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ONE NUMBER CENSUS STEERING COMMITTEE

The Strategy for the Census Coverage Survey in England and Wales

1. The purpose of this paper is to set out the main features of the Census Coverage Survey (CCS) for England and Wales as it is currently being planned.
2. **The Steering Committee are asked to:**
 - a) **note the paper; and**
 - b) **provide any comments at the meeting on the 13 November 1998, or in writing by 27 November 1998.**

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THE STRATEGY FOR THE CENSUS COVERAGE SURVEY IN ENGLAND AND WALES

1. The purpose of this paper is to set out the main features of the Census Coverage Survey (CCS) for England and Wales as it is currently being planned, to inform all those with an interest in this project.

Aim and Nature of the Survey

2. The **main aim of the CCS** is to collect the information required **to estimate the coverage of the 2001 Census at Local Authority District level**. The coverage will be estimated by comparing the information collected in the CCS with the Census returns from the Survey areas. The results will be used to calculate the adjustments required in the "One Number Census" (ONC) outputs.
3. The Survey will also inform us about the quality of the 2001 Census outputs, the other sources of information being the various question and form tests already done, the Census Quality Survey, and information gathered during processing.
4. The **most likely sample size for the CCS currently appears to be around 300,000 households, equivalent to 20,000 postcodes**. It may be sufficient to sample **as few as 240,000 households** equivalent to 16,000 postcodes but, at the other extreme, a **maximum sample size of 600,000 households** is still being considered, equivalent to 40,000 postcodes. Alternative sample sizes and designs are currently being researched to determine how they affect the Relative Standard Error at around County level. In the light of this work, and the views of the CCS project team on the practical feasibility of carrying out CCS's of various sizes, a provisional sample size will be put to the One Number Census Steering Committee on 13 November 1998 (see paper ONS(ONC(SC)) 98/12). The design for 2001 could be adjusted somewhat in the light of the results from the Dress Rehearsal in 1999.
5. A two-stage sampling procedure will be used: firstly **the 1991 Census EDs will be sampled by a "hard to count" index based on 1991 outputs, and a sample of EDs drawn**, and secondly, **a fixed number of postcodes (either 3, 4 or 5) will be sampled from each ED**. The EDs will be grouped into **"pseudo-counties"** for estimating the coverage; the number of pseudo-counties required is currently being researched, but is likely to be in the range 35-70.
6. Census field staff will not know which areas have been selected for the CCS and so will not be able to give special attention to these areas in the Census.
7. The Survey will take the form of **short doorstep interviews** (as opposed to using a self-completion questionnaire) with all households that can be contacted in the sampled postcodes.
8. The **survey questionnaire** will need to be compact and manageable in the field, as well as suitable for capture by scanning and recognition. The best design and size are being

researched further in the light of the preliminary results from the Test CCS, but it is hoped to accommodate a household of up to 12 people on a form of 8 pages.

9. The Interviewers will check carefully who is in the household to ensure, as far as possible, that no residents are missed. They will ask prompt questions about those groups likely to be under-reported, such as babies, students and young people, and the elderly. Interviewers will also enquire about visitors, as an aid in identifying the household correctly, but the information will not be captured.
10. The interviews in the Dress Rehearsal CCS will **collect the address including the postcode, basic information about the house, and for each person name, relationship within household, date of birth, sex, marital status, whether a student and if so whether at term-time address, ethnic group, whether the person had a different address one year ago, and economic status.** The names of residents will be captured. The need for each item of information will be assessed in the light of the Dress Rehearsal and a decision will be made on what will be collected and captured in 2001 after this has been evaluated.
11. The Survey will use pre-coded classifications compatible with those used in the Census. No write-in responses are required for the “Other” categories in the ethnic group question.

The CCS Field Staff

12. It is not yet clear if the CCS will need **one or two levels of field manager.** This will depend on what management input is needed on the spot during the survey fieldwork, and may also depend on the number of Interviewers that need to be employed. The risk to the survey of field managers resigning or becoming unavailable will also be taken into account.
13. Whether we have one level or two, it is intended **that the Census CAMs should handle any media interest in the CCS,** in a reactive way. Any publicity for the CCS will, in general, be low key. The message will be that we are checking on ourselves, not on the public.
14. **If two levels are needed, the top level will be the Regional Manager.** The options of having the Census Area Managers (the top level of field manager for the Census) carry out this function, or recruiting separate managers specifically for the CCS, are currently being investigated.
15. **The key level of CCS field manager will be the Team Supervisor.** The possibility of COs or ACOs carrying out the duties of the Team Supervisors has been considered but this is **not practicable** because the duties would clash. Also, it is important to have **a fresh and independent management team for the Survey. Between 100 and 417 Team Supervisors** will be required, depending on the size of the Survey and the workloads field staff can handle.

16. **Between 2,000 and 5,000 CCS Interviewers** will be needed. The number will depend on the size of the Survey, but is likely to be towards the lower end of this range.
17. **It is expected that many of the Interviewers will have been Enumerators in the 2001 Census.** This is because the same type of person is likely to be attracted to, and suitable for, both the Census and the CCS. However, to capitalise on people who may be prepared to interview but not to enumerate, **some people will be recruited just to be Interviewers.** Those Interviewers who have been Enumerators will be assigned to a different area for the CCS.
18. For the 1998 Test CCS, the field staff pay rates were aligned with those being considered for the Census. **In the light of the results of the Test pay rates will be firmed up.** The implications for taxation and loss of benefit of a person being both an Enumerator and an Interviewer have still to be examined; this could be a problem for some applicants.
19. There are issues concerning **recruiting the CCS field staff** which are being investigated:
 - it is not clear if the Census recruitment strategy, relying mainly on **Job Centres**, would provide best value for money for the CCS. It may be necessary to advertise directly to be seen by the most suitable people for Interviewers. If direct advertising is used for the CCS but not the Census this may affect the proportion of Interviewers who have been Enumerators;
 - if we have Regional Managers they will be recruited directly by HQ staff. Whether we have Regional Managers or not, the current view of the CCS team is that **Team Supervisors should be recruited by the by HQ CCS staff** in order to exert maximum control over quality. We will need some external assistance, from people with survey recruitment experience, unless the CCS is at the bottom end of the size range. The timing of this recruitment is also being researched. We need to strike the right balance between leaving it too late so the timetable is too packed, and recruiting too early so that there are resignations before duties begin;
 - the current view of the CCS team is that **a separate application should be made for a job as an Enumerators and as an Interviewer**, and applicants should be interviewed by the Census Officer and the Team Supervisor, respectively. The interviews are likely to be held independently in most areas because to organise joint interviews would not be practicable as a general policy. The reasons for making the jobs entirely separate are because the pool of potential staff may be somewhat different, and because it would not be practicable to select the Interviewers from the Enumerators based on their performance on the Census and even if it were, applicants will want to know as soon as possible for what work they have been accepted.
20. **Training the field staff is a key aspect of the CCS.** SSD and HRD have already been involved along with the CCS team in planning and delivering the training to field staff

for the 1998 Test CCS. Due to the size of the Survey in 2001 it may be that SSD will not be able to provide all of the assistance required and we will need to bring in another survey organisation or organisations. Size apart, there may be benefits from involving an external organisation as well as ONS staff. This issue was discussed with the Head of SSD on 29 October 1998 and she is sounding out possible partner organisations. All organisations proposed to be involved in 2001 will also need to be involved in the DR CCS in 1999.

- **Interviewer training** must take place simultaneously throughout the country immediately after they have completed their Census follow-up collection duties. A large number of courses (between 100 and 417) will have to be run simultaneously so it will not be possible for professional survey and CCS staff to deliver the training. Therefore the Team Supervisors will have to train the Interviewers and a comprehensive training pack will have to be developed to enable them to do this.
- **Team Supervisor training should be done by CCS HQ staff and survey specialists.** There will be more freedom in arranging the timing of Team Supervisor training as they will not be involved in the Census.
- There are various options for **training them in the background to the Survey** and the details of the property listing and the Survey questionnaire and these are currently being researched. Individual study packs will be an important part of the scheme.
- **Training the Team Supervisors in how to train the Interviewers in interviewing methods will be critical.** In order to make this part of the training as effective as possible it is intended to have people with **professional survey experience** deliver it.
- Team Supervisor training will need to be in two parts, the first covering the nature of the survey and Interviewer recruitment, and the second covering interviewing technique and training the Interviewers. We must also allow time to mount a contingency course in the event of resignations.
- **Training for the Regional Manages** will be developed if we decide we need to have this level of field manager. As the minimum, a briefing on the CCS, sufficient to handle any enquiries from the media, needs to be included in the CAM training pack for the Dress Rehearsal.

Timing and Processing

21. **The survey needs to be carried out as soon as practicable after the Census** in order to minimise the effect of migration. The earliest possible start date is not less than three weeks after Census Day as the Survey cannot go into the field until the Census follow-up has finished.

22. The **length of the fieldwork** is being assessed by means of the Test CCS, but is likely to be around 3 weeks.
23. The **data from the Survey will be captured by similar means to the Census data**, that is by the contractor appointed to provide scanning and recognition processing for the Census.

Preparations

24. A **Pilot CCS** using four Interviewers was carried out in selected postcodes in Brent in conjunction with the 1997 Census Test. This established the general feasibility of an intensive re-enumeration, and pointed out some options to be researched by means of a further test.
25. Following on from the Brent Pilot, a **Test Census Coverage Survey** was carried out in parts of Southampton in October 1998 using 24 Interviewers plus two reserves managed by two Team Supervisors. There was good co-operation from the public with few refusals, and an encouraging contact rate. Figures will be available at the meeting of the Steering Committee.
26. This Test will yield further information about the workloads that a Team Supervisor and an Interviewer can handle, the validity of an index of difficulty based on 1991 Census data for assigning Interviewer workloads, and the time needed to carry out the Survey. It will also yield information about the practical aspects of undertaking the survey, and the training given to staff, including the effect of sending out or not sending out advance warning postcards telling residents that the Survey is to be taken in their area
27. It is expected that the Survey methods and procedures used in the Southampton Test will be improved for the DR CCS. **One or two further smaller tests** will need to be carried out to assess improvements to the methods, using HQ staff and possibly a few of the Interviewers from the Test CCS.
28. Both the Pilot CCS in Brent and the Test CCS in Southampton used Raster maps, but more detailed and more up-to-date maps, called LANDLINE, are available from Ordnance Survey, at considerably greater cost than Raster. A **separate comparative test of LANDLINE and RASTER maps** is being carried out in November, with the aim of making recommendations at the end of that month.
29. There will be a **Dress Rehearsal Census Coverage Survey in 1999** to evaluate the effects of scaling up the size of the Survey. The Dress Rehearsal CCS is planned to cover around **18,000 households in 1200 postcodes**, and to have a field force of not less than 12 Team Supervisors and 200 Interviewers. This will be considerably larger than in proportion to the size of the Dress Rehearsal to provide the quantity of data required for the final stages of the research into the ONC estimation method. In the light of this research the ONC project will confirm the sample size required for the full survey after the 2001 Census. Also, the final details of all the field methods and procedures will be decided.

The Organisation of the Work

30. Some of the work on the Survey is similar to work on the Census, for example investigating the employment regulations and paying the field staff, designing and producing the many administrative forms required, and producing the maps for field staff. Such work will be done by census operations staff as a service to the CCS.
31. The CCS core team will do the preparatory research into how best to carry out the survey, and will be actively involved in recruiting and training the survey field managers, and directing the fieldwork.
32. The funds ideally required for, and the funds likely to be available for, the CCS are currently being considered. A **total provision of £4-5m** seems at this stage to be the maximum that can be afforded, and the Survey may have to be scaled to fit within this budget.

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2 November 1998