American Community Survey Program Updates

Presented to the Association of Public Data Users Annual Conference

Trent Alexander and Nicole Scanniello
September 22, 2011
Outline

• ACS Program Review
• Survey Improvements
• Data Release Updates
ACS Program Review

• ACS recently delivered first 5-year data products in December 2010

• Census Bureau Director commissioned team to conduct a comprehensive program review

• Began in April 2011, expected to be complete by December 2012
Program Review Scope

Internal Review Elements
- Strategic Review
- Business Processes
- Systems Engineering Processes
- Program Management Processes

External Review Elements
- Product Line Review
- Communication and Stakeholder Analysis
- Methodology Improvements
- Research and Evaluation
Program Review: Product Line

• Interviews with federal data users – ongoing
• Population Reference Bureau (PRB) workshop with data users – June 2011
• Census workshop with federal data users – July 2011
• Committee on National Statistics (CNSTAT) at National Academies, Workshop with non-federal data users – late 2011
• Interchange with Advisory Committees
Program Review: Communications

- Inventory stakeholders
- Communication strategy
- Briefing new members of Congress – completed
- Data Users Group
Program Review: Methods

- Draft of ACS operations baseline
- Commissioned CNSTAT Panel to review critical methodological issues (starts Fall 2011)
- Interchange with Advisory Committees
Program Review: Research and Evaluation

- Inventory of current research projects
- Document current process for identifying research projects
- Determine alignment of current research projects to the emerging strategic plan
Outline

• ACS Program Review
• **Survey Improvements**
• Data Release Updates
ACS Sample Size Increase

• Sample expanded from 2.9 million to 3.54 million addresses per year

• Sample increase began for
  o Mailout in June 2011
  o CATI in July 2011
  o CAPI in August 2011
Reallocation of Sample to Improve Small Area Estimates

- Objective: improve the reliability of the estimates for small areas
- Increased sampling rates for small tracts and governmental units
- Slightly decreased sampling rates in larger tracts
- Began in January 2011
Computer Assisted Personal Interview Modification

• CAPI follow-up for all non-mailable and non-responding addresses in:
  – American Indian areas with estimated American Indian population > 10%
  – All Hawaiian Homelands
  – All Alaska Native Village Statistical Areas
  – All remote Alaska sample (began January 2011)

• Increases total field workload by roughly 27,000 cases per year
Possible New Content

- Two new topics tested
  - Computer Ownership/Internet Access
  - Parental Place of Birth
- Late in testing phases
  - Testing and Analysis complete
  - OMB and federal agencies briefed on results
  - Census and OMB making final determinations
- Would be implemented in 2013 or later
Possible Internet Response Mode

• First test (April 2011) – analysis underway

• Second Test (planned for November 2011)
  o Aimed at making tweaks to improve response rates and reduce costs

• Would implement in January 2013 or later
Outline

• ACS Program Review
• Survey Improvements
• Data Release Updates
Data Release Updates

- 2010 Based Population Controls
- Revised 2010 Geography
- Occupation Code Changes
- 2010 ACS Briefs
- New American FactFinder
Thank you!

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Expected improvements

- Five-year Coefficients of Variation (CVs) for a sample statistic, by tract size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tract Size Category</th>
<th>CVs before reallocation and sample expansion</th>
<th>CVs after reallocation, before sample expansion (2.9M)</th>
<th>CVs after reallocation and sample expansion (3.54M)</th>
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