How BEA Could Better Explain its Data -
Responses to Recommendations from the Nov. 2005 Meeting

Better Explanation and Delivery of Data

	New Since Last Meeting
	• Interactive chart of Government Current Receipts and Expenditures (implemented shortly before last meeting); URL= http://www.bea.gov/bea/dn/nipaweb/GovView.asp
	• Interactive charts and table of "Comparison of Personal Saving in the NIPAs with Personal Saving in the Flow of Funds Accounts (FFAs)" (implemented in March 06); URL= http://www.bea.gov/bea/dn/nipaweb/Nipa-Frb.asp
	• RSS News Feeds (implemented in March 06); URL= http://www.bea.gov/rss/rss_info.htm.
	• Previously published estimates -- Regional Accounts archives added (implemented in March 06); URL= http://www.bea.gov/histdata/RMyear.asp.
	• Interactive direct investment and MNC time series data (implemented in March 06); URL= http://www.bea.gov/bea/di/home/directinv.htm

Web Site – Design

Recommendation	BEA Response
Provide help and organization for less experienced users, such as links to other statistical agencies	• Implemented an enhanced FAQ system and Glossary. This system allows browsing or keyword search of FAQs in the BEA database. Permits customer to submit questions and be notified if a particular FAQ is updated.
	• Will implement revised, consistent navigation (based on contractor usability study) by September 2006.
	• Contractor analyzing use of common language labels to aid novice users.
	• Will add a Glossary "Term of the Day" box to the home page by September 2006.
	• Redesigned "GDP and the economy" article in *Survey of Current Business*.

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Recommendation	BEA Response
Provide a search window to search the web site	• Made available in mid-November 2005.

Make data more accessible, less hidden	• By September 2006, BEA will:
	  o Implement consistent labeling of navigation elements to increase usability.
	  o Provide meaningful icons for advanced table features.
	  o Reorganize home page to better highlight important releases and services.
	  o Flatten and simplify navigation on the Web site.

Conduct periodic comprehensive revision of Web site design	• Currently performing a web site navigation review and redesign, using information gathered from the Customer Satisfaction Survey, Internet server statistics, and other user feedback.

Web Site – Interactive Tables

Recommendation	BEA Response

Provide links within tables to FAQs, footnotes, and other explanatory tools	• Within all interactive tables, BEA is implementing:
	  o Hyper-linking of words directly to Glossary definitions.
	  o Consistent navigation to Help files, Glossary, and FAQs on site.
	  o Standard tool bars across all interactive tables (see example on page 3)
	• Within Regional personal income tables, links to definitions for each statistic are currently available.
	• Also in Regional personal income tables, users can toggle between types of tables. For example, users may view the components of personal income for a specific state, and also view values for the same component for all states, by clicking on a link to generate the new table.

Explain tables in keyword index, rather than just providing a list of tables	• Prototyping the addition of table names within the keyword index.

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Recommendation	BEA Response
Show how tables are related to each other	• An existing guide to table categories and relationships is available and linked from the interactive tables ; URL= http://www.bea.gov/bea/ARTICLES/2003/08August/0803NIPA-Preview.pdf#page=9
Put table labels on left and right for scrolling purposes	• An existing feature to lock table stubs is available.

Web Site – FAQs

Recommendation	BEA Response
Address "errors frequently made"	• Additional FAQs are under development for inclusion in the new searchable FAQ database.
Develop "Handbook of Methods"	• Will report on handbook at the November, 2006 Advisory Committee Meeting.

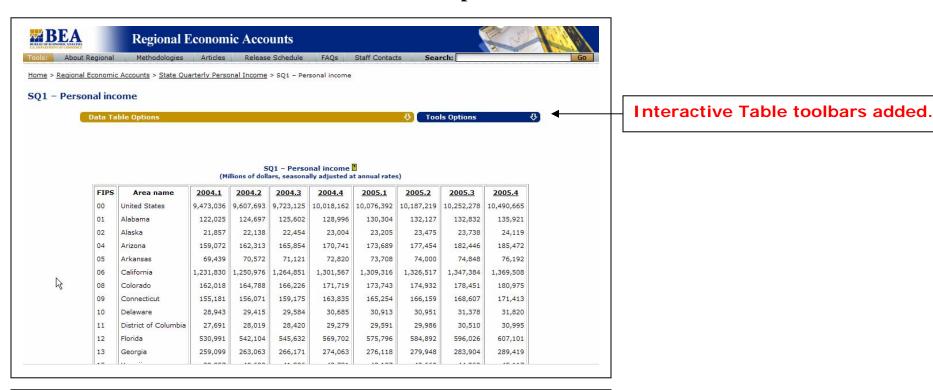## Web Site – *Survey of Current Business*

Recommendation	BEA Response
Provide full-text search capability	• Acquired new software to provide full-text search capability for the *Survey of Current Business*. Now in testing.
Improve subject index and create an index for 2004	• Software solution includes a full-text search capability to eventually be applied to all *Survey of Current Business* files posted on the Web site. • Currently developing subject indexes for 2004 and 2005.

Interactive Tables – Example of Standard Toolbars

Interactive Table toolbars added.

Toolbars can be opened to reveal available table options.