**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**
**Economics and Statistics Administration**
**U.S. Census Bureau**
Washington, DC 20233-0001
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

OCT 17 2016

MEMORANDUM FOR: Ditas Katague
Chair
National Advisory Committee on Racial, Ethnic and Other Populations

From: John H. Thompson
Director
U.S. Census Bureau

Subject: U.S. Census Bureau Responses to National Advisory Committee on Racial, Ethnic and Other Populations Recommendations

The U.S. Census Bureau thanks the National Advisory Committee on Racial, Ethnic and Other Populations for its recommendations. We are responding to the committee recommendations submitted as a result of the May 26-27, 2016 meeting.

Your expert advice is critical to identifying new strategies for improved census operations, survey and data collection methods, including determining cost efficient ways to increase census participation.

Attachments:

Census Responses to the NAC Recommendations from Spring 2016

Meeting Memorandum of Agreement between Census and Bureau of Indian Affairs

Census Bureau and Bureau of Indian Affairs Article on Signing of Memorandum of Understanding

Charter for the American Indian and Alaska Native Data Improvement Work Group

Final Working Group Plan for American Indian and Alaska Native Data Improvement Work Group

**FINAL Official Recommendations from the National Advisory Committee on Racial, Ethnic and Other Populations Spring 2016 Meeting**

**Meeting Dates: May 26-27, 2016**
**Submitted by: Ditas Katague, NAC Chair**
**Date Submitted: June 21, 2016**

Dear Director Thompson,

By a consensus vote, the NAC submits the following official recommendations:

**National Content Test Study Plan**

1. Recommend testing the tribal enrollment questions in combination with the two AIAN race question write in options: "print enrolled or principal tribe, for example" and "print, for example."

    1. *Background and comment from Discussant: I offer this suggestion to encourage a potential middle-ground approach to the enrollment question debate: a broad capture of AIANs and tribes in the race question coupled with a more precise tribal capture in the enrollment question. The precision of the latter would be evaluated in the 2017 NCT.*

    **Census Bureau Response:**

    We are testing a tribal enrollment question as part of the 2017 Census Test. This question is a separate and distinct question from the race question, which the 2015 National Content Test (NCT) is testing. The tribal enrollment question measures the ways individuals are enrolled in tribes, villages, corporations, etc. In developing this question, we are having consultations with tribal leaders and conducting focus groups and cognitive interviews with respondents who identify as American Indian or Alaska Native (AIAN).

    While research planned for the 2017 Census Test aims to explore a **separate** topic/question on tribal enrollment, the findings from the 2015 National Content Test (NCT) race and ethnic research will provide guidance on the design of the race/ethnicity question(s) for the 2020 Census. This decision from the 2015 NCT includes whether to employ the instructions, "print enrolled or principal tribe, for example..." or the instructions, "print, for example..." in conjunction with the "American Indian or Alaska Native" response category in the race question. This decision on the design of the 2020 Census race/ethnicity question(s) has been planned to rely on the 2015 NCT research results, because these insights are needed to inform the 2020 Census topics, which must be submitted to Congress before April 1, 2017 and the final wording must be submitted to Congress by April 1, 2018.

2. Recommend Census Bureau provide greater clarity on measures of accuracy and reliability.

    1. *These terms used alongside "consistency" and measures like consistency scores, gross difference and net difference rates*

    2. *More explanation needed, perhaps following 2012 AQE Report*

    3. *Table shells, now mostly of consistency scores, should follow text*

    **Census Bureau Response:**

    We will review and address the use of "accuracy," "reliability," and "consistency" in the NCT Analysis Report. We will also look back to the AQE Report for guidance as we employ the concepts in the NCT Analysis Report. With respect to the placement of the tables shells in the NCT Study Plan, we have placed each table shell between the corresponding research question (text) and the subsequent decision criteria (text), so that the reader can follow the topic from premise, to results, to conclusions as each research question is discussed.

3. Recommend Census Bureau test accuracy of detailed ethnic reporting, using reinterviews.

    - *Focus is on rate of detailed reporting*

    - *And consistently include smaller, write-in ethnic groups in analysis*

    **Census Bureau Response:**

    Part of our work, once we have 2015 National Content Test (NCT) results, is to examine detailed group data as much as is possible. Our focus is on the largest groups in each of the categories (i.e., the six examples and/or checkbox groups), but we will determine whether additional detailed groups can be examined. We have tables in the analysis plan that illustrate some of our planned explorations, and the NCT Analysis Report will explain what we analyze as well as any limitations.

    We do plan to examine as many detailed groups as possible from the perspective of self-response, for example, to understand how some detailed groups self-identify their race/ethnicity. Once we analyze the NCT data, we will be able to determine what level of detail we are able to show in the NCT Analysis Report.

4. Recommend Census Bureau analyze interaction effects of "race" terminology with Hispanic and MENA checkboxes, by comparing joint outcomes by terminology variant and inclusion or exclusion of Hispanic and MENA checkboxes on:

    - *(i) rates of reporting as Hispanic or MENA;*

    - *(ii) item non-response by Hispanic or MENA respondents.*

**Census Bureau Response:**

Our NCT Study Plan Team is considering how to include this as part of our evaluation measures. As we examine the results, we will be prepared to advise how the various successful designs performed across the research dimensions. We are also planning to evaluate interaction effects using different models; this is introduced in the Study Plan, but will be detailed in the analysis report.

5. Recommend Census Bureau clarify item non-response measure for MENA dimension (See Res. Q. 8, p. 68), by specifying that non-response rates for both

- all respondents, and

- MENA respondents only will be calculated. Recommend Census Bureau clarify item non-response measure for MENA dimension. *(See Res. Q. 8, p. 68)*

**Census Bureau Response:**

The Census Bureau acknowledges the recommendation from the NAC to clarify the non-response measure for the Middle Eastern and North African category in the National Content Test Study Plan, Question 8. We plan to clarify the item non-response measure for Question 8 of the 2015 National Content Test Study Plan on Race and Ethnicity in the analysis report.

6. Recommend Census Bureau conduct inclusive analyses regardless of current "official" MENA designation, for the following groups:

    1. Recognized MENA respondents: Individuals who identified in reinterview as MENA and reported one or more Bureau-recognized MENA origin(s) or ethnicity/ies (e.g. Iraqi, Kurdish).

    2. Unrecognized (or "candidate") MENA respondents: Individuals who identified in reinterview as MENA and reported one or more origin or ethnicity, none of which is classified by the Bureau as MENA.

    3. Unspecified MENA respondents: Individuals who identified in reinterview as MENA but did not report any origin or ethnicity.

    4. Potential MENA respondents: Individuals who do not identify in reinterview as MENA, but who report ethnicities that the Bureau considers to be of Middle Eastern or North African origin (e.g. an Iranian who reports as "White")

**Census Bureau Response:**

The Census Bureau has planned analyses for examining detailed reporting of the Middle Eastern and North African population. We plan to use the 2015 National Content Test data

to analyze all of the detailed groups that are currently included in the Census Bureau's working classification of Middle Eastern and North African, such as Iraqi and Kurdish (i.e., groups referred to by NAC recommendation as "recognized MENA respondents"); and groups that could potentially be included in a Middle Eastern and North African classification, such as Afghan and Sudanese (i.e., groups referred to by NAC recommendation as "candidate MENA respondents").

We also plan to examine how "potential MENA respondents" are reporting (i.e., described by NAC recommendation as individuals who do not identify in reinterview as MENA, but who report ethnicities that the Bureau considers to be of Middle Eastern or North African origin - e.g., an Iranian who reports as "White"). We appreciate these NAC recommendations, as well as the NAC recommendation to examine "unspecified MENA respondents" and we will see whether the data enables us to examine patterns for individuals who identified in the NCT reinterview as MENA but did not report any origin or ethnicity. All of these analyses provide us with the important opportunity to evaluate and understand how nationalities and ethnicities are utilizing the opportunity to report their Middle Eastern and North African heritages.

7. Recommend Census Bureau calculate share of respondents who identify as MENA (via checkbox or write-in) for each "official" or "candidate" MENA detailed group. The tendency of specific ethnic or national groups to identify as MENA could provide a neutral and reasonable basis for developing the Bureau's MENA classification framework.

**Census Bureau Response:**

This recommendation is in line with the Census Bureau's mid-decade research on race and ethnicity. This is part of our planned analysis to examine the utility of a Middle Eastern or North African category. We plan to use the 2015 National Content Test data to look at all of the detailed groups that could potentially be included in a MENA classification. This will allow us to evaluate and understand how nationalities and ethnicities are utilizing the opportunity to report their Middle Eastern or North African heritages.

8. Recommend Census Bureau analyze reporting consistency for all multiple-race groups larger than 1% in the reinterview.

**Census Bureau Response:**

As part of the Census Bureau's mid-decade research on race and ethnicity, we intend to analyze the reporting consistency for a number of multiple race/ethnicity groups, including all multiple groups greater than 1 percent. Some of these groups are already delineated in the NCT study plan (e.g., White **and** Black; White **and** Asian), as they are expected to be larger than 1 percent. Additional groups that are larger than 1 percent will also be analyzed. The full list of multiple groups will be determined as we examine the results and conduct the NCT analysis.

9. Recommend Census Bureau Supplement decision process with simultaneous ranking of options according to universal measures.

   - *Background Comments: Current decision tree based on aggregate performance of each dimension (e.g. whether in general, a MENA checkbox works better than no MENA checkbox)*

   - *But interaction effects are possible (e.g. even if a MENA checkbox generally works well, it may work poorly when joined to another strategy, say "race" term)*

   - *So "check" current decision procedure results against a ranking of all 36 options by:*

   - *Item response rate, Consistency scores, Rate of reporting in OMB / checkbox—i.e. not SOR—categories, Rate of detailed ethnic reporting*

   **Census Bureau Response:**

   The Census Bureau appreciates the NAC recommendation to add to our planned analyses by examining the ranking of options according to universal measures. Our NCT Study Plan Team is considering how to include this as part of our evaluation measures. As we examine the results, we will be prepared to advise how the very various successful designs are performed across the research dimensions. We are also planning to evaluate interaction effects using different models; this is introduced in the Study Plan, but will be detailed in the NCT analysis report.

**Tribal Enrollment Questions**

1. Census Bureau should NOT pursue cognitive testing of the tribal enrollment question.

   **Census Bureau Response:**

   The Census Bureau is researching the feasibility of a tribal enrollment question a part of the 2017 Census Test. This research is designed to assess the feasibility of such data collection, including the assessment of barriers to accurate measurement. While The Census Bureau believes it is critical to obtain information regarding its ability to collect tribal enrollment data in a self-response census environment, this does not imply the Census Bureau has decided to collect tribal enrollment data in the 2020 Census or the ACS.

   In addition to this research, the Census Bureau is exploring enrollment question feasibility by conducting at least two rounds of tribal consultations. The first of these rounds was completed in March of 2016, and the second round will begin in September of 2016. The Census Bureau's objective is to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the particular questions, which is critical for determining whether such data collection could actually be implemented in the larger population.

2. If testing proceeds, Census Bureau should develop an Alaska Native strategy to effectively capture the tribal and subtribal diversity within this population.

**Census Bureau Response:**

In the cognitive test, the Census Bureau will implement a recruitment strategy that captures the tribal and subtribal diversity within the Alaska Native population. The Census Bureau is using a recruitment contractor with particular expertise and contacts in the Alaska Native population to screen and recruit respondents. The recruitment contractor's contacts include Alaska Native non-profit organizations, social services, health centers, schools, and community centers.

The contractor will use recruitment flyers, tribal publication ads, and Craigslist ads to recruit respondents. Finally, the Census Bureau is using respondent selection criteria aimed to establish diversity within the group of Alaska Native respondents, including:

- race (alone or in combination),
- tribe(s),
- tribal enrollment status,
- whether living on or off an American Indian reservation,
- level of tribal engagement,
- education level,
- age, and
- gender

3. If testing proceeds, Census Bureau should test more than one reservation site for cognitive testing given the paucity of reservation outreach and participants in focus groups.

**Census Bureau Response:**

In the cognitive test, the Census Bureau will address the paucity of reservation outreach and participants in the focus group phase, while achieving the intended recruitment diversity. Two of the cognitive interview sites are Gallup, New Mexico, and Tulsa, Oklahoma. Although both of these locations are not directly on American Indian reservations, both cities are very near reservations. At the Gallup, NM site, the Census Bureau will recruit respondents from several reservations, including the Navajo, Zuni, and Ramah Navajo Reservations, among others. At the Tulsa, OK site, the Census Bureau will recruit respondents from the Osage Reservation, which shares a part of its border with Tulsa.

4. If testing proceeds, Census Bureau should expand the interview sample beyond N=60 in order to meet the diversity criteria sought in the Proposed Recruitment Plan.

**Census Bureau Response:**

Based on typical cognitive interview standards and our own experience, we believe that a sample of 63 respondents is reasonable for this study. This study will assign 21 respondents to each of three question formats, and it is common to recruit 10-20 respondents per format. Furthermore, each group of 21 respondents will be spread across interview locations to maximize diversity. In addition, throughout the cognitive interviewing protocol, the other formats will be administered to all 63 respondents—thus, some data will be collected regarding all three question formats from all respondents. The Census Bureau will analyze respondents' answers to the questions and probes, including follow-up question format comparisons. Using these methods, a total of 63 cognitive interviews should provide a reasonable assessment of how the different questions perform among a diverse set of respondents.

5. If testing proceeds, Census Bureau should publish key findings from the first round of tribal consultations as soon as possible; recommend Census commit to a second round of Tribal Consultations following the cognitive testing.

**Census Bureau Response:**

The Census Bureau conducted eight tribal consultation meetings and one national webinar between October 2016 and April 2016. The Census Bureau plans to continue a second round of tribal consultations from September through December 2016. After these meetings are completed a final report will be produced by June 2017 that will have key findings, and recommendations for the 2020 census.

6. Census Bureau should invest in a targeted tribal outreach strategy to provide technical assistance for analysis and use of existing tribal data collected by the Bureau.

**Census Bureau Response:**

Beginning in FY15, eight partnership specialists were authorized to work with the AIAN population throughout the country. This is the earliest partnership staff has ever been hired to support decennial efforts. The staff is supporting the tribal consultations and developing the partnerships for the 2020 census. In both the Denver and LA regions the partnership specialists will be supporting the Community Partnership and Engagement Program for the 2017 Test on the Colville and Standing Rock reservations. The staff will also support poster contests on each Test site and will work with the selected liaison for each tribe.

We will begin hiring the partnership staff for the 2020 Community Partnership and Engagement Program in FY17.

Tribes will have opportunities to work with the census to help ensure an accurate and complete count. Tribes will be asked to participate in the 2020 Census Tribal Government Liaison Program. The liaison will serve as the bridge between all census operations and the tribe. All selected liaisons will be trained on census operations. They will assist in recruiting efforts, operational activities, and all partnership and outreach efforts.

The tribes will have the opportunity to form Complete Count Committees and utilize all partnership and outreach programs for those living on and off reservations. Specific efforts will be made to partner with all organizations supporting the AIAN population.

Another great resource for tribal users is our Data Dissemination Specialist regional network, which consists of 36 specialists located throughout the country who offer free training (mainly through webinars) on a wide variety of topics including how to access AIAN data. A number of the specialists have a particular focus on tribal data. At present, the Census Bureau is hiring a tribal specialist to be based in Phoenix who will conduct training with this population.

7. Recommend a second cognitive testing site on a reservation be secured.

**Census Bureau Response:**

Recruitment will include outreach to several reservations. Please see the response to Recommendation 3.

8. Recommend tailored tribal coding lists be provided to each of the 567 federally recognized tribes and all state recognized tribes, ANCSA regional and village corporations, tribal entities such as NCAI and all state recognized tribes, along with a formal process for feedback to enhance utility of tribal data coding and aggregation.

**Census Bureau Response:**

We agree with the recommendation. For the 2017 Census Test, this is our current process. The plan is to use a code list that includes all 567 federally-recognized tribes, hundreds of state-recognized tribes, hundreds of non-recognized tribes, as well as all the ANCSA regional and village corporations. The detailed code list is the same list that is used to code the write-ins for the race question to ensure continuity and comparability between a respondent's self-reported race and self-reported tribal enrollment status.

This detailed list has been shared with all tribes during our 2020 Tribal Consultations with Federally-Recognized Tribal Government meetings with the expressed intension for the tribes to provide feedback to the Census Bureau on the coding and classification. The coding and classification list was shared before the consultation meetings with all federally-recognized tribes and was discussed with those who attended the consultation meetings. This on-going dialogue on the American Indian and Alaska Native code list will continue with a second round of consultations scheduled for later this year.

Additionally, the Census Bureau will reach out to the tribes again in 2017 to ensure that any additional modifications or changes are gathered before the 2020 Census.

**American Community Survey**

1. Recommend Census implement oversampling up to 50 percent on tribal and Alaska native lands in the American Community Survey to respond to report undercounts of AIAN. Sampling areas of focus should include overcrowded and homeless populations.

**Census Bureau Response:**

Currently, the ACS interviews the population through two operations with independent samples: the housing unit address sample and the Group Quarters (GQ) sample. Relative to the homeless population, the GQ sampling and data collection operations exclude certain GQs types, including domestic violence shelters, soup kitchens, regularly scheduled mobile food vans, targeted non-sheltered outdoor locations, commercial maritime vessels, natural disaster shelters, and dangerous encampments. There are several reasons for their exclusion and they vary by GQ type. Concerns about privacy and the operational feasibility of repeated interviewing for a continuing survey, rather than once a decade for a census, led to the decision to exclude these GQ types. However, we control the ACS estimates of the total population to be consistent with the Population Estimates Program estimate of the GQ resident population from all GQs, even those excluded from the ACS.[1] However, Emergency and Transitional Shelters (with Sleeping Facilities) for People Experiencing Homelessness are in scope for ACS sampling and data collection activities. Currently, the rates for the GQ sample are set at the state level and are set in such a way as to minimize differences in the coefficients of variation among estimates at the state level.

The housing unit address sampling rate for American Indian areas and Alaska Native Village Statistical Areas is determined by the proportion of the population responding as American Indian (alone or in combination) from the 2010 Census. We multiply this proportion by the estimated number of occupied housing units in each area. This is the number we use to set our sampling rates. In Hawaiian Homelands, we employ the same procedure but use the proportion of the population who responded to the 2010 Census as Native Hawaiian (alone or in combination). Therefore, we target our sampling rate in these areas to provide reliable estimates of the AI population in AIAN areas, and the Native Hawaiian population in Hawaiian Homelands, by focusing on these populations. Other populations residing in these areas gain the benefit of targeting these populations. In general, the smaller the population size, the higher the sampling rate.

Several changes to the sampling methodology were implemented beginning in 2011:

We added 11 sampling rates, reallocated the sample, and increased our fixed strata sampling rates in an effort to minimize the differences in estimate reliability across areas. In the smallest areas of the U.S., including AI areas, we now sample at a rate of 15 percent, 10

[1] Source: American Community Survey Design and Methodology Report (January 2014), Chapter 4: Sample design and Selection. http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/methodology/design-and-methodology.html

percent, or 7 percent per year. These sampling rates are fixed rates and are not dependent on the distribution of the population, unlike the other 13 sampling rates we use.

In our sampling for non-response Computer Assisted Personal Interview (CAPI), every AI area where at least 10% of its population responded as AI (alone or in combination) in Census 2010 are sampled for non-response follow-up at rate 1. In other words, all non-responding cases in these areas go to CAPI. This is quite a bit higher than the 33 percent, 40 percent, or 50 percent for cases we can mail to, and 66 percent for the cases that we deem "non-mailable" in other areas. We also attempt a personal visit interview at all non-responding addresses, and all non-mailable addresses, in each Alaska Native Village Statistical Area and in all Hawaiian Homelands, as well as for all addresses in remote Alaska.

We increased the overall sample in the U.S. by approximately 600,000 cases per year. This increase benefitted all areas, as it was proportionally allocated to the existing sampling strata.

These changes were in direct response to recommendations the Census Bureau had received concerning the reliability of the estimates in general, and for the American Indian population living in American Indian areas.

The following illustrates the impact these changes had on the ACS sample for the AI areas:

<u>Comparing the one-year sample and interview counts for AI areas from 2010 to 2012</u>
Initially selected housing unit addresses
Increase from ~80,000 to ~101,000
Relative terms, a 26 percent increase
Final housing unit interviews
Increased from ~47,000 to ~84,000 housing units
Relative terms, an 80 percent increase

Given that the Census Bureau implemented these changes in mid-2011, the quality of the five-year ACS estimates will continue to improve each year thereafter. The 2012 – 2106 estimates scheduled for release in late 2017 will include the expanded sample in AI areas for all five years, and will therefore reflect the full benefit of these changes.

**Other**

1. If a MENA category is implemented for 2020, we recommend a targeted public campaign to make the appropriate populations aware of the existence of this new category. In the absence of this, populations that have been educated over time to select White as their race/origin, may only mark that category and stop reading the remaining ones.

   **Census Bureau Response:**

The Census Bureau plans to continue outreach and engagement with stakeholders in the Middle Eastern and North African community, as well as with myriad racial and ethnic communities, as we approach the 2020 Census. An integral part of our work has been extensive outreach with Middle Eastern or North African community stakeholders, leaders, expert scholars, and advisors in preparation for testing a distinct Middle Eastern or North African category in the 2015 National Content Test.

2. Please give an update on the deep dive being taken to understand and target households where children may not be included in reporting as well as timing of making improvements in the 2020 Census.

   **Census Bureau Response:**

   The undercount of young children research team is in the process of documenting their findings in research reports. These reports will be included in the 2020 Census Memorandum Series, available to the public on the census website. The first report was released in June.

   The 2017 Census Test will include updated wording of the roster instructions and undercoverage question to help address the undercount of young children.

   Once the 2020 Census Integrated Communications (ICC) contract is awarded, the research team will meet with the contractor to discuss methods for targeting specific subpopulations of young children that may be at more risk of an undercount.

3. Engage NAC members in a working group to crack the undercount of young children.

   **Census Bureau Response:**
   The Director welcomes the creation of a working group on the undercount of young children. The Advisory Committee Branch will begin to coordinate the formation of the working group.

4. 2016 update of the breakdown of the demographics of the hired staff. Lessons learned and analysis from LA and Houston of hiring process in regards in aligning the characteristics of the areas with enumerator skills.

   **Census Bureau Response:**

   At this time, the Census Bureau is not able to release the demographics of those hired from the 2016 Census Test but we are exploring the ability to share it. We are still reviewing debriefings and other data related to hiring, managing, and assigning staff.

**Request for Information**

1. Request for details of the federal agency tribal data working group membership and objectives be publicized to NAC members and the public.

   **Census Bureau Response:**

   Correspondence was sent to an inquiring NAC member, NAC Chair and Vice Chair, which contained four documents pertinent to the federal agency tribal data working group on June 14, 2016. The four documents are listed below and are attached to this response:

   1. Memorandum of Agreement between Census and Bureau of Indian Affairs
   2. Census Bureau and Bureau of Indian Affairs Article on Signing of Memorandum of Understanding
   3. Charter for the American Indian and Alaska Native Data Improvement Work Group
   4. Final Working Group Plan for American Indian and Alaska Native Data Improvement Work Group

**Future Agenda Topics**

1. Bureau's use of administrative data and 3rd party record data based on the working group's recommendation.

2. Counting people in nontraditional housing in the 2020 Census and the American Community Survey.

3. Cyber security for the 2020 Census (messaging to the public and preventing against scammers).

4. Update on research of the undercount of children.

5. Budget update and impact to research and program areas.

   **Census Bureau Response:**
   The Census Bureau thanks the committee for these recommendations on future agenda topics. We will work on incorporating these items in future meetings.

Last Updated: 01-11-2016
Version 2.3

# MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN
THE U.S. CENSUS BUREAU
AND
THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

Agreement No. 2016-1

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

The United States has a unique legal and political relationship with Indian tribal governments established through and confirmed by the United States Constitution, treaties, statutes, executive orders, and judicial decisions. In recognition of that special relationship, Executive Order 13175 – Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments (Nov. 6, 2000) charges executive departments and agencies with engaging in regular and meaningful consultation and collaboration with tribal officials in the development of Federal policies that have tribal implications, and strengthening the government-to-government relationship between the United States and Indian tribes. Additionally, executive departments and agencies must take appropriate steps to remove any procedural impediments to working directly and effectively with tribal governments, including working cooperatively with other Federal departments and agencies.

Indian tribes and communities need access to quality data and information as they make decisions concerning communities, economic development, land and resource management, and other decisions. The collection and analysis of data by the Federal government is also critical to ensuring that Federal agencies and programs are delivering effective services to Indian tribes to meet tribal needs and deliver on Federal responsibilities.

The parties agree that accurate socioeconomic and geospatial boundary data for American Indians and Alaska Natives is essential to Federal agencies, tribes, and other entities for management, policy, and decision making. Each party has a need to gather and maintain geographic data pertaining to Federal Indian reservations and trust and restricted lands, and each party can benefit from the knowledge, expertise, and resources of the other in a cooperative endeavor.

Thus, the parties enter into this agreement to promote communication and collaboration between the two agencies and improve the dissemination of accurate data, in furtherance of the government-to-government relationship between the United States and Indian tribes.

## 2. PARTIES

The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) carries out the Department of the Interior (DOI) Indian Affairs' trust responsibilities to federally recognized Indian tribes and individual Indians. Among other things, the BIA provides land related functions to federal Indian trust and restricted land owners including acquisition, disposal, rights-of-way, leasing and sales, and assists them in the management, development, and protection of trust and restricted land and natural resource assets. In addition, the BIA is the principal agent with the Federal responsibility to record, provide custody, and maintain records that affect titles to Indian land, to examine titles, and to provide certified title status reports and maps.

The Census Bureau counts and profiles the people and institutions of the United States. In this capacity, the Census Bureau conducts a census of population and housing every 10 years, economic censuses every 5 years, and the American Community Survey every year, in order to provide social, economic, and housing data tabulated by geographic areas to implement governmental programs, to meet broad statistical needs, and to disseminate data for government and public use. To support its data collection activities, the Census Bureau routinely performs work, such as data collection, on behalf of other federal agencies.

## 3. AUTHORITY

The authorities to enter into this MOU are:

A. 13 U.S.C. § 6 (authorizing the Census Bureau to call upon other executive departments and agencies for information pertinent to the work of the Census Bureau),

B. 13 U.S.C., §1 et seq., (authorizing and requiring the Census Bureau to collect, compile, and disseminate statistics which are used by industry and business, State and local governments, agencies of the Federal Government, and the general public),

C. 25 U.S.C. § 13 (authorizing the BIA to expend appropriations for the benefit, care, and assistance of Indians, including administration of Indian property), and

D. 25 C.F.R. Part 150 (§§ 150.1-150.11) (setting forth BIA authorities, policy and procedures governing the recording, custody, maintenance, use and certification of title documents, and the issue of title status reports and maps for Indian land).

## 4. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PARTIES

A. *Cooperation and Collaboration.* The parties agree to work together, collaboratively and cooperatively, to improve, to the extent feasible, the accurate enumeration of American Indians and Alaska Natives, particularly as it relates to geographic boundaries and data dissemination.

B. *Data Sharing*. The parties will make efforts to share geographic information system (GIS) shapefiles or geodatabases that portray boundaries for reservations and off-reservation trust and restricted lands, whenever possible, unless such access would violate Federal law, or there are strong policy grounds for denying access where such access is not required. The Census Bureau will use the geographic information system (GIS) shapefiles or geodatabases in producing data sets including but not limited to the Decennial Census, The American Community Survey, The Economic Census, and the Current Population Survey. No Census Bureau data protected from disclosure by title 13 of the U.S. Code will be shared pursuant to this agreement.

C. *Workgroup*. The parties will establish a workgroup to share, discuss, and resolve issues concerning American Indian and Alaska Native data, including reservation boundaries and socio-economic data, as soon as possible, subsequent to the signing of this agreement. The workgroup will consist of DOI and Census Bureau staff, with possible informal participation by other interested agencies.

D. *Communications*. The parties will submit any questions, notifications, and requests for assistance pursuant to the subject matter of this agreement to the contacts listed below. Because the BIA is the authoritative source for all Indian land boundaries, all requests for boundary certifications and opinions shall be sent to the BIA. BIA will consult with the Office of the Solicitor and other DOI offices as appropriate. In the event that a communication is outside the scope of the subject matter of this agreement, the parties agree to notify the requesting party and to forward the communication to the appropriate office.

i. Questions, notifications, and requests for BIA assistance should be sent to:
**Beth A. Wenstrom**
Chief, Division of Land Titles and Records
Office of the Deputy Bureau Director-Trust Services
1849 C St. NW Room 4649-MIB
Washington, D.C. 20240
Telephone: 202-208-7284
Cell: 202-604-6746
Fax: 202-219-1065
Email: Beth.Wenstrom@bia.gov

For matters relating to reservation boundaries, a copy should be sent to:
**Jennifer Turner**
Assistant Solicitor, Branch of Environment and Land
Division of Indian Affairs, Office of the Solicitor
1849 C St. NW, Mail-Stop 6513
Washington, D.C. 20240
Telephone: 202-208-6260
Fax: 202-208-4115
Email: Jennifer.Turner@sol.doi.gov

ii. Questions, notifications, and requests for Census Bureau assistance should be sent to:
**Laura L. Waggoner**
Assistant Division Chief, Geographic Partnerships, Data Collection, and Products
Geography Division
U.S. Census Bureau
4600 Silver Hill Road
Washington, DC 20233-7400
Telephone: 301-763-9079
E-mail: Laura.L.Waggoner@census.gov

iii. Any changes to the above contacts shall be made in writing, and the party making the change shall notify the other party as soon as possible.

## 5. BIA TRIBAL ENTITIES LIST

The BIA publishes a list of tribal entities recognized and eligible for funding and services from the BIA by virtue of their status as Indian tribes. This list is updated annually and published in the Federal Register, and can be accessed via the BIA website at: <http://www.bia.gov/WhoWeAre/BIA/OIS/TribalGovernmentServices/TribalDirectory/>.

## 6. CENSUS BUREAU GIS SHAPEFILES AND GEODATABASES

In August of each year, the Census Bureau publishes detailed geographic information system (GIS) shapefiles and geodatabases. This data contains statistical tribal boundaries for purposes of data dissemination and tabulation. The data can be accessed via the Census Bureau website at: <http://www.census.gov/geo/maps-data/data/tiger-geodatabases.html>.

## 7. CONTACTS FOR THIS AGREEMENT

The primary contacts for this agreement are the same as those listed under section 4.D above. Any changes to the contacts below shall be made in writing, and the party making the change shall notify the other party as soon as possible.

The secondary contacts of each party to this agreement are:

Census Bureau
**Dee Alexander**
Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs
U.S. Census Bureau
4600 Silver Hill Road
Washington, DC 20233
Telephone: 301-763-9335
E-mail: Dee.A.Alexander@census.gov

**Lyndsey Richmond**
Partnership Communication and Outreach Branch
Geography Division
U.S. Census Bureau
4600 Silver Hill Road
Washington, DC 20233
Telephone: 301-763-1114
E-mail: Lyndsey.Richmond@census.gov

BIA-OTS
**Helen Riggs**
Deputy Bureau Director, Office of Trust Services
1849 C St. NW Room 4620-MIB
Washington, D.C. 20240
Telephone: 202-208-5831
Fax: 202-219-1065
Email: Helen_Riggs@ost.doi.gov

## 8. DURATION OF AGREEMENT, AMENDMENTS, AND MODIFICATIONS

This agreement will become effective upon signature and will terminate five (5) years from the date signed. Any modifications to this agreement must be in writing and mutually agreed upon by the parties. The parties will review this agreement at least once every three (3) years to determine whether it should be revised, renewed, or cancelled. Either party may terminate this agreement by providing ninety (90) days advance written notice to the other party.

## 9. INTEGRATION

This agreement constitutes the entire agreement of the parties with respect to its subject matter. To the best of the parties' knowledge, there have been no representations, warranties, or promises made outside of this agreement. This agreement shall take precedence over any other documents that may be in conflict with it, except where limited by applicable laws.

Nothing herein is intended to conflict with current Census Bureau or BIA directives. If the terms of this agreement are inconsistent with existing directives of either of party, then those portions of this agreement which are determined to be inconsistent shall be invalid, but the remaining terms and conditions not affected by the inconsistency shall remain in full force and effect.

At the first opportunity for review of the agreement, all necessary changes will be accomplished by either an amendment to this agreement or by entering into a new agreement, whichever is deemed expedient to the interest of both parties.

## 10. EFFECT OF AGREEMENT

This agreement is an internal federal agreement and is not intended to confer any right upon any other person or party, public or private. This agreement does not limit or restrict either parties from participating in similar activities or arrangements with other entities.

## 11. RESOLUTION OF DISAGREEMENTS

Should disagreement arise on the interpretation of the provisions of this agreement, or amendments and/or revisions thereto, that cannot be resolved at the operating level, the area(s) of disagreement shall be stated in writing by each party and presented to the other party for consideration. If agreement on interpretation is not reached within thirty (30) days, the parties shall forward the written presentation of the disagreement to respective higher officials for appropriate resolution.

Date: 1/13/2016

John H. Thompson
Director
U.S. Census Bureau

Date: 1/13/2016

Michael S. Black
Director
Bureau of Indian Affairs

Photos by Hubert Dobson

**Director John Thompson shakes hands with Mike Black, director of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Behind them are (l-r): Timothy Trainor (chief, Geography Division), Dee Alexander (Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs), Akenabah Begay (Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs), Wendy Hawley (Geography), Beth Wenstrom (Bureau of Indian Affairs), Lyndsey Richmond (Geography), Helen Riggs (Bureau of Indian Affairs), Carrie Hirtz (Geography), Laura Waggoner (Geography).**

# Census Bureau and Bureau of Indian Affairs Sign MOU

By Virginia Hyer
Public Information Office

The Census Bureau and the Bureau of Indian Affairs signed a memorandum of understanding on Jan. 13 to promote communication and collaboration between the two agencies and improve the dissemination of accurate data for American Indians and Alaska Natives.

"Accurate socio-economic and geospatial boundary data for American Indians and Alaska Natives are essential to federal agencies, tribes and other entities for management, policy and decision-making," Census Bureau Director John Thompson said at the signing in the director's conference room on the eighth floor of the headquarters building. "Each party has a need to gather and maintain geographic data pertaining to federal Indian reservations and trust and restricted lands, and each party can benefit from the knowledge, expertise and resources of the other in a cooperative endeavor."

Mike Black signed the agreement as director of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, which is part of the Department of the Interior.

The Census Bureau and the Bureau of Indian Affairs agree to work together to gain an accurate count of American Indians and Alaska Natives, agree to share files that show boundaries for reservations and off-reservation trust and restricted lands, and agree to establish a workgroup to discuss and resolve data issues.

At the signing, Census Bureau staff consisted of Timothy Trainor (chief, Geography Division) and four from his division, Laura Waggoner (assistant division chief for geographic partnerships), Carrie Hirtz (chief, Geographic Partnerships Branch), Lyndsey Richmond (geographer) and Wendy Hawley (geographer). Dee Alexander (tribal affairs coordinator) and Akenabah Begay (intergovernmental liaison assistant) represented the Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs.

Accompanying the Bureau of Indian Affairs director were Helen Riggs (deputy director, Office of Trust Services) and Beth Wenstrom (chief, Division of Land Titles and Records).

**John Thompson (Census Bureau) and Mike Black (Bureau of Indian Affairs) sign the memorandum of understanding Jan. 13 on the eighth floor in the Census Bureau headquarters building.**

*Final March 4, 2016*

# CHARTER
## American Indian and Alaska Native Data Improvement Work Group

### Introduction
This Charter is pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the U.S. Census Bureau (Census) and the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA).[1] The Federal Government retains the trust responsibility and remains committed to engaging in ongoing and meaningful Tribal consultation as this American Indian and Alaska Native Data Improvement Work Group (AIANDI WG) data improvement effort proceeds.

### Purpose and Objectives
The overarching goal of the American Indian and Alaska Native Data Improvement Work Group (AIANDI WG) is to identify the common data needs of the Federal Agencies that provide programs and services to tribes and work to improve the quality and quantity of data available to decision makers. The AIANDI WG will share, discuss and resolve issues concerning American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) data, including, but not limited to: geospatial information on reservation and trust land boundaries; socio-economic data collected by Census and others; and methods and approaches for collecting and disseminating data. The AIANDI WG shall promote communication and collaboration to improve the collection and dissemination of accurate AIAN data, in furtherance of the government-to-government relationship between the United States and Indian tribes.

### Background
Federal policymakers need access to quality data and information to make decisions that ensure Federal agencies and programs are delivering effective services to Tribes to meet tribal needs and deliver on Federal responsibilities. Access to quality data and information is an essential element of tribal sovereignty and a core component of making decisions concerning tribal communities, economic development, and land and resource management.

The National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) recently referred to the American Indian and Native Alaskan population as "The Asterisk Nation."[2] Various data collection issues and data gaps greatly affect the quality of AIAN data, often leading to missing data points or to estimates that have very large margins of error relative to comparable data on non AIAN populations. Improving socio-economic, economic, and geospatial data is critical for Federal agencies and Tribes to make informed decisions on budgets, social programs, strategic planning, program measurement, and other decisions affecting AIAN.

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[1] Memorandum of Understanding between the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Indian Affairs, Agreement No. 2016-1.

[2] "Data Quality," NCAI, http://www.ncai.org/policy-research-center/initiatives/data-quality.

This Work Group will improve federal data quality and availability to improve program performance, deliver more effective services, and help advance and deliver results to Indian Country through important initiatives such as Generation Indigenous, which seeks to address barriers to success and opportunities for Native youth.

**Membership**

The AIANDI WG will primarily be comprised of representatives from the Census, BIA, DOI and Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and other relevant Federal agencies, as necessary and appropriate. The AIANDI WG will be co-chaired by the Deputy Bureau Director - Trust Services, Bureau of Indian Affairs; Assistant Director for Economics, Office of Policy Analysis, Department of the Interior; and Senior Advisor on American Indian and Alaska Native Affairs, U.S. Census Bureau. Changes in chairmanships will be designated by the AIANDI WG. Representatives may identify a proxy in the event they are unable to participate in meetings. Once the AIANDI WG is established and the work progresses, representatives from other Federal agencies will be invited to participate and/or become members. Representatives may identify a proxy if they are unable to participate in meetings.

The list of AIANDI WG members will be maintained by the Co-Chairs. AIANDI WG members may designate alternates to participate in meetings and activities. .

**Roles and Responsibilities**

The Co-Chairs will make consensus-based decisions. Members are responsible for participating in meetings and achieving the goals of the AIANDI WG work plans.

**Work Group Functions**

To meet its purpose and objectives, the AIANDI WG will:

- Develop a work plan to address activities for FY 2016 and FY 2017. Additional work plans will be subsequently developed.
- Meet on a monthly basis to discuss issues of interest and monitor progress towards completion of tasks identified in the work plan.
- Update the AIANDI WG members, Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) and other interested entities by keeping and distributing meeting summaries and notes.
- Identify and establish subgroups to focus on specific issues, such as geospatial and socioeconomic data and Census surveys and programs. AIANDI WG Co-Chairs will designate subgroup chairs with participation from at least two federal agencies. Any subgroup established must develop an annual work plan to inform the broader AIANDI

WG and other interested entities within 60 days. Subgroup work plans must be approved by the Co-Chairs.

- Issue decision memorandums documenting all decisions and approval of subgroup work plans.
- Identify opportunities for collaborative projects and sharing of resources with other federal agencies, tribes, and others.
- Complete an annual report of AIANDI WG achievements and progress.

**Reporting**

The AIANDI WG will provide annual reports to the A/S Indian Affairs and A/S - PMB in the DOI, the Tribal Affairs Coordinator of the Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs and the Geography Assistant Division Chief for Geographic Partnerships, Data Collection, and Products of Census, and OMB. Monthly meeting minutes will be provided to AIANDI WG members and made available to non-members, as appropriate.

**Approvals**

The AIANDI WG shall be chartered as long as the MOU between the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Indian Affairs remains in effect. The Charter will be reviewed annually and revised, as appropriate. Revisions to the Charter will require the consensus of the Co-Chairs, based on input from members of the AIANDI WG.

*April 1, 2016*

# FINAL American Indian and Alaska Native Data Improvement Group -- Work Plan

## Overview

The American Indian and Alaska Native Data Improvement Work Group (AIANDI WG) is tasked with identifying and addressing the common data needs of Tribes and Federal agencies. Collection and analysis of data by the Federal government is critical to ensuring Federal agencies and Tribes deliver effective services and programs. The AIANDI WG is a joint effort between the U.S. Census Bureau (Census) and the Department of the Interior (DOI) Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), with collaboration from Tribes and other Federal agencies. The AIANDI WG will address the common concerns and needs for quality American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) data.

## Meetings and Communication

The AIANDI WG will meet on a monthly basis. Meeting notes will be distributed to all AIANDI WG members to keep parties updated on the group's progress and achievements. The AIANDI WG will prepare an annual summary of achievements for submission to all AIANDI WG participants.

Communication with outside stakeholders is necessary to collaborate on data issues and options, and to update outside stakeholders on the group's progress and accomplishments. The AIANDI WG will develop a systematic approach to such communication, including developing a communication plan to coordinate its work with the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) to discuss: ways that agencies can collaborate, reduce duplication, and share AIAN boundary information; discuss and document definitions for Indian lands, non-legal boundaries, and geospatial terms used by other agencies to conduct their AIAN programs. This work will be conducted in cooperation with tribes.

The Federal Government retains the obligation and commitment to engage in ongoing and meaningful Tribal consultation as the Native American data improvement effort proceeds. Census has conducted numerous consultations for the 2020 Census. The AIANDI WG will not duplicate these efforts.

## Subgroups

The Co-Chairs will establish subgroups, as needed, to focus on specific issues such as geospatial and socioeconomic data and Census surveys and programs. The Co-Chairs will designate subgroup chairs and participants from at least two agencies. Each subgroup will develop a work plan within 60 days of the subgroup creation. Each work plan will be approved by the Co-Chairs.

## Tasks

The Work Plan identifies a set of high-level tasks to be completed by the AIANDI WG and subgroups. Tasks will be reviewed and revised, as necessary, by the AIANDI WG by the end of FY 2017. Co-Chairs will approve any changes. Subgroups are expected to develop detailed work plans.

### A. Communication Plan Subgroup

1. The AIANDI WG will create a Communication Subgroup. The Communication Subgroup will complete the following tasks including but not limited to:
    a. Developing a systematic process for external communication, including communication with the FGDC and its subgroups, other Federal agencies, and Tribes. The communication processes outlined in the plan will apply to subgroups and, as appropriate, for specific tasks identified in subgroup work plans.
    b. Developing a process for internal communication, including communication between subgroups.
    c. Serving as the FGDC point of contact.
    d. Developing reporting requirements for Federal agencies, Federal workgroups, and Tribes.
    e. Working with the National Boundary Group Tribal Subgroup to identify AIANDI federal agency needs and gaps, and reporting results to the communication subgroup on a quarterly basis.
    f. Preparing an end-of-year report detailing the AIANDI WG progress and accomplishments.
    g. Developing a list of key contacts and subject matter experts.
    h. Improving the accessibility of AIAN data on Federal websites and data depositories, including:
        i. Working with the Geospatial Data Sharing Subgroup to promote the creation of a Tribal community page on GeoPlatform.gov
        ii. Creating a link to the community page on data.gov
        iii. Developing an internet improvement strategy

2. The AIANDI WG will review and approve the communication plan submitted by the Communication Subgroup.

**Lead:** Census
**Deliverables:** Communications Work Plan
**Completion Date:** April 14, 2016.

### B. Geospatial Data Sharing Subgroup

1. The AIANDI WG will create a Geospatial Subgroup. The Geospatial Subgroup will complete tasks including but not limited, to:
    a. Creating a process for integrating BIA's authoritative Indian land boundary data into Census products base products. The lead for creating the authoritative Indian land

boundary data task is Beth Wenstrom. BIA's legal boundaries provide the backdrop for other agencies.

b. Creating a process for sharing and updating the Indian land boundaries data for federally recognized tribes. One component of this is developing and facilitating a tribal boundary pilot study. Data sharing will initially involve BIA and Census. Sharing will eventually include other federal agencies, tribes, and others. The leads for this task are Beth Wenstrom, Laura Waggoner, and Benjamin Simon.
c. Developing a communication plan outlining how the group will communicate to the AIANDI WG, other subgroups, and those beyond the AIANDI WG. The leads for this task are Beth Wenstrom, Laura Waggoner, and Benjamin Simon.
d. Identifying short and long-term geospatial data projects, contingent upon available resources. The leads for this task are Beth Wenstrom, Laura Waggoner, and Benjamin Simon.
e. Working with the Communication Subgroup to increase the presence and improve the accessibility, of AIAN geospatial data to Federal websites and data depositories, including creating a Tribal community page on geoplatform.gov.

2. The AIANDI WG will work with the Geospatial Subgroup to identify and approve short- and long-term geospatial data projects and initiatives.

**Leads**: BIA, Census, PPA
**Deliverables**: Geospatial Work Plan
**Completion Date**: Geospatial Work Plan - April 14, 2016

## C. Federal AIAN datasets and products Subgroup

1. The AIANDI WG will create an AIAN Datasets and Products Subgroup. The Datasets and Products Subgroup will complete tasks including, but not limited, to:
   a. Creating a spreadsheet identifying Federal agency AIAN datasets, including the following information: agency ownership, collection and dissemination frequency, sampling information, latest data available, and data type.
   b. Developing an approach for sharing and updating the catalog of datasets, as well as the data itself, among the federal agencies and others.
   c. Organizing a meeting of Federal agencies to identify data needs, data gaps, potential approaches to address the gaps, and approaches for data dissemination.
   d. Researching methods to address issues, and presenting options to the AIANDI WG.
2. The AIANDI WG will collaborate with Federal agencies and Tribes to identify common data needs. Topics include, but are not limited, to:
   a. Improving socioeconomic and demographic data for AIAN populations;
   b. BIA support to improve the AIAN response rate for the Decennial Census;
   c. Tribal consultation;
   d. Collecting and disseminating data to the public and stakeholders;

| **Federal AIAN Datasets and Products – Work Plan** | |
|---|---|
| **Tasks** | **Milestones** |
| Research existing inventories of Federal AIAN datasets. | March - April, 2016 |
| • Create spreadsheet of Federal agency AIAN datasets with the following information: agency ownership, collection and dissemination frequency, latest data available, and data type.<br>• Summarize data issues, by type and agency.<br>• If appropriate, identify subgroups to address distinct data issues. | Initial draft of spreadsheet by May 4, 2016 accompanied by summary of data issues.<br><br>Data summary by August 1, 2016. |
| • Develop data call and template for sharing and updating this information among the federal agencies and possibly others.<br>• Distribute data call to Federal agencies, get responses, collate and summarize results, and provide feedback to the work group. | Template complete by May 31, 2016.<br><br>July 29, 2016 |
| • Plan and convene a meeting of federal agencies to discuss data needs and gaps. | Meeting September 2016; planning during spring 2016 |

**Lead**: PPA, BIA, Census
**Deliverables**: Spreadsheet of AIAN data and characteristics; planning for meeting of federal agencies.
**Completion Date**: December 31, 2016

## Planning for Future Work

This Work Plan is designed to cover the activities of the Work Group through FY 2017. The Work Group Charter requires annual reporting. For the FY 2017 report, the AIANDI WG will include a list of recommendations addressing and identifying work to be completed during FY 2018-2020. These recommendations shall be included in a new Work Plan.