

**CENSUS REHEARSAL****Summary**

1. Press Releases in August announced that, as part of the planning and testing programme for the 2001 Census of Population and Housing, the 3 Census Offices would be conducting a large-scale Census Rehearsal (CR) starting in April 1999 with the enumeration of some 134,000 households. Previous to this Ministers had been informed, who in turn notified Members of Parliament of CR areas at the same time as the Census Offices notified Chief Executives of Local Authorities.
2. **Advisory Group members are invited to note:**
  - **further background to the CR;**
  - **information as to its conduct;**
  - **details of the areas chosen; and**
  - **a timetable of CR field work milestones**

**Background**

3. The planning and testing programme for the 2001 Census, which included the large scale Census test in 1997, has focused on improving coverage and quality, reducing the burden upon the public, and improving the cost-effectiveness of the operation. As a result, some major changes have been introduced into plans for the 2001 Census. These include:
  - enumeration procedures in which householders will post back their completed forms as opposed to them being collected by an enumerator;
  - a complete redesign of the Census form which has proved easier for members of the public to complete;
  - a method of planning enumeration areas using Geographic Information Systems software; and
  - data processing based upon the use of scanning, optical mark reading, and optical character recognition techniques.
4. The CR will serve to finally confirm that all intended methodologies and procedures for 2001 will deliver its strategic aims and that the content and conduct of the Census will be acceptable to the public.

## **Conduct**

5. There will be a full enumeration of all households in the selected areas. A temporary field force, totalling some 500, of Census Area Managers, (Scotland, Leeds and Lincoln only), Census Officers, Assistant Census Officers and Enumerators are to be recruited locally to carry out the work. Census Area Managers and Census Officers have already been appointed.
6. The completion of Census forms by householders will be voluntary. Information returned on the forms will be treated as confidential and only used for evaluating the success of field work and dress rehearsing subsequent phases of the operation concerned with data processing including data quality, edit and imputation, One Number Census processes, disclosure control, production of outputs and methods of dissemination of products.
7. A Census Coverage Survey (CCS) – some 18,000 households - comprising the re-enumeration of all households in a sample of postcodes, will follow enumeration. The survey will use doorstep interviews to collect basic data which will be subsequently matched with Census data to allow the One Number Census process to be evaluated

## **Areas**

8. Choice

The areas were chosen collectively to:

- include a cross section of the population and the types of households found in the country as a whole;
- allow for regional variations in response;
- measure the success of new procedures for the issue of Welsh language forms in Wales;
- yield a sufficiently large number of returned forms for a realistic dress rehearsal of subsequent activities in the 2001 Census ie data processing, assessing data quality, and production of output; and
- have individual areas of sufficient size to allow employment of the full structure of field staff expected to be in place for the 2001 Census.

10. Location and estimated Households (1991 Census)

ENGLAND

Bournemouth (part)	20,000
Leeds (part)	34,000
Lincoln	34,200

**Total** **88,200**

WALES

Ceredigion (part)	6,900
Gwynedd (part)	7,800

**Total** **14,700**

SCOTLAND

Angus (part)	8,200
Dundee City (part)	14,500

**Total** **22,700**

GREAT BRITAIN	125,600
NORTHERN IRELAND	8,000
UNITED KINGDOM	133,600

Timetable

11. Census Rehearsal day will be 25 April 1999. The remaining 1999 milestones are as follows:

January-March	Assistant Census Officers, Enumerators and CCS (Field) Team Managers recruited
April	CCS Interviewers recruited Enumeration field work started
25 April	Census Rehearsal day
mid May	Enumeration field work finished
late May/June	CCS conducted

Linda Street  
2001 Census Programme Manager  
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