

**2009 Census Rehearsal Evaluation
Census Quality Survey**

December 2009

Table of contents

1. Definition and scope for rehearsal.....	4
2. Evaluation findings	5
3. Other evaluation points	10

2009 Rehearsal – Census Quality Survey

1. Definition and scope for rehearsal

The Census Quality Survey (CQS) is designed to gather information on the quality of responses to census questions which were provided by householders during the census. The CQS takes a small sample of households who have returned a completed questionnaire and asks each householder in the sample to answer the census questions again, cross-checking the responses against those provided earlier on the census questionnaire. Where differences are found, the CQS interviewer will attempt to identify why the response is different so that an estimate of the quality of data of such responses can be made.

The scope for rehearsal was to run a sample survey of approximately 300 households and comprised:

- Door to door survey which asked a sample of respondents in west Edinburgh to re-answer all census questions;
- seven field staff, including one manager;
- interviewers using mini-laptops to record responses; and
- an interview application developed in-house using Microsoft Access.

What was tested:

- recruitment, training and management of field staff;
- use of mini-laptops for door to door interviewing;
- use of a Microsoft Access-based interface;
- pre-loading of census data onto laptops;
- security of laptops containing personal data; and
- design of survey, both from statistical and operational point of view.

What could not be tested:

The sample did not include any respondents who had completed the questionnaire online.

Automatic upload of data from the paper data capture (PDC) site was not tested.

2. Evaluation findings

Pre – determined evaluation points

Description	Success Criteria	Outcome against success criteria	Recommendation	Timeframe
CQS Helpline	All questions answered appropriately and in suitable timescale.	Achieved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As the CQS in 2011 will be run in May, the census helpline will still be operational and will answer CQS queries. The CQS team will provide the required knowledge. 	By April 2011
Laptops for CQS	Suitability of: a) Laptop device. b) Interview application software.	a) Laptop was sufficiently lightweight and battery life was adequate. The laptops were late in arriving which impacted on the time available to test fully before issue to the field staff. 3G cards sometimes suffered from poor coverage. b) Interview application generally worked well, although response time was sometimes slow. Some lessons have been learnt	a) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use same model of laptop (or latest equivalent) in 2011. Thoroughly test application on all laptops prior to rollout. Investigate other means of uploading data as alternatives to 3G card. b) Use IT expertise to review interview application for optimum efficiency and to make minor changes to reflect lessons learned.	a) By April 2011 b) By January 2011

Description	Success Criteria	Outcome against success criteria	Recommendation	Timeframe
	c) Security processes.	about the design of the interface. c) Security issues meant a large number of passwords were required.	c) Review laptop security requirements, for example number of passwords required.	c) By January 2011
Statistical Design	Sample is representative of rehearsal population (e.g. by age, sex, ethnicity, tenure). Sample size is large enough to enable robust comparisons to be made between the census and CQS across different questions, and give an indication of the main reasons for those differences.	Sample was biased towards older age groups (people over 60 at expense of people in their 20s and 30s), people of white Scottish ethnicity and people who own their home outright. The last two are likely to be related to the first. The problem was partly due to the profile of the data set that the sample was drawn from. The sample size was sufficient to give the required information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at ways of drawing a more representative sample. • Ensure a wider cross-section of the sample are interviewed. • Consider weighting results to remove any bias in sample. 	By October 2010
Early manual extract of paper questionnaire copies from the processing site for CQS.	Data from the paper questionnaire delivered on time and to format.	For the rehearsal four General Register Office for Scotland (GROS) staff had to key in data from the paper questionnaires. This	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extract the data directly from the processing site to minimise the potential for human error and to remove the complexities. 	Requirements for data extract by February 2010

Description	Success Criteria	Outcome against success criteria	Recommendation	Timeframe
		involved a convoluted route of spreadsheets and databases, but despite this the quality of the captured data was high with only one significant error in translating the data to the database.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a simplified process for loading the data. 	Load process developed by January 2011
Recruitment Processes	All staff successfully recruited on time.	<p>All staff were recruited on time.</p> <p>Standards were adhered to. Security checks were found to be more time consuming than originally planned.</p> <p>There were some issues with communicating employment dates to candidates.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin recruitment process earlier to allow time for security checks. • Liaise with census security to see whether processes can be simplified and burden reduced. • Communicate directly with candidates before they are recruited, to ensure they have the correct details. 	By June 2010
Training for Team Manager and Interviewers	<p>a) Delivery: was the method suitable for staff?</p> <p>b) Content: were all likely field</p>	<p>a) The interviewers were generally positive about the experience, although they felt it could have been structured better and spread over more than one day.</p> <p>b) Some felt that more</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Separate training sessions for interviewers and accompanying persons should be considered. • Split admin and issue of IT equipment into an additional 	By May 2010

Description	Success Criteria	Outcome against success criteria	Recommendation	Timeframe
	<p>situations covered?</p> <p>c) Laptops were issued successfully at the training event.</p>	<p>interview practice would have been beneficial.</p> <p>c) The time taken to issue and test the laptops encountered technical issues and took more time than allocated.</p>	<p>day, separate from fieldwork training.</p>	
Communal Establishment (CE) Interviews	<p>Response rates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 46 per cent of sample contacted. • 80 per cent response among interviewed CEs 	<p>No CE interviews were conducted because the interview application did not allow for individuals in CE to be interviewed. There were in any case only two CEs in the sample areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a separate rehearsal of CE enumeration procedures. • Ensure the interview application allows for the interviewing of individuals in communal establishments. • Draw separate sample of CEs to ensure adequate representation. 	<p>CE rehearsal by October 2010</p> <p>Application developed by January 2011</p> <p>Sample plans finalised by October 2010</p>
Field Management	<p>a) Field management procedures worked successfully.</p> <p>b) All reports completed on time.</p>	<p>a) Field management procedures worked successfully and no 'undue' incidents were reported to HQ staff.</p> <p>b) Originally field management reports were</p>	<p>a) Continue with current field management procedures.</p> <p>b) For 2011 CQS reports to be included on new field</p>	<p>By March 2010</p>

Description	Success Criteria	Outcome against success criteria	Recommendation	Timeframe
		not planned for the rehearsal but it was then decided to collect this information via e-mail.	services system.	
Household Interviews	Response rates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 46 per cent of sample contacted. • 80 per cent response among interviewed households 	Total number of household interviews conducted was 153. This was 46 per cent of the total sample, slightly above the target. There were seven callers to the helpline who specifically asked not to be interviewed. The proportion of those contacted who agreed to be interviewed was therefore 95.4, per cent well above the target.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure the same levels of success for 2011. • Ensure that interviewers are available for the whole interview period to ensure maximum coverage. • Rethink number of interviews expected per interviewer, so as to increase chance of achieving desired sample size. 	By October 2010

3. Other evaluation points

Description	Outcomes/issues	Recommendation(s)	Timeframe
Running Census Coverage Survey (CCS) & CQS Surveys	Both surveys were managed by one team. Running both surveys proved problematic and much more work than anticipated. This was particularly so around the critical points, such as the end of CCS and beginning of CQS.	CCS and CQS would benefit from being run by two separate teams.	By November 2009
Payroll system	All payments were made on time. However there was a delay in authorisation of some expenses claims due to the Team Manager's leave.	Transfer responsibility for CQS payroll service to Field Operations Branch (FOB) with appropriate service level agreement. Ensure that there is the facility for a second approver for expenses claims.	By March 2010
Timing of field work	There is some evidence that, as a result of the four to five month gap between census and CQS, some respondents had forgotten the answers they provided on the census questionnaire, especially if their situation had changed in the meantime. In addition, field staff who prove capable in the census are more likely to be available for the CQS if there is little or no gap between the two.	Bring CQS field work forward to May, at the same time as the CCS field work.	By November 2009
Data upload	<p>a) 3G cards proved difficult to use and coverage was patchy, even in Edinburgh - it is likely that at least one rural area will be included in 2011</p> <p>b) Data file was transmitted to HQ in a file format which caused problems as</p>	<p>a) Investigate other options, e.g. landline broadband in interviewers' homes</p> <p>b) Change specification to deliver data in a different format.</p>	<p>By March 2010</p> <p>By January 2011</p>

Description	Outcomes/issues	Recommendation(s)	Timeframe
	some of the data values include commas.		
Field staff manual	The manual was easy to understand. However some commented that separate manuals for each level of field staff should be provided.	Produce separate manuals for each level of field staff for 2011 CQS.	By April 2011
Role and title of Accompanying Person (AP)	The AP role was originally for Health and Safety purposes and they were instructed to take no part in the interviews. However, it became apparent that it could be beneficial to develop a role in assisting the interviewer they accompanied.	Consider the impact of changing the AP role.	By October 2010
Questionnaire	<p>a) Some respondents were unsure as to the exact meaning of certain questions, e.g. which rooms should be included in the total number of rooms. Interviewers were not always able to help.</p> <p>b) Visitor questions were not answered well, because people could not remember who was staying on census night. This is likely to be true even if the CQS field work is brought forward as proposed. Also, question H1, which is intended purely as a ready-reference for the householder to check that all relevant people have been included, was not answered consistently.</p>	<p>a) Review training around definitions and provide a quick-reference guide for use in the field. Include question numbers on the electronic questionnaire for easy cross-referencing with the census questionnaire.</p> <p>b) Do not include question H1 or any visitor questions in the CQS.</p>	<p>a) By May 2010</p> <p>b) By January 2011</p>

Description	Outcomes/issues	Recommendation(s)	Timeframe
Interview appointment system	Overall there were no significant problems with recording appointments. However, anecdotal evidence shows that a better method of recording progress would have been beneficial.	Consider introducing a CQS Property Listing Sheet.	By October 2010