



Proactive Release

The following documents have been proactively released by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC), on behalf of the Deputy Prime Minister, Hon Grant Robertson:

Rapid Assessment of Census Implementation Planning to Reach Vulnerable Populations

The following documents have been included in this release:

Title of paper: Rapid Assessment of Census Implementation Planning to Reach Vulnerable Populations (CPC-22-SUB-0034 refers)

Title of minute: Rapid Assessment of Census Implementation Planning to Reach Vulnerable Populations (CPC-22-MIN-0034 refers)

Title of minute: Report of the Cabinet Priorities Committee: Period Ended 21 October 2022 (CAB-22-MIN-0450 refers)

Some parts of this information release would not be appropriate to release and, if requested, would be withheld under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Where this is the case, the relevant section of the Act that would apply has been identified. Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

Key to redaction code:

- Section 9(2)(f)(iv), to maintain the confidentiality of advice tendered by or to Ministers and officials.

~~[In Confidence]~~

Office of the Minister Hon Grant Robertson
Deputy Prime Minister

Chair, Cabinet Priorities Committee

Rapid Assessment of Census Implementation Planning to Reach Vulnerable Populations

Proposal

1. This paper is an update on the Implementation Unit's (the Unit) work programme. It covers the Rapid Assessment (the Assessment) of the implementation planning for the Census to reach vulnerable communities delivered to me on 31 August 2022.

Relation to government priorities

2. The Unit's operations are critical to enabling the successful delivery of Government priorities, particularly *accelerating economic recovery* and *laying foundations for the future*.

Background

3. On 26 July 2022, the Cabinet Priorities Committee [**CPC-22-MIN-0021 refers**]:
 - 3.1. **agreed** that a rapid assessment of the implementation planning, including risk mitigation measures to reach vulnerable communities before and during the Census should be undertaken by the Implementation Unit.

Rapid Assessment

4. The Unit has advised that the Department of Statistics (StatsNZ) has acted on the three key findings of the Reviews of the 2018 Census – an explicit focus on maximising response rates from hard to reach and priority populations, using a formal disciplined programme Management approach and significantly strengthening senior leadership.
5. The Unit found that the Census Programme has been designed to target the most investment into supporting hard to reach and priority populations to respond. This is evident in the approach, design, planning and resourcing of the 2023 Census.
6. The design, the programme management approach and disciplines are fit for purpose and represent the best end to end set of disciplines across a complex multi-year programme that the Unit has so far assessed.
7. The Unit noted that there is a high level of integration between the workstreams but observed that it would assist for the key elements that apply to hard to reach and priority populations to be drawn together and shown in one or more A3s. The approach would also be strengthened during implementation by designating a senior person reporting to the lead to focus only on the hard to reach and priority populations roaming across the work streams to identify emerging issues for consideration by the operational leadership team. This person would not be part of the hierarchy or have decision-making delegations but would be senior enough to influence discussion and decisions.

8. Notwithstanding these factors, the Census Programme will face some significant challenges. For its design approach to be successful it needs to recruit 3000 FTE staff to assist hard to reach and priority populations during the Census period. Many of these staff need to be from local communities and must be credible with the populations they are supporting. Recruiting the right people in these quantities for a period of three and a half months in a tight labour market will be challenging.
9. StatsNZ has identified recruitment as its top risk, put remuneration strategies in place and sought the advice of specialist recruitment firms. The Unit suggested that StatsNZ take this a step further and develop and socialise back-up innovative approaches for recruiting staff who can credibly work with hard to reach and priority populations in local areas where recruitment using standard methods proves challenging. This could include working with Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission and the Regional Public Service Commissioners to source secondees from across the Public Service who are based in local communities.
10. The Unit also noted that the StatsNZ team will likely face mis or disinformation campaigns that target the Census, particularly once its social media ramps up closer to the Census itself requiring a strong monitoring regime supported by counter measures where appropriate.
11. The Unit reported its Assessment to me on 31 August 2022. A copy of the Assessment is in Appendix A I discussed the Unit's report and recommendations with the Minister of Statistics on 20 September 2022.

Progress Update on Implementation Unit Assignments

12. A brief outline of progress against all the assignments the Unit is currently working on is in Appendix B. I will continue to report completed assignments and their associated Reports to CPC.

Next steps

13. Progress against the recommendations of the Census Rapid Assessment will be included in the quarterly reports I provide to CPC on the work undertaken by the Unit.
14. I will report to CPC in December on the completion of Reports for the Stocktake of implementation readiness for the Government Investment in the Decarbonising Industry Fund and the Stocktake of the delivery of New Zealand's International Climate Finance Commitments. I will also bring the proposed work programme for the Unit for the period January to June 2023 to that meeting.

Consultation

15. The Department of Statistics (StatsNZ) was consulted on this paper, and the Assessment at Appendix A. The Public Service Commission and the Treasury were informed of this paper, and the Assessment.

Financial Implications

16. There are no direct financial implications from this paper.

Legislative Implications

17. There are no legislative implications arising from this paper.

Impact Analysis

18. An Impact Statement is not necessary for this paper.

Human Rights

19. There are no Human Rights implications arising from this paper.

Gender Implications

20. There are no gender implications arising from this paper.

Disability Perspective

21. There are no matters arising from this paper that require a disability perspective.

Publicity

22. No publicity is planned as a result of this paper.

Proactive Release

23. I intend to proactively release this paper and its associated minute after the standard 30 business days from the decision being made by Cabinet.

Recommendations

I recommend that the Committee:

- (a) **Note** that the Unit delivered its Rapid Assessment of Census Implementation Planning for Vulnerable Communities to me on 31 August 2022.
- (b) **Note** that I discussed the recommendations in the Unit's Assessment with the Minister of Statistics on 20 September 2022, and we have agreed on the recommendations.
- (c) **Note** that progress against the recommendations will be included in the quarterly reports I provide to CPC on the work undertaken by the Unit.
- (d) **Note** the progress report on Implementation Unit assignments to 13 October 2022.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Grant Robertson
Deputy Prime Minister

Appendix A: Rapid Assessment of the Census Implementation Planning to Reach Vulnerable Communities

Appendix B: Implementation Unit Work Programme Update as at 13 October 2022

Proactively Released

Briefing

Rapid assessment of census implementation planning to reach vulnerable communities

To: Hon Grant Robertson
The Deputy Prime Minister

Date	31 August 2022	Security Level	[IN CONFIDENCE]
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Purpose

1. The Purpose of this Rapid Assessment is to undertake a short sharp assessment of the 2023 Census implementation planning including risk mitigation measures to reach vulnerable communities before and during the census.

Executive Summary

2. The Department of Statistics (StatsNZ) has acted on the three key findings from the Reviews of the 2018 Census – an explicit focus on maximising response rates from hard to reach and priority populations, using a formal disciplined Programme Management approach over the life of the Census, and significantly strengthening senior leadership.
3. The 2023 Census Programme is designed to target the most investment into supporting hard to reach and priority populations to respond. This involves three streams – identification of Assist areas where census staff will undertake a contact-based approach and for the first time will actively by design help respondents to complete the forms. Staff will also follow up immediately on non-responses. The second stream is about Delivery – all respondents in this stream will be delivered forms by a census staff member and have the opportunity for forms to be collected and to receive in-person assistance. The final stream is Mail-out in which all will receive a letter (delivered by NZ Post) with a call to action, a code for online completion and advice as to how to get paper forms and assistance.
4. 30% of the identified population is expected to be supported across the Assist and Deliver streams of the approach and the remaining 70% will be in the Mail-out stream. 44% of all dwellings will receive paper forms. Double the number of staff will be employed than for the 2018 census, most of which will be targeted to the Assist areas, with the remainder primarily working in the Deliver stream with support centrally from a contact centre.
5. A much stronger partnership has been formed with Māori early in the design and implementation planning and included as part of the testing process, particularly for testing the feasibility of the Assist approach.
6. There is a clear definition of the hard to reach and priority populations based on extensive analysis of a range of data points. An enhanced approach to engage communities and form partnerships was put in place early and there are a range of supporting plans to ensure access and language barriers are reduced. All three of New Zealand's official languages are available as options for respondents.


7. The key finding from this assessment is that the approach, design, and planning for the 2023 Census reflects a focus on maximising response rates from hard to reach and priority populations. Investment follows this focus, and a range of supporting plans and mechanisms have been designed to complement it. The design is fit for purpose.
8. The Programme management approach and disciplines (leveraged from the Inland Revenue Transformation programme) are also fit for purpose and represent the best end to end set of disciplines across a complex multi-year programme that the Unit has so far assessed. The leadership of the Programme is skilled and experienced, including in implementation.
9. It is a large complex programme, and it faces challenges that could impact on successful implementation. The Programme has got appropriate, clear risk identification and mitigation processes. This assessment makes some further suggestions.
10. There is a high level of integration across the programme design and in its management. This made it difficult without going through many documents to easily see the whole picture of how the design and its support strategies target hard to reach and priority populations. Without being able to view the key components just for the hard to reach and priority populations in one place it is possible that actions that should be distinct for different parts of these groups may be missed as implementation progresses.
11. The design and plan and support for hard to reach and priority populations should be pulled out from the separate workstreams and visibly show how all the factors will work together – perhaps in an A3 or series of A3s if the priority populations can be separated. The base documentation across the Programme contains this information. This could then form the basis of a checklist to ensure that dependencies particularly for the major priority groups are being explicitly monitored as implementation proceeds.
12. Taking this a step further, the planning and testing is extremely detailed and thorough, a good thing overall but it is possible during implementation that it may be difficult to see something that isn't predicted emerging and to pivot quickly enough to address it. There is a strong operational lead, and that role takes complete control in February across all the workstreams for implementation. The lead will be supported by an Operational Leadership Team that will include other key workstream leads. This is a sound approach, but it is worth considering designating one person whose sole responsibility is monitoring and identifying tactical interventions for hard to reach and priority populations only. This role would not be part of any of the workstreams or hold decision-making responsibilities but would roam across implementation focusing only on what is occurring in the hard to reach and priority populations. It would be tactical, at times a disruptor if needed and would report to the Operational lead.
13. The Team has identified recruitment of the right staff in the local areas where they are needed as its top risk, and it will closely monitor recruitment progress. Steps have been taken to ensure remuneration is competitive and further steps are planned if they prove necessary. Having enough staff to execute the strategy is one thing, but it will be important that many of the staff are able to credibly work with the hard to reach and priority populations. The Programme is relying on specialist recruitment firms to assist with this. It could also leverage its partnerships with Māori and Pacific peoples in places where it expects to experience difficulty and develop approaches that factor in the work done in the regions by the engagement teams.
14. The Team could work with its key partners to develop innovative recruitment and employment approaches and socialise these with decision makers and Ministers for use as a last resort if other strategies fail to provide appropriate coverage. An additional measure could include working with Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission and the Regional Public Service Commissioners to identify and train public service staff based in hard to recruit local areas who could be seconded.

15. Convincing some of the hard to reach and priority populations will be more difficult if one or more disinformation attacks are targeted at the Census. This would put more pressure on census staff also requiring the Team to adapt and act quickly potentially for a prolonged time. There is experience in this field within the Communications team of the DPMC All of Government COVID Group that it would be beneficial to connect with.

Recommendations

I recommend you:

1. **note** that this assessment considers that StatsNZ has adopted a fit for purpose approach, design, and plan for the 2023 Census, where investment is targeted to ensuring maximum response rates for hard to reach and priority populations, has adopted and is actively using an appropriate strong, disciplined programme management approach and has ensured skilled and experienced leadership is in place.
2. **agree** to discuss with the Minister of Statistics asking StatsNZ to strengthen its implementation by
 - a) preparing one or more A3s that show all aspects of the design, approach, plan and implementation plans for the hard to reach and priority populations. YES / NO
 - b) considering designating a senior leader reporting to the Operations lead during implementation to focus solely on identifying an immediate tactical response to issues that arise within hard to reach and priority populations. YES / NO
 - c) developing and socialising innovative approaches for recruiting staff, including seconding staff from across the Public Service based in local areas who will credibly be able to work closely with priority populations to be deployed should planned recruitment not have the required results. YES / NO
3. **agree** to proactively release this report, subject to any appropriate withholding of information that would be justified under the Official Information Act 1982. YES / NO


Katrina Casey
 Executive Director, Implementation Unit
 31/08/2022

Hon Grant Robertson
 The Deputy Prime Minister
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Background

16. On 26 July 2022, the Cabinet Priorities Committee agreed to the Implementation Unit (IU) undertaking a rapid assessment of the 2023 Census implementation planning including risk mitigation measures to reach vulnerable communities before and during the Census [CPC-22-MIN-0016 refers].
17. Preparation for the 2023 Census started with the results of internal and external reviews of the 2018 census following significant issues with the design and implementation of that Census for ensuring appropriate response rates from vulnerable populations.
18. The overall approach to the 2023 Census while focusing on correcting and not repeating the issues from 2018 is part of a longer-term strategy StatsNZ is working on to transform the Census.

Who are the Hard to Reach and Priority Populations for the 2023 Census?

19. Varying definitions are used across Government to identify vulnerable populations depending on the purpose and or nature of a programme or initiative. From the start of its planning for the 2023 Census, StatsNZ has used the terms hard to reach and priority populations. This group is consistently defined throughout Census documentation as including:
 - Māori
 - Pacific Peoples
 - Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) People
 - Male – specifically young Māori and Pacific
 - Young working age 15-29
 - People with English as a second language
 - Communities with no or limited digital access
 - People in crowded housing
 - People on lower incomes
 - People with lower education attainment
 - Rainbow communities
 - People with disabilities.
20. In defining these groups, StatsNZ recognises that they are not mutually exclusive, and it has designed its approach accordingly while still identifying unique actions required to support some of these groups.

What is the Approach to the 2023 Census?

21. As with the 2018 Census the approach to the 2023 Census uses a blend of on-line and paper-based approaches to collect data from respondents. The design and organisation of the approach for the 2023 Census is very different. Administrative data will also be available much earlier than in 2018 and is timed to run alongside the backend of the collection process. While this does not provide critical data about priority groups it does mean that overall, the

Census response rate could be boosted by 10-12% (resulting in a coverage rate that includes both respondent and administrative data). There is a significant technology workstream and while not the focus of this assessment it will be critical to the application of administrative data and the overall success of the Census that the technology is functional when it needs to be.

22. Careful consideration has been given to the appropriate methods of census collection and to the support required to give effect to those methods to achieve an overall response rate of 90% across the identified population, as well as 90% across Māori and 90% across Pacific populations.
23. The design identifies three key methods of collection (excluding administrative data) based on a rigorous and complex analysis of data from a range of sources including response rates from the 2018 Census. The design focus is on ensuring it is respondent centric and prioritises investment into actions that will motivate respondents and remove barriers to participation that respondents faced in 2018 (such as language, accessibility, digital capability, and geography).
24. The most intensive form of collection is termed **Assist** and is expected to apply to around 15% of the identified population. Defined geographical areas have been identified for this stream including the Far North District, West and South Auckland, Whakatane District, Kawerau District, East Coast and Gisborne District, Whanganui, Otaki, and pockets in greater Wellington. This is where most of the field effort from 3,000 FTE staff will be assigned. There will be an increased focus on contact, paper for all, and immediate follow up to non-response. Significant pre census engagement is focused in these areas. For the first time staff working in these areas will by design “cross the doorstep” and help fill in the survey. This could either be on paper or online. There will also be common events or places where teams will be available to respond to queries and assist people to complete the Census.
25. The next most intensive form of collection is called **Deliver** and is expected to apply to a further 15% of the identified population. This population is generally not well served by mail, and this will involve delivery of paper copies which will then be collected. People will receive a call-to-action letter and can choose to fill in the survey online. Included in this group will be parts of the South Island, none of which are identified as areas for Assist purposes but where there may be a concentration of hard to reach and or priority populations. A similar approach will also be applied to retirement villages, hospitals, prisons, emergency housing and other forms of temporary accommodation (termed non-private dwellings).
26. The least intensive form of collection is called **Mail-out** and is expected to involve around 70% of dwellings. This involves StatsNZ providing NZPost with the names and addresses of all the identified population and they will be sent a call-to-action letter. They will be invited to complete the Census online or on paper if they prefer. It is expected that 20% of the Mail-out dwellings will receive paper packs based on need and historical responses (in addition to the dwellings in the Assist and Deliver streams).
27. In all cases, people will have the opportunity to request assistance. The Census information website will also guide people and there will be a contact centre. The Census will be supported with marketing and communications including use of social media.

How does the Approach Ensure High Response rates from Hard to Reach and Priority Populations?

28. StatsNZ recognises that the design will not by itself result in appropriate response rates. In effect it forms the frame of reference around which other mechanisms are and will be in place to facilitate the highest response possible. These include a partnership approach with Māori, an engagement strategy and function in addition to more traditional communications and marketing activities, partnership approach with key representative parties, a language strategy, and an accessibility plan.

Partnership with Māori

29. In its early Programme management documentation, StatsNZ identified that it needed to engage in partnership with Māori and iwi and needed to better deliver on their needs.

30. Specifically, StatsNZ seeks to deliver quality Māori data by lifting response rates and growing Māori capability to collect Māori and iwi data. This is part of a broader and longer-term strategy that goes beyond this Census. StatsNZ is recognising its responsibilities under Te Tiriti o Waitangi and has also developed Mana Ōrite, a Relationship Agreement with the Data Iwi Leaders Group of the National Iwi Chairs Forum. The goals, principles and outcomes focus on equal partnership.

31. Giving effect to the partnership will require both engagement and operational responses as the Census rolls out that are flexible and adaptable to what occurs locally during implementation. This is in addition to the discussions occurring about co-design of the approach to increase Māori response rates.

Engagement Strategy and Partnership with stakeholders

32. An engagement team is in place across 8 regions. The team has 50 staff, a significant increase on the 2018 Census engagement team of 20 staff.

33. The engagement team is working in communities to build understanding of what the Census is and why it is important.

34. The approach to partnerships focuses on building relationships, nationally, regionally, and locally with partners who will support StatsNZ to maximise response rates specifically with the hard to reach and identified priority groups in the Assist areas.

35. In doing this there is recognition that shifts are required from previous processes – notably a shift from generating an awareness to generating a response and there is recognition that forming transactional partnerships will not change the outcome.

Languages

36. Provision has been made to cover the three official NZ languages – English, Te Reo, and New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL). The latter two have been tested as part of a dress rehearsal earlier this year and as a result will have refinements made.

37. Provision is being made for the contact centre to cover nine languages and the hard copy Language guides will also be in these nine languages. The Census website also provides information in a further 20 languages (same as the COVID-19 website).

Accessibility Plan

38. There is a separate Accessibility Plan that runs alongside the Census design and implementation process. It aims to remove barriers to participation. The Plan ensures that accessible design principles are integrated where possible into the Census design, build and test approach. This was developed involving external advice and testing with people with disabilities and people for whom English is a second language.
39. As part of the Plan, more people will be in the field able to provide assistance and all field staff will receive training on disability responsiveness. Supporting information will be available in five alternate formats – NZSL, Easy Read, Large Print, Braille, and Audio. This is the first time a large Print English paper form has been available. It is also the first time that Easy Read will be available in both English and Te Reo. There will be additional help signalled on the Census information website, including through a freephone public contact centre where multiple languages will be spoken.
40. There has also been a focus in lifting awareness across the Census teams, including the engagement team, and working with external representative agencies to seek their support to encourage their networks to get involved in assisting people with disabilities to participate and respond.

How is the Census Being Managed ?

41. For the first time this Census has been established as a Programme, adopting formal disciplines that align with a complex multi-year Programme rather than adopting some programme management techniques but being largely managed as a business-as-usual deliverable. As well as introducing formal disciplines, senior people with the appropriate skills and experience have been brought in. Overall, the leadership of the programme has been strengthened from the previous Census. These actions were signalled as necessary in the Independent Review of the 2018 Census and in StatsNZ Census 2023 Business Case and the associated Detailed Management Case.
42. The Programme Management Plan finalised in late 2020 and importantly kept as a live document and updated as changes have occurred is comprehensive but not complicated. There are very clear objectives set, the strategy and approach support those objectives and there is a strong line of sight to the programme risks and issues. The Programme milestones, planning, reporting and identification of dependencies are clear as are the Programme tolerances. The infrastructure has been established to support the implementation of the Plan and tweaked as the Programme has developed and following targeted review, assurance and testing processes.
43. The Governance structure is strong and includes an external chair of the Census Programme Board. The design of the key forums is clear about the place of and linkages between the Enterprise Governance, Programme Governance and Programme Management. While there are several forums created their purpose and relationship to each other and to the Programme is clear. Modifications have been made as circumstances have changed and or because of findings of internal and external assurance activities.
44. The Programme is supported by a comprehensive assurance programme. This includes three levels of assurance activities – level one activities are integrated into the Census Programme, level two brings in assurance activities from within StatsNZ, and level three has a range of external assurance mechanisms scheduled throughout the life of the Programme.
45. There have been two External Data Quality Panel Reports, three Gateway Reports and four Independent Quality Assurance (IQA) Reports as the programme has proceeded. An IQA is

scheduled for November 2022 and a Gateway Review will be undertaken in December 2022. A final IQA and full review will also be undertaken after the Census.

46. The internal team focused on providing regular operational assurance continues to undertake monthly reviews and most recently completed a Deep Dive in June 2022. This involved a range of methods and had a focus on the viability of the Assist stream of the Census approach.
47. Two field tests have been undertaken on the Collection Model. The first in March 2021 included testing improvements to the approach for hard to reach and priority populations. The second test in March 2022 was to retest the Assist collection approach but was descope due to community feedback arising from the timing with OMICRON. Alternate assurance was conducted to compensate for this.

How does this come together for Hard to Reach and Priority Populations ?

48. As expected for a Programme of this nature issues have arisen, and assurance activities have identified where improvements and changes need to be made. The Assist stream sits at the heart of achieving appropriate response rates from hard to reach and priority populations. This is where the greatest investment is occurring and if this does not work, it is unlikely that response rates from hard to reach and priority populations will be high enough.
49. The recent Deep Dive focused on testing the feasibility and design of Assist. It did so in a range of ways. Market research was undertaken with the results affirming the benefit of the approach, including amongst Māori and Pacific respondents and from targeted engagement. Throughout the Census process, the team has ensured close relationships with international counterparts particularly where Census have been held in the last three years or so. International experts have confirmed that the use of person to person contact as per the Assist design was the most effective approach for hard to reach and priority populations.
50. Testing needed to be thorough and included scenarios that would need to be activated should COVID-19 become a barrier to the successful deployment of the Census as currently designed. There are contingencies that have been developed but any of these would if deployed detract from the response rates being sought from hard to reach and priority populations.
51. While there are several challenges, the recruitment of field staff will be an early determinant of likely success. Recruiting 3,000 FTE field staff for a period of around three and a half months in a tight labour market will be a challenge.
52. This is not just a numbers game – for the design to work many of the staff employed need to be from the local community they will work in and be credible to that community or parts of it. The recruitment and assignment of staff will be critical. There will need to be some input from the engagement team from the work they have been doing in local communities. This is also where the Partnership Agreements at regional and local levels need to be activated and engaged in recruitment.
53. These are all factors the Census Team is acutely aware of, and for a Programme that sees integration as one of the keys to its success, if enough of the right people in the right numbers can't be employed it is likely the integrated nature of the approach will disintegrate. The key is how many are enough and as recruitment occurs it will be important to actively prioritise and reprioritise the allocation of staff to maximise the response rate. Contingency plans will be a guide for possible scenarios but these need to be tested and potentially recalibrated against what happens with recruitment.
54. StatsNZ has identified recruitment as its top risk to meeting the needs of hard to reach and priority populations. It has developed its policies on the back of recent and strong information about recruitment patterns. It has adjusted remuneration rates to be 20% above the Living

Wage s9(2)(f)(iv)

and will also use specialist recruitment firms. Recruitment of team leaders is well underway and positive (after two weeks) with 1,600 expressions of interest and 319 applications for 321 positions.

55. StatsNZ should work with its partners to identify back up methods of recruitment or arrangements that may need to be put in place in some areas to ensure Māori and Pacific Peoples can receive direct assistance in those communities where the more traditional recruitment approach isn't working. This could include innovative recruitment or employment arrangements which may not usually be viewed as desirable or may be complex to manage. It would be important to get appropriate approvals to undertake any of these approaches. It may assist to formally work with Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission and the Regional Public Service Commissioners to source secondees from across the Public Service who are based in those communities where recruitment of the right people proves difficult.
56. StatsNZ has experienced challenges with the part of its permanent workforce that are critical for the success of the Census. Most recently the pace and nature of the work has led to high attrition rates and there are around 70 vacancies, many of which are in the critical digital technology workstream. The programme is two thirds of the way through and for something this complex that is often when leaders need to focus on measures to boost the resilience of the workforce. This is something StatsNZ leaders are attuned to and are putting in place retention and wellbeing support measures. While not a part of this assessment, the challenges experienced moving permanent staff from a business-as-usual working environment to a formal programme management one for a long period needs to be factored into the future thinking about the leadership and workforce disciplines and staff that need to be in place on an ongoing basis. This will need to be a key feature of the overall thinking about implementing the Census Transformation Programme.
57. Significant work continues to be undertaken on communications, marketing and engagement planning and implementation, with plans that ramp up the closer it gets to the operational Census period. One of the very real possibilities is that there is a high level of misinformation and disinformation seeded into the environment about the Census in the immediate lead up and during the Census period itself. It is difficult to predict either the degree to which this could occur or the degree to which it will affect people's willingness to engage with census workers and to respond to the Census.
58. Active consideration about the extent and impact as well as countering actions and arguments and how these are deployed needs to occur if this happens – it will most likely be obvious on social media and be picked up by both the engagement and operational staff working in the Assist and Deliver streams and by and through the Partnerships struck regionally and locally. The Communications Team in the DPMC All of Government COVID Group has got experience with this and would be a good point of contact.
59. This assessment considers that the design, supporting strategies and plans and management of the 2023 Census is fit for purpose to maximise response rates from the hard to reach and priority populations. The success factors and associated challenges are identified and in sight. Overall success will require very detailed real time monitoring as the Census rolls out and timely flexible and agile responses both planned and tactical as risks materialise and challenges occur. This would be strengthened if the Team add one more mechanism - a senior person that can roam across workstreams, is not part of the hierarchy, is solely focused on what is happening for hard to reach and priority populations and whose focus is to advise the Operational lead and his leadership team about real time tactical responses.
60. The design and range of actions being undertaken all require the technology underpinning the Census to be effective and the application of applied data to be successful.

Treaty of Waitangi considerations and te ao Māori perspective

61. This report acknowledges that StatsNZ has taken steps to partner with Māori in the design planning and testing of the design for the 2023 Census. There is scope to expand this partnership as part of the medium-term Strategy for the transformation of the Census.

Financial implications and Next Steps

62. There are no financial implications of this report.

63. The next step is for you to meet with the Minister of Statistics to discuss this report and suggested next steps and recommendations. The Report will then be taken to the Cabinet Priorities Committee meeting in October 2022.

Proactively Released

Completed commissions since last Cabinet Priorities Committee report (paper lodged on 18 August 2022)

Programme	Commission	Deadline	Status	Update
Immigration Rebalance	Rapid assessment of Immigration New Zealand's (INZ) planning and approach to visa processing for the border reopening	✓ 19 Aug 2022	Complete	The Report was delivered to the Deputy Prime Minister on 19 August 2022.
He Waka Eke Noa	Work alongside Ministry for the Environment and Ministry for Primary Industries to assist with implementation planning	✓ 26 Aug 2022	Complete	The Unit's work alongside the Ministry for the Environment, Ministry for Primary Industries, and the He Waka Eke Noa Partnership's Programme Office concluded at the end of August 2022.
Census readiness for reaching vulnerable communities	A rapid assessment of the implementation planning including risk mitigation measures to reach vulnerable communities before and during the census	✓ 31 Aug 2022	Complete	The Report was delivered to the Deputy Prime Minister on 31 August 2022.
Te Aorerekura	Work alongside Te Puna Aonui to support the transition to the Interdepartmental Executive Board (IEB)	✓ 31 Aug 2022	Complete	The Unit's support for the Joint Venture Business Unit concluded at the end of August. The Unit will continue to provide support as requested.

Status of remaining commissions (continued over page)

Programme	Commission	Deadline	Status	Update
Mental Health and Addiction	Deep dive into the Mental Health Infrastructure Programme	14 Oct 2022	In progress	The Unit is finalising the results from the Infrastructure experts and Te Waihangā and will report to the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Health on the 14 October 2022.
Government Investment in Decarbonising Industry Fund	Stocktake of implementation readiness	14 Oct 2022	In progress	The Unit is finalising the stocktake and will report to the Deputy Prime Minister on the 14 October 2022.
NZ's International Climate Finance Commitments	Stocktake of delivery of the 2019 to 2022 commitment and readiness to deliver the 2022 to 2025 commitment	20 Oct 2022	In progress	The Unit has completed its analysis, is preparing and consulting on the report to the Deputy Prime Minister and will deliver the Report on the 20 October 2022.
Immigration Rebalance	Work alongside MBIE as it delivers the Immigration Rebalance programme	Will review in December 2022	In progress	Following the rapid assessment completed in August, the Unit is providing weekly updates to the Deputy Prime Minister on average visa processing times and working with Immigration New Zealand on the development of an overarching contingency plan across its priority visa categories.
Emissions Reductions Plan	Work alongside agencies as the IEB is established and Emissions Reduction Plan (ERP) implementation plan developed	31 Oct 2022	In progress	The Unit resumed its working alongside role in September and is providing input into the development of the ERP implementation plan before it is considered by Cabinet in November 2022.
He Waka Eke Noa	Undertake a rapid assessment of progress towards the farm-level emissions reporting and planning milestones	18 Nov 2022	Not started	Rapid assessment will commence in the last week of October 2022.

Status of remaining commissions (continued from previous page)

Programme	Commission	Deadline	Status	Update
Three Waters Reform Programme	Work alongside agencies to strengthen transition planning and risk mitigation	31 Oct 2022	In progress	The Unit continues to work with the National Transition Unit within the Department of Internal Affairs, focussed on workforce planning for the new entities.
	Stocktake of Day 1 readiness	<i>To be determined</i>	<i>Not started</i>	<i>The Stocktake is currently scheduled for early 2023. Timing will be determined as part of the Review of the Work programme scheduled to go to the 6 December 2022 CPC meeting.</i>
Public housing	Stocktake of the progress of Kāinga Ora's public housing construction pipeline and delivery	25 Nov 2022	In progress	The Unit commenced the stocktake in early October and is working with the Ministry for Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Kāinga Ora.
	Stocktake of delivery of existing housing supply initiatives	9 Dec 2022	In progress	The Unit agreed a draft Commissioning Brief with HUD and Kāinga Ora in September and will commence the stocktake in partnership with HUD this month.
Health system reforms	Support the Ministry of Health to develop plans to implement the additional funding received in Budget '22 to increase its capability	Dec 2022	In progress	Discussions held with the Acting Director-General on her approach and further discussions will occur as and when needed.
	Assessment of the effectiveness of the new working arrangements between agencies	2 Dec 2022	<i>Not started</i>	<i>Initial discussions with the Acting Director-General of Health, the Deputy Chief Executive of Health and subsequently the Ministry's Executive Leadership Team. The Assessment will commence in late October 2022.</i>
Emergency and Transitional Housing	Support HUD and MSD to implement a place-based emergency housing model in Wellington and Hamilton. The Implementation Unit will: 1. Work with the delivery agencies to ensure the lessons learned in the Rotorua pilot are taken into account in the design and delivery of the model; and 2. The model is implemented in a way that is fit for purpose and responsive to the respective contexts in the two locations	<i>To be determined</i>	<i>Not started</i>	<i>Support likely to commence in November 2022. Timing is dependent on the progress the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development makes with policy development.</i>
Te Aorerekura	Stocktake of progress against the Action Plan	<i>To be determined</i>	<i>Not started</i>	<i>The Stocktake is currently scheduled for early 2023. Timing will be determined as part of the Review of the Work programme scheduled to go to the 6 December 2022 CPC meeting</i>



Cabinet Priorities Committee

Minute of Decision

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Rapid Assessment of Census Implementation Planning to Reach Vulnerable Populations

Portfolio Deputy Prime Minister

On 18 October 2022, the Cabinet Priorities Committee (CPC):

- 1 **noted** that in July 2022, CPC agreed to new assignments for the Implementation Unit (the Unit) for the second half of 2022, including a rapid assessment of implementation planning for the upcoming census and mitigation measures to reach vulnerable communities [CPC-22-MIN-0021];
- 2 **noted** that the Unit delivered its Rapid Assessment of Census Implementation Planning for Vulnerable Communities to the Deputy Prime Minister on 31 August 2022;
- 3 **noted** that the Deputy Prime Minister discussed the recommendations in the Unit's Assessment with the Minister of Statistics on 20 September 2022, and the Ministers have agreed to the recommendations;
- 4 **noted** that progress against the recommendations will be included in the quarterly reports that the Deputy Prime Minister provides to CPC on the work undertaken by the Unit;
- 5 **noted** the progress report on Implementation Unit assignments to 13 October 2022, attached to the submission under CPC-22-SUB-0034.

Jenny Vickers
Committee Secretary

Present:

Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern (Chair)
Hon Grant Robertson
Hon Kelvin Davis
Hon Dr Megan Woods
Hon Chris Hipkins
Hon Andrew Little
Hon Nanaia Mahuta
Hon Poto Williams
Hon Damien O'Connor
Hon Stuart Nash
Hon Michael Wood
Hon Kieran McAnulty

Officials present from:

Office of the Prime Minister
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet



Cabinet

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Report of the Cabinet Priorities Committee: Period Ended 21 October 2022

On 25 October 2022, Cabinet made the following decisions on the work of the Cabinet Priorities Committee for the period ended 21 October 2022:

[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
CPC-22-MIN-0034	Rapid Assessment of Census Implementation Planning to Reach Vulnerable Populations Portfolio: Deputy Prime Minister	CONFIRMED
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

Rachel Hayward
Acting Secretary of the Cabinet