



CENSUS ADVISORY GROUPS

Advisory Group Paper (07)01

2011 CENSUS UPDATE REPORT

Summary

In lieu of a spring round of Census Advisory Group meetings, ONS has prepared this Update Report on progress on a number of 2011 Census and other census-related issues. The paper covers:

- **2007 Census Test**
- **2006 Scottish Census Test evaluation**
- **Address Register evaluation**
- **Consultation on small area geographies**
- **Coverage assessment and adjustment**
- **Local authority and community liaison**
- **Wider stakeholder management**
- **Proposals for EU Census legislation**
- **Census governance**
- **ONS independence**
- **Innovative census methodologies in the new millennium**

Separate Advisory Group papers are being circulated on ideas for the **distribution of outputs from the 2011 Census** (Paper AG(07)02), the timetable for a programme for the research and user involvement in developing a **statistical disclosure control methodology** for the 2011 Census (Paper AG(07)03), and summarises the user consultation that has taken place on the **content of the 2011 questionnaire** (Paper AG (07) 04) since the last round of Advisory Group meetings in November 2006.

Comments from Census Advisory Group members are welcome. The next round of meetings is likely to be scheduled over the period **6-28 November**. Dates will be confirmed, and invitations sent out, later in the summer.

2007 Census Test: progress report

1 The Census Test took place in England and Wales on the 13 May 2007. The purpose of conducting the voluntary test is to assess a wide range of different aspects in planning, testing and evaluating the census operation and to feed these into the design of the 2011 Census. The main aims of the Test are to evaluate the effect on response rates of including a question on income and the use of post-out to deliver questionnaire, and to assess the feasibility of some major innovations in operational procedures, such as the development of an address register and the outsourcing of field staff recruitment, training and pay.

2 The Test included approximately 100,000 households from within the five local authority areas of Bath and North East Somerset, Camden, Carmarthenshire, Liverpool and Stoke-on-Trent. The respective areas had been chosen to provide a diverse cross section of the population and types of housing that would be covered in the full census. An article by Peter Benton and others, published in *Population Trends* no. 126* in January, set out the main aims of the Test, and described the design and location of the sampled areas and the basis for their selection. The article concluded with an overview of the questions that were included on the Test form.

3 Out of the 101,976 households in total, some 43,998 questionnaires were delivered by hand, compared with an expectation of 50,668 questionnaires. The reason for this disparity relates to derelict and vacant properties and a small proportion of refusals. Post-out, using the Royal Mail, was adopted for the delivery the questionnaires to the other half of the sample households. If this proves to be successful it could be adopted throughout the majority of Enumeration Districts in the 2011 Census.

4 The numbers of questionnaires delivered within each Test area were:

Bath and NE Somerset	9,749
Camden	30,273
Carmarthenshire	8,983
Liverpool	37,932
Stoke	14,859
Total	101,976

5 Before households were due to receive the Test Census forms, information cards were posted out. Approximately 2,000 were returned as undeliverable, with equal numbers in post-out and hand delivery areas. To verify this information checks were carried out in the field and latest feedback suggests this number accurately reflects the number of addresses where forms genuinely could not be delivered.

* www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_population/PopulationTrends126.pdf

6 On the ground a temporary field force has been recruited to carry out the work. Hays Recruitment were contracted to conduct the field recruitment, training and pay. Based on detailed assessments at the start of the Test, some 273 Delivery Enumerators

and 284 Follow-up Enumerators across the five Test areas were required. The recruitment and training of the Delivery Enumerators was completed within the timetable. But recruitment of follow-up staff was harder than anticipated and, as a consequence, field staff in some areas have been asked to work extra hours to fill the gaps.

7 Various suppliers have been working closely with the ONS Cnsus team to develop essential systems and services for the 2007 Census Test. This will ensure that they have a shared, detailed understanding of system requirements and will be able to proceed quickly with development of full systems and services for the 2011 Census. ONS has shortlisted two suppliers, Lockheed Martin UK and T-Systems International, and each have been awarded a contract to provide services for the 2007 Census Test. Following the Test, further performance evaluation of the two shortlisted suppliers will be carried out, and one supplier will be awarded the contract to design and deliver the 2009 Census Rehearsal and the 2011 Census.

8 An innovative operational intelligence (OI) system has been employed for the Test. This technology provides a form tracking system that links questionnaires to addresses, enabling intelligence to be gathered through all delivery channels. The ability to track and relate questionnaire identity numbers to household provides a greater degree of control over the whole process whilst providing more detailed information to make decisions. The OI system has been supporting the operation of a number of teams, including the Contact Centre (CC).

9 The CC was set up (in Milton Keynes) and was functional between 23 April and 25 June. Staff have been trained in the Operational Intelligence systems and on the use of the Census Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). The CC has been taking details from households who have not received a form, updating address list information and the form tracking system in the process, and posting out uniquely referenced forms as necessary. There was a peak of calls on the first day that the posted-out forms were delivered and at the start of the follow-up phase. Census Customer Services at Titchfield took over from the CC on 26 June, after follow-up was completed on the 22 June, and remained open until the 6 July to deal with queries, requests for materials and 'Frequently Asked Questions'.

10 The CC answered a total of 2,271 enquiries during its lifespan (around 1,300 were forecast). The most frequently asked question has related to whether or not the Test was compulsory. From the language help available, Cantonese translation booklets have been the most frequently requested, the majority of these requests coming from residents in Liverpool. There have been four requests for large print format of booklet, but no requests for the Braille version.

11 Follow-up activity commenced as planned on the 23 May and extended to 22 June, during which period there were three attempts to contact households in order to maximise return rate of questionnaires. In the Stoke-on-Trent timetable was extended beyond 22 June to allow for a complete 3rd follow-up.

12 Some 60,000 reminder cards were issued to non-responding households A fourth follow-up in the areas of Camden, Liverpool and Bath and NE Somerset was undertaken with the goal of achieving a 50 per cent final response rate.

13 As at 29 June some 42,981 forms had been received and response rates in each of the Test areas are:

	%
• Carmarthenshire	63
• Bath and NE Somerset	59
• Stoke-on Trent	53
• Liverpool	43
• Camden	34

These figures are expected to increase marginally as further questionnaires that are posted back to the 'posting centre' will be receipted and processed up to the 12 July (when processing ceases). At the ED level, the initial levels of response to date has ranged from 72 per cent to under 10 per cent.

14 The Census Evaluation Survey started on 1 June and will re-interview a sample of both respondents and non-respondents to assess the quality of responses and reasons for non-response. Initially, a sample of 12 responding households in each of 87 EDs across all five Test LAs will be interviewed, to be followed by a further sample of 8 responding and 4 non-responding households in a second tranche of interviews.

15 The 2007 Census Test included a wide range of potential new questions to help provide information in drawing up the final selection. New questions tested included:

- national identity - to allow respondents to record their identity as English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish, Irish or other;
- income - to collect level and sources of income;
- language - to collect information on proficiency in English, Welsh, British Sign Language and other languages;
- frequency of the use of the Welsh language in Wales;
- second address - to identify the number of people with a regular second address and the purpose and frequency of its use;
- month and year of entry into the UK - to collect extra information about international migration.

2006 Scottish Census Test evaluation

16 The 2006 Census Test evaluation report has now been published and is available at: <http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/census/censushm2011/2006-census-test/2006-census-test-evaluation.html>

17 The report reviews the 2006 Census Test operation in Scotland and includes a number of recommendations that will be taken forward into strategies and procedures for the Census Rehearsal in 2009 and the full Census in 2011.

18 There are five sections to the report:

- *Census Test Evaluation report*, summary of main findings and recommendations
- *Fieldwork Evaluation*;
- *Evaluation of Data Capture Contract*;
- *Statistical Evaluation with Annex A, Annex B and Annex C*
(Note: Annex D has still to be finalised and will be added when ready) ; and
- *Evaluation of Governance procedures*

Each section of the report is available in either HyperText Markup Language (HTML) or Adobe Acrobat Portable Document Format (PDF). Maximum file size is 780 Kb.

Address Register evaluation

19 Phase 1 of ONS's assessment of the two competing national address products – Ordnance Survey's MasterMap Address Layer 2 and the local authority sourced National Land and Property Gazetteer - has been completed. This mainly assessed the coverage of the two products in the five Census Test areas at the time of an address checking exercise conducted in these areas in September 2006. The Phase 1 report is scheduled to be published on ONS's web-site later this summer, after further consultation with both address suppliers.

Consultation on small area geographies

20 The promised consultation on users' views on the value of Output Areas (OAs) and Super Output Areas (SOAs) was carried out between November 2006 and February 2007. This review is to be used to inform the National Statistics policy on geography and particularly the output areas for which data are to be released for the 2011 Census

21 The response to the consultation was extremely positive both in terms of the number of submissions and the amount of useful and well considered comments they contain. The consultation has revealed a great deal of support for the key principles currently being suggested - of stability and continuity - although there obviously remain areas of disagreement requiring further discussion on the detail of the policy.

22 Some 90 per cent of respondents agree that stability in output geographies is worth pursuing - but there is some discussion about the level that stability that should be maintained. Some respondents call for radical change at the OA level while others plea for no change at all.

23 With this, as with other issues, it is evident that there are some complex issues here and conflicting calls on the policy. It is clear that it is going to be impossible to provide a solution that satisfies all users at the same time, but the response to the consultation will be critical in helping ONS decide where to draw the compromise position.

24 ONS is fully aware that there is a complex interaction between policy on geography, data supply and disclosure, and it is going to need to keep an eye on those

connections and will need to be flexible and responsive as these policies are jointly developed. Nonetheless, ONS does need to start to get these separate elements tied down and intends to start by getting an interim geography policy in place.

25 There remains work to do on analysing the results of the consultation but the results will be published, together with an initial view on what this means for Census policy, as soon as possible - likely to be July.

26 Some issues are still open to discussion, and there are several key decisions to make including those on:

- dealing with communal establishments,
- names for SOAs; and
- whether or not boundaries should better align the with real world features.

ONS also needs to do further work on how it takes account of change in population. The aim is for a maintenance policy which reflects population shift where essential - but minimises change. Again the results of the consultation and further discussion with users will help inform our decisions.

27 Some issues are, however, much more settled. The overall response and strength of feeling expressed by many respondents has confirmed a number of the key principles:

- ONS *is* going to proceed with a policy based strongly upon stability and continuity with Census 2001.
- ONS *is not* going to redraw the whole OA/SOA hierarchy from scratch. However, a decision on the level at which stability is maintained is still open. The starting point is to retain stability at all level of geographies - but there remain other options which will be assessed in the light of responses made and an assessment of costs and benefits of change.
- *If* ONS does adopt stability at the OA level it may allow some variation where users have identified a real need but that change is certain not to be more than 5 per cent of OAs and we are looking to make it less than this. ONS is going to use feedback from the consultation to inform the policy on this.
- ONS is fully aware of the need to support geographies other than the OAs and SOAs, and will continue to develop its policy on this and related disclosure control issues. ONS is also very conscious of the value of alignment across the UK and will continue to work with the devolved administrations on options.

28 Census users will be aware that there were some issues that ONS did not manage properly in 2001; these will be better addressed this time. These include;

- the differences in borders in the Scottish and English datasets; and
- providing an alternative to the Extent of the Realm boundary sets.

What matters now is that within the known principles ONS should work with users to make the OA and SOA geography and Census data as usable and as useful as possible.

29 ONS would like to thank the user community again for the quality of input to date and, no doubt, over the coming months as it refines the way in which these principles are applied.

Coverage assessment and adjustment

30 Work is underway on developing a methodology to assess coverage (both under-enumeration and over-count) in the 2011 Census and to adjust the counts accordingly.

31 A sub-group of the UK Census Design and Methodology Advisory Committee (UKCDMAC) was formed in January 2007 to provide a rigorous quality review of the work associated with developing the methodology. The sub-group includes external and international experts in the field including Ludi Simpson (University of Manchester), Chris Skinner (University of Southampton), Steve Turner (Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit), David Steel (University of Wollongong) and William Bell (US Bureau of the Census), and reports to the main UKCDMAC.

32 An internal Working Group (including representatives from GROS, NISRA and the Welsh Assembly Government) has also been formed to provide advice, quality review and to steer the work in developing the methodology.

33 An article by Owen Abbott in the latest issue of *Population Trends** outlines the proposed strategy for coverage assessment and adjustment for the 2011 Census. The article outlines the key areas of innovation with the aim of improving on the 2001 One Number Census approach.

Local authority and community liaison

Local Authority Liaison Programme

34 Further to the reports presented to a number of the Census Advisory Groups last October (Paper CLIP(06) 01, DiAG (06)02, and CAGW (06)03), continued progress was made collecting area profile data against the LA Liaison Action Plan and the profiles required for the 2007 Census were produced on time. Actions against Annex A of the LA Action Plan were completed to timetable. A meeting of the Local Authority Liaison Steering Group took place on 22 January 2007.

* www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_population/PopulationTrends127.pdf

35 All five Test LA have now signed their Service Level Agreement (SLA). Three LAs have been paid their first payment instalment of the SLA.

36 The Stoke-on-Trent Census Liaison Manager (CLM) and Assistant Census Liaison Manager (ACLM) have now left the City Council; otherwise the other

original CLMs/ACLMs are still in-place. The ONS team were particularly sorry to lose the valuable experience of Knud Moller, and wishes him well for the future.

37 Evaluation of the 2007 Test is underway and an LA/ONS evaluation workshop was held on 11 July 2007. It is yet too early to give an indication of what elements will be recommended to go forward for the Census Rehearsal in 2009, or in what form they might take, but firmer plans will be announced before the next scheduled round of Census Advisory Group meetings in the autumn 2007.

38 For those Advisory Group members who may not have already seen it, Neil Storer (the ACLM for Camden) has provided an excellent account of the role of Camden in the Test, published in the latest issue of *BURISA* (www.burisa.org).

39 Principles and proposed partnership models for working with LAs towards the 2011 Census are being developed in conjunction with key stakeholders, including SOLACE and the Local Government Association.

Community Liaison Programme

40 There have been variations in timeliness and provision of information requested by ONS from different community organisations. Whilst they have provided a helpful advisory role, practical response to the specific actions contained in the Community Liaison Action Plan in informing enumeration intelligence has been limited. However, meetings with several community organisations and individuals have been very informative and helpful, as have the many external seminars attended.

41 Equality impact assessments are to be undertaken that will undoubtedly have an effect on taking forward the Action Plan to ensure that the Census meets accessibility requirements and complies with gender, race and disability legislation.

Wider stakeholder management

42 Following local press interest in the issue of Cornish identity and language expressed in the run up to the 2007 Census Test, ONS officials visited Truro on 20 April to discuss these topics in meetings with key stakeholders.

43 In addition ONS have recently met with other key stakeholders to discuss other particular issues related to the conduct of the 2011 Census. These have included meetings with:

- Heads of Professions – to consider the options for including an additional page of census questions to meet Departmental data requirements;
- Liberty - to discuss issues related to human rights and data confidentiality;
- Stonewall - to discuss the collection of information on sexual identity;
- British Sikh Federation and the Board of Deputies of British Jews – to discuss the recognition of Sikh and Jewish as specific ethnic categories;
- British Humanist Association – to discuss broadening the religion question to include non-faith based beliefs; and

- Ligali (and other ethnic community groups) – to discuss the acceptability of the continued use of ‘Black’ terminology in ethnic classifications.

44 As part of the means of establishing engagement with wider stakeholder generally, ONS are developing a detailed Stakeholder Management and Communications strategy with particular emphasis on users, local authorities as working partners, community organisations, and with Parliament, Ministers, Departments and the National Assembly for Wales. Plans will be presented at the next round of Census Advisory Group meetings currently scheduled for the autumn 2007.

Proposals for EU Census legislation

45 The European Union is almost ready to introduce a Framework Regulation covering the harmonisation of outputs from Member States’ censuses of population and housing. A draft of the Regulation was scrutinised by Council of Ministers Working Party on Statistics (STATIS) on 3 May and 18 June 2007. Officials from ONS were present representing the UK.

Background to the Regulation

46 The proposed Council and European Parliament Framework Regulation on Population and Housing Censuses is intended to be a permanent piece of legislation concerned with establishing common rules for the decennial provision of comprehensive data population and housing to be collected from traditional census or from alternative sources such as surveys and registers, or from combinations of such sources.

47 The Regulation is not concerned with prescribing the ways in which Member States should collect the information. Nor is it itself concerned with specifying the particular outputs to be provided. The latter will be the subject of a subsequent Commission Implementation Regulation. A Commission Regulation would be required for each successive census round.

48 The proposal for the Council Regulation was adopted by the Commission on 23 February 2007 and was presented and discussed at the meeting of the Council Working Party on Statistics (STATIS) on 5 March 2007. Because of the short time frame between the adoption of the proposal by the commission and the first discussion at STATIS, the Presidency has asked Member States for detailed comments on the proposal in writing by 13 April 2007. Subsequently a revised Presidency proposal – taking account of many of the comments on content and drafting made by the UK - was considered at a meeting of the Working Party on 3 May and was finally approved on 18 June.

The Regulation

49 The substantive elements of the Council Regulation are that it:

- Defines certain fundamental terms referred to specifically in the text, such as "population", "housing", "usual residence", "national" , "regional", and "essential features of population and housing censuses" . Such terms are

consistent with the latest version of the joint UN-ECE/Eurostat *Recommendations on Population and Housing Censuses* adopted by the Conference of European Statisticians in June 2006.

- Provides for Member States to determine the date to which the data refers (reference date) but requires that that date should fall within the reference year.
- Requires the first reference year to be 2011. Thereafter, the reference year is to be prescribed by subsequent Commission Regulations.
- Provides for the basis for statistics to be taken from a variety or combination of sources, including traditional censuses, rolling censuses, surveys and registers.
- Requires Member States to provide Eurostat with validated data and metadata with respect to specific topics covering: demographic, social economic and housing characteristics of persons, households, families, housing units and buildings at both national and regional level, and that such data be provided to Eurostat within 27 months after the end of the reference year.
- Requires the Commission to adopt a programme of those statistical data and metadata to be transmitted in an electronic form to be specified in a subsequent Commission Regulation
- Defines the scope of the topics to be covered in the programme of statistical data together with the geographic level at which the data are to be supplied to Eurostat. These topics are limited to those that are identified as 'core' in the current Conference of European Statisticians' *Recommendations for the 2010 Censuses of Population and Housing*.
- Provides for the provision of aggregated data in the form of anonymised micro data to be supplied to Eurostat on a voluntary basis.
- Requires Member States to ensure that data sources and methodologies are fit for purpose.
- Requires measures to be taken to ensure the quality of data and metadata to be provided and to report on such measures to Eurostat as required by the Commission.
- Provides for the content of a quality report and the quality criteria for the production and dissemination of the data to be prescribed by Commission Regulation.
- Requires Member States to inform Eurostat of any changes or corrections to any data previously supplied not later than one month prior to the release of the corrected data, and requires the transmission of any such corrected or revised data to Eurostat no later than at their release

Implications for topic content for the 2011 UK Census

50 A number of topics on which the UK will be required to report statistics to Eurostat arising from the proposed Regulation are either not yet confirmed for inclusion in the 2011 Census or are likely to be omitted. Currently these cover:

Individual person topics

- Industry
- Educational attainment
- Place of birth within the UK (at County/Unitary Authority area level)
- Country of citizenship
- Ever resided abroad and year of arrival (for all persons)

Housing topics

- Water supply system
- Toilet and bathing facilities
- Dwellings by type of building
- Period of construction

In the event that information on these topics is not collected in the 2011 Census, data may be provided from alternative sources such as surveys or administrative records.

Next steps: preparing further EU legislation

51 The UK is an active participant in an EU Census Legislation Task Force which is advising the European Commission on the scope and content of the proposed Implementing Regulation. As noted above the Commission Regulation will set out: the detail of the programme of statistical data to be provided to Eurostat by Member States from the 2011 round of European censuses (based on the core topics specified by the Council Framework Regulation) and the format by which data is to be submitted or otherwise made accessible; and the quality criteria to be adopted in the preparation of the statistics.

52 The Task Force next meets on 17 September 2007 and is due to make its recommendations to the Commission by the end of the year.

Census governance

53 Following an extensive review, by Ernst and Young, of the organisational management of the Census within ONS, a revised governance structure has been developed. A chart showing the high level structure is attached. This shows how the user input from the several Census Advisory Groups feeds into the Census Project Board

54 Responsibility for the management of user consultation in general and, in particular, the secretariat for the several Census Advisory Groups, now falls within the Census Communications and Stakeholder Management Branch of the 2011 Census Division.

55 The format, membership and terms of reference of the proposed user forum (the User Requirements Board) are currently being reviewed following this major reorganisation, and details will be circulated to Advisory Groups as and when these are finalised. A chart showing the more detailed structure of the work areas within the revised Census organisation is attached as an Annex to this paper.

ONS Independence

56 May and June were busy months for the ONS Independence Team with developments on a number of fronts. In Parliament, peers resumed their consideration of the Statistics and Registration Service Bill. The Bill reached the Committee Stage in the House of Lords in May, and was debated on the floor of the House on three occasions.

57 There have been two notable amendments to the Bill during Lords' Committee. Firstly, it has been proposed the Cabinet Office should succeed HM Treasury as the Statistics Board's parent Department that would be responsible for those residual Ministerial functions; these would include the Census. Secondly, the Statistics Board has been given responsibility for determining the rules and principles governing pre-release access, thus having the effect of removing those same powers from Ministers.

58 More recently the Commons have been considering the Lord's amendments, and the Bill is now back in the Lords. Third reading and Royal Assent is anticipated before the Parliamentary Summer Recess.

59 Meanwhile, the process to appoint a Chair of the Statistics Board has begun. ONS expects an appointment to be made during the summer. The Chair will then function in a 'shadow' capacity until the new arrangements come into effect formally in April next year.

Innovative methodologies for censuses in the new millennium

60 '*Innovative Methodologies for Censuses in the New Millennium*' is a Satellite Meeting of the 56th Session of the International Statistical Institute (ISI), organised by the Southampton Statistical Sciences Research Institute. The meeting is taking place at the Statistical Sciences Research Institute, Southampton University from 31 August-2 September 2007.

61 Supported by the ONS, this meeting is jointly sponsored by the ISI, International Association of Survey Statisticians (IASS), International Association for Official Statistics (IAOS), American Statistical Association (ASA), Lockheed Martin and Statistical Product & Service Solutions (SPSS), and brings together leading experts in census methodology from around the world.

62 The aim of this meeting is to highlight and focus on the methodological advances that are taking place around the world, and raise awareness regarding best practices in census methodology, and is complemented by a broad set of additional contributed papers presenting developments both in the UK and several other

countries. Census Advisory Group members may be interested to know that discount registration is still available via the conference website at:

<http://www.s3ri.soton.ac.uk/isi2007/>

Distribution of 2011 Census outputs

63 A separate paper (AG (07) 02) describing ideas for the distribution of outputs from the 2011 Census that are currently being put forward independently by users has been sent out to Census Advisory Groups members for initial comment. The idea arose from a workshop on 20 March 2007 attended by a selection of data distributors with long-term experience of managing Census data, and by an EU Task Force formed of representatives for Member States to consider options for providing future Census data to Eurostat (see also item on EU legislation below)

Statistical disclosure control work plan

64 Another paper setting out the timetable for a programme for the research and user involvement in developing a statistical disclosure control methodology for the 2011 Census as been sent out to Census Advisory Group members as Paper AG(07)03.

2011 Census questionnaire development

65 A further paper summarising the user consultation that has taken place on the content of the 2011 questionnaire since the last round of advisory groups in November 2006 along with the ongoing work on developing questions for the 2011 Census is presented as Paper AG(07)04.

ONS
2011 Census Stakeholder Management Branch
July 2007