

The U.S. Census Bureau is at a critical juncture. Continued investment in research and development will produce an accurate and cost-effective 2020 Census.

## What is a Census?

**Q: What goes into conducting a census?**

**A:** As mandated by the U.S. Constitution, America gets just one chance each decade to count its population. The next census in 2020 will require counting an increasingly diverse and growing population of around 330 million people in more than 140 million housing units. To get an accurate count, the Census Bureau must build an accurate address list of every housing unit, maximize self-response to the census, and follow up with those who do not respond. It is the largest mobilization and operation conducted in the United States and requires years of research, planning, testing and development of methods and infrastructure to ensure an accurate and complete count.

**Q: What is the Census Bureau doing differently?**

**A:** The Census Bureau is researching and developing innovative and efficient methods to increase the response rates, decrease the number of door-to-door interviews, raise workforce productivity and streamline operations without sacrificing the accuracy of the census. These changes have the potential to save taxpayer money (compared to the cost of repeating 2010 methods in 2020), maintain accuracy and reduce the burden on respondents.

## 2010 Census in Review

506 Census Offices

550,000 Staff On The Ground

## More Expensive 2020 Census

More Than 500 Census Offices

More Than 750,000 Staff On The Ground

Increased Follow-up Workload

## Cost-Effective 2020 Census

As Few As 150 Census Offices

200,000 Staff On The Ground

Reduced Follow-up Workload

## Elements of a Cost-Effective Census

1

Use the Internet to increase self response.

2

Use information people have already given the government to answer Census questions and reduce follow-up workload.

3

Automate operations to increase productivity and reduce staff and offices.

4

Update existing maps and addresses to reflect changes rather than walking every block in every neighborhood in America.

Less Staff

Less Offices

+ Less Burden

Up to \$5 Billion in Savings

## Why Now?

America gets only one chance each decade to count its population accurately. The Census Bureau must start making major decisions next year about the methods it will use to get the job done in 2020. Without funding to research and develop systems and operations in FY15, the risks and costs will be much higher. Investing now will save billions of dollars later.

## Benefits of Research



Fewer offices needed.



Less staff verifying address changes.



Less staff knocking on doors.



A cost-effective Census with up to \$5 billion in savings and high-quality data.

## 2020 Census Lifecycle

### RESEARCH AND TESTING PHASE

2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Key Census activities start in 2015 and continue through 2020	Estimate on-the-ground workloads and define operations and systems needed for the Census	Develop and award major contracts for the systems that will support the Census	Put management infrastructure and offices in place throughout the country	Conduct end-to-end systems test	Address list development begins	April 1: Census Day, On-the-ground interviews begin	December 31: Deliver apportionment counts April 1: Release Redistricting Summary Files [P.L.94-171]

# Four Elements of a Cost Effective Census

1

## Increasing Self-Response with the Internet



### What are we talking about?

- Giving people more options to respond to the Census, so we do not have to knock on their doors



### What are we researching and developing?

- Testing ideas to measure how much we can increase self-response. Finalizing estimates to know how large to build response collection systems
- Researching new techniques such as email, text, social media, and leveraging the Internet to give the respondent options
- Testing language support



### What are the intended outcomes?

- Encourage self-response via Internet (Internet is cheaper than paper)
- Fewer offices to manage staff
- Fewer staff knocking on doors
- More response options
- More attention on hard-to-count populations

## Using Information People Have Already Given the Government to Answer the Census Questions



### What are we talking about?

- Using government data instead of conducting in-person interviews, so we can reduce the number of staff knocking on doors



### What are we researching and developing?

- Using existing government data (HUD, VA, HHS, SSA, IRS) to reduce the number of in-person follow-up interviews
- Learning how to apply the data in a Census environment
- Assessing the quality of the resulting data



### What are the intended outcomes?

- Supplement 2020 Census self-responses with other existing governmental data
- More convenient, less burdensome
- Conduct fewer interviews—making fewer phone calls and knocking on fewer doors
- More resources to focus on areas with hard-to-count populations

2

Less Staff  
Less Offices  
+ Less Burden  

---

More Savings

3

## Innovation and Automation in Workforce Management



### What are we talking about?

- Using technology, data, and GPS to collect interviews efficiently



### What are we researching and developing?

- Streamlining data collection using smart phones and tablets to lower costs
- Managing through technology not brick-and-mortar offices
- Automating logistics to increase workforce efficiency



### What are the intended outcomes?

- Fewer census offices
- Less staff
- Increased productivity
- Leveraging off-the-shelf technology
- More staff redirected to hard-to-count populations

4

## Updating Existing Maps and Address Lists



### What are we talking about?

- An accurate address list is the cornerstone of a high quality Census. In the past, we have walked every street in every block to get every housing unit. In 2020, we want to visit and check only areas of change



### What are we researching and developing?

- Identifying the neighborhoods with significant change, usually about 20% of all addresses change between decades
- Using alternative sources of information, including tribal, state and local governments



### What are the intended outcomes?

- Ensure we have an accurate address list
- Fewer staff walking through America's neighborhoods to check addresses
- Stronger partnerships with tribal, state and local governments