

Ken Hodges

BACKGROUND ON THE CENSUS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The 2010 Census Advisory Committee (CAC) provides advisory input to the Census Bureau on the design of the 2010 census, the American Community Survey, and related programs. Committee members represent a range of census stakeholders, and APDU's seat on the Committee provides a channel for APDU members to comment from the data user perspective.

Ken Hodges is your APDU representative on the 2010 Census Advisory Committee, and Bill O'Hare is your alternate representative. This report summarizes the November 5-6 CAC meeting. Contact Ken ken.hodges@nielsen.com or Bill wohare@aecf.org with comments, questions, or suggestions.

NOVEMBER 5-6 MEETING OF THE 2010 CENSUS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Nancy Gordon, the Census Bureau's Designated Federal Official, started the meeting by introducing Nancy Potok, Commerce Deputy Undersecretary for Economic Affairs, who made brief remarks on the census, and introduced Secretary of Commerce Gary Locke, who addressed the Committee via telephone. Locke offered remarks of appreciation to the Committee and Census staff, recited the list of upcoming 2010 census milestones, and expressed high praise for Census Director Robert Groves.

Gordon announced that next year's meetings of the 2010 Census Advisory Committee will be April 8-9 and October 21-22. She then turned the meeting over to CAC Vice Chair Pauline Medrano, who relayed regrets from Chair Marc Morial, who was unable to attend. Medrano then introduced Census Director Robert Groves.

The Role of the Census Advisory Committees

Robert Groves (Census Bureau Director) described a philosophy that he would like the Census Bureau and the advisory committees to adopt. The Census Bureau, he said, needs to recognize that advisory committee reps are busy people, who need to be provided with timely information. Rather than describing plans only after years of development, and at a point when feedback is not really wanted, Groves called for the provision of "half baked ideas," or plans at a stage where feedback can be constructive. The Director also spoke of mutual obligation, and the need for advisory committees to understand the real constraints faced by the Census Bureau, and the limits of the advisory role. He pledged that the Bureau will take all recommendations seriously, but will not adopt all recommendations. Groves also commented that he is focused on the future, and asked for patience as he considers the composition of the 2010 CAC, and the appointment of new member organizations.

Several reps expressed appreciation for the Director's call for the earlier presentation of plans, which would enable the committees to have a more truly advisory role. Groves noted that a more truly advisory role would involve more work for the CAC reps. Ilene

Jacobs (California Rural Legal Assistance) also expressed appreciation for the Director's remarks, and his focus on the future, but noted that concerns remain with 2010. For example, Jacobs noted that the Subcommittee on Hard to Locate Housing Units is presenting recommendations for steps to identify additional units for the 2010 count.

State of the Census Bureau/Future Priorities

Groves also provided a 2010 census update, noting that he is impressed with something called the "Tract Action Plan," which involves heavily customized approaches for improving the count in tracts with low mail return rates, and those identified by census partners as warranting special attention. Groves reported that almost all of the local census offices are now open, and address canvassing has been completed. The canvassing results are in review, but the number of addresses is consistent with the housing unit estimates. He described the update/leave operations in the Gulf Coast hurricane impact areas, and the early feedback from the LUCA results. The group quarters validation process has just finished, and efforts are underway to gather information on new construction.

Arturo Vargas (National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials) asked about the many LUCA addresses in Los Angeles that reportedly are not being added to the MAF. Tim Trainor (Chief, Geography Division) said it is too early to respond specifically to the L.A. situation, but he confirmed that Los Angeles provided more additional addresses than expected. The more generic response is that many addresses that are not accepted are duplicates or non-residential.

In response to a question about foreclosures and the economic crisis, Groves said this is a big issue – that the census will have to probe more on the presence of people doubling up in housing units, and redouble efforts to count the new homeless, such as persons living in RVs. And responding to a question about where such populations will be geocoded, Frank Vitrano (Census Bureau, Decennial Management Division) explained that they will be counted where they are found. If it is a parking lot, they will be coded to the parking lot. Terry Ao (Asian American Justice Center) asked about the hiring of local partners for the Questionnaire Assistance Centers. The Census Bureau must follow the federal hiring process, and cannot guarantee the hiring of local partners, but Tim Olson (Census Bureau, Field Division) said they are encouraging partners to get their people in the applicant pool.

Brainstorming for the 2020 census has begun, and a meeting of experts was in progress elsewhere as the CAC met. Groves described increasing census costs as unsustainable, and said the Bureau needs to resist the temptation (in the face of oversight pressure) to lock into census designs too far in advance. Technology and the social context can change rapidly, and the census needs to be nimble. As Groves noted, no one knows what the Internet will be like in 10 years, or the extent to which the US Postal Service can contribute in 2020.

With the talk of new approaches to census taking, Ed Spar (Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics) recalled Groves' efforts along these lines almost 20

years ago, and the Director quipped that they had no effect on the 2000 census. Your APDU rep also recalls those early efforts, and while there might have been little impact on 2000, they led eventually to the American Community Survey.

2010 Census Integrated Communications

Steve Jost (Census Bureau Associate Director for Communications) amused the attendees by playing a public service announcement for the 1980 census. He then provided an update on the Communications Campaign, describing the positive feedback from an Academic Assessment Panel. He also described the Enhanced Language Program that includes the tracking of areas with high levels of linguistic isolation, additional in-language advertising, and in-language messages in the advance letter. Jost credited the CAC Subcommittee's efforts in getting the in-language messages on the letter, but the delay in the Groves confirmation also was credited, as the letter could not be finalized until it was certain Groves would be the Director.

A lot is going on with paid advertising. The campaign is buying ad time, hiring directors, and producing creatives. Jost reiterated that the Census will have a major media presence leading up to Census Day, and they have found that showing the census form in ads is effective at conveying how short it is, and that responding is easy. Census ads will air on the Super Bowl, NCAA Basketball Final Four, and the Winter Olympics. Jost also described packages negotiated with BET, Univision, and MTV, with on-air personalities scheduled to deliver census messages. Early bids from NASCAR were too expensive, but deals have been reached with some drivers. In short, paid advertising is poised to reach a variety of audiences.

The 2010 Census website was launched October 22. Separate from the Census Bureau's regular website (and with a different look), the 2010 site is about reaching out, and getting people to promote the census to others. Jost described some of the site's content and interactive functions. He also described the Road Tour, in which trailers will travel the country, providing a walk-in experience explaining the census and how it makes a difference in people's lives. The Road Tour route will be posted on the web site January 4, with late changes posted in real time. Following Census Day, the 2010 web site will have a map tracking and color coding areas by mail back rates. The politically associated red and blue were deliberately avoided for the color scheme.

Arturo Vargas (NALEO) asked about reports that Spanish language media buys are less in 2010 than 2000. Jost explained that overall Spanish language buys are up 35 percent over 2000, but that buys for some vehicles are lower, as there are many more Spanish language media vehicles now than in 2000.

In response to Joan Naymark's (U.S. Chamber of Commerce) question about partners, Jost acknowledged that some corporate partners are "sitting on the fence" due to census controversies. However, with Target and Best Buy becoming active, and with the Road Tour set to kick off on the *Today* show, additional corporate sponsors are expected. Amber Ebarb (National Congress of American Indians) asked how mail back response (for the web site map) would be tracked for reservations, and Jost said that is a challenge

they have not cracked yet. Ken Hodges (Association of Public Data Users) asked if there were updates on plans for responding to anti-census campaigns. Jost said this is a concern. They are monitoring blogs every day, reaching out to partners to head off anti-census activity, and considering the possibility of ads to counter such efforts. Also, budgets have been shaved to create a \$4 million reserve for communications in response to unexpected events, such as hurricanes or anti-census campaigns.

2010 Census Integrated Communications Program Evaluation National Opinion Research center (NORC)

Chet Bowie (NORC) provided an update on plans for evaluating the Communications Campaign. The objectives are to measure the contribution of the campaign to increasing mail back, decreasing differential undercount, and increasing cooperation with enumerators.

Much of the work is survey based, looking at people's feelings toward and knowledge of the census, and noting their exposure to different components of the Communications Campaign. Bowie went into some detail describing the survey design, sampling plans for specific populations, and the timing of data collection. A first wave is underway now (the pre-advertising period), a second wave is set for winter 2010 (the period of peak advertising), and a third wave will follow the census (during NRFU).

A Heavy-Up Experiment (a late addition) will study the impact of an extra heavy dose of census messages in eight pairs of selected media markets (Designated Market Areas). Eight of the 16 markets will receive double the planned media weight. Bowie noted that an ideal design would compare no exposure versus some exposure, but withholding census communications from selected markets would be unfair and unethical. However, with default messaging already at saturation levels, there is concern that extra messaging (saturation plus) might not reveal the true impact of the campaign.

Bowie described delays in the Wave 1 and Wave 2 schedules (related to security and confidentiality concerns), but indicated that the Wave 3 and Heavy Up schedules will not be impacted. In describing the evaluation design, Bowie mentioned that the Navajo tribe had declined to participate as a site. Bowie's understanding was that this was more a reflection of the Navajo's focus on the count itself, and the Census Bureau followed up with comment that it is not believed to reflect anti-census sentiment.

Ed Spar (COPAFS) asked if NORC is coordinating with DraftFCB on the types of messages where the impact is being measured. Bowie said they are working closely with DraftFCB, but he cautioned that the results will not differentiate by the specific type of message.

Before starting the next session, Dan Weinberg (Census Bureau, Assistant Director for ACS and Decennial Census) addressed questions that had come up about duplicate counts. Weinberg confirmed that the Census Bureau will conduct what he called a nationwide matching of the census against itself, with the intent of identifying possible duplicates. Matching criteria include name, date of birth and sex, but even these can

identify false duplicates, and that's why follow up is needed. The Bureau does not have the capacity to follow up on all possible duplicates, and will not identify all duplicates, but Weinberg described this as a serious effort that will improve the count. It is one reason that 2010 coverage evaluations will look at the components of census coverage.

2010 Census Ethnographic Studies

Yuling Pan, Anna Chan, and Laurie Schwede (all with the Census Bureau's Statistical Research Division) described ethnographic studies that are planned, but not yet approved.

One study would observe NRFU interviews of non-English speaking households. The objective is to see what interviewers do, and to better understand what makes for a successful interview in these situations. Interviews would be observed, and both interviewers and respondents debriefed, with a focus on the enumeration process, translation issues, and socio-cultural issues.

A second study would conduct a set of small field studies to identify ways to improve enumeration methods and coverage for race and ethnic populations. Research questions include how well personal visit operations work for race/ethnic populations, problems with enumeration methods, issues with the questionnaire, issues related to residence rules, and the types and sources of coverage error.

A third study would focus on the group quarters (GQ) enumeration process, with the objective of determining optimal methods for counting populations in different types of group quarters facilities. The study would recruit subject matter experts and experienced ethnographers to make observations in up to four facilities in each of the eight major GQ types. The study also would obtain administrative data for comparisons with the census counts.

In the follow up discussion, Dan Weinberg (Census Bureau, Assistant Director for ACS and Decennial Census) noted the challenge of group quarters data collection, and said the Census Bureau is establishing a group to focus on GQ methods and data issues. It was also noted that the observers in the ethnographic studies must be very unobtrusive to avoid influencing interviewer/respondent interactions.

Alternative Questionnaire Experiment Update

Joan Hill (Census Bureau, Decennial Statistical Studies Division), Nicholas Jones, and Roberto Ramirez (both of the Census Bureau's Population Division) presented on the Alternative Questionnaire Experiment (AQE). The AQE seeks to improve the race and Hispanic origin questions by testing different questionnaire design strategies in 2010, with the goal of increasing the accuracy, completeness and reliability of the race and Hispanic origin data in the 2020 census.

AQE methodology includes expert review and cognitive testing of the race and Hispanic origin questions, and 15 experimental panels (2 control and 13 experimental) that will receive alternative versions of the race and Hispanic questions in 2010. The experimental

forms will be mailed to a national sample of housing units (30,000 per panel), with over-sampling in areas with concentrations of race and Hispanic groups of interest.

Specific areas of research include discontinued use of the term “Negro,” permitting multiple responses to the Hispanic question, combining the race and Hispanic questions, and limited use of the term “race.” A one-in-five re-interview survey will supplement information from the 2010 panels, and focus groups will seek a better understanding of the self-identification of race and Hispanic origin, and identify issues that respondents have with the experimental treatments. The AQE is part of the 2020 census testing program, but its immediate timeline is dictated by the need to integrate with the 2010 census mail out.

Asked if the Questionnaire Assistance Centers will be equipped to answer questions about the experimental forms, Census staff noted that recipients of the experimental forms will get a different number to call for assistance. Replacement forms will be of the experimental type, but addresses that go to NRFU are out of the test. Jungmiwha Bullock (Association of MultiEthnic Americans) asked if the tests include alternatives in which “White” is listed at the bottom rather than the top of the response options. Census staff commented that there have been studies and discussion of the option, but it is apparently not being tested in the AQE.

2010 Census Coverage Measurement

Patrick Cantwell (Census Bureau, Decennial Statistical Studies Division) updated the CAC on Census Coverage Measurement (CCM) activities and plans. He described the Independent Listing Operation, which establishes an independent sample of about 960,000 addresses for the CCM process. The listing started the last week of August and will continue through December 12, 2009.

Cantwell described suggestions that the CCM schedule be moved earlier (by several weeks) to minimize the impact of movers and recall bias. However, the schedule is already condensed, and given the risks, they have decided not to change it. The Bureau has been more successful in moving up the scheduled release of CCM results. The reporting of net error was originally scheduled for November 2012, but has been moved up to July 2012, and the components of coverage, original targeted at January-February 2013, are now scheduled for a September 2012 release.

Cantwell also described initiatives to reduce nonsampling error through lower sample size, increased re-interview rates, additional training for interviewers, and the use of higher level field staff for visits following up on “long distance” duplicates. In the discussion that followed, we learned that the components of coverage will not be provided below the national level.

Decennial Data Products Plans

Louisa Miller (Census Bureau, Population Division) described plans for 2010 census data products, and distributed a document (soon to be posted on the website) that summarizes the planned products and release dates. The 2010 products will be very similar to the

short form products from 2000. Miller noted that initially, only the PL 94 redistricting file was to be published on DVD with user software, but in response to demand, plans now call for the publication of SF1 and SF2 on DVD with user software (the national summaries, not the state by state files). Major release dates include the following.

PL 94-171: State flow February – March 2011.
National file April 2011.
Summary File 1: State flow June – August 2011.
National file November 2011.
Summary File 2: State flow December 2011 – April 2012.
National file May 2012.
PUMS: Release dates not yet determined.

Miller said PUMS release dates should be announced soon, and are likely to be in the late 2012 – early 2013 range. And because the 2010 census is short form only, the Disclosure Review Board has approved a 10 percent PUMS product.

Michael Ratcliffe (Census Bureau, Geography Division) announced that the 2009 TIGER/Line files are available now, and have a shifted shape file format. He noted that most 2010 census geographic products (such as maps) will accompany the data products that Miller described, and will be available on American FactFinder. Users can expect to find the usual suite of reference maps and geographic cross reference files – similar to those from the 2000 census. Post-2010 activities will include the definition of urbanized areas, congressional districts, and updated metropolitan areas – along with associated maps.

Responding to a question about geographic relationship files, Ratcliffe noted that they already have released files for 2000 tabulation blocks to 2010 collection blocks. A file description for the 2000 tabulation block to 2010 tabulation block relationship file is available online now, and the file itself likely will be released about the same time as the redistricting data.

Joan Namark (US Chamber of Commerce) asked if the 2010 data products would make mention of the ACS in order to minimize user confusion. Miller said they are working to minimize confusion, but that current plans do not include explicit mention of the ACS. Miller acknowledged the potential for confusion, and commented that even among users who are aware of the ACS, many still lapse into expecting to see 2010 long form data.

Day Two

American Community Survey

Susan Schechter (Chief of the Census Bureau's American Community Survey Office) noted the recent release of the 2008 1-year and 2006-2008 3-year ACS estimates, and said they are working hard on the first release of 5-year estimates. Part of the challenge is the expansion of data products well beyond the number of tables provided in the 2000 census summary files.

Acknowledging the potential for confusion when the first 5-year data are released, Schechter said current thinking is that the earlier the 5-year data are released, the better. And in the spirit of early sharing (called for by Director Groves), Schechter said they are considering the possibility of releasing the 5-year data before the corresponding 1-year and 3-year data. That would put the release earlier in 2010, and more distant from the release of 2010 census counts in 2011. Steps are also being taken to minimize confusion between the ACS and census data collection operations. For example, ACS materials will have different envelopes, and language to distinguish them from the census. And both the ACS and decennial assistance centers will be prepared to address respondent confusion. Schechter concluded by noting that the final set of user handbooks has been released, and that other ACS Compass materials are in the works.

Alexa Kennedy-Puthoff described the use of Census Bureau county population and housing estimates (as well as those for age, sex, race, and Hispanic origin) as ACS controls. She also explained the timing issue, as estimates released in 2010 (including the first 5-year estimates) will control to estimates building from the 2000 census – leaving them inconsistent with the 2010 census data released shortly after. ACS estimates released in 2011 (including the second set of 5-year estimates) will be controlled to estimates building from the 2010 census, and presented in the 2010 census geography – resulting in discontinuities with the previous year’s releases.

Schechter mentioned the upcoming APDU webinar on ACS multi-year data, and Ken Hodges (APDU) invited the CAC reps to join. Hodges also asked if the Bureau had considered the risk that the margins of error might unnecessarily scare off some potential users. Schechter acknowledged that this is an issue they are trying to address. Hodges is concerned that some data providers might point to margins of error in seeking to discredit the ACS, and promote proprietary products, for which error measures are not provided. With the anticipated inconsistencies between the first 5-year ACS data and the 2010 census, and the potential undermining of user confidence, Ed Spar (COPAFS) asked if the Bureau had considered not releasing 5-year data until they are consistent with the 2010 census. Schechter said there had been some discussion of the option, but not serious consideration. Your APDU rep was about to suggest further consideration of the option, but time ran out, and we were on to the next session.

Census Redistricting

Cathy McCully (Census Bureau Redistricting Office) described the process for collecting data for the redistricting data program, including work now in progress at Geography Division. The work is now in a verification phase that will be done by April 1, 2010.

A prototype for the 2010 redistricting data file has been delivered, and the format is considered final. McCully noted that school districts (vintage 2009-2010 school year) will be included on the redistricting file, as will occupancy status (counts of occupied and vacant housing). And the data will be accompanied by a suite of maps and TIGER shape files.

McCully commented that data users make heavy duty use of the block level redistricting data, and that the Census Bureau's Redistricting Data Office views the ACS as a source of supporting data on characteristics. She also noted that some providers of redistricting services have plans to drill ACS block group data to the block level. There are serious questions about the quality of such data, but McCully remarked that they might be better than anything else available – at the block level.

McCully concluded by describing the process for disseminating the PL 94 redistricting data. The process involves FedEx delivery to the states, with notification to both sides of the isle. When the Census Bureau receives confirmation of receipt by the states, they will make the data available to the public on the website. In the meantime, a workshops and seminars are planned for users of the redistricting data.

2010 Census Partnerships

Marilia Matos (Census Bureau, Associate Director for Field Operations) announced that the partnership program is now fully staffed, and experiencing an intense level of activity – ahead of the 2000 census schedule. Tim Olson (Census Bureau, Field Division) noted that the partnership staff is five times larger than that for the 2000 census, and he spoke highly of their qualifications. Over 100,000 organizations have signed on as 2010 Census partners, in addition to the many Complete Count Committees formed by people in communities coming together to support the census. Olson described how the partners are contributing to efforts to identify locations for Be Counted and Questionnaire Assistance Centers, and will promote awareness of these centers. Partners also are helping to identify outdoor locations where people can be found in non-traditional dwellings or living situations – a contribution described as especially important in the current economy. Olson reiterated how energetic partnership activity has become, but said the real burst of activity will be in the January through April time period. He concluded by remarking that, with the economic downturn, the partnership program has not been needed for recruitment, as the Census Bureau has been getting more applicants than needed for most 2010 Census jobs.

REAC Update

Bernie Miller (Chair, Census Advisory Committee on the African American Population) updated the CAC reps on the activities of the Race and Ethnic Advisory Committees. For example, REAC has had significant input to the 2010 Language Assistance Guides, and the tool kits designed to help the census reach diverse audiences. Miller also described the outreach efforts of some REAC members, and played a YouTube video featuring CAC Chair Marc Morial and Vice Chair Pauline Medrano dancing at a 2010 Census press conference in Dallas.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_9188KX0beE&feature=channel_page

CAC Representative Feedback

When the Census Bureau asked for CAC rep feedback on this meeting. Ed Spar (COPAFS) said he appreciated the level of interaction, and called for CAC working groups devoted to areas such as data products. Other reps echoed the idea, and suggested working groups on topics including the estimates program, geography, the 2020 census, and coverage measurement. Joan Naymark (US Chamber of Commerce) said it was

unfortunate that this meeting did not include a congressional update, as these often help CAC reps serve as trusted voices in support of the census.

Hidden Households/Hard to Locate Housing Units

The Subcommittee on Hard to Locate Housing (on which your APDU rep serves) was formed at the July CAC meeting following a Census Bureau presentation describing the challenges associated with hard to locate housing. Ilene Jacobs (CRLA) heads the Subcommittee, and reviewed its recommendations to the Census Bureau.

With address canvassing completed, the opportunities for identifying missed units are limited, but the Subcommittee is calling for the identification of areas likely to have concentrations of hard to locate housing, and targeting these areas with operations that could add missed units to the MAF. The special procedures would serve as a supplemental canvassing effort, conducted during operations such as group quarters enumeration, LUCA, and non-response follow up (NRFU). A post enumeration survey is recommended to evaluate the MAF in areas with hard to locate housing. The Subcommittee also is concerned with plans for updating the MAF through the decade, and the ability to include hard to locate housing in the samples drawn for the ACS.

Citing how little time remains, and the constraints of the remaining field operations, the Census Bureau is reluctant to commit to ambitious supplemental efforts. However, the Tract Action Plan described by Director Groves (and by Census staff in Subcommittee meetings) was described as an operation intended to improve the count in the areas of concern. The Census Bureau agreed to provide additional information and responses to the Subcommittee recommendations within three weeks.

Advance Letter

Terry Ao (Asian American Justice Center) headed the Subcommittee on the Advance Letter, with the objective of including in-language instructions on how to acquire census forms or assistance in non-English languages. As described earlier, the Subcommittee worked with the Census Bureau to find a way to include the in-language messaging, and Ao thanked everyone for their efforts in getting this done.

Committee Discussion

Arturo Vargas (NALEO) proposed that the CAC request legal opinion from the Department of Justice establishing the priority of Title 13 over other laws. Such opinion is seen as providing valuable support to the census confidentiality pledge, and the CAC reps voted approval.

Joan Naymark (U.S. Chamber of Commerce) called for greater CAC focus on the ACS, and in particular the need for increased sample size. She also asked for comment on a recent *USA Today* report that, despite the short form only census, the Census Bureau is expecting 2010 mail response to be lower than 2000. Census Director Groves reported they are in the middle of an exercise to estimate mail back, and stressed that no one really knows what it will be. He noted that there is ample reason to expect a decline in the mail back rate, and stressed that the contribution of the short form only census to mail

response is not relative to 2000, but to the rate that would have been achieved if there had been a long form in 2010.

Kim Brace noted CAC concerns that the component measures of Census Coverage Measurement will not be reported below the national level, and proposed a resolution that the components should be reported for sub-national areas, such as states or metropolitan areas. The CAC approved the resolution.

Vice Chair Pauline Medrano called on the reps to prioritize the CAC working groups that had been discussed earlier, and some reps volunteered to serve on the groups to be established. Your APDU rep agreed to serve on the working group on data products.

There was discussion of the need for a revised meeting schedule, and the possibility of more frequent deliberations via conference calls. And when discussion turned to CAC contributions to 2020 census planning, Ken Hodges (APDU) asked if the Census Bureau expects the “2010 Census Advisory Committee” to evolve into a “2020 Census Advisory Committee.” Director Groves said that is the kind of thing he needs to consider, and that he is not ready to offer anything definitive on that now.

Arturo Vargas (NALEO) thanked the Census staff for the time devoted to the CAC meeting, and from these meeting notes, it should be apparent that Census Director Robert Groves was a very active participant for the duration of the meeting. The Director expressed his thanks, and said the Bureau looks to the CAC reps to serve as trusted voices during the upcoming census process.

With that, the meeting was adjourned.