



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

August 21, 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR: Thomas L. Mesenbourg
Acting Director, U.S. Census Bureau

FROM: Ron Prevost 
Assistant Inspector General for Economic and Statistical Program
Assessment

SUBJECT: Review of 2020 Census Research and Testing Efforts

As part of our FY 2012 audit and evaluation plan, we will review the status of the Census Bureau's 2020 Census redesign efforts. Our specific objectives are to (1) determine if Census 2020 governance and internal controls are adequate to manage the redesign effort; (2) assess the implementation status of each project comprising the Census 2020 redesign effort, including the extent of implementation, time frames for completion, milestones, deliverables, and impact on the overall redesign program; and (3) assess the Census Bureau's approach to evaluating each project, including whether accurate and reliable data will be available to determine each project's impact on redesign efforts.

We believe that improvements to the decennial census design—combined with operational and management changes—will contribute to a more efficient use of resources to enumerate the population in 2020, minimizing the need for resource-intensive field operations and containing costs. Without these changes, the next decennial could cost up to \$30 billion (according to GAO's 2009 estimate).

As a first step in our review, we will contact your audit liaison to schedule an entrance conference. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please contact me at (202) 482-3052 or Carol Rice, Division Director for Statistical Programs, at (202) 482-6020. We appreciate the cooperation of your staff during this review.

cc: Pam Moulder, Senior Program Analyst, Economics and Statistics Administration
Adam Miller, Census Audit Liaison