CHAPTER 6 : THE NUMBERING SYSTEM

BASIC CHARACTER OF THE NUMBERING SYSTEM

A strict decimal numbering system has not been adopted in the ASIC because such a system would either impose limitations on the number of categories which could be established in various parts of the Classification, or would require the use of very long reference numbers. For example, a decimal numbering system in which the first digit was used to identify divisions would require that the number of divisions be limited to ten. Alternatively, if two digits were used for each of the levels of the ASIC, an eight digit reference number system would be necessary.

2. On the other hand, a decimal numbering system can be a useful aid in bringing out clearly the hierarchic structure of a classification, and can also provide a good deal of practical convenience in the Bureau's internal work, for example in the specification of procedural instructions for classifying establishments.

3. The numbering system adopted in the ASIC has been devised with the purpose of providing greater flexibility than a strict decimal four-digit system, whilst retaining the advantages of a decimal system as far as practicable, i.e. within each division. There are thirteen divisions in the ASIC, each identified by an alphabetic character. Each subdivision is identified by a two digit number, each group by a three digit number and each class by a four digit number.

4. The number of subdivisions, groups and classes within each division is shown in the table below. (The number of the subdivisions, groups and classes in the previous (1969) edition of the ASIC is shown in brackets.)

Division	Number of: Subdivisions	Groups	Classes
A	4 (4) (4*)	9 (11) (10*)	31 (27) (33*)
B	6 (6)	8 (6)	23 (20)
C	12 (12)	41 (41)	173 (173)
D	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)
E	2 (2)	4 (3)	18 (14)
F	2 (2)	16 (18)	77 (78)
G	5 (5)	6 (6)	15 (15)
H	1 (1)	1 (1)	1 (1)
I	3 (3)	12 (10)	38 (32)
J	2 (2)	4 (2)	6 (6)
K	4 (4)	11 (11)	37 (34)
L	4 (5)	8 (9)	27 (28)
M	1 (-)	1 (-)	1 (-)
TOTAL	48 (48)	124 (121)	451 (432)

* Division A including 'interim revised' Subdivision 01 Agriculture, issued in 1974.

CHANGES TO CODE NUMBERS

5. As described in the Preface, this 1978 edition of the Classification incorporates numerous changes to industry definitions resulting from the review of the 1969 edition of the Classification. The main impact of these changes has been at the class and group levels of the Classification. At the subdivision and division levels of the Classification the changes have generally been less significant.

6. For these reasons new code numbers have generally been allocated to most classes and groups in this 1978 edition of the Classification, whereas the subdivision and division codes, used in the 1969 edition, have generally been retained.

7. The change in code numbers is also supported by the following considerations:

(a) Users of industry statistics, comparing data over time, may sometimes identify industries by their numeric code alone. In such circumstances a change in the industry definition should be signalled by a change in the code - if this were not done time series data could be misinterpreted where the class definition has changed but the code has not.

(b) Not all users of the ASIC may convert their applications from the 1969 edition of the ASIC to the 1978 edition of the ASIC at the same time. Accordingly the possibility of erroneously comparing statistical series, based on different editions of the Classification, is minimised if the two editions of the ASIC employ different code numbers.

(c) Experience by other statistical organisations.

8. The renumbering exercise has caused the following changes to industry codes:

(a) Previously hyphenated subdivision codes have been replaced by non-hyphenated codes.

(b) Division and subdivision codes (in all other respects) have been retained. However, Subdivision 99, Non-classifiable establishments, previously part of Division L, has become a separate division with code M and has been retitled: Non-classifiable economic units.

(c) Previously hyphenated group codes have been replaced by non-hyphenated codes.

(d) Where there was no choice but to reuse a previous group code to designate a different group the previous class codes within that group were not reused (if at all possible).

(e) New class codes have been used in all cases where the basic character or composition of the class had changed.

(f) A previous code was never reused for a completely different class.

(g) Most other group and class codes have also been replaced by new codes, regardless of whether the industries had undergone change or not. However, where the previous class code had been retained to designate the same class, care was taken to ensure that this occurred only in cases where the basic character or composition of the class had remained largely unchanged.

9. Given the constraints under which the renumbering exercise had to be carried out (e.g. the numeric code for ASIC classes had to remain a four digit code, subdivision codes were to remain unchanged and the decimal numbering system was to be retained and improved) it was not possible to use unbroken regimens of code numbers, starting with '1' in each case. Accordingly the presence of these constraints largely explains the gaps in the code numbers within ASIC groups or within ASIC subdivisions.

UNDEFINED CLASSES, GROUPS, ETC

10. For certain statistical operations it is necessary to make provision for classifying establishments by industry in cases where only incomplete information is available on the activities of the establishment. For example, in classifying people in the workforce in a Population Census by industry - i.e. by entering the appropriate ASIC code numbers on the Population Census schedules - a particular Population Census schedule might provide insufficient information to enable the establishment at which a person is employed to be identified (as required for the method of classification described in Chapter 4). Moreover, that census schedule might show only a broad industry description for the place of work at which the person is employed such as 'clothing retailing', without any indication of whether the establishment concerned is mainly engaged in retailing mens clothing or womens clothing. To meet this situation it would be necessary to have provision for classifying the data to some such heading as 'Clothing Retailing undefined'. To avoid having a large number of such 'undefined' headings in the ASIC, the numbering system

provides for the same result to be achieved by classifying inadequately described cases to a broader level of the Classification.

11. For this purpose provision has been made in the numbering system of the Classification for, so called, undefined classes, groups and subdivisions (Division M, Non-classifiable economic units, represents, in effect, the undefined division) by not using code numbers ending in zero unless there is only one class in a group, or one group in a subdivision, or one subdivision in a division - in such situations the lower category always equals the higher, hierarchically related, category in any case.

12. For statistical processing purposes undefined categories, i.e. undefined classes, groups and subdivisions, can thus be inserted in the relevant processing systems by using codes ending in zero. Accordingly, there is provision in the Classification for having:

- one undefined class within each multi class group (representing the group and having the code of the group with an added zero),
- one undefined group within each multi group subdivision (representing the subdivision and having the code of the subdivision with an added zero),
- one undefined subdivision within each multi subdivision division (representing the division - however, their code must be a new number because division codes are alphabetical characters).

13. As already mentioned, Division M represents the undefined division.

14. Further, each undefined subdivision could be represented as an undefined group or class by the addition of extra zeros to the code. Similarly each undefined group could be represented as an undefined class by the addition of an extra zero to the code number.

15. For example, the undefined categories relevant to the industries in Subdivision 24 Clothing and footwear (in Division C, Manufacturing) are included in the full listing of this subdivision as follows.

Subdivision	Group	Class	Title
24			CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR
	240	2400	Clothing and footwear undefined
	244		Knitting mills
		2440	Knitting mills undefined
		2441	Hosiery
		2442	Cardigans and pullovers
		2443	Knitted goods n.e.c.
	245		Clothing
		2450	Clothing undefined
		2451	Mens trousers and shorts; work clothing
		2452	Mens suits and coats; waterproof clothing
		2453	Womens outerwear n.e.c.
		2454	Foundation garments
		2455	Underwear and infants clothing n.e.c.
		2456	Headwear and clothing n.e.c.
	246	2460	Footwear

16. The detailed Classification does not list or include these undefined categories. Their use is in processing statistical data and they should not be used for the purpose of presenting or publishing statistical data. For that purpose only the defined industry categories should be used.