



American Community Survey: Content Review

Briefing for the National Advisory Committee

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Background

- In December 2010, the Census Bureau began a comprehensive assessment of the ACS program – including an initiative to examine and confirm the value of each question on the ACS.
- In June 2012, OMB initiated a process to confirm and update information the statutory and regulatory authority for the questions on the ACS with select federal agencies.
- In August 2012, the Interagency Council of Statistical Policy (ICSP) Subcommittee for the ACS was formed with a mission, in part, to ensure that the ACS would “provide the most useful information with the least amount of burden.”
- To support the ICSP Subcommittee, the ACS Content Review is the next logical step in reviewing content beyond what was accomplished with the OMB effort.

Old Approach

Take holistic view across all topics/questions...

- Request agencies identify points-of-contact (POCs) – Dec 2013
- Gather input from all POC's – Jan-May 2014
- Analyze input on all topics and make decisions on content – Summer-Fall 2014
- Formally announce decisions – Oct-Dec 2014
- Implement decisions – CY2015 to affect CY2016 ACS data collection

Content Review – Current Status

- We are behind schedule
- Requires us to re-examine approach
- Considerations
 - What topics/questions are most “troublesome”?
 - What are the environmental factors affecting our ability to carry out this review?
 - How do we show responsiveness?

New Approach

Focus attention on troublesome topics:

- Plumbing Facilities
- Journey to Work
- Income
- Disability
- Request agencies identify POC's – Mar 2014
- Prototype information gathering process with a single Federal agency – Mar-Apr 2014
- Hold kickoff meeting with all Federal agency POC's – Apr-May 2014
- Not lose sight of comprehensive top-to-bottom assessment

Next Steps

- Communication Activities
 - Letters to Federal Agencies requesting Points of Contact (POCs)
 - Discussions with OMB Committee on the ACS
 - Online feedback mechanisms for Data Users and Respondents/General Public
- Information Gathering with Federal Agencies
- Analysis Phase – Findings
- Recommendations
- Vetting of Recommendations
- Decision
- Formal Announcement
- Implementation – Research (e.g., administrative records) and Changes (e.g., modifying the Acreage question)

Questions for Discussion

You told us last time that you want to be engaged in the process, so in response, we are chartering an ACS Content Review Working Group. In preparation for the first meeting, we want members to consider the following questions...

1. How important are these topics (Plumbing Facilities, Journey to Work, Income, Disability) to the populations you represent?
2. Are there additional topics your communities find intrusive, burdensome, or of an overly sensitive nature?
3. Would you be willing to publicly endorse specific ACS topic(s) or supply case examples of how the information is used in your communities?