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## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Seacoast MPO Policy Committee Members  
**FROM:** Scott Bogle, RPC Senior Transportation Planner  
**DATE:** October 8, 2003  
**RE:** First look at 2000 Census Journey to Work data

Enclosed are two sets of tables depicting town to town commuter flow data from the 2000 Census.

- A. Place of Work by Town of Residence (2000). This table includes the number of commuters from each MPO community and their work locations.
- B. Percent Change - Place of Work by Town of Residence (1990-2000). This table shows the change in overall commuter trips originating in the region between 1990 and 2000.

Please keep in mind a couple of caveats while reading the tables:

- Ignore the subtotal rows for the Urbanized Area and Non-Urbanized Area on pages 3 and 4 depicting percent change between 1990-2000. The change in boundaries of the region's Urbanized Area (UZA) with the 2000 census skew these numbers.
- The percent change tables on pages 3 and 4 include some very large numbers – for example, the number of commuters from Newfields traveling to jobs in "Other NH" (locations in New Hampshire outside of Strafford and Rockingham Counties) increased 2900% during the decade. These numbers are not erroneous, but reflect very small numbers of commuters in 1990. In the Newfields case, there were 2 commuters in this category in 1990, and 60 in 2000.

The following are some key findings related to trends in commuting patterns in the region between 1990 and 2000:

- A total of 121,837 residents of the MPO region commute to work in NH and surrounding states. The bulk of these workers commute to jobs in New Hampshire (103,911, or 85%), with most of those (82,907) working within the Seacoast Urbanized Area as redefined by the 2000 Census.
- Massachusetts has the next highest state total at 12,404 (10%), followed by Maine at 4,489 (4%). Only about 1,000 residents of the region (1%) commute outside of this three state area.
- Commute trips have grown faster than population during the 1990s. Commute trips by residents of the region increased by 11% or 12,474 between 1990 and 2000. This compares to an 8.9% increase in population in the region during the same period. Factors accounting for this difference likely include an increase in workers per household, and an increase in households without children.

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### Seacoast Metropolitan Planning Organization

Barrington • Brentwood • Brookfield • Dover • Durham • East Kingston • Epping • Exeter • Farmington • Fremont • Greenland  
Hampton • Hampton Falls • Madbury • Kensington • Lee • Middleton • Milton • New Castle • New Durham • Newfields  
Newington • Newmarket • North Hampton • Northwood • Nottingham • Portsmouth • Rochester • Rollinsford • Rye • Seabrook  
South Hampton • Somersworth • Strafford • Stratham • University of New Hampshire • Wakefield

- Commuters to NH and MA communities have increased, while commutes to Maine have decreased. The 11% increase in total commute trips includes a 15% increase in commutes to jobs in NH communities, but a 4% decrease in commutes to communities in other states. This reflects a 36% decrease in commutes to Maine (-2,485 trips), a 19% increase in commutes to Massachusetts (1,988 trips), and a 16% decrease (-198 trips) in commutes to other states beside Maine and Massachusetts.
- The 36% decrease in commutes to Maine is likely due to job cuts at Kittery Naval Base. The 36% decrease in commutes to Maine is likely due primarily to the loss of jobs at Portsmouth/Kittery Naval Shipyard during the 1990s. Employment at the shipyard was 8,340 in 1990, hit a low of 3,790 in 1997, and has grown at approximately 3%/year since 1997 according to the Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission.
- Commuters to Boston and Northern Massachusetts increased. The decade showed a significant increase in commute trips to Boston (27% or 392 trips) and other Massachusetts communities outside of Essex County and Boston (37% or 1,026 trips). Commutes to Essex County, one of the largest destinations outside of the state, grew 9% (570 trips) during the decade.
- There was a significant increase in commute trips to NH locations outside of the Seacoast UZA. This includes an increase of 1,046 trips (127%) to Salem, Plaistow, and Windham; and an increase of 2,791 trips (56%) outside of Rockingham & Strafford Counties. This includes Hillsborough and Merrimack Counties, facilitated by the upgrade to NH 101.
- The decline in commute trips within Portsmouth and Newington reflects closure of Pease. A 48% decrease in commuters from Newington, linked to the closure of Pease AFB, and a 17% decrease in commuters from Portsmouth similarly linked to Pease.
- Commuters to Portsmouth and Newington down the Spaulding Turnpike increased significantly. While commutes to jobs in Portsmouth and Newington grew just 2% overall during the decade, commutes to Portsmouth/Newington from Dover grew 31% (880 additional trips), from Rochester grew 55% (716 additional trips), and from Farmington grew 109% (139 additional trips). This is reflected in observed congestion increases on the Spaulding.
- Rural communities in Strafford County saw large increases in commuters, reflecting population growth northward on the NH 16 corridor in search of lower cost housing. Strafford and Wakefield saw increases of 40%, while Nottingham, Northwood, and Middleton all experienced increases of over 30%.
- Growth in rural communities can also be seen in central Rockingham County, with East Kingston and Fremont each experiencing increases of over 40% (290 and 623 additional trips respectively), and Hampton Falls and Epping seeing 29% and 28% increases in commuter trips (221 and 658 added trips) respectively.

The full dataset from which these findings are drawn is available on the RPC website: ([www.rpc-nh.org](http://www.rpc-nh.org)) on the regional data page. It is also linked from the "What's New" section on the front page of the site. While these tables depict commute destinations for residents of MPO communities, data are also available on origins of all commuter trips to MPO communities.

Please contact staff if you have any questions regarding Census data, or would like copies of the full dataset.