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35,000 jobs for 2011 Census

The Office for National Statistics today announced the award of a contract to provide integrated nationwide personnel services to the 2011 Census – supporting ONS to appoint staff to around 35,000 temporary jobs across England and Wales in 2011.

ONS has chosen Capita to provide the services in a £25 million contract which is a major step towards the next census, planned for Sunday 27 March 2011.

Capita will provide services to help recruit and train the estimated 35,000 ONS staff needed at the peak of the project to deliver the 2011 Census and, before that, a rehearsal to be held in October 2009. Capita will also provide payroll services to the temporary census staff appointed by ONS through the contract.

The staff will be recruited to work for ONS from local communities across England and Wales to carry out census field roles in their area.

Capita will support ONS in recruiting staff to a range of posts including area managers, local team coordinators, teams of checkers, and Census delivery and collection staff.

Recruitment for the 2009 rehearsal for the census will start in May 2009 in Lancaster, Newham and Ynys Môn, Isle of Anglesey. Nationwide recruitment for the 2011 Census will start in August 2010.

The census involves the collection, processing and analysis of information from more than 25m households.

This complex ONS project – which happens once every 10 years – is run with the support of a range of specialist service providers who help deliver the most cost-effective solutions.

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All of the staff will sign a confidentiality undertaking recognising their commitment to ensuring that personal census data remains secure and confidential - a top priority for the 2011 Census.

Data security and protection is central to the design of all systems and processes for the 2011 Census, and rigorous training and management procedures are in place to make security and confidentiality a priority for all 2011 Census staff.

2011 Census Director Glen Watson said today: "We are delighted to be able to announce this contract award to Capita. It's a significant milestone in our planning for the next census - which is now just two years away.

"Information from the census helps to inform many decisions made by central and local governments about policies, planning and providing services. The census provides vital information that helps to allocate funding for national and local services – and so it's critical that we recruit absolutely the right people for this important nationwide project."

Mr Watson added: "Capita have offered an excellent solution to help us put the ONS Census team in place over the next couple of years."

People can register their early interest in working for the 2011 Census in jobs across England and Wales by emailing their details to censusjobs@ons.gsi.gov.uk

BACKGROUND NOTES

1. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is responsible for carrying out the census in England and Wales. Under the Statistics and Registration Services Act, strategic oversight of ONS and the authority to conduct the census rests with the UK Statistics Authority, which reports direct to Parliament. The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) is responsible for conducting the Census in Northern Ireland. The General Register Office for Scotland (GROS) is responsible for carrying out the census in Scotland.
2. A census, a count of all people and households, has been carried out every ten years since 1801, apart from in 1941. It provides information about local areas and communities as well as a complete national picture and is the most complete source of information about the population.
3. Central and local government, health and education services, the business community, genealogists and the public at large, rely on census data for a range of purposes. The information is used by government to inform central and local policy making by showing exactly where investment in public services is most needed and to help allocate funding to local government and health authorities. Information from the census forms the basis for the allocation of over £100 billion of public funds each year.
4. Building on lessons learned from 2001, the design of the census has been amended for 2011. Census questionnaires will be posted to most households and for the first time people will be able to fill in the census online as well as through traditional paper questionnaires.
5. A key role for field staff will be in offering assistance in cases where a completed questionnaire is not returned. The questionnaire-tracking system set up for the 2011 Census will provide lists of addresses that require follow-up, enabling local field managers to allocate staff efficiently and effectively. The roles will include full and part time positions. Around 25,000 of the posts will be required for six weeks around the time of the Census in March 2011.
6. People emailing their interest in 2011 Census jobs to censusjobs@ons.gsi.gov.uk should be aware that their details will be forwarded to Capita.
7. The contract is to provide a complete service for the recruitment, payroll and training of the entire field staff needed to deliver the 2009 Census Rehearsal, and the 2011 Census and Census Coverage Survey.
8. There will be 13 different types of role within the field teams working on the Census for anything between six weeks and eight months.
9. UK registered British company Capita is the UK's leading outsourcing and professional services company. This FTSE100 company has other high profile clients including the BBC, the Department for Children, Schools and Families and the Health and Safety Executive, as well as a number of local authorities.