

RESPONDENT: 2939035911 – Brian Parker
SECTOR: Unknown - Individual

Q1 - What are your views of the different census approaches described in the consultation document?

Both have merit. Economics of running a census is important but I fear that estimates are just that and tend to balloon rather than drop. I worry about the "assumed" nature of population "changing rapidly". This assumption of change is based on what? Most people assume the world population is increasing...in our own back yards...who knows? Past census? I am not a statistician but know that the numbers can be manipulated to a degree depending on a number of factors. Populations are dynamic and do change....is that not the reason to do a census? It may be that in 10 years world dynamics may change to the negative, immigration may drop...it might rise...a plague may wipe out half the planet??? Is not the census survey a tool to document those changes as well as plan for the future? More people may be "online" in five years...but maybe not...maybe there will be a backlash to computer technology? As online response seems to be a bit of a hit and miss affair and data would have to be collected over multiple surveys to make some of the data useful (if I understand the reports) then the period of transition from paper to digital may create a lack of data...surely not good. While people may be reluctant to offer info to a paper survey they definitely have the opportunity to dismiss a digital one...my opinion...legislating the census may work...but who is going to follow up those that don't do it? Using existing government data and compulsory annual surveys seems quite feasible who is the onus on...the person being surveyed or the government to enact annual compulsory surveys?...I think the costs of annual programme are underestimated. My first impression is that the standard paper census has worked well and has certainly been improved upon over the years...short versus long form...some digital backup...data collection and computerization should have improved the quality of data output and allow for easy manipulation of results...annual survey has its merits but I wonder about the public acceptance...as noted it does bear a burden.

Q2 - Please specify any significant uses of population and housing statistics that we have not already identified.

Q3 - Please specify any significant additional benefits of population and housing statistics that we have not already identified.

Q4 - What would the impact be if the most detailed statistics for very small geographic areas and small population groups were no longer available? High, medium, low or no impact?

Medium

If medium or high, please give further information.

If I were looking for someone or some group that fell under these parameters then the data would be unavailable. I assume it appears a small issue to those who may not need to know something about those areas/groups but for those who do need it or may need it the data would be lost..forever? Would this survey feature be permanent or simply bypass certain groups and areas every other survey? Would they no longer be included at all? More information needed.

Q5 - What would the additional benefit be if more frequent (i.e. annual) statistics about population characteristics were available for areas like local authorities and electoral wards? High, medium, low or no additional benefit?

Low

If medium or high please give further information.

Q6 - Please specify any significant uses of census information for historical research that we have not already identified.

Changing religious affiliations related to national security? What does the government look at/for. For family history...depending on experience level, people can glean an amazing amount from a census...basically the who, what, where, when and perhaps even why someone is noted in a census.

Q7 - What advantages or disadvantages for genealogical or historical research can you see from a move to a solution based on archiving administrative data sources?

Perhaps in a shorter time frame data can become available to the public but again not sure if this would change from standard 100 year privacy policy. Are admin data sources going to be brought up from past surveys and integrated to latest data and made available sooner?

Q8 - What are your views of the risks of each census approach and how they might be managed?

Digital information has always had the risk of falling into the wrong hands or being lost or destroyed....really not different than paper though perhaps a lot easier to undertake. I could not see how there could not continue to be both a digital and hard copy record of data...for security sake. Managing risk is related to managing people and equipment...both ongoing I expect but both possible causes to security issues. I assume hackers love to try and manipulate data if they can get to it....greater security and cost related to it. Annual compulsory collection also may become too much a burden....requesting 30 minutes of someone's time in the busy world we live in may be too onerous...I am being facetious but some will see that as an intrusion. Is the data collected accurate? I am sure there are statistical formulae that account for that....but then is the data really accurate any longer?

Q9 - Are there any other issues that you believe we should be taking into account?

The future is unknown...don't assume that perceptions and actions of the public will continue based on today.

