

## Topic: Using a .dct file to read data into Stata

### Background

The datasets in a standard HRS product distribution kit are contained in ASCII files with a .DA suffix. SAS, SPSS, and Stata command files are supplied for each .DA file, allowing the user to read the data into the statistical analysis system of her/his choice. In the case of the HRS 2002 County Geographic Information files, the following table cross-references the Stata command file (.dct) suffix with the appropriate .DA file:

Product	Command File	Data File
1993 AHEAD	ahd1cty.dct	ahd1cty.da
1995 AHEAD	ahd2cty.dct	ahd2cty.da
1992 HRS	hrs1cty.dct	hrs1cty.da
1994 HRS	hrs2cty.dct	hrs2cty.da
1996 HRS	hrs3cty.dct	hrs3cty.da
1998 HRS	hrs98cty.dct	hrs98cty.da
2000 HRS	hrs00cty.dct	hrs00cty.da
2002 HRS	hrs02cty.dct	hrs02cty.da

### Reading the Data

How to read the data into Stata:

We will use as an example the 2002 HRS .dct and .da files for the county geocode data. We assume that:

1. The .dct files are stored in the following location:  
c:\hrs\resdat\geocode\2002\county\stata
2. The .da files are stored in the following location:  
c:\hrs\resdat\geocode\2002\county\data

The file hrs02cty.dct contains the following information:

```
infile dictionary using
c:\hrs\resdat\geocode\2002\county\data\HRS02cty.da {
* HRS 2002
  _column(1)  str6   HHID      %6s  "Household ID"
  _column(7)  str3   PN        %3s  "Person Number"
  _column(10) str2   StUSPS   %2s  "USPS State Abbreviation"
  _column(12) str2   StFIPS   %2s  "FIPS State Code"
  _column(14) str3   CtyFIPS  %3s  "FIPS County Code"
  _column(17) str5   StCty    %5s  "State+County FIPS Code"
  _column(22) str30  County   %30s  "Name of County"
  _column(52) str1   MatchTyp %1s  "Match Quality Indicator"
}
```

In order to read the information contained in the .da file into Stata, begin by opening your Stata application. (If it is already open, be sure to type 'clear' before you do anything more.) Next you should enter:

```
infile using  
c:\hrs\resdat\geocode\2002\county\stata\HRS02cty.dct
```

This should result in the county file for 2002 being read into Stata.

It is important to note that you will need to modify the file locations if you have unzipped the files into sub-directories that are different than the default sub-directories referenced in the distribution files. For example, if you have saved the .da files in sub-directory c:\hrs\data and the .dct files in sub-directory c:\hrs\stata, you will need to modify the first line of c:\hrs\stata\HRS02cty.dct file to read...

```
infile dictionary using c:\hrs\data\HRS02cty.da
```

Once in stata, issue the following command...

```
infile using c:\hrs\stata\HRS02cty.dct
```

This should provide the desired result.