

**Ken Hodges**

## **BACKGROUND ON THE CENSUS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The 2010 Census Advisory Committee (CAC) provides advisory input on the design of the 2010 census, the American Community Survey, and related programs. Committee members represent a range of census stakeholders, and APDU's seat on the Committee provides a channel for APDU members to comment from the data user perspective.

Ken Hodges is your APDU representative on the 2010 Census Advisory Committee, and this report describes the most recent meeting of that Committee. Reports on these meetings are designed to keep APDU members informed on census activities, and to encourage feedback. Contact Ken anytime at [khodges@claritas.com](mailto:khodges@claritas.com) with comments, questions, or suggestions.

## **OCTOBER 18-19 JOINT MEETING OF THE CENSUS ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

### **Background**

The October 18-19 meeting was a joint meeting of all advisory committees, including the 2010 Census Advisory Committee, the Race and Ethnic Advisory Committees, and the Advisory Committee of Professional Associations. The Census Bureau initiated the meeting to gather input for use in planning the "Integrated Census 2010 Communications Program."

The objective for 2010 is to integrate the advertising and partnership programs, which had been separate in 2000. The firm DraftFCB was recently selected as the primary contractor for the Communications Program, but while they were present at the meetings, the program has not yet been planned. The Census Bureau and DraftFCB will plan the program taking into account the input provided by the advisory committees.

### **October 18: Day One**

On Day One, the advisory committees met separately, discussing materials distributed in advance, in preparation for preparing a position statement on the Communications Program. The

advance materials are posted on the Census Bureau's website  
[http://www.census.gov/cac/www/race\\_ethnic\\_advisory\\_committees/007732.html](http://www.census.gov/cac/www/race_ethnic_advisory_committees/007732.html).

The Census Bureau identified the following topics to guide these discussions.

- Building on the Success of the Census 2000 Campaign
- Identifying Effective Messages and Media
- Audience Segmentation and Evaluation
- Role of Advisory Committees
- Committee Position Statement

We in the CAC started with the intent of addressing the topics sequentially, but given the wealth of observations, and the tendency of one thought to lead to another, it proved easier let the discussion flow. And with Committee Chair Mark Neuman and Vice Chair Lee Adams unable to attend, Jackie Byers (National Association of Counties) guided the discussion, and make sure we covered the agenda topics.

Nancy Gordon (Census Bureau) started the meeting, and introduced us to the DraftFCB representatives in attendance – including CEO Peter DeNunzio. Gordon explained that their role today was to listen to our deliberations, but before long, DeNunzio was invited to the table, and drawn into much of the discussion.

Gordon also noted that three committee members had prepared papers providing initial comments from the perspectives that they represent.

Joan Naymark (U.S. Chamber of Commerce) summarized her paper, describing the business community's support for the census, but expressing concern with inconsistencies between the 2000 partnership program and the messages from the national and local census offices. Naymark called for greater coordination between the partnership and paid advertising programs – noting that greater access to the copyrighted paid advertising materials would be helpful. She concluded by suggesting that it is less important to look back at 2000 than to look forward to what will work best for 2010.

In her paper, Karen Narasaki (Asian American Justice Center), commended the Census Bureau for combining the advertising and outreach efforts – recalling the problems in 2000 when slogans were established without partnership input. Narasaki noted the importance of testing messages in advance, and stressed that having messages delivered by trusted sources is more important than ever in the post-September 11 environment. She also pointed to the importance of language issues, and the need for consistent messages from all levels – a consistency that would be easier to achieve if partners could have access to copyrighted materials.

Jackie Byers (National Association of Counties) noted that the first two papers covered many of her points, but stressed the issues of timing and funding, which are often linked. For example, the Census in the Schools program needs to start earlier in order to be included in school curricula. Byers joined the others in calling for access (without royalties) to the paid advertising materials – noting that the partners are best able to get these messages to key people.

Terry Ao (Asian American Justice Center) presented additional thoughts from the Asian American Justice Center perspective. Ao described the great diversity of the “Asian” population, noting that this diversity must be taken into account in the census questionnaire assistance efforts. Specifically, the Census Bureau needs to hire bi-lingual staff reflecting this diversity. She also spoke to the importance of coordinating with immigration officials to limit raids and deportations while the census is in the field, and called for additional research on how best to reach and communicate with racial and ethnic minorities.

## **Discussion**

The meeting then moved to a wide ranging discussion of the Integrated Communications Program. By “integrated,” the Census Bureau means that the advertising and partnership programs (separate in 2000) are to be coordinated for 2010. The program has three major goals: 1) to increase mail response to the census, 2) to improve accuracy and reduce differential undercount, and 3) to improve cooperation with enumerators. Several times during the meeting, it was noted that these goals can conflict. For example, an ad campaign that increases mail response among white suburbanites could increase census coverage, but also differential undercount. By integrating the advertising and partnership programs, it is hoped that the three objectives can be achieved together.

Again, we started with the first discussion topic – how to build upon the success of the 2000 campaign – but moved quickly to concerns about the present and future. Ilene Jacobs (California Rural Legal Assistance) argued that the 2000 program did not do a good job of reaching minority populations – that it was too focused on mail response, and not enough on differential undercount. Jackie Byers (National Association of Counties) recalled issues with the choice of subcontractors in 2000, and expressed concern that subcontractors had already been chosen (DraftFCB already has a “team” of companies that will work with them on the 2010 census). DraftFCB CEO Peter DeNunzio responded that the subcontractors have not been finalized, and that they are looking for input from the advisory committees before doing so. A Census Bureau representative explained that DraftFCB’s role is to integrate the efforts of subcontractors, who will specialize in the components of the program.

Kay Ferrell (American Foundation for the Blind) noted that she had seen no mention of people with disabilities, and Jungmiwha Bullock (Association of MultiEthnic Americans) noted that there was little focus on multi-ethnic populations. Karen Narasaki (Asian American Justice Center) argued that faith-based outreach would have to expand beyond the major religions, and Ilene Jacobs (California Rural Legal Assistance) noted the emergence of indigenous populations speaking languages not addressed in 2000, and that issues of literacy must be addressed.

Jacobs also wondered if there is some risk that an over-emphasis on confidentiality assurances might actually raise suspicions among some populations. Helen Samhan (Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee) commented that confidentiality assurances should be delivered by

trusted partners to give them greater credibility. Peter DeNunzio (DraftFCB) assured that the confidentiality message would be positive in tone, and targeted to specific population groups. And in response to a question about the impact of new technology (such as YouTube), DeNunzio assured that they expect new media and technology to be a major part of the 2010 program. Taken together, the reps' early comments sent the clear message that the 2010 environment is different from 2000, and will pose unique challenges to the Communications Program.

The CAC reps support the integration of the advertising and partnership programs, but had questions about how this would be achieved. Several raised the issue of timing—noting that partnership efforts need to be started “yesterday.” Ken Hodges (Association of Public Data Users) noted that the State Data Centers and Census Information Centers are already making outreach plans, and preparing budgets, so coordination with the states needs to begin now.

Concern also was expressed with how the CAC can have input as the Communications Program is planned. Budget limitations preclude additional meetings, while conference calls are difficult to schedule, and less conducive to interaction. Kim Brace (Election Data Services) suggested the possibility of regular teleconferences (webcasts), scheduled in advance with agendas to guide discussion. Census Bureau representatives stressed that they really do want our input, and pledged to pursue viable alternatives. To help focus our thinking on input options, the Census Bureau distributed a timeline (summarized below) indicating the milestones for the 2010 Communications Plan.

Award contract	Sept. 6 2007
Contractor Learning Tour Sept –	Dec, 2007
- Visit regions and regional offices	Nov 14 – Dec 11
- Attend joint advisory committee meeting	Oct 18-19, 2007
Deliver draft Communications Plan to Census Bureau	Early Feb, 2008
Deliver final Communications Plan to Census Bureau	Mar, 2008
Present plan to Race and Ethnic Advisory Committees	Apr, 2008
Present plan to 2010 Census Advisory Committee	May 2008
Present plan to Census Advisory Committees of Professional Associations	May 2008

Given this schedule, the CAC is most interested in having input on the draft Communications plan before it is made final in March 2008.

### **Census Bureau Remarks**

Following a break, we heard comments from Census Bureau staff. Betty Moon, of the Partnership and Data Services staff, noted that some regional staff have already been in touch

with state and local partners, and that they will start bringing in partnership staff in January 2008 (budgets permitting). When asked about communications with DraftFCB, Moon confirmed that Census staff will be providing input to the contractor from the beginning.

Barbara Harris of the Census Bureau's Customer Liaison and Marketing Services Office (CLMSO), explained that they will work with the national partnership organizations, and have already met with DraftFCB. They will establish a branch for partnerships, and a branch for the Census in the Schools program, and are actively recruiting staff for these functions. Harris noted that the State Data Centers have been active in LUCA (Local Update of Census Addresses) training, and that CLMSO will have a 2010 kickoff conference with the SDCs and CICs in April 2008. Asked if CLMSO will be working with private sector partners, Harris said they are waiting to see DraftFCB's draft plan to see if there are gaps that might be filled by business partners. There followed some discussion on the challenges faced by the Census in the Schools program, and reps encouraged further work with private sector partners.

Cathy McCully, of the Census Bureau's Redistricting Office, reported that they have met with various government offices about the roll out of redistricting information, and the importance of LUCA. Jackie Byers (National Association of Counties) asked about the expense of follow up versus mail response. Census staff did not have per-respondent figures handy, but Peter DeNunzio (DraftFCB) cited the Census Bureau's expectation that each percentage point increase in mail response would save \$72 million. When asked if DraftFCB would be involved with overlapping communications for the American Community Survey (ACS), Census Bureau representatives explained that there is no funding for an ACS communications program. In response to a question on the role of kids, DraftFCB's DeNunzio assured that they are very aware of the role of kids as "influencers," and would incorporate that into the plan.

As we had drifted from the topic schedule, Jackie Byers made sure we devoted some attention to the plans for audience segmentation and evaluation. DraftFCB CEO Peter DeNunzio explained that segmentation is the foundation of this project. The segmentation work is yet to be done, but it will be much of what will be presented in the draft communications plan in February. When asked what dimensions will be the focus of the segmentation effort, DeNunzio commented that segmentation used to be straightforward (based on variables such as age, income, education), but has become more complex as more data are available. Again, the plan is not yet developed, but he said the first step is to develop segments based on program objectives, possibly using psychographics as they relate to propensity to respond to the census.

As Day One drew to a close, the CAC members asked DraftFCB what they wanted from the committee. DeNunzio expressed that the CAC members are the experts on the constituencies they represent, and that their objective is to educate themselves based on the CAC deliberations. Census representatives echoed the sentiment, and expressed satisfaction that the CAC reps were doing a good job of sharing their expertise. The Census Bureau also looks to the CAC reps to serve as "census ambassadors" – communicating the purpose and importance of the census to those they represent.

We wrapped up with remarks from Nancy Bates, of the Census Bureau's 2010 Publicity Office. Bates stressed that segmentation work would seek to encourage populations to respond to the

census, and would benefit from census data on actual mailback rates—which is more effective than asking about the intent to respond. Analyses of these data have revealed three populations (or segments) that are hard to count by mail.

1. The Economically Disadvantaged
2. The Unattached/Mobile Singles
3. High Density Areas with Ethnic Enclaves.

Bates responded to a number of questions on this topic, noting that factors such as foreign born, linguistic isolation and disability status were not factors. As Bates described it, the objective is to segment the hard-to-count population, not the entire population.

## **October 19: Day Two**

Dan Weinberg, the Census Bureau's designated federal official started the joint meeting by introducing census director Louis Kincannon, who has now served almost a year beyond his resignation, but said it looks like the confirmation hearing for his nominated replacement, Steve Murdock, will take place in November. Kincannon touched on the Census budget situation, saying they are doing everything they can to minimize the risks associated with the continuing resolution, which (until a final budget is passed) holds Census funding at 2007 levels at a time when increased funds are needed for 2010 census preparations, including the testing of hand held computers and other Census Dress Rehearsal activities. Turning to the communications program, Kincannon noted the importance of reaching hard to count populations, but also those who usually respond—in order to reduce census costs. He described DraftFCB as highly qualified, and expressed confidence that they will lead a successful communications program.

Census deputy director Jay Waite remarked that it is especially important that they get CAC input on the communications program now, while the program is being designed. He recalled some successes from the 2000 campaign, but stressed that the 2010 program would be guided by research, and deliver integrated and consistent messages with the objective of achieving the most complete census possible.

Jennifer Marks, chief of the 2010 Census Publicity Office, expressed hope that today's meeting would be the beginning of a long and productive collaboration between the Census Bureau, the contractors, and the advisory committees. She introduced key Census staff, and remarked that while the contract award process was necessarily very closed, the intent now is to conduct a very open program. Marks then introduced the key DraftFCB representatives, who, in turn, introduced their 2010 census "team," including partner companies that will focus on Hispanics, Asians, Native Americans and Alaska Natives, South Asian, Eastern European and Arab-speaking populations. Other companies will focus on public relations and event marketing. DraftFCB emphasized that these "team members" are minority owned and led, as appropriate to their focus.

## **Q & A Session**

The Q & A session was devoted primarily to the expressing of concerns. Several reps expressed concern that the partnership program is not further along, while another cautioned that references to “highly resistant” (hard-to-count) populations carries a negative connotation. In response to a comment that we had heard little mention of the contractor’s expertise on Internet advertising, a DraftFCB representative assured that they had just not touted the considerable experience that they have in this area. Other concerns related to partnership funding, the increasing relevance of the immigration and confidentiality issues (especially for Hispanics), the need to focus on non-English speaking Black populations, the need for more attention to the Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander Population, and the need to target communications at the local level, where specific populations can be better targeted.

Jay Waite noted that national campaigns tend to increase overall census coverage, while local campaigns tend to improve differential undercount, and that the challenge is to strike a balance between these objectives. In response to a question on the hiring of small and minority owned businesses as subcontractors, Jennifer Marks stressed the Census Bureau’s commitment to this objective, and pointed to the diversity of the DraftFCB partners already introduced. DraftFCB added that they see this as a key to the success of the communications program. When asked if there has been progress in allowing local partners to use materials from the paid advertising campaign, Marks assured that they have heard this concern, and will work to overcome the obstacles to this option.

## **Concurrent Session**

At this point, the advisory committees met in concurrent sessions, where the objective was to summarize concerns in statements to be reported back to the joint session.

In these deliberations, we held more closely to the discussion topics.

1. **Building on the Success of the Census 2000 Campaign.**

Ken Hodges (Association of Public Data Users) noted the recurring concern that the 2000 program boosted mail response, but did not reduce the differential undercount. Other reps worried that, even now, there may be too much emphasis on the national advertising campaign, the handheld computers, and other cost-saving measures, as opposed to partnerships that could more effectively address differential undercount. Ilene Jacobs (California Rural Legal Assistance) argued that the ad campaign should be able to reduce

undercount if it is done right – that it was the disconnect from the partnership program that prevented it from doing so in 2000.

The CAC reps agreed to acknowledge the success of the 2000 program, but to express concern that the disconnect in 2000 led to greater improvement in mail response than in differential undercount. The CAC endorsed the integrated approach, and made the following recommendations for improvement in 2010.

- Increase the share of the budget devoted to reducing differential undercount.
  - More effectively target linguistically isolated populations.
  - Prioritize and start funding the partnership program earlier.
  - Continue the research-based approach to the integrated communications program.
  - Target the confidentiality assurance message to the most appropriate audiences.
  - Fully leverage the expertise of the advisory committees.
  - Have citizen hiring requirements waived for the 2010 census.
2. Identifying Effective Messages and Media

The CAC expressed satisfaction with the selection of DraftFCB, and the attention paid to the hiring of diverse subcontractors experienced with traditionally hard-to-count populations. Recommendations included the following.

- More small, local and ethnic media buys covering more media types.
  - Adequate funding for subcontractors reaching out to diverse hard-to-count communities.
  - Stress the link between census participation and funding for schools and other government services.
  - Ensure that the official census slogan translates well to many languages.
  - Messages must be accessible to persons with disabilities.
  - Messages must reach populations with all levels of literacy.
  - Images used in census communications need to reflect greater diversity.
  - Messages must be available for use by local partners.
  - Have local tags to national messages.
3. Audience Segmentation and Evaluation

Stressing the importance of counting all persons, the CAC made the following recommendations.

Expand the Questionnaire Assistance and Be Counted programs to include more languages.

- Segment communications based on characteristics including linguistic isolation, citizenship status, place of birth (foreign born), disability and multi-racial status.
  - Respect the sovereignty and government-to-government relationship between Native American tribes and the U.S. government.
  - In targeting the Hispanic population, recognize that there are indigenous populations speaking languages other than Spanish that need to be accounted for.
4. Role of the Advisory Committees
- With the 2010 census approaching a critical time, the CAC recommended the following.

- The CAC expects to have meaningful participation during the information gathering stage of the communications program plan.
- The CAC believes it serves as a liaison between the Census Bureau and its constituent populations.
- Guidelines are needed for timely two-way communications between CAC members and the communications team – including Census and DraftFCB staff.
- CAC members should be invited to attend focus groups and other communications plan events (at their own expense).

## **Committee Reports**

The meeting concluded with the advisory committees reconvening to report on their recommendations.

### Census Advisory Committee of Professional Associations

The American Economic Association did not send a representative to the meeting, but the Census Bureau's Dan Weinberg read a statement in which they noted their lack of expertise in this area, but offered whatever assistance they could provide.

The American Marketing Association noted that the goals of improving differential undercount and cooperation with enumerators are related, but that strategies for one do not necessarily contribute to the other. They stressed the importance of the partnership program, and how difficult it will be to coordinate with the advertising campaign – with consistent messages from the national down to the local level. They cautioned against an over-emphasis on mass media and the national ad campaign, suggesting that less glamorous campaigns would be more effective. They also called for an early start to the partnership program, and for better ways to measure the performance of communications campaigns.

The American Statistical Association called for a proactive, rigorous evaluation program for the communications campaign—including experimental designs where possible. The objective is to maximize learning from the 2010 communications activities. The Association called on the Census Bureau to present evaluation plans at the next advisory meeting.

The Population Association of America noted considerable overlap with the AMA remarks, as they encouraged both mainstream advertising for easy-to-count populations, and custom communications for the hard-to-count. They expect the undocumented immigrant population to pose a greater challenge in 2010, and recommend the use of ACS data to identify areas where this population might be concentrated.

### 2010 Census Advisory Committee

Jackie Byers presented the thoughts and recommendations of the CAC (described above).

### Race and Ethnic Advisory Committees

The African American Committee stressed the importance of the partnership program, and hiring from communities as the census seeks to increase mail response while also reducing differential undercount. They called for a comprehensive communications program tapping the variety of media used by the African American population, and reflecting the diversity within this population. Messages must reach all levels of literacy and should stress the confidentiality pledge and the link between census participation and community benefits.

The American Indian and Alaska Native Committee stressed the importance of the government-to-government relationship with sovereign tribes, but also noted the importance of counting Native Americans wherever they live – not just where they are concentrated. They expressed support for the integrated communications approach, and called for an early start that develops targeted messages based on a strategic plan for communicating with Native Americans and Alaska Natives. They also called for research on how best to segment these populations, and the need to reach those that are linguistically isolated.

The Asian Committee described how diverse this population is in terms of cultures and languages, and stressed the importance of getting the partnership program budgeted and started now. With respect to confidentiality, they noted the importance of instilling confidence not just to get a response, but to get accurate responses. Other recommendations included outreach through faith-based organizations, differential marketing strategies, the distribution of census materials to ethnic businesses, and the development of two versions of a Chinese language questionnaire. They also recommended that communications emphasize that non-immigrant visa holders should be counted in the census.

The Hispanic Committee noted that Hispanics are now the largest minority population in the U.S., but that animosity toward Hispanics surrounding the immigration issue provides an unfortunate backdrop to the 2010 communications campaign. The Census Bureau will have to work hard to communicate the confidentiality pledge to this population. To do so, the committee recommends an early start to the partnership program, and that enumerators have ready copies of the confidentiality statement to share with respondents. It is also important that the contractors and subcontractors have the expertise necessary to communicate with all Hispanic segments.

The Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander Committee noted that this population consists of about 20 different groups throughout the Pacific region. The populations are small, difficult to count, and subject to large data errors. Among the obstacles to a complete count are mistrust of government, perception of a lack of respect, language barriers, and the lack of an organized network linking these diverse populations. Strategies for overcoming these obstacles include sensitivity to diversity, delivering messages in the appropriate language and protocol, and national recognition – “putting a face on our population.” They recommended a communications program that educates about the census, provides resources for grass roots partnerships, and hires contractors with expertise in the Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander populations.

## **Wrap Up**

In wrap up remarks, Jennifer Marks acknowledged that the confidentiality issue is a huge challenge for the 2010 communications program, which will have to determine just what to say to which populations and when. They have heard the message that the partnership program needs to be a priority, and that measurement and evaluation issues must be addressed. They also understand the tremendous diversity among all the populations that the census needs to count, and that there are no one-size-fits-all solutions. The challenge is to develop a campaign with unique messages for many groups. Doing so will require extensive collaboration, and Marks described the joint advisory committee meeting as a great start on this collaborative effort.