



## **CENSUS ADVISORY GROUPS**

### **Summary of issues and topics covered at the Census Advisory Group meetings held during November/December 2006**

Summary of issues and topics covered at the round of Census Advisory Group meetings held in November/December 2006. The groups involved were:

- Academic Advisory Group;
- Business and Professional Interests Advisory Group;
- Central and Local Government Information Partnership (CLIP) Census Sub-Group;
- Departmental Advisory Group;
- Diversity Advisory Group;
- Health Service Advisory Group;
- Wales Advisory Group

These Groups cover the interests of the academic community, business sector, local government, central government, health authorities, special needs and minority populations and Wales respectively.

#### **AG (07) 05 – 2007 Test Emerging Findings**

1. Members were interested in the response rates and how they compared with 1997. It was explained that the 2007 Test contained a greater proportion of hard to enumerate areas than the 1997 Test had. When figures were adjusted for this, the rates showed a slight decline but this was in line with the decline in willingness to respond shown in other surveys and countries. Because the Test was voluntary and there was limited publicity, it was not possible to extrapolate the response for the 2011 Census from the Test results. The Census will be compulsory and there will be a major publicity programme.
2. Analysis had not yet been done on whether post-out affected whether people asked for additional forms for large households or language leaflets. However, the 2011 form will cater for 6 people instead of 5, which is enough for the majority of households and people with language difficulties were expected to be identified at follow-up, when an enumerator would contact anyone who had not returned a form.
3. The number of different languages spoken in the country has increased since 2001 when 24 languages were supported. Census is consulting other government departments to see what will be required in 2011.

4. Although post-out areas showed a lower initial response rate in the Test, it was possible to recover from this with additional follow-up visits. There were large savings from using post-out instead of the traditional model of enumerator delivery even after allowing for the additional costs of the Address Register and more effort in the follow-up phase.
5. Members were concerned about the possibility of households being missed because of the quality of the Address Register that was used for post-out. Issues mentioned included multiple occupancy, bedsits and new buildings. It was agreed to change the name of the register to Household Framework, which more accurately reflected the contents. The Address Check would not only check for buildings but would identify how many households there were living at the premises. The Household Framework would also categorise buildings into private or communal. Enumerators would both deliver and collect from communal establishments so that they could support managers and residents in them.
6. There was also interest in how successful the Address Register was in identifying second homes. Although this was not one of the aims of the Test, there would be some information on it from the Test and the coverage survey that was carried out at the same time.
7. The effect of an income question on response was evaluated in the Test because of the interest in a question on income immediately after 2001 Census. It would be more difficult to make up for the reduced response rate because of this question than for the reduction caused by post-out. In addition, the consultation on the content of the Census had shown that there was more demand for other questions. It was not now intended to include a question on income even if a fourth page of questions was funded. Members considered getting the maximum response was more important than having the income question.
8. Local Authorities should be involved in the recruitment of field staff as LA staff had made a difference in Test areas where they had been used. This may be constrained by employment legislation. It was intended to attempt to match staff to the community they would be working in but some services such as British Sign Language or other language interpreters would probably only be available through the contact centre.
9. ONS will need to reassure the public that their data is secure and explain how it will be used. One of the security measures is that all enumerators employed on 2011 Census will be required to sign a Census Confidentiality Undertaking which will be binding. This had not caused any issues in the Test.

#### **AG (07) 06 - 2011 Census Highlight Report : November 2007**

10. 2009 Census Rehearsal date had not yet been decided but was likely to be later in the year because of the time needed for the procurement and development of the systems for it. It is intended to be primarily a rehearsal of field procedures.
11. There was

**AG (07) 07 – 2011 Census Questionnaire Development**

**AG (07) 08 – Address Register Development**

**AG (07) 09 – 2011 Census Output User Consultation: Update**

**AG (07) 10 – Statistical Disclosure Control: update on methodological research**

**AG (07) 11 – 2011 Census White Paper and Legislative Process**

**AG (07) 12 - Future of Census Advisory Groups**

**Any other business**

**Date of next meeting**

To be announced later after the review of the groups.

**November 2007**