

## **CENSUS ADVISORY GROUP**

**AG (08) 15**

### **2011 CENSUS LOCAL AUTHORITY / COMMUNITY LIAISON AND STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATION**

#### **Summary**

- 1 Further to the Advisory Group Paper (07)06, ONS wishes to briefly update members on actions taken and progress made to engage with local authorities, community groups and other stakeholders to support effective enumeration and reach all audiences in England and Wales.
- 2 Advisory Group members are invited to note progress on these issues and activities and to comment as necessary.

#### **Local Authority Liaison**

- 3 There are a number of activities that have been identified on which ONS would like to work in partnership with local authorities. This joint working can enhance the quality of the Census through local knowledge and expertise, with corresponding benefits for both ONS and the local authorities involved. The activities are:
  - Address Register development to ensure fullest coverage;
  - Sharing of enumeration intelligence for targeting of delivery methods and follow-up resources;
  - Identification and development of contacts within community groups;
  - Support for recruitment and logistics; and
  - Support for publicity; and
  - Provision of local information to support quality assurance

#### **Local Authority Liaison for the 2009 Rehearsal**

- 4 Following the evaluation of the 2007 Test, the Local Authority Liaison Programme and its related Action Plan has been revised for the 2009 Rehearsal. This plan covers the activities which ONS will carry out in order to coordinate the activities described above in rehearsal local authorities. Progress on address register development is separately described in the Census Advisory Group paper CAG (08) 11.

- 5 The development of working relationships with representatives from each Rehearsal LA is progressing well. Authorities involved in the Rehearsal are
- Lancaster City Council
  - Lancashire County Council
  - The London Borough of Newham
  - Ynys Môn - Isle of Anglesey.

Engagement between ONS and these local authorities began with Chief Executives in March 2008, and since then working level relationships between the ONS LA Liaison team and Census Liaison Managers and Assistant Census Liaison Managers appointed by each authority have been built. Assistant Census Liaison Managers provide an important communication channel for ONS to coordinate its requests for support and information.

- 6 Engagement activities undertaken to date with Rehearsal local authorities have included information sharing about Census Rehearsal plans and timetables to allow the local authorities to plan and resource their responses to ONS requests for support. Rehearsal local authorities have also responded positively to requests for local information that will support enumeration in their area such as languages spoken.
- 7 The Census Local Authority Liaison team is coordinating and supporting the relationships between Rehearsal local authorities and other parts of the Census and ONS including Methodology and Geography.
- 8 Census directors will visit each rehearsal area to meet the local authority Chief Executives during November.

### **Local Authority Liaison for the 2011 Census**

- 9 To extend the partnership approach that is being developed with Rehearsal areas to all local authorities for 2011, ONS will need to begin to communicate effectively with several key audiences within local authorities. A communication plan for each audience within local authorities has been drafted. The key partners within local authorities include:
- Local authority Chief Executives, primarily through a network of Census Regional Champions
  - Data Custodians of Local Land and Property Gazetteers and their Regional Chairs
  - Local authority officers appointed to be Census Liaison Managers or Assistant Census Liaison Managers
  - Technical leads and users
  - Local authority communication and publicity teams

- 10 Census Regional Champions (CRCs) have been appointed to play an integral part of ONS' communications network and plans.
- 11 The CRC network is based upon the Regional Returning Officers for each of the nine English Local Government Regions and the Returning Officer for Wales. The Census Regional Champions are either the Chief Executives, or Senior Officers (Legal or Electoral), of local authorities.
- 12 Broadly, the role of the CRCs will be to use their expertise and networks to:
  - Create awareness of the 2011 Census amongst local authorities and their strategic partners and community groups.
  - Assist ONS in creating effective partnership working with local authorities.
  - Effect introductions and facilitate meetings and the staging of events.
  - Advise ONS on communications strategies and engagement plans with local authorities.
  - Share best practice across regions and with other CRCs – providing expertise, advice and guidance to help resolve difficulties local authorities may encounter.
- 13 The programme of activity agreed with CRCs for the first quarter of 2009 includes initial communication through the CRCs to all local authority Chief Executives and the organisation of regional events for local authority representatives including Census Liaison Managers and Assistant Census Liaison Managers.
- 14 In addition to the communication channel between Census Regional Champions and senior local authority managers, ONS will work in partnership with existing local authority organisations such as LARIA, LGA, and SOLACE in both England and Wales to reach local authority audiences through existing communication channels.
- 15 Engagement with communication and publicity teams from local authorities will also begin in the early part of 2009, sharing key census messages and publicity plans and asking for support in communicating these key messages to local audiences.
- 16 A suite of core materials and information about the Census is being prepared and will be available to local authority communication teams to use within their own publicity mechanisms.

## **Community Liaison**

- 17 Effective liaison with community groups is vital to delivering a successful census. The prime aim of the Census community liaison plan is to facilitate enumeration of target population groups which may be hard to count or may have been previously under-represented population.
- 18 The strands of support identified by ONS that ONS will seek from community groups are:

- To identify how community groups can provide local intelligence into the Census programme;
  - To publicise the Census and underline its use and value;
  - To provide help and guidance to local community groups and individual members of the public;
  - To assist with the development of language and disability strategies, and in particular, the provision of language translation and interpreting materials and facilities; and
  - To help provide a source of potential field staff.
- 19 Ci Research (a not for profit company) was commissioned to provide consultancy support to identify community liaison best practice, ensuring 2011 Census meets its business objectives.
- 20 From this commission Ci Research produced a toolkit which is a reference guide for effectively engaging selected communities which are either hard to count or require specific interventions in order to complete the 2011 Census form.
- 21 The kit also provides a practical tool for understanding the specific barriers experienced by hard to count groups in relation to the 2011 Census.
- 22 ONS is currently finalising its action plan of community liaison activities which will take place over the next 12 months. The plan includes liaison through the Diversity Advisory Group, meetings with umbrella community groups and the development and testing of field based local community liaison procedures during small scale tests and the Rehearsal. Information packs to help organisations understand how they can help with the 2011 Census and to provide information about the Census process will also be produced.
- 23 ONS will also continue to encourage LAs to further develop their list of community groups and key contacts, and to support ONS in accessing Local Strategic Partnerships to channel information to a wide range of community groups.

### **Communication with all stakeholders**

- 24 ONS has developed a communications strategy to ensure that consistent messages are given to all audiences, including the public, users, local authorities as working partners, community organisations, other government departments and parliamentarians.
- 25 The strategy sets out a number of recommendations for the 2011 Census publicity campaign which would follow a five phase approach aimed at: education, enlistment, engagement, enforcement, and explanation. The publicity campaign will be run at both national and regional levels to allow for the specific targeting of hard-to-count groups and areas.
- 26 Processes have begun to procure the services of marketing and communication agencies to support the delivery of the communication

strategy. The procurement processes for the advertising, new media and PR agencies will be completed during the first quarter of 2009.

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