



CENSUS ADVISORY GROUP

Advisory Group Paper (07)06

2011 CENSUS HIGHLIGHT REPORT: November 2007

Summary

- 1 In addition to the papers on specific topics in the agenda for the November 07 round of Census Advisory Group meetings, ONS wish to briefly update members on a number of other issues and activities that are on going. This Highlight Paper covers:
 - **Date of the Census**
 - **Rehearsal plans**
 - **Output geography consultation report**
 - **Local authority and community liaison**
 - **Publicity and stakeholder management strategies**
 - **New ONS Minister**
 - **ONS independence**
 - **Procurement process**
 - **EU developments**
- 2 **Advisory Group members are invited to note progress on these issues and activities and to comment as necessary.**

Date of the Census

- 3 Two potential dates in spring 2008 are currently being considered for the 2011 Census. A paper setting out the advantages and disadvantages of both dates was put to the United Kingdom Census Committee on 17 October 2007 but a final decision has yet to be made. The key factors being taken into consideration are:
 - the timing of public holidays and festivals;
 - the timing of local and/or national elections;
 - conditions affecting the delivery and follow-up field work (such as hours of daylight); and
 - school and university term times.

- 4 The proposed date will be announced to Parliament in the 2011 Census White Paper which is scheduled for publication in autumn 2008 (see paper AG (07)11).

Census Rehearsal

- 5 A Rehearsal of all the processes and systems for the Census is currently being planned for 2009, with the aim of ensuring that all the procedures for delivery and collection of the census questionnaires, and the systems for processing the data and producing outputs, will be effective. It will also be used as the final opportunity to assess public reaction to the proposed Census questions.
- 6 The design of the Rehearsal in England and Wales (including the date and location of the sampled areas) is not yet finalised. There will also be complementary rehearsals of the Census operation in Scotland and Northern Ireland

Output geography consultation report

- 7 The National Statistics Consultation on Small Area Geographies (for England and Wales) ran from 15 November 2006 to 21 February 2007. As reported in Advisory Group Paper AG (06)14, the purpose of the consultation was to take user views on how ONS should proceed with the use of Output Areas (OAs) and Super Output Areas (SOAs) - and so how these areas would be used for the 2011 Census.
- 8 A total of 243 complete questionnaires were received, along with more than 100 additional comments and submissions. The consultation is considered a success by ONS both in terms of the level of response and of the high quality of responses made.
- 9 The report on the results and analysis of the consultation is now published on the web. It includes a clear statement of the current thinking on the approach to geography to be used for Census 2011. The first eight pages of the report provide an executive summary and clear statement of the conclusions drawn - while the rest of the report analyses the views expressed and explains the thinking behind the policy to be adopted.
- 10 The main conclusions of the report are:
 - The National Statistics small area geography policy will be to retain a high degree of stability – both at the OA and SOA level.
 - Minimal changes will be made after the 2011 Census to take account of the most significant changes in population and to adjust the worst performing OAs and SOAs. Such changes will be limited to less than 5 per cent of OAs nationally – and may be significantly below this level.
 - Changes at the Lower Layer SOA will be similarly minimised, but changes to the Middle layer SOAs will only be made in exceptional circumstances.

- As far as possible, changes to OAs and SOAs will be made by simple mergers or splits of the existing scheme.
- There are currently no plans to establish business or workplace OAs.
- The consultation has not identified sufficient support to make the constructions of a set of Upper Layer SOAs a priority at this stage.
- It is not currently proposed that areas of empty land will be defined as part of the NS small area geography.
- Further consideration will be given to options for improving the alignment of existing boundaries to real world features.
- ONS will take every step possible to ensure that digital boundaries are made freely available to end users and that licensing is kept as simple as possible for all types of sharing and distribution.
- All possible steps will be taken to ensure that a common boundary exists between Scottish and English data sets.
- A separate set of boundaries reflecting mean-high-water will be released as well as those extending to the extent of the realm.

11 The report can be downloaded at:

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/consultations/Small_Area_Geography_Policy.asp

Local authority and community liaison

Local Authority Liaison Programme

- 12 Evaluation of the 2007 Test Local Authority Liaison Programme is currently being undertaken. The following is a summary of findings to date.
- 13 The Principles and benefits of Local Authorities (LA) Liaison are proven but it is clear that LA Liaison 2007 Action plan is not fully scalable for 2011.
- 14 Engagement across the LAs was variable. Some were more engaged than others and there were differences in timeliness and provision of data. It is clear that methods need to be developed to ensure more consistency including common format for transfer of data and whether to source data nationally.

Liaison Managers

- 15 Each of the Test LAs appointed a Census Liaison Manager (CLM) to act as 'Champions' and Assistant CLMs to be the main contact point and who provided data and local intelligence to Census HQ, and liaised with field managers. However continuity was a problem with the CLM and ACLM

in one LA leaving, as well as there being three Chief Executives over the 2007 Test period.

Service Level Agreements

- 16 The Service Level Agreement (SLA) detailed the ONS/LA partnership agreement and work schedule. Although a generic SLA was endorsed by the LA Steering Group, tailored drafts were required for each LA. Some LA legal advisors wanted to establish reciprocal rights and responsibilities over some sections of the ONS Standard Terms and Conditions and ONS were able to agree reciprocal rights on data protection and Intellectual Property Rights. All five Test LAs signed their SLA and were paid for their 2006-07 work with a further amount due for 2007-08, the final trigger point for payment being production of their evaluation reports (so far four out of the five have been received). **It is clear, however, that limited Census HQ resource will not allow for such detailed negotiations with all LAs in 2011, nor will the budget allow for payment on such a scale.**

Area Profiles

- 17 Not all local information given to Field staff in Area Profiles was found to be useful; some Field staff who felt that they knew their local area well did not use this information. One avenue explored was to give Area and Team Managers web links to LA websites, where it is much more common now to find the sort of local profile data that the Field Force find useful. **Rather than ONS collecting area profile data from LAs centrally, LAs may be asked to collate the area profile information and provide these directly to Field Managers. ONS would need to identify exactly what pieces of profile information particularly adds value on the ground.**

Address registers

- 18 It is not yet clear what level of quality assuring of address checking will be required from LAs; this has yet to be evaluated from 2007 Test (see Paper AG(07)08). However, LA buy-in and confidence in the address lists to be used in 2011 and the chosen Address Product is critical. Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) information from LAs proved very useful for census purposes, with for example, some 400 HMOs were identified in Camden.

Local Strategic Partnerships

- 19 LAs have a statutory requirement to continue developing Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs). Presentations on the Test given to LSPs by the Census LA Liaison Manager were very well received. In Carmarthenshire, a programme of presentations to Community Networks created a lot of interest with very positive feedback.

- 20 **LSPs are thus seen as a key and effective way of getting information to a range of community groups and others simultaneously.**

Recruitment and logistical support

- 21 Where LA staff or ex-LA staff were recruited as Census Field staff they generally performed to a high standard. LA staff, particularly on the Electoral Register side, had excellent local knowledge and contacts. In one LA, there were some communication problems with Hays over recruitment, and a need for clarity identified.
- 22 LAs provided advice and assistance to Field staff manager in response to requests. For instance, accommodation was provided or arranged, and in Camden car park passes were provided. Maps provided by Carmarthenshire LA proved superior to the maps ONS provided to Field staff.

Publicity

- 23 Because of the 2007 Test structure, it was not sensible to develop 'blanket' publicity. However, some LAs did publicise the Test on their Web-sites and were ready to put articles in their Council newsletters and to liaise with local media. LAs did advertise Field staff recruitment, with good results. However many people on the doorstep were not aware of the importance and uses of the Census and how it directly affected them. One LA recommended a Schools campaign as a possible publicity approach.

Case studies

- 24 Arising from the close partnership working with, in particular, Camden (during the 2007 Test) and Manchester (as part of the post 2001 Census address checking exercise) ONS has produced two case study leaflets describing how it is working with LAs towards getting the 2011 Census count right. Copies of these two leaflets will be available to members at the current round of Census Advisory Group meetings.

Next steps

- 25 The Local Authority Liaison Steering Group (LALSG) has been very valuable in an advisory capacity leading up to the Test. However, the Group's 'remit' will now be transferred to the CLIP Census Sub Group, on which several LALSG members, (Sheila Ritchie, Mary Moore, John Hollis, Malcolm Brown and David Pye) currently sit. Other Steering Group members (plus possible representation from the Rehearsal areas when they are announced) could be added to the Advisory Group as and when necessary with the LA Side's agreement.
- 26 Following the evaluation, the Action Plan will be revised for the 2009 Rehearsal.

Community Liaison Programme

- 27 The advisory and steering role that community groups have contributed to continues to be valuable, and one-to-one meetings between ONS and community organisations have been mutually very useful. These continue.
- 28 There were wide variations in the timeliness and provision of information requested by ONS for the 2007 Test. Since community organisations are limited in their capacity to provide the amount of information initially envisaged (although they are providing a helpful advisory role), ONS will need to clarify where it is feasible and practicable to adopt particular elements of the Community Liaison Action Plan. Progress against the actions requested of community organisations as set out in the Plan was, with one or two exceptions, of limited practical assistance in informing enumeration intelligence.
- 29 As noted in paragraph 19 above, a number of presentations on the Test were given by Census LA Liaison Manager to Local Strategic Partnerships and these were very well received. In Carmarthenshire, a programme of visits giving presentations to Community Networks was carried out which created a lot of interest with received very positive feedback.

Next steps

- 30 ONS will encourage LAs to further develop their list of community groups and key contacts, so as to be able to concentrate efforts on contacting the hardest to reach people. Developing Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) is now a statutory requirement for LAs. As key means of getting information to a range of community groups, ONS will continue to work with Local Strategic Partnerships.
- 31 Additionally ONS need to continue to establish from communities what they themselves want to get from the Census generally. In order to carry out a robust and effective Census in 2011, it is essential the project interacts effectively with as many different community groups as possible, including those groups representing elderly, disabled, ethnic minorities, faiths, charities, and other voluntary and community organisations.
- 32 However, given the diversity of the population and the scale of the operation, it will not be possible to interact with all groups, at all levels. Limited resource therefore will need to be targeted in the most effective way.

Publicity and Stakeholder management strategies

- 33 Advisory Group paper AG (07) 01 noted that as part of the means of establishing engagement with wider stakeholders 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, and the National Assembly for Wales.

- 34 A draft strategy document is in preparation that sets out a number of recommendations for the 2011 Census publicity campaign which would follow on a five phase approach aimed at: education, enlistment, engagement, enforcement, and explanation. The campaign would be run at both national and regional levels to allow for the specific targeting of hard-to-count groups and areas.
- 35 Similar documents are in preparation covering the strategies to engage key groups of stakeholders in order to seek their support for, endorsement of, and participation in, the planning and conduct of the 2011 Census. Separate strategies will cover engagement with Parliament and Ministers, with Local Authorities particularly at the Chief Executive level, and with wider stakeholders. Currently a draft of the LA engagement strategy is being reviewed prior to publication by the Local Government Association Research, the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives, the DCLA and a number of key local authorities.

New ONS Minister

- 36 In the last Government re-shuffle Angela Eagle (MP for Wallasey) was appointed as the new Treasury Minister with responsibility for ONS. Ministerial responsibility for ONS has moved from the Financial Secretary to the Treasury to the newly named Exchequer Secretary.
- 37 Educated at St John's College Oxford with a BA degree in Philosophy, Politics and Economics, Angela Eagle has been Chairwoman of the Fabian Society and worked for the Confederation of British Industries and the Confederation of Health Service Employees before her election to Parliament in 1992. She has been Minister for Overseas development and subsequently served on the Employment Select Committee before taking up her current post.
- 38 From 1 April 2008 when most of the provisions of the Statistics and Registration Service Act take effect (see following item) Ministerial responsibility moves from the Treasury to the Cabinet Office.

ONS Independence

- 39 The Statistics and Registration Services Act 2007 which received Royal Assent during the summer, creates an independent Statistics Board, which is a Non-Ministerial Department accountable to Parliament. The objective of the Statistics Board is to promote and safeguard:
- the production and publication of official statistics that serve the public good; and
 - the quality, good practice and comprehensiveness of official statistics.

- 40 The legislation does not alter the basic structure for statistical production in the UK. ONS (as part of the new Statistics Board) will retain its position as the central statistical producer, and policy departments will retain responsibility for their statistical outputs on their topic areas (the Home Office, for example, will still be responsible for crime statistics).
- 41 Although the Board will be a Non-Ministerial Department, there will necessarily be some continued Ministerial involvement for a number of residual matters which are covered by specific legislation. These will include the Census. For these matters Ministers will act as a link with Parliament to relay reports and Parliamentary Questions, and will play a role in appointments. This Ministerial responsibility will be located in the Cabinet Office rather than HM Treasury.

42 The Board's main functions are:

- **Monitoring and reporting on all official statistics**
The Board is required to monitor, and may report on, all official statistics (wherever produced), whether or not they are National Statistics.
- **Independent assessment of key statistics**
The Board will be required to prepare and publish a Code of Practice against which it will independently assess the quality and integrity of key statistics (both produced in ONS and across government departments) for formal approval as National Statistics.
- **Oversee the Office for National Statistics (ONS)**
The Board will provide the top level of governance for what is currently ONS, replacing the overseeing role that Treasury Ministers now perform. The Board consequently has a statutory power to produce statistics, as ONS does now.

43 The key posts established by the legislation are:

- **The Statistics Board** - membership will comprise the Chair, at least five other non-executive members (some appointed after consultation with the devolved administrations), the National Statistician and two other executive members. Sir Michael Scholar, currently President of St John's College, Oxford, has been appointed as the first Chair of the new Board.
- **The National Statistician** - who will be a full member of the Board, and will be directly responsible for the work of the current ONS, reporting to the Board not Ministers, as well as being the Board's chief professional statistical adviser and chief executive.
- **The Head of Assessment** - the Board's principal adviser on assessment. The Act makes it clear that those staff working on the assessment of statistics will be precluded from working on statistical production and *vice versa*.

44 Other issues covered by the Act include:

- **Pre-release access arrangements**
Details of pre-release arrangements will be set out in secondary legislation, and the Board will assess departmental adherence.
- **Confidentiality**
The Act sets out that information that relates to and identifies a particular person or business and that is held by the Board or disclosed by the Board to others, is confidential. Any unlawful disclosure is a criminal offence punishable by a fine or imprisonment
- **Data sharing**
The Act contains powers to allow information sharing between public authorities and the Board where this is for statistical purposes only. All proposals to allow such sharing will be agreed by Ministers, enacted through secondary legislation and be subject to further scrutiny and

approval by Parliament. In addition, the Bill ensures that current data flows can continue.

- **Registration Service**

The registration functions (births, marriages, deaths, etc) currently undertaken by ONS (given the National Statistician's role as Registrar General for England and Wales) will not be part of the responsibilities of the new Board, and will be retained under Ministerial responsibility. The Act also includes provisions to establish proper employment status and rights for registrars in England and Wales, as local authority employees, giving them access to employment tribunals for the first time.

Procurement

- 45 ONS is outsourcing some of its census activities and processes to external suppliers. In their report to the Public Accounts Committee on outsourcing the 2001 Census, the National Audit Office noted that outsourcing helped ONS to introduce some important innovations to deliver the Census. The value of ONS outsourcing in this way is that such organisations bring with them considerable technical experience and expertise which would otherwise be unavailable. Furthermore, given the 10-year cycle for the Census and short processing timetable - requiring a large short-term workforce - it is not appropriate for ONS to attempt to recruit and retain such personnel itself.
- 46 There are three separate procurements. A single contract will cover;
- printing of questionnaires, information leaflets and envelopes;
 - data capture;
 - operational intelligence support (new for the 2011 Census);
 - public interface (contact centre); and
 - Internet collection (new).
- 47 This procurement was launched in September 2005. From a short list of six potential bidders ONS chose two in **August 2006** - Lockheed Martin UK and T-Systems Limited. Both suppliers have supported the Census Test. The final selection of supplier is planned for **spring** 2008, following the 'Best and Final Offer' (BAFO) process.
- 48 Further contracts to support the field operation will cover:
- field staff recruitment, training and pay; and
 - several other contracts to support the field operation, such as distribution, postal services, translation and printing of non-questionnaire material.
- 49 ONS plans to start the procurement for Recruitment, Training and Pay at the end of 2007/early 2008. For the 2007 Test this service was provided by Hays Specialist Recruitment.

- 50 Other contracts, in due course, will cover activities such as managing the publicity and advertising campaign.

Proposals for EU Census legislation

- 51 As reported in the last Census update report (AG (07) 01, 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 finally approved by Council of Ministers Working Party on Statistics (STATIS) on **18 June 2007**. Officials from ONS were present representing the UK. The final draft took account of many of the comments and suggestions made by the UK delegation following earlier discussion of the Regulation by the Working Group on **3 May**.
- 52 Paper AG (07) 01 set out the substantive elements of the Council Regulation and noted those topics covered which are not yet confirmed, or for which there are no current plans, for inclusion in the 2011 UK Census.
- 53 There is as yet no clear indication as to when the Regulation will take effect but the First Reading of the draft Regulation is scheduled to take place before the European Parliament on **11 December 2007**.
- 54 In the meantime the UK continues its active participation in the EU Census Legislation Task Force, which is advising the European Commission on the scope and content of the proposed Implementing Regulation. As noted in AG (07) 01 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 and the format by which data is to be submitted or otherwise made accessible.
- 55 The Task Force next meets on **19 November 2007** and is due to make its recommendations to the Commission early next year.

**ONS
October 2007**