

NATIONAL STATE DATA CENTER STEERING COMMITTEE

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*Representing a Network of 1,800
SDC/BIDC Data Centers and Affiliates Nationwide*

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We Bring Value-Added Census Data and Education to the User

SDC Steering Committee Meeting June 13-15, 2006

INTRODUCTIONS

Stan Rolark kicked off the meeting with a warm welcome followed by greetings from Howard Shih, vice chair of the CIC network; Annette Watters, vice chair of the SDC network; and Linda Gage, chair of the FSCPE network. Stan also introduced Enrique Lamas, the new Chief of the Population Division.

AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY (ACS) AND 2010 DECENNIAL UPDATE

Teresa Angueira (Asst. Director for the ACS and Decennial Census) brought our groups up-to-date on ACS and Decennial Census activities. The 2005 ACS collected data in every county in the U.S. Data collection for the group quarters population began in January 2006 and included approximately 20,000 group quarters facilities. Newly translated materials are now available to assist field collection operations and to assist with non-response follow-up with those for whom English is not their primary language.

In June, the ACS released a 2005 ACS Special Tabulation Product that focused on the Gulf Coast regions affected by hurricanes Katrina and Rita. These data will be used to help support the recovery efforts in areas of Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas.

The 2005 ACS data products will be released in waves by subject. Data will be released for all geographies that meet the 65,000 population threshold. The first data to be released on August 15, 2006 will include demographic and social characteristics. It is expected that economic characteristics will be available August 29, 2006 followed by housing data in early October and selected population profiles for race, ethnic, and ancestry groups coming out in November.

The ACS Design and Methodology paper has been released. This paper can be found online at: <http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Downloads/tp67.pdf>. The ACS Data User Training Guide was released in May 2006. This guide includes examples and exercises as well as a set of PowerPoint presentations covering the basics of ACS. An additional PowerPoint, and guide, is under development to assist users with the 2005 ACS.

ACS Research and Evaluation

A content test was conducted earlier this year. Data from this test are currently being analyzed. Research is also underway on using population estimates as the control for ACS. This research includes several components including evaluations of the quality of the estimates and the use of alternative population estimates as controls in the production of multi-year estimates. Research will also look at data collected in the ACS to identify how many geographic areas are likely to have high levels of seasonal populations. Operational evaluations are planned to look at the quality and efficiency of data collection in Puerto Rico and in Group Quarters.

2010 Decennial Census

Preliminary results from the 2005 test show increased response rates to the bilingual form, but this form also resulted in an increase in non-response to some items, including Hispanic origin. The 2006 Census test used April 1, 2006 as Census day and will test the use of handhelds for non-response follow up. Initial mailings were sent out in March 2006. Coverage follow-up will take place in August of 2006. Preliminary results from the 2006 Census Test evaluations will be completed on a flow basis between May 2006 and February 2007, and all final results are expected to be published by April of 2007.

Full Count Review will be a component of the 2010 Dress Rehearsal. This review will have FSCPE involvement.

The 2010 Planning Database is scheduled for completion in Fall 2008. It will contain demographic, socioeconomic, and housing variables as well as identifying areas that are difficult to enumerate. It is not expected to be ready in time for LUCA. Focus of the planning database is to meet internal Census Bureau operations requirements first. To avoid the risk of disclosure it is uncertain if the planning database will be available for external use.

Frank Vitrano provided an update on small, multi-unit addresses. Coverage of these units is problematic and often results in a duplicate count for some units while missing others. The 2004 Census test in the borough of Queens in New York provided some insight on improving these counts. Allowing canvassers to record observed features such as the number of mailboxes, doorbells, or gas meters, as well as asking respondents about other units are under evaluation. Work is underway on a formalized procedure on how to accommodate adding and removing units. Consideration is being given to identifying small, multi-unit address in clusters for field follow-up rather than the traditional mail-out, mail-back non-response follow-up.

Following Frank Vitrano's update was David Whitford who talked about the coverage evaluation and measurement program. A sample enumeration will take place after the 2010 Census that will be compared to the Census to develop over/under count measures for use in determining how future Censuses could be improved.

American Community Survey (ACS)

The ACS update was started with a preview of a five-minute video on the ACS. This video will be available at a later date on DVD as well as online in a streaming media format.

Using Data from the 2005 ACS was presented by Debbie Griffin. This PowerPoint was developed from materials that are in the works on how to use ACS data. This presentation and the materials under development cover the basics of ACS, emphasize that ACS data are estimates, explain which geographic areas will receive data in 2005, provides samples of the different data products, as well as how to access these data products, and a schedule for release. The 2005 ACS will be released in four waves by subject for all geographic areas with populations of 65,000 or greater. The first release will be the demographic and social characteristics on August 15, 2006. On August 29th, the economic characteristics are expected. The physical and financial characteristics of housing data are not expected until early October and finally, in November the Selected Population Profiles for Race, Ethnic, and Ancestry Groups are expected to be released.

Alfredo Navarro focused on the ACS Quality Measures featured in the aforementioned presentation. This portion of the training materials is meant to provide data users with enough information to make informed decisions. Materials being developed will include descriptions and examples explaining sampling error, margin of error, and testing for statistical significance. It is important not only to remind users that ACS data are estimates, but also that these data are released with a 90% confidence interval.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROGRAMS UPDATE

Howard Hogan, Associate Director for Demographic Programs, began by introducing Enrique Lamas, new Chief of the Population Division. The Demographic Programs division is planning a re-organization of the directorate. This reorganization has been proposed and is awaiting approval. The main change

under the proposed reorganization will be the creation of a data integration group. This group will specialize in the use of administrative records in conjunction with surveys.

There are two new initiatives; 1) to measure the daytime population of communities using employment, school enrollments, etc. and 2) to quantify economic dislocation whether it be caused by base closure or natural disaster.

The Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) was collected at a cost of around \$42 million per year. The 2007 Census budget was cut by roughly \$42 million, so the decision was made to cut SIPP. In light of public outcry at this announcement, other options were investigated. There will be no field collection in 2008, but at the same time the use of administrative records will be investigated. The newly structured program will be called the Dynamics of Economic Well-Being (DEWB). Concern has been voiced over the data gap between the cessation of SIPP and the start of DEWB. It is unknown at this time if it will be possible to extend SIPP or begin DEWB early to fill this gap.

DATA ACCESS AND DISSEMINATION (DADS) UPDATE

Marian Brady along with DADS Program Manager, Ron Thompson briefed the committees on DADS activities. There was a delay in issuance of the DADS II RFP. This will result in no significant changes to DADS in the 2010 cycle. The first wave of the 2005 ACS will coincide with the release of a new version (v 10.5) of American FactFinder. The main page in AFF will then default to the current ACS data rather than Census 2000.

UPDATES FROM CENSUS EXECUTIVE STAFF

Associate Director for Strategic Planning and Innovation, Nancy Gordon, detailed some of the staff changes that have taken place within the Bureau. Director Kincannon recently attended a special recognition ceremony for the state partners in Illinois and Missouri involved with the Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) program. Director Kincannon also attended the recent opening ceremony of the Research Data Center at Baruch College in New York.

Ms. Gordon extended the thanks of the Director for our network's assistance with the Boundary and Annexation Survey (BAS). The advice and suggestions received from our networks is greatly appreciated.

GEOGRAPHIC PROGRAMS UPDATE

This update was provided by Linda Franz, Asst. Division Chief for Geographic Partnership Programs. The MAF/TIGER Improvement Program is scheduled to be complete in Spring 2008. So far 1900+ counties have been realigned. MAF/TIGER is also undergoing a redesign in which these data will be migrated to a new system this Fall. Software applications for the new system are under development.

Boundary and Annexation Survey (BAS) will be expanded to include all governmental units in the 2008 survey. The deadline for the inclusion of changes is April 1 for subsequent year estimates and ACS address extract. The SDC network was very helpful in the follow-up with non-respondents. After the 2010 BAS, the Census Bureau will send a Boundary Validation Map to each highest elected official for every legal entity in the U.S. This will provide a final boundary review before tabulating the 2010 Census.

Participant training in the Participant Statistical Areas Program will begin in 2008. Initial delineation by participants will take place mid-2008 through early 2009. Census Bureau and participant review of the delineations with final approval by the Bureau starting in the summer of 2009. Data tabulation areas will be finalized considering 2010 BAS and the boundary validations in 2010.

The state LUCA Pilot Test was conducted in Indiana and Wisconsin. Field validation was conducted during March and April 2006. Analysis has been postponed as focus has shifted to the LUCA Dress Rehearsal. The Dress Rehearsal LUCA will be conducted in California and North Carolina. Advance and invitation mailings are complete with 37 of 62 eligible governments confirming their participation. Advance letters for the 2010 Census LUCA will go out in January 2007 to all eligible governments.

Invitations will follow in July 2007. In order to have time to process the results, review will need to be complete by early April 2008.

JOINT STEERING COMMITTEE DIALOGUE

Dan Veroff (Wisconsin, SDC) lead the group in an abbreviated S.W.O.T. analysis to discuss what we can do to foster communication and collaboration among and between our three networks. Some of the points suggested were:

- Listen to new people with fresh voices/encourage new people to participate
- Develop a common mode for the sharing of knowledge
- Create a searchable index of our networks
- Develop a way to learn about products from other organizations
- Develop a knowledge base to help retain our institutional memory
- Create one unified list of CIC's, FSCPE's, and SDC's

HEALTH OF THE SDC NETWORK DISCUSSION

An open discussion was held among the SDC Steering Committee members on the health of the SDC network. We are a network bound by our common bond as data users, but our roles have changed over the years. We are no longer simply the data processors of the past, but educators requiring more access to the experts. As staff change throughout the network, how do we document common tasks and knowledge? Can the SDC network produce a template to assist with this documentation? It was suggested that more contact was needed with new leads to help them know where to turn when questions arise. The questions being received by network members have become more complex, often only when a data user is unable to locate the needed data on the internet. With these changes, have the core competencies changed? Does the steering committee need to review and possibly revise this document? It was suggested that a panel discussion be held at the annual meeting featuring some best practices for communicating and coordinating efforts within state SDC networks. These best practices could be featured on the Clearinghouse web site.

There is a perception that there is a changing culture at the Census Bureau. Communication is no longer the open dialogue between peers that it once was, but more of a scripted message to the public. How can we as a network better tap into the Bureau? CLO suggested using their office as an initial point of contact in communications with other divisions. The steering committee asked if it would be possible to have informal discussions with the experts as part of the monthly conference calls. The committee could provide questions as they arise and a specialist could join the call for an open discussion that may not always yield the answers, but could facilitate the communication of the needs of data users.

SDC BUSINESS MEETING

Announcements

- Sub-county population estimates will be on the embargo site on Friday, June 16, 2006. These data will be released to the public on June 21st.
- Associate Director for Communications, Jefferson Taylor, will be leaving the Bureau.

Carol Rogers is spearheading a restructuring of the Clearinghouse web site. The new site will be dynamic and database driven. As such it is anticipated that new site will be searchable and there is potential for a wiki of sorts that would allow network members to submit their own content. The steering committee brainstormed on possible categories for the revised site. Suggestions included:

- Presentations (speeches, powerpoints, etc)
- Media Coverage
- Newsletters
- Data Usage
- Affiliate Products
- ACS Uses

- Case Studies
- Tech Tips
- Decennial Census (Census 2000 and 2010 Planning for starters)

It was suggested that it might be helpful to have a digest-type email sent out to the listserv that summarizes newly added content.

Internet-based Training

The Census Bureau is currently using Microsoft Live Meeting (<http://www.microsoft.com/office/livemeeting/prodinfo/default.msp>) to conduct remote, internet-based training. If you are interested in having the Bureau conduct remote training in your state, please contact CLO. Stan Rolark suggested incorporating a remote training session into the annual meeting to demonstrate its use and capabilities to the network.

Partnership Opportunities with Other Federal Agencies

As data users, our network has expertise in many data areas. How can we tap into this expertise to share with the network? It was suggested that subcommittees be formed around common data topics or sources. Each subcommittee would be lead by a steering committee member who will solicit the network for participation by others with experience with the topic or source. The subcommittee would then inform the SDC network on the release of data, technical changes to the data, or provide a critique of the data format. Possible topics/sources discussed were:

- CTPP/Transportation
- Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA)
- Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)
- U.S. Department of Agriculture
- Immigration (INS/DHS)
- Education
- Housing/HUD
- Federal Reserve
- Crime

A summer pilot will get this off the ground with following subcommittees: Carol Rogers - BEA, Barbara Ronningen – Immigration, and Richard Rathge – Housing/HUD. Each will solicit the network to identify others with experience in these areas to serve on the subcommittee. Topic tables will be conducted at the Annual Meeting to brief the network on this concept and to expand the number of subcommittees. It was suggested this concept could be further expanded to cover programs within the Census, such as ACS, or university resources, such as ICPSR.

ACS Product Gaps

Are there gaps between the ACS data products and the needs of SDC network users? The committee expressed the need for SF-like data files from the Bureau. Also expressed were the needs for:

- 1-page example(s) on the use of ACS
- Advanced Query application for ACS
- PUMS software tool
- Crosswalk between Summary Files from Census 2000 and ACS
- SF4-like data

Annual Report

CLO was asked if the annual report could clarify which questions apply to the lead agency only and which ones also apply to coordinates and affiliates. Bob Scardamalia further suggested that some questions ask for a simple yes/no response when a quantity response might be more meaningful.

Elections

Three steering committee seats will be up for election. These seats are those currently held by Dan Veroff (WI), Barbara Ronningen (MN), and Annette Watters (AL). All three are eligible to run for a second-term, if so desired. Xan Wedel will send out a series of three emails to the listserv. The first will be a pre-nomination note in June, followed by a solicitation of nominations in July, and finally in August an

email about voting. A follow-up email with the winners of the election will be sent out by Bob Scardamalia. Carol Rogers will post information on the nominees on the clearinghouse site. John Blodgett (MO) has hosted the online voting site in the past. Xan will follow-up with John and see if he is willing and able to host this site again this year.

Fall/Annual Meeting

In a discussion of possible topics/sessions for the annual meeting the following items were discussed:

- Panel with Regional Office regarding core competencies followed by a facilitated break out session (SDC)
- Other Federal resource topic tables (SDC)
- Lessons from LUCA by Carol Rogers and Dan Veroff (SDC)
- LUCA Training and pilot evaluation (SDC)
- Communication Training (joint session with CIC)
- Roll out of the new Clearinghouse web site (part of SDC Business Meeting)
- Demonstration of Microsoft Live Meeting (joint session)
- ACS Training (joint session)
- Network Show & Tell with a tie-in with case studies (SDC)
- Roundtable Discussions (SDC)
 - How to "Skin" a web site
 - ACS PUMS
 - How to effectively run an SDC
 - Working with the media on ACS

Newsletter

Maria Olmedo (CLO) presented a draft of a newsletter that she has developed for the network. The newsletter will feature a variety of articles on data, data resources, plus what's happening at CLO. The periodicity of this publication has not yet been decided, but it is likely that it will be disseminated as a PDF attachment to the SDC listserv.