



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Bureau of the Census
Washington, DC 20233-0001

MEMORANDUM FOR Distribution

From: Cynthia Clark
 Associate Director for Methodology and Standards

Subject: Field Infrastructure: EEO Process

I am pleased to present the executive summary for the evaluation study for the Census 2000 Dress Rehearsal. The dress rehearsal was conducted in three sites — Columbia, South Carolina; Menominee County, Wisconsin; and Sacramento, California. The evaluation studies cover detailed aspects of eight broad areas related to the census dress rehearsal — census questionnaire, address list, coverage measurement, coverage improvement, promotion activities, procedures for nonrespondents to mail census, field operations, and technology.

The executive summary for each evaluation study is also available on the Census Bureau Internet site (<http://www.census.gov/census2000> and click on the link to “Evaluation”). Copies of the complete report may be obtained by contacting Carnelle Sligh at (301) 457-3525 or by e-mail at carnelle.e.sligh@census.gov.

The evaluations are distributed broadly to promote the open and thorough review of census processes and procedures. The primary purpose of the dress rehearsal is to simulate portions of the environment we anticipate for Census 2000, so we can identify and correct potential problems in the processes. Thus, the purpose of the evaluation studies is to provide analysis to support time critical review and possible refinements of Census 2000 operations and procedures.

The analysis and recommendations in the evaluation study reports are those of staff working on specific evaluations and, thus, do not represent the official position of the Census Bureau. They represent the results of an evaluation of a component of the census plan. They will be used to analyze and improve processes and procedures for Census 2000. The individual evaluation recommendations have not all yet been reviewed for incorporation in the official plan for Census 2000. These evaluation study reports will be used as input to the decision making process to refine the plans for Census 2000.

The Census Bureau will issue a report that synthesizes the recommendations from all the evaluation studies and provides the Census Bureau review of the dress rehearsal operation. This report will also indicate the Census Bureau’s official position on the

utilization of these results in the Census 2000 operation. This report will be available July 30th.

Evaluation of the Nonresponse Followup Operation (A1b)

Evaluation of the Mail Return Questionnaire (A2)

Evaluation of Telephone Questionnaire Assistance (A4)

Service Based Enumeration Coverage Yield Evaluation (D1)

Effectiveness of Paid Advertising (E1a)

Promotion Evaluation: Exposure to Paid Advertising and Likelihood of Returning a Census Form (E1b)

Field Infrastructure: EEO Process (G7)

Evaluation of the Housing Unit Coverage on the Master Address File (B1)

Field Infrastructure: EEO Process

April 1999

Joseph Norvell
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For questions regarding this summary or to request a copy of the full report, contact the Planning, Research, and Evaluation Division, Bureau of the Census (301) 457-3525.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

Under Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) laws and regulations the Census Bureau is required to process all decennial employee and job applicant allegations of discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, and reprisal for participation in protected EEO activity. For Census 2000, this requirement is being met through the coordinated efforts of the EEO Office at the Census Bureau and the Offices of Civil Rights and General Counsel at the Department of Commerce. The Census Bureau EEO Office in 1997 began installing an automated system to track decennial complaints. This system is now online for Census 2000. The Department of Commerce's Office of Civil Rights worked on the overall Census 2000 EEO program to:

- Minimize disruption to decennial operations
- Resolve EEO complaints at an early stage
- Provide a timely and fair complaint process
- Ensure decennial hiring is consistent with EEO practices
- Give timely feedback to decennial managers

The Department of Commerce, General Counsel, has assigned staff to represent the Census Bureau in any administrative or judicial hearings. The Census Bureau EEO Office's initial workload projection for the decennial census is about 3000 to 6000 initial contacts.

Results

Only 8 out of 14 initial contacts received by the Census EEO Office between 1/1/98 and 6/30/98 were attributed to Regional Census Centers (RCCs) involved in the Census 2000 Dress Rehearsal. As of 11/30/98 there were only 125 initial contacts for all 12 of the Census Bureau's RCCs. While this workload was large enough to provide an early status report it was too small to evaluate and make verifiable predictions about the ability of the EEO process to handle the decennial caseload.

Conclusions/Recommendations

Census EEO reports show the initial contacts associated with the dress rehearsal and other census operations during 1998 were accurately recorded, tracked, and timely processed. Hopefully the light caseload and efficient processing will continue through Census 2000.

The Office of Civil Rights reports that recruiting and retaining staff is already proving to be a challenge. Because the Census 2000 EEO workload will not peak until the summer of 2000 there still is an opportunity for continuing improvements in the EEO process.