

## 2011 Census Progress Report: Other business

### Procurement update

The Invitation to Tender for the Systems and Services to support the 2011 Census - to print, capture and code the responses, and develop internet capture and management information systems - has been issued to the 6 short-listed bidders. Bids have to be submitted by 23rd May after which there is three months of evaluation to select the 2 suppliers who will work with us during the Test. The requirements for 2011 will be refined during and following the 2007 Census Test with the final contract being awarded in Dec 2007/ Jan 2008.

### Independence for ONS

The Government's proposals for ONS independence were published in a Treasury consultation paper (HM Treasury, *Independence for statistics: a consultation document*) in March. In summary the paper proposes:

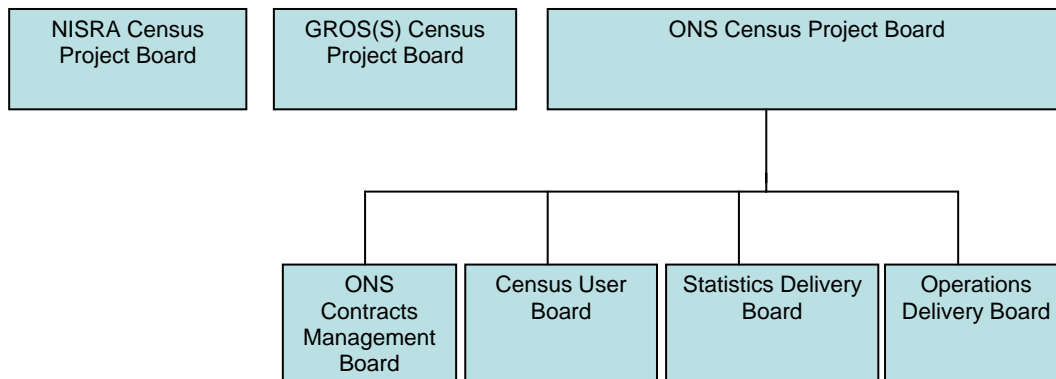
- entrenching independence in legislation;
- introducing direct reporting and accountability to Parliament rather than through Ministers (currently the Financial Secretary to the Treasury);
- removing the statistics office from Ministerial control by establishing it as a Non-Ministerial Department with special funding arrangements outside the normal spending review process (except for the Census – see below);
- disbanding the Statistics Commission and placing a statutory responsibility on a new independent government body to assess and approve all National Statistics against the code of practice.

The statutory and funding arrangement noted above will not affect the Census whose funding is determined by the provisions of the Census Act and which will remain subject to the usual spending review processes funding. Statutory responsibility for the Census will however be transferred through legislation from the Registrar General to the National Statistician. The civil registration functions of the Registrar General will be transferred to another government Department, possibly the Department for Constitutional Affairs.

Responses to the Consultation Paper are invited by 14 June.

## Governance

The proposed new ONS Census governance arrangements are as shown below. The ONS Census Project Board will be served by four new support Boards, one of which will be a new Census User Board on which key representatives from the several Census Advisory Groups will be invited to sit. Invitations to members and Terms of Reference will be posted shortly with a view to an inaugural meeting after the next round of Census Advisory Group meetings (possibly in June).



**April 2006**