



***U.S. CENSUS MONITORING BOARD***  
***Field Observations of the New York and Dallas Regional  
and Local Census Offices, Alaska Enumeration,  
and Household Matching Training.***

***Report to Congress  
April 1, 2000***

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THE U.S. CENSUS MONITORING BOARD

In November 1997, Congress established the eight-member Census Monitoring Board: four members appointed by Congress, four by the President, charged “to observe and monitor all aspects of the preparation and implementation of the 2000 Decennial census.” The issue is the Census Bureau’s plan to count over 275 million Americans in 2000 – a process which will determine both Congressional apportionment and the allocation of billions of federal dollars.

The members of the Census Monitoring Board welcome your input. Congressional Members can be reached via e-mail at *feedback@cmbc.gov*. Presidential Members can also be reached via e-mail at *comments@cmbp.census.gov*. For more information on the census, or to download this or other reports, visit our web sites at *www.cmbc.gov* and *www.cmbp.gov*.

A NOTE ON THE REPORT

This is the third in a series of joint Reports to Congress. Earlier joint reports were released in April 1999 and October 1999, and interim reports have been issued separately by the Congressional and Presidential Members. Additional reports are scheduled through September 2001.



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April 1, 2000

The Honorable Albert Gore  
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The Honorable J. Dennis Hastert  
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United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. President and Mr. Speaker:

Pursuant to P.L. 105-119, the Members of the U.S. Census Monitoring board hereby transmit the following joint report to the Congress. As you are aware, the Monitoring Board is a bi-partisan body established by the Congress in 1997 to monitor the Census Bureau's efforts to plan and carry out the 2000 decennial census.

This report details the findings from a series of joint field observations conducted in recent months. Specifically, the Board has undertaken case studies of Bureau operations in both the Dallas and New York census regions, conducted observations of critical training sessions at the Census Bureau's National Processing Center in Jeffersonville, Indiana, and sent staff to observe census operations in the state of Alaska.

With some exceptions detailed in the following report, and subject to their relatively limited scope, our observations indicate the planning for census operations and community relations is generally proceeding well in the regional offices and local census offices we visited.

Our report notes that the Local Census Offices (LCOs) we examined, with one exception, have been provided with good facilities and are well-equipped with furniture, forms, maps and other supplies. The exception is the New York Northwest LCO, located in the Harlem section in Manhattan. Significant problems were noted with the office space provided for the LCO.

## **CENSUS OPERATIONS UPDATE**

At the time of the drafting of this report, several major census operations were already underway and others were scheduled to begin shortly. The report summarizes the most current operational data available to the Monitoring Board as of March 23, 2000.

### **Remote Alaska Enumeration**

Enumeration efforts began on January 19, 2000 with the Remote Alaska Enumeration. This operation begins well in advance of Census Day in order to count residents of remote villages before the change of seasons prompts many to leave their communities to hunt, fish, or engage in other employment. For details on the Monitoring Board's observations of this operation, see Section IV of this report.

### **Advance Notice Letter**

On March 6, 2000, the Bureau mailed advance notice letters announcing that Census 2000 questionnaires would be arriving soon and that non-English census forms are available. Although an addressing error caused concerns, the Postal Service provided the Bureau with assurances that the letters would be successfully delivered. There are indications that the advance letter has had a positive effect. As of March 20, 2000 roughly 1.5 million non-English forms had been requested via return of the advance letter.<sup>1</sup>

### **Enumeration Operations**

Update/Leave operations (in which enumerators hand-deliver questionnaires in rural areas while simultaneously updating the address lists) began on March 3, 2000 and were scheduled to end on March 30, shortly after this report will go to press. List/Enumerate operations, used in remote and sparsely populated areas where enumerators will directly interview residents rather than dropping off questionnaires for Mailback, began on March 13, 2000 and are scheduled to continue until May 1, 2000. In addition, Urban Update/Enumerate operations, targeted at areas with historically high or potentially high undercounts, were scheduled to begin on March 20, 2000, as this report was being prepared, and are scheduled to be completed by May 30, 2000.

### **Mailout/Mailback**

On March 13, 2000, the Bureau mailed out roughly 98 million forms to households as part of its Mailout/Mailback effort. As of March 21, 2000, just under 15 million households had returned their forms, and the Bureau's four Data Capture Centers (DCCs) had processed 7.3 million of them.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Kenneth Prewitt, Director, U.S. Census Bureau, March 21, 2000 press briefing.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

## Recruiting

Recruiting efforts aimed at filling the more than 535,000 staff positions<sup>3</sup> the Bureau will need at peak operations were on track at the national level, although some local offices lagged behind. On March 21, 2000 the Bureau Director announced that the Bureau had recruited an applicant pool of 2.2 million qualified individuals. This is roughly 91 percent of the national recruiting goal, and was reached just under one month prior to the April 19, 2000 recruiting deadline.

The Board agrees that a successful census depends on meeting recruiting and hiring needs of individual communities and neighborhoods across the country, as opposed to simply meeting national goals. The Board has different perspectives on the Bureau's current efforts in local areas. A discussion of those views begins on page four.

## Partnerships and Outreach

Efforts to form partnerships with state and local governments and community organizations to promote the census continue. As of March 21, 2000, the Bureau reported more than 102,000 partnerships across the country.<sup>4</sup> A total of 27,000 sites for Questionnaire Assistance Centers (QACs) and more than 21,000 sites at which to place forms and materials for the Be Counted effort, had been identified.<sup>5</sup> QAC startups began on March 8, 2000 and these centers are scheduled to remain open until April 14, 2000.

## Telephone Questionnaire Assistance

Problems were initially reported with the Telephone Questionnaire Assistance (TQA) system designed to provide assistance to individuals with questions about the census form, but according to the Bureau Director have now been resolved. The TQA system had logged a total of 1.8 million calls as of March 18, 2000. Roughly 15 percent of these calls were to the Spanish language line.<sup>6</sup> Telephone assistance is available in English, Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, Korean and Tagalog.

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<sup>3</sup> *Census 2000 Field Staffing Requirements at Peak Operation*, U.S. Bureau of the Census, December 12, 1999.

<sup>4</sup> Reported by the Monitoring Board's Census Bureau liaison, March 23, 2000.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> Dr. Kenneth Prewitt, Director, U.S. Census Bureau, March 21, 2000 press briefing.

## **Special Population, Transient and Group Quarters Enumeration**

Shortly after this report went to press, the Bureau is scheduled to carry out operations to count special, transient and often hard-to-enumerate populations in certain locations:

March 27, 2000	Transitional and Emergency Shelters
March 28, 2000	Soup Kitchens and Mobile Food Vans
March 29, 2000	Targeted Non-Shelter Outdoor Locations
March 31, 2000	Transient Locations (campgrounds, parks, carnivals and marinas)
April 1, 2000	Group Quarters (dormitories, nursing homes, prisons)

## **Non-Response Follow-Up**

Finally, on April 27, 2000, the Bureau will begin a massive Non-Response Follow-Up (NRFU) operation, deploying enumerators across the nation to count those individuals who did not return forms following the mailout/mailback or update/leave operations. The ultimate size of this operation remains unclear. Much will be determined by the mailback response rate – the greater the number of forms returned by mail, the fewer the households which must be contacted during NRFU.

NRFU efforts are scheduled to be carried out in the field from April 27 to July 7, 2000. The Monitoring Board will be closely following the progress of this critical operation in the coming months.

## **FIELD OBSERVATIONS**

In order to assess the progress of the Census Bureau's planning in several key areas, the Presidential and Congressional Members of the Monitoring Board have undertaken a series of field observations in recent months. This report summarizes this joint field work.

These visits provide static observations of a large, dynamic process. They are intended to illustrate operations at the time of interview, in relatively few areas, and should not be used to infer general conclusions about regional or national census operations.

In reporting these results, the Board would like to acknowledge the efforts of the Census Bureau in accommodating these site visits. Each of these field observations required the expenditure of significant resources to arrange briefings and site visits for Board staff. In particular, we would like to thank the staffs of the Regional Census Centers and Local Census Offices with whom staff met. These site visits took place at a time of extraordinary activity for Census Bureau staff across the nation. The time and effort expended on arranging these informative field visits are greatly appreciated.

### **Dallas Regional Case Study**

In late February 2000, staff from the Presidential and Congressional Members of the Monitoring Board visited the Dallas Regional Census Center and two Local Census Offices (LCOs) in the region to review the status of enumeration planning at the regional and local levels. The LCOs visited were located in El Paso and in Dallas County.

The Board was impressed by the efforts devoted to enumeration planning and outreach at the Dallas Regional Census Center, as well as the high degree of motivation and dedication evidenced by its management and staff. The El Paso and Dallas County South LCO visits showed local efforts well-positioned to carry out the field work necessary to generate the best possible count: hard to enumerate (HTE) areas had been identified and solid plans developed to carry out the enumeration in each. In particular, we note the extensive efforts to reach the populations living in the colonias in Texas. These communities pose tremendous enumeration challenges, and we were impressed by the Bureau's efforts to reach them.

At the time of interview, both the RCC and the LCOs we visited were meeting their goals for enumerator recruiting. The Region was at 84.5 percent of its 276,415 applicant recruiting goal, well in excess of the 70 percent goal established by the Bureau for the time period. This applicant pool will be used to fill a total of 55,105 positions. Efforts by the RCC and LCOs to secure a sufficient pool of bilingual enumerator applicants appeared to be succeeding.

The LCO staffs have been provided with good facilities, and reported no problems in securing needed supplies and materials to carry out their work.

In regard to delivery of questionnaires in linguistically isolated communities (such as the Spanish colonias located in the Dallas Region), the Board agrees that delivering non-English questionnaires where appropriate would be of great benefit to a full enumeration. However, members disagree on the feasibility of implementing this policy during the 2000 census. For full discussion of this issue, see page 25.

### **New York Regional Case Study**

Staff from the Presidential and Congressional Members of the Monitoring Board traveled to the New York Region on February 22 and 23, 2000. Meetings were held with the Regional Census Center (RCC) and with the management of two LCOs, located in Harlem and Flushing, Queens.

The New York Region, although geographically the smallest of the Bureau's 12 regions, presents unique challenges for a successful enumeration effort. Most of the world's languages are spoken in the region, and the rich ethnic, religious and cultural diversity of the population requires an equally diverse outreach program. At the time of interview,

the RCC reported roughly 3,000 partnerships with local governments and community organizations. Significant time and effort had been invested in fostering and coordinating partnership efforts, and the Board agrees that these efforts are invaluable to conducting a successful census.

The New York Region was exceeding its overall employee recruiting goal at the time of our visit. The RCC had reached 90 percent of its total recruiting goal by February 25. The March 1 goal established by the Bureau required reaching 70 percent of the total. The RCC had tested a total of 219,526 job applicants to fill 41,345 positions.

Site visits to the New York Northwest (in Harlem) and Queens Northeast LCOs showed the offices to be staffed by knowledgeable, dedicated management and staff. In both cases, staff demonstrated a detailed knowledge of the areas and communities which they will be required to enumerate. Extensive enumeration planning had been conducted, drawing heavily on the expertise of LCO staff and the Planning Database provided by the Bureau.

In both cases, recruiting was meeting or exceeding the goals established for the time frame. The New York Northwest LCO had already reached 105 percent of its total recruiting goal. The Queens Northeast LCO had met the 70 percent interim recruiting goal for late February.

LCO staff in Queens Northeast reported successful recruiting drives for bilingual enumerators, aided by pre-testing exercises conducted in Korean, Chinese and Greek. The Harlem LCO staff was conducting aggressive recruiting efforts, but remained concerned about meeting the enumeration needs of the large Mexican American community in its jurisdiction.

Although the Queens Northeast LCO staff reported no complaints about the office space they have been provided, New York Northwest LCO staff reported significant problems. Access for persons with disabilities, and the delivery of needed furniture and supplies, were hampered by a non-functioning elevator. (The office is located on the third floor.) The building had no running water on the day of the interview, the third interruption in the water supply since the LCO opened in October 1999. One such outage lasted nine days. Trash pickup was reportedly inadequate. The lack of curtains or blinds required staff to tape paper over windows to reduce glare on computer screens.

In fairness, it should be noted that the General Services Administration (GSA) experienced significant difficulties in obtaining a site for the New York Northwest LCO, despite exhaustive efforts to obtain adequate space. However, the Board remains concerned about the conditions faced by the New York Northwest LCO staff as they prepare to enumerate one of the most challenging areas in the nation. Senior regional staff assured the Monitoring Board that steps were being taken to remedy the problems with the New York Northwest LCO facilities.



### **Alaska Enumeration**

In January 2000, staff from the Presidential and Congressional members of the Monitoring Board traveled to Alaska to observe the Remote Alaska Enumeration operation and to meet with the staff of the Anchorage LCO. Board staff accompanied Bureau personnel for meetings with community leaders, enumeration interviews, and for an aerial map-spotting operation.

The Board is impressed with the dedicated efforts of the Bureau's Alaska staff, and the degree of cultural sensitivity they have shown to the Native population in the state. Native leaders expressed their congratulations on the Bureau's efforts. Board staff noted that the LCO's successful partnership work has shown similar successes outside the state's Native community, as well.

The Board believes that the strategies employed by the Bureau in Alaska benefit the count in remote villages and address concerns regarding the undercount of native communities throughout the state. The positive results seen so far highlight the Alaska effort as an instructive example for Bureau operations in other areas of the country.

### **Household Matching Training**

In January 2000, staff from the Presidential and Congressional members of the Monitoring Board traveled to the Census Bureau's National Processing Center in Jeffersonville, Indiana to monitor training for clerical staff who will conduct the Before Follow-Up (BFU) matching operation. The BFU procedures will be used to match the address list developed for the traditional enumeration with the list developed as part of the Accuracy and Coverage Evaluation (ACE) survey.

The training provided for clerical level staff was well-executed to familiarize clerical staff with the Bureau guidelines to housing unit matching.

Given the importance of the various matching operations to be used by the Bureau in its effort to measure the expected undercount and possibly adjust the 2000 census, the Board plans to observe the Person Matching training scheduled for the fall of 2000. We will transmit the results of those observations in a subsequent report.

Participation in the census is one of the most basic civic responsibilities. The results of the 2000 census will, for the next ten years, affect every aspect of American life. The results will guide the allocation of political representation at the federal, state and local levels, determine funding for schools, hospitals, roads, bridges, and utilities, and guide vital decisions to address some of our most pressing social problems. In the private sector, businesses will rely on these numbers to decide where to invest, and where to build stores, factories and bank branches and housing.

This census has seen its share of political controversy. But for all the debate, we join unanimously to urge every resident of the United States to complete and return their census forms, and to cooperate with the Census Bureau's enumerators when they begin their efforts to find those who have been missed.

Sincerely,



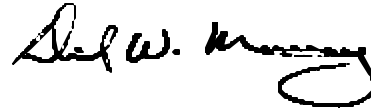
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David W. Murray  
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Everett M. Ehrlich  
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A. Mark Neuman  
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Lorraine A. Green  
Presidential Member



Joe D. Whitley  
Congressional Member

cc: Members of the 106<sup>th</sup> Congress  
The Honorable William Daley, U.S. Secretary of Commerce  
The Honorable Kenneth Prewitt, Director, U.S. Bureau of the Census

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# Table Of Contents

Report to Congress  
April 1, 2000

<b>I.</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>II.</b>	<b>New York Regional Case Study</b>	<b>10</b>
	<b>A. New York Northwest, LCO #2236</b>	<b>13</b>
	<b>B. Queens Northeast, LCO #2240</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>III.</b>	<b>Dallas Regional Case Study</b>	<b>23</b>
	<b>A. Dallas County South, LCO #3035</b>	<b>33</b>
	<b>B. El Paso, LCO #3036</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>IV.</b>	<b>Alaska Enumeration</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>V.</b>	<b>Household Matching Training</b>	<b>49</b>

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**INTRODUCTION**

After years of preparation, Census Day 2000 has finally arrived. In preparing for this day, the Census Bureau, state and local governments, and thousands of partners in the private and public sectors have taken steps to ensure the success of Census 2000.

This report details the findings from a series of joint field observations conducted in recent months. Specifically, the Board has undertaken case studies of Bureau operations in both the Dallas and New York census regions, conducted observations of critical training sessions at the Census Bureau's National Processing Center in Jeffersonville, Indiana, and sent staff to observe census operations in the state of Alaska.

With some exceptions detailed in the following report, and subject to their relatively limited scope, our observations indicate the planning for census operations and community relations is generally proceeding well in the regional offices and local census offices we visited.

Participation in the census is one of the most basic civic responsibilities. The results of the 2000 Census will, for the next ten years, affect every aspect of American life. The results will guide the allocation of political representation at the federal, state and local levels, determine funding for schools, hospitals, roads, bridges, and utilities, and guide vital decisions to address some of our most pressing social problems. In the private sector, businesses will rely on these numbers to decide where to invest, and where to build stores, factories and bank branches and housing.

This census has seen its share of political controversy. But for all the debate, we join unanimously to urge every resident of the United States to complete and return the census forms they have received and to cooperate with the Census Bureau's enumerators when they begin their efforts to find those who have been missed.

**CENSUS OPERATIONS UPDATE**

Following is a brief summary of major census operations. As with any undertaking of such massive scale, there have been operational problems to date and there likely will be more before the Census Bureau concludes its field operations later this year.

It should be noted that the largest and most vital operations, the Mailout and return of census questionnaires by mail and the field effort to follow up on non-responding households, are either still underway or yet to begin. These observations about census operations must, therefore, be considered preliminary.

### **Remote Alaska Enumeration**

Enumeration efforts began on January 19, 2000 with the Remote Alaska Enumeration. This operation begins well in advance of Census Day in order to count residents of remote villages before the change of seasons prompts many to leave their communities to hunt, fish, or engage in other employment. For details on the Monitoring Board's observations of this operation, see Section IV of this report.

### **Advance Notice Letter**

On March 6, 2000, the Bureau mailed advance notice letters announcing that Census 2000 questionnaires would be arriving soon. The letter was sent to approximately 112 million households nationwide. In addition to announcing the arrival of the census forms, the letter announced the availability of census forms in Spanish, Korean, Japanese, Vietnamese, Chinese or Tagalog. By checking off a selection on the letter and returning via an enclosed envelope, households could receive a form in one of these six languages.

A significant printing error on the letters was discovered after they had been shipped to U.S. Postal Service facilities for delivery. The contractor hired by the Government Printing Office (GPO) to print the letters inadvertently inserted an extra digit as the first character in the street address line of the address. The Bureau's quality control procedures failed to detect the error.

The Postal Service provided the Bureau with assurances that the letters would be successfully delivered despite the error, and the Monitoring Board would like to thank the Postal Service for their efforts to ensure this important operation was carried out.

There are indications the advance letter has had a positive effect. As of March 20, 2000 roughly 1.5 million non-English forms had been requested via return of the advance letter. In addition, on March 21, 2000, the



Bureau Director reported the results of the Inter-Survey (a survey funded by private donations but coordinated with the Bureau) which found that the number of respondents who understood that the census is primarily a Mailback operation climbed from 58 percent prior to the letter's delivery to 84 percent afterward.<sup>7</sup>

### **Update/Leave Enumeration**

The Update/Leave enumeration efforts (in which enumerators hand-deliver questionnaires in rural areas while simultaneously updating the address lists) began on March 3, 2000 and were scheduled to end on March 30, shortly after this report went to press. List/Enumerate operations, used in remote and sparsely populated areas where enumerators will directly enumerate residents rather than delivering questionnaires for Mailback, began on March 13, 2000 and are scheduled to continue until May 1, 2000.

### **Mailout/Mailback Operations**

On March 13, 2000, the Bureau mailed out roughly 98 million forms to households as part of its Mailout/Mailback effort. The Bureau had previously verified that the printing error on the advance letters was not duplicated on the forms. As of March 21, 2000, just under 15 million households had returned their forms, and the Bureau's four Data Capture Centers (DCCs) had processed 7.3 million of them.<sup>8</sup>

### **Urban Update/Enumerate Operations**

Urban Update/Enumerate operations were scheduled to begin on March 20, 2000, and are scheduled to be completed by May 30, 2000. The Bureau intends to use the Urban Update/Enumerate strategy in selected areas with historically high or potentially high undercounts. Enumerators will update the census address list and directly interview residents of selected areas' households, rather than dropping off questionnaires and awaiting a reply by mail.

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<sup>7</sup> It should be noted that the nationwide paid media campaign, carried out by Young & Rubicam under a Bureau contract, was operating in the same time period as the advance letter delivery.

<sup>8</sup> Dr. Kenneth Prewitt, Director, U.S. Census Bureau, March 21, 2000 press briefing.

## Recruiting

Recruiting efforts aimed at filling the more than 535,000 staff positions<sup>9</sup> the Bureau will need at peak operations were on track at the national level. On March 21, 2000 the Bureau Director announced that the Bureau had recruited an applicant pool of 2.2 million qualified individuals. This is roughly 91 percent of the national recruiting goal, and was reached just under one month prior to the April 19, 2000 recruiting deadline. The Bureau's 520 Local Census Offices (LCOs) were open and operating. For details on the Monitoring Board's findings on recruiting and LCO operations in the Dallas and New York census regions, see Sections II and III of this report.

Enumerators fluent in the language of the community are essential to a successful count in linguistically isolated communities. The Board will continue to monitor the effect of English proficiency tests – required of all enumerators in the lower 49 states and the District of Columbia – on hiring in these areas. We are encouraged by the reports from local offices detailed in this report, which indicated the English proficiency test had not been a barrier to recruiting a suitable workforce.

## Congressional Members' Position

*Initial reporting of the Bureau's recruiting progress has focused on national, not local, recruiting goals. The Congressional Members of the Monitoring Board believe that neighborhood hiring levels – not national goals – are the appropriate measure of recruiting success. Reporting on the national or aggregate level can mask the issue that there may be neighborhoods, particularly hard-to-count neighborhoods, where indigenous recruiting and hiring is not successful.*

*Based on conversations and interviews with local leaders across the country, the Congressional Members are still concerned that the Bureau's national plans to recruit and hire locally may not be realized in some hard-to-enumerate areas. We will continue our efforts to monitor local hiring in the field, through observation and interview with both local census offices and local partners.*

*The Congressional Members agree that the best enumerator is a person who looks like and sounds like the person answering the door.*

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<sup>9</sup> *Census 2000 Field Staffing Requirements at Peak Operation*, U.S. Bureau of the Census, December 12, 1999.

*Neighborhood residents have the knowledge of their own communities – something altogether different than verbatim training and operational directive. The Congressional Members believe the best way to reduce the undercount in hard-to-count neighborhoods is to ensure local residents are hired to take the census in their own neighborhoods.*

*For example, enumeration in Miami’s Little Haiti depends on hiring Haitian residents of Little Haiti; and enumeration in nearby Little Havana depends on employing Cuban residents of Little Havana.*

*In 1990, differential pay scales were first used to meet this challenge. The differential pay scales meant that people living in urban neighborhoods could effectively be hired. This was an important first step that the Bureau has continued in 2000.*

*The public statements of the Secretary of Commerce and the Director of the Bureau of the Census share this view. Secretary of Commerce William M. Daley stated, “the ideal census taker for us is a person who lives in a neighborhood. It is someone who knows the territory and knows the families in the area in which they live...it is someone who knows where the children are and how many children there may be in the building.”<sup>10</sup>*

*The Director of the Census Bureau publicly echoed this commitment, saying, “our goal is to have a pool of local people who are familiar with their communities and committed to a successful count in their own neighborhoods.”<sup>11</sup> While these statements are encouraging, the Board does not have sufficient information to affirm that stated goals are being implemented in the neighborhoods and on the streets in the hard-to-count communities.*

*We recognize the Bureau is fully capable of incorporating cultural sensitivity and adaptability in their hiring practices. The current enumeration operations in Remote Alaska illustrate this, and should be used as a model for other communities throughout America that are the hardest-to-count: colonias, vast sections of public housing, and remote rural areas such as the Mississippi Delta. For example, in the Native Alaska communities of Remote Alaska, the Bureau has waived the hiring*

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<sup>10</sup> Department of Commerce, Secretary William M. Daley, *White House Briefing: Welfare to Work and the 2000 Census* (Washington, DC: National Press Club, 28 September 1999).

<sup>11</sup> Damon Adams, “Census Bureau Counting on Local Hiring,” *Fort Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel*, Sunday, 16 January 2000, Broward Edition P1, sec. B.

*test requirement and solicits the input of Tribal Leaders when they hire village residents as enumerators.*

### **Presidential Members' Position**

*The Presidential Members join the Congressional Members in reaffirming the importance of local recruiting and hiring to a successful enumeration. However, we note that the Census Bureau has long incorporated local recruiting and hiring as an integral part of its planning for Census 2000 – a commitment which pre-dates the establishment of the Monitoring Board and one which was documented in the Board's joint report on April 1, 1999.*

*The importance of local recruiting, hiring and assignment has been repeatedly stressed by the Secretary of Commerce, the Director of the Census Bureau, and by all the regional and local census office officials with whom we spoke in the process of researching this report.*

*Each LCO visited during the preparation of this report had made the recruiting of local residents a priority. Their dedicated efforts to ensure that recruiting reaches into hard to enumerate neighborhoods are documented in this report. In particular, our visit to the New York Northwest LCO confirmed that the LCO staff was aware of the challenges they were facing in recruiting sufficient staff to enumerate the Mexican American community in their jurisdiction. We saw no lack of commitment by the LCO to ensuring those recruiting challenges are met.*

*While we agree that measuring the success of these efforts will be an important evaluation, and will continue to examine the Bureau's progress, we find no basis for questioning the Census Bureau's commitment to this recruiting strategy.*

### **Food Stamps, Medicaid, Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF) Waivers**

Effective hiring at the neighborhood level in economically disadvantaged communities will often mean hiring residents who receive public assistance such as Food Stamps, Medicaid, Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF). Until recently the fear of losing government assistance for taking a temporary census job was a concern for the Census Bureau and for residents in low-income communities.

In 1990, the Census Bureau addressed this concern through a series of cooperative agreements with the Federal agencies that manage the most important government assistance programs. However, the waiver process has proved significantly more complex for 2000. The Welfare Reform Act has transferred much of the responsibility for administering social services to the states.

As a result, for Census 2000, the Census Bureau and partners in Congress have worked to secure waivers at both the national level and in individual states.

On December 29, 1998, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development announced a waiver for recipients of Section 8 housing assistance. Since the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced the availability of a similar waiver for Food Stamp recipients in early February 2000, 46 states have approved the waiver.

Similarly, under a waiver announced by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 25 states have announced waivers for recipients of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). Twenty-eight states have announced that they will exclude census earnings from eligibility calculations for Medicaid, and 25 have announced the same policy for CHIP eligibility.

The waiver program remains an important recruiting tool for Census 2000, especially in communities which may be experiencing a shortage of qualified applicants in hard-to-enumerate areas.

### **Congressional Members' Position**

*The Congressional Members commend the Bureau for their work in advocating this issue, as well as those Senators who intervened directly with the Secretary of Agriculture to encourage him to reverse the Department's initial rejection of the waiver proposal.*

### **Partnership**

Efforts to form partnerships with state and local governments and community organizations to promote the census continue. As of March 21, 2000, the Bureau reported more than 102,000 partnerships across the country.<sup>12</sup>

### **Questionnaire Assistance Centers and Be Counted Sites**

The 12 Regional Census Centers, and the LCOs in their jurisdictions, had identified a total of 27,000 sites for Questionnaire Assistance Centers (QACs) and more than 21,000 sites at which to place forms and materials for the Be Counted effort.<sup>13</sup> QAC startups began on March 8, 2000. These centers are scheduled to remain open until April 14, 2000, shortly before Non-Response Follow-Up operations begin.

### **Telephone Questionnaire Assistance**

Problems were initially reported with the Telephone Questionnaire Assistance (TQA) system designed to provide assistance to individuals with questions about the census form. (Telephone assistance is available in English, Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, Korean and Tagalog.) According to Census Bureau Director Kenneth Prewitt, the initial incoming call volume exceeded predictions, which were based on the timing of calls to the 1990 Census telephone assistance system. As a result, calls came in before the system was operating with its full staffing complement of 9,100. Director Prewitt later reported the problem seemed resolved once all the planned operators were in place. The TQA system had logged a total of 1.8 million calls as of March 18, 2000. Roughly 15 percent of these calls were to the Spanish language line.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Reported by the Monitoring Board's Census Bureau liaison, March 23, 2000.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Dr. Kenneth Prewitt, Director, U.S. Census Bureau, March 21, 2000 press briefing.

### **Special Population, Transient and Group Quarters Enumeration**

Bureau operations to enumerate special, and often hard-to-enumerate, populations were scheduled for late March (shortly after this report went to press). On March 27, 2000 the Bureau planned to send enumerators to transitional and emergency shelters to count residents of those facilities. On March 28, enumerators were scheduled to canvass soup kitchens and mobile food vans for those who may be missed by other census operations. On March 29, teams of enumerators were scheduled to count homeless persons living in outdoor areas, and on March 31, persons without a permanent address living at transient locations (including parks, fairgrounds, carnivals and marinas) were to be enumerated. On April 1, 2000, the enumeration of group quarters is scheduled to take place. This operation will count residents of nursing homes, college dormitories, residential treatment facilities and prisons.

### **Non-Response Follow-Up**

Finally, on April 27, 2000, the Bureau will begin a massive Non-Response Follow-Up (NRFU) operation, deploying enumerators across the nation to count those individuals who did not return forms following the mailout/mailback or update/leave operations. The ultimate scope of this operation remains unclear. Much will be determined by the mailback response rate – the greater the number of forms returned by mail, the fewer the households which must be contacted during NRFU.

NRFU field operations are scheduled from April 27 to July 7, 2000. The Monitoring Board will be closely following the progress of this critical operation in the coming months.

## NEW YORK REGIONAL CASE STUDY

### REGIONAL CENSUS CENTER

On February 22 and 23, 2000, Board staff visited the New York Regional Census Center (RCC) and the New York Northwest and Queens Northeast local census offices (LCOs). The RCC visit lasted about three hours, and each LCO visit lasted one to three hours, which covered a briefing, tour and question and answer period.

The New York RCC is located in a federal government building in southern Manhattan. The 9<sup>th</sup> floor office includes sufficient space for the staff. Staff observed separate office areas for all divisions: recruiting, geography, partnership, automation, and payroll. Areas for a receptionist, top management, and assistants were also adequate.

In order to insure that pay is distributed accurately and on time, the RCC had recently added extra pay facilitator positions. Computers and office space had been provided for up to seven clerks to work full time on payroll support. In some divisions, such as Geography (which produces maps for enumerators), two or more work shifts are being employed.

Monitoring Board staff were briefed by the senior officials of the Census Bureau's New York Region, including the Regional Director, RCC Manager, Recruiting Manager, Partnership Manager, Geography Coordinator, and Automation Coordinator. Additional regional staff also participated.

### New York Region Enumeration Strategies

STRATEGY	NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS	PERCENT OF TOTAL
Mailout/Mailback	6,482,355	93.8%
Update/Leave	69,045	1.0%
Urban Update/Enumerate	360,612	5.2%

Most households in the New York Region are designated as mailout/mailback. That is, they will receive (and are asked to return) a census questionnaire via the U.S. Postal Service. Other housing units in the region will be enumerated by update/leave or urban update/enumerate. During update/leave, enumerators update the Bureau address list while



delivering questionnaires to households in rural areas. Respondents are asked to complete the forms and return them by mail. Urban update/enumerate is employed in certain targeted areas, and involves updating address lists and the simultaneous enumeration of households.

The New York RCC administers 39 LCOs centered around the New York City metropolitan area. Twenty-two LCOs are in New York City, while six are just north of the City and 11 are located in New Jersey.

According to the New York Regional Director, the region is unique in a few important respects. It leads the nation in population concentration and multi-unit dwellings. It also contains the largest number of urban HTE areas. The Regional Director emphasized New York City's unparalleled diversity, including representatives of virtually every language and culture from around the world.

The New York region has one significant advantage over others: it covers the smallest geographic area (only 309 square miles). This allows regional or partnership staff to make relatively quick visits to and from many of the region's LCOs.

### **Partnership**

Due to the New York region's small size, it elected to distribute Partnership Specialist responsibilities by race or ethnicity across the region, rather than assign one specialist to each LCO. The Regional Director noted limitations to this approach: race and ethnic groups far outnumber the 50 Partnership Specialists in the region. The region does not have sufficient personnel to cover each of the languages and cultures represented in New York City. However, the Regional Director indicated that assigning Partnership Specialists by race or ethnic focus allows the New York RCC to cover a broader range of races and ethnicities than individual LCO assignments.

Resources may be strained in some key areas, due to the complexity of the partnership workload. For example, managers at New York Northwest reported poor coordination with the partnership staff (see page 14).

According to the Regional Director, developing partnerships with government and various private sector entities has been the greatest task facing the New York RCC. This is the first census in which the Census

Bureau has actively sought such a broad range of partners, and the workload has been heavier than expected.

The Board agrees that partnership with local leaders is invaluable to a successful census. Outside partners, particularly community-based organizations, are best able to motivate residents to participate in the census. Time spent developing local partnerships is therefore a necessary investment, particularly in hard-to-enumerate areas.

The Regional Director noted some partnerships, such as those with the State and City of New York, initially required considerable attention from the RCC, and now function effectively as an independent partner. Other examples cited require more “handholding” from the RCC. With approximately 3,000 partnerships, the RCC cannot work closely with them all.

According to the Regional Director, partnership and outreach efforts had consumed a significant amount of top management resources. He also stated the time demands of meeting with political leaders and oversight groups (including the Monitoring Board) had been significant.

### **Recruiting and Staffing**

At the time of interview, the New York Region had exceeded its overall employee recruiting goal of 70 percent. As of March 1, 2000, the nationwide goal was 70 percent of the total applicants needed. By February 25, the New York region had recruited 90 percent of applicants needed.

#### **New York Region Hiring Goals**

<b>AREA</b>	<b>GOAL</b>
New Jersey	11,605
New York State	7,385
New York City	22,155
Total	41,345

The Bureau tracks the pass/fail rates for the employment test administered to applicants for enumerator positions. At the time of interview, 86 percent or 120,573 of 140,399 applicants tested had passed. No LCO reported less than a 75 percent passing rate.

The Bureau does not have a policy of contacting applicants after they have taken the test. Regional staff reported complaints from applicants who were not notified of failing the test, and responded with a regional policy. The region sent letters to all applicants who had not passed, informed them of their status, and encouraged them to re-take the test (which may be re-taken indefinitely).

At the time of interview, recruiting was largely successful across the region, with some pockets of concern. Of the region's 39 offices, 28 were ahead of their recruiting goals, and 11 lagged behind. The region had employed the Bureau's standard measures to escalate recruiting efforts where necessary.

Recruiting materials are generated at the RCC as well as the LCOs and by headquarter-contracted printing locations.

### **NEW YORK NORTHWEST, 2236**

Congressional and Presidential Monitoring Board staff met with the management of the New York Northwest local census office (LCO) for approximately two hours during the morning of February 23, 2000. The LCO manager, assistant managers for administration, field operations, and recruiting were present, as well as the office's automation technician. Also present were the New York Assistant Regional Census Manager (ARCM), and the Regional Technician responsible for the office. The Census Monitoring Board liaison was in attendance.

New York Northwest is responsible for enumerating the historic neighborhood of Harlem. The almost wholly-minority area includes African, African American, Caribbean, Mexican and Puerto Rican households. The 1990 population was 308,453, living in 154,588 housing units.<sup>15</sup> Mistrust of government, linguistic and cultural isolation, and socioeconomic conditions contribute to the area's hard-to-enumerate designation. The office also faces operational challenges: apparently poor coordination with partnership staff, slow delivery of supplies, and inadequate physical facilities.

Despite these challenges, the dedicated staff had surpassed recruiting goals. At the time of interview, recruiting a sizable pool of job applicants was the major operational focus of LCOs nationwide. Census Bureau records as of

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<sup>15</sup> Source: December 1999 Planning Database. Data may not reflect regional updates. The December 1999 PDB was provided to the Monitoring Board. The PDB assigns each census tract to an LCO using an LCO code. For example, all census tracts in the New York Northwest area have the code 2236. Discussions with regional staff suggest regional updates to LCO coding are not reflected in the file provided to the Board. As a result, population and housing unit totals may differ from regional data.

February 24, 2000, show New York Northwest at 105 percent of the recruiting goal, with 4,825 qualified applicants.<sup>16</sup>

Opened in October 1999, this office arguably has one of the most difficult assignments among the Census Bureau's 520 LCOs. Harlem is actually split into two distinct communities: West and East Harlem, or Black Harlem and El Barrio, respectively. West Harlem's population includes African American, African and Caribbean households. There is a small but growing French African population. El Barrio, which used to be almost entirely Puerto Rican, is now also home to a rapidly-growing Mexican community, which LCO staff have identified as particularly hard-to-count. The large Spanish-speaking population creates a demand for in-language recruiting and promotional materials. It also requires a substantial number of Spanish-fluent enumerators.

### **Hard-To-Enumerate Planning**

Census and survey coverage is generally lower than average in Black and Latino neighborhoods in dense urban areas, which puts Harlem at risk for extreme undercounts in Census 2000. Most of the census tracts in the area have been identified as hard-to-enumerate (HTE) by the Bureau's demographers, using data from the 1990 Census.

In addition, the management team – consisting wholly of Harlem residents – demonstrated detailed knowledge of different aspects of the community. Staff combined local knowledge with the Bureau's Planning Database (PDB) to develop special enumeration plans for HTE tracts. These HTE action plans, referred to as "Hot Tracts," were provided to the Regional Census Center (RCC) two weeks prior to interview.<sup>17</sup>

LCO staff cited blitz and pair enumeration among the strategies planned for Hot Tracts.<sup>18</sup> Monitoring Board staff requested copies of the plan, which would provide greater detail of the Bureau's efforts to improve enumeration in areas at risk of extreme undercounts, and were refused by the Monitoring Board liaison.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> *Census 2000 Recruiting Status, New York LCOs*, U.S. Bureau of the Census, February 25, 2000.

<sup>17</sup> During Autumn 1999, each of the 520 LCOs was required to prepare an HTE action plan; special enumeration strategies for census tracts identified as HTE.

<sup>18</sup> Blitz and pair enumeration are two special-enumeration strategies included in the "toolkit" of options provided by Bureau headquarters. Both involve sending multiple enumerators to an assignment area, instead of a single enumerator.

<sup>19</sup> The Associate Director for Field Operations has yet to authorize the release of any HTE action plans to the Monitoring Board. The stated reason is that the plans are not in final form. However, we note the plans are intended to be "living documents." They will not be in final form until census operations are complete.

## **Facilities**

The ability of New York Northwest's staff to meet enumeration challenges may be impaired by poor working conditions. On the day of interview, the office had no running water. This was the third such occasion since the October opening. Management reported one previous interruption of service had lasted nine days. During these occasions, the office staff (about 40 employees at the time of interview) was forced to solicit nearby businesses for use of the facilities.

Management's greatest physical concern is the building's elevator, which had not worked since the LCO opening. The office space is located on the third floor, and is not accessible to persons with disabilities. This also inhibits deliveries of supplies for the office or field staff. (For example, delivery of several hundred pounds of desks and chairs was delayed due to inaccessibility. LCOs also receive a large volume of various forms for administration and enumeration.)

Other space concerns include leaking plumbing, rodents, fire code violations, inadequate trash pickup and no window treatments (staff had taped paper over windows to reduce glare on computer monitors).

The ARCM ended further discussion of facilities, although LCO staff and the Regional Technician indicated there were additional problems in this area. Senior regional staff later assured the Monitoring Board they were aware of the facilities problems in New York Northwest, and were working closely with the General Services Administration (which procured space for all LCOs) to remedy all problems. Regional staff cited extreme difficulty obtaining a lease for suitable space in this LCO area. Reportedly, exhaustive efforts to obtain space, including soliciting aid from Congressional Representatives in the area, produced no suitable facilities.

This visit did not provide sufficient information for a full evaluation of the cause, effect and remedy of the facilities problems in New York Northwest, nor does the Monitoring Board have resources to perform such an evaluation. Nevertheless, these problems – and their impact on the staff – are clearly cause for concern.

## Recruiting and Staffing

Despite the challenges described above, recruiting has been successful. According to Bureau records, New York Northwest had reached 105 percent of its goal for qualified job applicants as of February 24, 2000. Management reports word-of-mouth and community “blitzing” (handing out fliers at community events) have been effective recruiting tactics, and the local churches have been prominent recruiting partners. However, staff reports that the strongest incentive for many Harlem residents is the substantial pay: \$19.50 an hour.<sup>20</sup>

From January 1, 1998 through February 22, 2000, 2236 had 7,672 job applicants. A majority were Black and Latino women. As of February 22, 100 applicants were working and 29 had been offered a position (hiring enumerators for non-response follow-up, the most labor-intensive operation, was scheduled to begin three weeks after the interview, on March 13). The applicant file listed 4,451 total persons available, with the remainder ineligible or under review.<sup>21</sup>

Although mail response will determine precise staffing levels and composition, New York Northwest anticipates hiring approximately 800 – 1,000 enumerators. The crew leader-to-enumerator ratio will be 1:20.<sup>22</sup> Management estimated needing approximately 350 Spanish-fluent enumerators. Staff anticipated potential problems in hiring enough enumerators in linguistically and culturally isolated Mexican neighborhoods. In particular, recruiters cited difficulty in receiving necessary identification from recent immigrants.

The LCO established 24 testing centers. Five were identified with the help of the partnership specialist. One center, located on East 14<sup>th</sup> Street, was established exclusively for the Mexican community: testing of Mexican applicants, conducted by Mexican local partners (the Latino Advisory Committee).

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<sup>20</sup> At the time of interview, the Assistant Manager for Field Operations noted a concern that census income counted against TANF and Medicaid eligibility. The potential loss of benefits had discouraged some local applicants who might be valuable enumerators. In March 2000, the state of New York opted into the TANF and Medicaid waiver programs (see page six for further discussion).

<sup>21</sup> PAMS/ADAMS Applicant Background Profile Report, February 22, 2000. The Assistant Manager for Field Operations noted a concern that census income counted against TANF and Medicaid eligibility.

<sup>22</sup> This ratio includes the Bureau’s practice of “frontloading:” hiring two people for each position in anticipation of turnover.

### **English Proficiency Test**

Although the enumerator test can be administered in Spanish, Spanish applicants must also pass an English proficiency test, since training is conducted in English. Staff reported the English-proficiency test did not appear prohibitive: out of 74 tests administered in the prior week, 70 were passed.

However, anticipating that they may need some flexibility in this area, there is a contingency plan to employ the Spanish-language training materials in use in Puerto Rico, conduct training in Spanish, and waive the English requirement, if necessary.

Monitoring Board staff requested a breakdown of the applicant file by language ability. Although the Bureau tracks this information, the RCC declined to provide it to the Board.

### **Pre-Appointment Management System and Automated Decennial Administrative Management System (PAMS/ADAMS)**

Management reported considerable frustration with the PAMS/ADAMS system and the recently installed PAMS/ADAMS Data Entry (PADE) software. There was some concern that the new data-entry software required additional time and auditing by clerks, and that efficiency was actually reduced. However, New York Northwest management has prioritized timely payment, and had received no complaints for late payment.

There was also concern about the ability to hire experienced employees at the appropriate pay scale. Specifically, the Assistant Manager for Field Operations wished to hire a woman, who had performed exceptionally as a lister during address listing, as a crew leader. Accepting the position, the woman received her first paycheck at the enumerator wage. Upon investigation, it was confirmed that PAMS/ADAMS would not permit an experienced employee to be hired at a higher rate – they must be hired at their previous wage. Bringing this to the attention of Bureau headquarters, the RCC and the LCO were told to hire people at the lower pay rate, and increase it the following week. Both the LCO staff and the ARCM indicated this was an insufficient measure.

## **Partnership**

One partnership specialist has been assigned to coordinate with New York Northwest since the October 1999 opening. Another specialist was recently hired at the prompting of the Latino Advisory Committee, to work primarily with the Mexican community. Staff suggest the partnership specialist position would be more effective if it answered directly to the LCO, rather than the RCC.

LCO staff reported coordination with the partnership specialist had been poor. The specialist had little or no input in recruiting efforts, Hot Tract planning, QAC and Be Counted site placement, or community outreach in this particular LCO.

Office staff reported conducting their own outreach with local churches, and meeting frequently with the Latino Advisory Committee and the Harlem Complete Count Committee (CCC). Partnership activities include mini-awareness days and church events. The Latino Advisory Committee meets weekly at the LCO.

## **Questionnaire Assistance Centers (QACs) and Be Counted Sites**

LCO staff have selected 45 QAC sites, expanded from an original 25. Partnership specialist and local partners did not have input in site selection. Additional Be Counted sites had not been determined at the time of interview, although Be Counted forms had been delivered to the LCO.

## **Materials and Training**

Management reported frustration in obtaining materials of any kind: office supplies, promotional materials, enumeration and in-language forms. In addition to the physical space difficulties noted above, all staff reported consistent shortages and delays in receiving materials, with the exception of maps.

Enumeration and administration training manuals, although lengthy, were cited as effective reference materials. There was concern that the PAMS/ADAMS manuals contain some misleading or superfluous instruction in some areas.



In addition, the ARCM described “just in time” training sessions: detailed training or “refresher” courses, conducted by area managers, dealing with imminent operations. Management agreed these were valuable sessions.

### **QUEENS NORTHEAST, 2240**

Congressional and Presidential Monitoring Board staff met with the management of the Queens Northeast local census office (LCO) for approximately one hour during the afternoon of February 23, 2000. The LCO manager, assistant managers of administration, field operations, and recruiting were present, as well as the office’s special places enumeration coordinator. Also present were the Deputy Regional Director, an Assistant Regional Census Manager, an Area Manager, and the Census Monitoring Board liaison.

Queens Northeast is responsible for enumerating a largely white population, with a substantial Asian community. The 1990 population was 308,453, living in 154,588 housing units.<sup>23</sup>

The LCO staff reported no problems, and had surpassed recruiting goals at the time of interview. The only major concern discussed was the area’s tightly-knit Korean and Chinese communities, which would be at risk for major undercounts without sufficient in-language materials, local enumerators, and partnership with community leaders. The office reported actively pursuing all these goals with considerable success. However, the Deputy Regional Director indicated that the enumeration of these hard-to-count communities represents a significant challenge.

### **Facilities**

Queens Northeast officially opened its doors on October 29, 1999. The office facilities were a sharp contrast from New York Northwest. The office was clean, well-lit and spacious. There were no complaints from the staff regarding the facilities. Each department had plenty of space to operate.

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<sup>23</sup> Source: December 1999 Planning Database. Data may not reflect regional updates. The December 1999 PDB was provided to the Monitoring Board. The PDB assigns each census tract to an LCO using an LCO code. For example, all census tracts in the Queens Northeast area have the code 2240. Discussions with regional staff suggest regional updates to LCO coding are not reflected in the file provided to the Board. As a result, population and housing unit totals may differ from regional data.

## **Recruiting and Staffing**

Recruitment seems to have been successful up to the time of interview. Staff reported high recruitment numbers, reaching close to 70 percent of the needed 9,000-person applicant pool. At peak operations, Queens Northeast expects to have 85 staff members in its office.

Fourteen recruiting assistants are responsible for hiring 800 to 1000 enumerators. This staffing level is based on an assumed mail response of 52 percent (anticipated from the 1990 rate). The LCO estimated reaching 80 percent of the recruitment goal by March 1. Staff attributed recruiting successes to pre-testing exercises conducted in Korean, Chinese and Greek, although the actual tests were only conducted in Spanish and English. The LCO found that a sufficient number of applicants were Asian-language fluent and English proficient. The bulk of the first round of non-response follow-up (NRFU) hiring will be done by mid-April, and NRFU will begin April 27.

Management reported the main problem encountered in recruitment has been the lack of proper identification credentials from applicants. Most of the time applicants simply forgot to bring them and had to return another day. In some cases, applicants did not have the proper identification.

The pay scale for this LCO is at the high end; clerks will be paid from \$14.00 to \$21.50, enumerators will be paid \$18.80/hour, and crew leaders will be paid \$20.00/hour.

## **Hard-To-Enumerate Planning**

The Planning Database (PDB), using 1990 Census data and response rates to identify hard-to-enumerate (HTE) areas, was supplemented with local knowledge to develop an HTE Action Plan.

The largest minority populations in the area are Chinese, Korean and Hindu Indians. The LCO goal is to recruit 30 people per census tract. According to the PDB (and confirmed by office staff), Queens Northeast has HTE neighborhoods in only two zip codes, each with concentrations of Korean and Chinese residents.

Office staff reported preparing an action plan to enumerate HTE areas, and submitting it to the Regional Census Center. Monitoring Board staff requested copies of the plan, which would provide greater detail of the

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Bureau's efforts to improve enumeration in areas at risk of extreme undercounts, and were refused by the Monitoring Board liaison.<sup>24</sup>

### **Pre-Appointment Management System and Automated Decennial Administrative Management System (PAMS/ADAMS)**

Queens Northeast reported no problems with PAMS/ADAMS, or the recently-installed user interface, PAMS/ADAMS Data Entry (PADE).

### **Partnership**

Two partnership specialists have been actively coordinating with the office since the October 1999 opening. Staff reported a partnership specialist would generally be in the office for at least a short time on any given day.

Given the demographics of Queens Northeast, the LCO has formed an invaluable partnership with the 80-member Queens Area Asian American Coalition. The Coalition has developed an outreach plan for the Korean, Chinese and Hindu communities. Management reported the Coalition scheduling an all-day Census Awareness Conference at the Flushing Library, which will target these communities.

The Korean Task Force, a member of the Queens CCC, has also been very helpful, working closely with the Korean Partnership Specialist. Both organizations worked together to place a full-page ad in the Mandarin Chinese newspaper alerting its readership of the Advance Letter and the opportunity to request an in-language census form should it be needed.

### **Questionnaire Assistance Centers (QACs) and Be Counted Sites**

Bureau records indicate 25 Questionnaire Assistance Centers (QACs) located in the Queens Northeast LCO area. The QAC sites were placed in neighborhoods meeting the following criteria: identification as HTE; identification of language barriers among residents; and a high proportion of low-income families. The QACs were intended to be staffed by paid employees and volunteers, although the volunteer pool had not been determined at the time of interview. In addition, staff reported 25 partnership organizations submitted input on site selections.

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<sup>24</sup> The Associate Director for Field Operations has yet to authorize the release of any HTE action plans to the Monitoring Board. The stated reason is that the plans are not in final form. However, we note the plans are intended to be "living documents." They will not be in final form until census operations are complete.

## **Materials**

Promotional and outreach materials were translated and distributed by the Queens Area Asian American Coalition and the Korean Task Force.

Staff expected delivery of Be Counted forms on February 25, and had received the displays already. Management indicated that the employee manuals were very helpful and that the field manuals were easy to sift through. Staff also indicated no problems securing the necessary resource materials.

## DALLAS REGIONAL CASE STUDY

### REGIONAL CENSUS CENTER

Staff from both sides of the Census Monitoring Board visited the Dallas Regional Census Center (RCC) and two local census offices in the region – Dallas County South and El Paso, Texas February 28 – 29, 2000. Senior management officials of the RCC briefed the staff for approximately four hours. Conducting the briefing were the Dallas Regional Director, Deputy Regional Director, Area Regional Census Managers, Regional Recruiters, the Regional Media Specialist, and the Regional Partnership Coordinator.

The Dallas Regional Census Center is responsible for conducting the decennial in three states – Texas, Louisiana and Mississippi. The combined population of these three states is estimated at 24 million people living in approximately 11,455,000 housing units. There are 7 American Indian Reservations and over 6,000 governmental units. The region contains twenty-five cities with over 100,000 people and vast stretches of rural counties. To assist in counting this area of over 350,000 square miles, the Bureau opened 46 Local Census Offices. Thirty-two are in Texas, 9 are in Louisiana, and 5 are in Mississippi.

#### Dallas Region Enumeration Strategies

STRATEGY	PERCENT OF TOTAL
Mailout/Mailback	75.9%
Update/Leave and Urban Update/Leave	23.2%
Update/Enumerate	0.8%
List/Enumerate	0.1%

Due to the diverse geography of the region, the Dallas RCC will employ five different enumeration strategies: mailout/mailback, update/leave, urban update leave, update/enumerate, and list/enumerate. Mailout/Mailback describes the method where the Bureau mails out a census form and expects a form back in the mail. Update/leave is when the Bureau updates its address list while delivering questionnaires in rural areas and expects the form back in the mail. Urban update/leave is the same operation as update/leave but in urban areas. Update/enumerate is used in targeted areas with historically or potentially high non-response

rates by updating the address list while conducting door-to-door enumeration. List/enumerate is used in remote and sparsely populated areas to create an address list and conduct door-to-door enumeration.

### **Hard-To-Enumerate Planning**

RCC Managers used the Planning Database (PDB) developed by Census Headquarters to help identify hard-to-enumerate areas, areas of potentially low mail return rates, placement of Questionnaire Assistance Centers (QACs) and/or Be Counted sites, areas that need special outreach and promotion activities and where additional recruitment activities are needed in the Dallas Region. The PDB evaluates and arranges 1990 census data and mail response rates to generate a Hard to Enumerate (HTE) score for each census tract in the country. Furthermore, the RCC worked with the Texas State Data Center and the Attorney General's Office to pre-identify HTE areas and shared the findings with local government officials and planners. In order to raise awareness early in HTE areas, meetings between census officials and from state and local governments took place in the fall of 1999. In these meetings, the PDB was updated with changes from the last 10 years, some tracts were added and some were removed from the HTE list.

The Regional Director sent a memo in April 1999 asking each Early [Opening] Local Census Office (ELCO) to "check" the PDB to determine its HTE areas and develop an action plan for the areas by July 1, 1999.<sup>25</sup> The plans were, and are, subject to change. According to the April memo, "[the Bureau] cannot guarantee that all aspects of a plan will be implemented. There are obstacles, such as budgetary constraints, that may be limiting factors."<sup>26</sup>

As LCOs opened, the new PDB spreadsheets that listed HTE tracts were shared with the office. The spreadsheet included suggested strategies to count the pre-identified hard to count areas. Such strategies include pair/team enumeration, blitz enumeration, bilingual enumeration, guides or local facilitators, Be Counted site location, QAC location, and use of update/enumerate and urban update/leave delivery strategies. Relying on local knowledge, the LCOs were able to locate the pre-identified HTE tracts and decide the appropriate enumeration tool to use in that particular

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<sup>25</sup> Early Local Census Offices (ELCOs) were the first wave of local census offices opened in 1999.

<sup>26</sup> Dallas Regional Census Center Technical Memorandum No. 99-26. "Development of Plans for Hard to Enumerate Areas." From Alfonso Mirabal, Regional Director to ELCO Managers, Partnership Specialists, Media Specialists and Field Regional Technicians.

area. LCOs also further refined and continue to update the PDB to reflect local changes.

### Colonias

The Dallas RCC has taken proactive steps in one of the most undercounted areas of the country in the 1990 census – colonias. Colonias are small, rural, unincorporated communities primarily along the Texas/Mexico border. These communities often lack basic services such as water, paved streets, and sewage systems.

According to the Texas Water Development Board, in 1996, there were a total of 1,512 colonias. The highest concentration of colonias is found in Hidalgo, Cameron, Starr and El Paso Counties.<sup>27</sup>

COUNTY	NUMBER OF COLONIAS
Cameron	111
El Paso	151
Hidalgo	867
Maverick	44
Starr	124
Webb	43

Source: Dallas Regional Census Center Briefing to the Monitoring Board

The Census Bureau is expending extra attention to these traditionally undercounted communities. In 1990, colonias were not considered census designated places. As a result, data from colonias were combined with data from adjacent non-colonia areas. The former Attorney General of Texas, Dan Morales, and the Dallas Regional Census Center worked together with colonia leaders, local governments, planning agencies and Councils of Governments to ensure that in the 2000 census, colonias would be listed as census designated places. This designation allows the Bureau to compile data specifically for colonia areas.

The Bureau plans to hire 900 bilingual enumerators and colonia cultural facilitators in Starr, Cameron, Hidalgo and El Paso counties. Recruiting and testing for enumerators in the colonias is in Spanish. Cultural

<sup>27</sup> Briefing book prepared by the Dallas Regional Census Center for the Staff of the Census Monitoring Board, "Colonias." February 28, 2000.

facilitators will not be required to take the enumerator test and will be paid separately from the PAMS/ADAMS payroll system.

To conduct the actual enumeration in 70 percent of the colonias, the Dallas RCC will employ an update/enumerate questionnaire delivery strategy in El Paso, Hidalgo, Cameron, and Starr Counties. Beginning in late March and continuing through May, a local census enumerator accompanied by a cultural facilitator will visit each colonia household and assist residents in completing an English-language census questionnaire. Enumerators and cultural facilitators will employ Spanish language guides during this operation, but Spanish questionnaires will not be used.

The Bureau is also working with Texas A&M's colonia program. Texas A&M is employing the colonias' promotoras – local community leaders – to conduct home visits with small groups to build awareness about the census and provide any assistance residents might need. An update/enumerate strategy will also be used on all 7 of the American Indian Reservations located within the region.

In extremely rural areas which lack residential mail delivery, census enumerators will list and map housing units and enumerate occupants on the same visit. Bilingual enumerators will be used for this operation.

In the remaining 30 percent of the colonia areas, the Dallas RCC will use the update/leave method. The Bureau will drop off an English language questionnaire along with a Spanish language questionnaire assistance guides. Regional staff reported the decision to deliver English language forms to all areas, including monolingual Spanish areas such as some colonias, was a decision made early in the decennial process by the Bureau's national headquarters. Questionnaire Assistance Centers are in place with paid and volunteer staff.

### **Congressional Members' Position**

*The Congressional Members of the Monitoring Board are skeptical of the Census Bureau's assertion that limited and targeted distribution of Spanish language census forms was impossible for Census 2000. We believe the Bureau has made a mistake that may reduce response rates in the linguistically isolated, hard-to-count Hispanic communities.*



*This is not a belief solely held by the Congressional Members of the Monitoring Board. The Board has been informed throughout the past two years by many stakeholders that there are a limited number of hard-to-count communities throughout the United States, especially in the Southwest and Texas, that are completely linguistically isolated. The Bureau's Planning Database and local offices corroborate this fact. **These communities**, we have been told on numerous occasions, **need to get a their census forms in Spanish.** Benito Juarez, an immigrant and community leader working in the immigrant community in Texas, told the Monitoring Board "we believe that instead of sending this form in English to Spanish speakers, they should send a form in Spanish. So in that way people will be able to understand better what it is about and feel more confident in filling out and participating in the census."<sup>28</sup>*

*The Bureau has consistently resisted targeted distribution of census questionnaires in these communities. The Bureau has held steadfast to their plan, requiring residents in these linguistically isolated communities to receive a letter written in English to then request a Spanish language questionnaire. However, senior Bureau officials indicated Regional Census Centers have the discretion to deliver notices in Spanish in these neighborhoods. Despite frequent staff visits to colonias and surrounding areas, the Congressional Members have been unable to confirm delivery of Spanish-language notices.*

*Moreover, in the colonias of South Texas – areas the Bureau knows to be monolingual Spanish – the Bureau is delivering English language questionnaires in update/enumerate and list/enumerate areas. This is particularly unsettling because, unlike mailout/mailback areas where the Postal Service delivers the questionnaire through regular mail service, these are areas where a Census 2000 employee will hand-deliver a questionnaire. **We believe this attitude toward the hard-to-count, linguistically isolated communities should change. The Census Bureau and the Regional Census Centers, in particular the Dallas and Los Angeles Regional Census Centers, should deliver Spanish language questionnaires in these linguistically isolated communities, including the colonias.***

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<sup>28</sup> US Census Monitoring Board, Congressional Members, Benito Juarez, *Undercount Summit* (Washington, DC: National Press Club, 29 October 1999).

### **Presidential Members' Position**

*The Presidential Members of the Board agree that distribution of non-English forms to residents who wish to receive them is an excellent goal. We note that the Census Bureau explored the possibility of distributing non-English forms for Census 2000, but were unable to overcome the operational difficulties involved.*

*We believe the subject is worthy of further study for possible inclusion in the 2010 census. However, at this late date, we do not believe it is feasible for the Census Bureau to alter its questionnaire delivery strategies for Census 2000. Update/Leave operations are well underway and the mailout of forms has already occurred.*

*Steps have been taken in the field to reach non-English speaking residents. In particular, we note the efforts of the Dallas Regional Census Center and the LCOs we examined in the Dallas Region to reach the residents of the colonias along the Texas/Mexico border. In those areas, a Spanish language assistance guide will be hand delivered with each questionnaire.*

*Questionnaire delivery operations that involve door-to-door delivery by hand, such as Update/Leave, may provide an excellent opportunity for enumerators to deliver non-English forms to residents in selected neighborhoods.*

*However, there are serious challenges to the idea of incorporating non-English forms in the mailout/mailback operation. In order to mail non-English forms to a given neighborhood, the Bureau must effectively assume that all residents of that neighborhood in fact speak the targeted language. This may be a difficult assumption to justify; it is doubtful that any neighborhood in the nation is entirely monolingual in a language other than English. In addition, the fact that the census occurs only once per decade may make precise targeting difficult, if not impossible.*

*We do not conclude that these barriers are insurmountable. However, additional study is needed before such a major change to census operations is undertaken. Given that questionnaire delivery operations are already underway, such a major change to field procedures might well do more harm than good.*

## Recruiting and Staffing

In line with the Bureau's national recruiting plan to recruit five people for every census position, the Dallas Region plans to recruit over 276,415 people to fill 55,105 positions. As of February 18, 2000, the region as a whole had reached 84.5 percent of its recruiting goal – well above the national benchmark of 70 percent. The RCC was at 74.3 percent of its recruiting goal in Louisiana, 83.6 percent in Mississippi, and 84.5 percent in Texas.

OPERATION	TIME	POSITIONS	TOTAL RECRUITING GOAL
Update / Leave	March	7,617	38,975
Update / Enumerate	March	942	4,710
Non-Response Follow-Up	April 27 through June	46,546	232,7307

Source: Dallas Regional Census Center Briefing to the Monitoring Board

At the time of interview, the major operation underway nationally was recruiting. The Dallas RCC had 500 full-time recruiting positions. In addition, management encouraged all staff to act as recruiters. Staff attribute recruiting success to aggressive strategies, including mailing 2.4 million "Census Jobs" post cards to zip codes where recruiting was low, providing recruiting materials and testing in Spanish, and offering competitive pay.

The Bureau's policy of recruiting five times as many people as are needed and training twice as many people to fill temporary positions is meant to offset turnover. In order to recruit such a volume of applicants, the Bureau is testing applicants months before they are needed. While this method allows the Bureau a large number of people from which to draw, it also creates some frustration among early applicants because the Dallas Regional Office has not implemented a method of notifying applicants whether they will be offered a job. Radio, television, and print solicitations for additional applicants may have confused or discouraged those who had already applied, but were not notified of their status.

**The Monitoring Board recommends that, for the 2010 Census, the Bureau establish a process of routine follow-up with job applicants. After testing, applicants should be notified as to whether they passed, and when the Bureau plans to begin filling positions.**

The Dallas Regional Office printed a pamphlet informing applicants they would not hear from the Bureau until mid-April (when most census jobs are offered.) These pamphlets were distributed at testing sites. While this is a positive informational tool, a routine follow-up notice would prevent some applicant frustration. Nationally, the Bureau expects to recruit 2.5 million people to fill census jobs – a gesture of professional courtesy could prevent some public relations problems. (The New York City Region has been able to mitigate some of these criticisms by sending a post card to those who do not pass the enumerator test. Since applicants can re-test repeatedly, the notice encourages re-testing.)

The Bureau had a national goal to hire 4,000 welfare recipients by September 1999 with more to be hired this year. Each LCO developed Welfare-to-Work recruiting goals. At the time of interview the Dallas Region had hired 434 welfare recipients.

As of March 15, all states in the region had applied for federal waivers that would allow income from temporary census employment to be exempt from the public assistance income eligibility caps. That is, people on public assistance could work for the census without the risk of losing benefits.

The RCC is monitoring the recruitment process closely. The Recruiting Managers at the RCC receive weekly updates on available test sites and monitor closely the number of welfare-to-work test sites and applicants. The Managers also watch each LCO progress towards their recruiting goal and make personal visits to LCOs experiencing recruiting difficulty. By maintaining weekly updates, the Recruiting Managers are able to send a biweekly bulletin to the region's recruiters, *Fast-Breaking Recruiting News Briefs*.

At the time of interview, the Dallas RCC had tested more than 3,000 applicants in Spanish. Staff reported more than 90 percent of applicants scored the requisite 70 or higher on the census test.

## **Training**

The bulk of the Bureau's hiring – enumerators to conduct Non-Response Follow-Up (NRFU) – will begin in mid-April. At the time of interview, the RCC had hired 230 Managers, 22 Regional Technicians and 55 Partnership Specialists. Each LCO had 5 managers: the Local Census Office Manager, the Assistant Manager for Field Operations, the Assistant Manager for Administration, the Assistant Manager for Recruiting and the Automation Technician. Regional technicians are responsible for a subsection of the region and the Partnership Specialists are responsible primarily to the Regional Office.

Each manager went through extensive training for 4-5 days in October and December of 1999. The RCC provides job-specific training and just-in-time training as a refresher before major operations, such as special places enumeration and the implementation of QAC/Be Counted sites. These sessions started in December of 1999 and will continue through July 10, 2000. Just-in-time training will also take place before the update/leave, update/enumerate, list/enumerate, non-response follow-up operations.

LCO Managers receive media training, including instruction in maintaining confidentiality of census records. This training proved helpful in the El Paso office when an FBI agent sought enumerator credentials, thus creating a potential public relations problem. The LCO manager followed Bureau policy of maintaining strict confidentiality and did not share any census information with the FBI agent – even when threatened with a potential warrant.<sup>29</sup>

## **Partnership**

For the 2000 Census, the Bureau reports relying heavily on its Partnership Specialists and local partners to improve the response rate, reduce the differential undercount and increase the public awareness of the census and census jobs.

The Dallas Region has 48 Partnership Specialists – 33 in Texas, 6 in Mississippi and 9 in Louisiana. Partnership Specialists are based in local census offices but report to the Regional Office. In Texas and Mississippi, two local census offices have two partnership specialists working in their areas while the rest of the local census offices have one. In some cases,

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<sup>29</sup> This incident was reported in the *El Paso Times* on February 16, 2000.

the partnership specialist is responsible for a vast geographic area. For example, the Dallas County South LCO's partnership specialist covers the southern half of Dallas County, while the El Paso LCO's specialist is responsible for 10 counties.

All partnership activities are coordinated out of the Dallas RCC through the Partnership/Recruiting Assistant Regional Census Manager (ARCM) and two Partnership Coordinators, one for Texas and one for Louisiana and Mississippi. Each state in the region has sponsored a web site to promote the census.

In Texas, the Dallas RCC was able to coordinate a joint letter sent by the Director of the Dallas Regional Office and the Governor in January to 500 Complete Count Committees in Texas thanking them for their participation and announcing the State's own promotional efforts. The State also has six ombudspersons working in the colonias promoting the census. The State Attorney General's office hired a Census 2000 Outreach Coordinator, sent Spanish language radio ads to every Spanish-language radio station in Texas, and sent census reminders in drivers' license notice mailers.

The Bureau held 10 informational and promotional conferences in Texas and Mississippi. Regional staff reported Louisiana has not been as aggressive at promoting the census as the other two states in the region. However, the Governor did three public service announcements about the census and discusses the census during his weekly radio broadcast.

The Regional Office has an African American Initiative, an American Indian Tribal Program, a Religious Initiative, supports Complete Count Committees, encourages Census in the Schools and participates in the national road tour. The RCC also has solicited support from regional business to supplement census promotion. For example, Coca-Cola in Louisiana and Mississippi will place sleeves on two-liter bottles promoting the census and including a coupon for a local baseball game. A Texas statewide grocery chain, HEB, will place the census tagline and the census logo on grocery bags in Spanish and English. The Midland Reporter-Telegram printed and distributed a census coloring book in English and Spanish.

The Partnership Program was able to develop supplemental RCC Spanish-language fact sheets in addition to those provided by headquarters. These

included fliers listing QAC locations and census awareness posters. Also, partnership staff arranged translation of the enumerator test into Spanish. These materials are generated at the RCC and then sent to the LCOs.

### **DALLAS COUNTY SOUTH, 3035**

Congressional and Presidential Monitoring Board staff met with the management of the Dallas County South local census office (LCO) for approximately two hours during the morning of February 23, 2000. The LCO manager, assistant managers of administration, field operations, and recruiting were present, as well as the office's automation technician. Also present were the Assistant Regional Census Manager (ARCM), the Partnership Specialist and the Media Specialist responsible for the office. Representatives of the Bureau of the Census Decennial Communications Division and the Department of Commerce Economic Affairs Office were in attendance.

Dallas County South includes the southern third of Dallas County, including six small cities south of the city of Dallas. The population is a mix of Anglo, African American, and Hispanic residents, and includes substantial communities of Mexican immigrants. Office staff noted a relatively small Asian/Pacific Islander population in Pleasant Grove. The LCO area has several trailer parks, and approximately 8,000 housing units that were scheduled to receive questionnaires through update/leave operations in March. Of 107 census tracts in the area, 75 were identified as hard-to-enumerate (HTE) by the Bureau's Planning Database (PDB), using demographic data and response rates from the 1990 Census.

At the time of interview, Dallas County South appeared extremely well-organized, and thoroughly prepared for the upcoming enumeration. Staff cited an emphasis on early and thorough training, and were pleased with the Region's approach, new for this decennial, of training management as a team. The emphasis on teamwork and training continued at the LCO, with the management team meeting every morning. Partnership specialists were included in these meetings.

Perhaps most significantly, the office has the benefit of an LCO manager with more than 30 years of experience at the Bureau, including work on three decennials. Actively recruited out of retirement by the Dallas Regional Director, the office manager clearly has the respect of the Regional Office, and of his staff. Operating with considerable autonomy, the manager has employed his experience (including an extensive network

of Bureau contacts) and thorough knowledge of the area to train a motivated, organized team of managers, and position Dallas County South for a successful enumeration.

### **Hard-to-Enumerate Planning**

The LCO Manager demonstrated little familiarity with the Bureau's Planning Database (PDB), and the large maps that papered many of the office walls were not generated by the Dallas Region's geography division. Instead, store-bought maps in several work stations and common areas were covered with neatly-labeled, hand-drawn recruiting and coverage districts. Hard-to-count neighborhoods were identified by name, testing sites, Questionnaire Assistance Centers (QACs) and Be Counted sites were carefully pinned into place. Other than to reference mail response rates, Dallas County South appeared to have little need of the PDB. A detailed strategy to enumerate the area, the product of years of census experience combined with local knowledge, was clearly integrated into office operations.

### **Questionnaire Assistance Centers (QACs) and Be Counted Sites**

LCO staff had selected 20 QACs and 70 Be Counted sites. Partnership specialists and local partners had input in site selection. Be Counted forms were already at the LCO.

### **Recruiting and Staffing**

Dallas County South had surpassed recruiting goals at the time of interview. Bureau records show 6,048 qualified applicants as of February 24, 2000: 124 percent of the goal.<sup>30</sup>

At the time of interview, 95 people were on the payroll. For non-response follow-up (NRFU), the most labor-intensive census operation, Dallas County South anticipates hiring five field operation supervisors (FOS), 40 crew leaders, and 900 enumerators. The LCO manager estimates three or four of every 10 enumerators will be fluent in Spanish.

Recruiting had been carefully planned by census tract, and the LCO area split into eight recruiting districts. Each district included between 10 and

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<sup>30</sup> *Census 2000 Recruiting Status, Dallas LCOs*, U.S. Bureau of the Census, February 25, 2000.



20 tracts. Ten assistants oversaw recruiting: one to each district, with two “floaters.”

The Assistant Manager for Recruiting maintained a database of recruiting sources. Many also provided space for testing and training. Sources included churches, recreation centers and schools, among several others. The office also directed special efforts to partner with and recruit local firefighters. According to the LCO manager, emergency workers often make outstanding enumerators, due to their knowledge of the area, community involvement, and schedules providing several days off-duty.

There were 67 test sites and 40 training sites established. The partnership specialist assisted in locating space for test sites. Staff reported that the total time for testing, including filling out employment forms and taking the half-hour timed test, may last between an hour and 90 minutes. Crew leader training is five days straight, on evenings and Saturdays.

### **Partnership**

Staff reported consistent and helpful coordination with the partnership specialist assigned to the LCO, who assisted in planning and locating test sites and QACs. Three active area Complete Count Committees (CCCs) were cited: Dallas, Grand Prairie and DeSoto.

A partnership was established with Potter’s House, an area church with a Sunday congregation between 15,000 and 30,000 members. Every Sunday a video message is played, encouraging the congregation to fill out and return their census forms.

In addition, the LCO manager sent letters to all area cities in September 1999, requesting to meet with the City Council and Chief of Police. During these meetings, the LCO manager described upcoming census operations, what the local officials could expect and when, and whom to call with questions or concerns. “I wanted to put a face with a name,” he reported, “To say, ‘I’m responsible. If there’s a problem, please talk to me.’”

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## **Facilities and Materials**

Dallas County South reported no problems receiving materials. All types of promotional materials and posters were available. Congressional staff noted some materials not seen in other areas of the region.

The PAMS/ADAMS system was up and running with no problems. Staff reported the recently-installed PADE data-entry software was much more user-friendly than entering data directly into the database.

Dallas County South exhibited excellent working conditions, with plenty of open space to accommodate storage of a large volume of forms and materials. They also reported sufficient space to conduct update/leave, special places enumeration, and NRFU in separate areas. (The lessor, unable to lease the remaining space, essentially gave the office several hundred square feet of extra space.) Facilities are centrally located in an area shopping center.

## **EL PASO, 3036**

Congressional and Presidential Monitoring Board staff met with the management of the El Paso local census office (LCO) for approximately two hours during the morning of February 29, 2000. The LCO manager, assistant managers of administration, field operations, and recruiting were present, as well as the office's automation technician. Also present were the Dallas Assistant Regional Census Manager (ARCM), the Partnership Specialist and the Media Specialist responsible for the office. Representatives of the Bureau of the Census Decennial Communications Division and the Department of Commerce Economic Affairs Office were in attendance.

El Paso is responsible for enumerating a vast area on the western edge of the Texas / Mexico border. The area includes 10 counties covering 25,855 square miles. Terrel County, the most distant county in the LCO area, is 300 air miles from the El Paso office. The 1990 census population was 616,713.<sup>31</sup>

This area includes a large and growing immigrant and Spanish-speaking population, including monolingual Spanish communities and colonias (see box). The large Spanish-speaking population creates a demand for in-language recruiting and promotional materials, as well as enumerators fluent in Spanish. In addition, El Paso has recruited and plans to hire cultural facilitators to accompany enumerators in monolingual Spanish areas. The office has developed extensive plans and partnerships to improve enumeration in colonias.

A PROFILE OF THE HARD-TO-COUNT:  
COLONIAS

The official definition of the colonia, “a residential subdivision lacking essential facilities such as water and wastewater services and paved roads,” only begins to describe life in a colonia.

Colonias are found in the states along the US-Mexican border – Arizona, California, New Mexico and Texas. Most of the US colonias are in Texas – over 1200 colonias with approximately 300,000 residents. Almost 90 percent of the colonias in Texas are located in Hidalgo, El Paso, Starr, Cameron, Maverick, Webb and Zavala counties – 251,032 persons who are 90 percent Hispanic and often recent immigrants.

Cameron Park, one of the oldest colonias and featured on national news programs, has become a “model” colonia. Due to the advocacy of the community, the roads in Cameron Park are paved, water is available and there are services available in the colonia. In fact, within the maze of streets there is a community health center, several businesses and a community center.

Yet, Cameron Park is not illustrative of the main. Most colonias are like Del Mar Heights, La Paloma, Blanca Juarez, Sunny Side, Huecho, Montana Vista, Rio Bravo and Basham 23. The residents of these colonias are geographically, culturally and linguistically isolated and struggle to obtain water for their daily needs and even to travel beyond the colonia.

<sup>31</sup> Source: El Paso Local Census Office Partnership Activity Report. Aggregate LCO statistics in the December 1999 Planning Database, provided upon request by Bureau headquarters, differ slightly from the local records. El Paso planning materials likely include updates to the assignment of census tracts to LCO areas.

### **Hard-to-Enumerate Planning**

Census and survey coverage is frequently depressed in Latino neighborhoods, particularly in immigrant and monolingual Spanish communities. In addition, El Paso is classified as a “Type D” office, responsible for enumerating largely rural geography. Language and cultural barriers, difficulties of enumerating a large area, as well as underdeveloped colonias, present formidable challenges to the El Paso enumeration. The Planning Database (PDB), using data from the 1990 census, identifies 50 of the office’s 118 census tracts as hard-to-enumerate (HTE).<sup>32</sup> However, much of the area has experienced high growth and immigration in the last decade. In particular, many of the HTE immigrant communities and colonias did not exist ten years ago. As such, 1990 data is not likely to provide an accurate picture of local areas, particularly those at greatest risk of high undercounts.

LCO staff combined local knowledge with the Bureau’s PDB to develop special enumeration plans for HTE areas. They partnered extensively with city, county and state governments, and drew on resources of Texas A&M University to collect detailed, recent demographic and geographic information.<sup>33</sup> The result is a systematic plan anticipating and locating specific barriers to enumeration, and listing the LCO enumeration strategies customized to overcome each barrier. This plan was developed in June 1999 (ahead of the national schedule for HTE action plans).

Specific examples of strategies cited during interview included locating a Questionnaire Assistance Center in each HTE tract, employing cultural facilitators in monolingual Spanish neighborhoods, using pair and team enumeration, and establishing aggressive efforts to hire bilingual enumerators.

Monitoring Board staff requested copies of the plan, which would provide greater detail of the Bureau’s efforts to improve enumeration in areas at risk of extreme undercounts, and were refused by the representative of the Bureau of the Census Decennial Communications Division.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Aggregate LCO statistics in the December 1999 Planning Database, provided upon request by Bureau headquarters, differ slightly from the local records.

<sup>33</sup>The El Paso Partnership Specialist was uniquely qualified and effective in these efforts. A former city planner with more than 30 years experience working with geographic information systems and demographic data, his services were actively pursued by the Regional Director.

<sup>34</sup> The Associate Director for Field Operations has yet to authorize the release of any HTE action plans to the Monitoring Board. The stated reason is that the plans are not in final form. However, we note the plans are intended to be “living documents.” They will not be in final form until census operations are complete.

In the colonias, questionnaires will be hand-delivered to each household by an enumerator during the Update/Enumerate, Update/Leave, or List/Enumerate operation. These three operations comprise approximately 15 percent of the LCO workload. Cultural facilitators will accompany enumerators in colonias.

El Paso management has identified monolingual Spanish communities where it would be appropriate to deliver a Spanish – rather than English – questionnaire. However, the Bureau’s national policy is to distribute English questionnaires to all households, unless an in-language questionnaire is specifically requested. As a result, during Update/Leave, scheduled to begin March 3, 2000, El Paso enumerators were to distribute English-language questionnaires, and Spanish Language Assistance Guides. The Update/Leave operation comprises 7 percent of the LCO workload.

During Update/Enumerate, scheduled from mid-March to May, a local census enumerator accompanied by a cultural facilitator will visit each colonia household and assist residents in completing an English-language census questionnaire. Enumerators and cultural facilitators will employ Spanish language guides during this operation, but Spanish questionnaires will not be used.

The Board agrees that delivering non-English questionnaires where appropriate would be of great benefit to a full enumeration. However, members disagree on the feasibility of implementing this policy during the 2000 census. For full discussion of this issue, see discussion beginning on page 25.

### **Recruiting and Staffing**

El Paso had surpassed recruiting goals at the time of interview. Bureau records show 6,048 qualified applicants as of February 24, 2000: 124 percent of the goal. For non-response follow-up (NRFU), the most labor-intensive census operation, El Paso anticipates hiring 600 enumerators.

In addition, El Paso plans to hire local residents as cultural facilitators in colonias to accompany enumerators. Management reported recruiting 200 cultural facilitators at the time of interview. Cultural facilitators will not

be required to take the enumerator test and will be paid separately from the PAMS/ADAMS payroll system.

### **Partnership**

El Paso's Partnership Specialist has worked closely with LCO management on most aspects of planning. The formidable outreach campaign includes contact with city, county and state officials, media, academic institutions, businesses, and professional, community-based and religious organizations. Partnership has been especially active in coordinating local partners to develop HTE action plans.

Documentation provided to the Bard details more than 1,000 contacts via presentation, site visits, phone, meetings and other channels. Contacts resulted in an estimated 2,350 commitments from local partners, each listed under nearly 30 categories. Types of commitment include endorsements, recruiting assistance, donation of free space, volunteers, and service as Questionnaire Assistance Centers and Be Counted sites.

As of February 1, 2000, El Paso listed nine Complete Count Committees (CCCs) as active or created in the area. Partnerships had been established with the Texas A&M Colonias Program, El Paso County, the local Catholic Diocese, the Displaced Workers Volunteer Group, the Islera Tribe, McDonalds and local radio and television.

El Paso's partnership efforts have succeeded despite some unique logistical challenges. The size of the El Paso LCO area, and the lack of air routes within that area, present major barriers. Partnership and LCO staff conduct "Round Robins": road trips with stops throughout the LCO area. A Round Robin might cover several counties, and several hundred miles, in two days.

### **Questionnaire Assistance Centers (QACs) and Be Counted Sites**

LCO staff selected 41 QACs. Most, 37, are located in El Paso County, where the vast majority of the area's population is concentrated. The partnership specialist and local partners assisted in site selection. QACs were scheduled to open March 8 and will have paid and volunteer staff. Due to the hand-delivery of questionnaires to colonias, no Be Counted sites were planned for those areas. Management reported no problems receiving materials.

## ALASKA ENUMERATION

Put simply, Alaska is unique. Given its harsh climate, limited infrastructure, transient population, and the vast distances between communities, the challenge the Bureau faces in this state is truly daunting. Alaska's estimated 1999 population of 619,500 is spread out over some 586,412 square miles – equivalent to one-fifth the land area of the lower 48 states and twice the size of Texas. Yet, the population is close to that of the District of Columbia – a city of only 68 square miles. While the state can rightfully boast of several major – and thoroughly modern – urban areas such as Anchorage and Fairbanks, thousands of its residents live in scattered communities that are inaccessible by road. Travelers to these communities rely on prop-aircraft, utility vehicles – even dogsleds – to reach their destinations.

Monitoring Board staff journeyed to Alaska in late February 2000 to visit the Anchorage LCO and observe the Bureau's Remote Enumeration efforts. Throughout their visit, the two Board staffers were accompanied by the Seattle RCC Deputy Regional Director, whose zone of responsibility includes Alaska. In addition, staff had the opportunity to be briefed by Anchorage's LCO manager and other LCO staff.

Bureau operations in Alaska began well in advance of Census Day (April 1, 2000), though all questions have been or will be asked in relation to it. In fact, Director Kenneth Prewitt enumerated the first American of this year's census on January 19, 2000 in the remote village of Unalakleet. This special, expanded timetable enables the Bureau to work when weather conditions are most conducive to field operations, and before the change of seasons prompts residents to leave their communities to hunt, fish, or engage in other employment.

All operations in Alaska are run out of the Anchorage Local Census Office (LCO). One might characterize it as a "super-LCO," given the scope of its responsibilities. The varied conditions in Alaska compel the LCO to employ three separate enumeration methods and juggle several simultaneous operations.

## FIELD OBSERVATION

### LCO Facilities

The Anchorage LCO is located in modern facilities in the Federal office building at 222 West 8<sup>th</sup> Street in Anchorage. Bureau employees expressed no complaints about space or equipment shortages. The staff of approximately 120 appear to have the necessary resources at their disposal to conduct successful census.

### Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau and Other Cities

Most Alaskans, about 75 percent of the population, will be enumerated under the “standard” census plan—identical to the census procedures used throughout the rest of the United States. These include areas designated for the Mailout/Mailback procedures, Update/Leave procedures and List/Enumerate Procedures. Areas of Alaska designated for these standard census procedure include Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau, and their surrounding areas, several other cities such as Cordova, Dillingham, and Palmer, Portage, Seldovia, Sitka and Wasilla, as well as other so-called “hub” cities and communities.

#### Largest Alaskan Cities Designated For Mailout-Mailback

CITY	1990 POPULATION	PERCENT OF TOTAL*
Anchorage	226,338	41
College	11,249	2
Fairbanks	30,843	6
Juneau	26,751	5
Kenai	6,327	1
Total of 5 Cities	283,932	55

\* Total 1990 Alaskan Population: 550,043

**Mailout/Mailback**—This strategy, used for the majority of city-style addresses in the nation, is planned for the urban and small city areas of Alaska. Over 50 percent of the population will be enumerated through Mailout/Mailback procedures.

The census plan in these areas is identical to the Mailout/Mailback strategies used in the rest of the United States. Census forms are



mailed during March 2000 for the April 1 Census Day. Following the Mailout/Mailback period, Non-Response Follow-Up (NRFU) activities – enumerator visits to each non-responding household – will be used to complete the count in these areas. The census activities for these areas will be concentrated in the late spring and early summer, accounting for enumeration and NRFU activities.

*Update/Leave and List/Enumerate* – These strategies will be used in the rural/remote areas that are predominantly close to Anchorage, Fairbanks and Juneau and in the larger communities throughout the state and along the southeast coast of Alaska. These strategies will also be used to correct, update or create map-spots for the Master Address File (MAF).

One of the most significant differences between areas designated for Mailout/Mailback and those designated for update/leave or list/enumerate is that the housing units are already listed in the MAF for Mailout/Mailback areas. In update/leave and in the list/enumerate areas, the enumerator will update the MAF. In the update/leave areas an enumerator will visit each household. At that time, the enumerator will update the MAF and leave the census questionnaire. For the list/enumerate designated areas, an enumerator will identify each housing unit and will then “map-spot” (mark the housing unit on the assignment area maps) and list the housing unit, with a description, on the address register. At that point, the enumerator will either enumerate, or attempt to enumerate, the household.

### **Recruiting and Staffing**

Aside from some challenges in Barrow, the Anchorage LCO has encountered no significant recruiting difficulties. In fact, as of February 25, 2000, it stood at 176 percent of its goal. During the three days Board staff were in the office, they observed a steady stream of job applicants.

### **Questionnaire Assistance Centers (QACs) and Be Counted Sites**

The LCO has located suitable space for 73 Questionnaire Assistance Centers (QAC)<sup>35</sup> and 5 Be Counted Sites. Funds to pay 20 FTEs<sup>36</sup> have been budgeted and the QACs will be manned on a variable shift basis, allowing the 20 FTEs to satisfactorily cover all 73.

The QAC supervisor indicated that a “micro-sized” advertising budget would have a positive effect on QAC traffic. She noted that even a few hundred dollars could buy small advertisements in local “Penny Saver” circulars that would effectively target those most in need of QAC services.

Given time considerations, it is not feasible for the Bureau to institute widespread changes. However, advertising in circulars seems sensible and the Board recommends the Bureau consider allocating funds for such purposes in 2010.

### **Hard-to-Enumerate Planning**

There are approximately 200-230 remote villages throughout Alaska. Many of these villages have populations of less than 500. Remote villages are comprised of predominantly Alaska native residents, representing several groups including Aleut, Athabascan, Inupiaq, Northwest Coast Indians, Tlingit and Yupik. The LCO estimates approximately 10 percent or more of the state’s population live in these areas.

The census procedures used throughout most of remote Alaska differ significantly from the census procedures used in the rest of the country. These procedures are geared specifically to meet the needs of Alaska’s Native communities. Based on the experience of several past censuses, the Bureau allows greater operational freedom at the regional and local census office levels in Alaska. The result is a flexible and adaptive census operation.

Monitoring Board staff noted that one of the most important facets of remote Alaska enumeration is the experience of the managers. Both the Area Manager for Urban Field Operations and the Area Manager for Remote Operations worked in Alaska during the 1990 census. The remote

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<sup>35</sup> QACs will double as Be Counted sites.

<sup>36</sup> Full-Time Equivalents.

field operation design specifically reflects experience, rather than theoretical objectives.

In order to accommodate the geographic and climactic challenges in Alaska, enumeration for remote Alaska takes place during the winter months before “break-up,” or thaw. Prior to the break-up, frozen lakes and waterways allow access to remote villages that would be otherwise isolated. Residents of subsistence fishing villages are also more likely to be in the villages at that time.

According to the LCO in Anchorage, enumeration will take place in three waves.

<b>Wave I (January)</b>	<b>Southwest Alaska</b>
<b>Wave II (February)</b>	<b>Aleutian and Central Alaska</b>
<b>Wave III (March)</b>	<b>Far North Alaska</b>

In addition to the unique timing of enumeration, remote Alaskan villages will benefit from a flexible approach to enumeration. Due to the demographic challenges for enumeration and obtaining a workforce in the villages, enumerators are not required to take the Census Bureau’s test for field employment.

### **King Salmon**

Board staff flew with the Deputy Director from Anchorage to King Salmon. There they met with the local Field Operations Supervisor and the local team leader. Board staff had the opportunity to observe the final stages of operations in the King Salmon environs before accompanying the local team leader to the Yupik Native Traditional Council.

At the council center, staff observed the leader caucus with council president Ralph Angasan about the housing unit count in a local activity area (AA). After discussion and review of the AA address register, Mr. Angasan certified its accuracy by signing the register’s cover page. This local sign-off, known officially as “tribal validation,” is unique to the list/enumerate efforts in remote Alaska. The Bureau instituted the protocol to encourage Native participation in the census and provide an extra level of quality assurance. Mr. Angasan expressed his appreciation of the consultative relationship, and both the local team leader and the

Deputy Director informed Board staff that the program has been an unqualified success.

### **Egegik**

From King Salmon staff journeyed with the Deputy Director by single-engine prop aircraft to Egegik, a remote village on the Bering Sea with a 90 percent Native population. In Egegik, staff met with the Native Council President and observed the Census Team Leader during enumeration. According to list/enumerate guidelines, the enumerator asks the respondent each question and then records the responses in his/her own hand. Such a method requires that the respondent have a high degree of confidence and comfort with the enumerator, especially if they are being enumerated using the long form. According to the Deputy Director, enumerators have encountered few difficulties in soliciting the cooperation and trust of respondents. Staff observations in the village confirmed the Bureau's open and positive relationship with the community.

### **Aerial Map-Spotting**

Before returning to Anchorage, staff went on an aerial map-spotting "ride along" in the Egegik region. Map-spotting is the process by which field staff verify and update housing unit information on area TIGER maps. 2000 marks the first Census the Bureau has employed airplanes for this purpose, and it seems certain to increase the accuracy of the count. Board staff participated in the spotting efforts undertaken by the Egegik AA enumerator and the veteran prop-engine pilot contracted by the Bureau to provide air services throughout the Remote Enumeration operation. In the two hours they were aloft, more than twenty previously unknown housing units were spotted and added to the Bureau's records for follow-up.

The LCO's approach demonstrates the importance of being flexible, without such flexibility it would be difficult to obtain census takers who are residents of their respective villages. The premium placed on being able to obtain native Alaskan census takers to count their own villages is designed to encourage a trusting relationship and to ensure that the census can take place effectively in these villages.

## **Partnership**

Overall, the Bureau has established an effective alliance with the leaders of the Alaskan Native community. One of the first steps toward this end was taken during the past two years when the Bureau invited 500 Native representatives to Anchorage to attend conferences intended to discuss the role of Alaskan Native communities in Census 2000. This event set the stage for effective follow-up by the LCO's four partnership specialists.

The Board is impressed with the level of cultural sensitivity – key to a successful count – the LCO has shown in its interactions with the Native community. It has, for example, consulted Native leaders throughout the hiring process and exhibited flexibility and understanding when tragedies – requiring the temporary suspension of enumeration efforts to observe traditional mourning rituals – have struck communities. Native leaders have not hesitated to express their satisfaction. As Nelson Angapak, Vice President of the Alaskan Federation of Natives, put it, “I have to congratulate the Bureau [on its efforts] ... Our working relationship is excellent.”

Fortunately, the Bureau's successful partnerships are not limited to the Native community. The LCO has formed positive relationships with the Anchorage Complete Count Committee (CCC) and the Mayor's office, amongst other entities. The State Demographer and the Lt. Governor were also cited as important “bridge builders” whose help the Bureau would be hard-pressed to do without.

## **Congressional Members' Position**

*The Regional Census Center, the Local Census Office and the Remote Field Operations Team have developed a plan that is targeted and tailored to the needs of Native Alaskan communities. This will improve the census in these communities.*

*The villages in Remote Alaska, due to geographic and cultural isolation, share many of the same characteristics of hard-to-count communities throughout the United States. Yet, there are significant differences in the way that these villages will be enumerated in Census 2000 and the way that other hard-to-count communities will be enumerated. Because of the ability to be flexible and to accommodate cultural needs, the Regional Census Center, Local Census Office and the Remote Field Operations*

*team for Alaska has a better chance of enumerating Alaska Natives and other remote village residents. Their plan, demonstrating greater flexibility and regional autonomy than any other area in this decennial, is focused on a census inclusive of the residents and cognizant of the needs unique to Alaskan Native communities. Hiring enumerators based on the recommendation of tribal leaders, allowing those enumerators to be hired without taking the cumbersome hiring test, and maintaining the involvement of the village throughout the census are unique Alaskan initiatives in Census 2000.*

*The Congressional Members believe this community-centered approach improves the count in Remote Villages and addresses concerns regarding the undercount of Native Alaskan communities. Moreover, the Congressional Members believe the Remote Alaska approach may offer important lessons that can be implemented in other hard-to-count communities during Census 2000 and future censuses.*

#### **Presidential Members' Position**

*Across the board, the Bureau is doing an excellent job in Alaska. By all accounts, the Anchorage LCO has already met, or is on target to meet, the overwhelming majority of its goals. If, as we believe, the Bureau's efforts to-date in this most challenging environment are any indication, the Presidential Members believe the nation has ample reason to be confident about the prospect of a successful 2000 Census.*

## HOUSEHOLD MATCHING TRAINING

In January 2000, a staff representative from each side of the Board observed the Bureau's Before Follow-Up (BFU) clerical matching training at the National Processing Center in Jeffersonville, IN. This training is key to the success of the Accuracy and Coverage Evaluation (ACE) survey. Accurately matching results from the census and the survey in sampled areas is critical to the Bureau's Dual-System Estimation. The Bureau, accordingly, endeavored to make the training as authentic as possible. Throughout, the trainees sat in the same rooms and at the same computers which will be used when the actual matching process begins (the Bureau refers to this as the "production" as opposed to the "training" stage). Moreover, the software package which will be used in production was used in training, and the block clusters the trainees worked were drawn from available Sacramento, CA and Columbia, SC dress rehearsal data.

The following is intended as an overview of the household matching guidelines and training. It should not be considered an exhaustive reference.

### Address Listing and Coding

During the ACE listing phase, listers canvassed neighborhoods within the ACE sample blocks and recorded address information in Independent Listing Books (ILBs). This information will be entered into a mega-computer and compared to an extract of the Decennial Master Address File (DMAF). Upon completion of the computer matching, four categories of addresses will emerge: matched, possibly matched, unlinked/non-matched census addresses, and unlinked/non-matched ACE addresses. The computer-generated results will then be entered into a database management system called the Housing Unit Matching Review and Coding System (HUMaRCS) for clerical matching (HUMaRCS was developed by the Gunnison Group working in tandem with the Bureau's Decennial Statistical Studies Division). During this operation, known as Before Follow-Up (BFU) matching, all ACE and census addresses that are not computer-matched in the previous operation will be reviewed and assigned one of the following clerical match codes:

- M The ACE and census addresses match.
- P The ACE and census addresses possibly match. There is not enough information to assign a match with confidence.
- NI The ACE address does not match to a census address.
- NE The census address does not match to an ACE address.
- DI The ACE address is a possible duplicate with another ACE address.
- DE The census address is a possible duplicate with another census address.
- RV The match status is not clear. A review by a Technician or Analyst is needed to resolve status before sending to the field.

Once all of the block cluster addresses are clerically coded, they will be sent to the next ACE operation, Housing Unit Field Follow-up (HUFF). During HUFF, ACE interviewers will visit addresses to obtain additional information that will assist the clerical matchers in resolving the P, NI, NE, DI, and DE addresses. The operation will then return to the clerical matcher for After Follow-up Housing Unit (AFUHU) coding. This operation will result in the creation of the Preliminary Enhanced List (PEL) of all ACE and census housing units at the time of the housing unit follow-up operation in the ACE sample area.

Next comes the Person Phase, which will establish a list of persons who resided in the housing units listed on the Enhanced List, or EL (Before the Person Phase begins, large block subsampling will be used to reduce the number of listed housing units on the PEL). ACE interviewers will then conduct Computer Assisted Personal Interviews (CAPI) with the people living at each of the addresses on the EL. Using information collected during CAPI, a computer file containing ACE person data will be compared with a census file containing person information collected for Census Day. The computer matching employs the Bureau's Primary Selection Algorithm (PSA). Clerical matchers will then review ACE and census person information that the computer is unable to match (as in the Housing Unit BFU stage) and identify any ACE or census person requiring additional field information. At this point, such cases will be sent to the field for follow-up before being returned to the clerical matchers in the After Follow-up (AFU) matching phase.

Housing Unit matching will be revisited after the Person Phase is completed; as the Housing Unit Phase will have been conducted before the



inventory of census housing units is final. As a result, a final housing unit processing will be necessary in order to produce housing unit coverage estimates. Once again, the computer-clerical matcher pattern will be followed: the information will be fed into the computer, which will identify those housing units that were added or deleted from the DMAF; a clerical review will be done on all ACE and census housing units identified in the computer processing operation; and Final Housing Unit follow-up interviews will be conducted, the results of which will be fed back to the clerical matchers for After Follow-up (AFU) matching. Those housing units that are found to exist will be assigned the appropriate match code and those found not to have existed will be deleted. The ACE Housing Unit file will then be updated.

### **Contractor**

Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC) was awarded the clerical matching training contract by the Bureau. SAIC staff is well versed in the particulars of the software, having conducted similar training for the Dress Rehearsals. While the clerical matchers (a.k.a., “clerks”) are temporary decennial staff, the technicians and analysts who comprise the supervisory and quality check levels in the process are career professionals with years of Bureau experience. They have all previously completed intensive matching training, and conducted the actual matching of the Dress Rehearsal data.

### **Software**

The HUMaRCS software divides the screen into roughly equal, scrollable thirds. The top third contains those ACE and census addresses of a single block cluster that the computer linked/matched; the middle third contains unlinked/unmatched ACE addresses; and the bottom third unlinked/unmatched census addresses. Clerks review unmatched cases, and attempt to identify matches. The software allows the user to display images of both the ACE and census map-spotted maps to assist them in their work. (Computer matches are not usually reviewed).

The matching software is advanced and easy to operate, but has little flexibility. Standard features on Windows-compatible software, such as sizable frames or “undo” options, are not available in HUMaRCS. Bureau staff noted this inflexibility is by design, in order to minimize error and maximize uniformity in matching. This is a sensible precaution.

## Matching Principles

Clerical matching operates on certain principles, the most important being what might be called the principle of non-contradiction. That is, clerks are encouraged to link as many ACE and census addresses as possible – even if the information in the two addresses is not identical – as long as the information in the addresses to be linked is not expressly contradictory. In short, the address matching guidelines can be loosely summarized as follows:

**AGREE if:** The information in two addresses is identical or contains only minor spelling differences.

**NON-CONTRADICTIONARY if:** The information is supplied for only one address; the information supplied is partially complete in one or both addresses and that which is present in one address does not contradict information supplied for the other; and differences in information result from misspelling of householder's last name.

**CONTRADICTIONARY if:** Information from the two addresses cannot be classified into either the agree or non-contradictory category.

**NO MATCH FOUND if:** No possible match for either the ACE or census address is found.

Some examples: *415 Osborne Dr.* and *415 Osbourn* would, according to the guidelines, agree. *123 Main Ave.* and *123 N. Main* would be considered non-contradictory, if no other version of Main exists in the block cluster. *456 W. Frank St.* and *456 E. Frank St.* would be considered contradictory if both versions of Frank Street exist in the cluster.

## **Objective**

The goal in the BFU stage is to produce a good address list for the follow-up interviewer. Board staff did not observe the Bureau pushing clerks to unequivocally match addresses. Rather, the clerks were instructed to match addresses only if they have a strong sense that they match. The Bureau, according to the trainer, is counting on the clerks growing progressively comfortable over time – i.e., as they gain experience and familiarity, the clerks will grow more adept at resolving unmatched cases.

## **Presidential Members' Position**

*Based on the training observations, the Presidential Members of the Board do not believe there is cause to be concerned about an inordinate number of addresses being definitively, inaccurately matched. The problem, in fact, may be a plethora of P coded addresses, at least initially. But given the importance of accuracy, we believe that the Bureau is right to err on the side of an abundance of P as opposed to M matched addresses.*

## **Congressional Members' Position**

*The Congressional Members of the Board have concerns that attempts to match addresses are subject to a certain level of ambiguity, even with total fidelity to the matching guidelines. Given the sensitivity of the Dual System Estimation procedure planned by the Bureau, small errors in matching a relatively few households in the sample could magnify into large errors when projecting the results to larger regions or the entire country.*

*To cite one example, multi-unit structures with poorly-marked unit designations (often found in dense urban areas) are extremely difficult to match with certainty. Units could easily be mismatched during address listing, with two different apartments in the same building being given the same unit designation (i.e. Apt. A). Conceivably, the Bureau's computer matching could code those two different apartments as a match, prior to clerical review. As noted above, computer matches are rarely reviewed by clerks or analysts.*

*At this time, the Board does not have sufficient information to assess the risk of this and other potential errors in matching, particularly since the*

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*Bureau has refused to provide the Dress Rehearsal evaluation report on the Primary Selection Algorithm. However, without further information and analysis, we cannot affirm the integrity of the household matching procedure.*

### **Quality Check**

DSSD has produced detailed quality assurance guidelines. In the early production stages, 100 percent of clerical matching will be checked by analysts and/or technicians. After that, work will be reviewed on a sample basis.

### **CONCLUSION**

**The training provided for clerical level staff was well-executed to familiarize clerical staff with the Bureau guidelines to housing unit matching.**

**Given the importance of matching to the integrity of the Accuracy and Coverage Evaluation (ACE) survey, the Board plans to send observers to the Person Matching training, scheduled for the fall, and transmit the resulting observations in a future report.**

