AUDIT REPORT

Audit of Data Collection and Quality Control Procedures for the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey

REPORT NO. OIG-26-010-A

March 10, 2026

The Census Bureau's Disclosure Avoidance Officer has reviewed this information product for unauthorized disclosure of confidential information and has approved the disclosure avoidance practices applied to this release. (CBDRB-FY25-ACSO003-B0017)

U.S. Department of Commerce
Office of Inspector General
Office of Audit and Evaluation

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Office of Inspector General
Office of Audit and Evaluation
Washington, DC 20230

March 10, 2026

MEMORANDUM FOR: George Cook
Chief of Staff, performing the nonexclusive functions and duties of the Director
U.S. Census Bureau

FROM: Arthur L. Scott, Jr.
Assistant Inspector General for Audit and Evaluation

SUBJECT: *Audit of Data Collection and Quality Control Procedures for the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey*
Report No. OIG-26-010-A

Attached for your review is a final report on our audit of the adequacy of the U.S. Census Bureau's data collection procedures to ensure that the American Community Survey estimates are reliable. We will post the final report on our website per the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended (5 U.S.C. §§ 404, 420).

Within 60 calendar days, please provide an action plan addressing the report's recommendations, as required by Department Administrative Order 213-5.

We appreciate your staff's cooperation and professionalism during this audit.

Attachment

Audit of Data Collection and Quality Control Procedures for the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey

Audit Report OIG-26-010-A
March 10, 2026

What We Audited | Our objective was to determine whether the U.S. Census Bureau has implemented adequate data collection procedures to ensure that American Community Survey (ACS) estimates are reliable.

Why This Matters | The U.S. Census Bureau provides quality data about the nation's people and economy. As part of providing quality data, the bureau collects information through the ACS. The ACS collects data on both people and housing units from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. The survey covers topics such as age, number and age of children, military service, commutes, education, income, and employment. Each year, the bureau releases community-level ACS data in the form of estimates.

In 2013, the bureau designed an internet survey instrument, known as the internet self-response (ISR), that enabled users to easily respond online to the ACS. This audit focused on two data collection methods, ISR and personal visits, for the ACS conducted in calendar year 2022.

Policymakers use ACS data to distribute more than $2.8 trillion in federal funding. Therefore, the bureau must ensure that its survey data collection methods are aligned with established production and quality assurance processes to ensure that ACS estimates are reliable.

What We Found | The bureau did not effectively implement its data collection and quality control procedures to ensure that ACS estimates were reliable. We found that:

- The bureau did not sufficiently monitor ISR data collection procedures.
- The bureau did not effectively implement personal visit data collection and quality control procedures.

What We Recommend | We made 17 recommendations to the U.S. Census Bureau to monitor and evaluate data collection, complete interviews, monitor supervisory review of cases, strengthen its reinterview process, and develop policy on when regional offices should respond to inquiries. The bureau concurred with our recommendations.

Contents

Introduction

The U.S. Census Bureau provides quality data about the nation's people and economy. As part of providing quality data, the bureau collects information through the American Community Survey (ACS). The ACS is a mandatory survey[1] that collects information on demographic, social, economic, and housing characteristics to help inform how trillions of dollars in federal funds are distributed each year. In 2005, the bureau replaced its detailed census "long form"[2] with a continuous data collection survey that provided community-level estimates on an annual basis throughout the decade to governments and other stakeholders. In 2013, the bureau designed an internet survey instrument (ISI), known as the internet self-response (ISR), that enabled users to easily respond online to the ACS.

The ACS collects data on both people and housing units from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. The survey covers topics such as age, number and age of children, military service, commutes, education, income, and employment. The bureau collects data on four types of living arrangements: housing units (HUs), HUs in remote Alaska,[3] group quarters (GQs),[4] and GQs in remote Alaska. Each year, the bureau selects about 3.54 million HU addresses and approximately 20,000 GQs for the ACS. The bureau uses the data collected through the ACS to publish: (1) detailed, single-year estimates for geographic areas with populations of 65,000 or more; (2) less-detailed, single-year estimates for geographic areas with populations of 20,000 or more; and (3) detailed, 5-year estimates for all areas.[5]

[1] Response to the ACS is mandated by law (*see* 13 U.S.C. § 221), and information about the mandatory requirement is communicated to respondents in all stages of data collection.

[2] The long form was used in decennial census prior to 2010. It contained over 50 questions for a sample of respondents concerning housing and population characteristics. Because the ACS now includes questions on housing and population data, the bureau no longer uses the long form.

[3] Remote Alaska is a set of rural areas in Alaska that are difficult to access.

[4] A GQ is a place where people live or stay, in a group living arrangement, that is owned or managed by an entity or organization providing housing and/or services for the residents. These services may include custodial or medical care as well as other types of assistance, and residency is commonly restricted to those receiving these services.

[5] U.S. Census Bureau. November 2022. *ACS and Puerto Rico Community Survey Design and Methodology*, Version 3.0, ii.

Data Collection

The bureau offers HU respondents in non-remote Alaska areas[6] four modes to respond to the ACS:

1. ISR: Respondents submit survey information online.
2. Mail Self-Response: Respondents receive the survey through the mail and submit their response via mail.
3. Telephone Questionnaire Assistance: Respondents contact the call center, and survey information is collected during the call.
4. Personal Visit: Field Representatives (FRs) collect survey information in person or via telephone.

For GQ living arrangements, FRs collect survey information through personal visits, and residents also have the option to respond through mail after a personal visit is conducted.

Additionally, in areas designated as remote Alaska, the bureau considers all addresses to be "unmailable" and is unable to notify respondents that they were selected for the ACS. Therefore, these cases are automatically assigned to an FR for data collection.

This audit focused on two of the four data collection methods, ISR and personal visits, for the ACS conducted in both non-remote Alaska and remote Alaska in calendar year (CY) 2022. ISR and personal visits made up approximately 85 percent of all HU data collection for non-remote Alaska. Additionally, personal visits made up 75 percent of GQ data collection for non-remote Alaska. See table 1 for details.

[6] Non-remote Alaska includes addresses in (1) Alaska that are not defined as difficult to access, (2) Hawaii, and (3) the contiguous 48 states.

Table 1. Percentage of Responses for Each Data Collection Method in 2022*

2022 Collection Method	HU Non-Remote Alaska	HU Remote Alaska	GQ Non-Remote Alaska	GQ Remote Alaska
ISR	55	10	-	-
Mail Self-Response	15	-	25	15
Telephone	1	-	-	-
Personal Visit†	30	90	75	85

*Totals may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding. The total for each data collection method is weighted.

†For HU and GQ totals, the bureau decided to include FR telephone calls with personal visits.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey Office data

We reviewed samples of both non-remote and remote Alaska cases to ensure our results were inclusive of all addresses selected for the ACS. See Appendix 1 for more details.

Prior Audit Work Identified Weakness in the Bureau's Quality Control Review of Surveys

In a prior report,[7] OIG identified that the bureau did not meet quality assurance program requirements for reimbursable surveys.[8] Specifically, the bureau did not meet reinterview measures or complete falsification investigations in a timely manner. By not meeting quality assurance measures, the bureau cannot guarantee that it detected, reviewed, and resolved cases with discrepancies or that FRs with confirmed falsifications did not falsify additional cases.

Objective

Our audit objective was to determine whether the bureau has implemented adequate data collection procedures to ensure ACS estimates are reliable. Appendix 1 details our scope and methodology.

[7] Commerce OIG. August 30, 2023. *The Census Bureau Needs to Improve Its Performance Management Processes and Quality Control Program for the Reimbursable Surveys Program*, OIG-23-025-A.

[8] A reimbursable survey is a survey conducted by the bureau on behalf of other federal agencies. Our August 30, 2023, report discusses three reimbursable surveys: American Housing Survey, Consumer Expenditure Survey, and Current Population Survey. These surveys are smaller in scale than the ACS.

Findings and Recommendations

Summary: The bureau did not effectively implement its data collection and quality control procedures to ensure that ACS estimates were reliable. Specifically:

- The bureau did not sufficiently monitor ISR data collection procedures.
- The bureau did not effectively implement personal visit data collection and quality control procedures.

The insufficient monitoring of ISR data collection occurred because the bureau (1) did not require that test documentation be maintained for issues identified and resolution of errors identified and (2) did not develop a plan to monitor ISR data during the data collection phase. Additionally, during the personal visit data collection phase, the bureau did not provide sufficient training, develop adequate guidance for conducting vacant interviews, or adequately supervise its FRs. Further, the quality control activities for personal visit data collection had weaknesses due to resource constraints and a lack of policies and procedures.

As a result, the bureau lacks assurance that the data collected through ISR and during personal interviews is accurate and complete. It is imperative that ACS data is accurate and reliable for state and local policymakers and planners as the estimates are used to distribute more than $2.8 trillion in federal funding.[9]

The Bureau Did Not Sufficiently Monitor ISR Data Collection Procedures

The ISI is designed to collect data from respondents who opt to submit the survey via ISR. The bureau annually conducts several tests for data collection on the ISI before the start of the data collection year. A series of systems tests are conducted on the ISI to validate that

[9] On June 14, 2023, the U.S. Census Bureau released a report, *Uses of Decennial Census Programs Data in Federal Funds Distribution: Fiscal Year 2021,* which estimated that more than $2.8 trillion in federal funding was distributed to states, communities, tribal government, and other recipients using bureau data, including Decennial Census, ACS, and annual population estimates.

changes to the survey were incorporated to ensure that data is delivered correctly. The bureau also conducts data validation tests to determine whether the ISI accurately records information from testers. According to the bureau, the documents within the ISI standard operating procedures, *Housing Unit Self-Response Instrument Changes*[10] and *Internet Data Collection (IDC) Summer Release Specification,*[11] are used to develop the ISI and train its staff. In addition, the bureau uses operational and program analytics to monitor the quality of data.

The bureau developed a standard operating procedure to conduct system tests on the ACS. Testers examine different scenarios such as (1) year-to-year changes to the ISI, (2) a test of the ISI from start to finish, and (3) a verification of outcome code if changes are made to the ISI after testing or if issues are found. According to the bureau, it conducts tests on the Automated Response Cleanup (ARC)[12] process when changes are made to the ISI. The ARC automatically cleans up data collection responses received from the ISI. The bureau then conducts testing of data during the annual post data collection processing phase.

We found that the bureau's testing documentation lacked key details on whether identified issues were resolved prior to the start of data collection. In addition, the bureau did not develop recurring procedures to monitor and evaluate data during the data collection phase. Further, the bureau failed to test CY 2022 data during data collection. As a result, the bureau lacks assurance that it has adequate data collection procedures in place during ISR data collection.

The Bureau Did Not Document Resolution of ISI Issues Prior to Data Collection

U.S. Census Bureau Statistical Quality Standards require that the bureau maintain documentation of its testing of updates to ACS data collection methods and documentation to replicate and evaluate data collection methods for employees to carry out their work.[13] The standards also require the bureau to develop a plan to address data collection modes, systems, and procedures to monitor and evaluate data collection operations,[14] and to take corrective actions if problems are identified.[15]

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[10] U.S. Census Bureau. October 2017. *Standard Operating Procedures for HUSR* [Housing Unit Self-Response] *Instrument Changes*, 8-24.

[11] U.S. Census Bureau. July 2022. *Requirement Specification for ACS Internet Data Collection Instrument Detail Design*, *2022*, 3.

[12] The ARC process consists of a series of editing rules, run daily to ensure survey responses do not contain specific prohibited characters, punctuations, and text.

[13] U.S. Census Bureau. April 26, 2022. *U.S. Census Bureau Statistical Quality Standards*, requirement B1-4, 32.

[14] *Statistical Quality Standards*, sub-requirement B1-2, 29.

[15] *Statistical Quality Standards,* sub-requirement B1-3.4, 31.

According to the American Community Survey Office (ACSO), the bureau tested and reviewed the ISI prior to data collection to ensure that it accurately recorded information entered by a user, sample files and data were delivered correctly, and data was not compromised. We reviewed test results provided by the bureau and found that the bureau had a process to test the ISI before data collection. Specifically, the bureau identified issues with accurately recording data entered by users. However, the bureau did not have the documentation required by the standards to substantiate whether system errors were resolved prior to the start of the data collection year.[16]

For example, the bureau stated that bureau personnel identified keying errors and/or system errors during an interview. Bureau personnel noted that system errors included changes to the ISI that impacted the application's functionality or the manner in which the Application Service Division interfaced with the ACSO systems. In addition, there were instances when testers did not record test outcomes; thus, no one could verify that the test had occurred and that it was successful or if issues had occurred. According to bureau officials, the errors identified during testing were minor errors made by the testers that were not significant and did not result in updates made to the ISI.

We were unable to validate whether issues were resolved because the bureau did not provide documentation. In addition, the bureau did not have a requirement to maintain documentation of testing, issues identified, and resolution of errors identified in its ISI standard operating procedures or IDC guidance. Further, the bureau lacked policies and procedures to monitor supervisory review of testers for the ISI to ensure that *Statistical Quality Standards* are followed.

By not documenting whether the issues were resolved, the bureau lacks assurance that tests were successful and the ISI is working as intended. It is critical that the bureau conducts oversight to ensure that issues are addressed and data collection procedures are followed before the survey begins. Appropriate oversight and sufficient reviews will help minimize delays in processing data that key stakeholders use to make decisions.

The Bureau Did Not Develop Recurring Procedures to Monitor and Evaluate Data During the Data Collection Phase

Statistical Quality Standards require the bureau to evaluate data collection activities. It states that "[s]ystems and procedures must be developed and implemented to monitor and evaluate the data collection activities and to take corrective actions if problems are identified."[17] Monitoring and evaluating activities include "[r]eviewing response data for

[16] *Statistical Quality Standards*, sub-requirement B1-4, 32.

[17] *Statistical Quality Standards,* sub-requirement B1-3.4, 31.

accuracy and completeness and taking appropriate corrective action when necessary to improve accuracy or completeness." [18]

The bureau tests ISR data systems prior to data collection and assesses the quality of the response data during the annual post data collection processing phase. However, we found that the bureau did not review or test ISR data during the response phase of data collection for CY 2022.

After survey responses are collected, they are automatically processed through the ARC. According to the bureau, it tested survey response data from the ARC in 2013 when the ISR data collection method was first introduced and again when system updates were made in 2020 and 2021; however, it was unable to provide test results for the most recent updates. According to the ACS Development branch chief, ARC output data is not tested during data collection because the purpose of the ARC is only to clean up the data.

The lack of testing occurred because bureau management did not develop a plan to monitor ISR during CY 2022 data collection. For 2022 data, management decided to wait and test ACS data during the annual post data collection phase, which occurs 8 to 10 weeks after data collection ends. During post data collection processing, the bureau reviews ACS data from all collection methods to identify inconsistencies in the data and ensure completeness. However, this review does not specifically focus on ISR data.

During our review, ACSO implemented a process to begin monitoring ISR during data collection. According to the branch chief of Survey and Analytics, the bureau started to analyze the quality of the data received during the data collection phase about a year ago. During our reporting phase, bureau personnel provided procedures that detail how they analyze response distributions and compare data across data collection modes and survey panels to ensure consistency, accuracy, and alignment with expected patterns.

Because bureau management decided not to test ACS data during the CY 2022 data collection phase, it did not have sufficient oversight to ensure adequate data collection procedures were in place and standards were followed. The bureau has since taken action to develop a process to test data during the data collection phase. However, the bureau did not develop or implement policies and procedures to monitor and evaluate data collection activities as required by *Bureau Statistical Quality Standards*.

To maintain integrity and provide assurance, it is critical to test the data during the data collection phase. Key stakeholders rely on ACS data, such as housing unit counts and other demographic data, to make critical decisions. Developing procedures or a plan for

[18] *Statistical Quality Standards*, sub-requirement B1-3.4, 31.

monitoring and evaluating ISR data collection could ensure the bureau's confidence in the quality of the data collection operation and help the bureau prepare for major disruptions.

Recommendations

We recommend that the Director of the U.S. Census Bureau:

1. Establish and implement oversight to ensure that ISI issues are resolved during testing and that documentation of testing is maintained.
2. Develop and implement procedures for maintaining documentation of testing, the issues identified, and the resolution of errors identified.
3. Develop and implement a process to monitor and evaluate the quality of the data during the data collection phase.
4. Establish and implement oversight to ensure that issues identified during the data collection phase are resolved and documentation is maintained.
5. Develop and implement a process to conduct recurring tests of ARC responses to ensure that the bureau's systems are processing data as intended.

The Bureau Did Not Effectively Implement Personal Visit Data Collection and Quality Control Procedures

During the personal visit phase of data collection, the bureau relies on FRs to collect survey information for respondents that are in housing units (HUs) that do not self-respond or are in remote Alaska. Additionally, FRs collect the survey data for all group quarter (GQ) facilities. To ensure that FRs understand personal visit procedures, the bureau has extensive guidance that explains how FRs should collect survey information.

Additionally, to ensure the quality of data collected by FRs, the bureau relies on reinterviews and the FR Data Tool. Reinterviews verify that the data collected by FRs is accurate, whereas the FR Data Tool compares data collected by an FR to the data collected by their peers to identify anomalies.

Overall, we found that the bureau did not effectively implement data collection and quality control procedures during personal visits. Specifically:

- FRs did not follow procedures for coding vacant interviews and reaching recommended contacts.
- Supervisors did not ensure survey procedures were followed for noninterviews.

- The bureau did not meet its FR reinterview goals.
- Bureau officials did not respond timely to FR data tool inquiries.

As a result, the bureau lacks assurance that data collected during personal visits accurately represents the HUs and GQs interviewed. This lack of assurance may impact the reliability of ACS estimates, which are critical in decision-making.

FRs Did Not Follow Procedures for Coding Vacant Interviews and Reaching Recommended Contacts

If an FR determines that an HU in the sample is vacant,[19] the FR will collect information only about the HU characteristics. The FRs did not follow ACS procedures for vacant interviews. Specifically, FRs (1) coded some interviews as vacant that should have been coded as noninterviews and (2) did not attempt to complete vacant HU interviews with recommended contacts.

FRs coded some interviews as vacant that should have been coded as noninterviews

We reviewed 96 vacant interview[20] cases, which included a stratified statistical sample of 86 non-remote Alaska cases[21] and a judgmental sample of 10 remote Alaska cases. See appendix 4, table 9, for details on our sample. We found that FRs incorrectly coded 18 of the 86 (21 percent) non-remote Alaska vacant interviews.

[19] *ACS and Puerto Rico Community Survey Design and Methodology* states that HUs are coded as vacant when there are no current residents. Further, a current resident is defined as anyone who is currently living or staying at a sample address, except for those staying there for 2 consecutive months or less.

[20] FRs conduct vacant interviews to collect information about unoccupied HUs.

[21] See Appendix 1 for details regarding our statistical and judgmental selections of vacant HU interviews.

FR notes for the 18 interviews incorrectly coded as vacant indicated that:

- Seven interviews should have been coded as Type A noninterviews.[22]
- Nine interviews should have been coded as Type C noninterviews.
- Two interviews should have been coded as Type A or C noninterviews; however, the notes did not include sufficient details to support which noninterview classification was correct.

Additionally, we found that FRs potentially miscoded[23] an additional 16 of the 86 (19 percent) non-remote Alaska interviews due to incomplete or unclear interview notes. These interviews included addresses for which the bureau's documentation (1) described as under renovation and (2) did not support that FRs made a personal visit.[24] For example, interview notes for addresses under renovation did not explain whether exterior windows and doors were installed or if finished floors were in place. If the windows and doors were not installed or if finished floors were not in place, the interviews should have been coded as Type C noninterviews.[25]

Based on our review, we estimate that approximately 29,000 of the 125,000 (23.2 percent)[26] non-remote Alaska cases that FRs coded as vacant interviews in 2022 were miscoded and approximately 23,000 (18.4 percent)[27] additional non-remote Alaska cases coded as vacant interviews in 2022 may have been miscoded.

Further, we found that an FR potentially miscoded 1 of the 10 remote Alaska vacant interviews. The interview notes indicated that the address may have been a short-term rental property, which should have been coded as a Type C noninterview.

The miscoding of interviews occurred because the bureau did not provide adequate recurring training to reinforce ACS requirements. Specifically, the training did not include sufficient detail regarding how to correctly classify interviews and noninterviews. As a

[22] "Noninterview" is the status of a sample unit when no information is obtained for the occupants or HU. See Appendix 2 for the definitions and examples of various types of noninterviews.

[23] Interview notes for cases did not include sufficient information to support vacant interview outcome code.

[24] We reviewed contact history instrument data for cases with notes that did not mention a personal visit. The reports validated that FRs did not visit the addresses.

[25] U.S. Census Bureau. January 2023. *ACS FRs Manual*, 8-14.

[26] Projections were made at the 90 percent confidence level with a margin of error of ± 8.3 percentage points after weighting.

[27] Projections were made at the 90 percent confidence level with a margin of error of ± 7.7 percentage points after weighting.

result, FRs did not follow the required ACS procedures and applied procedures from other surveys.[28]

Additionally, the bureau did not require field supervisors to review vacant interview cases that had a completed status. Further, the FRs manual did not include high-level guidance that describes the purpose and desired contents of an interview note. As a result, the bureau does not have assurance that vacant cases are classified accurately. For example, by classifying Type C noninterviews as vacant interviews, the bureau includes details for HUs in its estimates that should not be included. Further, by classifying Type A noninterviews as vacant, the bureau may not capture details for people in its estimates.[29] Incorrectly classified cases impact the ACS estimates, which are used to distribute federal funds each year.

FRs did not attempt to complete vacant HU interviews with recommended contacts

An FR's objective is to find a recommended contact such as an owner, landlord, apartment manager, or real estate agent to provide information on the vacant HU.[30] Recommended contacts would be in the best position to (1) know if the address had a current resident and (2) provide complete and accurate information for the vacant HU.

FRs did not conduct vacant interviews with a recommended contact for 27 of 56[31] (48 percent) non-remote Alaska interviews in our sample. Instead, FRs obtained survey data from:

- 22 neighbors
- 3 local government employees
- 1 contractor
- 1 postal service employee

We found that FRs did not attempt to reach a recommended contact for 10 of the 27 (37 percent) interviews.

For the 10 remote Alaska cases in our sample, we found that an FR relied on a recommended contact for 1 of 10 (10 percent) and FRs did not conduct vacant interviews

[28] FRs often collect data for multiple bureau surveys, not just the ACS.

[29] The bureau does not include vacant HUs in the noninterview adjustment factor that it uses to produce survey estimates as the bureau assumes FRs properly identify all vacant units in the field.

[30] *ACS FRs Manual*, 5-3.

[31] We identified 18 miscoded interviews and 12 interviews with notes that did not specify the contact; therefore, we reviewed 56 of the 86 non-remote Alaska cases that may have been correctly coded to determine if the bureau relied on a recommended contact for the interview.

with a recommended contact for 2 of 10 (20 percent). Instead, they relied on a neighbor and a local government employee. Additionally, interview notes for 7 of the 10 (70 percent) cases did not explain who the FR interviewed. As a result, we were unable to determine if FRs relied on a recommended contact to answer the survey.

The bureau allows FRs to conduct vacant interviews with individuals other than recommended contacts when information cannot be obtained from a recommended contact.[32] However, the bureau does not have guidance that clearly defines what is considered a "reasonable attempt" to reach a recommended contact for vacant interviews. According to the Field Division ACS branch chief, the bureau did not develop guidance because it allows staff in regional offices to determine what qualifies as a reasonable attempt. However, clearly defining expectations for reaching recommended contacts would help ensure consistency across the bureau's regions and still allow for discretion at the regional office level. Completing interviews with recommended contacts allows FRs to collect more reliable and complete survey information for stakeholders to use when making key decisions.

[32] *ACS FRs Manual*, 5-3.

Recommendations

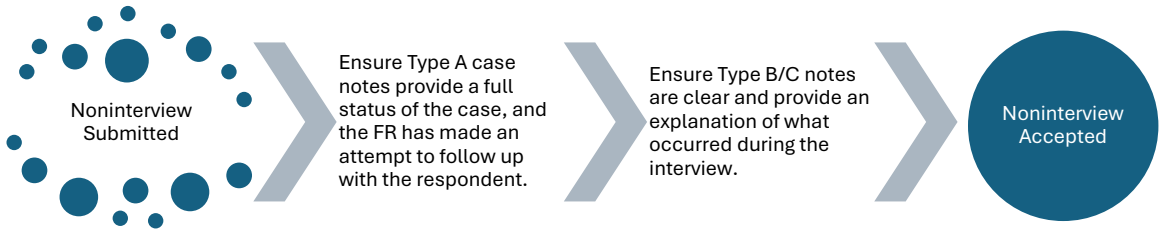
We recommend that the Director of the U.S. Census Bureau:

6. Develop and implement recurring ACS training for FRs to ensure that vacant HUs are correctly identified and coded.
7. Update policies and procedures to include controls to ensure that FRs:
    a. Make personal visits to HUs when required.
    b. Know when to contact a recommended contact.
    c. Know what information should be included in an interview note.
8. Update policies and procedures and implement controls to ensure that field supervisors:
    a. Review interview notes for vacant HU interviews.
    b. Request FRs to reclassify interviews and obtain additional information to support the vacant status for HUs, when necessary.

Supervisors Did Not Ensure Survey Procedures Were Followed for Noninterviews

Supervisors provide oversight of noninterviews, which is necessary to ensure that the bureau can collect data needed when problems are encountered during data collection. However, we found that supervisors did not ensure that FRs followed survey procedures for noninterviews and supervisors did not always review noninterview cases in the Regional Office Survey Control (ROSCO)[33] system. See figure 1 for the supervisor's role in the noninterview process.

Figure 1. Supervisor's Role in the Noninterview Process



Source: OIG derived from a review of *ROSCO System Self-Study for Field Supervisors*

[33] The bureau uses its ROSCO system for supervisory reviews of noninterviews. Using ROSCO, supervisors can monitor FRs' progress with daily reports, review and evaluate completed work, and close out assignments.

Supervisory reviews of noninterview cases did not ensure that FRs followed survey procedures

Bureau guidance requires supervisory reviews of FR noninterview notes during in-person data collection to ensure that cases are coded correctly, the FR clearly explained what occurred during the interview, and the FR made an attempt to follow up with a respondent, if needed.[34]

We conducted a review of a statistical sample of 86 non-remote Alaska HUs and a judgmental sample of 30 remote Alaska HUs. In addition, we reviewed a statistical sample of 92 non-remote Alaska GQs and a judgmental selection of 17 remote Alaska GQs. See appendix 4, tables 10 and 11, for sample details.

We found that supervisory reviews of non-remote Alaska noninterview cases did not ensure that survey procedures were followed in 13 of 86 (15 percent) HU noninterviews and 19 of 92 (21 percent) GQ noninterviews. Specifically, supervisors did not detect discrepancies between recorded outcomes and interview descriptions and FRs did not always record notes. For example:

- For 13 HUs and 16 GQs, FRs' case notes did not match how the cases were coded.
- For 3 GQs, FRs did not include case notes to support the recorded outcomes, which are required to be reviewed before a noninterview is accepted.

Based on our review of non-remote Alaska cases, we estimate that approximately 30,000 of 225,000 (13.3 percent)[35] of HU noninterview cases and 19,000 of 82,000 (23.2 percent)[36] of GQ noninterview cases had outcomes inconsistent with the status in the case notes.

In addition, we found that supervisory reviews for remote Alaska noninterviews did not ensure that procedures were followed for 5 of 30 HUs and 1 of 17 GQs. For example:

- For 3 HUs and 1 GQ, FRs' case notes did not match how the cases were coded.
- For 2 HUs, FRs did not include cases notes to support the noninterview outcomes, which are required to be reviewed before a noninterview is accepted.

Furthermore, we reviewed case notes for Type A noninterviews for 58 HUs in non-remote Alaska, 10 HUs in remote Alaska, and 23 GQs in non-remote Alaska. In total, our sample

[34] U.S. Census Bureau. October 2015. *ROSCO Self-Study for Field Supervisors,* 9-1.

[35] Projections were made at the 90 percent confidence level with a margin of error of ± 6.8 percentage points.

[36] Projections were made at the 90 percent confidence level with a margin of error of ± 8.2 percentage points.

included 91 items from the three living arrangements. See appendix 4, table 12, for sample details.

We found that supervisory reviews did not ensure FRs performed the follow-up actions required[37] before coding a case as a Type A noninterview. Specifically, FRs did not perform the required follow-up actions when issues were encountered while obtaining a survey response for non-remote Alaska in 4 of 58 (7 percent) HU and 12 of 23 (52 percent) GQ Type A noninterviews. For example:

- For 4 HUs, FRs did not document actions to resolve Type A cases before they were submitted.
- For 4 GQs, FRs did not follow up when they received blank questionnaires.[38]
- For 6 GQs, FRs did not document the original interview attempts.
- For 2 GQs, FRs did not follow up when they received refusals.

Additionally, we found that FRs did not perform the required follow-up actions when issues were encountered while obtaining a survey response in 3 of 10 (30 percent) HU remote Alaska interviews. Specifically, FRs did not document actions to resolve Type A cases before they were submitted for review in these three cases.

According to the Field Division ACS branch chief, time constraints prohibited supervisors from detecting FR miscoding of noninterviews and ensuring noninterview follow-up procedures were implemented. For example, FRs submitting interviews for closeout on the 30th or 31st of the month prevents the supervisors and FRs from completing follow-up data collection procedures. Because the bureau requires supervisors to close out interview cases at the end of each month, late submissions impact the time available to review open noninterviews and ensure that FRs follow up with nonresponding households. Additionally, the branch chief stated that supervisors need to be retrained on how to review FR implementation of noninterview procedures.

The bureau strives to reduce the number of noninterviews to obtain an accurate representation of HUs and GQs for the ACS. However, incorrectly recorded, missing, or miscoded noninterview data negatively impacts the bureau's ability to mitigate the impacts of nonresponse. Minimizing these noninterviews is important as data is collected for only a

[37] *ACS FRs Manual,* 8-2, states that for Type A cases, FRs are required to follow up when they are unable to conduct an interview with a respondent. For example, when an FR receives a refusal, the FR is required to make another attempt to interview, and regional offices send letters to encourage a response or reassign the case to another FR.

[38] U.S. Census Bureau. 2022. *ACS GQ FRs Manual*, 4-10, notes that during a GQ interview with a resident, an FR can leave a questionnaire for a resident to record their answers to the ACS. FRs provide a date to collect these questionnaires and are required to follow up with the resident if the questionnaire is blank.

sample of nonrespondent HUs, and the bureau projects that 1 resident interview represents about 40 residents in the GQ population. Therefore, it is critical that the bureau takes measures to avoid noninterviews to ensure that the data collected is a true representation of the population.

Supervisors did not always review noninterview cases in the ROSCO system

During data collection, the ROSCO system processes data collected by FRs. When an FR submits a noninterview, ROSCO flags the case so supervisors can review the case and make every effort to ensure that the FR can resolve the reason for the noninterview. Figure 2 illustrates the process.

Figure 2. FRs Submit Noninterviews into ROSCO, Which Flags Them for Supervisory Review

Source: OIG analysis of the ROSCO system

We found that supervisors did not review 28 of 86 (33 percent) HU non-remote Alaska noninterviews and 23 of 92 (25 percent) GQ non-remote Alaska noninterviews before approval. Specifically, ROSCO showed no indication that a supervisory review of the case had occurred. In addition, the bureau was unable to provide evidence that the noninterview outcomes had been reviewed by a supervisor before the noninterview was approved in ROSCO. Based on our review of non-remote Alaska cases, we estimate that approximately 83,000 of 225,000 (36.9 percent)[39] of HU noninterviews and 22,000 of 82,000 (26.8 percent)[40] of GQ noninterviews were not reviewed by the supervisor before approval in ROSCO. In addition, we found that 12 of 30[41] (40 percent) HU remote Alaska noninterviews showed no indication that a supervisory review in ROSCO had occurred.

The lack of supervisory oversight occurred because the bureau lacked procedures to monitor supervisory review of noninterview case outcomes. In addition, the bureau did not

[39] Projections were made at the 90 percent confidence level with a margin of error of ± 9.6 percentage points after weighting.

[40] Projections were made at the 90 percent confidence level with a margin of error of ± 8.4 percentage points after weighting.

[41] We were unable to review 17 remote Alaska GQs because record retention requirements had passed for those cases.

implement system controls over the supervisory approval of noninterviews in ROSCO to ensure that supervisors reviewed cases before they were closed out. According to the assistant field chief, the bureau was unaware that cases were submitted without a record of supervisory review of the noninterview case outcome. When noninterview cases are closed out without supervisory review, issues with data collected from FRs are not addressed in a timely manner, which could impact the reliability and accuracy of the ACS estimates.

Recommendations

We recommend that the Director of the U.S. Census Bureau:

9. Update policies and procedures and implement controls to monitor supervisory reviews of noninterview cases and ensure that notes include sufficient information and follow-up actions when Type A cases are submitted.
10. Reevaluate and update timelines and training for supervisory review of noninterviews to ensure that all noninterview procedures are implemented and cases are reviewed by supervisors before closeout.
11. Develop and implement procedures to track and monitor supervisory review within ROSCO to ensure that approval of noninterview procedures were followed before closing out a case for supervisory review in ROSCO.
12. Develop and implement recurring testing of system controls in ROSCO to ensure that noninterview cases are reviewed by a supervisor before being closed out.

The Bureau Did Not Meet Its FR Reinterview Goals

A reinterview is the main quality control measure to ensure the quality of an FR's work. The reinterview process verifies that the data collected from an FR is accurate. The primary purpose of a reinterview is to detect and deter falsification by identifying FRs who falsify interviews, miscode noninterviews, and incorrectly apply or do not follow current survey procedures.[42] ACS reinterviews for all case types, with the exception of Type A noninterviews, are completed by trained bureau employees.

The bureau's goal is to select 5 percent of HU interviews and 10 percent of GQ interviews at random for reinterview each year. Management has the discretion to add additional cases for certain circumstances, such as reviewing the work of any FRs they suspect of falsifying

[42] U.S. Census Bureau. January 2018 and April 2018. *Reinterviewer Self-Studies for the ACS and Puerto Rico Community Survey HU Samples* and *GQ Samples,* 12 and 7, respectively.

data or not following procedures properly. Depending on the severity, data irregularities may lead to disciplinary action against an FR, up to and including removal from service.

In areas designated as remote Alaska, there is no random sampling of reinterviews. Instead, all cases are eligible for supplemental reinterview whereby at least two reinterview cases are completed for each FR during the reinterview assignment period—one originally completed by telephone, and one originally completed by personal visit.

We found that the bureau did not meet program goals for the required reinterviews. Specifically, the bureau did not:

- Meet selection goals for reinterviews
- Meet reinterview completion goals based on FR experience level
- Include GQ resident interviews in the reinterview process
- Determine whether FRs falsified data and did not complete reinterviews in a timely manner

By not meeting reinterview goals, the bureau lacks assurance that the reinterview operation is effectively serving its purpose of detecting and deterring FR data falsification.

The bureau did not meet selection goals for reinterviews

The bureau did not meet its selection goals for reinterview cases, thus diminishing its ability to detect FR falsifications. The bureau's goal is to select 5 percent and 10 percent of HU and GQ interviews, respectively, for reinterviews.

We found that the bureau did not pre-select enough cases to meet its goals for HUs and GQs. See table 2 for details.

Table 2. Bureau Did Not Meet Reinterview Selection Goals

Noninterview Sample	CY 2022 Interviews	Cases Selected for Reinterview	Percentage of Cases Selected for Reinterview	Goal	Met Goal
HU	720,000	34,000	4.72%	5%	No
GQ	20,000	1,600	8.0%	10%	No

Source: 2022 ACS Reinterview Data, U.S. Census Bureau

By not selecting enough cases, the bureau does not have assurance that it is detecting or deterring FRs from falsifying data.

The bureau did not meet reinterview completion goals based on FR experience level

The bureau did not meet reinterview completion goals for the type of living quarters surveyed and the experience level of the FR. The bureau selects a sample of cases for reinterview. FRs are randomly selected and grouped as follows: HU inexperienced, HU experienced, GQ only, and HU and GQ. Table 3 describes the completion goals per month by experience level when an FR is selected for reinterview.

Table 3. Reinterview Completion Goals Per Month by Experience Level for Each FR Selected

Living Quarter Type	FR Employee Type	Reinterview Goal Per Month for Each FR
HU	Inexperienced	3
HU	Experienced	6
GQ	Work GQ Only	3
HU/GQ	Work HU and GQ	1

Source: 2022 ACS Reinterview Selection Process, U.S. Census Bureau

We found that the bureau did not meet reinterview goals for the type of living quarters surveyed and the FR's experience level. For the number of FRs randomly selected, we reviewed the total number of reinterviews completed to determine whether the bureau met its completion goals based on FR experience level and workload. See table 4 for details on how often the bureau met its reinterview goals.

Table 4. Reinterview Completion Goals Not Met

Living Quarter Type Sample	FR Employee Type	Number of FRs	FRs Completion Goals Met	Percent of FRs Completion Goals Met	Percent of FRs Completion Goals Not Met
HU	Inexperienced	745	135	18%	82%
HU	Experienced	3,000	30	1%	99%
GQ	All	130	40	31%	69%

Source: 2022 ACS Reinterview Data, U.S. Census Bureau

The bureau's reinterview selection and completion goals were designed based on the results of a study[43] conducted before the ACS was initiated.[44] The study examined the

[43] U.S. Census Bureau. May 10, 1993. *Falsification data by FRs from 1982 through 1992*.

[44] The bureau began conducting the ACS in 2005.

behavior of FRs that falsified data. However, data collection methods and resources available to the bureau to monitor FRs have changed since the study was conducted.

According to bureau officials, budgetary and staffing constraints are a factor in how many cases are selected for reinterview. The Decennial Statistical Studies Division stated that the selection goals for HUs and GQs represent the maximum number of cases it will select and are not necessary to achieve the bureau's goals of detecting falsification. The bureau also noted that completion was limited by respondents who were reluctant to answer the phone or would not respond to reinterview questions, and the high number of Type A noninterviews that were no longer eligible for reinterview. When reinterviews are unable to be completed, the bureau is not able to meet its objective of detecting and deterring falsification through the reinterview process. In addition, the bureau increases the risk that data collected by FRs is inaccurate or incomplete. Thus, there is less assurance that the data collected is reliable when stakeholders use this information to make key decisions.

The bureau did not include GQ resident interviews in the reinterview process

The bureau's reinterview operation did not include contacting residents at GQ facilities for reinterviews. To detect FR data falsification, the bureau established the reinterview selection and completion goals described in tables 2 and 3; however, these goals did not include GQ resident interviews.

We found that the bureau did not include 215,000 resident interviews out of 235,000 (91.5 percent) GQ interviews conducted in the reinterview sample for CY 2022. According to the Quality Assurance Branch and the Field Division management, FRs did not conduct resident-level reinterviews at GQ facilities because they assumed residents would be difficult to reach, as many residents are in transient populations. Further, the bureau views reinterviews conducted with GQ administrators as sufficient for detecting and deterring falsification, interview miscoding, and improper application of current survey procedures within GQs. However, by not conducting GQ reinterviews with residents, when feasible, the bureau is unable to verify information obtained directly from respondents. This affects the bureau's ability to detect and deter falsification which could impact the reliability of ACS estimates.

The bureau did not determine whether FRs falsified data and did not complete reinterviews in a timely manner

Of the 175 reinterviews we selected for review,[45] the bureau was unable to determine whether FR data falsification occurred for 28 (16 percent) of the cases. See table 5 for details about the inconclusive reinterviews.

Table 5. Inconclusive Reinterviews

Living Quarters Type	Cases Reviewed	Inconclusive Reinterviews	Conclusive Reinterviews	Percentage of Inconclusive Reinterviews
HU Non-Remote Alaska	73	13	60	18
GQ Non-Remote Alaska	71	7	64	10
Total Non-Remote Alaska	**144**	**20**	**124**	**14**
HU Remote Alaska	21	7	14	33
GQ Remote Alaska	10	1	9	10
Total Remote Alaska	**31**	**8**	**23**	**26**
Total	**175**	**28**	**147**	**16**

Source: 2022 U.S. Census Bureau reinterview data and notes

Based on our review of the statistical sample, we estimate:

- Approximately 3,300 of the 20,000 (16.5 percent)[46] non-remote Alaska HU reinterviews were inconclusive
- Approximately 150 of the 1,600 (9.4 percent)[47] non-remote Alaska GQ reinterviews were inconclusive

To allow for maximum respondent recall, the bureau states that reinterviews should be completed within 2 weeks of the original interview.[48] However, we found that the bureau

[45] See appendix 4, tables 13 and 14, for sample details.

[46] Projections were made at the 90 percent confidence level with a margin of error of ± 7.4 percentage points after weighting.

[47] Projections were made at the 90 percent confidence level with a margin of error of ± 5.8 percentage points after weighting.

[48] *Reinterviewer Self-Studies for the ACS and Puerto Rico Community Surveys for HU Samples* and *GQ Samples,* January 2018 and April 2018, respectively.

completed nearly half of the conclusive reinterviews more than 2 weeks after the original interview. See table 6 for details on late reinterviews.

Table 6. Late Conclusive Reinterviews

Living Quarters Type	Conclusive Interviews	Late Reinterviews	Percentage of Late Reinterviews
HU Non-Remote Alaska	60	28	47
GQ Non-Remote Alaska	64	18	28
Total Non-Remote Alaska	**124**	**46**	**37**
HU Remote Alaska	14	13	93
GQ Remote Alaska	9	9	100
Total Remote Alaska	**23**	**22**	**96**
Total	**147**	**68**	**46**

Source: 2022 U.S. Census Bureau reinterview data and notes

Based on our review of the statistical sample, we estimate:

- Approximately 7,300 of the 20,000 (36.5 percent)[49] non-remote Alaska HU reinterviews were completed more than 2 weeks after the original interview
- Approximately 410 of the 1,600 (25.6 percent)[50] non-remote Alaska GQ reinterviews were completed more than 2 weeks after the original interview

The inconclusive reinterviews occurred because the bureau could not reach the respondents to complete a reinterview. In addition, the late reinterviews for non-remote Alaska cases generally occurred because respondents were reluctant to answer the phone and respond to requests to complete a reinterview. However, while respondents may also have been reluctant to answer the phone and complete reinterviews for remote Alaska cases, the bureau did not attempt to complete reinterviews until more than 2 weeks after the original interview date for 29 of the 31 (94 percent) remote Alaska reinterviews. According to the Field Division deputy director for surveys, this occurred because reinterviewers prioritized completing reinterviews for non-remote Alaska cases due to the

[49] Projections were made at the 90 percent confidence level with a margin of error of ± 9.2 percentage points after weighting.

[50] Projections were made at the 90 percent confidence level with a margin of error of ± 8.8 percentage points after weighting.

shorter reinterview period.[51] The deputy director added that this was not a practice that the bureau encouraged.

If the bureau does not detect data falsification, it can lead to inaccurate data, and stakeholders would have less assurance that the data is accurate when making funding decisions. Additionally, when reinterviews occur more than 2 weeks after the original interview, the information collected during reinterviews may be less reliable as respondents may forget details from the original interview. Consequently, the bureau lacks assurance that its reinterview operation is (1) efficiently and effectively detecting and deterring FR data falsification and (2) ensuring that high-quality data is collected to inform its survey estimates.

Recommendations

We recommend that the Director of the U.S. Census Bureau:

13. Reevaluate and update the design of the reinterview operation to meet the bureau's goal of detecting and deterring falsification, considering (1) staffing and funding constraints, (2) FR behavior and experience, and (3) respondents' reluctance to respond to reinterviews.
14. Evaluate and determine the extent to which FR data falsification occurs during resident-level GQ interviews and revise the reinterview operation to include GQ residents, as appropriate.
15. Develop and implement controls to ensure that reinterviews are conducted for remote Alaska cases in a timely manner.

Bureau Officials Did Not Respond Timely to FR Data Tool Inquiries

After the release of the 2017 ACS data products, the bureau became aware that an FR had falsified data. This FR contacted households, asked survey questions, and manipulated survey responses to avoid asking additional, in-depth questions. The FR completed the reinterview process, but the falsified data was not detected. The falsified data impacted the ACS estimates in New Castle County and the State of Delaware. In 2018, before the release of 1-year estimates, the bureau identified the same data error and applied a data editing and imputation methodology to address the error.[52]

[51] To allow FRs adequate time to resolve transportation and logistical challenges associated with conducting interviews, they have two 6-month interview periods for remote Alaska sample addresses.

[52] U.S. Census Bureau. Updated December 2, 2019. *Data Collection Error in Delaware*.

To prevent and detect these types of issues, the bureau's ACSO developed the FR Data Tool. The FR Data Tool compares data collected by FRs to the data collected by their peers to identify anomalies. For example, if an FR collected data that indicated most of their respondents had a smartphone but no data plan, the FR would be flagged, as that would be unusual. ACSO staff would then develop an inquiry into the FR and provide it to the appropriate regional office for review and response. ACSO requests that the regional offices investigate the cause of the anomalies, take corrective actions[53] when necessary, and provide a written response to the inquiries within 2 weeks.

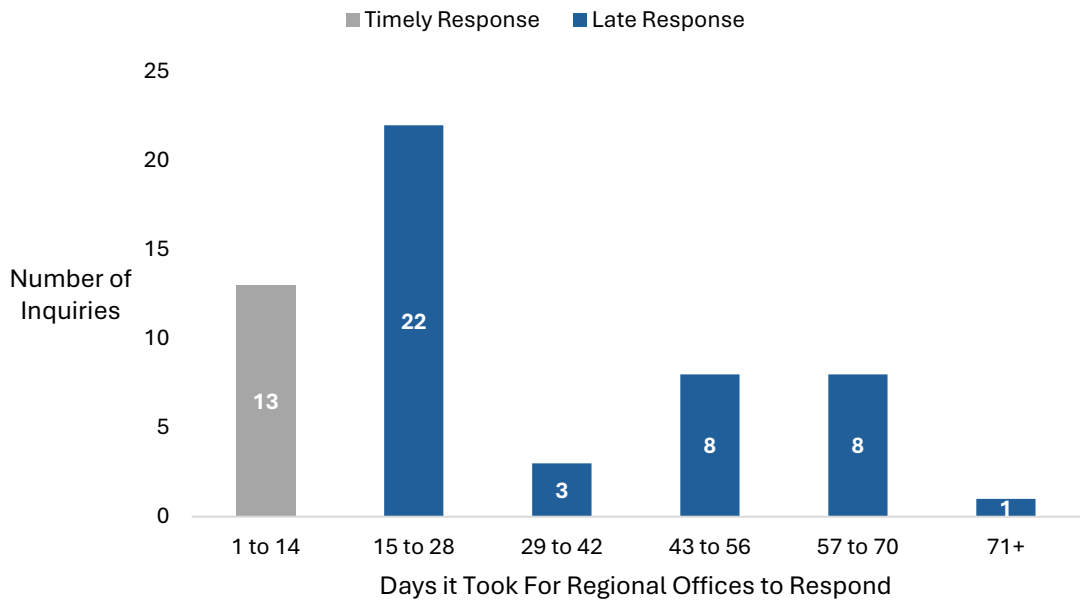
The bureau's regional offices did not respond to FR Data Tool inquiries within 2 weeks of receiving the inquiries. We selected a stratified statistical sample of 60 data tool inquiries to determine whether the regional offices responded within 2 weeks (see appendix 4, table 15, for sample details). Of the 60 inquiries selected for review, we found that:

- Regional offices did not respond to three inquiries.
- The bureau could not locate one inquiry.
- One inquiry was developed by ACSO for an FR that no longer worked on the ACS.

Of the remaining 55 inquiries, we found that regional offices responded to 42 (76 percent) of the inquiries after the requested due date. Figure 3 shows the distribution of the regional offices' responses to the selected inquiries.

[53] Corrective actions include supervisors observing FRs as they conduct interviews, additional reinterviews for the FR, or FRs being removed from their position, depending upon the severity of the issue.

Figure 3. Regional Offices' Responses to Inquiries Were Not Timely



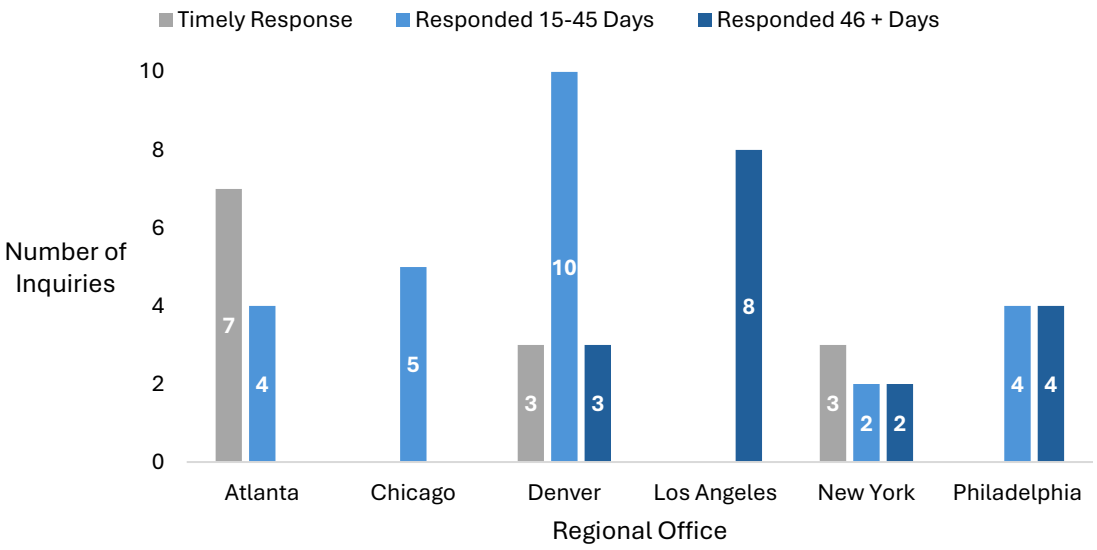
Source: 2022 U.S. Census Bureau FR Data Tool inquiries

Based on our review, we estimate that the bureau's regional offices responded to approximately 290 (69.9 percent)[54] of the 415 inquiries after the requested due date.

Additionally, figure 4 shows each regional office's response time for data tool inquiries.

[54] Projections were made at the 90 percent confidence level with a margin of error of ± 9.0 percentage points after weighting.

Figure 4. Response Time for Inquiries by Regional Office



Source: 2022 U.S. Census Bureau FR Data Tool inquiries

Regional offices did not respond to inquiries in a timely manner because the bureau does not have a policy requiring or procedures indicating when regional offices should respond to inquiries. Instead, the ACSO staff included notes on the inquiries that stated a response should be provided within 2 weeks. Further, field supervisors and regional survey managers within the regional offices relied on informal reminders to respond to FR inquiries because the FR Data Tool could not be modified to produce system-generated alerts.

As a result, the bureau lacked assurance that inquiries developed through the FR Data Tool are effectively being used to improve the data collected by FRs. This tool was specifically designed to prevent and detect errors or falsified data. Not addressing issues in a timely manner delays actions that can improve the quality of the data collected for the ACS. In addition, the bureau increases the risk that falsified data may create the same data issues for the ACS estimates as those found in New Castle County and the State of Delaware.

Recommendations

We recommend that the Director of the U.S. Census Bureau:

16. Develop and implement FR Data Tool policies and procedures that require supervisors to respond within 2 weeks of the initial inquiry.
17. Update policies and procedures to ensure that field supervisors and regional survey managers are notified of response deadlines for inquiries developed through the FR Data Tool and implement controls to ensure that they respond within 2 weeks.

Conclusion

ACS data gathered from people living in households and group quarters is used for a range of policy decisions; therefore, it is imperative that ACS data is accurate and reliable. By not maintaining documentation of test results to show whether issues were resolved and establishing a process to conduct recurring tests during the data collection phase, bureau officials or third parties are unable to validate that the ISR process is collectively working as intended. In addition, incorrectly recorded, missing, or miscoded data for HUs and GQs can negatively impact the bureau's ACS estimates.

Identifying errors early, developing process improvements for the ISR collection method, and effectively implementing adequate procedures and quality control measures for the personal visit phase during data collection will enhance the quality and reliability of the ACS estimates. Policymakers use ACS data to distribute more than $2.8 trillion in federal funding. Therefore, the bureau must ensure that its survey data collection methods are aligned with established production and quality assurance processes.

Summary of the U.S. Census Bureau's Response and OIG Comments

The bureau reviewed a draft version of this report and responded to our findings and recommendations. In its response (received December 22, 2025), the bureau concurred with our recommendations and described actions it has taken or plans to take to address them. The bureau's complete response is included in this report as appendix 5. The bureau also provided technical comments on the draft report. We considered those comments and revised the report where appropriate. In addition, below we address two notable comments from the bureau's response.

ISR Data Collection Procedures for ACS

U.S. Census Bureau Response

"The Census Bureau has a robust field data collection quality assurance structure and a comprehensive process to test internet self-response (ISR). As part of our standard operating procedures, ACS consistently checks the data throughout data collection. These checks have been in place since 2005 and have continued to grow and strengthen with the survey. Since 2022, the ACS program has taken steps to improve the monitoring and documentation of data collection. In 2023, the ACS began to develop a more comprehensive response data monitoring operation – with capabilities of monitoring and comparing all housing, population and group quarters response variables, across modes and operations throughout the year." In addition, "[w]hile the ISR testing documentation lacked detail in 2022, there are safeguards in place to ensure the ISR instrument is working as expected. Thus, the Census Bureau is confident in the ISR and its data."

OIG Comment

We appreciate the bureau's efforts to improve its ACS program for monitoring and documenting data collection. However, we could not independently verify that these processes and checks were performed throughout data collection for CY 2022 because the bureau lacked key documentation for response data monitoring to ensure that procedures were working. During the reporting phase of the audit, the bureau provided documentation of tests conducted on its ISR data system prior to data collection; however, the bureau was unable to provide sufficient documentation to substantiate whether errors were resolved prior to the start of data collection.

In addition, during the reporting phase, we received information that the bureau began to develop a more comprehensive operation for monitoring response data; however, we were

unable to verify that these controls were in place and working as intended. This audit focused on CY 2022 survey data; therefore, we were unable to verify any action taken, or its effectiveness, to substantiate the bureau's claims of improved controls over ISR data collection. Even though the bureau claimed it had established safeguards and conducted checks after data collection, we were unable to verify that controls were implemented and effective or that the data was without errors or anomalies. It is critical that the bureau take steps to strengthen the documentation of ISR data systems testing and document the operation for monitoring response data throughout data collection to address issues and errors as soon as possible. Monitoring and developing procedures for the ISR data collection process throughout the year will demonstrate that effective quality controls are in place, which will provide assurance to key stakeholders who rely on ACS data.

➤ Personal Visit Data Collection and Quality Control Procedures for the ACS

U.S. Census Bureau Response

"Regarding the personal visit data collection phase, the Census Bureau has a robust field data collection quality assurance structure in place through our reinterview program and field quality monitoring. To date, we have not observed any out-of-bounds or elevated reinterview failure rates or unusual patterns for cases coded as vacant. This reinforces our confidence in the integrity of vacancy data." Further, "[a]dditionally it is important to note that interviewer case notes are primarily intended to help field staff document critical information. While we occasionally observe imprecise wording, we do not interpret these instances as evidence that the underlying process or final case determination was incorrect."

OIG Comment

Our report notes that the bureau fell significantly short of meeting its reinterview goals for housing units, FR experience level, and GQs. The primary purpose of a reinterview is to detect and deter falsification by identifying FRs who falsify interviews, miscode noninterviews, and incorrectly apply or do not follow current survey procedures. As the bureau did not meet its reinterview completion goals for HU FRs (when reinterviews for vacant cases were not conducted), the bureau was unable to identify potential vacant interview errors through reinterview. In addition, the bureau failed to respond to FR Data Tool inquiries in a timely manner, a tool specifically designed to address issues and improve the quality of the data collected for the ACS.

Furthermore, we disagree with the bureau's position that case notes do not include evidence to suggest a case may have been miscoded. During our review of vacant and noninterview cases, we identified case notes that directly contradicted the vacant and

noninterview outcome codes of cases we selected for review. These inconsistencies support our findings that FRs did not follow procedures to properly classify living quarters, affecting the quality of data collection. According to a bureau official, FRs are informed during training that interview case notes should include details that a supervisor needs to verify the case status. Additionally, we reviewed contact history instrument reports and interviewed bureau leadership to develop the results for our review of vacant interviews. Ensuring FRs case notes support the correct final classification of a case provides the bureau assurance that the final case determination is correct, provides accurate information for supervisors and reinterviewers, and helps ensure procedural deficiencies are corrected.

We are pleased that the bureau concurs with our recommendations. We look forward to receiving the bureau's action plan, which will provide details on its corrective actions.

Appendix 1. Scope and Methodology

Our audit objective was to determine whether the bureau has implemented adequate data collection procedures to ensure ACS estimates are reliable. To address our objective, we reviewed quality control processes for internet and in-person response data collection methods. Our audit reviewed CY 2022 ACS procedures and did not include Puerto Rico.

To assess if the bureau implemented adequate data collection procedures, we:

- Reviewed the following law and bureau policies, practices, procedures, and guidance:
    - Title 13 United States Code § 221
    - *ACS and Puerto Rico Community Survey Design and Methodology*, Version 3.0, November 2022
    - *ACS GQ FRs Manual*, 2022
    - *ACS FRs Manual*, January 2023
    - *ACS GQ Regional Office Manual*, September 2023
    - *Data Collection Error in Delaware,* December 2, 2019
    - *Reinterviewer Self-Studies for the ACS and Puerto Rico Community Survey HU Samples*, January 2018
    - *Reinterviewer Self-Studies for the ACS and Puerto Rico Community Survey GQ Samples*, April 2018
    - *Requirement Specification for ACS Internet Data Collection Instrument Detail Design*, 2022
    - *SOP Housing Unit Self-Response Instrument Changes,* October 11, 2017
    - *Specification Document for ARC*, 2022
    - *Falsification data by Field Representatives from 1982 through 1992,* May 10, 1993
    - *ROSCO Self-Study for Field Supervisors*, October 2015
    - *U.S. Census Bureau Statistical Quality Standards*, April 26, 2022[55]
    - *Content Scenarios SOP,* August 2021

[55] Census Bureau updated its *Statistical Quality Standards* in April 2023; however, since the audit scope was CY 2022, this report used the previous version.

- Interviewed bureau officials responsible for oversight of data collection activities for internet and in-person responses including:
    - Decennial Information Technology Division program managers and staff
    - ACSO HU and GQ program managers and staff
    - Field Division program managers and staff
    - Decennial Statistical Studies Division program managers and staff
- Obtained and reviewed documentation that supported the data collection procedures to ensure reliable estimates, including:
    - Interview and reinterview notes for vacant interviews and noninterviews cases
    - Contact history instrument reports for vacant interviews
    - Case outcomes that were reinterviewed
    - Reinterview goals and completion reports
    - Inquiries produced by the FR Data Tool
    - Studies and reports published by the bureau to understand the design of the internet survey instrument
    - The 2022 ARC Rules worksheet
    - ISI data validation reports
    - ISI content testing spreadsheets

In addition, we assessed the internal controls that were significant to our objective. We gained an understanding of internal control processes significant within the context of the audit objective by interviewing bureau officials and reviewing documentation for evidence that the bureau carried out internal control procedures. We also carried out attribute testing (described below) to determine whether internal controls, specifically quality control processes, were carried out appropriately. We reported the internal control weaknesses in the Findings and Recommendation section of this report. Our audit found no incidents of fraud, illegal acts, or abuse.

To determine whether the bureau has implemented adequate data collection procedures to ensure ACS estimates are reliable we:

- Selected stratified statistical samples of HU and GQ cases including the 50 states and non-remote areas of Alaska that were completed in CY 2022 for vacant interviews, noninterviews, and reinterviews; see appendix 4, tables 9-14 for details.

- Each judgmental selection was based on factors such as number of interviews and the intended use of results. The results and overall conclusions from our judgmental selection are limited to the items tested and are not projected to the entire population.
- Judgmentally selected interviews completed during CY 2022 for remote Alaska, including vacant, completed, and noninterview cases.; see appendix 4, tables 9-14 for details. The Remote Alaska population makes up approximately 30,000 HU and 500 GQs addresses and encounters specific difficulties in data collection, such as a seasonal population and reaching respondents in remote areas.
- Obtained CY 2022 reinterview year-end reports for HUs and GQs for interviews selected.
- Selected a stratified sample of FR Data Tool inquiries that were completed in CY 2022; see appendix 4, table 15 for details.
- Used the results of our testing of statistical samples to project over the respective populations for each interview type. Each statistical sample produced estimates at a 90 percent confidence level and a margin of error of no greater than 10 percentage points.
- Reviewed documentation for ISI annual testing results. During the fieldwork phase of the audit, we requested documentation from the bureau on multiple occasions to show whether it completed annual testing results on the ACS ISI; however, it was not provided. During the reporting phase the bureau provided documentation to support ISI testing and its results. We conducted a limited review to validate and test the documentation provided.

We relied on computer-processed data obtained during data collection to support our findings, conclusions, and recommendations. In satisfying the audit objective, we obtained computer-processed data from the following systems and files:

- ROSCO
- Structured Query Language Developer Application
- Unified Tracking System
- Statistical Analysis System
- FR Data Tool log

We assessed the reliability of data by conducting testing to determine data consistency, completeness, and accuracy. We also performed reasonableness testing, such as checking for missing fields, duplicative records, invalid time frames, and illogical

relationships between data elements, to identify any errors. We found the data to be sufficiently reliable to support our findings and conclusions.

We conducted our audit from August 2023 through November 2025 under the authority of the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended (5 U.S.C. §§ 401-424), and Department Organization Order 10-13, as amended October 21, 2020.

We conducted this performance audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence that provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objective. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objective.

Appendix 2. HU Noninterview Definitions

Table 7. HU Noninterview Types and Reasons

Noninterview Type	HU Noninterview Definition by Type	Reasons for HU Noninterview
Type A	An FR attempts to conduct an interview for a household eligible to be interviewed, but an interview cannot be obtained.	• No one is home • Residents are temporarily absent • A language problem exists • Resident refused • Unable to locate household • Other (e.g., death in family, household quarantine)
Type B	FR unable to confirm the status of the HU due to a natural disaster	• Sample units are likely to be uninhabitable • Residents are likely to have evacuated to unknown locations, due to a natural disaster, during the interview period
Type C	A household selected for interview is not eligible to be interviewed	• Under construction • Demolished • House or trailer moved or empty mobile home site • Permanent business or storge • Condemned • Merged with another unit

Source: OIG analysis of *ACS FRs Manual*

Appendix 3. GQ Noninterview Definitions

Table 8. GQ Noninterview Types and Reasons

Noninterview Type	GQ Definition by Type	Reasons for GQ Noninterview Facility Level	Reasons for GQ Noninterview at Resident Level
Type A	Facility: Noninterview when an interview cannot be obtained from an administrator Resident level: Noninterview when an interview cannot be obtained from a resident	• The GQ refuses to complete the interview due to legal restrictions • Unable to locate the GQ • GQ refuses • Other (e.g., unable to obtain interview from administrator)	• A language barrier exists • Unable to locate the resident • Insufficient partial interview • Resident temporarily absent • Resident refused • Other (e.g., death of family, resident unable to respond)
Type B	Facility: Noninterview when an FR is unable to access the GQ due to a natural disaster Resident: Noninterview when an FR is unable to access the resident's location for an interview due to a natural disaster	• The FR is unable to access and verify the correct status of the GQ during the entire interview period due to a severe natural disaster	• The resident's location remains inaccessible for the entire sample period • The FR is unable to contact or locate the resident by phone

Noninterview Type	GQ Definition by Type	Reasons for GQ Noninterview Facility Level	Reasons for GQ Noninterview at Resident Level
Type C	Facility: GQ is not eligible to be interviewed Resident: resident is not eligible to be interviewed	• GQ no longer exists • GQ converted to HU • Domestic violence shelter • No residents in GQ during survey period • GQ out of scope or other reason	• Residence is vacant • Residence is out of scope

Source: OIG analysis of *ACS GQ FRs Manual* and *ACS GQ Regional Office Manual*

Appendix 4. Audit Sample

Vacant Sample

Table 9. Vacant Interviews

Vacant Sample	Universe Non-Remote Alaska	Universe Remote Alaska	Statistical Sample Non-Remote Alaska	Judgmental Sample Remote Alaska	Total Sample
Vacant	125,000	1,100	86	10	96

Source: OIG results of vacant sample

Noninterview Sample

Table 10. HU Noninterviews

Noninterview Sample	Universe Non-Remote Alaska	Universe Remote Alaska	Statistical Sample Non-Remote Alaska	Judgmental Sample Remote Alaska	Total Sample
Type A	176,000	700	58	10	68
Type B	790	725	5	10	15
Type C	48,000	365	23	10	33
Total	**224,790**	**1,790**	**86**	**30**	**116**

Source: OIG results of HU sample

Table 11. GQ Noninterviews

Noninterview Sample	Universe Non-Remote Alaska	Universe Remote Alaska	Statistical Sample Non-Remote Alaska	Judgmental Sample Remote Alaska	Total Sample
Type A	26,000	0	23	0	23
Type B	2,500	0	10	0	10
Type C	54,000	205	59	17	76
Total	**82,500**	**205**	**92**	**17**	**109**

Source: OIG results of GQ sample

Table 12. Type A Noninterviews

Noninterview Sample	Universe Non-Remote Alaska	Universe Remote Alaska	Sample Non-Remote Alaska	Sample Remote Alaska	Total Sample
HU	176,000	700	58	10	68
GQ	26,000	0	23	0	23
Total	**202,000**	**700**	**81**	**10**	**91**

Source: OIG results of Type A sample

Table 13. HU Reinterview Sample

Reinterview HU Sample	Universe Non-Remote Alaska	Universe Remote Alaska	Sample Non-Remote Alaska	Sample Remote Alaska	Total Sample
Noninterviews	2,600	40	14	6	20
Vacant	6,700	90	22	5	27
Completed (Not vacant)	11,000	140	37	10	47
Total	**20,300**	**270**	**73**	**21**	**94**

Source: OIG results of HU reinterview sample

Table 14. GQ Reinterview Sample

Reinterview GQ Sample	Universe Non-Remote Alaska	Universe Remote Alaska	Sample Non-Remote Alaska	Sample Remote Alaska	Total Sample
Noninterview	360	N < 15	21	7	28
Completed (Not vacant)	1,200	N < 15	50	3	53
Total	**1,560**	**N<15**	**71**	**10**	**81**

Source: OIG results of GQ reinterview sample

FR Data Tool Sample

Table 15. FR Inquiries Sample

FR Data Tool Sample	Universe	Inquiry Sample
1 Inquiry	285	40
2 Inquires	110	15
3 Inquires	20	5
Total	**415**	**60**

Source: OIG results of FR Data Tool inquiry sample

Appendix 5. The U.S. Census Bureau's Response

The U.S. Census Bureau's response to our draft report begins on the next page.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
U.S. Census Bureau
Office of the Director
Washington, DC 20233-0001

December 22, 2025

MEMORANDUM FOR: Analee Striner-Brown
Acting Assistant Inspector General for Audit and Evaluation
Office of Inspector General

From: George M. Cook
Performing the Non-Exclusive Functions and Duties of the
Under Secretary for Economic Affairs and Director of the
Census

Ron S. Jarmin FOR
Deputy Director
And Chief Operating Officer

Subject: U.S. Census Bureau's response to the Office of the Inspector General's Report: ***"Audit of Data Collection and Quality Control Procedures for the Census Bureau's American Community Survey."***

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the Office of Inspector General's draft report titled, ***"Audit of Data Collection and Quality Control Procedures for the Census Bureau's American Community Survey."*** dated November 19, 2025. The U.S. Census Bureau respectfully submits the attached comments.

Attachment

Formal Response to OIG Draft Report: "Audit of Data Collection and Quality Control Procedures for the Census Bureau's American Community Survey."

The U.S. Census Bureau appreciates the opportunity to respond to the draft report *"Audit of Data Collection and Quality Control Procedures for the Census Bureau's American Community Survey."* We appreciate the work of the Department of Commerce Office of Inspector General (OIG) in providing feedback on the American Community Survey (ACS). The report details two findings and a number of recommendations that the Census Bureau will consider and address moving forward.

As the Census Bureau's flagship survey, the ACS plays a critical role in ensuring that the Census Bureau is the leading provider of quality data about the nation's people and economy. The ACS is the nation's premier source of social, economic, housing, and demographic information on small areas and small populations. The ACS is the largest annual survey in the nation and serves as the gold standard for collecting and producing high-quality, detailed statistics for all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico, annually.

The OIG assessed the ACS data collection methods used in calendar year 2022. As the OIG report indicates, the ACS program needs to strengthen the documentation of its annual data collection evaluations and monitoring processes. The Census Bureau acknowledges the value of strengthened documentation and monitoring processes and has a high level of confidence in the quality and reliability of the ACS estimates produced every year. The ACS program has a long history of innovation, continuous improvement, and rigorous testing to ensure the production of high-quality data.

The Census Bureau has a robust field data collection quality assurance structure and a comprehensive process to test internet self-response (ISR). As part of our standard operating procedures, ACS consistently checks the data throughout data collection. These checks have been in place since 2005 and have continued to grow and strengthen with the survey. Since 2022, the ACS program has taken steps to improve the monitoring and documentation of data collection. In 2023, the ACS began to develop a more comprehensive response data monitoring operation – with capabilities of monitoring and comparing all housing, population and group quarters response variables, across modes and operations throughout the year.

In addition to data collection monitoring, ACS data and tables are thoroughly reviewed prior to public release. Each year, more than 40 subject matter experts across the Census Bureau review the ACS estimates and tables, by following a multistep review process before estimates are released to the public. This final data review and acceptance process helps to ensure there are no obvious errors or other data anomalies.

Based on expert knowledge and experience operating at the scale and rigor of the ACS for more than two decades, we do not believe the findings in this OIG report would substantively alter the quality of ACS estimates. As an agency, we are committed to continuous improvement in all aspects of the ACS design, including documentation and monitoring. The sources of error are well understood, and our efforts focus on achieving quality over all features of the design to the greatest effect. Not doing so would create unforeseen operational burdens that could adversely diminish cost efficiency with little or no impact on data quality. We maintain that ACS estimates

are robust, accurate, and reliable. The Census Bureau looks forward to the final report and the opportunity to document and execute a final action plan.

OIG's Findings:

The bureau did not effectively implement its data collection and quality control procedures to ensure ACS estimates were reliable.

Specifically:

- The bureau did not sufficiently monitor ISR data collection procedures.
- The bureau did not effectively implement personal visit data collection and quality control procedures.

The insufficient monitoring of ISR data collection occurred because (1) the bureau did not require that test documentation be maintained for issues identified and resolution of errors identified and (2) did not develop a plan to monitor ISR data during the data collection phase. Additionally, during the personal visit data collection phase, the bureau did not provide sufficient training, develop adequate guidance for conducting vacant interviews, or adequately supervise its FR's. Further, the quality control activities for personal visit data collection had weaknesses due to resource constraints and a lack of policies and procedures.

As a result, the bureau lacks assurance that the data collected through ISR and during personal interviews is accurate and complete. It is imperative that ACS data is accurate and reliable for state and local policymakers and planners. Collecting inaccurate data from respondents can negatively affect the quality and reliability of the bureau's ACS estimates, which are used to distribute more than $2.8 trillion in federal funding.

Census Bureau's Response to OIG's Findings:

As stated above, the ACS consistently checks the data throughout data collection. These checks have been in place since 2005 and have continued to grow and strengthen with the survey. Since 2022, the ACS program has taken steps to improve the monitoring and documentation of data collection. In 2023, the ACS program began to develop a more comprehensive response data monitoring operation – with capabilities of monitoring and comparing all housing, population and group quarters response variables, across modes and operations throughout the year.

The Census Bureau has a robust process in place to test the ISR. While the ISR testing documentation lacked detail in 2022, there are safeguards in place to ensure the ISR instrument is working as expected. Thus, the Census Bureau is confident in the ISR and its data.

Regarding the personal visit data collection phase, the Census Bureau has a robust field data collection quality assurance structure in place through our reinterview program and field quality monitoring. To date, we have not observed any out-of-bounds or elevated reinterview failure rates or unusual patterns for cases coded as vacant. This reinforces our confidence in the integrity of vacancy data.

Additionally, it is important to note that interviewer case notes are primarily intended to help field staff document critical information. While we occasionally observe imprecise wording, we do not interpret these instances as evidence that the underlying process or final case determination was incorrect. Rather, they reflect the informal nature of field notes and not a procedural deficiency.

We remain committed to maintaining rigorous quality standards and are confident in the effectiveness of our current controls and the reliability of the ACS data.

OIG's Recommendations and Census Bureau Responses:

Recommendation 1: We recommend that the Director of the U.S. Census Bureau:

Establish and implement oversight to ensure that ISI issues are resolved during testing and that documentation of testing is maintained.

Census Bureau Response: The Census Bureau concurs with this recommendation. We will add a branch-level walkthrough of data validation results for each instrument, in order to strengthen the accountability and oversight of test documentation.

Recommendation 2: We recommend that the Director of the U.S. Census Bureau:

Develop and implement procedures for maintaining documentation of testing, the issues identified, and the resolution of errors identified.

Census Bureau Response: The Census Bureau concurs with this recommendation. We will strengthen our standard operating procedures to ensure more detail is provided regarding the identification and resolution of issues identified during testing.

Recommendation 3: We recommend that the Director of the U.S. Census Bureau:

Develop and implement a process to monitor and evaluate the quality of the data during the data collection phase.

Census Bureau Response: The Census Bureau concurs with this recommendation. The ACS program has maintained a system of data quality checks throughout the data collection process since the beginning of the ACS. Since 2022, ACS has strengthened its data collection and response data monitoring operations and will continue to make changes and improvements as needed.

Recommendation 4: We recommend that the Director of the U.S. Census Bureau:

Establish and implement oversight to ensure that issues identified during the data collection phase are resolved and documentation is maintained.

Census Bureau Response: The Census Bureau concurs with this recommendation. We will strengthen documentation regarding data collection monitoring.

Recommendation 5: We recommend that the Director of the U.S. Census Bureau:

Develop and implement a process to conduct recurring tests of ARC responses to ensure that the bureau's systems are processing data as intended.

Census Bureau Response: The Census Bureau concurs with this recommendation. We are in the process of investigating and modernizing our approaches to the ARC process.

Recommendation 6: We recommend that the Director of the U.S. Census Bureau:

Develop and implement recurring ACS training for FRs to ensure that vacant HUs are correctly identified and coded.

Census Bureau Response: The Census Bureau concurs with this recommendation. We will develop materials to include in upcoming Refresher Trainings distributed to the field staff.

Recommendation 7: We recommend that the Director of the U.S. Census Bureau:

Update policies and procedures to include controls to ensure that FRs:

a. Make personal visits to HUs when required.

b. Know when to contact a recommended contact.

c. Know what information should be included in an interview note.

Census Bureau Response: The Census Bureau concurs with this recommendation. We will review current training materials and enhance the guidance for entering complete notes and when to reach out to additional contacts for verifying unit status.

Recommendation 8: We recommend that the Director of the U.S. Census Bureau:

Update policies and procedures and implement controls to ensure that field supervisors:

a. Review interview notes for vacant HU interviews.

b. Request FRs to reclassify interviews and obtain additional information to

support the vacant status for HUs, when necessary.

Census Bureau Response: The Census Bureau concurs with this recommendation. We will research possible changes to policy and procedures needed to validate the vacant case status.

Recommendation 9: We recommend that the Director of the U.S. Census Bureau:

Update policies and procedures and implement controls to monitor supervisory reviews of noninterview cases and ensure that notes include sufficient information and follow-up actions when Type A cases are submitted.

Census Bureau Response: The Census Bureau concurs with this recommendation. We will communicate the need for field staff to use the available resources to follow-up on cases and ensure that all the necessary details are collected. Supervisors will be reminded that all Type A's should be reviewed with an assessment on whether follow-up is warranted.

Recommendation 10: We recommend that the Director of the U.S. Census Bureau:

Reevaluate and update timelines and training for supervisory review of noninterviews to ensure that all noninterview procedures are implemented and cases are reviewed by supervisors before closeout.

Census Bureau Response: The Census Bureau concurs with this recommendation. We note that the ROSCO system requires a supervisor to take an action on all cases in supervisory review before the interviewing period can be closed out. We will prepare and conduct enhanced training on supervisory review.

Recommendation 11: We recommend that the Director of the U.S. Census Bureau:

Develop and implement procedures to track and monitor supervisory review within ROSCO to ensure that approval of noninterview procedures were followed before closing out a case for supervisory review in ROSCO.

Census Bureau Response: The Census Bureau concurs with this recommendation. We note that the ROSCO system requires a supervisor to take an action on all cases in supervisory review before the interviewing period can be closed out. We will investigate methods to ensure noninterview procedures are followed.

Recommendation 12: We recommend that the Director of the U.S. Census Bureau:

Develop and implement recurring testing of system controls in ROSCO to ensure that noninterview cases are reviewed by a supervisor before being closed out.

Census Bureau Response: The Census Bureau concurs with this recommendation. We will review the ROSCO system requirements to verify the system is working as designed whereby a survey cannot close out the interview period without supervisors reviewing all Type A, B, and C non-interviews.

Recommendation 13: We recommend that the Director of the U.S. Census Bureau:

Reevaluate and update the design of the reinterview operation to meet the bureau's goal of detecting and deterring falsification, considering (1) staffing and funding constraints, (2) FR behavior and experience, and (3) respondents' reluctance to respond to reinterviews.

Census Bureau Response: The Census Bureau concurs with this recommendation. We will reevaluate the reinterview operation design and update as necessary to meet our objectives. The Census Bureau would like to note that Reinterview is just one practice. There are other methods the Census Bureau will explore.

Recommendation 14: We recommend that the Director of the U.S. Census Bureau:

Evaluate and determine the extent to which FR data falsification occurs during resident-level GQ interviews and revise the reinterview operation to include GQ residents, as appropriate.

Census Bureau Response: The Census Bureau concurs with this recommendation and will investigate ways to include resident-level interviews in the reinterview process.

Recommendation 15: We recommend that the Director of the U.S. Census Bureau:

Develop and implement controls to ensure that reinterviews are conducted for remote Alaska cases in a timely manner.

Census Bureau Response: The Census Bureau concurs with this recommendation. We will investigate improved assignment efficiency and increased monitoring of progress for more timely completion of remote Alaska reinterviews.

Recommendation 16: We recommend that the Director of the U.S. Census Bureau:

Develop and implement FR Data Tool policies and procedures that require supervisors to respond within 2 weeks of the initial inquiry.

Census Bureau Response: The Census Bureau concurs with this recommendation. We will further develop and implement policies to require responses within 2 weeks of the initial inquiry.

Recommendation 17: We recommend that the Director of the U.S. Census Bureau:

Update policies and procedures to ensure field supervisors and regional survey managers are notified of response deadlines for inquiries developed through the FR Data Tool and implement controls to ensure that they respond within 2 weeks.

Census Bureau Response: The Census Bureau concurs with this recommendation. We will investigate ways to ensure the timely completion of inquiries.

REPORT

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