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**SOME ASPECTS OF ENSURING THE PROTECTION AND CONFIDENTIALITY
OF STATISTICAL DATA IN TURKMENISTAN**

Contributed paper

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1. The transition from the traditional "paper" technology to electronic technology for storing and transferring statistical data is naturally raising a considerable number of problems with respect to ensuring the reliable protection and confidentiality of statistical information. In this context, the convening of the present workshop is most welcome.
2. Our National Institute of State Statistics and Information of Turkmenistan, which we represent, is, in accordance with the Law on State Statistics in Turkmenistan, the central government body for collecting, analysing and disseminating statistical information. In accordance with the above-mentioned Law, one of the main functions of the Institute is to ensure the reliable storage and protection of statistical information.
3. The intensive introduction of new electronic technology into statistical work is considerably facilitating the collection, processing and analysis of statistical data. The job of storing data has become much simpler. The new technology is also opening up extensive possibilities for creating a variety of statistical databases. Alongside this, however, the use of modern technology in statistical work is beginning to make it necessary to search for new, more reliable methods for protecting the data stored in our computer memories and ensuring the confidentiality of these data.
4. Alongside the traditional administrative measures for protecting information (establishing a password system, reinforcing the responsibility of individual members of staff for the safekeeping and confidentiality of data, establishing a corresponding system for providing information to users, limiting network access, restricting users by printing the notice "For official use" etc.), our Institute has recently given special attention to ensuring the protection of intra- and inter-departmental information transferred on the local and central electronic network, through the use of enciphered traffic in the information transmission channels. An additional method applied is the restriction of access to local and network resources. This is achieved by using methods of identification (through the use of conventional signs in the form of sets of symbols) and authentication through the use of passwords. There is widespread application of the method of enciphering or encoding individual kinds of information for which access is restricted.

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5. We are also aware that much still needs to be done in this area. All the more so when one considers that the requirement for statistical information which has been accumulated centrally and is available centrally may increase to excessive levels. If not today, then in the near future, the methods which we apply to protect data may become obsolescent, and we cannot rule out the possibility that if not all, then at least a specific proportion of our data could be readily available to those who need them. In our view, creating the most up-to-date system for protecting information is clearly an archiving task.