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Welcome and Introduction

With this issue, we are inaugurating Survey News, the Census Bureau's Survey Sponsors Newsletter, which will be sent monthly via email to all our sponsors. We want to provide you with regular updates on our efforts to continually improve the design, implementation, and management of our surveys. Our goal is to help facilitate the sharing across surveys and agencies of information related to advances in design and methodology. Most articles will be short but some will include longer papers on technical issues, research, or analysis.

I hope that you will share your reactions and suggestions with us in conversations, meetings, and written communications. The Demographic Directorate's information network email box is: addp.i-demo@census.gov.

We also encourage you to submit your own notices about research, innovative approaches, or any other items relevant to survey managers and survey sponsors.

Best regards,
Nancy Potok
Deputy Director and Chief Operating Officer

Leadership Changes

by Marjorie Hanson

In August, Tom Mesenbourg became the Acting Director of the Census Bureau and Nancy Potok took over as the Census Bureau's Deputy Director and Chief Operating Officer.

Retiring Census Bureau Director Bob Groves wrote to the Bureau:
"Tom and Nancy have decades of deep and broad experience across the spectrum of the Bureau's operations, and I am confident I am leaving the Bureau in excellent hands. . . These two strong leaders . . . will keep the Census Bureau on course, continuing to innovate and pursue the cost efficiencies that we have been achieving over the past three years, while providing our fellow Americans with the information they need to fuel their decisions."

Nancy announced that she appointed Enrique Lamas to be Associate Director for Demographic Programs. Enrique, formerly Chief of the Population Division, will continue Nancy's work on the realignment of survey design, implementation, and management in the Demographic

Directorate, a key initiative in the larger effort to design and conduct the Census Bureau's surveys faster, better, and at a lower cost.

Survey Directors

Our realignment of our demographic survey operations and management is continuing on schedule. As of October 1, 2012, the following Survey Directors and Assistant Survey Directors have been appointed for the demographic surveys.

National Health Interview Survey (NHIS)

Survey Director: Anne Kearney
Anne was most recently the Chief of the Health Surveys and Supplements Branch in the Demographic Statistical Methods Division. She has an M.S. in Survey Methodology from the University of Maryland and is a Certified Project Management Professional. She also was the recipient of the Director's Award for Innovation as part of the Automated NAICS Assignment Team in 2006.

Assistant Survey Director: Andrea Piani
Andrea was most recently Chief of the Health Surveys Branch in the Demographic Surveys Division (DSD). She joined the Census Bureau in 1997 as a Survey Statistician in DSD's Health Surveys Branch and became its chief in 2004. She has worked on the National Health Interview Survey, the National Hospital Discharge Survey, the National Survey of Ambulatory Surgery, and the National Immunization Survey Evaluation Study. Prior to joining the Census Bureau she participated in data collection and data analysis activities in developing countries. Andrea earned a Bachelor of Science in Sociology from the University of Utah and a Master of Arts in Demography from Georgetown University. She completed her Certificate in Project Management from George Washington University in 2001.

The National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS)

Survey Director: Bill Samples
Bill comes to us by way of the Service Sector Statistics Division (SSSD), where he had been the Branch Chief for the Information and Business Services Branch. Bill has held a number of positions in the Economic Directorate since joining the Census Bureau as a survey statistician in 1998. He holds a Masters Degree from The George Washington University and a Project Management Masters Certification. In 2011, he was awarded the Secretary of Commerce's Gold Medal for his work on economic data collection for the service industry expansion. He recently completed a rotational assignment at OMB, where he worked in the Office of the Chief Statistician.

Assistant Survey Director: Meagan Wilson
Meagan began her career with the Census Bureau in the Demographic Statistical Methods Division (DSMD) in 2002 as a mathematical statistician. During her time in DSMD, Meagan had

the opportunity to work on various demographic projects including the education surveys, the National Crime Victimization Survey, the Current Population Survey, the National Health Interview Survey, the National Immunization Survey Evaluation Study, the Demographic Area Address Listing, the Survey of Compact of Free Association Migrants, sample control, Blaise instrument conversions, and the implementation of the 2000 Sample Redesign. In 2011, Meagan became Chief of the Crime Surveys Branch in the Demographic Surveys Division (DSD). Meagan earned a Bachelor's degree in Mathematics from Virginia Tech and a Master's Certificate in Project Management from George Washington University.

Education Surveys (7 Total)

Survey Director: Sharon Stern
Sharon was most recently the Assistant Division Chief for Project Coordination, Communication, and Data User Support in the American Community Survey Office. Prior to that, she was the Chief of the Poverty and Health Statistics Branch in the former Housing and Household Economic Statistics Division in the Demographic Directorate. Sharon has published and presented numerous papers since 1998, when she first joined the Census Bureau. She holds a B.A. and an M.A. in Economics and ABD in Economics from the University of California at Santa Barbara. She earned a project management certificate in 2001. Sharon was chair of the American Statistical Association Social Statistics Section during 2010.

Assistant Survey Director: Shawna Graham
Shawna was most recently a Supervisory Survey Statistician in the Education Surveys Branch. She earned a B.A. in Mathematics and Economics from Boston University and an M.S. in Mathematics and Statistics from Georgetown University. Shawna joined the Census Bureau in 2004.

Assistant Survey Director: Hyon Shin
Hyon comes from the Education and Social Stratification Branch in the Social, Economic, and Housing Statistics Division, where she worked on language use/English-speaking ability, computer and Internet usage, and school enrollment characteristics. Hyon started at the Census Bureau in 2000 as a summer intern in the Estimates Branch in the Population Division, and she joined the Education Branch when the internship ended. Hyon was most recently on a detail as a Policy Advisor on Education and Data for the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. Hyon received her M.A. in Demography from Georgetown University and her B.A. in Sociology from Penn State University. She earned a Master's Certificate in Project Management in 2009.

National Survey of College Graduates

Survey Director: Benjamin Reist
Ben joined the Census Bureau in 2006. He has worked in the Demographic Statistical Methods Division (DSMD) in the Current Population Survey Branch, the Redesign Statistical Methods Branch, the Survey of Income and Program Participation Branch, and the Health Surveys and Supplements Branch. Most recently, he was Section Manager for the National Survey of College Graduates in DSMD. Ben has an M.S. in Mathematics and a B.A. in Mathematics and

Economics from the University of Vermont. He has an M.S. in Statistics from The George Washington University and is currently working on a Ph.D. in Survey Methodology through the Joint Program in Survey Methodology. Ben has written papers on various survey topics including sampling methods, multiple imputation, and calibration.

Assistant Survey Director: Cassandra Logan
Cassandra is currently a Survey Statistician in the Survey Management Branch of the Demographic Statistical Methods Division. She earned a B.S. in Agricultural Science from Penn State University, an M.S. in Applied Economics from Rutgers University, and a PhD in Rural Sociology and Demography from Penn State University. She earned a Master's Certificate in Project Management in 2009. Cassandra joined the Census Bureau in 2007.

Housing Surveys : American Housing Survey (AHS), The Residential Housing Finance Survey (RHFS)

Survey Director: Tamara Cole
Tamara Cole is currently Chief of the American Housing Survey Branch in SEHSD. Her career at Census began in 1992 in the former Construction Statistics Division (later the Manufacturing and Construction Division). There she worked on multiple surveys and served as a special assistant in the Construction Indicator Programs area where she performed analytical studies of housing and construction data, including the American Housing Survey and the Survey of Market Absorption. Tamara earned her B.A. in Psychology and Applied Statistics from the Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

Assistant Survey Director: TBA

Survey of income and Program Participation (SIPP)

Survey Director: Jason Fields
Jason was most recently the Chief of the Longitudinal Research, Evaluation, and Outreach Branch in the Social, Economic, and Housing Statistics Division, where he has been involved in many aspects of the re-engineering of the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), and the development of an Event History Calendar based survey instrument. Jason began his tenure at the U.S. Census Bureau in the Population Division in 1997 as a family demographer in the Fertility and Family Statistics Branch, working with SIPP, CPS, and decennial data, and developing several new reports focused on family living arrangements, marriage and divorce, and child well-being. He holds a B.A. from Emory University in Sociology, a M.P.H. from the Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health, and earned his Ph.D. in Demography from the Johns Hopkins University. He was awarded a Census Bureau Team Bronze Medal (2009) for the development and re-engineering of the SIPP. He is a member and currently serving on the program committee of the Population Association of America.

Assistant Survey Director: Dann Doyle
Dann Doyle is currently a Supervisory Survey Statistician in the Income Surveys Branch. He has worked exclusively on SIPP since joining the Census Bureau in 2005. He is a proud graduate of

the University of Maryland earning a B.A. in Criminal Justice. Dann also earned his George Washington University Project Management Certificate in 2011.

Adaptive Design

by Peter Miller

Adaptive Design of surveys is moving forward at the Census Bureau, and our survey sponsors are playing a crucial role in its development. As we grow capabilities that address your pressing survey problems, we need to test field management procedures that are appropriate for the goals of your survey and give you the means to make reasoned decisions that balance survey costs and errors.

Adaptive Design is a strategy for tackling key cost and error challenges that face a survey. It involves using a set of indicators to monitor field activities to make decisions about how to handle cases that have not yet yielded an interview. Handling cases could mean changing the mode of contact (a "multi-mode" adaptation) or a wide variety of other actions. At a higher level, adaptations could include setting a cost or time threshold, drawing a sample of the open cases when one of the thresholds is reached, and focusing field efforts on just the sampled households. Such an approach could more efficiently use scarce resources.

The indicators employed in adaptive design include a broader range of information than has been available to survey managers in the past. In addition to data on fieldwork progress, managers will be able to look at information on cumulating costs, current estimates on key variables in the survey, the likelihood that cases will respond with an interview on the next attempt, interviewers' observations on household characteristics, and a variety of other data. We are working to provide daily updates for such information, customized for each survey and displayed on convenient dashboards. Managers will also have access, prior to the survey, to enhanced frame information that can be used to identify cases of special interest, focus field efforts, estimate the likelihood of response, and aid in imputation if desired.

We are now at work developing and testing the information resources needed for adaptive design. In collaboration with the National Health Interview Survey, we will field test a battery of interviewer observation measures that could prove useful in response propensity models and in nonresponse adjustment (since interviewers will make observations of both respondent and nonrespondent cases). The National Survey of College Graduates has begun an adaptive design program to make possible a shorter data collection period and faster release of survey statistics. Among other things, that survey is experimenting with a new multi-mode approach.

We find that, as more researchers become aware of the possibilities of adaptive design, they want to see how it might help them with pressing cost and error problems. If you are interested in exploring the possibilities yourself, please contact me (peter.miller@census.gov). Your involvement is key to our ability to make the best use of adaptive design.

Cost Estimation, Analysis, and Modeling

by Christopher J. Laskey

The Census headquarters realignment established three new centralized areas, one of which is dedicated to survey cost estimation. The vision for improved cost estimation includes providing support to program areas across the Census Bureau for more accurate estimation of census and survey-related costs, including the use of more robust cost modeling techniques and "what if" analysis for cost estimation.

A temporary team, called the Cost Estimation, Analysis, and Modeling Team, or CEAMT for short, is headed by Acting Director Tom Mesenbourg, Jr. and is composed of about twenty representatives from across the Census Bureau's directorates. Since its inception in January 2012, the CEAMT has been developing a process for activity-based actual cost reporting at the Census Bureau via a pilot project and creating an alternative cost estimation model for predicting the 2013 American Housing Survey field-related data collection costs.

Recent accomplishments of the CEAMT include:

1. Meeting with GAO managers to gather their input on establishing a permanent CEAMO, including lessons learned from other similar efforts in the Federal government;
2. Conducting a pilot test of activity-based cost reporting using a web-based tool called the Electronic Time Tracking System (ETTS) in select areas of the Census Bureau; and
3. Leveraging previous work by the Governments Division to develop a Census-wide standard list of work activities (called Census/Survey Lifecycle Activities and Mission Enabling and Support Work) for use by staff in the ETTS Pilot to identify the types of work they perform.

Future articles will continue to report on the CEAMT's progress.

InterAgency Agreements

by Christa D. Jones

Good-bye FY12, Hello FY13

The Census Bureau survey realignment program established a centralized office dedicated to processing, approving, and tracking interagency agreements. This new operation is part of the Policy Coordination Office, reporting to the Director. Thanks to the cooperation and patience of our sponsors, the Census Bureau has successfully concluded FY12, clearing more than two hundred survey agreements.

During January 2012, we began to develop strategies and tools to ease the review and clearance of agreements, including agreement templates and checklists. In addition, we are developing a Sharepoint document management system that will allow the Census Bureau to route and track agreement clearances, permitting the creation of performance metrics.

In FY13, we plan to implement the Sharepoint system and develop an external website to share templates and other information. The Census Bureau will offer a special session at an upcoming sponsors meeting to discuss the FY13 agreements and, as always, is happy to meet with sponsors to develop sponsor-specific strategies.

We appreciate your trust, and we are happy to work with you.

Economic Surveys

by Lisa M. Blumerman

Governments. What word comes to mind when you think of governments – perhaps a state capitol building, Congress, or a courthouse? How about the tens of thousands of governments that provide the day-to-day services we all use? These are the governments that we all depend on but we so quickly forget – they are a natural part of our lives. Our cities and towns are governments. Our public school systems are governments. Special districts – like your neighborhood fire department or library – are governments.

On August 30, 2012, we released the first data from the 2012 Census of Governments – preliminary data on the number and types of governments. These data help us see the many forms of governments. Just like our Nation's demographics, our governments change over time. Governments grow and shrink depending on the needs of the times. While the number of states, counties, cities, and towns remained relatively unchanged, special purpose governments (special districts and independent school districts) have demonstrated marked change. The closer we get to more localized services – school districts and special districts – the more likely we are to see governments coming into existence and merging or consolidating as the service needs change.

Preliminary data from the 2012 Census of Governments show us that as a nation we have nearly 90,000 state and local governments. Of those, almost 40,000 are our states, counties, cities, and towns (general purpose governments). The rest are special purpose governments. Historically, special purpose governments have demonstrated the most change. For example, we're familiar with the rise and fall of the one-room school house. This consolidation of public school districts has resulted in a dramatic decline of the number of school districts from a high of 67,346 in 1952 to today's count of 12,884. Unlike the decline in school districts, special districts have grown. In 2012, special districts accounted for 37,203 of the 89,004 governments, which is just over three times the number of special districts in 1952. Special districts are developed by law to provide one (or a limited number) of specific services. For example, a special district – like a community development district – may be established to accommodate the growing needs of a new

community. These types of districts change over time as the needs of the area change and laws permit.

Every five years since 1952, the Census Bureau has completed a comprehensive count of all state and local governments in the country. The preliminary data released represent the first in the series of data from the 2012 Census of Governments. The interested data user can find these data on the Census Bureau's Governments Division website.

Final counts of governments will be issued in September 2013. The employment component of the 2012 Census of Governments, which began collection in March of 2012, collects information on the number of state and local government civilian employees and their payrolls. Data on public employment and payroll will be available beginning December 2013.

The finance component, which began collection in September 2012, collects information on revenues, expenditures, assets, debt, and public pensions. These data will be available beginning in December 2014. Please see the 2012 Census of Governments website for more information on the 2012 Census of Governments and statistics about governments.

The Census of Governments has received extensive reengineering during the past year. In the next Survey Sponsors Newsletter, we will describe some of these innovations.

Insights from the Census of Governments

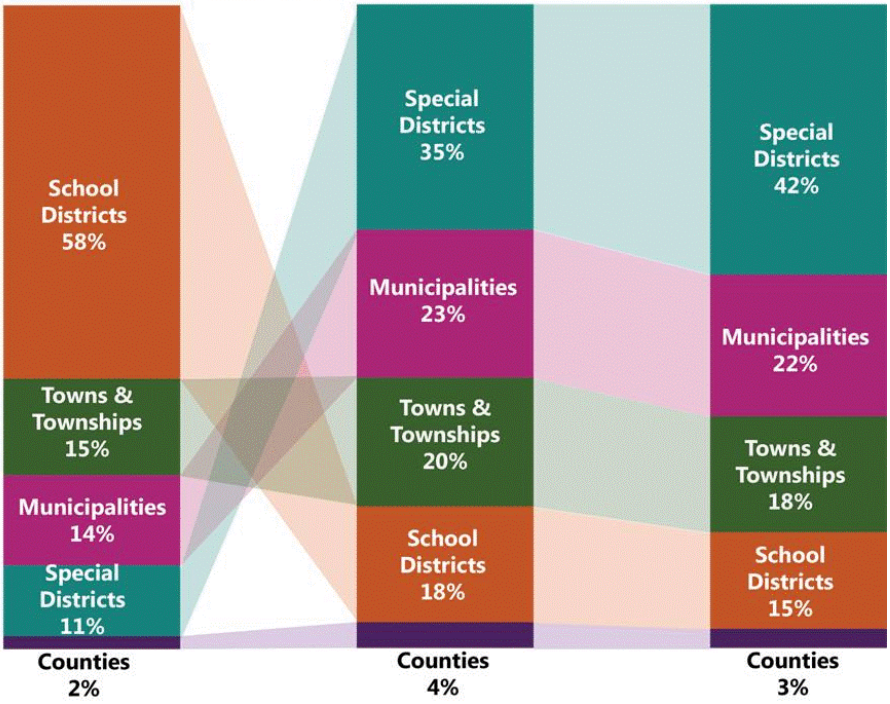
The Census of Governments provides important content to the ever-changing picture of the United States. Census of Governments data offer insight into the evolving public sector and allow us to understand the changing nature of state and local government activity. This visualization shows just one aspect of the information from the Census of Governments by providing insight about the change in the distribution of the five types of local governments from 1952 – 2012.

Census of Government Year	***1952***	***1982***	***2012***

Since the first modern-day Census of Governments in 1952 to the current 2012 Census of Governments, there has been significant change in the structure and organization of state and local governments. For 1952, you can see that 58 percent of the 116,694 local governments were identified as school district governments. However, by 1982 the percentage of school districts had fallen to 18 percent and today it is at its lowest level of 15 percent in the preliminary 2012 counts.

In contrast to the decline of school districts, the percentage and number of special districts increased substantially from 1952 to 2012. For 1952, you can see that special districts comprised 11 percent of the total number of local governments. In 1982 the total number of local governments declined by over 34,000 local governments; however, the percentage of special districts increased to 35 percent of the 82,290 local governments. By 2012, the number of local governments rose to 89,004 and the percentage of special districts rose to represent 42 percent of local governments.

Note that the number of counties has stayed around 3,000 but has fluctuated as a percentage of the total number of governments, which has changed dramatically.



Total Number of Governments	***116,694***	***82,290***	***89,004***

SOURCE: US Census Bureau 1952, 1982, 2012 Census of Governments