

SUMMARY OF KEY OUTCOMES FROM THE OUTPUT WORKING GROUP (OWG) MEETING HELD ON 6th MARCH 1998**1. Introduction**

This paper summarises the key outcomes from the last meeting of the Output Working Group (OWG) held on 6th March 1998. Its purpose is to inform the Advisory Groups on the latest progress and developments in the work of the OWG and its sub-groups.

2. OWG Meetings

Three meetings of the OWG had been arranged (for 6 March, 5 May and 25 June) and were chiefly aimed at preparing for the consultation exercise to follow the publication of the White Paper on the 2001 Census. The objectives of these meetings were to:

- a. maximise the contribution from Census users to the preparations for the main round of consultations on 2001 Census output;
- b. seek views on the proposed mechanisms for consultation;
- c. agree tasks which would be best carried out by sub-groups; and to
- d. plan for the most effective use of the eighteen months between the White Paper and the Dress Rehearsal in 2000 (where output systems would be fully tested prior to the 2001 Census).

3. Key Outcomes

The key outcomes from this meeting are summarised below:

3.1 2001 Census: Output Strategy

OWG generally welcomed a summary of the main elements of the framework document, *2001 Census: Output Strategy*; **OWG98/02**, presented by Chris Denham. The paper set out the general directions of development of the Output Strategy, stressing that a final document had still to be agreed by the UKCC. Following agreement, the paper would be re-issued to OWG, and as an Advisory Group paper [now issued as (98)05].

3.2 Output Production Project

OWG raised two key issues relating to the Output Production Project that would be considered by the Census Offices:

- a. there should be consultation on the formats proposed for outputting data to customers;

- b. there should be quality checks by experienced users on 2001 Census, prior to release.

All these issues will be considered by the Dissemination Special Interest Group (DSIG), a sub-group of the OWG.

3.3 OWG Sub-groups

The three sub-groups currently operating would continue with their remits:

- a. SARs - to continue under the Chair of Angela Dale with reports to OWG;
- b. DSIG - to broaden remit as set out in para 3.2 above;
- c. *Origin-destination statistics* - Frank Thomas to provide OWG with a paper on issues and possible products for 2001.

OWG agreed that a fourth sub-group *Output Geography and Area Statistics*, under the Chair of Chris Denham, to look at small area products, population bases, output geography, and disclosure control, should be set up and begin work as soon as possible.

3.4 Consultation

A paper was presented to OWG setting out proposals for consultation with users. The paper highlighted the key milestones and dates for consultation. A full paper setting out the mechanics of holding a series of roadshows is being prepared. It was agreed that consultation will be handled by a series of roadshows similar to the 1991 Census. Discussion of the various output issues would be phased rather than placed in a single round of consultation. Also, consultation would be predominantly by face-to-face means, but electronic (virtual) consultation, for example, the Internet would be used where appropriate. The next two meetings of OWG would focus on more specific proposals on consultation.

The Census Offices would update their customer databases in preparation for the consultation programme.

4 Action

The Advisory Groups are invited to note the latest progress and developments in the work of the OWG and its sub-groups.

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