Take2 Newsletter

Happy New Year!

A little late, but "Happy New Year!" to the devoted readers of the *Take2* Newsletter. Your editor drifted back to work last week after an extensive trip around the World. A full report will no doubt eventually appear in the *National Geographic* (or perhaps not) but in the meantime I can tell you that all went exceptionally well.

The only serious delay was being fogged in at Wellington at the very start of the journey.

The intended furthest point north to be reached was Dunstaffnage Castle near Oban in Scotland (see photograph), but in fact by rationing our essential supplies (again, see photograph) we were able to push up to Fort William where, you'll be surprised to learn, it was dark and raining.

Now, though, it's back to work, so buckle up and read the rest of the Newsletter because there are some useful bits of information.

Statement of Service Performance

No doubt you are aware that you must make your Statement of Service Performance (SSP) for the 2002 year by 31 March 2003. The STEP Web site has more information about how and to whom the SSP is to be submitted.

Take2 can help you prepare some of the statistics that you are required to include in the SSP. Whilst a full description of how this works is available in section 13.7 of the *Take2* User Manual, a brief overview is provided here.

The essential supplies start to dry up at Dunstaffnage Castle.

➢ Open the Administration Module and select *External Reporting*. Click on the button that says "SSP – Statement of Service Performance".

➢ Enter "2002" as the return year. Select a Prospectus (i.e. Qualification) code, Student Type, and Source of Funding. Then you can opt to print all or one of the various indicators.

➢ The Ministry's documentation has not made clear (at least as far as we can ascertain) whether the SSP is for just type D students and those funded through the EFTS Funding Scheme, so what options you select here is arguable. Suffice it to say, you are reporting now against estimates you made in October 2001, so select whichever options match those estimates.

➢ Please be aware that the statistics produced by *Take2* are based on formulae developed by Meta Office from the loose definitions provided by the Ministry in the *Guide to Tertiary Education Funding* released in 2001. The definitions in the latest version of *Guide to Tertiary Education Funding* apply to the 2003 year. Two indicators in particular are open to interpretation. One says "will achieve ___% growth in enrolments on previous year" but does not stipulate whether enrolments are to be measured as head counts or EFTS. *Take2* therefore provides both

options and it is up to you to determine what to provide the Ministry. The other indicator "___% of students will successfully complete their programme of study this year" provides no definition of "successfully complete". However the concept of "successful completion" is used by the Ministry for the Course Completion return of the Single Data Return. Therefore *Take2* generates the programme of study successful completion indicator on the basis of an aggregation of course completion data. In short, if all courses in a programme of study (which corresponds to the *Take2* concept of enrolment event) have an outcome code of "2", then the programme of study is deemed to have been completed successfully. It follows therefore that for *Take2* to successfully produce a rate, you must have first entered all course completion data for 2002.

➢ Finally, please note that whilst it is obvious that indicator values are being collected for 2002 there was no definition in the *Guide to Tertiary Education Funding* as to which enrolments are to be included. For example, do we count only enrolments that start in the 2002, only enrolments that finish in 2002, or enrolments that in part or in total take place in the specific year? The Single Data Return works on the basis that students and enrolments are counted if any part of the enrolment is in the specified year. For this reason – i.e. to retain comparability with the Single Data Return – *Take2* generates indicator values in this basis.

With all of the above "ifs" and "buts" the more cynical amongst us may be prompted to ask whether the SSP has any validity as a measure of performance.

Version 5 of Take2

It's on its way and some clients will be contacted soon to "volunteer" for testing. In the meantime, please note that **you will not be able to use version 5 (and all its yummy new features) unless you are live with the NSI.**

Loose Ends

We may have mentioned before that we write each year to Government agencies asking to be kept informed of any changes they may impose of you that would require us to modify *Take2*. Well, two changes that we weren't told about have popped up in the last month and we will handle them both in version 5.

➢ NZQA sent out a circular asking for the Payment Cover Sheet that accompanies hook-on requests, etc. to be of a new format. *Take2* produces a cover sheet in a format that NZQA approved some years ago. In version 5 we will move to the new design. In the meantime you can fill in the new coversheet manually and send it with your returns or use the existing *Take2* coversheet, but make sure that there is a signature on it.

➢ The TOPS and Youth Training forms printed by *Take2* (Labour Market Outcome, etc.) use the term "SNZ" or "Skill New Zealand". We hear, again not from the agency itself but from our clients, that the term to use should be "TEC" or "Tertiary Education Commission". It'll be fixed in version 5 and in the meantime substance will have to have ascendancy over form.

Farewell Atalie

Atalie, Queen of the Help Desk, is packing her bags and heading down south to study medicine. This is a sad loss for Meta Office but we can understand that training to be a doctor is probably less stressful than working on the Help Desk.

Thank you Atalie, you've been brilliant.

A new appointment will be made to the position soon and in the meantime our users will have to put up with Richard.