

# NATIONAL RECORDS OF SCOTLAND

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## Scottish Census Steering Committee

### Minutes of Meeting

13 July 2011

**NATIONAL RECORDS OF SCOTLAND** joins together



General Register Office  
*for*  
**SCOTLAND**  
*information about Scotland's people*



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Minutes of the Scottish Census Steering Committee (SCSC) meeting held on Wednesday 13 July 2011 in the National Records of Scotland (NRS), New Register House, Edinburgh.

**Present:**

Duncan Macniven	NRS, Registrar General
Peter Scrimgeour	NRS, Director of Census
Kim Reimann	NRS, Census Outputs
Ann-Marie Meikle	NRS, Census Outputs
Anne Moises	Scottish Government
Donna Forrest	Equalities and Human Rights Commission
Helen Martin	Scottish Trade Union Congress
Jenny Boag	RSS Statistics User Forum
Jon Harris	CoSLA
Ken Macdonald	Information Commissioner's Office
Prof Dave Martin (teleconference)	University of Southampton
Prof. Ken MacKinnon	Bòrd na Gàidhlig
Ranald Mair	Scottish Care
Ros Micklem	Equalities and Human Rights Commission
Prof Michael Anderson	University of Edinburgh

**Apologies:**

Alan Dickson	Capability Scotland
Dr Eric Baijal	NHS Borders
Jalal Chaudry	Scottish Council for Muslims
Liz Ferguson	Scottish Trade Union Congress
Penni Rocks	NRS, Head of Census Operations

## **1. Welcome and introductions – Duncan Macniven**

- 1.1 Duncan welcomed everyone to the meeting. Duncan explained that since the last meeting things have been well with the census. This meeting would give an update.

## **2. Minutes of the of Meeting at 25 October 2010 – Duncan Macniven**

- 2.1 The minutes were accepted as an accurate reflection of the discussion. There were no matters arising from the minutes. They will now be published in the [Scottish Census Steering Committee](#) section of the GROS website.

## **3. Update on the Census - Duncan Macniven and Peter Scrimgeour**

- 3.1 Duncan and Peter gave an update:

- 3.1.1 Return rates were excellent: 95-96% of what went out to the public came back - at least equal to last time, despite a more difficult social climate. Some areas in Glasgow had a lower response rate of around 90%.
- 3.1.2 Communal establishments appeared to have been better-enumerated than in 2001 as a result of preparation work and placing more responsibility on the enumeration team leaders.
- 3.1.3 Internet capture rate was 20%, which was exactly what it was originally estimated to be. The website did not crash, as this was well-prepared for in advance and carefully monitored at the time.
- 3.1.4 There was some concern around censuses using contractors, although it did not appear to have affected response rates.
- 3.1.5 There were 521 Gaelic internet returns. There were no negative comments regarding census in this language, but it was also seen as something that was not hugely promoted.
- 3.1.6 Two independent interview-based surveys post-census have been completed and the results are satisfactory:
  - The Census Coverage Survey – 90% response rate to this survey, enough to be able to make accurate estimates to impute the missing 3%. Considered good as responses were not obligatory.
  - The Census Quality Survey – 50-60% response rate. Glasgow regions were less co-operative.

#### **4. Report on Fieldwork Phase (Peter Scrimgeour)**

- 4.1 Debriefing of regional managers took place over a half-day and addressed managers who have been working with census from August 2010 to May 2011. They were involved in the successful recruitment of enumerators from December.
- The online recruitment process worked well and Disclosure Scotland also performed satisfactorily despite their increase in workflow, including vetting enumerators for England and Wales.
  - The IT helpdesk was particularly effective at addressing issues.
  - Communal establishments, hospitals, prisons, and the Armed Forces posed problems for enumeration, but it was felt that these issues were tackled well.
  - Non-compliance – there are around 15 cases ready to report to the Procurator Fiscal.

#### **5. Report on Community Involvement (Peter Scrimgeour)**

- 5.1 There has been more community involvement with stakeholder groups this census. Different ethnic groups have been engaged in order to revise the ethnic classifications and to help with harder to count groups such as Gypsy/travellers and rough sleepers. It was, however, too early to say how much that had contributed to the excellent response rate.

#### **6. Report on Communications (Peter Scrimgeour)**

- 6.1 It was generally felt that the press campaign and other communications for census went well. The census was the topic of the Broons cartoon in the Sunday Post on census day.
- 6.2 It was pointed out that the promotion materials did not have the date included on them, which may have helped as a reminder.
- 6.3 The link to the example of Scots language was well-received, helping to answer the queries as to what Scots actually was.

#### **7. 2011 Census Outputs – Update (Ann-Marie Meikle)**

- 7.1 Consultees had made useful points in response to the February consultation. The analysis and a summary paper are complete and published on the 30 June 2011. The reworked tables are now published and users are invited to give more feedback.

## 7.2 Further user engagement plans were:

- Content of first release and a provisional running order for subsequent releases to be published in early August. A full outputs prospectus and associated dissemination timetable will be issued early in 2012.
- Progress reports on topics such as metadata, and statistical disclosure control policy are to be published quarterly from the Autumn onwards.
- A prototype web-based system to disseminate census results (a successor to the existing SCROL system) is currently being developed and user testing will take place towards the end of the year.

**Action:** All are welcome to comment on the forthcoming publication in August of a note on the release of census results.

**Action:** Users are invited to participate in the online testing of the census website prototype. Please let Ann-Marie know if you would like to participate.

7.3 Second internal round of consultations with Analytical Services Divisions in Scottish Government has been launched to confirm their analytical requirements for census information.

7.4 Work continues with the other UK census offices to define and produce a set of comparable UK-level tables. ONS have like NRS purchased the Superstar products for outputs dissemination.

## 8. Gateway Review Benefits – (Peter Scrimgeour)

8.1 Peter summarised Gateway 5 plans for the Office for Government Commerce: a review of the census benefits set out in the business case. This review includes assessing value for money and maturity targets, and closedown plans including evaluation and de-commissioning. The evaluation will feed into the Beyond 2011 project.

8.2 Critical success plans are already in place. The evaluation will be achieved through the managed closed project for census over the next 12 months, which will co-ordinate the evaluation reports from all census areas and develop decommissioning plans including physical closure of offices and equipments, and with the contractors.

8.3 Benefits of outputs and the data itself will not be known until publication, however, a survey of benefits will take place over the next 6 months.

8.4 A further benefits realisation exercise will be carried out in 2013/2014 and will feed into any census option for the Beyond 2011/alternate to census decision which will be made in early 2014.

## **9. Any other business – Duncan Macniven**

9.1 The following items were discussed:

- It was planned that census outputs would be licensed under the Open Government Licensing of Data developed by The National Archives, to provide data as freely available as possible, subject to constraints to protect individuals' privacy.
- On the future of the census beyond 2011, access to HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) data has now been granted and the Scottish Spending Review is underway. There will be a series of consultations regarding public user needs.
- Duncan Macniven was warmly thanked for his work as Registrar General. His open and effective leadership were noted as very much welcomed. The Committee wished him well in his retirement.

## **10 Date of the next meeting**

10.1 It was agreed that there would be no other meetings as Beyond 2011 would pick up matters arising. Members were welcome to join the Population and Migration Statistics Committee (contact Jenny Boag).

National Records of Scotland

22 July 2011