/19/10

Released March 2010

State Government Tax Collections in 2009

Total State Tax Collections See Decline in 2009

State tax collections totaled \$715.2 billion in fiscal year 2009, down 8.6 percent from the \$782.1 billion collected in fiscal year 2008. Although fiscal year 2009 state revenue figures have yet to be released, in 2008 total state tax collection accounted for 46.6 percent of the total state government revenue.

In fiscal year 2009 five states* reported a positive increase over the previous year's tax collections. The reasons for each states' year-to-year increases vary; for example in the case of Wyoming and North Dakota increased tax revenue was largely due to strength in severance tax revenues, which are taxes imposed for the extraction of natural resources measured by value

States	Total tax percent change
FY09 increases	
Wyoming	14.2%
North Dakota	4.3%
Oregon	1.9%
Iowa	1.3%
South Dakota	0.9%
FY09 decreases 10 percent or greater	
Alaska	-41.2%
Arizona	-17.9%
South Carolina	-16.5%
New Mexico	-14.1%
California	-13.9%
Idaho	-13.1%
Virginia	-12.0%
Connecticut	-11.4%
Utah	-11.2%
New Jersey	-11.2%
Massachusetts	-11.1%
Georgia	-11.0%
Florida	-10.9%
North Carolina	-10.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009 State Government Tax Collections.

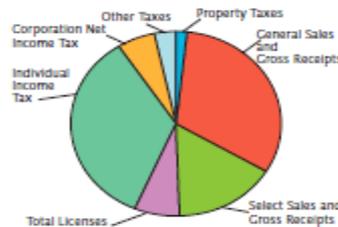
or quantity of products removed or sold. In contrast, fourteen states experienced a decrease of 10.0 percent or greater in year-to-year tax collections. No state had year-to-year tax revenue declines of this magnitude

*Total state government revenues and finances will be released in the fall of 2010 with the results from the fiscal year (FY) 2009 Survey of State Government Finances.

In 2008, the majority of these states reported decreases across the board and particularly in major revenue categories such as sales and gross receipts and individual income tax. Alaska is an exception to this case where a 44.8 percent drop in severance tax revenue was the largest category to decrease.

At \$245.9 billion, individual income tax remained the single largest source of state tax revenues in 2009, down 11.8 percent from 2008. General sales and gross receipts taxes accounted for \$228.1 billion, a decrease of 5.4 percent from 2008. Corporation net income tax decreased 20.7 percent, to \$40.3 billion in fiscal year 2009. Since 1992 the distribution of state tax collections, by tax category, has remained relatively constant, with individual income accounting for an average of 33.7 percent of total tax revenue, general sales and gross receipts taxes measuring 32.6 percent, and corporation net income taxes at 6.3 percent. Regionally, in fiscal year 2009, individual income tax was the largest revenue source among states in the Northeast, West, and Midwest, accounting for 46.5 percent, 35.1 percent, and 34.3 percent of total tax revenue, respectively. General sales and gross receipts tax was the largest contributor to tax revenue among states in the South, making up 38.9 percent of total tax revenue in 2009.

Total State Tax Collections by Category



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009 State Government Tax Collections.

The data and technical documentation for this release can be found at <http://www.census.gov/govs/statetax/>.

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02/19/10

Released April 2010

Quarterly Summary of the Finances of Selected State and Local Government Employee Retirement Systems

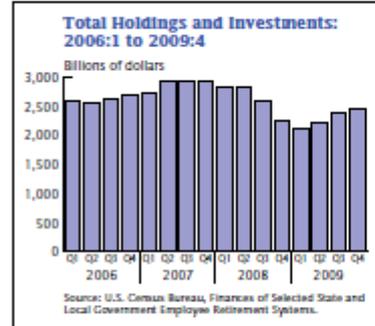
CORPORATE STOCKS OF MAJOR PUBLIC EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT SYSTEMS SHOW YEAR-TO-YEAR INCREASE FOR THE FIRST TIME IN TWO YEARS

2009 Quarter 4

For the 100 largest retirement systems in the country, total holdings and investments exceeded the same quarter one year ago, with an increase of 10.1 percent from \$2,229.5 billion in the fourth quarter of 2008 to \$2,454.2 billion in the fourth quarter of 2009 and demonstrated the first positive year-to-year change since the first quarter of 2008. Total holdings and investments continued their quarter-to-quarter climb for the third consecutive quarter, with an increase of 3.2 percent from \$2,379.2 billion in the third quarter of 2009.

Corporate Stocks

Corporate stocks surpassed their value from the same quarter one year ago (2008:Q4), breaking with the negative trend of the last seven quarters. Stocks rose 19.3 percent from \$690.6 billion in the fourth quarter of 2008 to \$823.8 billion in the fourth quarter of 2009 and were up slightly at 0.5 percent from \$820.1 billion last quarter (2009:Q3). Corporate stocks made up just over a third (33.6 percent for 2009:Q4) of the total cash and security holdings of major public employee retirement systems.



For further information on public employee retirement systems, please visit our Web site at www.census.gov/govs/ or contact Governments Division, U.S. Census Bureau, at 888-529-1963 or by e-mail at govs.retire@census.gov.

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Corporate Bonds

Corporate bonds were a little higher than the same quarter one year ago (2008:Q4), after four uninterrupted quarters of year-to-year declines. Bonds increased 1.6 percent from \$413.4 billion in the fourth quarter of 2008 to \$420.0 billion in the fourth quarter of 2009, but declined 2.9 percent from \$432.6 billion last quarter (2009:Q3). Corporate bonds made up just over a sixth (17.1 percent for 2009:Q4) of the total cash and security holdings of major public employee retirement systems.

International Securities

International securities soared past the same quarter one year ago, escalating 44.0 percent from \$292.6 billion in the fourth quarter of 2008 to \$421.3 billion in the fourth quarter of 2009 and up 15.3 percent from \$365.3 billion last quarter (2009:Q3). International securities made up 17.2 percent of the total cash and security holdings for 2009:Q4, slightly over the 17.1 percent for corporate bonds. This was the first time the proportion of international securities topped that of corporate bonds since they matched distribution levels of 16.8 percent each, in the second quarter of 2008.

Federal Government Securities

Federal government securities, unlike the aforementioned investment categories, continued to be lower than the same quarter one year ago. They fell 5.6 percent from \$155.3 billion in the fourth quarter of 2008 to \$146.7 billion in the fourth quarter of 2009. The year-to-year trend has remained negative for over three years—since 2006:Q3. There was a 4.8 percent increase from \$140.0 billion last quarter (2009:Q3), and federal government securities made up 6.0 percent of the total cash and security holdings for the fourth quarter of 2009.

Note: This summary is based solely on the Finances of Selected State and Local Government Employee Retirement Systems, which consists of a panel of the 100 largest public employee retirement systems as determined by their total cash and security holdings reported in the 2007 Census of Governments. These 100 systems comprise 85.4 percent of financial activity among such entities, based on the 2007 Census of Governments. Each of the 100 systems represents itself only. Although the data are not subject to sampling error, they are subject to reporting error, nonresponse, and possibly other nonsampling errors.

The data and technical documentation for this release can be found at www.census.gov/govs/igpr/.

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CNStat Theme: Dissemination

- Recommendations in Chapter 6: Stay engaged with the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB); obtain status as member of the Governmental Accounting Standards Advisory Council (GASAC)
- Response:
 - GASAC membership obtained
 - Attune to changes in state and local government accounting practices and guidelines

CNStat Theme: Timeliness

- Recommendation 5-1: Research the benefits/ costs of adopting earlier release procedures, i.e., releasing preliminary estimates or releasing estimates as they are compiled
- Ability to do this is dependent on GOVS reengineering its existing processing systems
- Progress Update:
 - Successful in moving up the release of several products
 - Some constraints due to data processing; are reviewing existing processes and methods to determine where efficiencies can be made

Next Steps on Modernization and Re-engineering

- Continued involvement with the user and supplier communities
 - Identify areas of primary interest
 - Identify ways to obtain data more easily
- Implementation of Quality Improvement Program – “QUIP Trips”
 - Coverage
 - Record keeping practices of state and local governments

Next Steps on Modernization and Re-engineering

- Content review and determination for the 2012 Census of Governments
 - Extensive detail from Census of Governments
 - Changes to detail in annual survey years
- Redefinition and revitalized product line
 - Changes in dissemination methods and tools
 - Increased descriptive analysis
 - User guides
- Modernized and then Reengineered Systems

Questions?

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For updated information on our efforts, please visit:

<http://harvester.census.gov/duw/>