

CENSUS ADVISORY GROUP

2011 Census Address Register Developments

AG (08)13

Introduction:

This paper presents an update on the progress of the 2011 Census Address Register Development Project. This has been set up to take forward and develop the 2011 Census addressing strategy, which was described in Advisory Group paper (08) 04.

Advisory Group members are asked to note the progress made between June and October 2008.

Addressing approach:

A number of interdependent processes or steps are required to deliver an Address Register of sufficient coverage and quality. The main steps are:

- Three main sources of national addresses, PAF, NLPG and OS AL2, will be matched to find the common elements and to identify differences for more research and verification;
- ONS will work with address product suppliers and local authorities to resolve anomalies (unmatched addresses) that cannot be resolved through computer aided and manual matching techniques alone;
- Areas throughout England & Wales where there has been difficulty resolving the mismatches and/or have high levels of multiple occupancy will be targeted for a Census Address check before the main enumeration in 2011.
- The process underpinning the different data sources for updating and maintaining the separate products will be studied so that the late addition of addresses or address changes can be incorporated into the Census Address Register before Census day.
- Local Authorities will be asked to endorse the improvements to the Address Register in their area and confirm that it is fit for purpose.
- There will be an on-going process of communication and engagement with Local Authorities and key stakeholders to achieve high-level support and direction for the Addressing strategy.

More detail on the Census addressing strategy is provided in Advisory Group paper (08) 04.

Project Background

The 2011 Census Address Register Development Project consists of 3 distinct phases:

- the **Pilot** phase (running between July 08 to December 08), which involves address matching of 24 local authorities and a small address checking exercise;
- the **Rehearsal** phase (August 08 through to May 09) , which involves 3 the rehearsal local authorities (Isle of Anglesey, Lancaster and Newham) and an address checking exercise in 2009; and,
- the **National** phase (December 08 through to June10), which involves address matching for all 376 local authorities in England and Wales and an address checking exercise in 2010.

Since June this year considerable progress has been made. The Pilot and Rehearsal address matching phases are both on schedule to be completed on time.

Progress Summary:

1 Information Sharing Agreement

An early key concern was whether or not ONS would be able to obtain the agreement of all the address list providers (Ordnance Survey, Royal Mail and Local Government Information House) to an Information Sharing Agreement, to cover the Pilot and Rehearsal phases of the project. This was successfully achieved on schedule and ONS would like to recognise the collective efforts of all parties in helping to make this happen in a very short timeframe. This agreement has played a pivotal role in enabling:

- the Pilot and Rehearsal to progress on time in a practical and fixable way; and,
- the sharing of all parties entire address lists for one Local Authority (Bristol) for an independent matching exercise, which will further help ONS measure progress and processes on the Pilot.

The effectiveness of the Information Sharing Agreement will be part of the evaluation at the end of the Pilot; however, ONS intends to start negotiations by November to help expedite a National Agreement to be put in place in time for the next phase of the project.

2 Cross matching of address lists and fielding checking exercises

Significant progress has been achieved on the cross matching between PAF/AL2 and the NLPG, which has produced higher match rates than originally anticipated. The Pilot has been able to achieve an overall match rate of about **98%** (target

96%) leaving a residue of <2% (target <4%) of address anomalies needing to be shared with local authorities. This has been achieved because of:

- the high quality of each of the national address lists supplied which has enabled higher match rates to be produced than previously expected; and,
- the contribution by suppliers in helping to resolve >75% of address anomalies before the residue was forwarded to local authorities for final resolution.

Consequently, these high match rates and the collaborative approach developed between ONS and suppliers have significantly helped reduce the burden on local authorities in the address matching process. This has helped negate original concerns over local authority participation in the process.

In parallel to the address matching process ONS has also commissioned address checking fieldwork in a sample of areas in 16 of the 24 local authorities in the pilot. This work will test the quality of the matching and will also support the evaluation of the pilot. It will also be used in the development of an area model to prioritise areas where a national address field checking exercise in 2010 would be most effective.

3 Engagement of suppliers and local authorities in the Project

All the Pilot and Rehearsal local authorities have either attended a Pilot seminar, held at the end of July, and/or one of 3 workshops held in early September 08.

Feedback from local authorities on the first set of address anomalies, sent out to them in early September, has been positive and their participation in the process is progressing well. We expect final feedback from local authorities on the resolution of unmatched addresses by mid-November, which will be included in the final evaluation report. A Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) Regional Chair Working Group has been setup and has played a crucial role in developing an effective two way communication channel between ONS and local authorities.

Engagement of suppliers in supporting the address matching exercise has progressed well. They have played a significant role in helping to reduce the number of unresolved addresses coming out of the ONS matching exercise, and supporting communications and workshops with local authorities. Consequently, the importance of the role of the address list providers in the success of the Pilot has been recognised and the project has begun negotiations with the suppliers to try and ensure their contributions are maintained when the national phase begins in December 08. The key challenges here are to agree:

- to extend the Information Sharing Agreement, with agreed changes, to cover the National phase; and,
- how to develop a collaborative approach which builds upon the successes achieved during the Pilot.

4 Other news

- ONS and address list providers now meet on a regular basis (generally once a month), which has helped to significantly improve the matching and the processes for exchanging information.
- ONS has attended several Local Authority Regional meetings to discuss progress on the development of a Census Address Register, at the initiation of LLPG Regional Chairs. This is a positive development and is encouraging for national communication with local authorities and shows support for the general approach

5 Looking forward

- A formal evaluation of the Pilot has begun and its key findings will be reported to the Census National Address Register Development Steering Group in December. In addition, 3 independent experts have been engaged to provide external quality assurance on the strategy, processes and the lessons learnt being built into the national plan.
- Some activities originally planned to be conducted in the Pilot have been delayed to the national phase because of time and capacity constraints. However these changes will have minimal impact on the successful delivery and assessment of the Pilot. These activities are: an evaluation of change in data sources over time; development of a long-term address update and change control process; assembly of address lists for communal establishments; and evaluation of the VOA data.
- ONS has begun preparations to ensure that appropriate third party address matching services are secured to support the National phase of the Project. This is progressing well and it is expected that the necessary services should be in place early in 2009 to support the national phase of the project.

October 2008