

FEB 25 2010



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Office of Inspector General
Washington, D.C. 20230

MEMORANDUM FOR: Robert M. Groves
Director, U.S. Census Bureau

FROM: Ronald C. Prevost 
Assistant Inspector General
for Economic and Statistical Program Assessment

SUBJECT: Review of the 2010 Census Operations, OAE-19893

The Department of Commerce Office of Inspector General is initiating a review of several decennial operations as detailed in Appendix B of the *2010 Census: Quarterly Report to Congress, February 2010* (OIG-19791-3) attached. The primary objective of this work is to evaluate the quality and efficiency of various operations that comprise the 2010 Census enumeration.

We intend to accomplish the following:

- (1) Monitor the 2010 Census field address list improvement and enumeration operations for conformity to specifications, accuracy, and field management efficiency.
- (2) Ascertain the adequacy of security controls, including information technology, to protect the privacy of information provided to the Census Bureau by its respondents.
- (3) Monitor the Census Bureau's effectiveness at managing the cost, schedule, and risks of the operation.
- (4) Monitor Recovery Act expenditures related to early 2010 Census field operations and Coverage Followup operations.
- (5) Follow up on 2010 Census related fraudulent enumerations claims and other hotline complaints.

The results of this work will be included in our quarterly reports to Congress, short reports to you, as warranted, and following the last operation, a capstone report.

As a first step in initiating this work, we will schedule a meeting with your key staff, during which time we will discuss our plans and objectives in more detail. In the meantime, if you have any questions regarding these reviews please feel free to call me at (202) 482-3052.

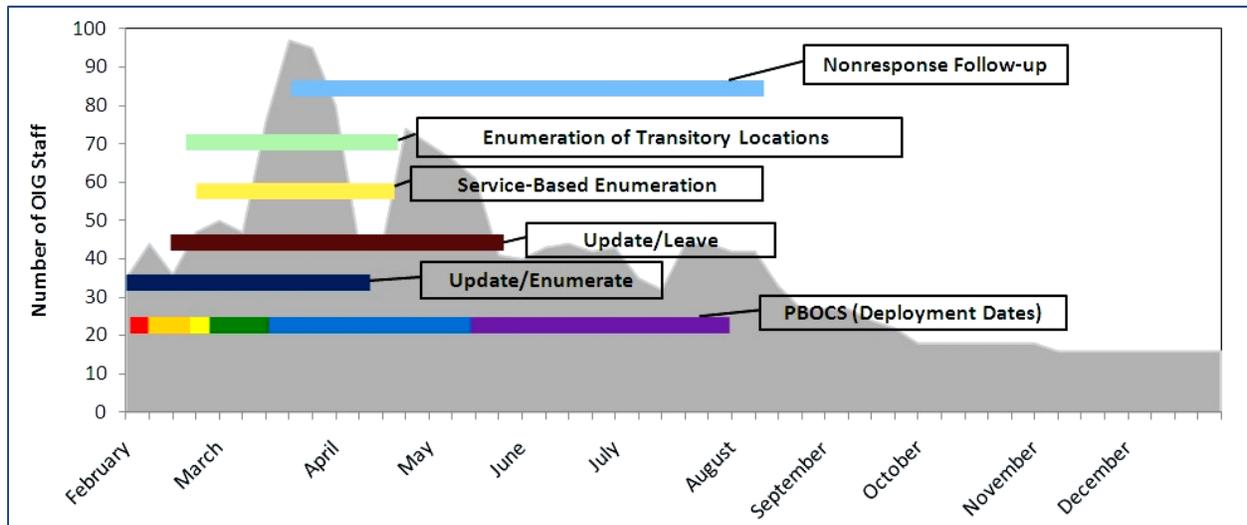
cc: James Dinwiddie, Assistant Division Chief, Decennial Program Information
Pamela White, Chief, External Liaison Branch
Adam Miller, Audit Liaison, Management Services Branch

**Appendix B:
Office of Inspector General
2010 Decennial Census Oversight Plan**

The Census Bureau has identified 44 decennial operations for 2010. These operations span several years and entail providing support, establishing where to count, collecting and integrating respondent information, providing results, measuring coverage, and performing analysis and research for the 2020 Census. In FY 2010 we anticipate covering aspects of 20 of these operations, including deploying substantial numbers of staff to observe eight Census field operations. This work will also inform our oversight of the 2020 census.

OIG resources devoted to the 2010 Decennial Census over the coming year will involve almost 100 members of our staff at a given point in time. Details of our planned staffing deployment over the course of the calendar year are provided in Figure 5, below. The variability of resource deployment is related to the number and extent of the field operations conducted by Census. During this period, OIG plans to expend approximately 35 full-time-equivalent employees at an estimated cost of about \$5.8 million for the review of the decennial census. OIG will oversee Census Bureau field and headquarters management of operations, field enumeration activities, information technology (IT) systems and the security of personally identifiable information, and internal controls over payroll.

Figure 5. OIG Census 2010 Oversight Staffing Plan



Field Activities

Our oversight of field activities will include deploying staff to selected local Census offices nationwide to observe whether activities are being conducted in accordance with Census procedures (for example, whether the Census questionnaire is being administered properly;

OIG Quarterly Report to Congress, February 2010

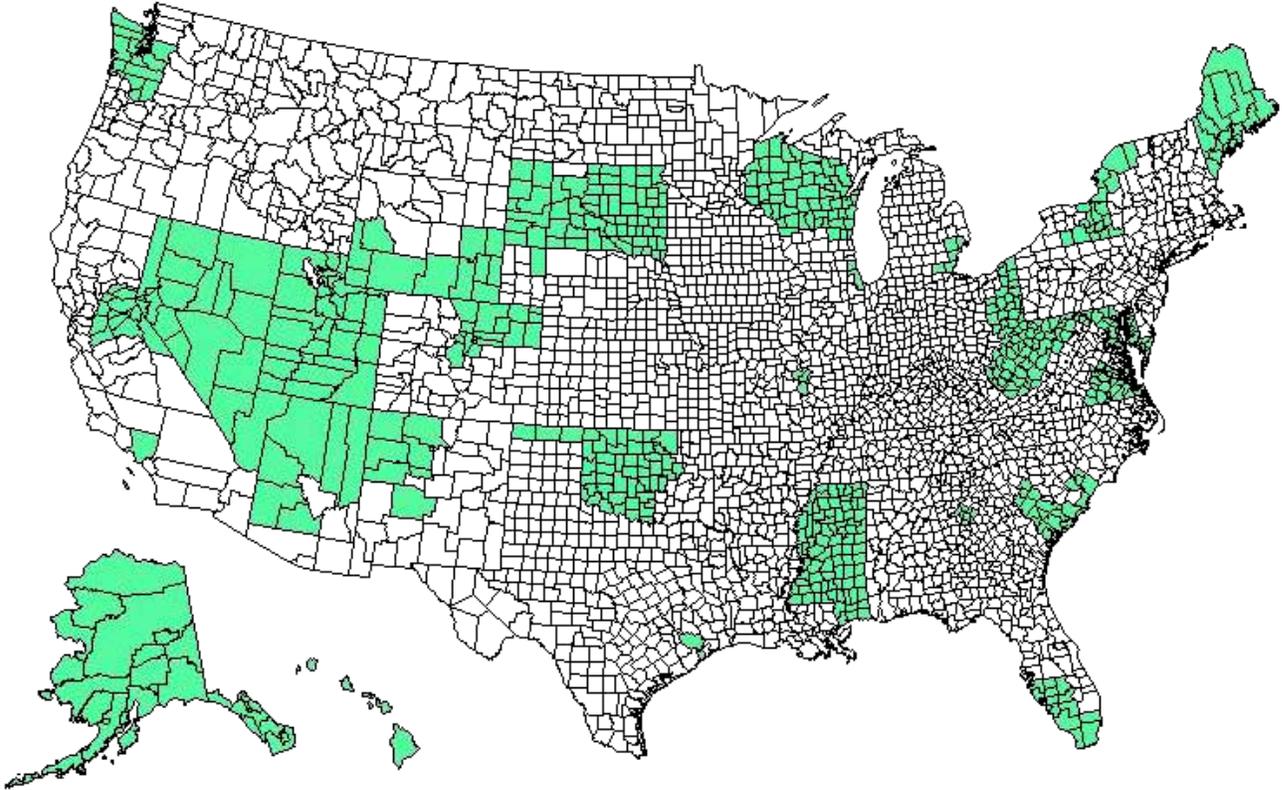
whether map and address list updating is being completed correctly, where applicable; etc.) and local Census office practices. We will notify the Census Bureau promptly of any problems needing immediate attention. We will summarize our observations and findings in a final report, to be completed in FY 2011. This capping report will provide our summary assessment of the overall efficacy and efficiency of the 2010 Census enumeration. This and subsequent reports will provide lessons learned to aid in planning for the 2020 Census.

In FY 2009 we observed *Address Canvassing* and *Group Quarters Validation*. During FY 2010 field operations we intend to have a presence in every enumeration activity. In our planning for this major deployment of OIG personnel, we analyzed multiple data sources to ascertain the areas in which the Census Bureau may face its greatest demographic and operational hurdles. The following are six decennial operations that we will be observing:

- *Update/Leave*: In areas in which many homes do not receive mail at a city-style address, enumerators canvass assignment areas to deliver a Census questionnaire to each housing unit. At the same time, they update the address list and maps. This method is also used in selected collection blocks within *mailout/mailback* areas, where mail delivery may be a problem, such as apartment buildings where mail is left in common areas.
- *Update/Enumerate*: Enumerators canvass assignment areas to update residential addresses, including adding living quarters that were not included on original address listing pages, update Census Bureau maps, and complete a questionnaire for each housing unit. This occurs in communities with special enumeration needs and in which many housing units may not have house-number-and-street-name mailing addresses, similar to *update/leave*.
- *Enumeration of Transitory Locations*: Enumerators visit transitory locations, such as campgrounds and hotels, to enumerate their residents.
- *Service-based Enumeration*: This focused, 3-day enumeration provides an opportunity for people living on the street or in shelters to be included in the Census.
- *Nonresponse Follow-up (including Vacant/Delete Check)*: Enumerators visit addresses for which the Census Bureau had no questionnaire or telephone response. Enumerators collect information about the household residents as of April 1, 2010.
- *Coverage Follow-up*: This telephone operation attempts to resolve erroneous enumerations and omissions.

Our field observations will focus on a judgmental sample of 34 of 151 early local Census offices that supported Address Canvassing operations. These are split into smaller local Census offices for enumeration activities; our sample equals 113 of 494 local Census offices. The areas highlighted on the following map (Figure 6) indicate the boundaries of local Census offices within our sample. OIG staff will observe Census operations in selected areas within those locations.

Figure 6. Local Census Office Boundaries within Sample to be Observed by OIG Staff



To ensure nationwide coverage, we initially selected at least one Early Local Census Office per Census region. Our selections were based on the bureau's demographic measures of enumeration difficulty, operational factors such as blocks with large populations, and significant socioeconomic changes such as high foreclosure rates or high growth rates. Next, we identified a smaller sample conveniently located near OIG offices. The remaining selections were included to ensure adequate representation of population density and specific hard-to-count populations. For example, we intentionally included the rural Mississippi Delta and the hurricane-affected Galveston, Texas, areas. We balanced the sample by including several areas that were not considered hard to count. A listing of the Early Local Census Offices in our sample follows:

Anchorage, AK
Flagstaff, AZ
Phoenix Central, AZ
Los Angeles Downtown, CA
Stockton, CA
Lakewood, CO
DC East, DC
Miami East, FL
Sarasota, FL
Atlanta South, GA
Honolulu, HI

Chicago Far North, IL
Chicago Near South, IL
Frederick, MD
Seat Pleasant, MD
Portland, ME
Detroit West, MI
St. Louis City, MO
Jackson, MS
Meridian, MS
Las Vegas, NV
Bronx Southeast, NY

Queens Northwest, NY
Syracuse, NY
Canton, OH
Oklahoma City, OK
Charleston, SC
Rapid City, SD
Houston Central, TX
Salt Lake City, UT
Richmond, VA
Tacoma, WA
Eau Claire, WI
Charleston, WV

Other Reviews

In addition to deploying staff to observe enumeration activities, we will be conducting reviews in the following areas:

- *Evaluating and Monitoring Decennial Systems:* We plan to evaluate key IT decennial systems for development and operational risks that may affect critical decennial operations and the accuracy of the population count. We will assess the paper-based operations control system and management workarounds required to address its anticipated shortcomings, starting with the *Group Quarters Advanced Visit* operation, as well as the Decennial Applicant, Personnel and Payroll System. Other systems that may be reviewed include the response processing system, the universe control and management system, and the Decennial Response Integration System.
- *Safeguarding Decennial Respondent Confidential Data:* We will assess controls to protect the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of electronic decennial respondent information.
- *Census's Ability to Detect/Respond to Cyber Attacks:* We will evaluate the extent and effectiveness of Census's monitoring of its decennial information systems for malicious activity.
- *2010 Enumeration Payroll and Progress Review:* In our ongoing audit of Address Canvassing payroll for the decennial Census, we are verifying the accuracy and integrity of payroll processing, including a review of supervisory approval, overtime compliance, and time-and-expense reports. The overall purpose of this review will be to monitor the cost and progress of the 2010 Census field operations and verify the accuracy and integrity of the payroll—with emphasis placed on identifying irregular operations, assessing management staffing and deployment decisions, and identifying fraud.
- *Early 2020 Planning:* Planning for the 2020 Census has already started, and we intend to track progress throughout the decade. Weaknesses in the bureau's cost estimating techniques and its failure in planning and managing the acquisition of handheld computers for field data collection were major contributors to the eventual cost overruns and high level of operational risk. A related factor was the misalignment of budgets, schedules, requirements, testing, and acquisitions leading up to the 2010 Census. We will monitor early 2020 planning to identify more cost-effective methods for obtaining a high-quality address file and conducting enumeration, and promote more effective and transparent decennial planning and budgeting.