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ONE NUMBER CENSUS STEERING COMMITTEE

CENSUS COVERAGE SURVEY – REHEARSAL OUTCOMES AND SCALING UP FOR 2001

1. This paper describes the evaluation of the CCS Rehearsal and how the conclusions are feeding into the plans for scaling up for 2001 in England and Wales.
2. The underlying principle in moving from the Rehearsal to 2001 is to do everything possible to maximise the chance of the Survey meeting its objective, while not introducing new risks by changing things that worked well in the Rehearsal.
3. **Members of the Committee are asked to note this paper.**

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Census Coverage Survey – Rehearsal Outcomes and Scaling Up for 2001

Introduction

4. This paper describes the evaluation of the CCS Rehearsal and how the conclusions are feeding into plans for 2001. **The Committee is asked to note this paper.**
5. The underlying principle in moving from the Rehearsal to 2001 is to do everything possible to maximise the chance of the Survey meeting its objective. However, this must be balanced against not introducing significant new risks by changing things that worked well in the Rehearsal, while recognising that the greater scale of the survey in 2001 will require some changes.
6. At the time of writing the Rehearsal database has only recently been released to ONS by Lockheed Martin, so the evaluation done so far has had to be based on other data including the survey administrative records, the training and de-briefing questionnaires, and observations by headquarters staff. The lack of the database has been a problem, but none-the-less it has been possible to progress the main framework for scaling up, and in particular to determine many aspects that worked well in the Rehearsal and will need only fine tuning for 2001.

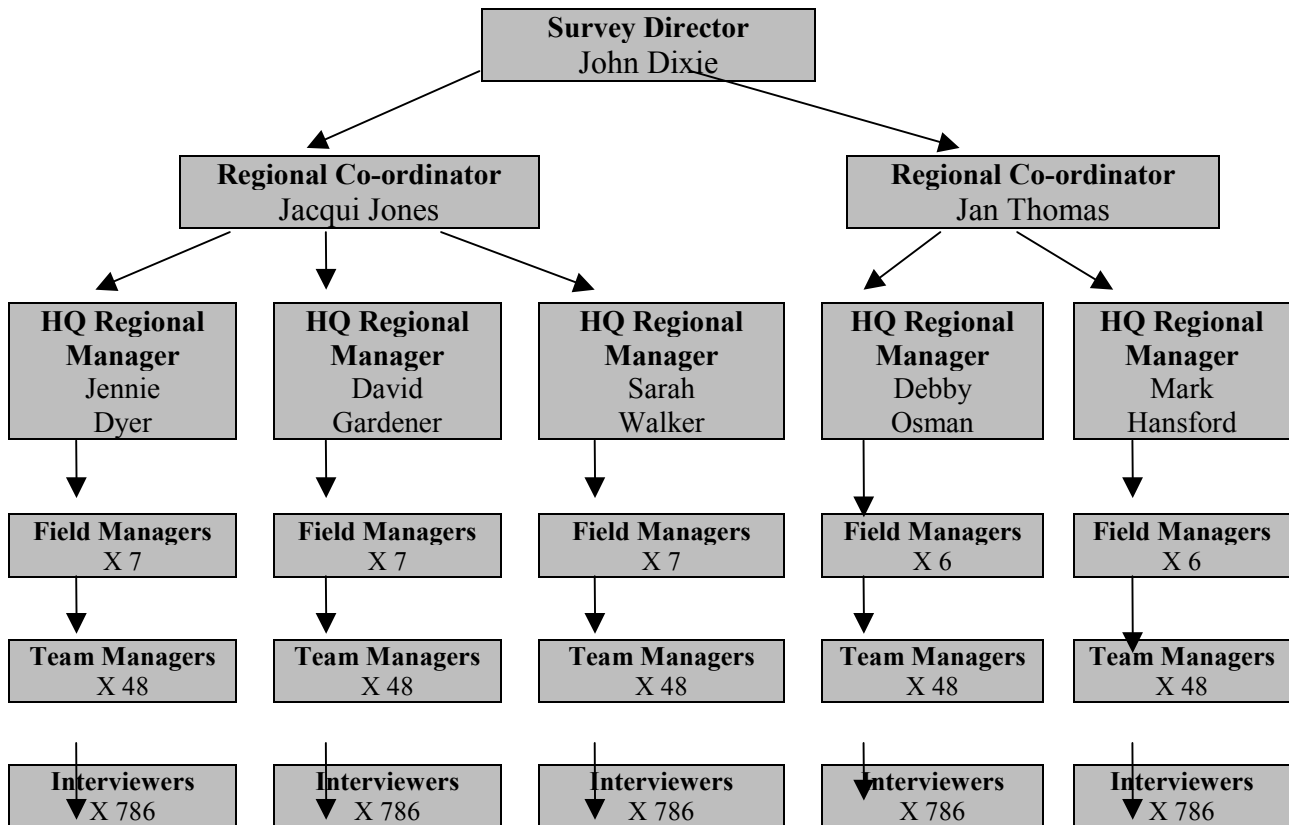
Initial Decisions Based on the Rehearsal Evaluation

7. The CCS Project Board has endorsed a first set of recommendations made on the basis of evaluation of the available data.

Field Management Structure

8. **Figure 1** shows the management structure agreed for 2001. Note that the numbers may be changed slightly in the light of further evaluation or the details of the survey sample when this has been drawn.

Figure 1: Field Staff Structure for the 2001 CCS



- England & Wales will be divided into five regional areas each consisting of approximately 20 design groups. Each Region will be managed by a headquarters regional management team consisting of a Regional Manager with one person to provide administrative support;
- we will train all Field Managers together in order to build a strong survey management team of the Field Managers and the headquarters staff, and to help ensure a uniform approach throughout all areas;
- we will recruit the Field Managers prior to Team Manager recruitment, and have them work with a member of HQ staff in a panel of two to recruit the Team Managers in their area;
- we will use the Field Managers to help with training the Team Managers; and
- during the fieldwork the Field Managers will be active managers on the ground, as the headquarters team were during the CCS Rehearsal. The business case is being prepared for a Team Reporting And Communications System (TRACS) to support the whole survey management team and help them achieve the high coverage required.

Advertising and recruitment

- joint Census and CCS advertisements should not be used (though general Census recruitment publicity will cover both the Census and the Survey);
- the style of the advertising will be adapted to appeal to a wider audience, balancing this carefully with the serious nature of the work;
- in conjunction with Census, consideration we will review the timing of the advertising, in particular to reduce the length of the recruitment process for Interviewers; and
- we will consider a more extensive advertising programme than a single advertisement, involving such media as local job papers and local radio as well as the main local newspaper in each area.

Training

- the residential format, structure and content of the Team Manager training will be retained. Any changes will be as a result of further research into the relationship between training and performance during the fieldwork, or to maximise the benefit from using the Field Managers as facilitators for the practical or team-building sessions;
- we will consider the value of extending the video but otherwise make minimal changes, including updating the video for the correct dates in 2001; and
- the entire CCS research and planning team is undertaking a formal programme of preparation and training to fully equip them to review and deliver the training to field staff in 2001. It is expected that everyone will achieve the RSA Trainer's Award during the course of this year.

The Remaining Aspects of the Rehearsal Evaluation

9. The main areas still being considered are:

- recruitment publicity;
- field staff pay;
- the interview procedure and its effect on coverage and quality;
- quality control measures;
- calling strategy and its effect on coverage; and
- the possible need to include some types of communal establishment in the survey.

These are, to some extent, inter-related.

10. Recruitment publicity is an important issue, primarily because of its effect on the success of the survey, but also because of its cost. A strategy will be worked out in conjunction with Census over the coming months. One area requiring further consideration is the role of the CCS Field Manager in Interviewer recruitment publicity and how this will mesh in with the publicity duties of the Census Area Manager.

11. Field staff pay is equally important, for the same two reasons. Our recruitment consultants recently reported and will recommend that we have local pay additions in areas where earnings are generally higher or there are expected to be difficulties with recruitment. A paper is being prepared jointly with Census staff on the principles on which Census and CCS field staff pay

should be based. It is intended to agree these, and to then move on to deciding the exact sums to be offered for the various grades of field staff.

12. Once the Rehearsal Census and interview data have been analysed we will be able to assess the evidence about the adequacy of the interview procedure. Whilst it is expected that it will be fundamentally sound, there may be aspects that need to be tightened up, for example to ensure that probing for addresses, households and persons within households is as effective as possible.
13. We need to concentrate on tightening of quality control for 2001, particularly to detect Interviewers that are achieving less than their colleagues in adjoining areas, and to raise the performance of everyone towards that of the best
14. Another aspect of quality control concerns the calling strategies used by the Interviewers. The preliminary results from the Rehearsal suggest that the main problem was non-contacts rather than refusals. We will be analysing the call data carefully to see if it is possible to increase the efficiency of working to achieve higher coverage within the same planned hours of work. If this is not generally possible then additional hours will need to be worked. This would certainly require additional pay, and possibly also additional staff if working hours cannot be increased.
15. The One Number Census project will be considering the extent to which communal establishments need to be covered in the survey. In some types of establishment the source of information would be the same in both the Census and the Survey and it may be that the survey would not achieve any better coverage than the Census. It may be important to include other types of establishment in the survey. The field procedures for those types to be included will need to be reviewed in the light of the One Number Census project's research.
16. As the Committee may be aware, numerous other points will be resolved and decisions taken as the plans for 2001 firm up. Broadly the aim is to have resolved all main issues by the end of June 2000, and to have formally signed off all items by the end of September 2000. At this point the CCS will move to operational mode and there will be little scope for any further research and evaluation.

John Dixie
January 2000