

5 December 2025

**s9(2)(a)**

Tālofa lava **s9(2)(a)**

## RESPONSE TO AN OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST (REF: DOIA014-2025/26)

On 9 October 2025, you contacted the Ministry for Pacific Peoples (the Ministry) requesting under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), information regarding communications between Stats NZ and the Ministry on census modernisation. This includes the Regulatory Impact Statement, as well as any advice the Ministry provided to the Minister concerning census modernisation and associated data quality issues that may affect the Ministry. I have outlined your specific request and my response below.

*Can I please request the following under the OIA*

- 1. All feedback and communications between Statistics NZ and MPP regarding census modernisation, including (but not restricted to) the Regulatory Impact Statement process and production.*
- 2. Any advice provided to the Minister from MPP about census modernisation and related data quality issues that may impact Pacific peoples.*

I have appended to this letter:

- copies of correspondence and documents between the Ministry and Stats NZ (refer to **Appendix One**).
- advice the Ministry produced for the Minister on changes to the census (refer to **Appendix Two**).

Please note that some information has been withheld or refused under the OIA:

- Section 9(2)(a) to protect the privacy of natural persons.

### Auckland

9 Ronwood Ave, Manukau  
PO Box 97005,  
South Auckland Mail Centre 2240  
P: 09 265 3200

### Wellington National Office

Level 7, 1 Bowen House  
Wellington, 6011  
PO Box 833, Wellington 6143  
P: 04 473 4493

### Christchurch

Level 1, BNZ Centre  
120 Hereford St  
Private Bag 4741,  
Christchurch 8011

- Section 9(2)(f)(iv) to maintain the constitutional conventions for the time being which protect the confidentiality of advice tendered by the Ministers of the Crown and officials.
- Section 9(2)(g)(i) to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions by or between or to Ministers of the Crown or members of an organisation or officers and employees of any public service agency or organisation in the course of their duty.
- Section 18(d) as the information requested is or will soon be publicly available.

I am satisfied that there are no public interest considerations that render it desirable to make the information in these documents that are withheld under section 9 of the OIA available.

In line with standard OIA practice, the Ministry proactively publishes some of its responses to OIA requests. As such, this letter may be published on the Ministry for Pacific Peoples' website. Your personal details will be removed, and the Ministry will not publish any information that would identify you or your organisation.

Should you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact the Ministry at: [uia\\_requests@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:uia_requests@mpp.govt.nz).

If you are dissatisfied with this response, you have the right, under section 28(3) of the OIA, to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

Ia manuia



Bernadette Scanlon  
**Deputy Secretary**  
**Policy and Insights**

## Appendix One

DOCUMENT NUMBER	DOCUMENT TYPE	DATE	REASON TO WITHHOLD/REFUSE
1	Email	20/02/2024	Withholding some information under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA – protect the privacy of natural persons.
2 2A	Email Attachment	10/06/2024 10/06/2024	Withholding some information under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA – protect the privacy of natural persons. Attachment refused under section 18(d) of the OIA as the information is publicly available. This can be accessed here: <a href="#">Reviewing the quality of ethnicity data from administrative sources: Comparison with the census</a>
3 3A	Email Attachment	05/08/2024 05/08/2025	Withholding some information under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA – protect the privacy of natural persons. Attachment released in full.
4	Email	06/09/2024	Withholding some information under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA – protect the privacy of natural persons.
5	Email	10/10/2024	Withholding some information under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA – protect the privacy of natural persons.
6 6A	Email Attachment	14/11/2024 14/11/2024	Email released in full. Attachment released in full.
7	Stand-alone Document	26/02/2024	Released in full.
8	Stand-alone Document	27/02/2024	Released in full.
9	Email	14/02/2024	Withholding some information under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA – protect the privacy of natural persons.
10	Stand-alone Document	15/03/2024	Withholding some information under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA – protect the privacy of natural persons.
11	Email	04/04/2024	Withholding some information under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA – protect the privacy of natural persons.
12	Stand-alone Document	17/04/2024	Released in full.
13	Email	18/12/2024	Withholding some information under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA – protect the privacy of natural persons.
14	Email	05/09/2024	Withholding some information under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA – protect the privacy of natural persons.
15	Email	27/03/2024	Withholding some information under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA – protect the privacy of natural persons.
16 16A 16B	Email Attachment Attachment	24/04/2024 24/04/2024 24/04/2024	Withholding some information under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA – protect the privacy of natural persons. Released in full. Released in full.
17	Email	29/04/2024	Withholding some information under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA – protect the privacy of natural persons.
18	Email	30/04/2024	Withholding some information under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA – protect the privacy of natural persons.
19	Email	12/06/2024	Withholding some information under: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Section 9(2)(g)(i) of the OIA – free and frank.</li> <li>Section 9(2)(a) of the OIA – protect the privacy of natural persons.</li> </ul>
20	Email	18/06/2024	Withholding some information under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA – protect the privacy of natural persons.
21	Email	27/06/2024	Withholding some information under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA – protect the privacy of natural persons.
22	Email	01/07/2024	Withholding some information under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA – protect the privacy of natural persons.
23	Email	03/07/2024	Withholding some information under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA – protect the privacy of natural persons.

## Auckland

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## Christchurch

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Private Bag 4741,  
Christchurch 8011

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25	Email	02/08/2024	Withholding some information under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA – protect the privacy of natural persons.
25A	Attachment	02/08/2024	Attachment refused under section 18(d) of the OIA as the information is publicly available. This can be accessed here: <a href="#">Technical feasibility: Measuring population and dwellings using administrative data   Stats NZ</a>
25B	Attachment	02/08/2024	Attachment refused under section 18(d) of the OIA as the information is publicly available. This can be accessed here: <a href="#">Reviewing the quality of ethnicity data from administrative sources: Comparison with the census</a>
25C	Attachment	02/08/2024	Attachment refused under section 18(d) of the OIA as the information will be released by Stats NZ in due course.
26	Email	04/08/2024	Withholding some information under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA – protect the privacy of natural persons.
27	Email	16/08/2024	Withholding some information under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA – protect the privacy of natural persons.
27A	Attachment	16/08/2024	Attachment refused under section 18(d) of the OIA as the information will be released by Stats NZ in due course.
27B	Attachment	16/08/2024	Attachment refused under section 18(d) of the OIA as the information will be released by Stats NZ in due course.
28	Email	27/09/2024	Withholding some information under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA – protect the privacy of natural persons.
29	Email	02/10/2024	Withholding some information under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA – protect the privacy of natural persons.
29A	Attachment	02/10/2024	Attachment refused under section 18(d) of the OIA as the information will be released by Stats NZ in due course.
29B	Attachment	02/10/2024	Attachment refused under section 18(d) of the OIA as the information will be released by Stats NZ in due course.
29C	Attachment	02/10/2024	Attachment refused under section 18(d) of the OIA as the information will be released by Stats NZ in due course.
29D	Attachment	02/10/2024	Attachment refused under section 18(d) of the OIA as the information will be released by Stats NZ in due course.
29E	Attachment	02/10/2024	Attachment refused under section 18(d) of the OIA as the information will be released by Stats NZ in due course.
29F	Attachment	02/10/2024	Attachment refused under section 18(d) of the OIA as the information will be released by Stats NZ in due course.
30	Email	10/12/2024	Withholding some information under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA – protect the privacy of natural persons.
31	Email	19/12/2024	Withholding some information under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA – protect the privacy of natural persons.
32	Email	19/06/2024	Withholding some information under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA – protect the privacy of natural persons.
32A	Attachment	19/06/2024	Released in full.
33	Email	25/06/2024	Email refused under section 18(d) of the OIA as the information will be released by Stats NZ in due course.
34	Email	31/01/2025	Released in full.
35	Email	19/02/2025	Withholding in full under section 9(2)(g)(i) of the OIA – free and frank.
35A	Attachment	19/02/2025	Withholding in full under section 9(2)(g)(i) of the OIA – free and frank.
36	Email	23/02/2025	Withholding in full under section 9(2)(g)(i) of the OIA – free and frank.
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53	Email	12/03/2025	Withholding in full under section 9(2)(g)(i) of the OIA – free and frank.
54	Email	01/05/2025	Released in full
54A	Attachment	01/05/2025	Attachment refused under section 18(d) of the OIA as the information is publicly available. This can be accessed: <a href="#">Cabinet papers – Modernising the census by taking an administrative data-first approach   Stats NZ</a>
55	Email	07/03/2025	Withholding in full under section 9(2)(g)(i) of the OIA – free and frank.
56	Email	16/03/2025	Withholding in full under section 9(2)(g)(i) of the OIA – free and frank.
57	Email	18/03/2025	Withholding in full under section 9(2)(g)(i) of the OIA – free and frank.
58	Email	20/02/2025	Withholding in full under section 9(2)(g)(i) of the OIA – free and frank.
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65A	Attachment	17/06/2025	Attachment refused under section 18(d) of the OIA as the information is publicly available. This can be accessed: <a href="#">Modernising New Zealand's data system   Stats NZ</a>
66	Email	06/08/2025	Withholding some information under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA – protect the privacy of natural persons
67	Email	21/02/2025	Withholding in full under section 9(2)(g)(i) of the OIA – free and frank.
68	Email	23/02/2028	Withholding in full under section 9(2)(g)(i) of the OIA – free and frank.
69	Email	24/02/2025	Withholding in full under section 9(2)(g)(i) of the OIA – free and frank.
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72	Email	17/03/2025	Withholding in full under section 9(2)(g)(i) of the OIA – free and frank.

# Document 1



## RE: Many thanks for your time - follow-up

**From** Gareth Minshall <gareth.minshall@stats.govt.nz>

**Date** Wed 6/03/2024 5:27 PM

**To** James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>

**Cc** Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>; Gerard Sonder </o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=66bcb380614d4ad0beeff32e595f5567-5985fb20-86>; Corina Grey <corina.grey@mpp.govt.nz>; Lisa Cheney <Lisa.Cheney@stats.govt.nz>; Hannes Diener <Hannes.Diener@stats.govt.nz>; Falaniko Tominiko <Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz>; Lafaele Mapusua <Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz>; Sean Broughton <sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz>

Some people who received this message don't often get email from gareth.minshall@stats.govt.nz. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hi James,

Following up from Sean's email to see when might suit to set up an initial hui.

I think you and some of your team are attending the APC presentation on the 13<sup>th</sup>. One option would be to use this as a starter and to set up something following that session for more detail. Otherwise happy to set a discussion beforehand. In terms of dates, some free options at our end are this Friday at 11.30, Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> between 9 and 10.30 and Friday 15<sup>th</sup> between 1 and 3pm. We'll be able to move calendars around if none of those time suit, so just let me know what will work from your end and we can go from there.

In terms of things to cover

- introducing the teams. From our end we'd probably look to involve Hannes Diener who has been leading the APC research, Lisa Cheney who is the design lead for future census design, alongside Falaniko Tominiko and Lafaele Mapusua who help support pacific engagement across Stats NZ.
- providing detailed info on the quality of admin data for pacific peoples. We don't have a paper similar to [Information for Māori about the experimental administrative population census | Stats NZ](#) but we can pull together a lot of the information you are looking for in terms of APC quality for pacific peoples to share. Also really happy to share code and talk through what other information would be good to collate.
- the idea of setting up a pacific data hui covering the topics suggested by Sean. Also happy to progress some of those topics with you and your team directly if you'd prefer

Let me know your thoughts, really happy to work in with what will work for you and your team.

Ngā mihi,  
Gareth

**From:** Sean Broughton

**Sent:** Tuesday, March 5, 2024 10:57 PM

**To:** James Greenwell

**Cc:** Maryke Barnard ; Gerard Sonder ; Corina Grey

**Subject:** RE: Many thanks for your time - follow-up

Kia ora James,

Ngā mihi nui for following up.

You can expect Gareth Minshall (Principal Analyst – Methods and Design) to reach out to you in the coming days regarding the APC assessment code and to explore options for a follow-up hui.

We've been working behind the scenes to align engagement with representatives from the Pacific Data Sovereignty Network, who have expressed an interest in understanding use of administrative data in 2023 Census and the implications for data for and about Pacific People.

With that in mind, Gareth's thinking is to set up a Pacific People data hui covering:

- use of administrative data in 2023 Census
- detailed information on the quality of data in the APC for Pacific Peoples
- Discussion on the impact of future census design decisions on quality of Pacific Peoples data.

I'll connect with Gareth *et al*, tomorrow. Thanks again for getting in touch.

Pō mārie,

Sean

Sean Broughton (pronouns: he/him/his)

General Manager – Customers and Partnerships

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**From:** James Greenwell <[james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, March 5, 2024 12:19 PM

**To:** Sean Broughton <[sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz](mailto:sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz)>

**Cc:** Maryke Barnard <[maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz)>; Gerard Sonder <[gerard.sonder@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:gerard.sonder@mpp.govt.nz)>; Corina Grey <[corina.grey@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:corina.grey@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Subject:** RE: Many thanks for your time - follow-up

Kia orāna Sean,

We'll note the correction. 😊

I'm following up to find out if your Methods and Design counterpart can share the Māori APC assessment code with me for an MPP IDI project. It would be an excellent way to validate the IDI work Stats NZ have already done and to expand it at MPP. The project we'd like to replicate is published here: [Information for Māori about the experimental administrative population census | Stats NZ](#).

As you point out it'll also be helpful to learn more about the APC (e.g. potential, data quality etc.), statistical registers system, population and social statistics architecture (e.g. potential shifts stemming from changing the approach to delivering a census etc.) and exploring the impact of future census design options for Pacific peoples data.

My team would also be interested in understanding the compliance challenges ahead so that we can determine how to support government agency partners.

Fa'afetai tele lava,

James

**Dr James Greenwell**

Chief Data Scientist, Data and Insights

Ministry for Pacific Peoples

Te Manatū mō ngā Iwi o te Moana-nui-ā-Kiwa

s9(2)(a)

[www.mpp.govt.nz](https://www.mpp.govt.nz)



---

**From:** Sean Broughton <[sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz](mailto:sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, February 21, 2024 10:14 PM

**To:** Corina Grey <[corina.grey@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:corina.grey@mpp.govt.nz)>; James Greenwell <[james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Cc:** Maryke Barnard <[maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz)>; Gerard Sonder <[gerard.sonder@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:gerard.sonder@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Subject:** RE: Many thanks for your time - follow-up

Kia ora kōrua,

It was fantastic to meet you, too. I really enjoyed our kōrero and your keenness to work alongside Stats NZ to explore options and models for 2028 Census and beyond.

Aroha mai for not responding sooner. s9(2)(g)(i)

[@James](#) – I'll get in touch with my Methods and Design counterpart to test if they've carried out analysis of the APC for Pacific peoples and how they can make the code available in the Data Lab. I also think there's a series of follow-up discussions to be had with Stats NZ's methodologists and subject matter experts on topics like the APC

(e.g. potential, data quality etc.), statistical registers system, population and social statistics architecture (e.g. potential shifts stemming from changing the approach to delivering a census etc.), and exploring what the impact of future census design options have on Pacific peoples data. I'll come back to you on these points.

[@Corina](#) – It's definitely gone to MEC via their Ministerial shared mailbox, plus Wendy's connected with Fiona and Pratima. As best as I can tell, it hasn't gone to HQSC, so if you've their email addresses to hand, that'd be great. One last thing. I need to correct a figure I quoted at our hui. The raw return rate at the close of the field operation for 2023 Census (July 2023) was 79.4 percent, up from the early-to-mid 70s for the 2018 Census. That's higher than the raw rate of return for Māori.

I'll be in touch in due course.

Pō mārie,

Sean

Sean Broughton (pronouns: he/him/his)

General Manager – Customers and Partnerships

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---

**From:** Corina Grey <[corina.grey@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:corina.grey@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, February 21, 2024 2:47 PM

**To:** James Greenwell <[james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz)>; Sean Broughton <[sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz](mailto:sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz)>

**Cc:** Maryke Barnard <[maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz)>; Gerard Sonder <[gerard.sonder@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:gerard.sonder@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Subject:** RE: Many thanks for your time - follow-up

Kia ora Sean

Just wanted to add my thanks to James' – it was lovely to meet you yesterday.

I also just wanted to follow up with a question I forgot to ask yesterday. We have some colleagues from the Health Quality & Safety Commission and Ministry for Ethnic Communities who I couldn't see on the distribution list for the cab paper. Just checking which organisations have been included in the consultation, and if there is possibility for you to include HQSC and MEC if they haven't already been consulted? I'm happy to send the email addresses for the data leads in those organisations?

Thanks very much

Corina

**Dr Corina Grey**

Deputy Secretary - Data & Insights

s9(2)(a)

---

**From:** James Greenwell <[james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, February 20, 2024 9:56 PM

**To:** [Sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz)

**Cc:** Corina Grey <[corina.grey@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:corina.grey@mpp.govt.nz)>; Maryke Barnard <[maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz)>; Gerard Sonder <[gerard.sonder@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:gerard.sonder@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Subject:** Many thanks for your time - follow-up

Kia orāna Sean,

Many thanks for meeting with us today. I know that meeting notes will be shared but need to ask for your help to find out if Stats NZ has plans to do an APC analysis for Pacific peoples? We just came across this analysis for Māori last month: [Information for Māori about the experimental administrative population census | Stats NZ](#)

If there are no plans can we get a copy of the code used for the Māori analysis to adapt for a Pacific analysis in the IDI? We're happy to do it ourselves if that will help speed things up.

So that we can be informed for future Cabinet papers and census engagements please help us learn more about your exploratory analysis for supplemental surveys, admin data record linkage and ethnicity harmonisation. The papers by Christine Bycroft have been very helpful so far.

Fa'afetai tele lava,

James

**Dr James Greenwell**

Chief Data Scientist, Data and Insights

Ministry for Pacific Peoples

Te Manatū mō ngā Iwi o te Moana-nui-ā-Kiwa

s9(2)(a)

[www.mpp.govt.nz](http://www.mpp.govt.nz)



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# Document 2

 Outlook

RE: DSE Paper - Share with MPP - Ethnicity Quality Review from Admin Sources

From Hannes Diener <Hannes.Diener@stats.govt.nz>

Date Wed 12/06/2024 7:42 PM

To Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>

Cc James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>; Hannah Wignall <Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz>; Sandy Suei <sandy.suei@stats.govt.nz>; Ivan Welsh <Ivan.Welsh@stats.govt.nz>; Ruby Dixon <Ruby.Dixon@stats.govt.nz>

 1 attachment (5 MB)

share with MPP-- Ethnicity Quality Review from Admin Sources.docx;

Guten Abend, Maryke

Many apologies that this has taken so long. Please find attached the draft of "Ruby's paper". As indicated we hope to use this as a base for refining our method to combine ethnicities from the different sources, but it can naturally also inform where there are particular issues with collection, coding, and processing of ethnicity in those admin sources.

- As the subtle watermarks indicate, this is still work in progress. We are planning to publish this work, and will quite likely come back to you with a formal review request. Having said that, we're obviously also interested in any feedback before this.
- Please don't share beyond your group.

Nga mihi nui,

Hannes

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**From:** Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>

**Sent:** Monday, June 10, 2024 9:37 AM

**To:** Hannes Diener <Hannes.Diener@stats.govt.nz>

**Cc:** James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>; Hannah Wignall <Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz>

**Subject:** RE: DSE Paper

Talofa Hannes

Hope you had a good weekend!

Just wondering if the ethnicity data quality paper is ready to be shared 😊

Fa'afetai tele lava

Maryke

**Maryke Barnard**

Operations Manager, Data and Insights

S9(2)(a)

1

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# Document 3



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## Re: Introductions - Dwelling Register

---

**From** James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>

**Date** Mon 12/08/2024 8:50 AM

**To** Sarah Cowell <sarah.cowell@stats.govt.nz>; Hannah Wignall <Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz>; Michael Judd <Michael.Judd@stats.govt.nz>

**Cc** Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>; Lafaele Mapusua <Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz>; Falaniko Tominiko <Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz>

Many thanks Sarah. I hadn't come across this document in my search.

I'll review this first and follow-up with you for questions/clarifications. 😊

---

**From:** Sarah Cowell <sarah.cowell@stats.govt.nz>

**Sent:** 12 August 2024 8:31 AM

**To:** James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>; Hannah Wignall <Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz>; Michael Judd <Michael.Judd@stats.govt.nz>

**Cc:** Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>; Lafaele Mapusua <Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz>; Falaniko Tominiko <Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz>

**Subject:** RE: Introductions - Dwelling Register

Kia ora James

Have attached for you our places index high level design, which includes an admin dwelling register, for you to have a read through.

We have Mike Judd on secondment from LINZ and co-domain leading with me (who is included in the email) on the Places Index and who designed the PDMF – the property data management framework. This framework is what underpins our Places Index.

Whilst it might be a lot of information to digest, please know that Mike and I are only too happy to arrange a suitable day/time, if it would be of some help to you and others from MPP to discuss StatsNZs Places Index design and proof of concept work as well to talk through some of what you mention below in terms of quality, data sources, updates, what it means for surveys...

Kind regards... Sarah

**Sarah Cowell**

Senior Geospatial Analyst

Data Management & Operations | Stats NZ | Tauranga Aotearoa

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# About Aotearoa, for Aotearoa

Data that improves lives today and for generations to come



**From:** James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>

**Sent:** Monday, August 5, 2024 2:50 PM

**To:** Hannah Wignall <Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz>; Sarah Cowell <sarah.cowell@stats.govt.nz>

**Cc:** Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>; Lafaele Mapusua <Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz>; Falaniko Tominiko <Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz>

**Subject:** Re: Introductions - Dwelling Register

Many thanks for introducing us Hannah 😊

Kia orāna Sarah,

The dwelling register (and address database) has been mentioned in the Census 2023 statutory review and in household survey methodology publications that my team is reviewing. We're also trying to understand dwelling register implications for Census 2028 proposals so would be grateful for information that would support our intuition.

If you have a chance please link me to dwelling register documentation so I can start learning about the following:

- data quality/validation
- data sources
- Update frequency
- relationship to census
- relationship to PES
- relationship to household survey frame
- relationship to APC or IDI more generally.

Meitaki,  
James

**Dr James Greenwell**

Chief Data Scientist, Data and Insights  
Policy and Insights, Ministry for Pacific Peoples  
Te Manatū mō ngā Iwi o te Moana-nui-ā-Kiwa

S9(2)(a)

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**From:** Hannah Wignall <[Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz)>  
**Sent:** 05 August 2024 1:57 PM  
**To:** Sarah Cowell <[sarah.cowell@stats.govt.nz](mailto:sarah.cowell@stats.govt.nz)>; James Greenwell <[james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz)>  
**Cc:** Maryke Barnard <[maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz)>; Lafaele Mapusua <[Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz)>;  
Falaniko Tominiko <[Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz)>  
**Subject:** Introductions - Dwelling Register

Kia ora James,

I'd like to introduce you to the wonderful Sarah. Sarah is Senior Design Analyst and is part of the ISDS (Integrated Statistical Data System) team, working on the places index.

Sarah would be best placed to have a conversation with you around a dwelling register 😊

Will leave it to you both to connect.

Ngā mihi,  
Hannah

**Hannah Wignall** (she/her)  
Kaiwhakahaere - Tuituinga | Kōtuitanga Hinonga | Kaiārahi Pūnaha Raraunga  
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## The Places Index: High level design including an admin dwelling register

Domain Leads: Michael Judd & Sarah Cowell

14 May 2024

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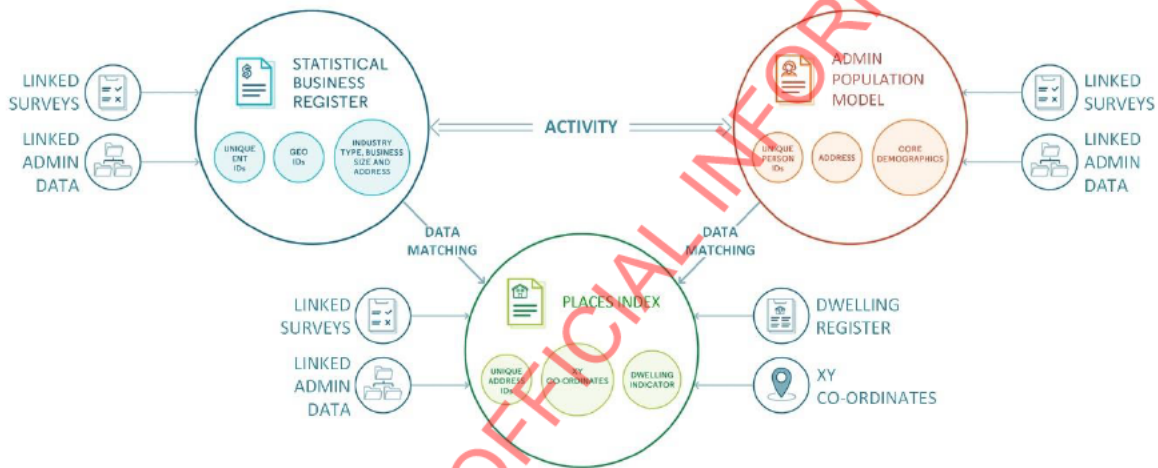
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# Introduction

## Purpose

Stats NZ has a strategic goal to become an organisation that use Admin Data First. A linked set of base statistical registers relating to people (Administrative Population Model), business (Statistical Business Register) and place (Places Index) based on Walgren and Walgren (2014) is a step towards an Integrated Statistical Data System (ISDS). It is a foundational enabler for processing administrative data for statistical purposes, including supporting future census. These base statistical registers, shown in figure 1, will become a core part of Stats NZ’s national statistical data infrastructure. Other international jurisdictions, most notably Canada with their implementation of building and dwelling registers, are also moving towards similar register-based systems.

Figure 1: The three registers



We present the high-level design concepts and outline how the Places Index will look and work to deliver an admin dwelling register.

## Scope

The Places Index spans both commercial and residential properties, allowing connections to be made to both the Statistical Business Register (SBR) and the Administrative Population Model (APM).

This document focuses on:

- a high-level design for a property-centric, admin data first Places Index, which includes
- a high-level design for an admin-data maintained dwelling register

The target population for the dwelling register is according to the definition of a dwelling as defined in Aria and included in the glossary on page 30.

### Initial scope

Initially the Places Index will focus on delivering and maintaining an admin data dwelling register to support future census requirements. However, property data can be used to support other statistical

outputs and is equally relevant to both dwellings and businesses. The Places Index high level design is intended to enable connections to the business register as well as the administrative population model.

The initial scope of the dwelling register is limited to dwellings that are permanent or long term, and that occupy buildings or part of buildings. These are the dwellings that can be identified from the currently available property rights-based admin data.

Permanent or long term means the initial focus is on private dwellings. It is possible that existing property data may identify some non-private dwellings, and if this is the case they will be included in the dwellings register. However, proof of concept work is required to confirm this. The Places Index is designed to incorporate, over time, additional admin data, including datasets or survey data that supports the identification and maintenance of non-private dwellings.

Temporary dwellings that are structures like tents or caravans are not currently in scope. The Property Data Management Framework (PDMF) model proposed to underpin the Places Index includes modelling for informal properties that could contain temporary structures. Informal properties are generally those that don't have a legal basis to exist. That means they are not based on property rights, or legal rights through some sort of private contract (like a rental agreement). Future iterations of the Places Index could focus on implementing these parts of the model.

## Rationale for change

Much has changed since the introduction of the Statistical Location Register (SLR) in 2016. Our understanding of, and the availability of, property data has increased significantly. The absence of key property entities in the SLR means change that impacts a dwelling is either not known, or cannot be placed in an unambiguous and clear context. Currently this gap is worked around by recreating a dwellings dataset every five years using census manual update processes.

The proposed move to a property-centric Places Index introduces the key entities of property and building and links these entities with address and dwelling in a more precise and accurate manner, consistent with the definitions of the data. This enables changes identified in admin data to be matched to the exact entity affected, allowing the impact on an exact dwelling to be determined.

These new entities also allow the introduction of property rules and guidelines. These rules and guidelines model real-world types of property and determine whether a property contains a dwelling, and what type of dwelling it is. These rules and guidelines also allow the record-level relationships for individual properties to be unpicked, further driving out ambiguity and simplifying the connections.

These changes enable admin data to identify dwellings and maintain a dwelling register. Additionally, by clearly delineating data, change, and relationships, a transparent quality and confidence rating can be provided for every dwelling.

## Design fundamentals

Stats NZ have developed principles that provide guiderails to the development of the Places Index in the ISDS environment:

Stats NZ Data Design Principles:

- Statistical purposes

- Define populations
- Enable linkages to base registers, to other dwelling-related sources, and to other property sources
- Known identities
- Basic population attributes
- Accuracy
- Timely and time referenced

**Stats NZ System Design Principles:**

- Time referenced
- Managed access
- Stable
- Timely
- Structurally efficient

There is also a set of statistical requirements, sourced from key customer/social domain stakeholders, that must be met:

- enable unique identification of the statistical unit of interest – the dwelling
- support production of operational frames and creation of statistical datasets
- produce statistics / direct counts of a population of interest (e.g. number of dwellings in NZ, dwelling types in NZ private single dwelling, apartments, retirement villages)
- derive variables in a timely fashion for statistical production
- extract a frame/s for social survey programme of work (eg HES, HLFS....)
- support a te ao Māori perspective on housing/dwelling needs
- establish links between different sources of data

**Property Data Management Framework**

We are proposing that the Places Index will be based on the PDMF. This framework has been developed by Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand (LINZ) in collaboration with other agencies including Stats NZ. The PDMF identifies and defines accurate relationships between property data (for example, address, parcel, titles, buildings, and rating units).

The PDMF underpins the Connected Property Data Management System (CPDMS) that LINZ uses to manage District Valuation Roll data sourced from councils, and the links between property, title, address, and building.

The PDMF also underpins the Property Spine proof of concept project jointly conducted by LINZ and Stats NZ in 2022 that proved that dwellings can be linked to buildings. The project followed these three principles that we also propose to apply to the Places Index:

- Honour the intent and definition of the datasets
- Rules based to ensure consistency, repeatability, and transparency
- Connect data unambiguously and be honest where there is ambiguity

The PDMF began in the aftermath of the Canterbury earthquakes of September 2010 and February 2011. The response following the earthquakes identified the need for a framework that would provide well-defined, reliable, and accurate property data relationships.

The development of the PDMF included:

- identifying problems experienced using property data,
- analysing and quantifying aspects of the problems,
- researching and proving the resultant PDMF model.

PDMF model is available from the LINZ website.

Fundamental to the PDMF are five aspects that every property must have in order to be useful. These are outlined in table 1.

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Table 1: fundamental aspects of a property

Aspects	Concepts	Data elements	Data
Boundary: where are the boundaries of the property?	land (or 3D space connected to the land)	the geospatial extents of the property	parcel, lease/rent extent
Owner/occupier: who owns and/or occupies the property and what rights do they have?	authority/permission	title and/or lease/rental agreements	title, lease agreement
Structures: what buildings or structures are on the property?	ability to use/build/improve	buildings and/or structures	building, structure
Services: what services does the property have?	ability to get services on/off	access points (or connections)	letterbox, front door, power meter, water toby, driveway
Location: how do I find the property?	ability to locate/share location	address	physical address

## Legal, physical, and statistical unit alignment

The ISDS comprises three domains containing statistical units: people, business, and place. Each domain has primary units and derived units. There are three important concepts that impact how these units behave and how each statistical register is designed:

- statistical unit of interest
- legal entity
- physical entity

Identifying each of these concepts in each of the registers can help determine what data is needed to create each key unit. However, these concepts do not align the same way across the three registers.

In the Administrative Population Model the primary unit is a person. A person is also the statistical unit of interest, the legal entity, and the physical entity. Because there is alignment, a person register can be created and maintained directly from datasets where a person can always be extracted from the underlying data. Other units like family are derived units.

In the Statistical Business Register the primary unit is a business (enterprise). The statistical unit of interest is a business, and generally aligns with the legal entity. At an enterprise level, a business register can generally be created from datasets where the record of interest is at least aligned with the primary unit (a business). There are exceptions though, for instance, for larger businesses there may be derived units to account for different activities, and a business may have several physical entities.

That alignment does not exist in the Places Index. Dwelling is usually the statistical unit of interest and is a derived unit. The primary units are property (the legal entity) and building (the physical entity). A dwelling is about the occupation of a building, and a building is dependent on the existence of a property. Dwellings are derived from datasets for which a connection to dwelling can be established through those legal and physical entities. This means that there are at least three different types of records of interest that need to be taken into account.

It should be noted, however, that at times, the statistical unit of interest can be the property or the building.

It should also be noted that a dwelling is not dependent on an address... an address is not a physical entity, and there is no legal requirement for a property (and hence a building or a dwelling) to have one.

## Three spines and a register

In this section we outline the core entities of the Places Index: a set of three spines used to maintain a dwelling register, organised around the common fundamental entity of property.

### Dwelling

The primary use case for the Places Index is to put people and businesses in their right place spatially. For people this means a dwelling and for business a property or building. While building and property datasets can be sourced elsewhere, The Places Index is the authoritative source of dwellings. It is where dwellings will be generated and maintained from admin datasets, and stored in the dwelling register.

A secondary purpose of the Places Index is using the property and dwelling spines for the production of statistical frames.

The dwelling register will need to connect to the admin data that will be used to maintain it. Stats NZ's definition of a dwelling<sup>1</sup> describes the record of interest that a dwelling connects to. Figure 2 shows the dwelling register and the definition of a dwelling.

Figure 2: Dwelling and dwelling definition

Dwelling  
Register

A dwelling is a  
building or part of a  
building

The design must take into account user requirements, for example, the ability to produce lists of dwellings with an associated address and dwelling location. The Places Index must be able to connect addresses to dwellings, although this will be indirectly through building and property which will result in a more precise link.

The definition of a dwelling also states that a dwelling is for the purpose of human habitation, and this aspect will form part of the investigation into the cross-register link between Places Index and the APM.

### Address

The primary purpose of an address is to locate a property. Address is, however, widely used for matching data across a diverse range of datasets. Figure 3 adds the address spine and address definition of an address to figure 2.

---

<sup>1</sup> See Glossary for definitions.

Figure 3: Addition of address and address definition



The Local Government Act 1974 (s 319b) says:

319B. Allocation of property numbers

- (1) For electoral, postal, and other purposes the council may allocate a number to any area of land or building or part of a building within its district and may change the number allocated to any such area of land or building.

In practice, territorial authorities (councils) allocate numbers to properties. But because councils also assign road names they are effectively allocating addresses to properties. The overwhelming majority of addresses in New Zealand are allocated to properties (the addressable object). However, property is broadly interpreted to include standard family homes, apartments, flats, shops, business premises, etc.

There may be several sources of address information so a spine approach will work best, where there is a central address spine collated from potential sources.

Address is a core entity in the PDMF. It is commonly used for matching data as it is embedded into many admin datasets. However, it is not the statistical unit of interest, and is not the statistical data connection that users require.

The data definitions make it clear that there is no direct connection between address and dwelling – a gap exists. However, When the SLR was first developed these definitions weren't fully appreciated resulting in coverage gaps. In reality, there are several important entities that sit between address and dwelling that are fundamental to, and contain change that impacts on, the existence of a dwelling.

The Places Index will fill that gap, connecting address to dwelling based on the actual connections embedded in the definitions of the entities.

## Building

A dwelling connects to a building, so the Places Index needs to contain a set of building information. Figure 4 adds the building spine to figure 3.

Figure 4: Addition of building



There is no one single definition of a building. The definition in the PDMF and the Christchurch City Council definition are generally used here.

There may be several sources of building information so a spine approach will work best, where there is a central building spine collated from potential sources.

A “part of building” dataset will be required to account for dwellings joined to other dwellings. Each joined dwelling must be able to connect (via a part of building) to the applicable property (and property rights) that apply to that dwelling, and hence the property’s address. For simplicity this is not shown separately in figure 4 but can be thought of as part of the building spine set of datasets.

Building and PartOfBuilding are entities in the PDMF model, so dwellings are now connected into the PDMF and the framework can now be utilised.

## Property

An address connects to a property, so the Places Index needs to contain a set of property information. Figure 5 adds the property spine to figure 4.

Figure 5: Addition of property



Property is a poorly defined term and tends to vary depending on the perspective of the person. It is a generally some combination of property rights and use, and is broadly defined in the PDMF as “land area and contents managed as a property”

There may be several types of property data (two examples are owned properties represented by rating units, and rented flats through private rental agreements). The datasets for each type may come from different sources, so a spine approach will work best where there is a central property spine collated from potential sources.

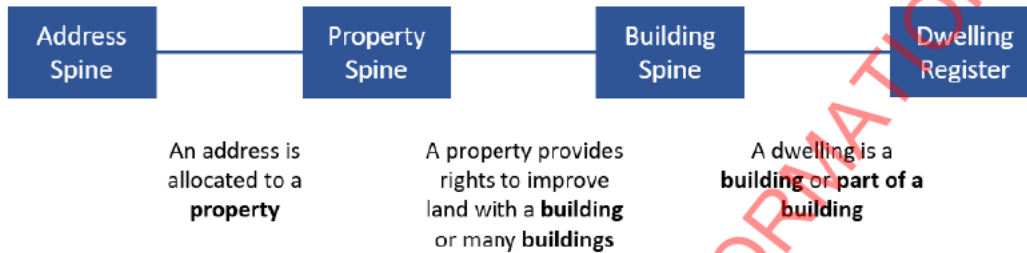
Property is the heart of the PDMF model and is the key entity on which almost all other property data depends.

It is not a requirement for a property to be allocated an address. But for a property to be useful, it is a fundamental requirement that its location can be shared with others so they can find it. The most common way the location of a property is shared is by using an address.

## A connected core

The final link needed is fundamental to NZ's property rights system and is embedded in the PDMF. Figure 6 adds this link, along with a definition, to figure 5.

Figure 6: Addition of the link and between property and building

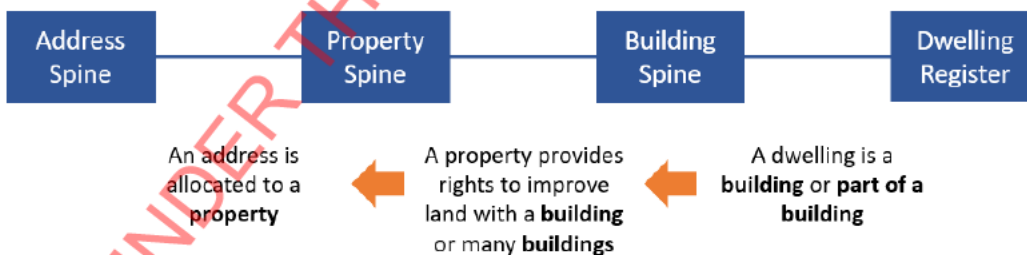


While a building can physically exist on any piece of land, in reality, the existence of a building is dependent on the existence of a property. Legal ownership of land is required through the property rights system, along with administrative permission, for example through consenting, before a building can be built. Legal limitations mean buildings cannot be built across property boundaries where the properties are in different ownership.

This means the connection between property and building can be determined geospatially... a building must always be within the boundaries of the property.

The logic of these connections between address, property, building, and dwelling works in either direction. Figure 7 illustrates the logic from dwelling to address:

Figure 7: Logic from dwelling to address

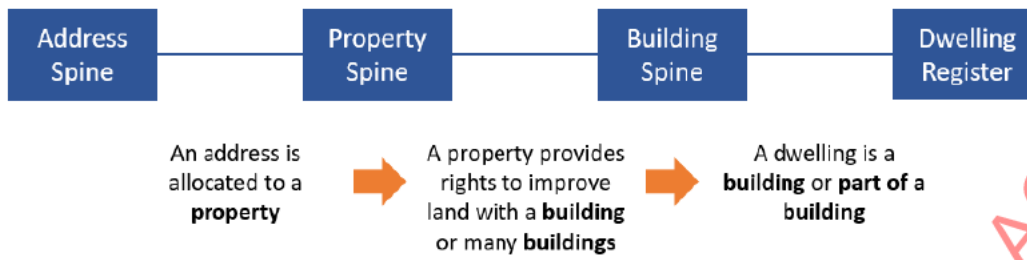


Translated to words, a dwelling is either:

- a building, on a property, that can have an address, or
- part of a building, that behaves as a property, that can have an address

Figure 8 illustrates the logic from address to dwelling:

Figure 8: Logic from address to dwelling



Translated to words, an address is allocated to a property that either:

- contains a building, that is a dwelling, or
- is part of a building, that is a dwelling

## Building, connecting, and maintaining the spines

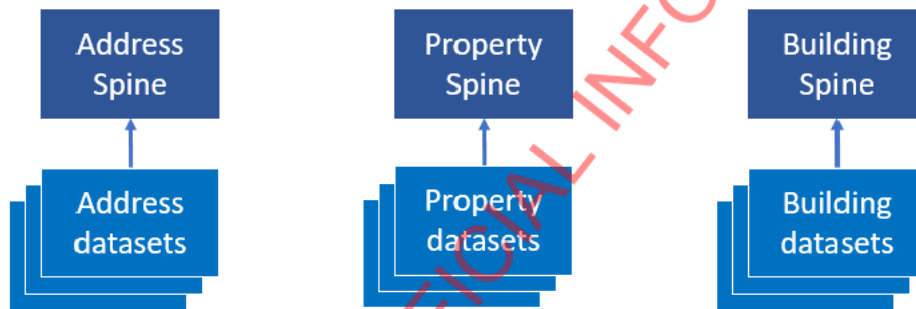
In this section we discuss how the spines will be formed, connected, and maintained. We separate admin datasets based on how they connect to a spine as each requires a slightly different process.

### Datasets with the same record of interest

In this section we discuss admin datasets that can be used to directly maintain the three spines because the record of interest in these datasets is the same as the spine record of interest.

Figure 9 shows the admin datasets that are the primary source of data to populate and maintain the spines. These datasets have the same record of interest as the spine, so can be used to directly maintain the spines. Address datasets are used to populate and maintain the address spine, property datasets are used to populate and maintain the property, and building datasets are used to populate and maintain the building spine.

Figure 9: Datasets directly support the spines



Many of these datasets will be authoritative (have come from the government agency with the regulatory mandate to maintain that data). StatsNZ's data principles say these should be used in preference to non-authoritative sources. For example, the property spine will contain data from the property rights and valuation regulatory systems, which are the authoritative source for data of that type.

These datasets also support the accurate and unambiguous use of admin data and contain information that can be used to maintain the dwelling register.

Note that the dwelling register is not a spine. The dwelling register is not built from admin datasets with the same record of interest. Instead, it is derived and maintained using the spines and admin datasets.

### Populating the spines

The spines are initially populated individually using a one-off supply of whole (i.e. not a changeset) admin datasets that have the same record of interest as the relevant spine.

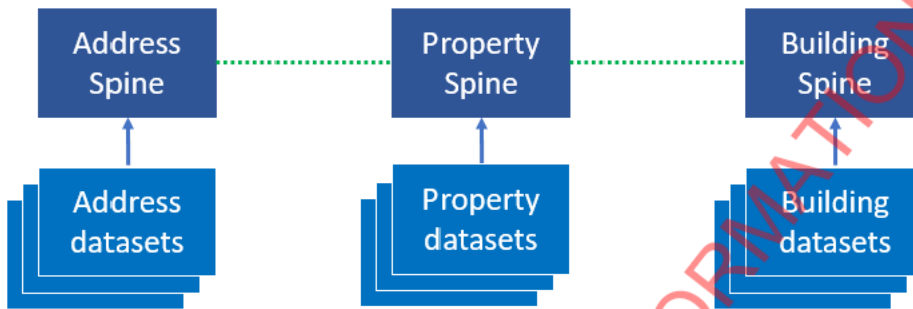
An onboarding process will be required for each dataset that includes functions like the removal of invalid records, reformatting to the spine standard, and processes to de-duplicate records so that the spine only contains unique records.

Each record in the spine will need a unique ID, and metadata that describes the sources of that record will need to be recorded.

### Connecting the spines

Once populated, the individual spines can be connected. Figure 10 shows these connections.

Figure 10: Connecting the spines



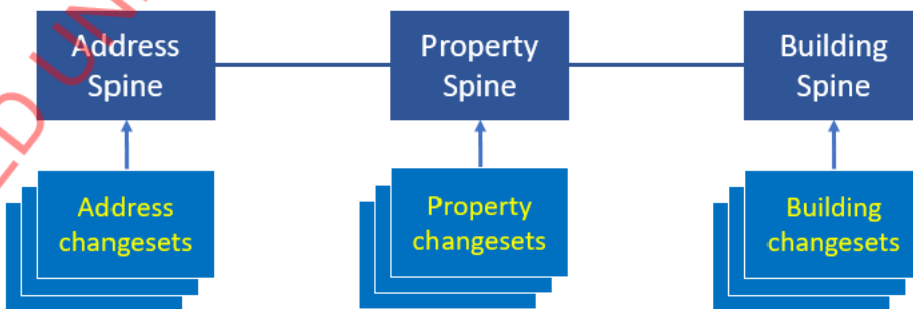
LINZ is planning to deliver an address-property association table connecting the address spine and the property spine. Some supplemental linking may be required where known errors and omissions have prevented linking, for example, where a property boundary is absent or inaccurate.

For straightforward, mostly freehold properties, connecting the property spine and the building spine can be relatively easily determined geospatially. However, geospatial techniques cannot be used to connect a property to a part of a building, so other methods (for example, address matching) will need to be used. Some supplemental linking may be required where known errors and omissions prevent straightforward linking, for example, where a property boundary is absent or inaccurate, or where building outlines are absent or have not been split into the individual buildings.

### Maintenance

The spines and the association tables are primarily maintained using changesets, illustrated in figure 11. These will often be supplied directly from the provider of the admin dataset but may need to be created as part of the data import processing in the Places Index.

Figure 11: Changeset maintenance



There may be a need to do periodic whole-of-spine/table refreshes to ensure the spine is in sync with its admin datasets and maintain quality and confidence. See “Quality and confidence” on page 27 for more detail.

It is essential that the spines and admin data are fully lifecycled. This means the lifecycle of the actual entity as well as the lifecycle of the digital record. This is crucial for using changesets to maintain the spines, but also for identifying the change that will result in a dwelling or change to a dwelling.

## Datasets with a different record of interest

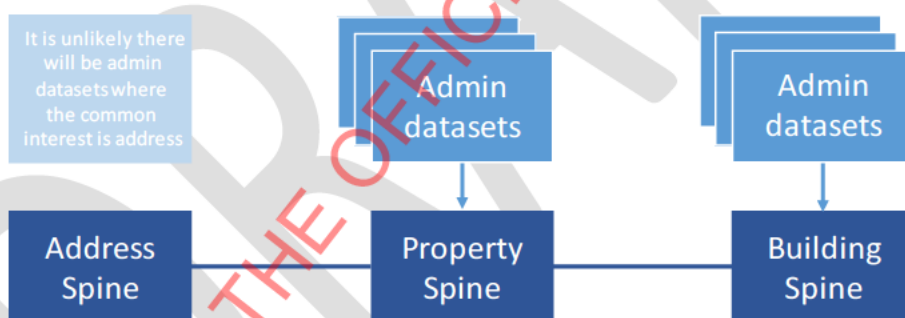
In this section we discuss admin datasets that cannot be used to directly maintain the three spines because their record of interest is not the same as the spine’s record of interest.

Two situations have been identified: datasets where there is a common interest to one of the spines, and datasets that contain spine data but there is no common interest to that spine.

### Datasets with a common interest

Figure 12 shows admin datasets that do not have the same record of interest as the spines but can be associated to one of the spines through a common interest. For example, the record of interest for a building consent is a consent, but consents that apply to buildings can be associated to a record in the building spine. These admin datasets can only be used indirectly to maintain the spines.

Figure 12: Datasets that do not directly support the spines



Because property datasets are a legal entity and building datasets are a physical entity, these admin datasets are very likely to have a common interest to their respective spine. However, addresses are very often used in a different context to their original purpose, so very often occur in datasets where address is not the record of interest and there is no direct common interest. The record of interest is probably a person (so will connect to the APM) or a business (so will connect to the SBR), meaning the link to the Places Index will be via a person or business (even if address is the method of matching). See “Datasets without a common interest but contain spine data” on page 18.

These admin datasets will be a primary source of variables about a dwelling, although they can be used to support change to the spines as well.

It is important that these admin datasets are associated to the appropriate spine based on the common record of interest. While this initially appears to be complex, in reality it simplifies the nature of each association, reducing ambiguity and uncertainty. It enables individual data records in the spine to be more uniquely connected, meaning admin data can be more easily used to

accurately create the correct dwelling, assigned the correct attributes, placed in the correct building, on the correct property, with the correct address.

### Onboarding

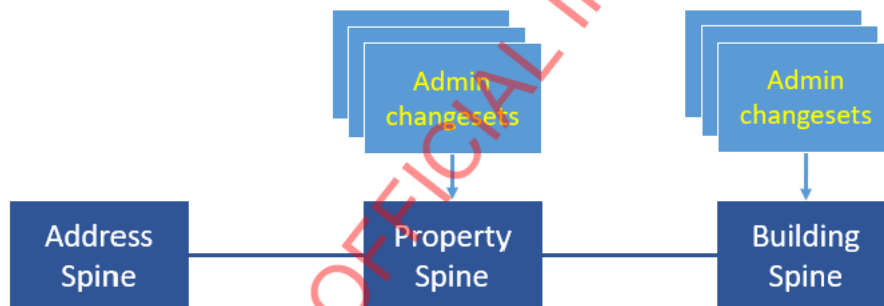
Because the record of interest is not the same as the relevant spine dataset, these admin datasets will need additional onboarding methods and processes when compared to those where the admin data has a direct connection to a spine.

The common record of interest will need to be identified so the relevant spine can be identified. Once identified, records in the admin dataset can be connected to the relevant spine. The connection could be stored in an association table linking the ID of records in the admin dataset to the ID of records in the appropriate spine.

### Maintenance

Once connected to the relevant spine, the associations are maintained using changesets derived from the admin datasets, illustrated in figure 13. These may be supplied directly from the provider of the admin dataset, but may need to be created as part of the data import processing in the Places Index.

Figure 13: changeset maintenance



There may be a need to do periodic whole-of-association-table refreshes to ensure the admin dataset connection to the spine is complete and accurate.

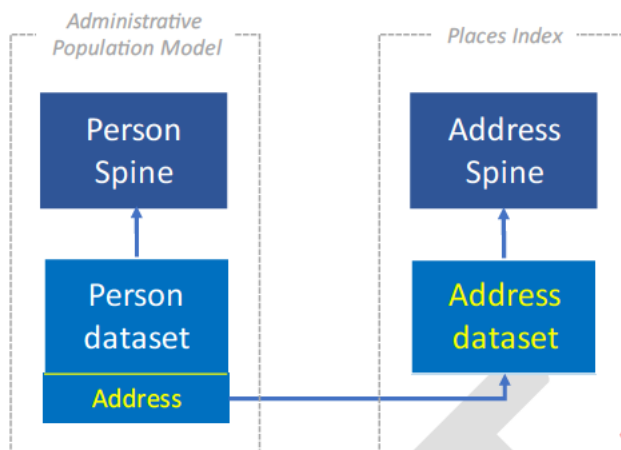
### Datasets without a common interest but contain spine data

Some admin datasets will have a field that contains spine data or data that could be used to maintain a spine, but there is no common interest between the record of interest of that dataset and the relevant spine. The record of interest may align to another spine in the places index, or it may align to a spine in a different domain (e.g. the ADM or the SBR).

The most commonly identified situation where this occurs is with addresses, but it may occur with data for any of the three spines. Many admin datasets contain address data, but only in a few is address the record of interest or there is a common interest to address (discussed in the datasets with the same record of interest section).

The data contained in that field can still be used to support the relevant spine but needs to be separated from its dataset first. This effectively turns the field into its own dataset where the record of interest becomes the same as the relevant spine. Figure 14 illustrates the separation of an address attribute to use as an address dataset.

Figure 14: Using an address attribute as an admin dataset



Once this separation has happened and the dataset has been established, the process to link the data to a spine becomes the same as that for datasets with the same record of interest.

Data sourced this way may be more prone to error as it is likely to be self-reported. Care needs to be taken to ensure the data does not degrade a spine but enhances it.

### Steady states

Processing of admin datasets into the system will use steady states. Steady states provide a clear purpose for each stage in the processing pipeline and assessment points throughout the pipeline where the dataset meets a set of pre-agreed quality levels. Figure 15 shows an example of how steady states work, noting that it is likely more than four states will be required.

Figure 15: Example of steady states



StatsNZ have defined enterprise steady states, but these are focused on processing of people-centric data and are not appropriate for processing of many property datasets. Some adaptation of these steady states will be required, or a more flexible and less linear approach will be needed, or maybe both.

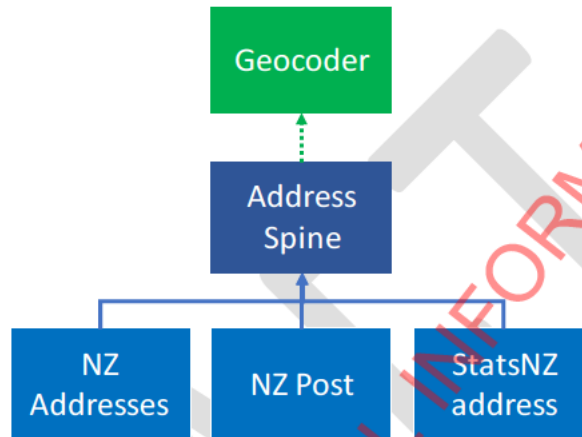
## Datasets that directly support the spines

In this section we identify the likely initial datasets that will directly support the spines.

### Address spine

Figure 16 identifies individual datasets that are sources of address data and (at this stage) will most likely be used to form the address spine.

Figure 16: Address spine datasets



NZ Addresses is the authoritative dataset of addresses in New Zealand. It was released by LINZ in 2023 and is more comprehensive than the previously available NZ Street Address dataset. As a general rule, authoritative addresses are preferred to non-authoritative addresses. The spine must be able to record the preferred address.

NZ Post provides additional in-use addresses not found in NZ addresses. Some of these additional addresses reference residential properties, and hence dwellings. Some attribution supplied from NZ Post is not available in NZ addresses and further work is required to understand the value of this attribution in the Places Index environment. For example, property attribution may be available through the DVR dataset in the property spine. Stats NZ purchase a customised National Postal Address Dataset (NPAD) dataset.

StatsNZ addresses are those found by StatsNZ and not present elsewhere. While needed in the existing address-centric model, the value of them in a property-centric system based on authoritative data needs to be determined.

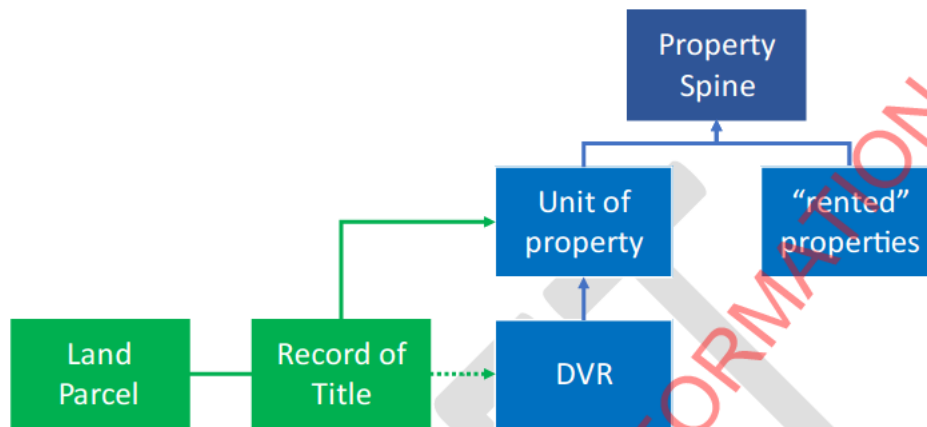
Spine processing will include functions like identifying alias addresses (where the same address is matched across the same dataset or different datasets). In a property-centric system the link between addresses and properties allows the identification of alternative addresses (different addresses referencing the same property).

Integration of the Places Index with the APM and the Business Register will require a high level of address consistency between the registers. The geocoding engine is a primary method for ensuring the same address is used and matched across all registers. While not directly part of the Places Index design, we propose that the geocoding engine should use a single address dataset formed from the address spine. It will no longer offer three different address datasets as all the contributing address datasets will be incorporated into the address spine.

## Property Spine

The Property Spine is slightly more complex than the address spine or the building spine. Figure 17 identifies individual datasets that are sources of property data and can be used to form the property spine.

Figure 17: Property spine datasets



For owned properties it will be almost entirely structured and populated using data supplied by LINZ. Unit of Property and DVR are part of the NZ Properties group of datasets available on the LINZ Data Service.

The property spine includes several fundamental authoritative datasets from NZ's property rights system (Landonline), without which an owned property cannot exist (and ultimately, no dwelling can exist). These are Record of Title and Land Parcels. These do not directly contribute to the property spine as their record of interest is not a unit of property, but they are fundamental to, and contribute directly to, a unit of property.

Unit of Property is the primary use-based property unit. It includes the district valuation roll (DVR) dataset, and may be extended in the future to include other types of property like farms, flats, papakāinga, etc.

The DVR is a key output of the valuation system and is based on ownership, with the record of interest being a rating unit. A rating unit is built using Landonline ownership records; it cannot reflect occupation or rental. However, StatsNZ also needs a representation of rented properties because these can contain dwellings. Often these are part of more complex properties like a row of flats, or retirement villages, meaning there is a need for a hierarchy of properties in a parent-child structure.

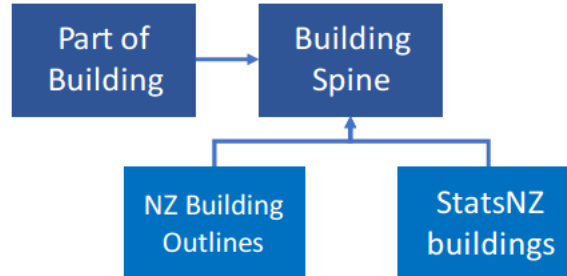
Rented properties may eventually be delivered from LINZ as part of the Unit of Property data or may (to some extent) be able to be imputed from DVR data. Tenancy bond data may be another source. For as long as StatsNZ is identifying the bulk of rented properties itself from admin data sources, for ease of management they will most likely be kept separate from unit of property data. Eventually, though, the intent is to integrate them into the into LINZ's unit of property dataset.

"Rented" is a broad term and generally means any situation where a property is occupied under an agreement with the underlying property rights holder (the owner). It may be registered as a lease in Landonline, or it may be a private commercial agreement. Of more specific interest for the property spine are rented properties that are only a portion of the underlying owned property, because these properties are not uniquely represented by a rating unit.

## Building spine

Figure 18 identifies individual datasets that are sources of building data and can be used to form the building spine.

Figure 18: Building spine datasets



NZ Building Outlines is a dataset captured from aerial imagery of (in simplified terms) the roofline of a building as seen from above. It is maintained by LINZ for topographic map production and is not an authoritative register of buildings. However, in the absence of an official building register it can act as a base dataset for a building spine.

Coverage and updates are dependent on where and how often councils capture aerial imagery. Urban imagery is often captured at least every three years, less regularly for rural areas.

Where separate buildings touch each other, they may not be separated into individual polygons if no clear roofline definition is visible. However, methods may be identified that allow the separation of joined buildings, for example, by using property boundaries.

Because the existence of a dwelling is dependent on the existence of a building, Stats NZ will need to be able to create a building record in the building spine for instances where NZ Building Outlines either does not have a record, the record cannot be used, or a record cannot be identified. These are the StatsNZ buildings.

StatsNZ defines dwellings as either separate or joined. Where they are joined the dwelling shares a building with other separate uses, for example, other dwellings, shops, or businesses. To account for this, the building spine will need to include a “part of building” table. Without this “part of building” record, a dwelling cannot be unambiguously linked to a property, and so to an address.

There is no existing dataset for “part of building” so StatsNZ will need to capture this data itself. There are attributes in admin data and rules and patterns in the connections that may allow the probable identification of whether a dwelling is joined to another dwelling, and therefore needs a “part of building” record. Methods may be identified that allow the identification of parts of a building from the NZ Building Outlines dataset, for example, by using property boundaries.

At this stage the part of building dataset will not be a complete list of all parts of buildings. It will only contain those needed to connect a joined dwelling to a property. It could be expanded in future to account for spaces occupied by businesses.

## The dwelling register

In this section we discuss the dwelling register and how to populate it.

The dwelling register is the primary output. It is what will be generated and maintained from source and admin datasets.

Admin datasets, and change in those datasets, are used to determine the existence of a dwelling.

The dwelling register requires certain attributes, in particular whether the dwelling is a separate building or is joined to other buildings. The categorisation of the records contained in certain admin datasets largely determines whether a dwelling will be separate or joined. In particular, the type of property is highly influential as it is the existence of the property, and the type of property rights it carries, that allows every other property entity, including a dwelling, to exist.

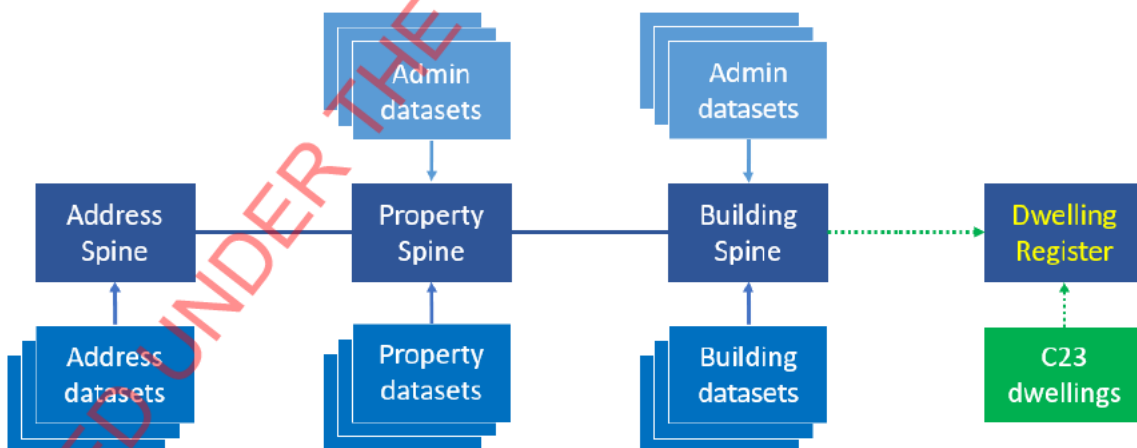
This means that data cannot just be connected at a record level. Data must be connected based on the categorisation contained within a record, with the resultant combinations across all the connected datasets, for the same property, determining the existence of a dwelling and the type of dwelling it is. This is the scenario approach tested successfully during the joint LINZ/StatsNZ Property Spine project in 2022, and is being implemented in the Places Index as sets of rules and guidelines.

Data from other domains could also be used to maintain the dwelling register. For example, the process of forming people into households (based on the “usual place of residence” address provided by a person) could provide information about the existence of a dwelling.

### Initial population

Figure 19 shows how a dwelling register connects to the spines and admin data.

Figure 19: Populating dwellings and connecting to buildings



A one-off task will be needed to initially populate the dwelling register.

Because we are building an admin data dwelling register, the initial population should be from admin data. If we use the 2023 Census dwelling observation dataset as the initial state we would be importing a collection method bias from there that we cannot measure and that would no longer be in use.

The quality of the initial dwelling dataset can only be measured by the use of external sources. Options include:

- Take samples of the register and check via desktop canvassing or site visit
- Build the register as at a particular date from admin data and compare to the 2023 Census dwelling observations
- Compare to other admin dataset, for example building consents, at some level of regional aggregation (e.g. SA1, SA2), where they still give an indication where the consent remains unmatched.

Sets of rules and guidelines (rule sets) would be used to create the individual dwelling records, and also to connect records in the dwelling register to records in the building spine. Using sets of rules and guidelines (at that time called scenarios) was successfully trialled with C18 dwellings data during the joint LINZ/StatsNZ Property Spine project in 2022.

There may be relevant lessons learnt from the 2023 Census review and these should be taken into account when working with the 2023 Census dwellings dataset.

## Property rule sets

A set of rules and guidelines (a rule set) defines a real-world property situation. Each set is rules-based and identifies the record-level set of data for a single type of property. They define what type of record, and how many records, in one dataset connects to what type of record, and how many records, in another.

The benefit of property rule sets is that they:

- provide a structured way to break large complex properties into aggregated combinations of simpler, more manageable properties
- support an approach that builds from the simplest property situation, adding complexity one step at a time
- allow the testing of specific property situations known to cause problems.

Ideally, for a single property, a rule set will break down the data relationships as much as possible to their simplest, and so most unambiguous and easy to manage, one-to-one arrangements.

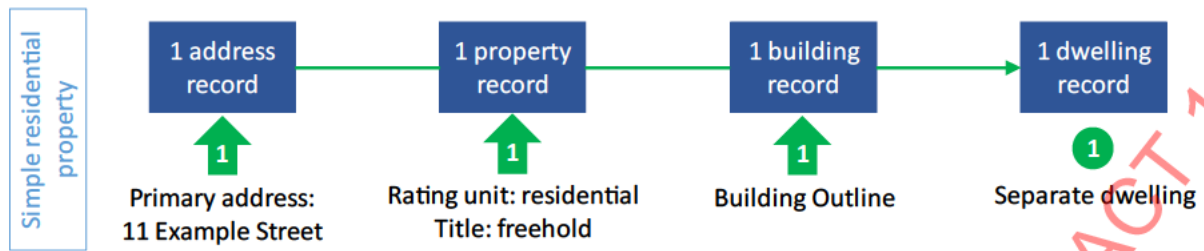
It is the attributes that categorise the records in the source data that mostly determine the type of property. The different logical and permissible combinations of these record-level attribute values, driven by the legal and physical rules that underpin them, results in the variety of types of property we see in the real world.

Some attribute combinations are not logical or are not permissible and need to be specified as invalid in the rules that control the relationships.

The types of real-world properties, along with the permissions that attach to these properties, determines (or at a minimum, heavily influences) the type of dwellings that exist.

Figure 20 shows an example of a rule set for a simple residential property. In this example, the address is categorised as a primary address, the Title is categorised as freehold, and the rating unit is categorised a residential. The property contains one building outline. The result is a single dwelling record that is categorised as a separate dwelling.

Figure 20: An example of the rules for a simple residential property



The property rule set approach supports the identification and defining of many types of property/dwelling situations, including those currently considered to be edge cases. Additional rule sets can be developed over time to increase coverage as the system matures. However, it may not be practical to develop rule sets to handle every edge case where the number of properties/dwellings is very small.

Simulation studies could be used to test certain rule sets, for example, what would happen if a large number of joined dwellings were built that were not expected? We could then get an expected quality.

Eight scenarios (rule sets) were agreed and defined by LINZ and StatsNZ for the Property Spine proof of concept project in 2022. These scenarios were designed to cover most real-world property-based dwelling configurations required by StatsNZ. Results from the Property Spine project estimated that these scenarios (and minor variations of them) covered 90-95% of all dwellings.

**The simplest case:** One each of address, property, building, dwelling. The address point is within the building outline.

**Simple, but spatially misaligned:** One each of address, property, building, dwelling. The address point is not within the building outline.

**Multiple buildings:** Two or more buildings on a single property, one address. The address point may not be within any of the building outlines.

**Multiple addresses:** A single property with two or more addresses (usually because there is more than one access to the property). There is one dwelling. The address point may not be within the building outline.

**Apartment or flat:** A single apartment or flat where there are at least two, and usually many, apartments or flats in one building.

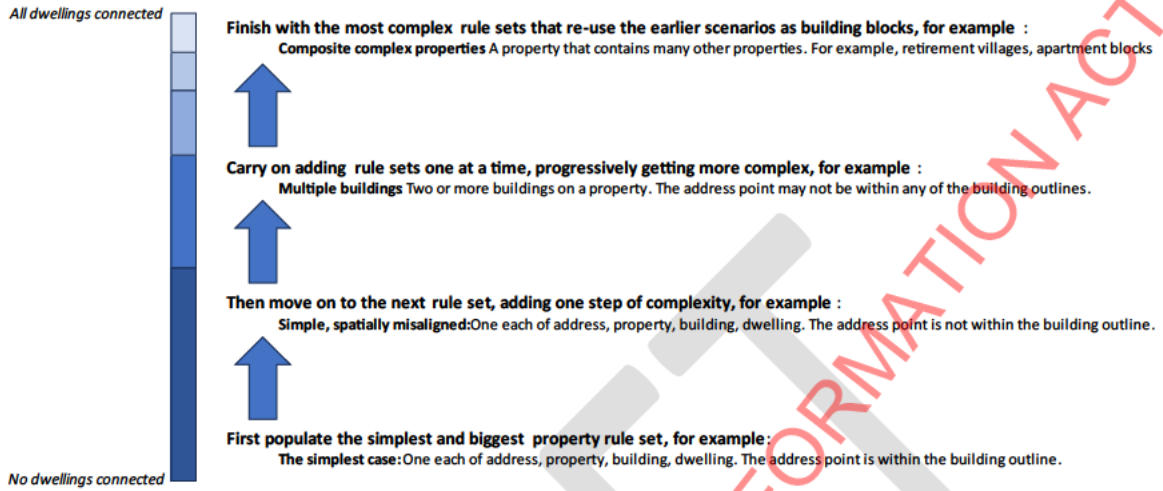
**Joined townhouses:** A freehold-owned townhouse that is in a terrace of at least two townhouses and does not share ownership with other townhouses in the same terrace.

**Composite complex properties:** A property that contains many other properties. For example, retirement villages, apartment blocks. The contained properties are types of single-property rule sets

**Self-contained flat:** A standalone, self-contained flat sharing the same property and address with a main house.

Figure 21 illustrates how rule sets populate the dwelling register progressively and iteratively. Populating the register continues until the target population has been met or an acceptable coverage has been achieved.

Figure 21: Iteratively building a dwelling register



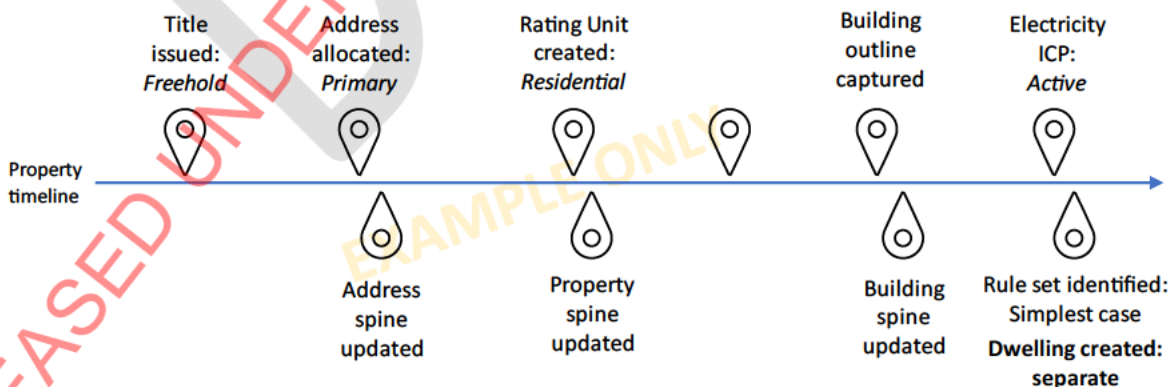
Once the dwelling register is built and populated, property rule sets will be used to maintain the dwelling register using changes identified in admin data.

### Using rule sets to create and maintain dwellings

Each rule set forms the basis of how to identify what type of dwelling to create, when to create it, when to update it, or when to delete it. Changes to data in the spines and admin datasets over time, grouped together into individual properties, are matched against the rule sets to produce the dwelling recommendation with the highest confidence rating.

In the hypothetical example shown in figure 22, six data points are tracked for a new property. The combination of record-level values, and number of records for each entity, conforms with the simplest case rule set, resulting in a new separate dwelling.

Figure 22: An example of dwelling maintenance using admin data



Change across a grouped set of records (i.e. for an individual property) could be tracked in real time. This could require some knowledge of the expected timing of change for each record, and a method to store, group, and monitor the accumulated change and the predicted rule set type. In figure 23,

the switching on of electricity supply has been used as the final trigger to create the dwelling. This method would allow for “proposed” dwellings to be created and updated as change is progressively identified and the applicable rule set becomes defined.

Alternatively, all change across a grouped set of records (i.e. for a property) could be checked on a regular cycle (for example, monthly). When the check meets a threshold of change across a basket of records, and that basket of change matches to a rule set, a dwelling is created. This method could be simpler and easier to manage.

It could also be possible for both these approaches to be run in tandem.

## Quality and confidence

To assess the success of the methodologies, clear and quantitative record-level measures of confidence and quality are required right the way through the system on both the records and the relationships that connect records. The sum of these measures is effectively a measure of the completeness and accuracy of the resultant set of data for a property and the admin-data dwelling record, as illustrated in the example in figure 23.

Figure 23: Where quality is measured



Error may accumulate across the connections so the design should identify where error occurs and where it is amplified (if it is). In figure 25, green ticks indicate high confidence and orange ticks indicate medium confidence of the data and the connections. The example results in a dwelling record at medium confidence because some records and links with medium confidence are involved in its creation.

The design should also identify if error is concentrated in one entity or spread across the system.

The success of a property rule set can be also assessed from the completeness and accuracy of the dwellings it produces.

Additionally, regular and ongoing quality measurement/benchmarking and testing will be required to measure the alignment of the spines and the register with their target population to see if any drift has accumulated.

The quality of the set of data for a property may be impacted by:

- The quality of the data in each admin dataset
- The quality of the record level connections
- the methods used to form each spine
- The methods used to form a record level connections across the system. If several methods are used to determine a record-level connection, each method contributes to the overall confidence

Additionally, the quality and confidence of a dwelling may also be impacted by:

- the number of records across the system used to create (or modify) a dwelling record
- The success of the property rule sets in identifying the dwelling

It is vital to provide transparency to the user on the quality and confidence of the dwelling. This allows a user to:

- validate the dwelling formed through additional manual or other processes (e.g. a site visit, or comparing against aerial or satellite imagery)
- determine whether there is enough confidence in the connected data to apply it to their use case.

As well as where in the system a measurement is recorded, it will be important to also record when the measurement was recorded. Update mechanisms will need to be tested back in time, not just going forward. A time-based measurement starting from a point in the past using historical data to see if maintenance in the proposed system would diverge (or not) over time compared to what has been observed. This would need to be measured before the system moves into production.

Measures could be presented as a scoring system as was used for 2023 Census. A “traffic light” red/orange/green system was tested in the Property Spine project. Other options could include a percentage value system.

# Glossary

## Dwelling

A dwelling means any building or structure, or part thereof, that is used (or intended to be used) for the purpose of human habitation. It can be of a permanent or temporary nature and includes structures such as houses, motels, hotels, prisons, motor homes, huts, and tents. There can be more than one dwelling within a building, such as an apartment building, each apartment or unit is considered to be a separate dwelling.

Retrieved from [www.aria.stats.govt.nz](http://www.aria.stats.govt.nz)

## Address

structured information that allows the unambiguous determination of an object for purposes of identification and location

ISO 19160-1:2015 Addressing – Part 1: Conceptual model

## Physical Building

The physical building that exists in the real world and that people interact with. It usually (but not always) coincides with the legal representation of a building contained within the cadastre.

Toitū Te Whenu (2023). Property Data Management Framework. A model for connecting New Zealand's property data. Retrieved from [www.linz.govt.nz](http://www.linz.govt.nz)

## Building

A Building is a built structure that is hollow and can be occupied for living, working or storage, which would need a Building Consent if it were to be replaced and that:

- is over 10m<sup>2</sup> in area or over 2m in height
- has a roof and,
- can be demolished without affecting another built structure.

Christchurch City Council. Christchurch City Council property definitions. Unpublished document

## Property

Land area and contents managed as a property. A defined area of land (or space connected to the land) and improvements with a distinct set of rights that potentially could be traded for the purposes of occupation or navigation. A discrete set of rights over an area of land (or space connected to the land) and/or improvements.

## Rating unit

A unit for the purposes of rates collection by territorial, regional and unitary authorities, as defined in Rating Valuations Act 1998, sub section 5B and 5C.

In effect, a rating unit is a type of property, created for valuation purposes, based on ownership and the uses the land under that ownership is put to.

## References

Anders and Britt Wallgren (2014). Register-based Statistics; statistical methods for administrative data 2nd edition, Wiley series in survey Methodology.

Toitū Te Whenua (2023). Property Data Management Framework. A model for connecting New Zealand's property data. Retrieved from [www.linz.govt.nz](http://www.linz.govt.nz)

Toitū Te Whenua (2008). [Rating Valuation Rules 2008. LINZS30300](#). Retrieved from [www.linz.govt.nz](http://www.linz.govt.nz)

# Document 4



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## New paper 'Technical feasibility: measuring population and dwellings using administrative data'

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From Sean Broughton <sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz>

Date Fri 6/09/2024 11:10 AM

Cc Rachael Milicich <rachael.milicich@stats.govt.nz>; Sean Broughton <sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz>; Hannah Wignall <Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz>

Kia ora tātou,

Today, Stats NZ published the new paper – *Technical feasibility: measuring population and dwellings using administrative data*.

Please see the message below from Stats NZ's Deputy Chief Methodologist, Gary Dunnet, to learn more about the paper.

You can read the paper here: [Technical feasibility: measuring population and dwellings using administrative data | Stats NZ](#)

We're continuing to work through options, and the implications thereof, for a future census model, while engagement is underway with agencies, Te Tiriti partners, key communities, and customers.

Stats NZ expects to publicly announce a decision on the future of census in Aotearoa New Zealand next year following Cabinet endorsement. This timeline is slightly different to what we've previously signalled. This is a critical piece of work and it's important we take the time to ensure we get the settings right.

Ngā mihi nui for your continued interest.

As always, please get in touch if there are aspects of the paper, or other matters, you'd like to discuss with us.

Mauri ora,

Sean

Sean Broughton (pronouns: he/him/his)

General Manager – Customers and Partnerships

Stats NZ | Tauranga Aotearoa | [stats.govt.nz](https://stats.govt.nz) | S9(2)(a)

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**From:** Angie Simms <Angie.Simms@stats.govt.nz> **On Behalf Of** Gary Dunnet

**Sent:** Friday, September 6, 2024 9:58 AM

**To:** Gary Dunnet <gary.dunnet@stats.govt.nz>

**Subject:** New paper 'Technical feasibility: measuring population and dwellings using administrative data'

Kia ora koutou

As you know, Stats NZ is exploring options for increasing the use of administrative data, supplemented by surveying and tailored data collection approaches, to deliver population and social statistics, including census.

Today, Stats NZ published the new paper *Technical feasibility: measuring population and dwellings using administrative data*.

The paper looks at the technical feasibility of moving New Zealand to a census model that primarily uses administrative data, supported by surveys and tailored data collection.

Summarising key work completed in the last decade to develop the necessary data and methodology, the paper highlights Stats NZ's readiness to make this shift and details associated opportunities, challenges, and areas for further development.

You can read the paper here: [Technical feasibility: measuring population and dwellings using administrative data | Stats NZ](#)

We appreciate the expert feedback and advice you and others have provided about the future of population and social statistics, including census. Your contributions continue to shape our thinking. If there are aspects of the paper you'd like to discuss I encourage you to get in touch with me.

Ngā mihi



**Gary Dunnet** (pronouns: he/him/his)

Deputy Chief Methodologist | Pou Mātāmuri Tikanga Tātari

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# Document 5

 Outlook

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**Re: Languages spoken and the 3 October release**

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**From** James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>

**Date** Fri 18/10/2024 1:44 PM

**To** Hannah Wignall <Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz>

**Cc** Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>; Melinda Clearwater <Melinda.Clearwater@stats.govt.nz>; Lafaele Mapusua <Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz>; Falaniko Tominiko <Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz>

Thanks Hannah - this is a big help 😊

---

**From:** Hannah Wignall

**Sent:** 17 October 2024 12:50 PM

**To:** James Greenwell

**Cc:** Maryke Barnard ; Melinda Clearwater ; Lafaele Mapusua ; Falaniko Tominiko

**Subject:** RE: Languages spoken and the 3 October release

Kia ora James,

I've received some responses to your queries from my colleague Melinda (Cc'd). Melinda is a Senior Advisor – Customer Engagement and we work closely together. Her response also includes a comment about when the PES undercount results will be made available – which you sent in a previous email.

1. Re '[Census results reflect Aotearoa New Zealand's diversity](#)' graph and table of languages spoke for total population. **Ten most widely spoken languages in 2023 (excluding English), for census usually resident population count, 2013–2023 Censuses.**

This data comes from the Totals by topic tables released 3 October in Aotearoa Data Explorer. These are the 3 tables that include Census Languages spoken data (for 2013, 2018 and 2023), by different levels of geography. Go to Languages spoken (total responses) - total census usually resident population count, can view/download all languages, or select specific languages

- [Totals by topic for individuals, \(NZ total\), 2013, 2018, and 2023 Censuses](#)
- [Totals by topic for individuals, \(RC, TALB, UR, SA3, SA2, Ward, Health\), 2013, 2018, and 2023](#)
- [Totals by topic for individuals, \(SA1\), 2013, 2018, and 2023 Censuses](#)

These tables have counts for each of the variables about people and dwellings, including Languages spoken. The Information Centre can provide help with accessing the data in our tools, including Aotearoa Data Explorer . Info Centre contact details: [0508 525 525](tel:0508525525) or [info@stats.govt.nz](mailto:info@stats.govt.nz) or [Online form](#) or livechat on stats.govt.nz.

2. When will attributes information from Census 2023 be available by ethnicity?

Some will come out as part of the top topic tables release 3 December. The rest will be part of the Ethnicity, culture and identity topic release 12 March.

[2023 Census product and release finder](#) (need to download the Excel document first) It has detailed information of what is in each of the tables and when they will be published, search Ethnicity.

NB. Place and Ethnic Group summaries are being released 26 November. This is an interactive tool, with simple graphs and tables of data for local communities and ethnic groups. It would be good to take MPP through this when it is released.

3. When will PES results about undercount for Pacific peoples be released

2023 Post-enumeration survey: Key results will be published December 9. This will include undercounts and overcounts for Pacific peoples.

4. Is there a date we can expect population estimates to be produced?

Estimated resident population (2023-base): At 30 June 2023 will be released March-May 2025. This will include ethnic population estimates and revision to all estimates back to June 2018.

Please let me know if you have any more questions,

Ngā mihi,

Hannah

**Hannah Wignall** (she/her)

Kaiwhakahaere - Tuituinga | Kōtuitanga Hinonga | Kaiārahi Pūnaha Raraunga

Engagement Manager | Agency Partnering | Data System Leadership

DDI| S9(2)(a)

Tatauranga Aotearoa | Stats NZ

[stats.govt.nz](https://stats.govt.nz)

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**From:** Hannah Wignall

**Sent:** Friday, October 11, 2024 4:54 PM

**To:** James Greenwell

**Cc:** Maryke Barnard

**Subject:** RE: Languages spoken and the 3 October release

Ni sab ula vinaka!

Thanks for the email James!

Sorry I haven't got back to you this side of the week. I'll endeavour to get some emails fired back to you Mon/Tues next week. I have three on my list I'm conscious of.

I appreciate you giving the extra context with the requests. Thanks for this.

I hope you have a good weekend and chat next week.

Ngā mihi,

Hannah

**Hannah Wignall** (she/her)

Kaiwhakahaere - Tuituinga | Kōtuitanga Hinonga | Kaiārahi Pūnaha Raraunga

Engagement Manager | Agency Partnering | Data System Leadership

DDI| +64 9(2)(a)

Tatauranga Aotearoa | Stats NZ

[stats.govt.nz](https://stats.govt.nz)

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**From:** James Greenwell <[james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** Thursday, October 10, 2024 3:36 PM

**To:** Hannah Wignall <[Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz)>

**Cc:** Maryke Barnard <[maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Subject:** Languages spoken and the 3 October release

Ni sa bula vinaka Hannah,

Warm Pacific greetings!!!

I have another few questions related to languages spoken and the PES. My Pacific languages colleagues have just asked me to summarise census 2023 results to support advice related to our language programmes.

The webpage published 3 October '[Census results reflect Aotearoa New Zealand's diversity](#)' shows a graph and table of languages spoke for total population.

There's a table called **Ten most widely spoken languages in 2023 (excluding English), for census usually resident population count, 2013–2023 Censuses** but when I cannot find this information in the new Aotearoa Data Explorer. All I can find are results from Census 2018. Can you please point me in the right direction to get this information from the data explorer?

Other questions:

5. When will attributes information from Census 2023 be available by ethnicity

6. When will PES results about undercount for Pacific peoples be released

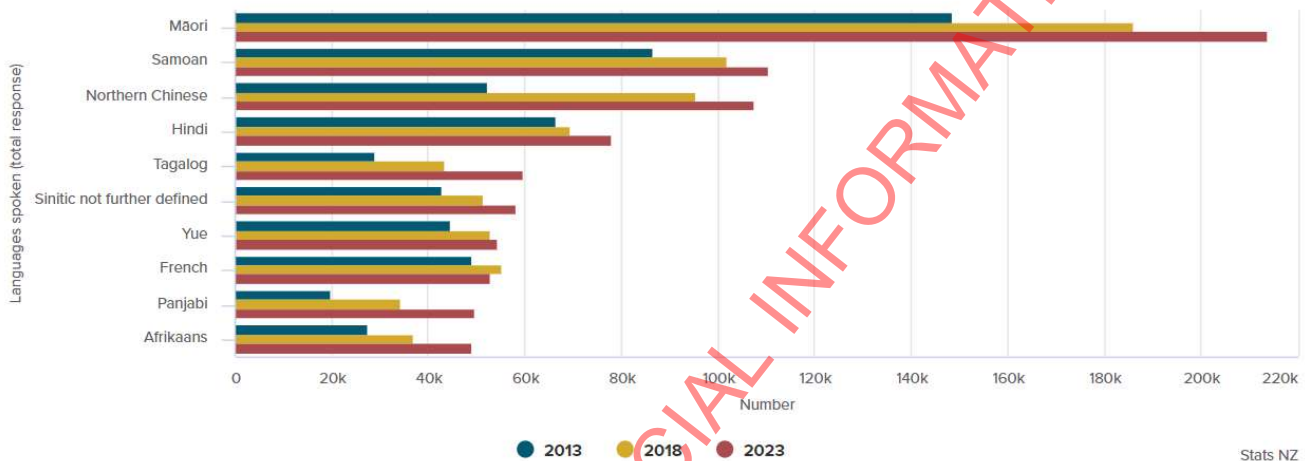
7. Is there a date we can expect population estimates to be produced?

For context:

Government agencies are expected to implement the new social investment approach which should draw from Census 2023 to the extent it is made available to government agencies. It is also well documented that ethnicity is a strong marker of need and an evidence based way of targeting scarce resources more efficiently.

FYI - Here's the graph and table.

Ten most widely spoken languages in 2023 (excluding English), for census usually resident population count, 2013–2023 Censuses



Ten most widely spoken languages in 2023 (excluding English), for census usually resident population count, 2013–2023 Censuses

Languages (total responses)	2013	2018	2023
Māori	148,395	185,955	213,849
Samoan	86,403	101,937	110,541
Northern Chinese	52,263	95,253	107,412
Hindi	66,309	69,471	77,985
Tagalog	29,016	43,278	59,517
Sinitic not further defined	42,750	51,501	58,059
Yue	44,625	52,767	54,417
French	49,125	55,116	52,884
Panjabi	19,749	34,227	49,656
Afrikaans	27,387	36,966	49,041

Vinaka Vakalevu,

James

**Dr James Greenwell**

Director, Data and Insights

Ministry for Pacific Peoples

Te Manatū mō ngā Iwi o te Moana-nui-ā-Kiwa

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# Ministry for Pacific Peoples

Te Manatū mō ngā Iwi o te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa


2024 PACIFIC LANGUAGE WEEKS

Fāeag Rotuam Ta	12 May - 18 May
Gagana Samoa	26 May - 1 Jun
Te Taetae ni Kiribati	7 Jul- 13 Jul
Te Reo Māori Kōki 'Āirani	4 Aug - 10 Aug
Lea Faka-Tonga	18 Aug - 24 Aug
Te Gana Tuvalu	29 Sep- 5 Oct
Vosa VakaViti	6 Oct - 12 Oct
Vagahau Niue	13 Oct - 19 Oct
Te Gagana Tokelau	27 Oct - 2 Nov
Papua Niugini Tok Pisin	10 Nov - 16 Nov
Solomon Aelan Pijin	24 Nov - 30 Nov

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# Document 6

 Outlook

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## Re: DSE linkage slides

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**From** James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>

**Date** Mon 18/11/2024 10:25 AM

**To** Hannes Diener <Hannes.Diener@stats.govt.nz>

**Cc** Michael Alspach <Michael.Alspace@stats.govt.nz>; Celeste Cutting <celeste.Cutting@stats.govt.nz>; Sandy Swei <sandy.swei@stats.govt.nz>; Andrew Martin <Andrew.Martin@stats.govt.nz>; Hannah Wignall <Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz>; Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>

Kia ora Hannes,

It was so nice to catch-up.

Many thanks for sharing the information - I'll treat with confidence. 😊

James

---

**From:** Hannes Diener <Hannes.Diener@stats.govt.nz>

**Sent:** 14 November 2024 7:23 PM

**To:** James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>

**Cc:** Michael Alspach <Michael.Alspace@stats.govt.nz>; Celeste Cutting <celeste.Cutting@stats.govt.nz>; Sandy Swei <sandy.swei@stats.govt.nz>; Andrew Martin <Andrew.Martin@stats.govt.nz>; Hannah Wignall <Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz>; Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>

**Subject:** DSE linkage slides

Kia ora James,

As always, it was great meeting with you and team last Tuesday. In that discussion you expressed some interest in linkage work that Andrew Martin is doing. He's currently preparing a conference presentation about that research, so attached are some draft slides he's preparing for that occasion (in a couple of months). In his research he's been looking at a few ways of incorporating linkage error into dual system estimations and one of the clever ideas is to apply DSE to the links themselves (from slide 12 onward).

For general background about the DSE method that is currently used at Stats to rebase the official ERP, all papers can be found at <https://www.stats.govt.nz/corporate/2023-post-enumeration-survey>. (There is even a publication specifically dedicated to linking.)

There is also a journal paper by many of our colleagues going a bit deeper into the technical background: [Bayesian dual systems population estimation for small domains](#).

Going back to Andrew's work, I also think it's worth pointing out that methodologically there's nothing stopping one applying the M\* method (Slide 10-11, and which is similar to how C23 got its interim

coverage rates) to medium sized ethnic groups, such as the big L2 Pacific ones (Samoan, Tongan, Fijian, Cook Island Maori). Not sure if we have much resource, but if you're interested it might be something Stats could explore with MPP.

Ngā mihi nui,

Hannes

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# Linkage error correction in small domain population estimation from administrative data

Andrew Martin

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# Disclaimer

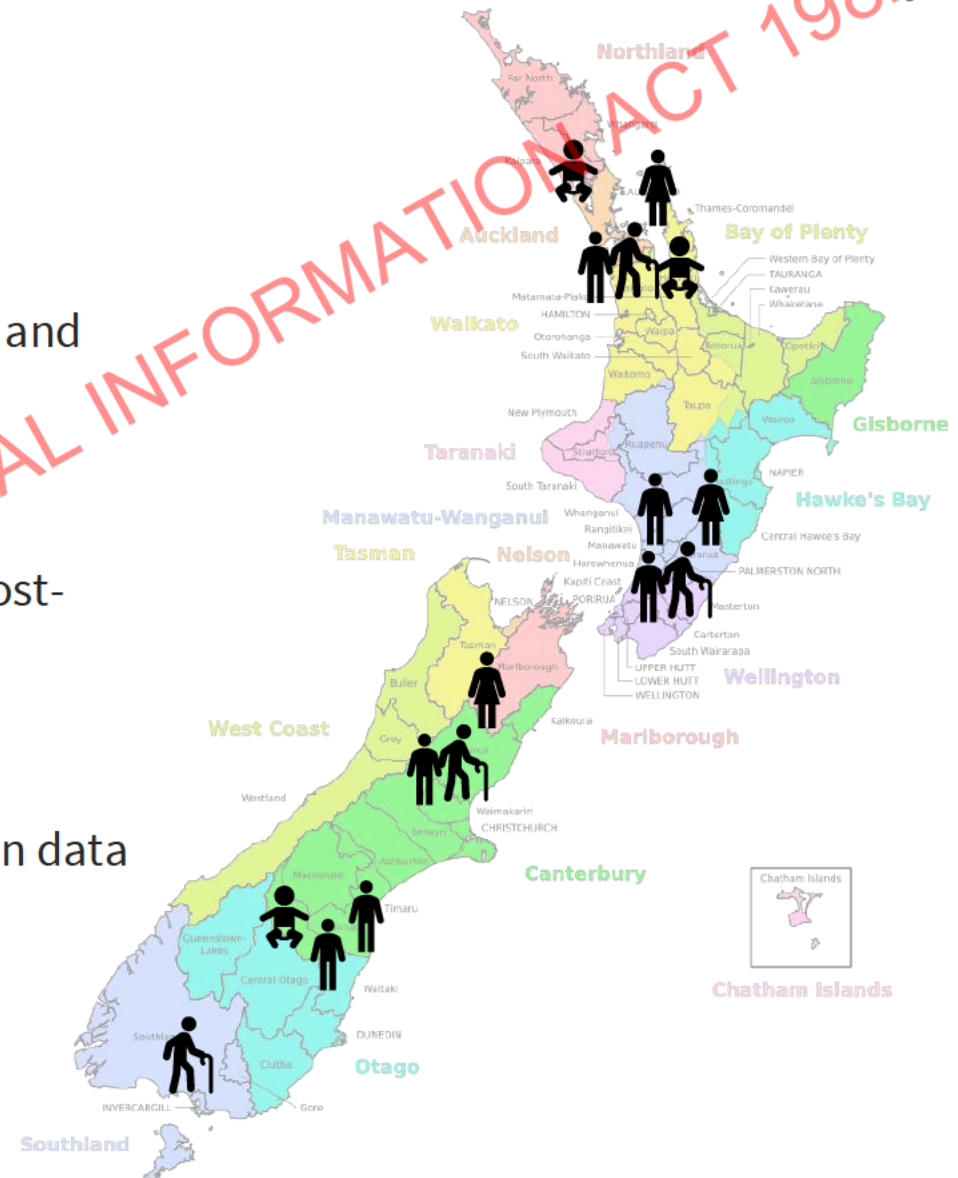
Stats NZ have been exploring administrative data-based alternatives to the current (census and sample) survey-based population estimation system. The methodology described in this presentation is in development and not the official methodology used by Stats NZ. Views expressed are the views of the author, and results presented are unofficial and experimental.

These results are not official statistics. They have been created for research purposes from the Integrated Data Infrastructure (IDI) which is carefully managed by Stats NZ. For more information about the [IDI and/or LBD] please visit <https://www.stats.govt.nz/integrated-data>

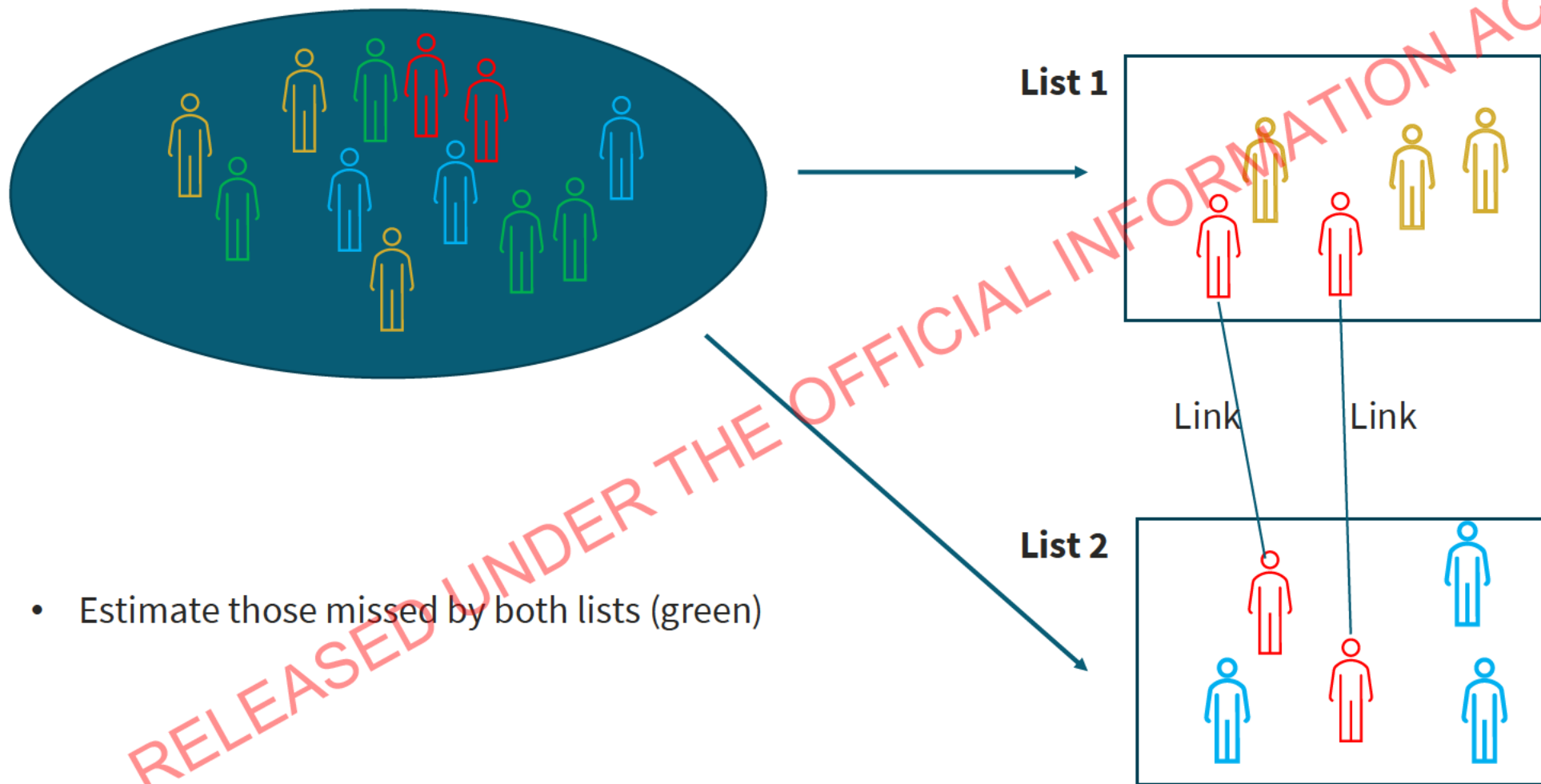
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# Background

- Stats NZ estimates the number of New Zealand residents aggregated by age, sex, ethnicity, Māori descent, NZ born and geographic area
- Current methods: Capture-recapture using census and post-enumeration survey (PES)
- Challenge: Can we make equivalent estimates using admin data only?



# Two linked administrative lists



- Estimate those missed by both lists (green)

# Bayesian inference on Census and admin list, assuming perfect linking, no misclassification



Total population estimate about 1.7% above the official estimate (ERP)

# Linkage error

More rows (people) than expected

Missed links appear to be a significant problem

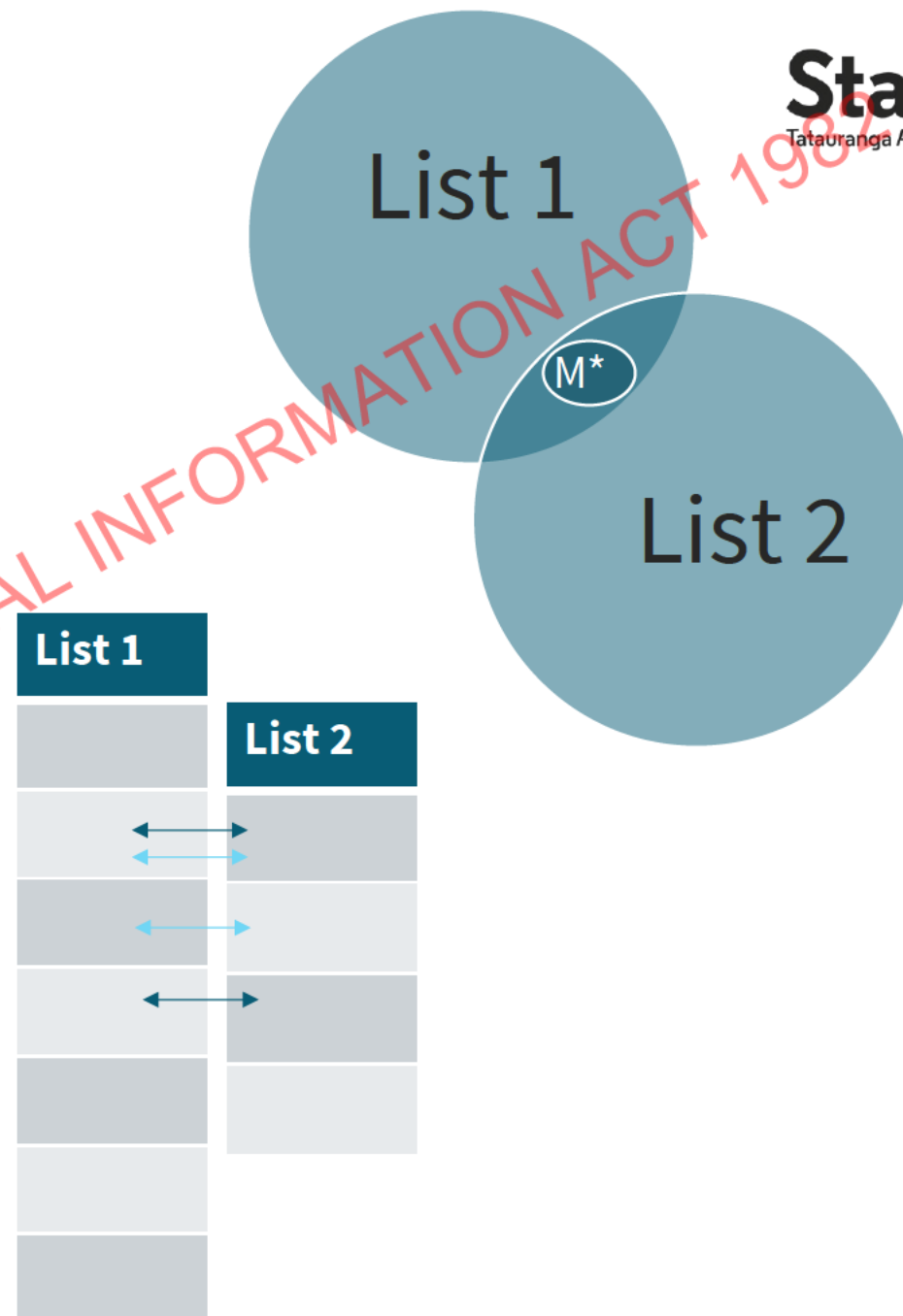
Conservative linking -> false links not a big problem

List 1	List 2
Person 1	Person 1
Person 2	
	Person 2
Person 3	
	Person 4

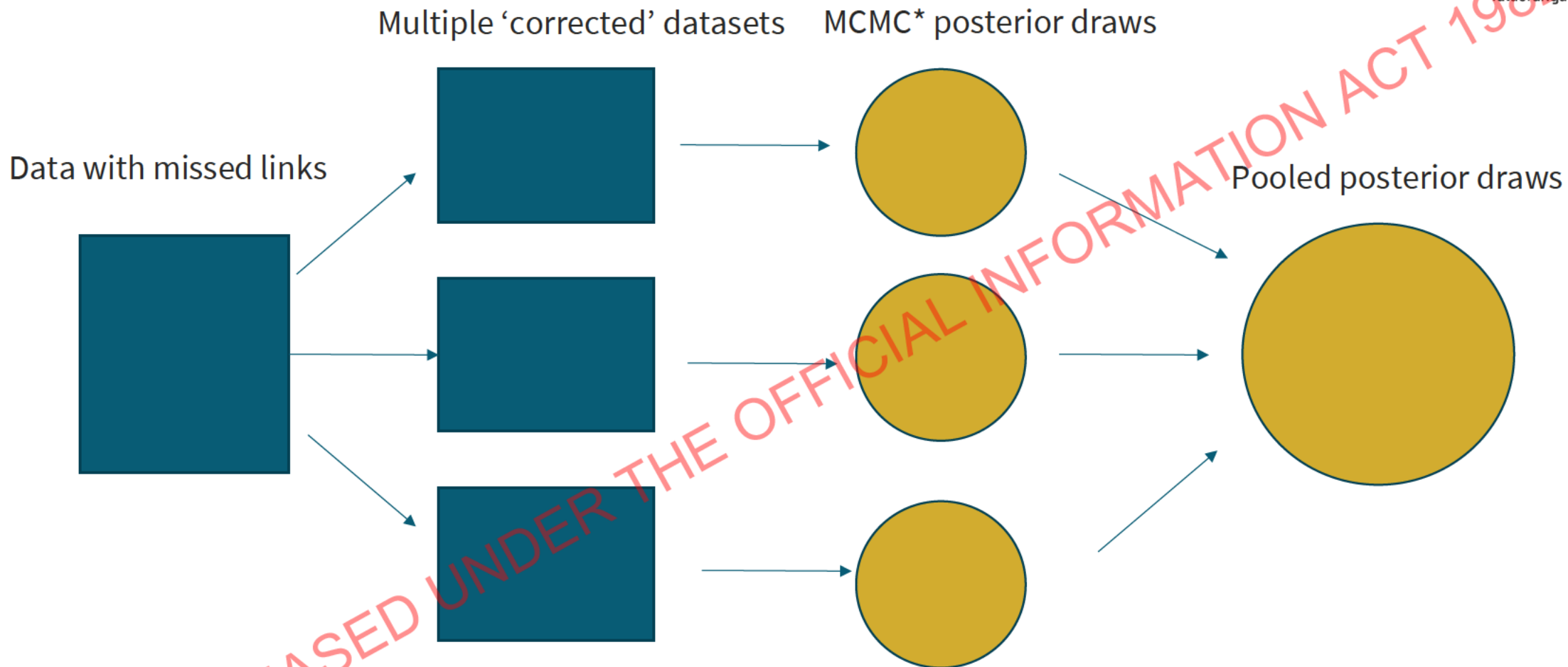
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## Methods to obtain multiple corrected datasets

- Identify a subset of one list that *must* be in the other. Observe link rate. Estimate missed link probabilities. Simulate link correction.
  - Various approaches with and without sophisticated modelling
- Use 2 methods of linkage (e.g. link on different variables). Do capture-recapture on the links. Draw missed links from posterior. Adapted from idea by *Seber, Hukau, Simmons, Biometrics, 56(4), 1227-1232*
- Linkage validation study



# Missed link correction

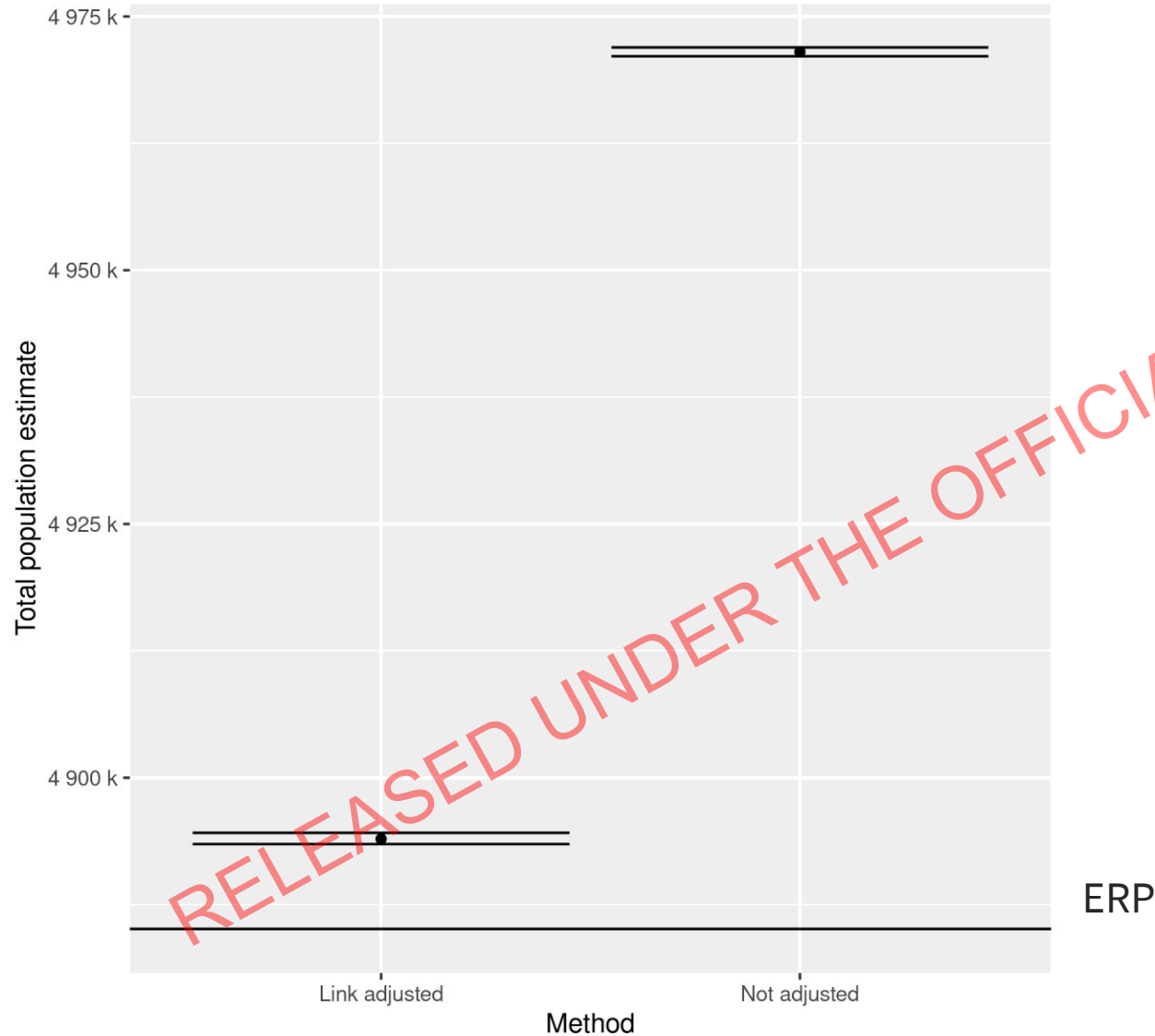


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(similar principle to multiple imputation)

\* MCMC = Markov chain Monte Carlo

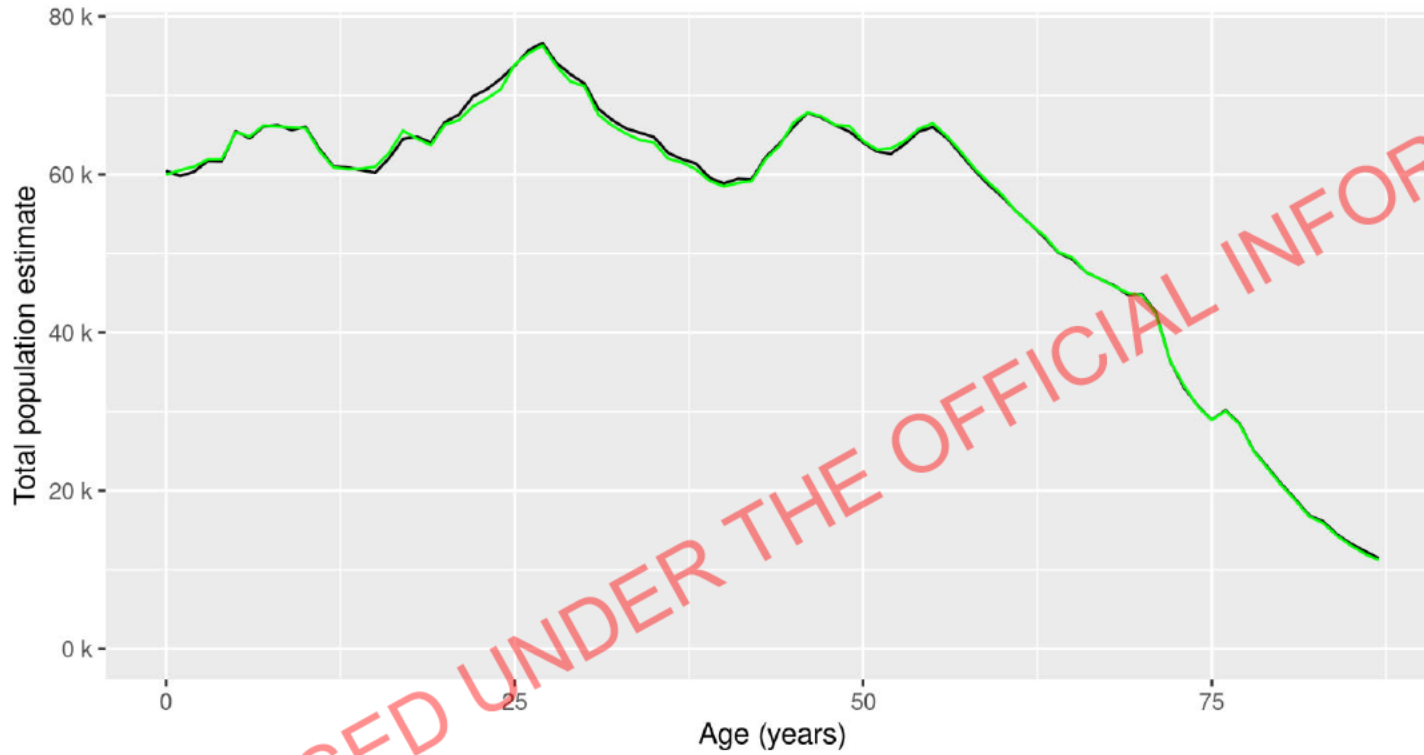
# Results: Experimental (Census + admin list) M\* method (Census night 2018)



- Broadens and brings closer to ERP
- **Point estimate agrees to ~0.2% (down from ~2%)**
- Width of 90% credible region not realistic uncertainty quantification
  - Need to capture model uncertainty

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# M\* - Results by age (Census night-18)

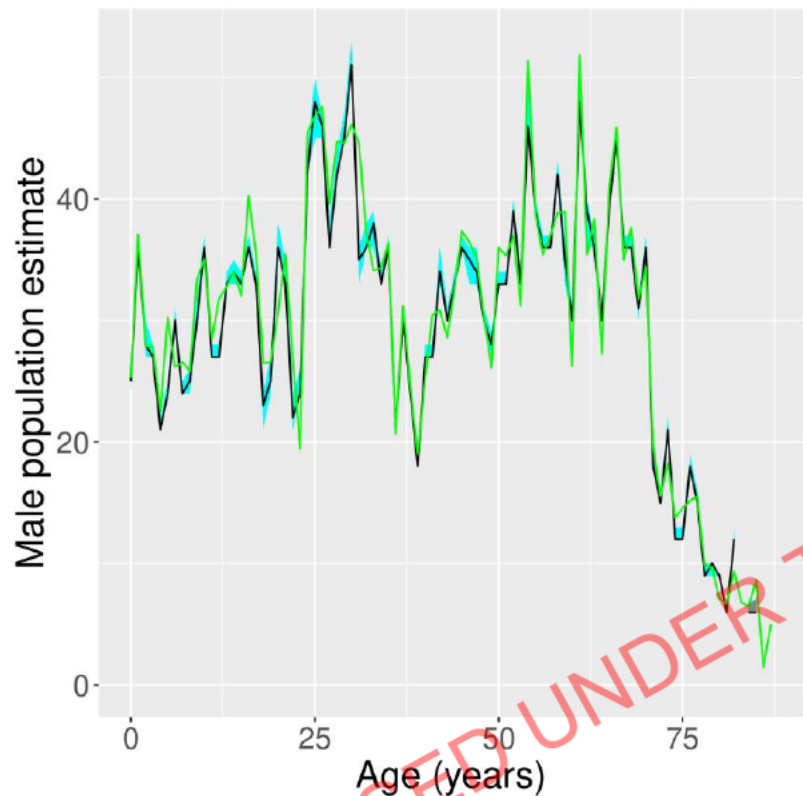


- Black - our experimental estimate
- Green - official ERP

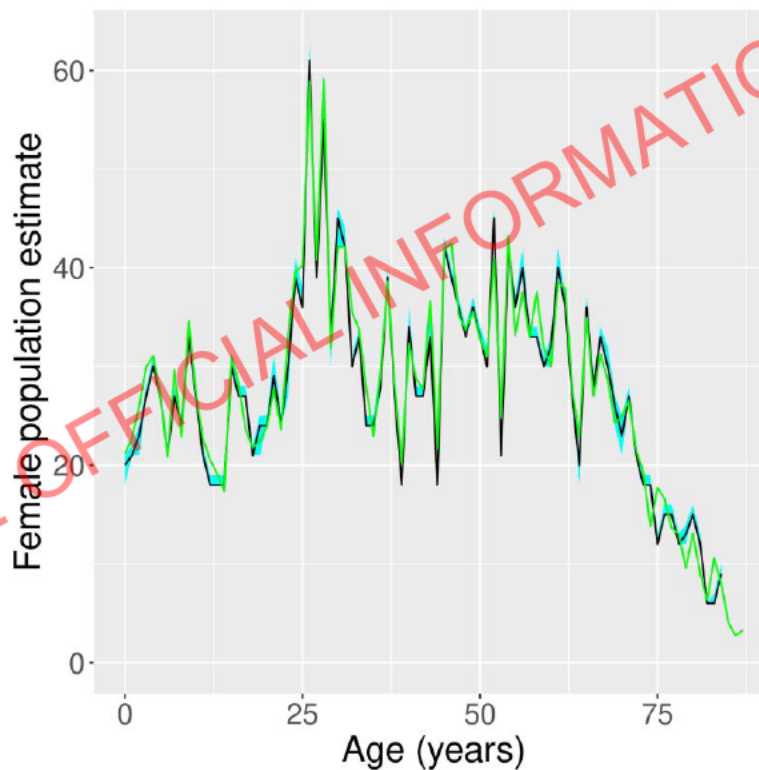
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# M\* - Small domains (Census night-2018)

### Mackenzie District male



### Mackenzie District female



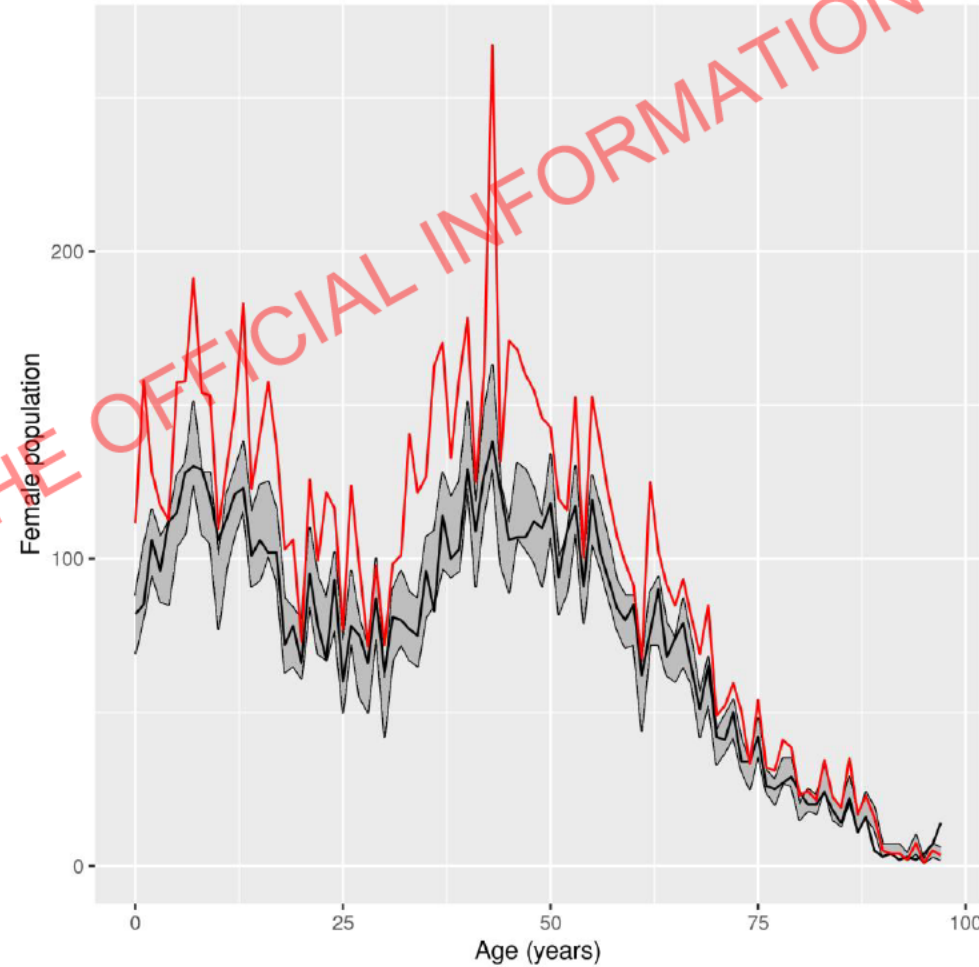
Our experimental point estimate (black), 90% Credible (blue), official ERP (green)

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\* Mackenzie District is traditionally a tricky district for adjustment, given its small size.

# Results: Capture recapture on links – simulated data

- Works well on simulated data



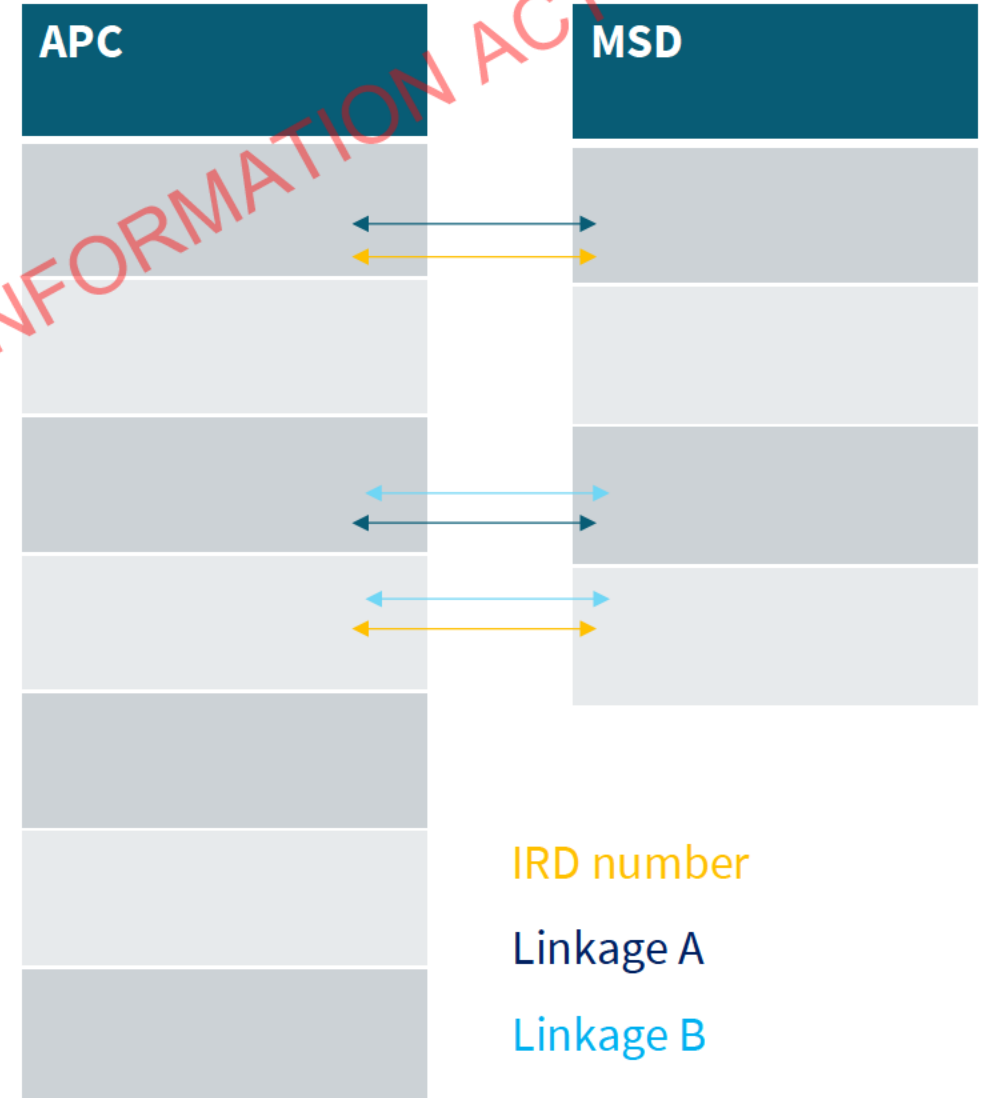
# Real data

- Two lists:
  - Admin Population Census (APC)
  - Ministry of Social Development (MSD)

Linkage methods (deterministic):

- IRD number (MSD special case – use to test method)
- Linkage A - first name, last name, year of birth, month of birth, TA
- Linkage B – day of birth, address components

Don't link if there is more than 1 candidate



## Issues

- Considerable address missingness in available MSD data, in particular
- Need to restrict lists to “linkable population”
- Hope to recover the removed records during the DSE

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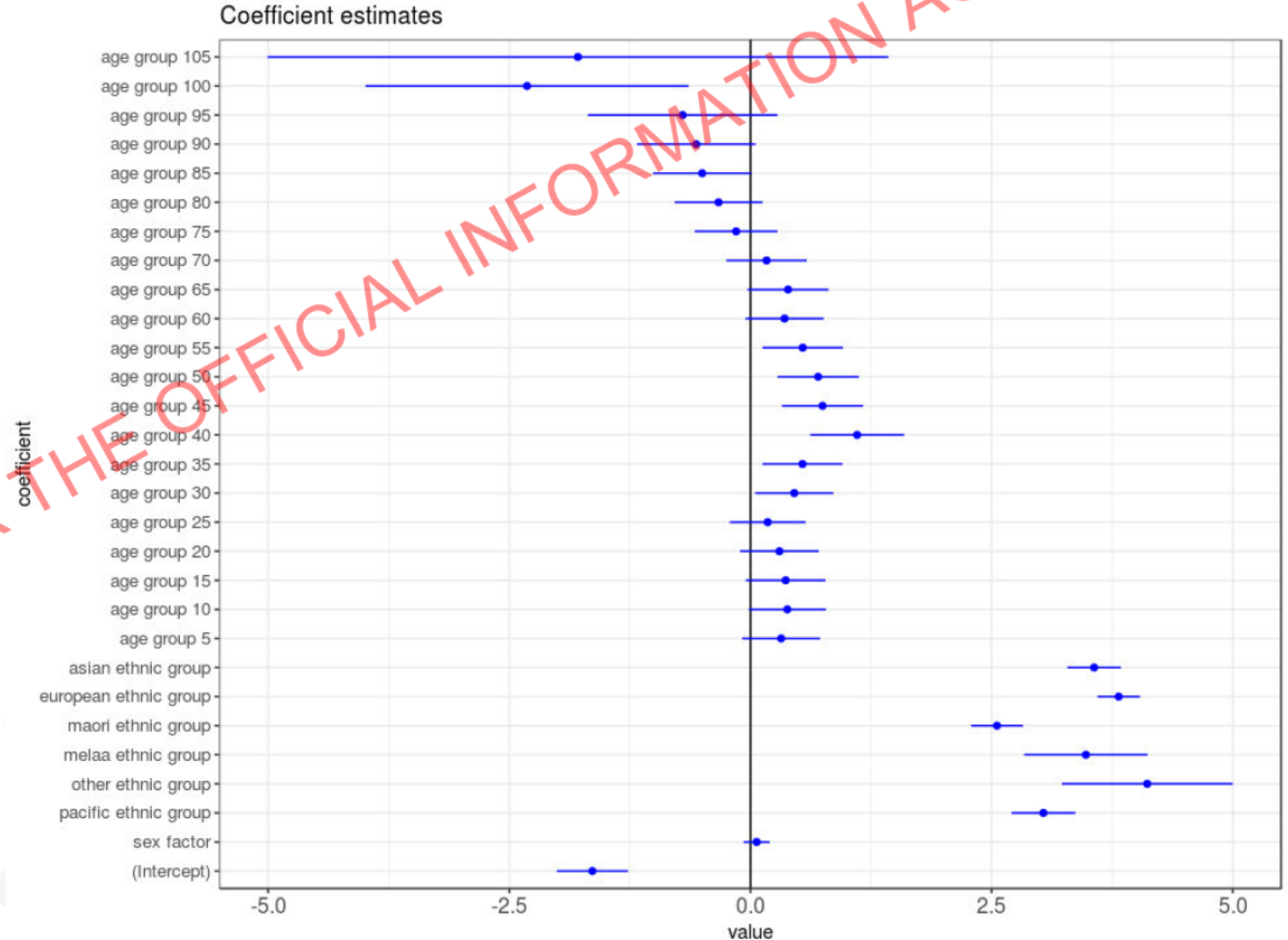
# Dependency between linkage methods

- Linkage A and B:
  - If there is corruption/outdated info in one variable in Linkage A in one list (e.g. MSD), there will be in a similar variable in list B in the same list (MSD)
- We use the Seber method on
  - Linkage A or B vs IRD linking
- This reveals that there is indeed dependency between A and B
- Knowledge of this dependency allows us to do a DSE that corrects for the dependency

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# Options in the absence of independent (IRD) linking

- Manual linkage validation study
  - Characterise dependence, **or**
  - Use directly to characterise missed links



<p><b>Section heading &amp; paragraph number:          (Modernising the approach to 2028 Census; Office of the Minister of Statistics; Cabinet Economic Policy Committee)</b></p>	<p><b>Feedback: Ministry for Pacific Peoples 26 February 2024</b></p>
<p><b>Paragraph 1          (Proposal)</b></p> <p>This paper informs Cabinet of the plan to modernise the 2028 Census, and Stats NZ’s public engagement and consultation approach.</p>	<p>1. <b>Use of the term ‘modernisation’.</b></p> <p>The specifics of the proposed changes have yet to be consulted on and decided, therefore it is not clear whether the proposed changes are in fact a modernisation of the census. We caution against using the terminology ‘modernising the 2028 Census’.</p> <p><u>Suggestion:</u> Change ‘modernisation’ to ‘transformation’ (as it has previously been described as in Stats NZ documents).</p> <p>2. <b>Highlighting the impact of the proposed changes on data equity for Pacific peoples.</b></p> <p>Because of the low response rates, particularly for Māori and Pacific peoples, Census 2018 has already tested the use of administrative data for official statistics. Independent reviews of the 2018 Census concluded that, while enumeration was good at the national level, it was poor for Pacific peoples. Enumeration also relied in part on the previous census for imputation, an option that improves data quality but isn’t future proof.</p> <p>Some data is only available via the census - these aspects include simultaneity (where data are collected at the same time for everybody), small area geographic enumeration, and social/household characteristics. Unfortunately, these variables were judged by the Independent Review Panel as of low or very low quality, especially for Pacific peoples. Administrative data is currently unable to provide this, and other, information (e.g. smoking rates, languages spoken), which are critical to adequately understanding Pacific population dynamics and characteristics. The use of an ‘administrative data-first’ approach will therefore have significant implications for the quality of data, particularly for Pacific peoples.</p>

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	<p><u>Suggestion</u>: Consultation documents and materials on this topic must clearly outline the risks to data equity and quality for Pacific peoples. For the purposes of the Cabinet paper, we would like these risks outlined in the Population section.</p>
<p><b>Paragraph 2 (Relation to government priorities)</b></p> <p>Supports the coalition agreement to deliver better public services. Modernising census data collection will cut costs, reduce compliance burden, support social investment, and provide more value to New Zealanders.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The paper must address equity and data quality, both of which are integral to better public services.</li> <li>2. Change 'Modernising census data <u>collection</u>' to '<u>data collation</u>' (because, in lieu of a conventional census, Stats NZ's role will not be data collection, but rather the collation of data that already exists across government).</li> <li>3. We would like to see articulation in the paper of the extent that accountability for the list of improvements (e.g. more supplemental surveying or improving the quality of administrative data) has been devolved to other agencies. The paper currently focuses on Stats NZ's role, but other government agencies will necessarily take on a bigger role with the proposed changes.</li> <li>4. We also suggest that the paper support assertions with evidence. We are concerned that there is currently no evidence for the following statements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>'will cut costs'</b> (e.g. is there an analysis of these cost savings, for both Stats NZ and across all contributing government agencies? The proposal shifts responsibility for basic collection and quality assurance to other agencies, which will also bear new compliance costs).</li> </ul> <p>It appears that compliance and costs analyses have been confined to Stats NZ costs (although no analyses have been referenced). Furthermore, census transformation reports and CBA reports already commissioned by Stats NZ do not seem to recommend this approach.</p> <p>We also understand from a report prepared for Stats NZ in 2021 that the benefits of census are valued at \$2.2 billion (or around \$4 of benefit for each dollar spent). This seems like a good return on investment, given that the estimated cost of Census 2023 was approx. \$300 million.</p> </li> </ol>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>‘reduce compliance burden’</b> (the compliance burden may be reduced for Stats NZ, but we are concerned that the burden will be transferred from Stats NZ to other government agencies that will provide administrative data and household surveys, therefore transferring, rather than reducing, compliance burden.</li> </ul> <p>We could not find any documentation confirming that there is a process for assuring compliance of agencies with the principles and protocols for producers of Tier 1 statistics or for the New Zealand Data and Information Management Principles? If agencies are found to be non-compliant, what support will be provided to them to become compliant?)</p> <p>Furthermore, what are expectations of agencies if/when the administrative purpose that the data is collected for ceases?</p>
<p><b>Paragraph 3 (Executive Summary)</b></p> <p>Data, statistics, and insights generated from the census are hugely valuable to New Zealand. The census is used to develop policies, inform service delivery, and drive economic growth. However, the current model relies on conducting a large-scale survey every five years, delivered through a large field workforce. This model is particularly vulnerable to external events, such as pandemics and natural disasters. Like many other countries, it is also getting more expensive and harder to meet response targets, and the current approach is unsustainable.</p>	<p><b>1. The proposed supplemental surveys to replace the census will have the same vulnerabilities as the census.</b></p> <p>Paragraph #4 says the administrative approach will be supplemented by surveying. Household surveys also have vulnerabilities like the Census (itself a large-scale survey) to natural events, meeting response/coverage targets, rising costs and workforce shortages.</p> <p>We are unsure whether the disruptions to the government’s current household survey programme, which spans several agencies (Stats NZ, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Justice), are well understood. This information is fundamental to understanding what the impacts of the proposed Census transformation might be.</p> <p><b>2. We need to highlight the impact of the proposed census transformation on household surveys</b></p> <p>It is important to highlight the distinction between census enumeration (population counts) from other information on population characteristics and dynamics (currently collected by census forms in combination with surveys).</p> <p><u>Suggestion:</u> The paper should highlight the implications of the proposed Census transformation for household surveys, which will include:</p>

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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Deterioration of survey sample frames for government household surveys. These surveys rely on census counts by small area (which are increasingly inequitable for Pacific peoples and will further deteriorate under the proposed census method)</li> <li>b. Interruption of the time-series for existing surveys if there are significant changes to the sampling methodology.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Paragraph 4 (Executive Summary)</b></p> <p>I have directed Stats NZ to develop options to evolve the next census, so it is more efficient, more responsive to changing data needs, and drives better value and outcomes for New Zealanders. Like many of our overseas counterparts, this will likely involve greater use of administrative data, supplemented by surveying.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. More information is needed on how Stats NZ will manage compliance for producers and users of official statistics to ensure equity</b></li> </ol> <p>And detail on how this will be handled for groups such as Māori and Pacific peoples, who currently experience data equity issues due to lower coverage and quality of data.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>2. Include evidence from independent reviews and international experience</b></li> </ol> <p>We suggest including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A review of what countries overseas are doing in terms of population enumeration and data collection and how successful these programmes have been.</li> <li>• Information about the extent to which recommendations of the Independent Review of Census 2018 by Jack and Graziadei have been taken up and whether Pacific peoples have been involved with organisational and programme governance, engagement and communications, and design considerations.</li> </ul> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>3. There is no evidence that NZ has capacity to increase the use of supplemental surveys or that supplemental surveys will be more cost-effective than a census.</b></li> </ol> <p>The Ministry for Pacific Peoples has the following specific concerns:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) It is likely NZ is already at capacity with what is achievable for the social sector household surveys, given capacity constraints with the main provider (Reach Aotearoa). For example, the child and adult nutrition surveys and the child and adult oral health surveys have not been repeated for many years despite the need. There is no evidence that Pacific sample sizes have increased, despite the uncertainty of survey statistics for many years.</li> </ol>

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	<p>(b) Household surveys are often the only other source of detailed information on specific outcomes (e.g. the NZ Health Survey provides information on unmet primary care need due to cost or transportation etc.). However, Census is currently required for population counts and distributional information used as the basis of the Household Sampling Frame. Sample surveys also use population estimates (based on the census) to improve the accuracy of the survey results.</p> <p>(c) If supplemental surveys are needed they will also likely require boosting or oversampling specifically for Pacific peoples.</p> <p>Suggestion: it would be useful to see the extent that the survey programme needs to be redeveloped, cost of the current set of household surveys being conducted across government to understand whether their current budgets need to be augmented.</p>
<p><b>Paragraph 5 (Executive Summary)</b></p> <p>Public buy-in and support is critical for delivering a new census approach. Stats NZ's proposed three-pronged engagement and consultation plan to start the national conversation consists of:</p> <p><b>[5.1]</b> <i>targeted engagement</i> with key stakeholders and partners on specific data needs and/or technical issues (already underway)</p> <p><b>[5.2]</b> public consultation on the new approach, delivered via an online discussion document (for a period of four weeks in April 2024)</p> <p><b>[5.3]</b> a light-touch <i>online public engagement programme</i> to gauge levels of public support, delivered via a series of social media posts</p>	<p><b>1. It is unclear how the current 3-pronged approach to engagement and consultation will ensure the proposed transformation programme will garner public support and buy-in.</b></p> <p>We agree that public trust has suffered as a result of the well-publicised failures of Census 2018. Furthermore, recent censuses have used different methodologies at the expense of stakeholder confidence and intercensal comparability. We are not confident that the proposed 3-pronged approach for engagement and consultation will deliver a different result for public buy-in/support.</p> <p><b>[5.1]</b></p> <p><b>2. As part of engagement, Stats NZ should clearly articulate what current data inequities exist and how the proposed programme will address them.</b></p> <p>The response rates, independent review and EDQP findings for Census 2018 indicate that data for Māori and Pacific peoples were not of <b>high-quality</b> compared with other groups.</p> <p>Stats NZ as a statistics producer should inform stakeholders about Pacific data quality and/or technical issues of existing census and admin data (in line with NZ Data and Information Management Principles as well as the Principles and Protocols</p>

for producers of Tier 1 Statistics) for the engagement process. This hasn't occurred. MPP is working at pace to conduct analyses about Pacific data quality to support the work that Stats NZ is trying to do.

[5.2]

3. **A 4-week online discussion document is not an appropriate way to engage meaningfully with Pacific peoples and communities.**

Ensuring buy-in and support from Pacific communities is critical if current data inequities are to be addressed. A good example of public engagement with Pacific peoples that prioritised face-to-face discussion was used for Te Mana Ola: The Pacific Health Strategy (Ministry of Health). MPP also provides the Yavu – Foundations of Pacific Engagement Tool which should be adopted when engaging with Pacific peoples.

4. **For the public to engage meaningfully, there needs to be more information given about admin data, the IDI and the shifting role of Stats NZ.**

It is not clear that government and public stakeholders have much awareness about the IDI, but this is fundamental to meaningful engagement. Public buy-in is critical for an admin-only census but admin data is already collected about people every day and joined with other data (eg an APC has already been constructed without their explicit buy-in in the IDI).

It is also not clear what the public thinks about the new Data and Statistics Act 2022 giving the government Statistician the power to delegate collection duties to other government agencies. The new Act doesn't provide clear boundaries around the kinds of data collection that may be delegated, opening the door to the possibility that delegations may allow agencies to collect data beyond the scope of their daily business.

The Pacific response rate/results for Census 2023 still aren't released – It is critical that this information be made available prior to engaging with public and government stakeholders.

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	<p>Public consultation should also cover the shifting role of Stats NZ and other agencies from the Data and Statistics Act 2022 eg being a data collator vs collector (may risk obscuring the provenance or line of sight between why the data are collected and what the data are being used for). Engagement should also point out that household surveys are already collected by a range of agencies (including Stats NZ) who may also need to consult with stakeholders to understand expectations.</p> <p><b>[5.3]</b> The phrase ‘administrative data-first’ implies that the preferred approach has already been determined to be an administrative census. If the public do not have in-depth knowledge about the IDI (or the Data and Statistics Act 2022) the ‘light-touch’ approach will need to cover a lot of ground since these are the pre-requisites of an administrative census according to a number of census transformation reports and Cabinet papers.</p>
<p><b>Paragraph 7</b> <b>(Analysis: 2023 Census highlighted the need to move beyond traditional survey methods)</b></p> <p>Stats NZ collects information from people and organisations to deliver high-quality data, insights, and statistics about New Zealand. This includes a suite of economic, environmental, and social and population data. A key source of data about the population is the census, which provides an official count of population and dwellings every five years. The census is also a critical input to key economic statistics (e.g. quarterly gross domestic product).</p>	<p>We would like to see inclusion of the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intercensal comparability has been compromised for every census since at least 2006 due to methodology changes.</li> <li>• The <b>official count</b> reference is not accurate for Pacific peoples where there has been a well-documented and systematic undercount.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Paragraph 8</b> <b>(Analysis: 2023 Census highlighted the need to move beyond traditional survey methods)</b></p> <p>Data collected via the census is used to develop and implement new policies and inform service delivery. The census dataset is an integral component of the data and evidence infrastructure required to support social investment and drive economic growth. This data is also critical to the delivery of some government functions, such</p>	<p><b>Although the 2018 and 2023 census response and coverage rates have been inequitable, there is not a strong case for transforming the census, rather than just focusing on lifting response and coverage rates for Māori and Pacific peoples.</b></p> <p>The <b>population estimates and projections</b> are disproportionately inaccurate for Pacific populations. While this is a failure of official population statistics for Pacific peoples, the administrative data do not currently offer higher quality or insight into social characteristics. While the independent review of Census 2018 indicates that enumeration with census augmented administrative data is good at a national level, it still hasn’t been shown that</p>

<p>as the population estimates and projections, which help determine allocation of health system funding and electoral boundaries.</p>	<p>counts, estimates and projections meet objectives of census for small area counts, beyond level 1 ethnicity classification, community and socio-economic attributes.</p>
<p><b>Paragraph 9</b> <b>(Analysis: 2023 Census highlighted the need to move beyond traditional survey methods)</b></p> <p>For the 2023 Census, Stats NZ implemented a ‘combined’ data collection model. First, a large-scale survey is used to collect most census data. Then, administrative data (i.e. data that public or private agencies already hold as part of their routine business) is used to supplement survey data to improve coverage and data quality.</p>	<p><b>The paper should include a description of the impacts of constantly changing census methodology.</b></p> <p>Constant changes to the census methodology have the effect of making intercensal comparisons challenging and inequitably so for Pacific peoples. It’s not clear when the last 2 comparable censuses have been conducted in New Zealand (potentially we would need to look at the censuses prior to 2006).</p>
<p><b>Paragraph 10</b> <b>(Analysis: 2023 Census highlighted the need to move beyond traditional survey methods)</b></p> <p>The 2023 Census is on track to deliver a response rate of 89 to 91 percent. By combining this with administrative data, Stats NZ expects to deliver data covering around 97 to 98 percent of the population. This will provide quality statistics and a high-quality population count.</p>	<p><b>We understand that an independent review of Census 2023 is underway. We support this review and strongly recommend that a Pacific data perspective is included, due to evidence of current data inequities.</b></p> <p>An independent review (e.g. Report of the Independent Review of New Zealand’s 2018 Census and reports by 2018 Census External Data Quality Panel) of Census 2023 would help Government stakeholders/statistics scrutinise the data quality and cost-benefits.</p> <p>The response rate should be broken down by ethnic group. In Census 2018 the response rate was hugely different between ethnic groups. Not stating the denominator minimises the value of this information.</p>
<p><b>Paragraph 11</b> <b>(Analysis: 2023 Census highlighted the need to move beyond traditional survey methods)</b></p> <p>However, the current data collection approach for census is not sustainable. It now takes more time, effort, and resources to achieve satisfactory response rates. It is becoming harder to motivate people to complete census forms, driven by changing societal attitudes and declining civic engagement.</p>	<p>As with previous paragraphs, it would be useful to see an independent review of Census 2023. The reviews of Census 2018 did not conclude that the current data collection approach for census is not sustainable. There are also analyses of census value, conducted in 2014 and 2021, which show the census still provides good value for money.</p> <p>If traditional survey methods are outdated, then this claim may undermine the claim earlier (para #4) that the proposal will need to rely more on surveying, presumably through the cross-government household survey programmes to achieve efficiency, responsiveness, better value and outcomes (these benefits still haven’t been qualified).</p>

<p><b>Paragraph 12</b> <b>(Analysis: 2023 Census highlighted the need to move beyond traditional survey methods)</b></p> <p>The overall cost of the 2023 Census was approximately \$326m – higher than the previous 2018 Census (\$126m) and the 2013 Census (\$104m). Costs rose due to expanded field collection activities and the need to hire a temporary workforce in a competitive labour market. Less than \$249m is available for 2028 Census.</p>	<p><b>The cost of the proposed census transformation has not been estimated; therefore it is unclear whether it would save money in the long-term or provide the same benefits and return on investment as a census.</b></p> <p>Suggestion: To have a more complete picture of costs, it would be useful to see an estimate of anticipated compliance costs for government agencies who would be accountable for collecting population statistics in addition to the collation costs that Stats NZ may be accountable for.</p> <p>The government surveys are also quite costly - and when summed may even rival the cost of census. In Budget 2023, \$84 million was allocated for delivery of data and statistical information services relating to the population, household economics, social conditions (including child poverty), the labour market, and the environment and nearly \$69 million for the delivery of data and statistical information services relating to business and the economy (<a href="https://2023.budget.govt.nz/budget/pdfs/estimates/v4/est23-v4-stat.pdf">https://2023.budget.govt.nz/budget/pdfs/estimates/v4/est23-v4-stat.pdf</a>). In the absence of information about this topic in the Cabinet paper, we can make a crude estimate that 6 government surveys (HLFS, GSS, HES, NZHS, NZTS, NZCVS) are ~\$160million/year then over 5 years (aligned with the census) that could be \$800 million.</p> <p>It's also possible that surveys are also coming under cost pressures and rely on a monopoly provider (Reach Aotearoa). It's logical to think that this provider arrangement has reached a capacity limit. For example the Pacific sample in the ongoing health survey has not increased since 2011 but we know the Pacific sample during that period hasn't been adequate.</p> <p>The Stats NZ 2023 report: Pacific Housing: People, place, and wellbeing in Aotearoa New Zealand describes data source limitations for the GSS and the sample size limits the ability to model... the challenge of small sample size limited the analysis we could carry out... <u>It also highlighted the significant role of census data.</u></p>
<p><b>Paragraph 13</b> <b>(Analysis: 2023 Census highlighted the need to move beyond traditional survey methods)</b></p> <p>The model is also vulnerable to external events, such as pandemics and natural disasters. In 2011, the census operations had to be rescheduled to 2013 due to the Canterbury earthquakes. The 2023 Census was then impacted by COVID-19, followed by Cyclone Gabrielle, which hit during the first week of planned data collection.</p>	<p><b>The administrative-first approach and population-based surveys, like the census, would also be vulnerable to administrative services changing over time.</b></p> <p>Any model would have the vulnerabilities mentioned. The pandemic would also have impacted administrative datasets, eg health, education, but the magnitude of this impact would be difficult to estimate.</p> <p>It also impacted the NZ Health Survey and the Tier 1 statistic BMI (body mass index) from being released. Census and household surveys are one of only a few tools to understand the</p>

<p>This resulted in delayed and re-designed collection activities, which required an unanticipated \$36.6m in additional funding.</p>	<p>impacts of the pandemic for a range of issues that relate to populations. It also allows for simultaneity, which helps to control for some of the measurement bias issues e.g. we can measure population impacts prior to an event and following an event with more precision and certainty.</p>
<p><b>Paragraph 14</b> <b>(Analysis: 2023 Census highlighted the need to move beyond traditional survey methods)</b></p> <p>Shocks and disruptions like this are likely to continue which has implications for the data system. It is increasingly important for government and businesses to be able to access relevant data quickly to inform decisions.</p>	<p><b>The failures of the 2018 Census were not the result of shocks and disruptions to the system.</b> As documented in the independent reviews of the census, failures of the 2018 Census stemmed not from disruptions to the system, but rather inadequate planning, governance, decision-making and project management. These are issues that should be addressed for the sustainability of the census, rather than transforming it into something completely different.</p>

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**Paragraph 15**

**(Analysis: We need to modernise the census by increasing the use of administrative data)**

I consider that using more administrative data to deliver data and statistics is the future for census. This will ease costs, improve resilience to external events, improve the efficiency of data collection (as it reuses data that the government has already invested time and resource in collecting), and make the outputs more flexible and responsive to changing data needs.

**1. Evidence on cost savings**

As stated previously, it would be helpful to provide evidence that the proposed approach may ease costs. The Valuing Census reports 2013 and 2021 commissioned by Stats NZ indicate that Census is providing excellent value for money, even accounting for the cost of Census 2023. The issue is that continued census failures due to well documented mismanagement (External Data Quality Panel final report 2020; Report of the Independent Review of New Zealand's 2018 Census 2019) risk devaluing the census further.

It is also likely that compliance costs will increase for a range of government agencies who will assume new responsibilities for production of official statistics. Also, costs could climb for agencies to do more and bigger surveys given multiple government household surveys have not adequately sampled for Pacific peoples and there has been no improvement as a result of this knowledge.

**2. Vulnerabilities of the Census Transformation Approach**

Agencies that provide data may not be resilient to external events. There were data quality issues at Ministry of Health during the COVID19 pandemic. There were limited hospital staff for data entry; business intelligence staff that clean the data; delays in data being useable. We would like to see how Stats NZ will ensure data continues to be accurate and provided in a timely manner.

We also see more recently that as a result of the health system reforms there have been significant administrative data quality failures ([Data Review Report – Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora](#)). The review of Emergency Department data by Health NZ in 2022 described failures at every step of the data collection, handling, analysis and reporting process. It also described management failures at Health NZ, which echoed those related to Census 2018.

**3. Likely reductions in data quality**

For the census transformation approach to succeed, Stats NZ needs to have the mandate to ensure data collected from other agencies will be complete, available and timely. Providing more information about the Data and Statistics Act 2022 and the

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	<p>Privacy Act 2020 may help. Issues of consent (for all agencies to enable their data to be used for this purpose) and additional resources/cost will need to be made clear.</p> <p>Admin data could be more prohibitive to use given privacy/confidentiality of admin data and all the biases that need to be accounted for, including selection bias, access barriers, simultaneity etc.</p> <p><b>4. Calculation of NZDep Index and Equity Index for schools will be affected</b></p> <p>To be estimated, NZ Dep Index needs: universality of coverage, simultaneity, and population counts by small geographic area.</p> <p>The new Equity Index developed by Ministry of Education to allocate equity funding to schools also uses census data and it's not clear how such a complex programme would be affected by a significant change to the way population statistics are produced.</p>
<p><b>Paragraph 16</b> <b>(Analysis: We need to modernise the census by increasing the use of administrative data)</b></p> <p>Countries like the United Kingdom, the United States, and Canada are all moving towards using more administrative data in their censuses, with the latter two already using design elements that Stats NZ is considering.</p>	<p>It would be useful to include more information about the countries being referenced.</p> <p><b>United Kingdom</b></p> <p>The Office for National Statistics in the UK is also transforming the population and migration statistics system for England and Wales using administrative data. Strategic documentation describes the use of a Dynamic Population Model derived from administrative data which cannot be directly compared with census estimates owing to their fundamental differences.</p> <p>In the UK, there is a comprehensive discussion document explaining proposals for the Population Census of England and Wales in 2031 (Office for National Statistics, 2023). To date, the comments of over sixty UK leading experts in population studies are available. Their comments (UK Census Consultation Response, 2023) may help us to anticipate issues we will see if any such consultation is to occur here. UK experts also point out the lack of a national identity system in their plans which is a topic that we may also be avoiding in New Zealand.</p> <p>“Administrative data is a vital supplement to the census, but the argument that it can replace all the functions of the census has not been convincingly made. There appears to be an element of wishful thinking in this view <u>given the absence of a national identity system in the UK.</u>”</p>

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	<p>“Any alternative using administrative data needs to be implemented and proven to yield comprehensive and accurate results—equivalent in quality to those yielded by the census—before any plan to abolish the decennial census.”</p> <p><b>France</b> France has moved to a rolling census – instead of trying to enumerate the whole population in one go, a survey covers around 13% of the population each year as part of a 5-yearly cycle, and these data are pooled across years to give a census-equivalent picture of the French population.</p> <p>Meanwhile, because the data are stratified, answers from the latest year can offer rapid insight into social change and modifications to the question set can be introduced progressively.</p> <p>On the downside, this system can lead to some people in some places being potentially missed by the rolling sample (a big issue in NZ with volatile internal migration as well as immigration/emigration), and the multi-year design makes the interpretation of the statistics more complex for users.</p> <p><b>USA</b> The American Community Survey is another geographically stratified rolling survey model, although the annual sample size is only around 2.4%. The survey data can similarly be pooled over several years to provide estimates for at different scales.</p> <p>The survey is held alongside a lightweight decennial census, which does not include the more detailed census-like questions covered in the survey.</p> <p>It would be useful to see an evidence review of overseas scenarios in order to back this up. It's also difficult to know how NZ compares to the US and Canada.</p>
<p><b>Paragraph 17</b> <b>(Analysis: We need to modernise the census by increasing the use of administrative data)</b></p> <p>The Government Statistician is currently considering a range of options, which all prioritise using administrative data first, supplemented by a survey component to fill gaps where administrative data is insufficient or unavailable. What distinguishes the different options is the type, scale,</p>	<p><b>We are concerned about the impact of the Census Transformation on Pacific data equity.</b></p> <p>Census 2018 tested poorly for Pacific data quality when supplemented with admin data. Social Wellbeing Agency IDI researchers have also noted the limitation with the Administrative Population Census (APC), which doesn't prioritise census data and have created an alternative that prioritises census data. The intuition from this natural experiment</p>

<p>and regularity of a supplementary survey component. These options balance collection efficiency with data quality and granularity considerations in different ways.</p>	<p>is that admin data census still can't replace conventional census yet in an IDI research context.</p> <p>A population register would solve the survey methodology problems and enable a reliable sample frame and correction of biases etc. It would enable the new survey approach (necessitated by the gaps with admin data) to work given how difficult achieving adequate coverage and sample are currently.</p>
<p><b>Paragraph 18</b> <b>(Analysis: We need to modernise the census by increasing the use of administrative data)</b></p> <p>Using an administrative data-first approach supplemented by a survey will mean the data for some census variables will be collected differently. Initial design work indicates key population counts (from census) will be similar quality to what they are now and will be produced more frequently. Identifying the most appropriate data source for delivering different population and social statistics measures will be a key part of Stats NZ's engagement process and considered a high priority within the 2028 Census/future census design work. A dedicated work programme within Stats NZ's Transformation Programme is being established to focus on improving the quality of administrative data over time.</p>	<p><b>It would be helpful for evidence to be published showing the impact of the census transformation on data quality for population counts.</b></p> <p>Engaging with stakeholders on this issue should include (according to the principles and protocols for producers of Tier 1 Statistics) comprehensive analysis and presentation of the results.</p>
<p><b>Paragraph 19</b> <b>(Analysis: Public consultation is needed before adopting a new approach)</b></p> <p>Moving towards an administrative data-first approach is a significant departure from how census has historically been conducted. It is, therefore, critical to undertake public consultation, in line with the requirements set out under the Data and Statistics Act 2022.</p>	<p><b>Pacific peoples and communities need to engage meaningfully during the consultation process.</b></p> <p>Concerns about Pacific data quality have been historically overlooked and the current decision-making approach may prove similarly concerning for Pacific data quality.</p> <p>It is important to signal for stakeholders how compliance with principles and protocols for producers of Tier 1 Statistics are enforced now and likely changes so they can plan.</p> <p>This paragraph raises questions about how wider compliance by government agencies will be addressed as they take a greater role in producing official population statistics for an administrative data first census and for bigger household surveys.</p>

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	<p>There's an accessibility and equity element which is part of principles and protocols compliance. For example, the Ministry for Pacific Peoples is currently charged a fee by Stats NZ to access data to determine data quality for surveys. This information should be released as part of the survey production process since MPP will not be the only stakeholder for Pacific statistics. The practice of charging for data quality information may be a barrier to the use and re-use of public data, illustrated by the fact that this basic information isn't currently available. In future, charging fees for population statistics derived from administrative registries should be discouraged.</p>
<p><b>Paragraph 20</b> <b>(Analysis: Public consultation is needed before adopting a new approach)</b></p> <p>Stats NZ's proposed three-pronged engagement and consultation plan to start the national conversation includes:</p> <p><b>[20.1]</b> Targeted engagement (already underway) on specific data needs and/or technical issues with key stakeholders and partners. This includes:</p> <p><b>[20.1.2]</b> the academic and research community to assess the technical and ethical implications of drawing more heavily on administrative data</p> <p><b>[20.1.4]</b> key communities (e.g. Pacific peoples) who are under-represented in administrative data sources and surveying is required to understand them</p>	<p>[20.1.1] Related to this there is a data quality principle for producers of official statistics to provide information about data quality to users. In the absence of this, MPP is doing quality assurance work which Stats NZ may be better positioned to do.</p> <p>[20.1.2] Otago University Virtual Health Information Network researchers have shown (Linkage error and linkage bias: a guide for IDI users 2019) that few IDI research publications adequately address linkage error and linkage bias. Furthermore, the report indicates that Stats NZ does not provide adequate information to support intuition and improvements for researchers to understand administrative data quality.</p> <p>[20.1.4] Pacific peoples are significantly under-represented in census data. Current harmonisation modelling for ethnicity isn't yet able to provide a high degree of reliability without using census data to train and impute from. It's not clear from the Stats NZ publication (Bycroft 2023 – Harmonising ethnicity from multiple administrative data sources using LCA) how ethnicity statistics will be validated without a census.</p>
<p><b>Paragraph 22</b> <b>(Analysis: Public consultation is needed before adopting a new approach)</b></p> <p>Concerns may also be raised around the quality and availability of administrative data sources and the ability for private information to be kept safely and securely under a new approach. Stats NZ will address these concerns by informing people of data security and privacy practices and understanding public expectations on privacy.</p>	<p>It's not clear that the IDI (as a prototype for the admin census) is adequately understood by the public and it's been around now for a decade. This could be a challenge for the census transformation to overcome since the premise of an admin census rests on IDI foundations.</p> <p>If the argument against a population register is that it's intrusive, then it seems that informing the public about what happens already in the IDI and how ethnicity is likely to be assigned to people may also run up against the same issues. Even though Census 2018 has very poor data for Pacific peoples, the Cabinet paper doesn't demonstrate how an administrative census based on the IDI could be better than the poorly run censuses we currently have.</p>

<p>Paragraph 26</p> <p>(Financial Implications)</p> <p>Modernising census will be funded through Stats NZ's multi-year census appropriation, and Stats NZ will continue to work with The Treasury on this.</p>	<p>As discussed previously, this doesn't include the compliance costs that other agencies will bear and also highlights a siloed approach which does not recognise the all-of-government data stewardship role of Stats NZ. Furthermore, this is a Cabinet paper which has to be scrutinised by multiple Cabinet ministers.</p>
<p>Paragraph 29</p> <p>(Population Implications)</p> <p>This paper proposes to consult publicly on modernising the approach to census. It is important that census data and statistics represent all population groups in New Zealand, and they have an opportunity to provide feedback.</p>	<p>The proposed engagement approach (largely online) may be insufficient to reach some population groups including Pacific peoples. The well-documented reviews of Census 2018 highlight this specific issue for Pacific peoples but those lessons don't seem to be taken into account for the proposed engagement approach.</p> <p>Suggestion: Given the implications are significant please use the Population Implications portion of the Cabinet paper template.</p> <p><a href="#">Updated-Cabinet-policy-paper-template-November-2023.docx (live.com)</a></p>
<p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <p>note the current approach to the census is not sustainable and the future approach to census needs to be modernised.</p>	<p>The results of Census 2023 haven't been published yet. Constantly changing the census methodology (modernising) doesn't support sustainability.</p>

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# Document 8

## Modernising the approach to 2028 Census: Summary and suggested talking points

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### Suggested talking points

- The Census plays a central role in New Zealand's data landscape, including for economic decision-making.
- I acknowledge that through these proposed changes, Stats NZ aims to reduce costs, improve efficiency, be responsive to data needs and deliver better value and outcomes for New Zealanders. I fully support cost containment, reduction in the compliance burden, and the provision of value to the public.
- The opportunity to discuss the proposed changes today is welcome – as a Cabinet, we need to know that the new system will match the value and coverage provided by the existing census and bring about necessary improvements.
- As Minister for Pacific Peoples, I have the following queries regarding the proposed approach for Pacific peoples:
  1. The quality of data for Pacific peoples is already lower than for most other population groups. There is a long-standing, well-documented undercount of Pacific peoples in official statistics. It will be important that any changes address bringing the quality of data for Pacific peoples up to standard.
  2. My data experts advise that there is a risk that the proposed reforms would further degrade data quality for Pacific peoples. What assurances can Stats NZ give in this regard?
  3. I would like to see further analysis of the costs involved in the proposed transformation. Advice I have been given suggests that the Census, while expensive, provides a return on investment of \$4 for every \$1 spent (estimated at \$2.2 billion according to a 2021 report commissioned by Stats NZ).
  4. The engagement approach must include meaningful engagement and consultation with the Ministry for Pacific Peoples, Pacific data experts and Pacific communities. I would like assurance that there are plans to do this.
- A well-run census should give Government the ability to monitor trends over time for Pacific peoples, make inter-census comparisons, and compare the experience of different ethnic groups.
- I would like to see Stats NZ and the Ministry for Pacific Peoples work together to resolve the issues and gaps I have outlined, and will ask my officials to stand by to support Stats NZ with this process.

## Background

The census provides an official count of people and dwellings and detailed social, cultural and economic information about the population. Government agencies use census information to allocate funding.

The 2018 Census was the first to take a 'digital first' approach. Unfortunately, response rates suffered, particularly for Māori and Pacific peoples. This subsequently impacted the quality of data available for Pacific populations throughout New Zealand.

As part of the Census 2018 mitigation process, responses were supplemented by administrative data from the Integrated Data Infrastructure (IDI). These data are collected in a non-standardised way by agencies for statutory and accounting purposes and not for the purposes of enumerating the population and understanding population dynamics.

This supplementation increased coverage of the population for the 2018 Census but could not plug gaps for specific data critical for Pacific communities (e.g. occupation, household characteristics, smoking, employment hours, languages spoken). Subsequently, overall quality is poor for the social attributes and small-area population counts of Pacific peoples.

## Proposed Census Transformation Process

Stats NZ is engaging with other government agencies about plans to transform Census 2028 to an 'administrative data-first' approach. This will replace the traditional population-wide census survey with administrative data and supplemented by population-based surveys.

Administrative data are largely based on who can access services and are therefore known to undercount Pacific peoples. The proposed changes by Stats NZ would likely result in further deterioration of the quality of data on Pacific peoples, households and populations.

Current household surveys do not adequately sample Pacific peoples to ensure representativeness for specific areas or allow analysis of diverse Pacific ethnic groups. Government surveys also use census statistics to calculate whom and where to survey. It is unclear how the survey sampling frames would be defined in the absence of a census.

One of the key drivers of the proposed changes is cost savings. The delivery cost for Census 2023 was an estimated \$317 million. By not holding a regular census, Stats NZ would save money as an organisation, but there would not necessarily be cost savings across government, as compliance costs for routinely collected data and supplemental surveys would likely be transferred to other agencies. There is good evidence that the census provides value for money (approximately \$2.2 billion, or around \$4 of benefit for each dollar spent, according to a 2021 report).<sup>1</sup>

## Proposed Engagement Approach

Stats NZ is proposing a three-pronged engagement approach:

1. Targeted engagement (already underway) with key stakeholders and partners.
2. Online public consultation (via discussion document) over four weeks in April 2024.
3. A light-touch online public engagement programme.

Stats NZ has stated that its targeted engagement will include key communities (e.g. Pacific peoples) who are under-represented in administrative data sets. However, it is unclear how meaningful engagement with Pacific peoples and communities will be conducted, given that online public consultation and 'light-touch' online approaches are not appropriate ways to engage with Pacific peoples on such an important issue.

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<sup>1</sup> Bakker, C (2021). Value of the New Zealand Census: August 2021. Retrieved from [www.stats.govt.nz](http://www.stats.govt.nz) 26/2/2024

# Document 9



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RE: For agency consultation: draft Cabinet paper on Modernising the approach to 2028 Census

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From Carly Skerrett <Carly.Skerrett@stats.govt.nz>

Date Fri 01/03/2024 11:10 AM

To Corina Grey <corina.grey@mpp.govt.nz>

You don't often get email from carly.skerrett@stats.govt.nz. [Learn why this is important](#)

Kia ora Corina,

Thank you for your input and considered response to the Cabinet paper. We value the advice from MPP regarding the impact of both our engagement approach and ongoing design on Pacific people and will be sure to be in touch with MPP throughout the process.

We will also respond late next week with a revised Cabinet paper, which will provide further detail on the engagement process.

Ngā mihi

Carly Skerrett (pronouns: she/her/hers)

Kaitohutohu Kaupapahere | Policy Advisor – Data and Statistics Policy

Stats NZ | Tauranga Aotearoa | [stats.govt.nz](https://stats.govt.nz)

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Please note, my usual hours are 7.30am - 4pm, I do not work Wednesdays

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From: Corina Grey <corina.grey@mpp.govt.nz>

Sent: Tuesday, February 27, 2024 4:18 PM

To: Carly Skerrett <Carly.Skerrett@stats.govt.nz>

Cc: James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>; Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>; Lucy Cassels <lucy.cassels@mpp.govt.nz>; Tiare Sharpe

<tiare.sharpe@mpp.govt.nz>

**Subject:** FW: For agency consultation: draft Cabinet paper on Modernising the approach to 2028 Census

Kia ora Carly

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft Cabinet Paper: Modernising the approach to 2028 Census.

Please find detailed feedback from the Ministry for Pacific Peoples attached.

The following points summarise the key themes from our feedback.

1. Highlighting the impact of the proposed changes on data equity for Pacific peoples. We believe the proposed changes are likely to result in a degradation of the quality of data the government holds on Pacific peoples and communities and would like clarification on Stats NZ's approach to this.
2. Clarification on the costs of the proposed transformation. Currently the paper is focused on cost savings for Stats NZ, but costs of the transformation will likely transfer the burden of data compliance and costs to other government agencies.
3. Including evidence from independent reviews of the census and experience internationally.
4. Seeking assurance from Stats NZ that there will be strong data governance and oversight to ensure data quality standards are met and maintained.
5. Ensuring there is a robust and meaningful engagement with Pacific data experts, organisations and communities.

We are very keen to work with Stats NZ on this programme and would be very happy to talk through this feedback if needed.

Ngā mihi

Corina

**Dr Corina Grey**

Deputy Secretary - Data & Insights

S9(2)(a)

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**From:** Sean Broughton <[sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz](mailto:sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** Thursday, February 15, 2024 2:02 PM

**To:** [aphra.green@swa.govt.nz](mailto:aphra.green@swa.govt.nz); [jane.bullick@swa.govt.nz](mailto:jane.bullick@swa.govt.nz); Andrew Webber <[andrew.webber@swa.govt.nz](mailto:andrew.webber@swa.govt.nz)>; Louise Pirini <[louise.pirini@swa.govt.nz](mailto:louise.pirini@swa.govt.nz)>; Tahia Eaqub <[tahia.eaqub@swa.govt.nz](mailto:tahia.eaqub@swa.govt.nz)>; [dean.rutherford@health.govt.nz](mailto:dean.rutherford@health.govt.nz); [peter.dolan@health.govt.nz](mailto:peter.dolan@health.govt.nz); Steven Johnston2 <[steven.johnston@health.govt.nz](mailto:steven.johnston@health.govt.nz)>; [leigh.deuchars@elections.govt.nz](mailto:leigh.deuchars@elections.govt.nz); [Beth.Kreitzer@elections.govt.nz](mailto:Beth.Kreitzer@elections.govt.nz); [Kristin.Leslie@elections.govt.nz](mailto:Kristin.Leslie@elections.govt.nz); [Jesse.Thwaites@ird.govt.nz](mailto:Jesse.Thwaites@ird.govt.nz); [Cate.Robertson@ird.govt.nz](mailto:Cate.Robertson@ird.govt.nz); [jpierce@linz.govt.nz](mailto:jpierce@linz.govt.nz); Aaron Jordan <[ajordan@linz.govt.nz](mailto:ajordan@linz.govt.nz)>; [Chris.Bunny@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:Chris.Bunny@nzta.govt.nz); [katie.mayes@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:katie.mayes@nzta.govt.nz); [wei-jiat.tan@customs.govt.nz](mailto:wei-jiat.tan@customs.govt.nz); [David.GRUMMIT@customs.govt.nz](mailto:David.GRUMMIT@customs.govt.nz); [chris.king@customs.govt.nz](mailto:chris.king@customs.govt.nz); [Jonathan.Briggs2@customs.govt.nz](mailto:Jonathan.Briggs2@customs.govt.nz); Corina Grey <[corina.grey@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:corina.grey@mpp.govt.nz)>; [vicki.plater@treasury.govt.nz](mailto:vicki.plater@treasury.govt.nz); Patrick Nolan [TSY] <[patrick.nolan@treasury.govt.nz](mailto:patrick.nolan@treasury.govt.nz)>; Meghan Stephens [TSY] <[meghan.stephens@treasury.govt.nz](mailto:meghan.stephens@treasury.govt.nz)>; [Georgina.Fulton@treasury.govt.nz](mailto:Georgina.Fulton@treasury.govt.nz); Peter Gardiner [TSY] <[peter.gardiner@treasury.govt.nz](mailto:peter.gardiner@treasury.govt.nz)>; [sacha.o'dea002@msd.govt.nz](mailto:sacha.o'dea002@msd.govt.nz); [Fleur.McLaren002@msd.govt.nz](mailto:Fleur.McLaren002@msd.govt.nz); [ben.o'meara001@whaikaha.govt.nz](mailto:ben.o'meara001@whaikaha.govt.nz); [trish.davis032@whaikaha.govt.nz](mailto:trish.davis032@whaikaha.govt.nz); [claire.bretherton@tpk.govt.nz](mailto:claire.bretherton@tpk.govt.nz); [Michelle.Gezentsvey001@whaikaha.govt.nz](mailto:Michelle.Gezentsvey001@whaikaha.govt.nz); [emma.fergusson@kaingaora.govt.nz](mailto:emma.fergusson@kaingaora.govt.nz); [Greg.Patchell@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:Greg.Patchell@mbie.govt.nz); [jacqui.ellis@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:jacqui.ellis@mbie.govt.nz); Puawai Wereta <[puawai.wereta@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:puawai.wereta@mbie.govt.nz)>; [igor.albornett@acc.co.nz](mailto:igor.albornett@acc.co.nz); [Anna.Chalmers@women.govt.nz](mailto:Anna.Chalmers@women.govt.nz); [chris.gilman@women.govt.nz](mailto:chris.gilman@women.govt.nz); [Riripeti.Reedy@women.govt.nz](mailto:Riripeti.Reedy@women.govt.nz); [Kylie.Fletcher@women.govt.nz](mailto:Kylie.Fletcher@women.govt.nz);

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**Subject:** For agency consultation: draft Cabinet paper on Modernising the approach to 2028 Census

Kia ora tātou,

Ngā mihi ki a koutou for your initial engagement throughout February and March 2024 about 2028 Census/Future Census in the context of population and social statistics information needs.

Tatauranga Aotearoa Stats NZ is seeking feedback from agencies on the attached draft Cabinet Paper – *Modernising the approach to 2028 Census*. You'll see from the email below that the draft Cabinet paper has been sent policy contacts in your respective agencies.

Please provide feedback to [@Carly.Skerrett](mailto:@Carly.Skerrett) (copied in) at [Carly.Skerrett@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Carly.Skerrett@stats.govt.nz) by **4:00pm, Wednesday, 28 February 2028**.

Please let me know if you have any pātai.

Mauri ora,

Sean

**Sean Broughton** (pronouns: he/him/his)

General Manager – Customers and Partnerships

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**From:** Tom Lee

**Sent:** Wednesday, February 14, 2024 11:07 AM

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**Subject:** For agency consultation: Cabinet paper on Modernising the approach to 2028 Census

Tēnā koutou,

Stats NZ Tatauranga Aotearoa is seeking feedback from agencies on the attached draft Cabinet Paper – *Modernising the approach to 2028 Census*. If you could please send any feedback to Carly (cc'd) at [carly.skerrett@stats.govt.nz](mailto:carly.skerrett@stats.govt.nz) by **4pm Wednesday, 28 February** that would be much appreciated.

The purpose of this paper is to inform Cabinet of our intention to begin public consultation and stakeholder engagement to determine a more modern approach to 2028 Census. The approach to 2028 Census will likely involve greater use of administrative data, which will be supplemented by surveying. Details on how this will be done will be informed by the discussions and feedback we receive during the consultation and engagement. We intend to report back to Cabinet on a preferred approach in mid-2024, before commencing more detailed design and implementation planning.

We recognise that census impacts all agencies and you may be eager to understand how we approach 2028 Census. Please note that there will be further opportunities to feed in to this mahi – we have and will continue to reach out to agencies for targeted engagement.

As per the timeline below, Ministerial engagement will be occurring concurrently with agency consultation.

<b>Departmental and Ministerial consultation</b>	<b>14 February – 28 February 2024</b>
<b>Paper lodged</b>	14 March 2024
<b>Cabinet committee (ECO)</b>	20 March 2024

For agencies who have responsibility for other public service entities, can we please ask that you coordinate feedback across relevant entities that may have an interest in this paper.

As an aside, please note that all future cabinet papers sent to Stats NZ for comment should be sent to: [officeofthegsce@stats.govt.nz](mailto:officeofthegsce@stats.govt.nz).

Thanks in advance for your consideration of the paper.

Kind regards,

**Tom Lee**

Principal Policy Advisor – Legislative & Statistics Policy | Kaitohutohu Kaupapahere Mātāmua  
Data System Leadership | Kaiārahi Pūnaha Raraunga  
Stats NZ | Tatauranga Aotearoa | [stats.govt.nz](https://stats.govt.nz)

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# Document 10

aide memoire

Advice/information

Date: 15 March 2024

Security Level: In Confidence

For: Hon Dr Shane Reti  
Minister for Pacific Peoples

Ref: AM049-2023/24

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## MODERNISING THE APPROACH TO THE 2028 CENSUS

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### Purpose

This aide memoire responds to your request on 12 March 2024 to provide a summary of the Ministry's advice for Statistics New Zealand's (Stats NZ) Cabinet paper *Modernising the approach to the 2028 Census*.

This advice includes a brief description of Stats NZ's proposed changes to an administrative data-first census, as outlined in the Cabinet paper, and issues the Ministry has raised in response.

Further detailed information on these issues is outlined in **Appendix 1**.

Talking points have been included in **Appendix 2** for your reference.

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### Background

New Zealand's census provides an official national count of people, dwellings, and detailed social, cultural, and economic information. The census provides the fundamental base for New Zealand population statistics, social investment initiatives and funding formulae across government.

The census is an authoritative, and in some cases the only, comprehensive source of information on Pacific peoples' characteristics and circumstances.

Census 2018 was the first to take a 'digital first' online approach to save costs. Unfortunately, response rates declined significantly, particularly for Māori and Pacific peoples. This subsequently impacted the quality of data available for Pacific populations throughout New Zealand.

As part of the unplanned Census 2018 mitigation process, responses were supplemented by administrative data from the Integrated Data Infrastructure (IDI). Census 2023 similarly used a combined approach with the planned use of administrative data to supplement full enumeration. Unlike census data collected by Stats NZ, administrative data are collected by other government agencies in a non-standardised way for statutory and accounting purposes and not for the purposes of enumerating the population and understanding population dynamics.<sup>1</sup>

As the first significant trial using administrative data for population statistics, Census 2018 was able to increase coverage of the population but could not plug information gaps critical for investments in Pacific communities (e.g., occupation, household characteristics, smoking, employment hours, languages spoken). Subsequently, overall Census 2018 data quality for social

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<sup>1</sup> Stats NZ (2022), Aotearoa New Zealand: Long term insights briefing about the role of data in wellbeing and economic advantage.

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attributes and small-area population counts of Pacific peoples has been well documented as unreliable.<sup>2</sup>

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**Proposed census transformation process**

Stats NZ is starting to engage government agencies about plans to transform Census 2028 to an 'administrative data-first' approach. The transformation aims to replace the traditional population-wide census survey with administrative data, supplemented with population-based surveys. The proposed shift represents the greatest transformation in official statistics since the census was established in 1851.

Larger household surveys conducted by Stats NZ and other agencies will be required (up to 3 times larger) to supplement social attribute gaps anticipated for Census 2028. Current surveys are small and costly to run. Due to inadequate samples, they are often not representative of specific areas or allow analysis of diverse Pacific ethnic groups. Sample frame designs also rely on census data to calculate whom and where to survey.

A key driver of the proposed transformation is cost savings. The delivery cost for Census 2023 was estimated at \$326 million. In theory, Census 2028 may result in lower costs for Stats NZ by not holding a regular census survey. However, Stats NZ has not provided an estimate of full costs to the government, which will need to develop unprecedented data infrastructure by 2028. New compliance costs for routinely collected data and supplemental surveys likely to be transferred to other agencies are also unknown. There is good evidence that the census provides value for money (approximately \$2.2 billion, or a return on investment of around \$4 for every dollar spent).<sup>3</sup>

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**Proposed engagement approach**

Stats NZ is proposing a three-pronged engagement approach:

- targeted engagement (already underway) with key stakeholders
- online public consultation over six weeks, starting in April 2024
- a light-touch social media public engagement programme.

Stats NZ has stated that its targeted engagement will include key communities who are under-represented in administrative data sets, such as Pacific peoples. Stats NZ acknowledges that public buy-in and support will also be critical for delivering a new census approach. However, an independent review of Census 2018 indicates that online public consultation and 'light-touch' approaches are not effective ways to engage with Pacific peoples on such an important issue.

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**Risks/key issues**

*Potential degradation of data quality and impact on decision-making, resource allocation and policy development.*

- The proposed approach is likely to impact data quality because data in the IDI are deficit-focused and based on interactions with the Crown, often under trying circumstances. This is further complicated by the lack of a
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<sup>2</sup> Ministry for Pacific Peoples (2022), Long-Term Insights Briefing 2022; Improving Pacific Data Equity.

<sup>3</sup> Bakker, C (2021). Value of the New Zealand Census: August 2021. Retrieved from [www.stats.govt.nz](http://www.stats.govt.nz) 26/2/2024

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data quality standard for administrative census and the Data and Statistics Act 2022 not specifying what a census needs to include.

- There will also be significant disruption for users of official statistics such as policymakers, budget holders and agencies regarding funding formulae, policy target measures and indicators, electoral boundary calculations and other fundamental considerations. The shift to administrative data may also restrict any changes to public services if they are tied to population statistics. For the Ministry, this could impact how our programmes are funded and administered.
- We are seeking assurance from Stats NZ that there will be strong data governance and oversight to ensure data quality standards are met.

*Financial implications are unclear*

- The paper is focused on cost savings for Stats NZ, but costs of the transformation will likely transfer the burden of data compliance costs to other government agencies.

*The proposed approach does not reflect international best practice and gold standard approaches*

- Robust evidence from independent reviews of the census and experience internationally is lacking. We need to ensure that the proposed approach is benchmarked against best international practice.

*There is limited scope for engagement and census implementation*

- As proposed, an administrative census will require probabilistic models which have a greater complexity and 'black box' aspect for the public and other government stakeholders (public trust may suffer). The existence of the IDI as a precursor to Census 2028 has not been well communicated to the public. We have recommended to Stats NZ the importance of robust and meaningful engagement with Pacific data experts and communities.
- The public consultation process will conclude in June 2025, which leaves less than three years to implement Census 2028. Typically, the full intercensal period of five years is required for census implementation.

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**Next steps**

Officials are available to meet with you to discuss this in further detail. We will provide further updates on any developments via the Weekly Report.

The Ministry is currently negotiating a refreshed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Stats NZ. The Ministry's Data and Insights directorate is also undertaking related work, including:

- preparing analytical reports assessing data quality and coverage for Pacific peoples from the government's household survey programme
- conducting IDI analysis to understand Pacific data implications from census transformation.

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**Ministry contact:** Dr Corina Grey, Deputy Secretary Data & Insights,

s9(2)(a)

## Appendix 1 – Shifting to an administrative data-first approach

The Ministry has specific concerns about the proposed shift toward an administrative data-first approach. There is considerable risk in moving to a new system before it is soundly proven and the Ministry has provided feedback to Stats NZ, raising the following concerns:

**(a) A shift towards an administrative data-first approach would result in a degradation in the quality of population data overall, as well as further deterioration in the quality of data on Pacific peoples**

Administrative data are largely based on who can access services (and this is disproportionately weighted towards welfare, health, education, taxation, and justice processes). The likelihood of being included in these datasets differs by socioeconomic status, ethnicity, and gender.<sup>4</sup>

Limitations with population data derived from administrative records include:

- Data may be missing for part of the population (e.g., people not working or receiving a benefit or superannuation and not enrolled with a GP). Conversely, it may also include people who have left the country.
- Data may be of poor quality because it is not important to the agency collecting it.
- Data may simply not be available (e.g., languages spoken, family and household attributes and smoking are not usually collected by government agencies and would be difficult to reconstruct without census yet are critical to understanding populations and the services needed to respond effectively).
- It is difficult to capture events that occur overseas and recently arrived migrants who have no personal history in administrative data (e.g., highest qualifications).
- Data may not be consistently collected or recorded across different administrative sources. Analyses conducted by the Ministry and other agencies have found that the collection of ethnicities across different administrative sources is highly variable and particularly problematic when people have multiple ethnicities.

In New Zealand, administrative data are known to undercount Pacific peoples.<sup>5</sup> A recent analysis by the Ministry of several government population surveys (like the supplementary surveys proposed in the Cabinet Paper) also demonstrate significant under-representation of Pacific peoples, resulting in limited and imprecise data on Pacific peoples, households and communities.

**(b) Stats NZ's statements that the proposed census transformation will cut costs and reduce compliance burden do not have a robust evidence base**

According to the Cabinet paper, the expense of the Census (estimated at \$326 million for Census 2023) is one of the main challenges facing Stats NZ. Stats NZ states that the proposed census transformation will 'provide better value for New Zealanders.' However, the paper is focused solely on cost savings for Stats NZ, not for the government as a whole.

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<sup>4</sup> Bedford, R., A. Reid, B. Milne, D. Cormack, I. Cope, L. Cook, T. Kukutai and T. Lumley (2020). "Final report of the 2018 Census External Data Quality Panel."

<sup>5</sup> Jack, M., and C. Graziadei (2019). "Report of the independent review of New Zealand's 2018 Census."

The proposed transformation will likely transfer the burden of data compliance and costs to other government agencies, most of which are not currently structured or equipped with the expertise to deal with these changes. The proposed changes would therefore likely lead to an increase, rather than a decrease, in costs associated with collection of population data.

In addition, health, education, welfare, and transport budgets are allocated using population-based funding formulas derived from census data. These budgets run into tens of billions of dollars annually. The impact of poor-quality population statistics on major public spending could be much larger than the cost of running the census.

A 2021 report commissioned by Stats NZ estimated the total benefit of the Census at approximately \$2.2 billion (or around \$4 of benefit for each dollar spent).<sup>6</sup> A similar valuation approach for the Australian census estimates a \$6 benefit per dollar spent. When all benefits are included, the value of a census might be up to 10 times its cost. Benefits of this magnitude should not allow quality and timeliness to be put at risk for short-term cost savings in our new fiscally demanding environment.

**(c) Evidence from independent reviews of the census and experience internationally are crucial to understanding the implications of the proposed transformation programme**

Several independent reviews have been conducted over recent years, including after the 2018 Census and more recently the 2023 Census. Findings from these reviews, and robust analysis of international experience with traditional and administrative data censuses, are crucial to understanding the potential implications of the proposed census transformation programme.

Research conducted by the Ministry has found that, other than a well-run census, the most successful population enumeration approaches overseas are found in Scandinavian countries. Those countries have compulsory population registers with high levels of public acceptability.<sup>7</sup>

Canada and Australia are still conducting traditional censuses but have moved to online data collection as the primary mechanism, with extensive support for those unable to complete electronic questionnaires. Like New Zealand, they can also supplement their full enumeration census with administrative data. In 2021, the response rates for the Australian and Canadian Censuses were 96.1 and 98.0 percent, respectively. Meanwhile, the New Zealand response rate for Census 2018 was 83.3% and just 65.2% for Pacific peoples.

France has moved to a rolling census. Instead of trying to enumerate the whole population in one go, a survey covers around 13% of the population each year as part of a 5-yearly cycle, and these data are pooled across years to give a census-equivalent picture of the French population. This system has been criticised for potentially missing people in certain places, and the multi-year design makes the interpretation of the statistics more complex for users.

Like Stats NZ, the Office for National Statistics in the UK is also transforming the population and migration statistics system for England and Wales in preparation for Census 2031 using administrative data. It is currently under consultation, where over sixty leading experts in population studies have voiced concerns about potential degradation in the quality of data.

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<sup>6</sup> Bakker, C (2021). Value of the New Zealand Census: August 2021. Retrieved from [www.stats.govt.nz](http://www.stats.govt.nz) 26/2/2024

<sup>7</sup> Bycroft, C. (2015). Census transformation in New Zealand: Using administrative data without a population register. *Statistical Journal of the IAOS* 31(3): 401-411.

## Appendix 2 – Talking Points for the Statistics New Zealand (Stats NZ) 2028 Census paper

### Suggested talking points

- The census plays a central role in New Zealand's data landscape, including economic decision-making.
- I acknowledge that through these proposed changes, Stats NZ aims to reduce costs, improve efficiency, be responsive to data needs and deliver better value and outcomes for New Zealanders. I fully support cost containment, reduction in the compliance burden, and the provision of value to the public.
- I welcome the opportunity to discuss the proposed changes – we need to ensure the new system will match the value and coverage of the existing census and bring about necessary improvements.
- As Minister for Pacific Peoples, I have the following comments and questions regarding the proposed approach for Pacific peoples:
  - The quality of data for Pacific peoples is already lower than for most other population groups, with a long-standing, well-documented undercount of Pacific peoples in official statistics.
  - Building awareness in communities takes time and it is important that any changes made to the current system bring the quality of data for Pacific peoples up to standard.
  - My data experts advise that the proposed reforms would further degrade data quality for Pacific peoples. I would like to see a robust analysis of the likely impacts of the proposed changes on the quality of data available across government.
  - The current paper focuses on costs incurred by Stats NZ for delivering a full-enumeration census, not the costs that would subsequently be borne by other government agencies. I would like to see further analysis of the costs involved in the proposed transformation to ensure that the compliance burden is manageable and can be carried in our current fiscal climate.
  - My officials have advised there is evidence that the census, while expensive, provides a return on investment of \$4 for every \$1 spent (the total benefit of census estimated at \$2.2 billion according to a 2021 report commissioned by Stats NZ).
  - The engagement approach must also include meaningful engagement and consultation with the Ministry for Pacific Peoples, Pacific data experts and Pacific communities. I would like assurance that Stats NZ will work closely with my Ministry to achieve this.
- A well-run census should give Government the ability to monitor trends over time for Pacific peoples, make inter-census comparisons, and help us to track progress on our targets.
- I would like to see Stats NZ and the Ministry for Pacific Peoples work together to resolve the issues and gaps I have outlined and will ask my officials to stand by to support Stats NZ with this process.

# Document 11

 Outlook

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**RE: Modernising and transforming the 2028 Census: Public consultation document**

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**From** Carly Skerrett <Carly.Skerrett@stats.govt.nz>

**Date** Mon 06/05/2024 1:16 PM

**To** Corina Grey <corina.grey@mpp.govt.nz>

**Cc** James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>; Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>; Wendy Hamilton <Wendy.Hamilton@stats.govt.nz>; Sean Broughton <sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz>; Tennille Maxey <Tennille.Maxey@stats.govt.nz>; Lafaele Mapusua <Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz>; Falaniko Tominiko <Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz>

Malo le soifua Lau Afioa Corina,

Ngā mihi nui for your feedback on the Cabinet paper and discussion document. It's clear this kaupapa is hugely important to the Ministry for Pacific People given the opportunities and impacts data can have for Pacific communities. A census which works for the people of Aotearoa New Zealand is at the heart of Stats NZ's thinking about what our future census could look like.

The Cabinet paper signals the first steps in an ongoing discussion about the next census. It is important that we are clear that we are not seeking agreement to a new approach at this stage. Rather, over the next year we intend to work closely with agencies and communities as we undertake more detailed design work. The Government Statistician will not be taking detailed design decisions without a full view of potential trade-offs, implications, and risks. As you point out in your submission, the census in its current form does not meet the needs of Pacific customers, partners, and communities. More frequency, depth and flexibility is needed. This is a key focus for our design work – we are considering a range of options for our future model including full enumeration and what survey components and bespoke solutions might be needed to support an admin-first approach to get the very best result for all communities.

We are very grateful for the work you've done to understand what you might need to feel confident as our design work progresses. This is a key input for us. We also deeply appreciate your offer of support – helping to design consultation processes that work well for our Pacific communities. We would love to come and have a talanoa about how we can improve for our subsequent phases – which will involve a more detailed understanding of the potential opportunities, benefits and limitations.

We really do understand the need for more detail, which will come as we complete the design work on different options. We are committed to providing as much information as we can as soon as we can and consider MPP as a key stakeholder as we work to ensure high quality data that meets the diverse needs of Pacific communities.

We understand the team are currently connecting with our Methods & Design Team, and there are a number of other touch points between MPP and Stats. We are keen to work with you to plan some regular catch ups to stay connected as this work progresses. My colleagues will be in contact with you to discuss this further.

Again, we thank you for you're the time and care that has been given by you and your team to guide and enrich this important mahi we are collectively undertaking.

Fa'afetai lava,

Carly

**From:** Corina Grey <corina.grey@mpp.govt.nz>

**Sent:** Wednesday, April 17, 2024 5:08 PM

**To:** Carly Skerrett <Carly.Skerrett@stats.govt.nz>

**Cc:** James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>; Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>

**Subject:** RE: Modernising and transforming the 2028 Census: Public consultation document

Kia ora Carly

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the public consultation document and accompanying Cabinet paper.

Please find detailed feedback on both the Cabinet paper and the accompanying discussion document attached.

The Ministry for Pacific Peoples supports evidence-based opportunities to improve data equity, accuracy and reduce costs. We are keen to support Stats NZ in ensuring official statistics are of high quality and in engaging Pacific peoples, communities and organisations in this consultation process.

Our feedback outlines a number of issues that we would like to see addressed to ensure the process of transforming the 2028 Census is transparent, robust and meaningful. We hope you find this useful and we are happy to discuss this with you in more detail if needed.

**1. Degradation in the quality of data available for population planning, policy advice and decision-making**

The Ministry is concerned that a shift towards an admin data-first approach for Census 2028 would result in a degradation in the quality of population data overall, as well as further degradation in the quality of data for Pacific peoples.

Some data is only available via the census – including small area geographic enumeration, smoking, languages spoken and social and household characteristics for Pacific peoples.

Administrative data is currently not fit-for-purpose for population enumeration or understanding population dynamics and attributes (as has been pointed out in numerous Stats NZ publications, which highlight the use of admin data as experimental and for research purposes only). We would like to see robust analysis about the impact of moving to an admin data-first approach. We believe this information is essential for the public and other stakeholders to be able to engage in informed discussion on the proposed changes.

We would like to see the risks to data equity and quality for Pacific peoples outlined clearly in the discussion document. For the purposes of the Cabinet paper, we would like these risks outlined in the Population section of the Cabinet paper template.

**2. Risks and implications of the changes for enumerating the population and particularly ensuring Pacific peoples are counted need to be highlighted in the paper and discussion document**

It is the Ministry's view that the discussion document does not adequately communicate the gravity or enduring implications of these changes for many government agencies, and in particular, the direct impacts for Pacific peoples. It does not currently describe the sources of the administrative data and registers likely to be used so that Pacific peoples can visualise how their information is used currently and proposed to be used for Census 2028.

We would like to see the risks and implications for data equity and quality clearly and comprehensively laid out. Accessibility and plain language are essential for public engagement documentation and should still be possible even with the technical nature and wide-ranging implications of the proposed changes. The Cabinet paper and discussion document requires further detail about the due diligence undertaken. They should clearly layout the risks and implications (particularly for Pacific peoples) to justify such a significant shift from the conventional enumeration census. For the purposes of the Cabinet paper, we would like these risks outlined in the Population section of the Cabinet paper template.

We recommend that the discussion document includes a range of options to consider, strengths and limitations of those options and a literature review of how censuses are implemented overseas and any lessons learned. We would like to see this summarised and available before consultation.

**3. We recommend an analysis or discussion of how the technical challenges previously identified by Stats NZ will be overcome**

Stats NZ has published a range of census transformation documents highlighting technical and legislative concerns, so the discussion document should explain how much progress has been made for Pacific data and strategies to address remaining challenges. We could not find any existing documentation about this.

**4. Information about the financial implications across government (not just Stats NZ) of the proposed changes is currently incomplete**

We recommend including a discussion or analysis that includes the financial implications for other agencies to provide higher quality information and to comply with census standards (which have yet to be defined). The cost of the proposed census transformation has not been estimated; therefore, it is unclear whether it would save money in the long-term or provide the same benefits and return on investment as a census.

**5. Implications of limited agency and public engagement**

The proposal represents a significant shift with consequences for Pacific peoples. The Ministry for Pacific Peoples are here to support Stats NZ and would appreciate being involved much earlier in the planning process to support Pacific community engagement.

The Ministry for Pacific Peoples has previously highlighted the shortcomings of the proposed engagement approach and recommended changes. We believe a six-week online discussion document is not an appropriate way to engage meaningfully with Pacific peoples and communities. We would like to see an outline of the administrative data and registers under consideration so that Pacific peoples can see where their information comes from, how their information is used now and how it may be used for Census 2028.

For the public to engage meaningfully, more information is also required about the changing roles of administrative data, the IDI and Stats NZ. We would like to see a discussion of the different options, limitations and trade-offs provided in advance of public consultation.

Kind regards  
Corina

**Dr Corina Grey**  
Deputy Secretary - Data & Insights

Te Manatū mō ngā Iwi o te Moana-nui-ā-Kiwa  
Ministry for Pacific Peoples  
Level 1, 101 - 103 The Terrace  
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**From:** Carly Skerrett <[Carly.Skerrett@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Carly.Skerrett@stats.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** Thursday, April 4, 2024 5:20 PM

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**Subject:** Modernising and transforming the 2028 Census: Public consultation document

You don't often get email from [carly.skerrett@stats.govt.nz](mailto:carly.skerrett@stats.govt.nz). [Learn why this is important](#)

Tēnā tātou,

Thank you to everyone who has engaged with us so far on the Government Statistician's proposal to modernise the 2028 Census.

Our approach to public engagement was agreed by EXP on Tuesday 19 March 2024. The committee requested that we bring the public consultation discussion document to Cabinet for visibility.

We will return to ECO on 1 May 2024 with the discussion document. Attached are both the Cabinet paper for feedback, and the discussion document for your awareness. We will commence public consultation shortly thereafter.

Please respond to this email with your Cabinet paper feedback by **17 April 2024**. Due to tight timeframes, we will not be able to incorporate feedback past this date. We will begin Ministerial consultation on 9 April 2024.

In accordance with the draft guidance on safeguarding the unauthorised disclosure of Cabinet material, the recipient list for this email has been narrowed. If you would like to share this further, please do so with processes in place to prevent sharing outside of your agency. We also ask that you cc [carly.skerrett@stats.govt.nz](mailto:carly.skerrett@stats.govt.nz) if you do so to allow us to track its distribution.

If you have designated a single point of contact for receiving draft Cabinet papers, please let us know for future reference. Our contact for future Cabinet paper consultation is [officeofthegsce@stats.govt.nz](mailto:officeofthegsce@stats.govt.nz).

Ngā mihi

**Carly Skerrett** (pronouns: she/her/hers)

Kaitohutohu Kaupapahere | Policy Advisor – Data and Statistics Policy

Stats NZ | Tatauranga Aotearoa | [stats.govt.nz](https://stats.govt.nz)

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<p>Section heading &amp; paragraph number:</p>	<p><b>Modernising the approach to 2028 Census: Public consultation document; Cabinet Economic Policy Committee Feedback: Ministry for Pacific Peoples 17 April 2024</b></p> <p><b>Please note our feedback for the Cabinet paper is on pp1-12 and feedback for the discussion document is on pp12-21</b></p>
<p>Paragraph 1</p>	<p><b>Feedback for [EXP-24-MIN-0011 refers] from Ministry for Pacific Peoples should be considered for this Cabinet paper and discussion document as previous concerns do not appear to have been addressed.</b> The Ministry is particularly concerned that a shift towards an admin data-first approach for Census 2028 would result in a degradation in the quality of population data overall, as well as further degradation in the quality of data for Pacific peoples (as Stats NZ has been unable to deliver accurate population statistics for Pacific peoples over multiple census cycles due to unequal response rates).</p> <p><b>The ability to overcome documented technical challenges hasn't been demonstrated.</b></p> <p>This Cabinet paper has not addressed the technical challenges identified by Stats NZ Census Transformation programme publications (including a register-based census by Christine Bycroft in 2010, and more recent publications such as the Government Data Investment Plan 2022), which indicate that New Zealand is not yet ready to move to an admin data-first approach in 2028. We have asked for information on the current quality of administrative data and the likely impact of the move to an admin data-first approach – both at a total population level and for Pacific peoples more specifically. However, it appears that these fundamental and foundational analyses including for electoral boundary setting have not yet been undertaken. Such information is crucial to enable informed, evidence-based discussion and decision-making.</p> <p>Given the crucial role of the Census in determining population counts and therefore government funding, other resource allocation, and electoral boundaries the degradation in the quality of data held for specific population groups (and in particular Pacific peoples) in admin data will become a major barrier to evidence-based policy and government decision-making.</p> <p>The current proposal described in this Cabinet paper and discussion document requires more detail to facilitate an informed discussion as the proposed approach is unprecedented among countries (including Canada and</p>

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	<p>Australia) who have not yet implemented register-based censuses. This has not been well articulated in the discussion document.</p>
<p>Paragraph 2</p>	<p><b>The Ministry has concerns about use of the term ‘modernisation’ to describe the census transformation process.</b></p> <p>Modernisation implies progress and increased quality. Without the specifics of the proposed changes being consulted on, it is unclear how the transformation will result in the collection of better quality census data, overall and for Pacific peoples.</p> <p>Census data quality has deteriorated over the past censuses, resulting in avoidable inequity for Pacific people. Due to low response rates in Census 2018 (65% for Pacific peoples compared to 83% overall), administrative data were imputed ad hoc to increase population enumeration and Pacific peoples had the highest rate of imputations. However, evaluations of data quality stemming from these imputations have mostly been conducted for the entire dataset and there has been inadequate consideration as to the data quality inequities for Pacific peoples. Modernisation must include a thorough assessment of quality and the assessment should be scrutinised by stakeholders.</p> <p>The data quality and equity issues are discussed thoroughly in the Ministry’s <a href="#">Long-term Insights Briefing</a>. The Stats NZ Long-term Insights Briefing also underscored the inequities associated with Pacific population statistics.</p> <p>It would be useful for the Cabinet paper to distinguish which parts of the proposed transformation are based on successful overseas examples, and where New Zealand is attempting to break new ground. The reference to overseas examples such as Canada, Australia and the UK may lead to confusion as those countries all implemented full enumeration (and not admin data-first) censuses in 2021. It is important to clarify that an administrative register-based census based on <b>a population register</b> (a robust method that has been implemented in countries such as Estonia, Singapore, Netherlands and Finland) is not being proposed for Census 2028.</p> <p>Census individual forms have been the gold standard for collecting census information in New Zealand. The Administrative Population Census (APC) derived from IDI data is currently the prototype for Census 2028 and yet it</p>

still cannot be decoupled from census data for quality control. For Census 2018, APC data for Pacific peoples is compared to combined individual form census data (65%), proxy ethnicity data gathered from household forms (8%) and imputed administrative enumerations (22%), resulting in 22% of the Pacific APC data being compared with other administrative data of unknown quality. This potentially undermines the transparency and accessibility aspects of the Government Data Strategy and Roadmap 2021, The Algorithm Charter, and the Principles and Protocols for producers of Tier 1 Statistics.

The undercount of Pacific populations in official statistics in 2018 supplemented with administrative data has been a major cause of misinformation pertaining to government policies. This became apparent when COVID-19 vaccinations were rolled out and vaccination coverage percentages were published regularly.<sup>1</sup> The Ministry of Health and Stats NZ determined that the official population statistics based on census data that were used for denominators were not suitable for this purpose and introduced an ad hoc administrative denominator: 'health service user' data. This set of population statistics introduced new biases and was similarly unreliable for Pacific populations.<sup>2</sup>

**Links to better public services and assertions about value for money have not been validated.**

The paper does not address how the documented data equity and quality challenges (both integral to better public services) will be overcome. Supplementation of administrative data in Census 2018 and 2023 has not been independently scrutinised for Pacific peoples. The Census 2018 independent review did not conduct detailed assessment beyond level 1 ethnicity subsets. Furthermore, the latest APC 3<sup>rd</sup> iteration (a Census 2028 prototype according to previous Cabinet papers and Census Transformation documentation) includes disclaimers calling the work experimental and not official statistics. The APC disclaimer contradicts the assertions being made in this paragraph but also ignores that some portion of the APC and Estimated Resident Population (ERP) have already been used for official statistics.

<sup>1</sup> Sonder, G. J., C. Grey, D. Ryan, J. Cumming, A. Sporle and P. C. Hill (2024). "Selective under-representation of Pacific peoples in population estimates for health indicator measurements in Aotearoa New Zealand misinforms policy making." *BMC Public Health* **24**(1): 564.

<sup>2</sup> Anglemyer, A., C. Grey, C. Tukuitonga, A. Sporle and G. J. Sonder (2022). "Assessment of ethnic inequities and subpopulation estimates in COVID-19 vaccination in New Zealand." *JAMA Network Open* **5**(6): e2217653-e2217653.

<p>Paragraph 3</p>	<p><b>The evidence base for social investment policies will require information at the unit/microdata level for Pacific peoples not yet available in administrative sources.</b></p> <p>Government agencies may be reliant on the IDI for small area counts by ethnicity, age, and sex as well as the social attributes for those populations. Research currently produced from the IDI is still unable to produce high quality population statistics due to coverage and selection biases of the administrative registers, record linkage error within those registers, and record linkage error to the IDI itself.<sup>3 4</sup> Furthermore, data quality related to Stats NZ modelling related to ethnicity imputation and harmonisation is also concerning.<sup>5</sup></p> <p>Census transformation publications have yet to demonstrate that existing methods to replace census data with IDI analyses can match or exceed information collected through conventional full enumeration. The IDI has existed for a decade as an experimental dataset but due to its limitations (which could be corrected through a population register) has been unable to graduate to the level of official statistics.</p>
<p>Paragraph 4</p>	<p>4.2 The Ministry is supportive of evidence-based opportunities to improve data equity, accuracy and reduce costs. However, it is unclear how we would test the merits of the proposed admin-first census supplemented with surveys without having access to scrutinise more detailed information than is currently provided to stakeholders and Cabinet Ministers. Stats NZ currently charges other government agencies to access data that could be used to assess the quality of official population statistics; this is not conducive to or aligned with data transparency efforts (as outlined in The Algorithm Charter, Principles and Protocols for Producers of Tier 1 Statistics, Government Data Strategy).<sup>6</sup></p>

<sup>3</sup> Choi, H. (2019). "Adjusting for linkage errors to analyse coverage of the administrative population." *Statistical Journal of the IAOS* **35**(2): 253-259.

<sup>4</sup> Kvalsvig, A., S. Gibb and A. Teng (2019). "Linkage error and linkage bias: A guide for IDI users." [University of Otago](#).

<sup>5</sup> Bycroft, C., J. Elleoet and H. Tran (2023). Harmonising ethnicity from multiple administrative data sources using latent class modelling. Stats NZ. Wellington.

<sup>6</sup> [OSS Principles and Protocols \(stats.govt.nz\)](#); [Algorithm charter for Aotearoa New Zealand - data.govt.nz](#); [Government Data Strategy and Roadmap 2021 - data.govt.nz](#)

	<p>Furthermore, if the Census 2023 model has already been ruled out due to time requirements or budget constraints, then this should be explicitly stated.</p>
<p>Paragraph 5</p>	<p>5.1 The statement ‘the current approach to census is unsustainable and the future approach to census needs to be modernised and transformed’ potentially creates a false equivalence that the proposed transformed census is also modernised and sustainable. As outlined in our previous feedback, this has not yet been established by the Census Transformation programme.</p> <p>5.2 The first sentence also states that Stats NZ has been directed to develop options but the next sentence states that an admin data-first approach will be the future. The paper should clarify what options were presented. For example, the status quo has not been provided as an option in this Cabinet paper or the previous paper [EXP-24-MIN-0011 refers]. This paragraph suggests that the approach has already been determined and, if this is the case, there is neither the time nor the budget to undertake a traditional Census in 2028 if that is determined to be the right course of action following public consultation.</p> <p>The paper should clarify if the proposed supplementary surveys will be face-to-face, like the NZ Health Survey and other household surveys, or completed online, and whether the surveys will continue to be based on a household sampling frame. This information is important because the previous Cabinet paper [CAB-24-MIN-0101 refers] references the long-form survey (part of the Canadian census) which has a sample rate target of 25% of the Canadian population. The implication is for NZ to implement a survey targeting 25% of the population. It is unclear how this will be carried out in a robust way in the absence of a census to determine the sampling frame.</p> <p>5.3 The three-stage engagement described in [CAB-24-MIN-0101 refers] is not likely to reach Pacific peoples for meaningful engagement. We still recommend that Stats NZ reconsider the reliance on virtual engagement methods and that staff work closely with the Ministry for Pacific Peoples for meaningful engagement with Pacific peoples.</p>
<p>Paragraph 7</p>	<p><b>The administrative data-first ‘evolution’ lacks a population register which other countries that have successfully implemented register-based censuses use.</b></p>

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According to the paper *Census transformation in New Zealand: Using administrative data without a population register* (Christine Bycroft, 2015) we see that Stats NZ had access to a 2007 review of best practice among Nordic countries for register-based statistics. The review explained register-based censuses must have a centralised compulsory population register to function appropriately. To our knowledge, a national population register is still the basis of internationally successful register-based census approaches. However, New Zealand does not currently have a register nor are there plans to implement one.

According to the Stats NZ 2012 publication *Transforming the NZ Census of Population and Dwellings: Issues, Options, and strategy* countries that have moved successfully to a fully administrative census take the following steps: (1) adopt a central population register, initially supplemented by surveys or complete enumeration to collect information not available from the register; (2) as additional registers are developed and their quality becomes sufficient for census purposes, the collection of data is gradually replaced by administrative registers. This Stats NZ paper was clear that for NZ to adopt a register-based census, it would require a national population register.<sup>7</sup> The Ministry for Pacific Peoples regards this as sound advice that mirrors the path other successful countries have taken to implement register-based censuses.

The overseas Canadian and United States examples are difficult to reconcile with the New Zealand census transformation proposal. The Canadian census is an example of a well-run census which did not require administrative data supplementation due to high response rate of 98% for Census 2021. From what we understand neither the US nor Canadian censuses are considering an admin data-first approach yet.

The UK Census 2031 proposal mirrors the NZ admin data-first census approach to link administrative data without the benefit of a population register. UK experts acknowledge that admin data is a vital census supplement but have expressed concerns that we feel are also relevant for Stats NZ to consider given the similarities between the two countries. They anticipate data quality will suffer due to the lack of a national identity system in the UK and

<sup>7</sup> Stats NZ (2012). *Transforming the New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings: Issues, options, and strategy*. Stats NZ. Wellington.

	<p>difficulty developing survey sample frames. They also highlight issues with record linkage and harmonisation, which have also not been solved in New Zealand.</p>
<p>Paragraph 8</p>	<p><b>The Ministry for Pacific Peoples should be involved much earlier in the planning process to support Pacific community engagement.</b></p> <p>To support the engagement process, the Ministry needs to have a detailed understanding of what we are engaging about. Engagement implies a two-way exchange to support an informed discussion. The current engagement planning has excluded our Ministry. The Ministry for Pacific Peoples has not had access to detailed technical information and decision-making related to census transformation. In addition, concerns we have raised previously about the proposed virtual engagement methods have not been addressed.</p> <p>For Census 2023, Pacific community engagement efforts started very late in the timeline. One of the most important lessons from Census 2018 reviews was that community engagement should start much earlier. We also know from Census 2018 that online and social media engagement is not as effective as engagement through community channels. The Ministry for Pacific Peoples highlighted the risks with this approach in our feedback on [CAB-24-MIN-0101 refers] and in advice to our Minister. This concern was also raised by several other public organisations at the Stats NZ engagement on future censuses – 2028 and beyond Pacific Community Wellington on 25 March 2024.</p>
<p>Paragraph 11</p>	<p><b>The Ministry for Pacific Peoples has previously highlighted the shortcomings of the proposed engagement approach and recommended changes.</b></p> <p>The methods of public consultation (largely online) are unlikely to be successful. The strategy and an engagement report both describe the public engagement approach. The Ministry for Pacific Peoples also provides guidance for public engagement and consultation.</p> <p>Engagement should involve Stats NZ informing stakeholders about Pacific data quality and/or technical issues of existing census and admin data (in line with NZ Data and Information Management Principles as well as the</p>

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Principles and Protocols for producers of Tier 1 Statistics).<sup>8</sup> This hasn't occurred. The Ministry for Pacific Peoples is conducting its own analyses of Pacific data quality to provide robust advice to government stakeholders.

**A six-week online discussion document is not an appropriate way to engage meaningfully with Pacific peoples and communities.**

Ensuring buy-in and support from Pacific communities is critical if current data inequities are to be addressed. A good example of public engagement that prioritised face-to-face discussion was that used for Te Mana Ola: The Pacific Health Strategy (Ministry of Health)<sup>9</sup>. MPP also provides the Yavu – Foundations of Pacific Engagement Tool<sup>10</sup> which should be adopted when engaging with Pacific peoples.

The Ministry's [Yavu](#) tool provides guidance on how to engage with our Pacific communities. The Yavu tool works by applying four principles to the generic engagement process:

- Understanding context - know who Pacific peoples are.
- Environment - make time to connect.
- Responsibility - recognise Pacific peoples' contribution.
- Teu le va - build, nurture and strengthen relationships.

These four principles can be applied at each step of the engagement process with Pacific communities and are further supported with a checklist and guide for what each principle looks like in practice. This tool is easy to use, culturally responsive and can help to further inform your engagements with Pacific peoples. The Ministry would also be best placed to connect with Pacific communities to support your engagement.

**For the public to engage meaningfully, there needs to be more information given about administrative data, the IDI and the shifting role of Stats NZ.**

It is not clear that government and public stakeholders have much awareness about the IDI, but this is fundamental to meaningful engagement. Public buy-in is critical for an admin-only census but admin data is

<sup>8</sup> Stats NZ (2011). New Zealand Data and Information Management Principles. Stats NZ. Wellington.

<sup>9</sup> Ministry of Health (2023). Te Mana Ola: The Pacific Health Strategy. [Te Mana Ola: The Pacific Health Strategy | Ministry of Health NZ](#)

<sup>10</sup> [Ministry for Pacific Peoples — Yavu - Foundations of Pacific Engagement Tool \(mpp.govt.nz\)](#)

	<p>already collected about people every day and joined with other data (e.g. an APC has already been constructed without explicit buy-in from the public in the IDI).</p> <p>It is also not clear what the public thinks about the new Data and Statistics Act 2022 giving the government Statistician the power to delegate census collection to other government agencies. The new Act does not provide clear boundaries for the kinds of data collection that may be delegated, opening the door to the possibility that delegations may allow agencies to collect data beyond the scope of their daily business.</p> <p>The Pacific response rate/results for Census 2023 have not yet been released. It is critical that this information be made available prior to engaging with public and government stakeholders</p> <p>Public consultation should also cover the shifting role of Stats NZ and other agencies from the Data and Statistics Act 2022 e.g. from being a data collector to collator (this may risk obscuring the line of sight between why the data are collected and what the data are being used for). Engagement should also point out that household surveys are already collected by a range of agencies which may also need to consult with stakeholders to understand expectations.</p> <p>The phrase ‘administrative data-first’ implies that the preferred approach has already been determined to be an administrative census. If the public do not have in-depth knowledge about the IDI (or the Data and Statistics Act 2022) the ‘light-touch’ approach will need to cover new ground since these are the pre-requisites of an administrative census according to several census transformation reports and Cabinet papers.</p>
Paragraph 12	<p><b>Limitations and trade-offs should ideally have been provided in advance of public consultation.</b></p> <p>Stats NZ should provide a review of overseas models to improve awareness that the proposal is also internationally unprecedented.</p> <p>The Prime Minister has also mentioned that New Zealand should emulate Estonia’s public sector digitisation efforts. Estonia produces a census using a digital population register along with other countries that implement register-based censuses.</p>

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<p>Paragraph 14</p>	<p><b>It is inevitable that there will be financial implications for other agencies to provide higher quality information and to comply with census standards.</b></p> <p>There may also be costs for stakeholders and users of official statistics to adjust their usual practices to account for new limitations. It has also been mentioned in APC engagement sessions that a new type of IDI and related infrastructure will have to be developed for census purposes. We imagine that additional resources will have to be developed to provide quality assurance across multiple agencies and to provide stakeholders with new IT infrastructure to scrutinise and use the new register-based census. Due to known measurement error and linkage bias, stakeholders may be required to conduct their own analyses to make responsible use of the new census.</p>
<p>Paragraphs 17 and 18</p>	<p><b>Census 2028 options along with their risks and implications particularly for ensuring Pacific peoples are counted should be clearly laid out.</b></p> <p>The Cabinet paper and discussion document requires further detail about the due diligence undertaken. Risks and implications for Pacific data equity and quality should be comprehensively laid out. It is the Ministry's view that the discussion document does not communicate the gravity or enduring implications of these changes for government agencies, and for Pacific peoples.</p> <p>The discussion document does not describe the sources of the administrative data and registers likely to be used so that Pacific peoples can visualise how their information is used now and proposed to be used for Census 2028.</p> <p>The information in the discussion document does not describe the options under consideration, and the strengths and limitations of those options. It would also be helpful if overseas examples could be used to illustrate similarities with the current state and proposed state. Some countries are referenced to suggest close alignment, but not enough detail is provided to make a comparison.</p> <p>For the purposes of the Cabinet paper, we would like these risks outlined in the Population section of the Cabinet paper template.</p>

<p>Paragraph 23</p>	<p><b>Pacific peoples and communities must be engaged meaningfully during the consultation process.</b> Engagement to date has been siloed and compartmentalised.</p> <p>The previous Cabinet paper [CAB-24-MIN-0101 refers] implied that Stats NZ has overcome data quality and availability challenges long identified in Census Transformation publications both on the Stats NZ website and in academic journal articles authored by Christine Bycroft. It is still not clear what approach ('...and test the quality and availability of the administrative data sources that could be used to support it') we are meant to support since recent Cabinet papers have provided very little detail.</p> <p>Concerns about Pacific data quality have been historically overlooked and current papers are also notable for the lack of consideration of Pacific data quality.</p> <p>It is important to signal to government stakeholders how compliance with principles and protocols for producers of Tier 1 Statistics are enforced now and likely changes so they can plan accordingly.</p> <p>This paragraph raises questions about how wider compliance by government agencies will be addressed as they take a greater role in producing official population statistics for an administrative data first census and for bigger household surveys.</p> <p>There is also an accessibility and equity element, which is part of principles and protocols compliance. For example, the Ministry for Pacific Peoples is currently charged a fee by Stats NZ to access data to determine data quality for surveys. This information should be released as part of the survey production process, since the Ministry is not the only stakeholder for Pacific statistics. The practice of charging for data quality information may be a barrier to the use and re-use of public data, illustrated by the fact that this basic information is not currently available. In future, there should not be fees for population statistics derived from administrative registries should.</p>

Paragraph 24	A press release from Stats NZ should consider an all-of-government outreach approach due the proposed scope for change.
Recommendations	<p>1.1 We reviewed [CAB-24-MIN-0101 refers] and did not see a plan to modernise the Census 2028 that provided any options. The previous paper did not fully account for cost and quality limitations.</p> <p>Also, is the plan that has been endorsed the same as the high-level approach described in paragraph 23?</p>
<b>Feedback on the accompanying proposed Discussion Document</b>	
CE's foreword pp 2-3	<p>"For several years, Stats NZ has shown that we can use data that government already collects to not only produce official statistics but to do so more efficiently, more frequently, and more sustainably, while protecting the privacy New Zealanders rightly value." This sentence contradicts Stats NZ's past (and current) messaging around the APC (and admin data more generally) being 'experimental' and not suitable for official statistics (and used for research purposes only).</p> <p>In general, the document does not present an invitation for the public to 'have their say'. The status quo is not given as an option. An admin data-first census is the only option being promoted to Cabinet and the public. The document also uses anecdotes that do not reflect the nature of Stats NZ as the government's chief data steward to justify an admin data-first approach with phrases such as: "We often hear that, "you already know this about me" "as Kiwis acknowledge that information about them is already held in official records."</p> <p>The foreword mentions that the proposed change represents the most significant shift for population enumeration methods since 1851. It also describes how important population statistics are to government agencies and that Stats NZ takes its stewardship role seriously. The foreword and introduction should provide examples of register-based censuses used in other countries and how New Zealand compares.</p> <p>New Zealand does not have a population register to provide a framework for administrative data to connect with and is not planning to develop one according to the current proposal. Our current use of admin data requires a</p>

	<p>census frame. The document incorrectly compares New Zealand, which has not managed to deliver a well-run census in many years, with countries who are successfully implementing register-based censuses. Population registers are the primary ingredient and basis for successful register-based censuses overseas.</p> <p>As the government’s Pacific data steward, the Ministry for Pacific Peoples does not believe Stats NZ can implement a register-based census as well as other countries that use population registers as a structure for administrative data. The proposal is likely to result in poorer enumeration and social attribute information than we currently have through conventional full-enumeration methods.</p> <p>Stating that the population wants more and new data (which is not yet qualified in this discussion document) risks misinformation and disinformation.</p>
<p>Introduction pp 5-7</p>	<p><b>Our world, and people’s information needs, are changing</b></p> <p>The claims being made throughout this discussion document are not supported by robust analysis. The introduction should summarise the evidence as this is the part that most people are likely to read.</p> <p>The document downplays the effectiveness of in-person surveys but then states that the admin-first approach will use supplemental surveys. Quality issues with admin data coverage and linkage error is not well covered but is important for the public to understand.</p> <p>The degradation of the household survey sample frames due to poor census data is another issue that is overlooked in this paragraph. At the same time, government household surveys do not currently produce high quality survey data for Pacific peoples due to coverage and sample frame inadequacies.</p> <p>The 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph mentions that Stats NZ delivers high-quality statistics but this is not the case for Pacific ethnic groups. This paragraph puts the onus for poor survey results on people rather than the institutions that plan and implement them. It focuses culpability outwards and does not reflect on the many well-documented management failures which undermine the integrity of official population statistics (see: <a href="#">Report of the Independent Review of New Zealand’s 2018 Census   Stats NZ</a>).</p>

The 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph mentions a growing demand for more timely, comprehensive and detailed information but it is also essential to have **accurate and equitable information**. The paragraph should mention other factors that may impact survey data collection including limitations with the sample frame from poor population statistics. It is also unclear whether there have been considerations of survey workforce limitations and the feasibility and sustainability of broadening the current government survey programme. There is currently a single provider that controls a significant portion of the market for government household survey research.

Population estimates and projections are disproportionately inaccurate for Pacific populations. While this is a failure of official population statistics for Pacific peoples, administrative data do not currently offer higher quality or insight into social characteristics. While the [Report of the Independent Review of New Zealand's 2018 Census | Stats NZ](#) indicated that enumeration with census augmented administrative data is good at a national level, it has not demonstrated that counts, estimates and projections meet objectives of census for small area counts beyond level 1 ethnicity classification, community and socio-economic attributes.

The admin data-first approach and population-based surveys, like the census, would also be vulnerable to administrative services and changes over time. Administrative data are also susceptible to poor data handling and quality assurance practices (see: [Review of the Process Underlying Publication of Clinical Data on the Website of Te Whatu Ora](#)). Any model would have the vulnerabilities mentioned. The pandemic would also have impacted data collection and reporting in administrative datasets (especially health and education), but the magnitude of this impact would be difficult to estimate. The pandemic also impacted the NZ Health Survey and prevented the Tier 1 statistic BMI (body mass index) from being released. Census and household surveys are one of only a few tools to understand the impacts of the pandemic for a range of issues that relate to populations. It also allows for simultaneity (data collected at the same time), which helps to control for some of the measurement bias issues e.g. we can measure population impacts prior to an event and following an event with more precision and certainty.

Furthermore, the failures of the 2018 Census were not the result of shocks and disruptions to the system. As documented in the independent reviews of the census, failures of the 2018 Census stemmed not from disruptions to the system, but rather inadequate planning, governance, decision-making and project management.

	<p><b>We are transforming the way we produce data and statistics</b> The approaches explored to date have not followed international best practice for register-based censuses.</p> <p><b>You'll see our transformation first through census</b> It would help those unfamiliar with official statistics to include context about what a conventional full enumeration census is meant to provide and then discuss the component parts, e.g. population enumeration by area, age, and ethnicity etc. If the proposal is to decouple enumeration from the social attributes function of census, the document should describe how administrative and survey data can supplement either of these core census functions.</p>
<p>About the Census pp 8-17</p>	<p><b>The census is the only survey that involves everyone in the country</b> This section should describe that while the whole population is targeted, New Zealand censuses have failed to achieve targets, particularly for Pacific peoples for at least the last two censuses (2018 and 2023). The <a href="#">Report of the Independent Review of New Zealand's 2018 Census   Stats NZ</a> highlights a range of management approaches that led to Census 2018 failures.</p> <p><b>In the past, we have mostly relied on surveying to collect census data</b> Step 5: Please mention the limitations of the Post Enumeration Survey (PES) for Pacific ethnic groups. Even after correction with the PES Pacific peoples have still been impacted by significant undercount.</p> <p>The paper should include a description of the history of frequently changing census methodology. These changes to the census methodology have the effect of making intercensal comparisons challenging and inequitably so for Pacific peoples. It is not clear when the last two comparable censuses were conducted in New Zealand (potentially we would need to look at the censuses prior to 2006).</p> <p><b>Spotlight on the 2023 Census</b> “We also worked to increase and support Māori and Pacific peoples’ participation in the census.” – Stats NZ has not yet published Census 2023 results and therefore an independent evaluation and review for Pacific data quality has not yet been possible.</p>

We understand that an independent review of Census 2023 is underway. We support this review and strongly recommend that a Pacific data perspective is included, due to evidence of current data inequities. An independent review (e.g. Report of the Independent Review of New Zealand’s 2018 Census and reports by 2018 Census External Data Quality Panel) of Census 2023 would help Government stakeholders/statistics scrutinise the data quality and cost-benefit assertions in the discussion document.

The response rate has not yet been broken down by ethnic group. In Census 2018 there were substantial differences between ethnic groups. The lowest response for Pacific peoples (65%) was likely an overestimate, given the consistent undercount of Pacific people in the denominator used

**We ensure your information remains private, secure and confidential**

The emphasis on privacy and confidentiality may be an attempt to prepare the reader for the consultation question about trust but is more about ‘current state’ Census which Stats NZ is proposing to move away from. It would be more relevant to the proposal for an admin first census to discuss privacy, confidentiality, social licence, and data sovereignty in the IDI, since the IDI is the cornerstone of the proposal and public awareness of the IDI is still not clear.

**Surveying has been supplemented with admin data in recent years**

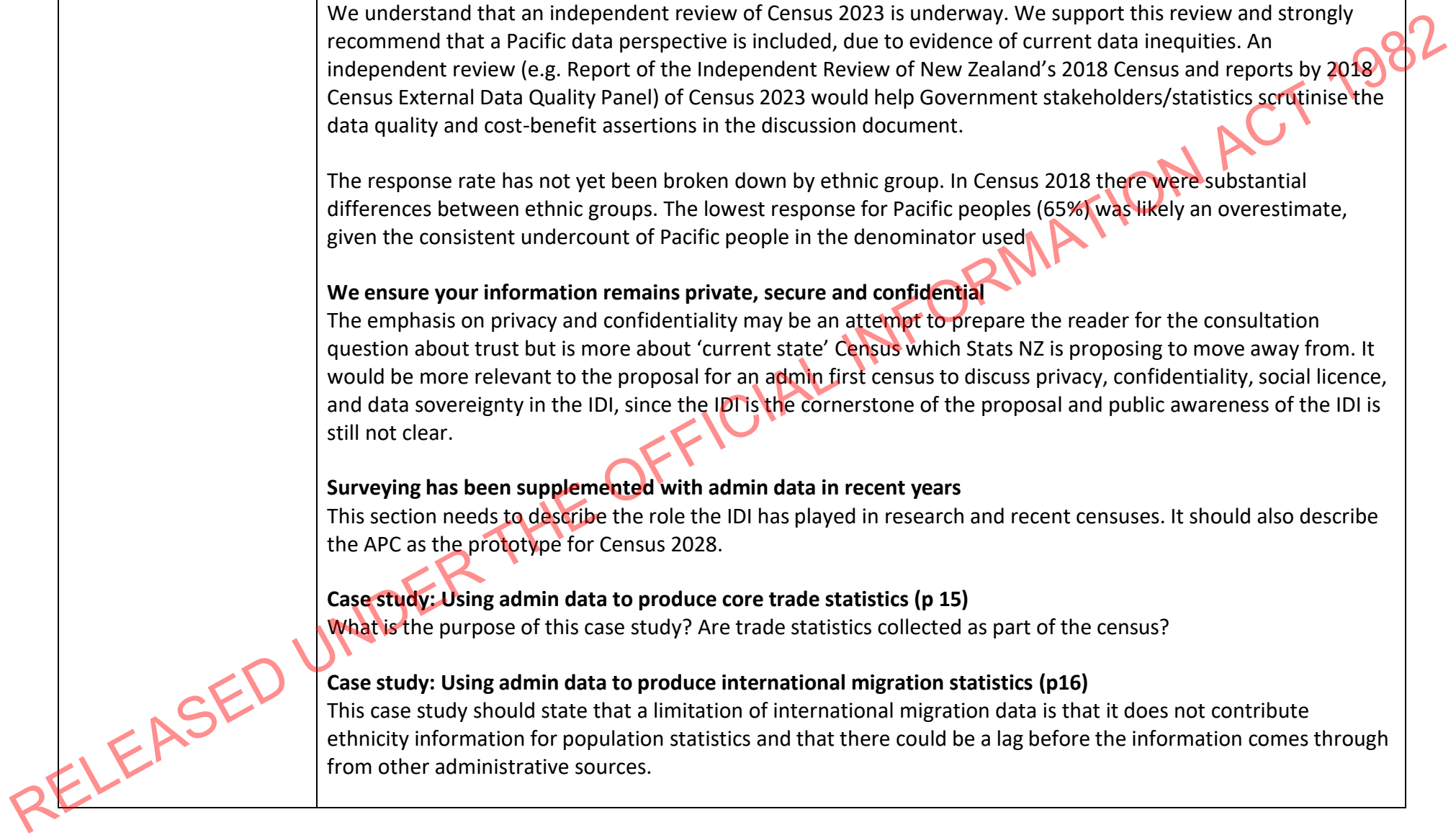
This section needs to describe the role the IDI has played in research and recent censuses. It should also describe the APC as the prototype for Census 2028.

**Case study: Using admin data to produce core trade statistics (p 15)**

What is the purpose of this case study? Are trade statistics collected as part of the census?

**Case study: Using admin data to produce international migration statistics (p16)**

This case study should state that a limitation of international migration data is that it does not contribute ethnicity information for population statistics and that there could be a lag before the information comes through from other administrative sources.



	<p>We suggest removing the last sentence ‘New Zealand’s migration statistics are still incredibly prompt by international standards and ultimately more accurate than relying on information collected in departure cards.’</p> <p><b>We now use a combination of survey and admin data (p 16)</b></p> <p>It would be helpful to understand the distinction between administrative data and population registers to avoid confusion while reading this paper.<sup>11</sup></p> <p>This section conflates the issue of full enumeration with population coverage supplemented with administrative data.</p> <p>“Without the use of admin data, we would be unable to produce robust and reliable population estimates.” An independent review of Census 2023 should also investigate costs and how funding was allocated. We know that other countries (e.g. Canada 98% and Australia 95.8% in 2021) have recently had higher response rates to their full enumeration censuses. A review describing what those countries are doing well and what New Zealand could learn from those examples should be included in the discussion document.</p>
<p>Adopting an admin-first approach pp 18-26</p>	<p>This section mentions other jurisdictions heading in the same direction – e.g. UK completing a consultation to move from conventional full enumeration census to administrative register-based census in late 2023. Here is a response to that consultation from 85 academic signatories: <a href="https://nms.kcl.ac.uk/john.armstrong/openletters/letter.php?campaign=future_of_population_statistics">nms.kcl.ac.uk/john.armstrong/openletters/letter.php?campaign=future_of_population_statistics</a> that expressed fundamental concerns with the proposed transformation, similar to the concerns the Ministry for Pacific Peoples is raising.</p> <p><b>We believe admin-data-first is the future of census</b></p> <p>This section refers to people, but it is still not clear who are the people being alluded to.</p>

<sup>11</sup> Trépanier, J. (2022). "The Canadian experience of building a privacy-responsible integrated statistical register infrastructure." *Statistical Journal of the IAOS* **38**(1): 231-243.

The current set of official population statistics do not comply with Tier 1 statistics principles and protocols for producers and users. How much weight is being given in decision-making about census transformation to what people may want? How much weight is given to decisions to have equitable and accurate population statistics for government decision making.

This discussion document is not upfront about how poorly NZ compares with Australia and Canada, which implement conventional full-enumeration censuses supplemented with administrative register-based data. According to Statistics Canada Geoff Bowlby and Josee Morel in a 2022 presentation stated that widespread use of their contingency plan to supplement full enumeration with administrative data was not necessary to high response rates. From what we can tell, those countries referenced do not plan to implement an admin-data first before New Zealand.

It is not clear why the United States is an example here given the differences in scale and overall approach to population enumeration.

**Consultation questions: ‘I am okay with Stats NZ reusing information (like tax or housing information) I have given to other organisations, so that Stats NZ can produce data, statistics, or research that would benefit me and my community.’ (p 19)**

This seems like a question about the general use of admin data. If the majority of New Zealanders strongly disagree, what would that mean for using Stats NZ IDI data for other research?

Each of these questions should include caveats that Stats NZ already reuses and links personal information collected by other organisations and has implicit approvals to do so through the IDI. Additional caveats should explain that the information Stats NZ would like to use for Census 2028 has already been accessible to researchers and government agencies for many years through the IDI.

An additional disclaimer should also describe the trade-offs with register-based censuses and social licence.

**Some of the data we get from census can be sourced from admin data**

“For instance, we know that the best way to count the population, which is a key part of the census, is best delivered through admin data.” The assertions that admin data is better or equivalent to full enumeration census data are also contradicted by published Stats NZ quality assessments of the administrative population census in the IDI which must rely on census data for validation. We are not aware of the quality standard for Census 2028 (and also whether there was a standard for Census 2023).

**Case study – Ethnicity data**

We have not seen evidence for the statements about quality. The studies that we are aware of that compare administrative ethnicity with census individual form ethnicity indicate that ethnicity data, particularly for Pacific ethnic groups, is inequitably poor. Losing the gold standard, which is census individual form data (and not replacing it with a high-quality register-based census), will harm Pacific peoples and reduce the ability for government agencies to obtain accurate and reliable ethnicity data over time.

“This means that while ethnicity information for the largest ethnicity groups is high quality, improvements are needed in some data sources to support information for smaller ethnic groups.” - the transparency of data quality metrics used, even for level 1, is obscure. What will the decision to implement an admin first Census be if Stats NZ can’t make improvements for level 2-4 ethnic groups?

**Surveying can be done in different ways (p 23)**

With a compulsory population register, there would be little need to survey the whole population every 5 years because precise information would be available on an individual level to develop better representative/accurate individual survey sample frames. With a reliable and up to date (near real time) population register, it would be possible to target surveys much more precisely to the group or area of interest, correct for non-response bias (which is currently not possible with household sampling frames) and weigh survey samples more accurately to the population, giving more accurate survey results with smaller samples and using fewer resources.

“Regardless of the survey model chosen, we will prioritise using admin data and only survey where we need to supplement that information.” This statement implies the decision of using admin data for the Census has already been made. Feedback from this consultation may only influence what the survey component looks like.

Different options are only mentioned for the first time in this section. These options should be at the top of the document – clearly laid out with diagrams, pros, cons, costs, etc.

The reduced cost and burden of carrying out a reduced Census questionnaire is likely to be marginal. Interviewers would still need to be employed and doing so may impact capacity for surveys by other agencies given the current market environment.

**We will assess different survey models against key criteria**

“A range of potential survey models will be assessed using key criteria by an evaluation panel, which will include external independent members.” How will the evaluation panel be put together and what power they will have to influence decisions?

The costs of Census 2023 should be scrutinised. The value of the current census approach should also be considered. There is also a cost for surveys (including surveys run by a range of government agencies). The costs and value for the potential survey models should be transparent to the evaluation panel to take the best decision.

**The cost of the proposed census transformation has not been estimated; therefore, it is unclear whether it would save money in the long-term or provide the same benefits and return on investment as a census.**

Suggestion: To have a more complete picture of costs, it would be useful to see an estimate of anticipated compliance costs for government agencies who would be accountable for collecting population statistics in addition to the collation costs that Stats NZ may be accountable for.

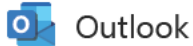
The government surveys are also quite costly - and when summed may even rival the cost of census. In Budget 2023, \$84 million was allocated for delivery of data and statistical information services relating to the population, household economics, social conditions (including child poverty), the labour market, and the environment and nearly \$69 million for the delivery of data and statistical information services relating to business and the economy (<https://2023.budget.govt.nz/budget/pdfs/estimates/v4/est23-v4-stat.pdf>).

The Valuing Census reports 2013 and 2021 commissioned by Stats NZ indicate that Census is providing excellent value for money, even accounting for the cost of Census 2023. The issue is that well documented continued

	<p>census failures (External Data Quality Panel final report 2020; Report of the Independent Review of New Zealand’s 2018 Census 2019) risk devaluing the census further.</p>
<p>Working with you pp 27-30</p>	<p><b>Consultation question: If Stats NZ, for the census, reuses data about you that you shared with other organisations, what extra things (for example, protections and safeguards) would you like to see?</b> This ‘if’ question is redundant since Stats NZ already uses admin data to supplement missing values in Census 2018 and Census 2023.</p> <p>The document should provide the public with transparency about what register, admin data and algorithms are used in recent censuses and in the IDI for the purposes of population statistics.</p> <p>As far as we are aware, fundamentally using sophisticated data linkage to repurpose administrative data for population statistics has not been transparently discussed with communities. Including (Pacific) communities would be an important opportunity to gain trust in the government.</p> <p><b>Your input will help shape the 2028 Census</b> Engagement with government agencies – One of the functions of the public service is to provide expert advice to decision-makers. It’s not clear how feedback from other agencies will be taken into account.</p>
<p>General (other comments)</p>	<p>The document mentions that feedback will be considered. We strongly recommend a summary of the feedback be shared publicly.</p>

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# Document 13



IN CONFIDENCE: Modernising the Census - Draft Cabinet paper for departmental consultation

From Carl Olive <Carl.Olive@mpp.govt.nz>

Date Tue 28/01/2025 4:00 PM

To Sam.Baker@stats.govt.nz <Sam.Baker@stats.govt.nz>

Cc Corina Grey <corina.grey@mpp.govt.nz>; James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>; Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>; Lu Avia <lu.avia@mpp.govt.nz>

1 attachment (349 KB)

20240226 MPP Feedback table Modernising Census 2028 Cabinet paper.pdf;

Kia ora Sam,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the Draft Cabinet paper - *Modernising the census by taking an administrative data-first approach: Approval of policy decisions*.

Overall, the Ministry for Pacific Peoples (the Ministry) supports census modernisation, particularly when it will address data quality gaps or where proposed efficiencies will increase the quality and availability of existing data.

### ***There is an opportunity to address issues in data quality for Pacific Peoples***

There are long-standing and well-documented data quality issues relating to Pacific peoples, including an undercount of the Pacific population in official statistics.<sup>[1]</sup> Updating the approach to the census is an opportunity to address these issues.<sup>[2]</sup>

The Ministry welcomes close collaboration on the modernisation of the census and looks forward working with Stats NZ to build on our agencies' joint and aligned work programmes. The Ministry supports cross-agency efforts to improve the collection, analysis and reporting of data for and about Pacific peoples.

### ***High quality data is critical to informed decision-making for social investment***

The Ministry uses high-quality data to support investment into critical services and relies on accurate and timely population statistics to advise government. Any significant change or reduction in data access creates specific risks for the Ministry and other government agencies. Poorly targeted investment for essential services can result in higher costs to government, including misallocation of resources, inequity of service delivery and inability to evaluate programme impacts.

The Cabinet paper could acknowledge that informed decision making from high quality data ultimately saves money for government by more effectively targeting social investment. Without accurate demographic data, social investments may fail to address the most pressing needs.

### ***Relying on administrative data in its current form carries a number of risks***

The Cabinet paper proposes an approach to administrative data collection that will rely on a level of commitment and coordination that does not currently exist across government. The data collected by government agencies does not include critical population demographics required for evidence-based decision-making, and it is unclear how these gaps will be filled. The Cabinet paper could better acknowledge that the proposed approach will not provide similar information to the current census.

Administrative data is not currently collected for the purposes of understanding population dynamics. Administrative data captures people who access government services (which is disproportionately weighted towards welfare, health, education, taxation, and justice processes at different time periods). The likelihood of being included in these datasets differs by socioeconomic status, ethnicity, and gender.

The key risk with the current proposal is that there will be less information available, resulting in a lower standard of data quality than what is currently being delivered through the traditional census approach. For example, the loss of the NZDep index will not be possible to reproduce with the proposed model. Since its creation in the mid-1990's, NZDep has been widely used as a tool for resource allocation, planning, needs assessment, community-based advocacy and research. The index is widely accepted as a tool both for highlighting the social and health needs of communities and for directing resources into those communities. [3]

The Cabinet paper would benefit from some discussion on how the proposal will provide a more effective system than the traditional census and the mechanisms for how this will be delivered.

The formal levers and process to require individual agencies to gather and share government data is unclear. Paragraph 27 of the Cabinet paper notes the intention to use existing powers under the Data and Statistics Act 2022 to request agencies to provide the administrative data. However, the paper could consider the financial and time constraints of other agencies. The Ministry would welcome further information on the process for cross-government work and the specific levers that will be developed to ensure agency collaboration.

The Cabinet paper does not provide any detail on the outcomes of agency or public consultation. Providing context to Cabinet on stakeholder views is critical to informed decision making.

### ***The current proposal does not fully account for the financial impact on government***

The Cabinet paper does not include an estimate of full costs to the government (across all relevant agencies) or an analysis of the proposal's value in comparison to the value to Government of a conventional census. The Cabinet paper could be strengthened by providing cost benefit analysis of the proposed approach compared to the traditional census. The Cabinet paper does not articulate the costs and trade-offs that are being proposed and the impacts that the proposed changes will have on access to high quality data. It is unclear whether the current proposals would save money in the long-term or provide similar or lower return on investment.

### ***The proposals will create both risks and costs for government agencies***

Agencies that collect government data will need to consider the cost implications of the proposals, which should include implications for service planning, funding and for developing new data infrastructure by 2028 or 2030.

The Cabinet paper would benefit from the inclusion of a section outlining the further work to map the costs and workforce requirements for government and the timeline for this work. The Ministry would appreciate the opportunity to review and support the work on the final evaluation panel report.

### ***The Cabinet paper may benefit from some further context***

The Cabinet may benefit from:

- Outlining an intention for cross-government collaboration to create an effective all-of-government process to managing data quality and access
- Providing cost benefit analysis of the proposed approach compared to the traditional census to outline the trade-offs and their potential impacts for government.

- Including a section on costs to government (across all agencies, not just Stats NZ) and the process for reporting these back to Cabinet.
- Providing details on the outcomes of agency and public consultation – *Does TSY support the proposals in this paper? What are the views of key community stakeholders?*
- A brief description of options considered - *Has there been consideration of the role of the private sector, what is the approach being taken in other jurisdictions?*

For your reference, please find attached previous feedback provided to Stats NZ on these proposals.

Ngā mihi

Carl

Dr Carl Olive

Policy and Insights

s9(2)(a)

[1] [2-v2.-Appendix-1-The-Ministrys-LTIB-Pacific-Data-Equity-Opportunities-to-Enhance-the-Future-of-Pacific-Wellbeing.pdf](#)

2 Sonder GJB et al. [Selective under-representation of Pacific peoples in population estimates for health indicator measurements in Aotearoa New Zealand misinforms policy making - PubMed](#). BMC Public Health 2024;24(1):564.

3 [Submission-re-future-of-the-census-15-June-2024.pdf](#)

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**From:** Sam Baker <[Sam.Baker@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Sam.Baker@stats.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, 18 December 2024 12:40 pm

**Cc:** Anna Hughes <[Anna.Hughes1@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Anna.Hughes1@stats.govt.nz)>; Tennille Maxey <[Tennille.Maxey@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Tennille.Maxey@stats.govt.nz)>; Carly Skerrett <[Carly.Skerrett@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Carly.Skerrett@stats.govt.nz)>

**Subject:** IN CONFIDENCE: Modernising the Census - Draft Cabinet paper for departmental consultation

You don't often get email from [sam.baker@stats.govt.nz](mailto:sam.baker@stats.govt.nz). [Learn why this is important](#)

Tēnā tātou,

Thank you to everyone who has engaged with us so far on the Government Statistician's proposal to modernise the manner of taking the census.

In March this year, Cabinet noted the intention to update the approach to the next census by using an administrative data-first approach and the Government Statistician's intention to publicly consult on an administrative data-first approach and report back to Cabinet on a final decision.

Since this time (and throughout 2024) Stats NZ has engaged with government agencies, iwi and Māori key communities and groups, and academics, undertaken a public consultation (in May/June 2024), and received advice from an Independent Evaluation Panel on options for the future of census. This work has led to the Government Statistician's in-principle decision on the manner of taking the census outlined in the attached draft Cabinet paper. We seek to have Cabinet endorsement by March 2025 so we can begin to dive more deeply into the details of what the new model might look like and undertake public consultation on the variables to be collected in the next census.

We acknowledge that this time of year isn't optimal for consultation, however, we are working to ambitious timeframes. It is necessary to have Cabinet endorsement in place so we can begin the

next phase of census planning and design. To combat the awkward timing we have extended the consultation time to six weeks.

Please respond to this email with your Cabinet paper feedback by **28 January 2025**, and cc my colleagues Anna Hughes and Carly Skerrett.

We will begin Ministerial consultation on 11 February 2025.

Feel free to reach out with any questions, noting that Stats NZ has a close down period of 24 December 2024 to 7 January 2025.

On that note, Merry Christmas and we hope you have a relaxing holiday break. We look forward to ongoing engagement in the New year.

Ngā mihi nui,

**Sam Baker**

Policy Advisor | Kaitohutohu Kaupapahere  
Data and Statistics Policy | Kaupapahere Ā-Ture  
Stats NZ | Tauranga Aotearoa | [stats.govt.nz](https://stats.govt.nz)

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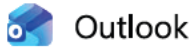
[1] [2-v2.-Appendix-1-The-Ministrys-LTIB-Pacific-Data-Equity-Opportunities-to-Enhance-the-Future-of-Pacific-Wellbeing.pdf](#)

[2] Sonder GJB et al. [Selective under-representation of Pacific peoples in population estimates for health indicator measurements in Aotearoa New Zealand misinforms policy making - PubMed](#). BMC Public Health 2024;24(1):564.

[3] [Submission-re-future-of-the-census-15-June-2024.pdf](#)

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# Document 14



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## IN-CONFIDENCE:Fw: Update: IN CONFIDENCE: Release of public consultation document: Census – Draft Cabinet paper for departmental consultation

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**From** Nelson Tiatia <nelson.tiatia@mpp.govt.nz>  
**Date** Tue 7/10/2025 4:52 PM  
**To** Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>

IN-CONFIDENCE

FYI

IN-CONFIDENCE

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**From:** Nelson Tiatia  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 1, 2025 9:56 AM  
**To:** Carly Skerrett  
**Cc:** MPP Advice  
**Subject:** RE: Update: IN CONFIDENCE: Release of public consultation document: Census – Draft Cabinet paper for departmental consultation

Kia ora Carly,

Please see below our feedback on the draft Cabinet paper for your consideration:

- Paragraph 12: In line with the Memorandum of Understanding, between Stats NZ and the Ministry for Pacific Peoples, we are interested in being consulted, completing and submitting the consultation document as part of targeted consultation, and supporting consultation with Pacific communities.
- Paragraph 20: We recommend adding specific reference to Pacific communities and a note that Pacific communities should be consulted as an affected group (the Ministry is happy to support this process in whatever way necessary and appropriate).

Happy to chat if preferred, please feel free to reach out!

Nelson

**Nelson Tiatia (he/him)**

Senior Analyst

Policy

Te Iho Building, 1 Bowen Street, Pipitea, Wellington



---

**From:** Carly Skerrett

**Sent:** Thursday, 25 September 2025 11:29 am

**To:** publicsectorengagement@acc.co.nz; Justine.Falconer@crownlaw.govt.nz; Katherine.McKenzie-Bridle@crownlaw.govt.nz; info@corrections.govt.nz; oia@dia.govt.nz; information@dpmc.govt.nz; kristina.temel@elections.govt.nz; Natalie.McNaught@elections.govt.nz; information@gcsb.govt.nz; HNZCabinetpapers@tewhatauora.govt.nz; ministerial\_services@hud.govt.nz; ministerialservices@ird.govt.nz; government.services@kaingaora.govt.nz; cabinetpapers@linz.govt.nz; ministerialservices@mbie.govt.nz; ministerial@ethniccommunities.govt.nz; dm-esd@mfat.govt.nz; ministerials@mfe.govt.nz; agencyconsultation@regulation.govt.nz; cabinetpapers@women.govt.nz; ministerial.requests@education.govt.nz; mohcorrespondence@health.govt.nz;

official.correspondence@justice.govt.nz; MPP Advice ; OIA\_requests@msd.govt.nz;  
oia.privacy@nzsis.govt.nz; Kate.Rickerby@privacy.org.nz; OIA\_requests@ot.govt.nz;  
enquiries@publicservice.govt.nz; Ministerial\_services@sia.govt.nz; minservices@tepunaaonui.govt.nz;  
oia@tpk.govt.nz; ministerial.services@treasury.govt.nz; MaES\_requests@whaikaha.govt.nz;  
Papers2review@tearawhiti.govt.nz; official.correspondence@nzta.govt.nz; OCU@transport.govt.nz;  
oia@customs.govt.nz; MODministerialservices@defence.govt.nz

**Cc:** Sara Montgomery ; Elizabeth Bush-King

**Subject:** Update: IN CONFIDENCE: Release of public consultation document: Census – Draft Cabinet paper for departmental consultation

You don't often get email from [carly.skerrett@stats.govt.nz](mailto:carly.skerrett@stats.govt.nz). [Learn why this is important](#)

## IN-CONFIDENCE

Kia ora koutou,

Apologies, some minor amendments have been made to the Cabinet paper to reflect that is a noting paper, please see the new copy attached. Please circulate this version instead.

Ngā mihi

**Carly Skerrett** (pronouns: she/her)

Kaitohutohu Kaupapahere | Policy Advisor

Stats NZ | Tatauranga Aotearoa | [stats.govt.nz](https://stats.govt.nz)

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Please note, my usual hours are 7.30-2, Monday-Friday. If you contact me outside of this time, I will respond the following business day.

**From:** Carly Skerrett

**Sent:** Thursday, 25 September 2025 10:53 am

**To:** [publicsectorengagement@acc.co.nz](mailto:publicsectorengagement@acc.co.nz); [Justine.Falconer@crownlaw.govt.nz](mailto:Justine.Falconer@crownlaw.govt.nz); [Katherine.McKenzie-Bridle@crownlaw.govt.nz](mailto:Katherine.McKenzie-Bridle@crownlaw.govt.nz); [info@corrections.govt.nz](mailto:info@corrections.govt.nz); [oia@dia.govt.nz](mailto:oia@dia.govt.nz); [information@dpmc.govt.nz](mailto:information@dpmc.govt.nz); [kristina.temel@elections.govt.nz](mailto:kristina.temel@elections.govt.nz); [Natalie.McNaught@elections.govt.nz](mailto:Natalie.McNaught@elections.govt.nz); [information@gcsb.govt.nz](mailto:information@gcsb.govt.nz); [HNZCabinetpapers@tewhatuora.govt.nz](mailto:HNZCabinetpapers@tewhatuora.govt.nz); [ministerial\\_services@hud.govt.nz](mailto:ministerial_services@hud.govt.nz); [ministerialservices@ird.govt.nz](mailto:ministerialservices@ird.govt.nz); [government.services@kaingaora.govt.nz](mailto:government.services@kaingaora.govt.nz); [cabinetpapers@linz.govt.nz](mailto:cabinetpapers@linz.govt.nz); [ministerialservices@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:ministerialservices@mbie.govt.nz); [ministerial@ethniccommunities.govt.nz](mailto:ministerial@ethniccommunities.govt.nz); [dm-esd@mfat.govt.nz](mailto:dm-esd@mfat.govt.nz); [ministerials@mfe.govt.nz](mailto:ministerials@mfe.govt.nz); [agencyconsultation@regulation.govt.nz](mailto:agencyconsultation@regulation.govt.nz); [cabinetpapers@women.govt.nz](mailto:cabinetpapers@women.govt.nz); [ministerial.requests@education.govt.nz](mailto:ministerial.requests@education.govt.nz); [mohcorrespondence@health.govt.nz](mailto:mohcorrespondence@health.govt.nz); [official.correspondence@justice.govt.nz](mailto:official.correspondence@justice.govt.nz); [mppadvice@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:mppadvice@mpp.govt.nz); [OIA\\_requests@msd.govt.nz](mailto:OIA_requests@msd.govt.nz); [oia.privacy@nzsis.govt.nz](mailto:oia.privacy@nzsis.govt.nz); [Kate.Rickerby@privacy.org.nz](mailto:Kate.Rickerby@privacy.org.nz); [OIA\\_requests@ot.govt.nz](mailto:OIA_requests@ot.govt.nz); [enquiries@publicservice.govt.nz](mailto:enquiries@publicservice.govt.nz); [Ministerial\\_services@sia.govt.nz](mailto:Ministerial_services@sia.govt.nz); [minservices@tepunaaonui.govt.nz](mailto:minservices@tepunaaonui.govt.nz); [oia@tpk.govt.nz](mailto:oia@tpk.govt.nz); [ministerial.services@treasury.govt.nz](mailto:ministerial.services@treasury.govt.nz); [MaES\\_requests@whaikaha.govt.nz](mailto:MaES_requests@whaikaha.govt.nz); [Papers2review@tearawhiti.govt.nz](mailto:Papers2review@tearawhiti.govt.nz); [official.correspondence@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:official.correspondence@nzta.govt.nz); [OCU@transport.govt.nz](mailto:OCU@transport.govt.nz); [oia@customs.govt.nz](mailto:oia@customs.govt.nz); [MODministerialservices@defence.govt.nz](mailto:MODministerialservices@defence.govt.nz)

**Cc:** Sara Montgomery <[Sara.Montgomery@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Sara.Montgomery@stats.govt.nz)>; Elizabeth Bush-King

<[Elizabeth.BushKing@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Elizabeth.BushKing@stats.govt.nz)>

**Subject:** IN CONFIDENCE: Release of public consultation document: Census – Draft Cabinet paper for departmental consultation

Tēnā tātou,

Thank you to everyone who has engaged with us so far on the Government Statistician's proposal to modernise the census.

In May this year, Cabinet endorsed Stats NZ running an admin data first census, supplemented by a large new census sample survey, and tailored solutions. Admin data forms the foundation, reducing the need for a full population survey, while the annual sample survey validates and supplements this data. Tailored solutions will be developed with iwi Māori and priority communities to meet specific data needs. Together, these sources produce a more accurate and complete picture of the population.

We are now returning to Cabinet to provide visibility of the second public consultation document on the next Census, focussed on the proposed approach for data collection and the content, informing of our intention to commence public consultation. This includes the data topics to be collected, proposed new topics and variables, and the methods for data collection. The next Census will cover the same topics as the 2023 Census, with a few exceptions to enable the approach (e.g. census night address will become

usual residence address) with proposals for some new variables and some improvements to existing variables.

Please find attached the **Cabinet paper for feedback** and the **public consultation document for your information**.

Due to our requirement to conclude public consultation before the end of 2025, we are working to tight timeframes. Ministerial consultation is running concurrently with departmental consultation. We are aiming to lodge the Cabinet paper to the Cabinet Social Outcomes Committee on 15 October, for Cabinet on 20 October. We intend to commence public consultation on 3 November, running for 7 weeks to 19 December.

Please respond to this email with your feedback by **2 October 2025**.

In accordance with the draft guidance on safeguarding the unauthorised disclosure of Cabinet material, if you would like to share this further, please do so with processes in place to prevent sharing outside of your agency. We also ask that you cc me if you do so to allow us to track its distribution.

If you have designated a single point of contact for receiving draft Cabinet papers, please let us know for future reference. Our contact for future Cabinet paper consultation is [officeofthesce@stats.govt.nz](mailto:officeofthesce@stats.govt.nz).

Ngā mihi

**Carly Skerrett** (pronouns: she/her)

Kaitohutohu Kaupapahere | Policy Advisor

Stats NZ | Tatauranga Aotearoa | [stats.govt.nz](https://stats.govt.nz)

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Please note, my usual hours are 7.30-2, Monday-Friday. If you contact me outside of this time, I will respond the following business day.

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# Document 15



## FW: Stats NZ engagement on future censuses – 2028 and beyond

**From** James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>  
**Date** Wed 27/03/2024 12:12 PM  
**To** Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>

**FYI**

**From:** Ian Newman <ian.newman@stats.govt.nz>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 27, 2024 11:37 AM  
**To:** Cyril.Mako@education.govt.nz; deb.potter@ethniccommunities.govt.nz; Donna Cormack <d.cormack@auckland.ac.nz>; f.collins@auckland.ac.nz; James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>; patatoac@waikato.ac.nz; r.simon-kumar@auckland.ac.nz; Roimata Timutimu s9(2)(a); r.peiris-john@auckland.ac.nz; seini@moanaconnect.co.nz; Stephanie.Kerruish@health.govt.nz; steven.ratuva@canterbury.ac.nz  
**Cc:** Tia Warbrick <Tia.Warbrick@stats.govt.nz>; Ashleigh Maw <ashleigh.maw@stats.govt.nz>; Vivienne Valledor-Lukey <vivienne.valledor-lukey@stats.govt.nz>; Sean Broughton <sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz>; Roxane Gajadhar <Roxane.Gajadhar@stats.govt.nz>; Ru Tauri <ru.tauri@stats.govt.nz>; Jacinta Syme <Jacinta.Syme@stats.govt.nz>; Rachel McBeth <Rachel.McBeth@stats.govt.nz>  
**Subject:** RE: Stats NZ engagement on future censuses – 2028 and beyond

Kia ora kotou,

You would have received an email and invitation to engage on future census.

Standards have been involved in conversations in planning these engagements. It was thought this group with its immense knowledge, passion, and coverage across a number of key ethnic communities would have some great insights in this space.

We understand you are all incredibly busy individuals but hopefully you have some time to input into these discussions. As noted, they will be vital in determining how we can serve data and information needs for our diverse communities, families and whānau, and social groups.

Please note that those of you are eligible will be paid for your time in accordance with our payment agreement for your ethnicity standard work.

If you have any questions or concerns, please sing out.

Noho ora mai,  
Ian

**Ian Newman**  
Principal Analyst | Kaitātari Matua  
Stats NZ | Tatauranga Aotearoa  
DDI +64 3 964 8818 | [stats.govt.nz](https://stats.govt.nz)

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# Document 16



**FW: Key themes from March Pacific data fono | Collaborative design workshop – request for Eol**

**From** Lafaele Mapusua <Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz>

**Date** Wed 24/04/2024 2:33 PM

**To** Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>

📎 2 attachments (882 KB)

IN CONFIDENCE Info Sheet - Pacific.pdf; IN CONFIDENCE 240321\_Pacific fono presentation\_FINAL.pptx

fyi

**Fuimaono Faumuina Lafaele Mapusua** (he/him/his)

Faufautua Sīnia | Kaitohutohu Matua | Senior Advisor – Pacific Engagement

**From:** Rachael Milicich

**Sent:** Wednesday, April 24, 2024 2:30 PM

**To:** Sua.Thomsen@treasury.govt.nz; James.Greenwell@mpp.govt.nz; Mine.Auelua@cert.govt.nz; Peter.Stokes@police.govt.nz; Toli.Sagaga@justice.govt.nz; L.Fatialofa@hpa.org.nz; Paulo Fuiono ; Asilika Aholelei ; Lisa Cheney ; Gareth Minshall ; Selau Ifopo ; Cyrus.Nielsen002@msd.govt.nz; Tuli.Mapuilesua002@msd.govt.nz; David.PULEMAGAFA@police.govt.nz; William.fanene@police.govt.nz; Fatulatetele.Tolo@education.govt.nz; Ativalu.Lemuelu@dia.govt.nz; Rosemary.Mose@nzqa.govt.nz; ivan.i.tava@pwc.com; Robert.Pa'o@corrections.govt.nz; ofeina.barbarich-manuel@health.govt.nz; maria.uluilolata@hapaitia.nz; Gareth.Williams020 ; 9(2)(a) ; Josephine.Herman@health.govt.nz; Julienne.Faletau@health.govt.nz; 'zac.qereqeretabua@tewhatauora.govt.nz; merivi.tiai@health.govt.nz; Junior.Ulu@health.govt.nz; Tapaeru.Minster@health.govt.nz; vevesi.togiaso@tewhatauora.govt.nz; kilisitina.fihaki@mbie.govt.nz; ioane.foa@tewhatauora.govt.nz

**Cc:** Lafaele Mapusua ; Falaniko Tominiko ; Rhonda Paku ; Hannah Wignall ; Sean Broughton ; Jacinta Syme ; Corina.grey@mpp.govt.nz; Rachel.Leota@ot.govt.nz; tufaina.moananu002@msd.govt.nz; serena.curtis012@msd.govt.nz; Odette.Frost@mbie.govt.nz; tania.ott@publicservice.govt.nz; jacinta@moanaconnect.co.nz; pip.tehira-matatia@swa.govt.nz

**Subject:** Key themes from March Pacific data fono | Collaborative design workshop – request for Eol  
Mālo ni, Tālofa lava, Mālō e lelei, Talofa, Noa'ia, Ni sa bula vinaka, Mauri, Tēnā koutou katoa, Kia orāna, Fakaalofa Lahi Atu, Ni sa bula vinaka, Na Mauri

Sincere thanks to those of you who participated in our 25 or 26 March Pacific data fono in Wellington or Auckland. It was our privilege to talanoa together about improving data and statistics to support better life outcomes for Pacific Communities, as we modernise and reimagine how we sustainably deliver quality data and statistics.

What has become even clearer to us are the areas where collaborative efforts could be most meaningful and valued by our Pacific communities. Some of these are highlighted in the key themes discussed, that follow.

Even where challenging, we treat our work with communities and community representatives as a privilege. Our commitment to working together with Pacific representatives will not be fleeting. Rather, it will be deliberate, cumulative, and sustained, with Pacific perspectives, and 'voice' up front and centre, on Pacific matters.

While transforming Aotearoa-New Zealand's data and statistical system will occur over a decade or more, with the help of population representatives like you, we can anticipate making meaningful progress. Delivering for communities from the 2028 Census will be a key point along our way.

Thank you for continuing to consider your engagement with us on this important kaupapa, as we strive for fair and

equitable access to statistical information, and data that accurately reflects the experiences and realities of Aotearoa New Zealand's diverse populations.

By way of next steps, there are two consultation or engagement opportunities you might like to consider, highlighted below.

### **Recent media**

Before I go further, I want to acknowledge any concern raised in relation to an article that appeared on RNZ on Wednesday morning. The article created some confusion around the future of censuses in Aotearoa New Zealand. RNZ has since updated the headline of this article to reflect that Stats NZ is exploring how surveys will continue to play a role in any future census.

We would like to assure you, and the many communities and leaders we have been engaging with for the past three months, that no decision has been taken on a new approach to the 2028 Census or beyond as Stats NZ will soon consulting with communities throughout Aotearoa.

Stats NZ continues to prioritise engagement with key communities, iwi and Māori, customers and other stakeholders such as civil liberties groups about their data and statistics needs. While administrative data will play a greater role in future censuses, a major objective of these ongoing discussions is to explore the importance and value of surveys in the collection of data for the production of census information.

Stats NZ is extremely grateful for the continued time, effort and energy afforded by the many groups we have been engaging with during our hui, fono and discussions to date.

### **Key themes of Pacific data fono, 25 and 26 March 2024**

- Stats NZ needs be clearer about its strategic intent to grow use of administrative data supplemented by surveys, and the potential data impacts or other affects this change in model could have upon population groups, including Pacific:
  - Limitations of administrative data need to be made clear to support informed feedback about a potential change in model.
  - Limitations might include data gaps, or interpretation that does not account for cultural context or sensitivity.
  - How we treat and count family information and ethnicity in administrative data will need improving.
- There is concern amongst participants that the potential change in model could risk deepening data inequity for Pacific, where mitigating or remedial provisions are not put in place:
  - When working with Pacific data, we need to start from a position of strengths, not deficits.
  - Use and interpretation of administrative data must consider cultural context or sensitivities.
- Pacific people must have influence upon decision making relevant to Pacific people:
  - Pacific inclusion, input, and leadership broadly, including on what information is collected, and how, is important and needs be valued.
  - Extends to the inclusion/empowerment of Pacific voice, narratives, and perspectives; the story of people within the data needs be enabled so that data is felt to be accessible, appealing, and meaningful to all.
  - Building the data capability of communities is implicit in this.
- An action focus is necessary:
  - System and data weaknesses have been identified and are well understood; opportunities to make improvements are there for the taking.
  - Stats and the data system need to apply learning and feedback to shore up the trust and partnership of Pacific communities and data representatives.
- Motivation for continued engagement and collaboration:
  - Stats must not assume it knows enough and can design solutions for Pacific, without Pacific; we must always ask if we are doing right, and how we can do better.
  - There is keen interest in continuing to engage / be engaged.
  - We noted that our work and environment is evolving, and all involved will need to move together and embrace newness or change, over time.

### **Future census design workshop, June 2024**

Stats NZ would like to invite data fono participants to express their interest in a full-day design workshop to explore the challenges and opportunities that a potential change in approach to census might bring for Pacific communities.

The workshop will focus on:

- Pacific data aspirations,
- how you use (or would like to use) social and population statistics including census and how that might evolve in the future,
- potential new data collections and insights for Pacific, and
- what a good census model might look like.

We will work through a facilitated design process to identify potential future opportunities, and mitigations to current or future challenges, and prioritise development of prototypes or tests that are most likely to meet needs and deliver value to Pacific communities and organisations that support them.

Later, workshop participants will have the opportunity, if desired, to test and provide feedback on any prototypes developed through this design process. Feedback will result in a recommendation paper that might seek, for instance, to progress an idea to pilot.

The outputs from the workshops will feed into the design of 2028 Census and future censuses, as well as the evaluation process to determine the best approach.

The workshop will likely take place in June 2024, face-to-face. Reasonable travel costs for those contributing their time in a personal capacity or on behalf of a not-for-profit organisation, can be met. No preparatory work or knowledge of statistical production is necessary.

To express interest, participants can [click here to notify us](#) by email. We will make contact with participants who express interest in due course. This invitation to express interest may be delegated to another member of your organisation who has shared equivalent discussion with Stats NZ about transformation and the future of population and social statistics, including census.

### **Public consultation and engagement on an administrative data-first approach for census**

In addition to ongoing engagement with iwi and Māori, key stakeholders and priority population groups on the future of population and social statistics, Stats NZ will soon invite the New Zealand public to have their say on what a future census could look like – and what is important to them.

We are seeking public input and sentiment about the use of more administrative data, supplemented by surveys, to produce social and population statistics from the census.

A formal six-week public consultation will commence in May. We let you know when the consultation is live, and appreciate any consideration you give sharing the consultation with your networks. You might also wish to make a submission, additional to your engagement with us – though this is not expected.

At the same time, a face-to-face consultation programme will support the receipt of feedback or formal submissions from priority response groups in the community.

Meanwhile, social media and ethnic radio stations will be used to stimulate feedback and gather sentiment from the general public about the use of more administrative data, supplemented by surveys. You might like to participate in the conversation and share the opportunity through your own social media networks.

From the middle of the year, the exploratory, collaborative design work mentioned above will be undertaken with our priority population groups. Community members and representatives will explore the challenges and opportunities that a potential change in approach to census might bring. The outputs from the workshops will feed into the design of 2028 Census and future censuses, as well as the evaluation process to determine the best approach.

Using feedback gathered from all engagement activities and guided by an independent evaluation panel, the Government Statistician will choose a preferred approach for Future Census.

The preferred approach to Future Census will be presented to Cabinet later in the year and, subject to Cabinet agreement, Stats NZ will focus on the detailed design of the new model, from the end of this year.

In 2025, a second round of public consultation and engagement will focus on the specific content and information needs that could be met in the 2028 Census and beyond.

Ngā mihi

Rachael

**Rachael Milicich** (pronouns: she/her/hers)

Deputy Government Statistician / Deputy Chief Executive – Insights and Statistics

Kaimātāi Tauanga Kāwanatanga Tuarua / Pouārahi Tuarua – Ngā Māramatanga Me Ngā Tauanga

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## Navigating our Pacific data future together

*Stats NZ is on a journey to modernise, reimagine and simplify how we produce quality and sustainable data and statistics – now and for generations to come.*

**We believe our Pacific people deserve to have confidence in our ability to partner to meet Pacific peoples' statistical needs, and that our partnership results in Pacific data equity, and quality statistics that enhance the future of Pacific wellbeing.**

That's why Stats NZ is putting the information needs of those who use statistics to support better life outcomes for us all, at the heart of all we do.

To succeed, Stats NZ must produce quality and equitable, meaningful statistics that meet the growing information needs of our diverse Pacific communities, in ways that are valued by the organisations and community groups that use them.

To meet this growth in information needs we're striving to support population counts and social statistics through greater use of administrative data, supplemented by surveys. Administrative data is data that government or other organisations already hold about people and places. It includes data about things like people's use of public transport, or where they live.

*Growing our use of administrative data will result in opportunities, and challenges for producers and users of Pacific statistics.*

Administrative data offers huge potential to improve the population statistics we produce. Some of the biggest benefits include the potential for more timely community-specific data at more regular intervals. Administrative data also offers potential for longitudinal and intergenerational measures. And it significantly reduces the time it takes some individuals or organisations to respond to surveys.

*Most importantly, the efficiency gained through using more administrative data can be used to support the development of new statistical products for our communities, or to collect information in new or enhanced ways, about important and possibly new topics.*

Right now, the quality and variety of administrative data available is not always good enough to meet everyone's information needs. Stats NZ will collaborate across our data system to improve administrative data quality, enhance and support adherence to data standards, and to better safeguard appropriate use of data – especially where information is derived from mixed data.

We're focused on improvements including the quality of ethnicity data for detailed ethnicity estimates, the collection of high-quality location data, and our methods for producing household and family information using administrative data.

*At the same time, we know many of the information needs of our Pacific communities will need to be met by surveying people. We'll partner with others to deliver a dedicated survey programme and other innovations to collect data and produce statistics that matter to our diverse Pacific communities.*

As we explore the potential of a Pacific data and statistics strategy and work programme together, we need to think through our opportunities and carefully consider how we will manage the challenges ahead.

**In a future with greater use of admin data:**

- **What are the greatest opportunities available to us, to improve Pacific data and statistics?**
- **What important considerations will our Pacific communities expect people in our data system, to be thinking about?**
- **What is the most fundamental thing our data system must collaborate on first for Pacific communities' statistics?**

***"Pikipiki hama, kae vaevae manava" – Let us bind our outrigger canoes so that we may share life***

## Key terms

**Administrative data** – Data collected by government agencies or private organisations while conducting their business. Administrative data can vary in nature, scope and quality depending on the organisation collecting the data.

**Data** – Facts, figures or observations collected, usually in digital form, that can be stored, manipulated and transmitted electronically.

**Data Equity** – Ensuring fair and equitable access to statistical information and ensuring that data accurately reflects the experiences and realities of diverse populations.

**Data Product** – Any statistical output resulting from the collection, processing, analysis and dissemination of statistical information.

**Data Quality** – The degree to which data meets the requirements and expectations of users for accuracy, reliability, relevance, timeliness and completeness.

**Data Standard** – A set of guidelines, rules and specifications that define how data should be structured, formatted and documented to ensure consistency and quality.

**Information** – Data that has been processed, organised or structured in a meaningful way, providing context, relevance and insights for decision-making or understanding.

**Social and Population Statistics** – A term used within Stats NZ to refer to statistics about individuals and households.

**Statistic** – An insight derived from a sample or a population, used to describe or summarise a specific aspect of that sample or population.

**Survey data** – Data collected, primarily by Stats NZ and other government agencies, from responses to surveys sent to individuals and businesses.

## Learn more

Learn how Stats NZ protects your data, how data helps to shape Aotearoa New Zealand, and how we deliver value back to you. [Ō raraunga i Tatauranga Aotearoa – Your data at Stats NZ | Stats NZ](#)

## Contact Stats NZ

Contact Stats NZ by email at [info@stats.govt.nz](mailto:info@stats.govt.nz) or phone on [0508 525 525](tel:0508525525)

# Delivering quality data for – and with – Pacific Peoples

Meeting information needs through greater use of administrative data

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“ Stats NZ is looking to transform how we deliver quality data and statistics...”

- Transformation – our vision and purpose
- Our drivers for change – challenges and opportunities
- Things need to change – so what we are exploring?

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“  
**We need your help  
rethinking what a  
Future Census  
could look like...**”

- Greater use of administrative data – what does this mean?
- Lifting the quality of administrative data for Pacific Peoples
- We will still need surveys – a targeted surveying programme
- Understanding your needs and how we can help

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# Pātai 1

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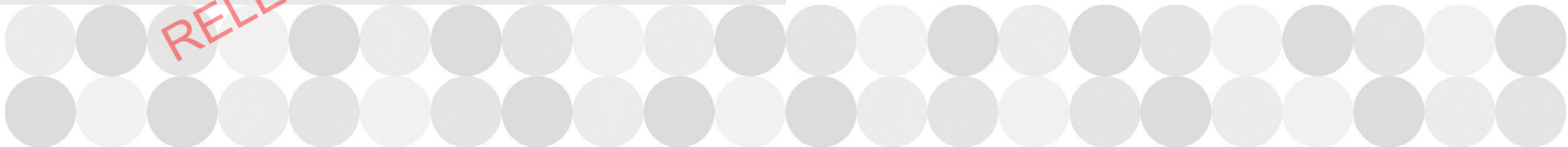
In a future with greater use of admin data, what is the single most important consideration we must think about, and why?

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“ We are looking to improve data equity and the quality of data for Pacific Peoples... ”

- Understanding your current, emerging and future needs
- Known concerns of current official measures
- We are committed to improving pacific data equity across social and population statistics.
- The role of enduring engagement to help meet your needs and aspirations

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# Pātai 2

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What strikes you most about what we've shared so far – and why?

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“

**Our aspiration is that you have trust and confidence in our ability to meet our communities' needs...**

- Earning your trust and confidence
- What else do you want us to keep top of mind?
- The importance of discussion and collaboration

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# Pātai 3

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What is the most fundamental thing we must collaborate on first, for Pacific communities' statistics, and why?

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# Pātai 4 (breakout)

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What do you believe to be the single greatest opportunity right 'here', and where should we, or others, begin?

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# Document 17



RE: Expression of interest in Pacific design workshops

From Corina Grey <corina.grey@mpp.govt.nz>

Date Thu 16/05/2024 2:42 PM

To Falaniko Tominiko <Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz>

Cc Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>; Fa'alogo Va'ai <Faalogo.Vaai@mpp.govt.nz>

Faiaksea Dr Falaniko

During the last Census, there was a lot of activity around the greater Wellington region due to the Pacific workforce from the Porirua area who worked hard and were well known in the regions. Many of our Pacific communities were exposed for the first time to what Census is and some are more interested to keep abreast of what's happening now and in the future.

Our Central team have had a quick chat and we're reaching out to the following providers and community groups in the Wellington region.

1. Taeaomanino Trust
2. Piringa Alofa
3. ATAMU Inc
4. Mafutaga Faifeau Samoa I Ueligitone
5. Wellington Tongan Leaders Group
6. Wellington Vagahau Niue
7. Partners Porirua
8. Tuvalu for All Trust
9. Wellington Tokelau Leaders Council.

We will let you know if any of these providers are keen to attend.

Faafetai

Corina

**From:** Falaniko Tominiko

**Sent:** Thursday, May 16, 2024 12:05 PM

**To:** Corina Grey

**Cc:** James Greenwell ; Maryke Barnard ; Gerard Sonder ; Fa'alogo Va'ai

**Subject:** RE: Expression of interest in Pacific design workshops

Noa'ia Dr Corina

We are topping the workshop at around 20ish.

We still have a few places so please reach out to Fa'alogo and let me know if they are keen to attend.

Faafetai

Falaniko (Niko)

**Vaotui Seuлуpe Dr Falaniko Tominiko**

Kaitohutohu Matāmua – Principal Advisor, Pacific Engagement

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| M:Office | T:WFH | W:Office | T:WFH | F:Office |

**About Aotearoa, for Aotearoa**

Data that improves lives today and for generations to come

**From:** Corina Grey <[corina.grey@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:corina.grey@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** Thursday, May 16, 2024 11:27 AM

**To:** Falaniko Tominiko <[Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz)>

**Cc:** James Greenwell <[james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz)>; Maryke Barnard <[maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz)>; Gerard

Sonder <[gerard.sonder@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:gerard.sonder@mpp.govt.nz)>; Fa'alogo Va'ai <[Faalogo.Vaai@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:Faalogo.Vaai@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Subject:** RE: Expression of interest in Pacific design workshops

Noa'ia Dr Falaniko

Hope you are having a good week. Sincere apologies for the late reply to this email. We're really looking forward to the workshop on 17<sup>th</sup> June.

Fa'alogo and the Central Partnerships team have good relationships with providers in the Wellington region and are very happy to reach out to them to invite them to the workshop. We were wondering if there is a limit on the number of people that can be invited and if you have particular providers or groups (e.g. health, social services, community) that you are wanting to invite?

Fajäksea

Corina

---

**From:** Falaniko Tominiko <[Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** Thursday, May 9, 2024 5:55 PM

**To:** Corina Grey <[corina.grey@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:corina.grey@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Cc:** James Greenwell <[james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz)>; Maryke Barnard <[maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz)>; Gerard Sonder <[gerard.sonder@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:gerard.sonder@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Subject:** RE: Expression of interest in Pacific design workshops

Talofa Dr Corina

I am pleased to offer yourself, James, Maryke and Gerard a place on our Future Census design workshop for our Pacific government partners which will take place on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> June from 10am - 4pm at Stats NZ at our office in 8 Willis St, Wellington.

Could you also help us by reaching out to some of your Pacific service providers in the Wellington area as we would also like representation from our Pacific service providers at the workshop.

Feel free to copy and paste email below (in blue) so that they can register their interest.

We look forward to meeting with you all Monday 17<sup>th</sup> June

Faafetai lava

Falaniko

**[Email to copy and paste to your Pacific service providers]**

### **Future census design workshop, 17 June 2024**

Stats NZ would like to invite data fono participants to express their interest in a full-day design workshop to explore the challenges and opportunities that a potential change in approach to census might bring for Pacific communities.

The workshop will focus on:

- Pacific data aspirations,
- how you use (or would like to use) social and population statistics including census and how that might evolve in the future,
- potential new data collections and insights for Pacific, and
- what a good census model might look like.

We will work through a facilitated design process to identify potential future opportunities, and mitigations to current or future challenges, and prioritise development of prototypes or tests that are most likely to meet needs and deliver value to Pacific communities and organisations that support them.

Later, workshop participants will have the opportunity, if desired, to test and provide feedback on any prototypes developed through this design process. Feedback will result in a recommendation paper that might seek, for instance, to progress an idea to pilot.

The outputs from the workshops will feed into the design of 2028 Census and future censuses, as well as the evaluation process to determine the best approach.

The workshop will take place 10am - 4pm, 17 June 2024 at Stats NZ, 8 Willis St, Wellington. Reasonable travel costs for those contributing their time in a personal capacity or on behalf of a not-for-profit organisation, can be met. No preparatory work or knowledge of statistical production is necessary.

To express interest, fono participants can [click here to notify us](#) by email. We will make contact with fono participants who express interest in due course. This invitation to express interest may be delegated to another member of your organisation who has shared equivalent discussion with Stats NZ about transformation and the future of population and social statistics, including census.

Falaniko (Niko)

**Vaotui Seulupe Dr Falaniko Tominiko**

Kaitohutohu Mātāmua – Principal Advisor, Pacific Engagement

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| M:Office | T:WFH | W:Office | T:WFH | F:Office |

## About Aotearoa, for Aotearoa

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**From:** Corina Grey <[corina.grey@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:corina.grey@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** Monday, April 29, 2024 4:18 PM

**To:** Falaniko Tominiko <[Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz)>

**Cc:** James Greenwell <[james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz)>; Maryke Barnard <[maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz)>; Gerard Sonder <[gerard.sonder@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:gerard.sonder@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Subject:** Expression of interest in Pacific design workshops

Talofa lava Falaniko

Hope you're well.

James, Maryke, Gerard and I would like to register our interest in attending a workshop in June as per Rachael's email last week.

Fa'afetai lava

Corina

**Dr Corina Grey**

Deputy Secretary - Data & Insights

Te Manatū mō ngā Iwi ō te Moana-nui-ā-Kiwa

Ministry for Pacific Peoples

Level 1, 101 - 103 The Terrace

PO Box 833, Wellington 6140, New Zealand

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# Document 18

 Outlook

RE: DSE Paper

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**From:** Maryke Barnard <[maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, May 7, 2024 2:39 PM

**To:** Hannes Diener <[Hannes.Diener@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Hannes.Diener@stats.govt.nz)>; James Greenwell <[james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz)>; Sandy Suei <[sandy.suei@stats.govt.nz](mailto:sandy.suei@stats.govt.nz)>; Conrad MacCormick <[conrad.maccormick@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:conrad.maccormick@mpp.govt.nz)>; Gerard Sonder <[gerard.sonder@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:gerard.sonder@mpp.govt.nz)>; Stacey Dobbie <[stacey.dobbie@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:stacey.dobbie@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Cc:** Hannah Wignall <[Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz)>

**Subject:** Re: DSE Paper

Kia Orana Hannes

Thank you so much for your time last week.

We really appreciate your considered response to our comments and questions.

We are currently working our way through the email and will get back to you soon.

We are keen to keep the conversation going and will get back to shortly to arrange a catch up.

Look forward to catching up soon!

Meitaki

Maryke

---

**From:** Hannes Diener <[Hannes.Diener@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Hannes.Diener@stats.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** Thursday, May 2, 2024 7:40:33 pm

**To:** James Greenwell <[james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz)>; Sandy Suei <[sandy.suei@stats.govt.nz](mailto:sandy.suei@stats.govt.nz)>; Conrad MacCormick <[conrad.maccormick@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:conrad.maccormick@mpp.govt.nz)>; Gerard Sonder <[gerard.sonder@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:gerard.sonder@mpp.govt.nz)>; Stacey Dobbie <[stacey.dobbie@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:stacey.dobbie@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Cc:** Maryke Barnard <[maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz)>; Hannah Wignall <[Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz)>

**Subject:** RE: DSE Paper

Kia ora James, Conrad, Gerard, Stacey, and Maryke

And thanks again for a good discussion. We're more than happy to keep the conversation going and see how we can support you using the APC or even collaborate on refining our methodologies around ethnicity.

I went through your comments and replied to all of them (attached) to make sure that they don't go unanswered, some of that info might be a repeat of what was said yesterday.

Re the questions in your email:

1. There's also a response in the slides, but in short: coverage + missingness = 100% (both relative to the base population). Output quality = non-missing quality \* coverage. Non-missing quality is calculated in different ways for each variable, but mostly is linked back to the proportion of agreement with direct 2018 census responses. [With variation of what exactly constitutes agreement and with the more complex approach of Dempster Shafer theory for L1 ethnicity and some other variables.]
2. As a start, I'll point you to [Experimental administrative population census \(third iteration\): Information by variable | Stats NZ](#), which, for each attribute, describes the data sources, and the derivation. We also have a copy of the actual SQL code output, and that is also available on the datalab wiki (albeit somewhat hard to find).
3. All our immediate "peers"—England+Wales, Scotland, Australia, Northern Ireland, Rep of Ireland, Canada, and US have very similar plans (the US has a somewhat different setup with the census fairly narrowly and explicitly defined in the constitution, so there are limits to any change). Not surprisingly we are in regular contact with them, which explains some similarities in thinking. See, eg [Annual Assessment of ONS's progress towards an Administrative Data Census post-2021 - Office for National Statistics](#) or [Administrative](#)

[data snapshot of population and housing | Australian Bureau of Statistics \(abs.gov.au\)](#). In some ways we are the furthest along the journey by maybe a couple of years, and definitely have the most mature experimental series of the bunch with the APC. Though, some like the UK are moving at speed, with having a very detailed plan of changing their population measurement (the equivalent of our ERP) to be admin based. Australia has also done quite interesting work and actually added a complete (income) census variable that only relied on admin data to their last census. This is something Stats NZ hasn't done, as C18 and C23 have always combined responses with admin data.

Other countries with slightly different setups (including actually having some sort of legal population register), but they also have plans that are reminiscent: South Korea, Italy, France, Netherlands spring to mind. There's a nice UN survey about how many countries use what sort of census model in the 2020 round. See tables at the end of: [BG-Item3j-Survey-E.pdf \(un.org\)](#). I believe there has even been a version with future plans for the next census round, but I can't find that at the moment.

4. We don't really have any quality thresholds per se. I guess that is one of the differences between a productionised output and an experimental one. Of course, we've made some decisions about admin data for some variables not being good enough to be included in the APC at this stage: [The quality of administrative data for census variables: Strengths, limitations, and opportunities \(stats.govt.nz\)](#). To be fair, I don't think the traditional census has fixed thresholds either. The decision of publishing data or not is made based on a general assessment. Eg the decision not to release iwi affiliation in 2018. (Some estimates based on the data have been published since).
5. Maybe [2018 Census data quality management strategy \(stats.govt.nz\)](#). Not sure if there is a C23 version of that paper.
6. No, at least probably not in the sense you mean. At the moment we're really focusing on understanding "nfd/other" and "L4". (So arguably it is seeing whether missingness is higher for some specific ethnicities, that exploring missingness that is not random in that sense).
7. Using HLFs and pooling over all years is really just the first attempt, as that is data we have access to and covers a large part of the population. If Stats NZ was to not have a full field enumeration for collecting census data there is a need for increased survey activity. So it's safe to assume that whatever that will look like it will be size-wise sufficient to benchmark. We would also have the opportunity to design the benchmarking into any future survey program. Eg making sure that core questions such as ethnicity are always asked.
8. A priori we are actually not setting out to produce the best possible data. Otherwise, we would be including C18 information. We're assessing the quality by both unit record and distributional comparisons. (Having said that, we're obviously happy if those numbers go up). There's actually also a lot of qualitative analysis done to make sure classifications align, and we understand the purpose with which t
9. For our small team and at the moment the IDI is a bit of a black box, in that we don't have full insight into their processes and can't influence decisions. (We do have an excellent working relationship, it's just that we're one of many users.)

Work is ongoing to set up the statistical data infrastructure to support the use of admin data in official statistics. That means that the entire process including data ingestion can be better understood and tweaked, and decisions can be driven by the outputs we aim to produce, rather than by the focus on policy research that the IDI has.

Hope this helps,  
Nga mihi nui,  
Hannes  
Dr Hannes Diener  
Senior Design Analyst | Kaitātari Hoahoa Mātāmua  
Research and Development Hub | Tikanga Mahi Tatauranga  
Methods & Design | Ngā Ritenga & Hoahoatanga  
Stats NZ | Tatauranga Aotearoa | [stats.govt.nz](#)

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**From:** James Greenwell <[james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 12:18 PM

**To:** Sandy Suei <[sandy.suei@stats.govt.nz](mailto:sandy.suei@stats.govt.nz)>; Conrad MacCormick <[conrad.maccormick@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:conrad.maccormick@mpp.govt.nz)>; Gerard Sonder <[gerard.sonder@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:gerard.sonder@mpp.govt.nz)>; Stacey Dobbie <[stacey.dobbie@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:stacey.dobbie@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Cc:** Hannes Diener <[Hannes.Diener@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Hannes.Diener@stats.govt.nz)>; Maryke Barnard <[maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz)>; Hannah Wignall <[Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz)>

**Subject:** Re: DSE Paper

Kia orāna Sandy, Hannes, and Hannah,

The implications of your work on future census is significant. This is a rich area for discussion and important for understanding Pacific data quality shortcomings.

Many thanks for taking several of our questions yesterday and sharing the links below. Your slides helped to focus our discussion rather than covering it all at once.

We'd be keen to continue the conversation and take advantage of your specialist expertise within Stats NZ.

Apologies I haven't had time to check with my teammates so there may be more questions. In the meantime, there are a few top of minds from my notes to follow-up:

1. Would either of you help us with a worked data quality analysis (expression and equations) for the slide showing missing%, non-missing quality rating, and output quality? Apologies if this is already published - if so a link would be great.
2. A similar level of detail/intuition illustrating the methods used for deriving the APC (including data source prioritisation and imputation) and assessing quality would help my team deliver much more informed advice about census transformation plans. The available slide deck and APC pages are targeted at a more generalist audience but not detailed enough my teammates to develop intuition from outside Stats NZ.
3. Are there models being adapted by Stats NZ from other countries who use (or consider using) large linked databases and registries like the IDI to replace conventional census enumeration in the absence of a population register? If so, links to literature (including grey literature) being used by Stats NZ would be appreciated.
4. Can you provide more intuition about the quality thresholds and what those are for APC applications?
5. The Quality slide (eg timelines, accessibility, consistency/coherency, accuracy, relevance, and interpretability) is helpful to see. Is there a formal framework that Stats NZ uses and if so can you link me to it. The main one that I can find which provides sufficient detail is the principals and protocols for producers for tier 1 statistics but on the Stats NZ website. However, I see a label next to it saying that it's basically expired. Is there a new framework (other than the slide) specific to the APC that you can link me to?
6. Does the ethnicity data quality study aim to understand the extent that missing data is random?
7. In terms of the use of HLFS - it sounded like pooled data over multiple (or all) years is applied in a limited way eg for ethnicity information. Can you provide more intuition about how surveys will be considered for benchmarking. We're conscious that the current set of surveys are household surveys and based on census. It would be useful to learn about how the APC could be used to design new sample frames and how that would affect cross-validation.
8. I think you touched on it - but is the objective of the APC to be high quality (according to the criteria in the quality slide) both at a unit record/individual level and at an aggregate population statistics level?

9. In terms of prioritising work you mentioned that the initial objective is to understand and describe the data itself. This appears to be the phase your team is currently in. Does this relate to the data being collated by the IDI prior (at the agencies) or post ingestion or is it more specifically the derived APC?

Fa'afetai tele lava,

James

**Dr James Greenwell**

Chief Data Scientist, Data and Insights

Ministry for Pacific Peoples

Te Manatū mō ngā lwi o te Moana-nui-ā-Kiwa

s9(2)(a)

[www.mpp.govt.nz](http://www.mpp.govt.nz)



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**From:** Sandy Suei <[sandy.suei@stats.govt.nz](mailto:sandy.suei@stats.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** 30 April 2024 5:09 PM

**To:** James Greenwell <[james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz)>; Conrad MacCormick <[conrad.maccormick@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:conrad.maccormick@mpp.govt.nz)>; Gerard Sonder <[gerard.sonder@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:gerard.sonder@mpp.govt.nz)>; Stacey Dobbie <[stacey.dobbie@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:stacey.dobbie@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Cc:** Hannes Diener <[Hannes.Diener@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Hannes.Diener@stats.govt.nz)>; Maryke Barnard <[maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz)>; Hannah Wignall <[Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz)>

**Subject:** DSE Paper

Kia ora koutou,

Thank you for meeting with us today.

We apologise if there were any questions left unanswered due to the time constraints. Feel free to schedule a follow-up session to either address those or to discuss the dual system estimation if you're interested.

Below are some background readings:

- [Population size estimation of four ethnic groupings \(stats.govt.nz\)](#) – our collab work with Utrecht University and University of Southampton
- <https://www.stats.govt.nz/methods/dual-system-estimation-combining-census-responses-and-an-admin-population> - the census 2018 paper might be a good intro to Dual system estimation (DSE)
- [Bayesian dual systems population estimation for small domains \(projecteuclid.org\)](#) - DSE theory and methods
- [Update on differences in reporting of ethnicity – supplement to 2023 Post-enumeration Survey: Standard design for coverage estimation | Stats NZ](#) – PES vs Census

Ngā mihi

Sandy

Dr Sandy Swei (pronouns: she/her/hers)

Manager - Research & Development Hub | Kaiwhakahaere - Pūtahi Rangahau & Whakawhanake hoki

Methods Support & Research | Te Tautoko & Rangahau mō ngā Ritenga Mahi

Methods & Design | Ngā Ritenga & Hoahoatanga

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# Document 19

 Outlook

RE: Stats/MPP Future Census

From Hannah Wignall <Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz>

Date Wed 12/06/2024 1:39 PM

To Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>

Cc James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>; Jacinta Syme <Jacinta.Syme@stats.govt.nz>; Sean Broughton <sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz>; Falaniko Tominiko <Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz>; Lafaele Mapusua <Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz>; Gareth Minshall <gareth.minshall@stats.govt.nz>

Kia ora Maryke,

Thanks for sending that through.

I've Cc'd others attending the hui today. s9(2)(g)(i)

s9(2)(g)(i) But I'll touch base with the team following the meeting on the discussion and actions to follow up with!

Talk soon!

Hannah

---

**From:** Maryke Barnard

**Sent:** Wednesday, June 12, 2024 1:00 PM

**To:** Hannah Wignall

**Cc:** James Greenwell

**Subject:** RE: Stats/MPP Future Census

Hi Hannah

Hope you are well.

Just wanted to share some of the subpoint to the agenda we're hoping to ask about at this afternoon's meeting (in blue below).

A suggested agenda for our next talanoa is:

- Overview of the Future Census Programme – progress & milestones
  - Statutory review of Census 2023 and the independent review of Census 2018.
  - Considerations re survey participation given census response.
  - PES update and implications for coverage rates and response rates.
  - Implications for census methodology and comms changes.
  - Does Stats NZ Plan to release the Level 2, 3, 4 usually resident population count in November 2024?
  - Is there a timeframe for updating the interim coverage rates?
    - While 99% coverage has been mentioned, has there been any discussion about the low response rates affecting methodology?
    - Have the Household sampling units been updated for government household surveys using Census 2023?
- Future Census engagement – updates, discussion
- Stats/MPP partnership and collaboration – updates, discussion

Maryke Barnard

Operations Manager, Data and Insights

s9(2)(a)

-----Original Appointment-----

**From:** Hannah Wignall <[Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** Thursday, June 6, 2024 10:18 AM

**To:** Hannah Wignall; Sean Broughton; Jacinta Syme; Falaniko Tominiko; Lafaele Mapusua; Corina Grey; Maryke Barnard; James Greenwell

**Cc:** Roxane Gajadhar; Tennille Maxey; Hannes Diener; Sandy Swei; Wendy Hamilton

**Subject:** Stats/MPP Future Census

**When:** Wednesday, 12 June 2024 3:30 pm-4:30 pm (UTC+12:00) Auckland, Wellington.

**Where:** Microsoft Teams Meeting

Kia ora Dr Grey and colleagues,

Mihi nui for your engagement and valuable feedback, to date, on Stats NZ's approach to modernising the next census. We've immensely appreciated your input, including contributions to fono with Pacific leaders and technical discussions between James *et al* and Stats NZ's Methods and Design kaimahi, as well as your clear and robust feedback on the Cabinet papers and discussion document earlier this year. As previously signalled by Carly in our Policy team, we're keen to set up regular talanoa with you – over and above planned technical sessions – to discuss the broader Future Census context, milestones, and key topics such as engagement with Pacific data stakeholders and community representatives, as well as how Stats NZ and the Ministry for Pacific People partner and collaborate.

A suggested agenda for our next talanoa is:

- Overview of the Future Census Programme – progress & milestones
- Future Census engagement – updates, discussion
- Stats/MPP partnership and collaboration – updates, discussion

Is there anything else you'd like to add or change relating to the above agenda? If so, please let me know.

I had talked to Maryke about having this talanoa be a Teams discussion, due to availability and travel for people. However, for the following talanoa we'd love to come back to the MPP offices or welcome you back to Stats. I'll work with Maryke on future meeting dates.

Ngā mihi,

Hannah

**Hannah Wignall** (she/her)

Kaiwhakahaere - Tuituinga | Kōtuitanga Hinonga | Kaiārahi Pūnaha Raraunga

Engagement Manager | Agency Partnering | Data System Leadership

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# Document 20



Re: Census transformation Pacific fono/workshop

From James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>

Date Thu 27/06/2024 4:23 PM

To Hannah Wignall <Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz>

Cc Lafaele Mapusua <Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz>; Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>

Sounds perfect 😊

**From:** Hannah Wignall

**Sent:** 27 June 2024 2:50 PM

**To:** James Greenwell

**Cc:** Lafaele Mapusua ; Maryke Barnard

**Subject:** RE: Census transformation Pacific fono/workshop

Kia ora,

How about I walk over for 11.15 and we catch up then. Does that work?

Thanks,

Hannah

**From:** James Greenwell

**Sent:** Wednesday, June 26, 2024 7:53 AM

**To:** Hannah Wignall

**Cc:** Lafaele Mapusua ; Maryke Barnard

**Subject:** Re: Census transformation Pacific fono/workshop

Kia ora Hannah,

Next Monday suits - anytime before noon. You're welcome to come to MPP or we can meet on Teams - whichever works for you.

Fa'afetai tele lava,

James

**Dr James Greenwell**

Chief Data Scientist, Data and Insights

Ministry for Pacific Peoples

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s9(2)(a)

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**From:** Hannah Wignall <[Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** 25 June 2024 6:07 PM

**To:** James Greenwell <[james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Cc:** Lafaele Mapusua <[Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz)>; Maryke Barnard

<[maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Subject:** RE: Census transformation Pacific fono/workshop

Kia ora James,

Thanks again for the follow up feedback/questions

I'd be keen to have a check in with you on your email below, I have a few clarifying questions if that is ok?

I'd be free for a zoom later this week or if you'd prefer I can come into MPP Mon or Tues next week?

Thanks

Hannah

---

**From:** Hannah Wignall

**Sent:** Wednesday, June 19, 2024 1:14 PM

**To:** James Greenwell <[james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Cc:** Lafaele Mapusua <[Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz)>; Maryke Barnard <[maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz)>; Lisa Cheney <[Lisa.Cheney@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Lisa.Cheney@stats.govt.nz)>

**Subject:** RE: Census transformation Pacific fono/workshop

Kia orāna,

Thanks again James. I wanted to send you a quick email to acknowledge we've received your further questions. I am going to take these to a few key people internally and will get back to you on a response. With regards to your feedback yesterday. I'll talk to Lisa about follow up comms to the design workshop participants and we'll incorporate your additional feedback into the comms so people are receiving one set of comms/updates from us if that is ok?

As always, get in touch if you need anything in the short term. Otherwise, I'll be in touch shortly.

Thanks

Hannah

---

**From:** James Greenwell <[james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, June 19, 2024 11:14 AM

**To:** Hannah Wignall <[Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz)>

**Cc:** Lafaele Mapusua <[Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz)>; Maryke Barnard <[maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz)>; Lisa Cheney <[Lisa.Cheney@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Lisa.Cheney@stats.govt.nz)>

**Subject:** Re: Census transformation Pacific fono/workshop

Kia orāna Hannah,

I had a chance to chat about this with several teammates yesterday.

It would be ideal to circulate my feedback yesterday and from this email with workshop attendees to continue the talanoa.

My teammates were wondering about adding the following:

- It would be ideal to get feedback from Stats NZ about how our reviews of Cab papers, briefings, and strategy drafts have been incorporated. In general we either receive a simple acknowledgement or no acknowledgement that comments have been received. MPP is happy to have our feedback shared in support of Talanoa. This issue was raised by other colleagues at the workshop as a minimum behaviour that Stats NZ can implement.
  - Similarly, after many months of trying to follow all the threads related to census transformation my team still has many unanswered questions. We are either meeting managers who cannot answer technical questions or technical experts who cannot or refuse to discuss the implications of their analyses. I made the point about the official comms being unhelpful and obscuring decision making, engagement and leadership challenges identified in the recent statutory review of Census 2023. We'd like to see a workshop action related to transparency/integrity. Perhaps this could be in the form of a reinvigorated principles and protocols for producers and users of official statistics?
- As an action for Stats NZ - would it be possible to collate all census transformation/modernisation documents (legislation, briefings/Cab papers/minutes, research/analytical/results reports, academic/peer reviewed research articles, methodology reports) going back to the earliest papers on census transformation in one place? At the moment many stakeholders are being asked to

consult on a significant topic who may not be sufficiently informed. The information may exist but that isn't clear. We have established during the Talanoa that the status quo approach does not support accessibility of information. Given the value of the census and the extreme disruption being proposed the expense to collate information to improve accessibility seems warranted.

- Can engagement be more inclusive? At the moment engagement between agencies and other stakeholders is very compartmentalised and also unlikely to reach some important teams within agencies. I run into stakeholders in other professional venues not knowing beforehand that they share many concerns about the current transformation proposal. Given the value of the census and the extreme disruption being proposed the expense to engage in a more include and comprehensive way seems warranted.

Fa'afetai tele lava,  
James

---

**From:** Hannah Wignall <[Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** 18 June 2024 3:02 PM

**To:** James Greenwell <[james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Cc:** Lafaele Mapusua <[Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz)>; Maryke Barnard <[maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz)>; Lisa Cheney <[Lisa.Cheney@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Lisa.Cheney@stats.govt.nz)>

**Subject:** RE: Census transformation Pacific fono/workshop

Kia orāna,

Thanks for sending through and nice to see you yesterday.

I've looped in Lisa, who ran the session yesterday.

I'll also reach out to Gareth and Hannes as you've mentioned them below and previous conversations.

Thanks again,

Hannah

---

**From:** James Greenwell <[james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, June 18, 2024 1:54 PM

**To:** Hannah Wignall <[Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz)>

**Cc:** Lafaele Mapusua <[Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz)>; Maryke Barnard <[maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Subject:** Census transformation Pacific fono/workshop

Kia orāna Hannah,

Many thanks to you and colleagues for inviting my team to the workshop yesterday.

I have a few follow-ups which should be added to the white board questions/comments. Any of this can also be shared with the group. I'll forward others once I've had a chat with MPP colleagues.

1. Will the PES be used to validate the admin information used for Census 2023 and will be able to see those results? For example as the recapture component - the PES will presumably obtain information from respondents missed by the census (initial capture) and where admin data was used. We'd like to understand the correlation between the admin data and PES.
2. I'd like clarification about the Italian and Swiss census examples provided at the workshop. Those examples haven't been included in the discussion document (from memory) and also haven't been mentioned by Mark Sowden or Hannes during our reviews of the APC. I've done some quick searching and found several Stats NZ documents ([International-examples-on-census-models.pdf \(stats.govt.nz\)](#) & [Transforming the New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings: Issues, options, and strategy \(stats.govt.nz\)](#)) which reference them. The first includes a high level summary which is potentially misleading. It labels the Italian census as combined which it is but it combines admin data and surveys with municipal registers that aim to cover the entire population. This is basically a register based census with a population register (in the form of municipal registers) which we don't plan to pursue from my understanding. The Swiss census from what I gather also makes use of registers based on a centralised population register. I've looked at publications outside Stats NZ but those may be out of date.
3. The example of Canada may also be a misleading example to use in the discussion document and in Stats NZ media releases. Can a clear explanation for using Canada in the transformation

discussion document, Cabinet papers and media releases be provided? The recent Canadian census has performed much better in terms of response rate than the NZ census which failed most KPIs. Apparently, the Canadian census anticipated response rate pandemic challenges and the need to supplement with admin data. However, the response rate was high enough that enumeration with admin data was unnecessary. They are also proposing to run an admin census several years after the next NZ census. The UK is also proposing an admin census following the NZ census. Canada, the UK and NZ all lack a population register. Part of our discussion centred on the loss of public trust in statistics systems and processes that Stats NZ is accountable for and the government services that other agencies are accountable for as a source of admin data. Part of the public trust includes the analytical and research community.

Fa'afetai tele lava,

James

**Dr James Greenwell**

Chief Data Scientist, Data and Insights

Ministry for Pacific Peoples

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# Document 21

 Outlook

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**RE: Thank you and FYI sharing our Pacific consutation**

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**From** Falaniko Tominiko <Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz>

**Date** Mon 1/07/2024 10:34 AM

**To** Gerard Sonder <gerard.sonder@mpp.govt.nz>; Lafaele Mapusua <Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz>; Hannah Wignall <Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz>

**Cc** James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>; Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>; gerard@pacificperspectives.co.nz <gerard@pacificperspectives.co.nz>

Thank you Gerard

Falaniko (Niko)

**Vaotui Seulupe Dr Falaniko Tominiko**

Kaitohutohu Mātāmua – Principal Advisor, Pacific Engagement

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**From:** Gerard Sonder <gerard.sonder@mpp.govt.nz>

**Sent:** Thursday, June 27, 2024 4:55 PM

**To:** Falaniko Tominiko <Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz>; Lafaele Mapusua <Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz>; Hannah Wignall <Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz>

**Cc:** James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>; Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>; gerard@pacificperspectives.co.nz

**Subject:** RE: Thank you and FYI sharing our Pacific consutation

Hi Falaniko and Lafaele,

Thanks for forwarding this, I really enjoyed the workshop.

I am also sharing FYI the link to our consultation submission below, which focusses on Pacific data quality related to census.

[Response: Modernising our approach | Pacific Perspectives](#)

It is my last day in MPP today, my e-mail address from today is [gerard@pacificperspectives.co.nz](mailto:gerard@pacificperspectives.co.nz)

Kind regards

Gerard

**Dr. Gerard Sonder**

Public Health Physician, epidemiologist PhD

s9(2)(a)

Level 1, 101 - 103 The Terrace

PO Box 833, Wellington 6140, New Zealand

**From:** Falaniko Tominiko <[Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** Thursday, June 27, 2024 3:08 PM

**To:** James Greenwell <[james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz)>; Gerard Sonder <[gerard.sonder@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:gerard.sonder@mpp.govt.nz)>; Fa'alogo Va'ai <[Faalogo.Vaai@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:Faalogo.Vaai@mpp.govt.nz)>; Theresa Fabricius <[Theresa.Fabricius001@msd.govt.nz](mailto:Theresa.Fabricius001@msd.govt.nz)>; Tuta Visesio-Pita <[Tuta.VisesioPita001@msd.govt.nz](mailto:Tuta.VisesioPita001@msd.govt.nz)>; Inspector Peter Stokes <[Peter.Stokes@police.govt.nz](mailto:Peter.Stokes@police.govt.nz)>; [David.PULEMAGAFA@police.govt.nz](mailto:David.PULEMAGAFA@police.govt.nz); Taima Fagaloa <[Taima.Fagaloa@porirua.govt.nz](mailto:Taima.Fagaloa@porirua.govt.nz)>; Linda Fatialofa <[Linda.Fatialofa@TeWhatuOra.govt.nz](mailto:Linda.Fatialofa@TeWhatuOra.govt.nz)>; Ivan Tava <[ivan@avantglobal.ai](mailto:ivan@avantglobal.ai)>

**Cc:** Lafaele Mapusua <[Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz)>; Lisa Cheney <[Lisa.Cheney@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Lisa.Cheney@stats.govt.nz)>; Hannah Wignall <[Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz)>

**Subject:** Thank you

**Importance:** High

Greetings all

I am just passing on a thank you below from Lisa Cheney for your participation in our Pacific Design Workshop.

Warm Pacific greetings,

I wanted to thank you all for your hard work and the valuable conversations we had in our Pacific collaborative design session last week. The team and I are busy drawing up the summaries and designs from the workshop and hope to have something with you to check by the end of this week or early next week. You will get a chance to check you are comfortable with the content we have captured, and then we will include it in our design content for our independent evaluation panel to consider, and it will also feed into the next stages of Future Census design. I hope you enjoyed the workshop – please let me know if you have any feedback that we can use to improve the experience at future workshops of this type.

Thanks again,  
Lisa

Lisa Cheney (pronouns: she/her/hers)  
Design Lead – Future Census

*Please note I work flexible hours and may send or respond to messages out of working hours. I do not expect the same from you – please read/respond within your own working hours.*

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# Document 22

 Outlook

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**RE: Many thanks for taking time with us today**

---

**From** Hannah Wignall <Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz>

**Date** Mon 1/07/2024 4:30 PM

**To** James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>; Lafaele Mapusua <Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz>

**Cc** Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>

Talofa lava,

Appreciate you making the time today and thanks for sending through the links.

Lafaele and I will catch up tomorrow and I'll send a summary our conversation through to you both then if that is ok.

Thanks again,

Hannah

---

**From:** James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>

**Sent:** Monday, July 1, 2024 3:27 PM

**To:** Hannah Wignall <Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz>; Lafaele Mapusua <Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz>

**Cc:** Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>

**Subject:** Many thanks for taking time with us today

Talofa lava Hannah, Lafaele,

Many thanks for taking time with us today. 😊

Here are a few links which may support intuition.

[Nicholson Consulting Submission: Modernising our Approach to the 2028 Census Consultation — Nicholson Consulting](#) This public feedback sums up what MPP feedback through agency consultation. It also references a historic Cab paper that identifies a number of obstacles that may still need to be overcome.

[The Experimental Administrative Population Census \(APC\).\(youtube.com\)](#) This is the APC presentation at Waikato Uni. The main questions start about half way through the presentation. It was reminiscent of the discussion my teammates had with Stats NZ when we were still trying to understand the APC.

Fa'afetai tele lava,

James

**Dr James Greenwell**

Chief Data Scientist, Data and Insights

Policy and Insights, Ministry for Pacific Peoples

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# Document 23

 Outlook

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Re: Catch up 1 July Stats/MPP

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From James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>

Date Tue 16/07/2024 9:45 AM

To Hannah Wignall <Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz>; Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>

Cc Lafaele Mapusua <Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz>; Falaniko Tominiko <Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz>

Mauri Hannah,

Apologies for the delay responding.

I think the interaction with Gareth and the evaluation panel paper was constructive.

Many thanks for sharing the PES information. Gareth introduced me to Dave Adair and Ben Faulks to follow-up about PES questions.

Kam rabwa,  
James

**Dr James Greenwell**

Chief Data Scientist, Data and Insights  
Policy and Insights, Ministry for Pacific Peoples  
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s9(2)(a)

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**From:** Hannah Wignall <Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz>

**Sent:** 03 July 2024 5:43 PM

**To:** Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>; James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>

**Cc:** Lafaele Mapusua <Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz>; Falaniko Tominiko <Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz>

**Subject:** Catch up 1 July Stats/MPP

Kia ora,

Sorry it has taken me a few days to get back to you. Thank you for your time on Monday, I really appreciated the discussion.

A few key things I heard:

- We acknowledged the current climate across government and the pressures and changes people are under.
- That it is D&I's core job to address quality of the system. You mentioned the importance of understanding how things are being worked up so you can give advice to the community, your networks and the Minister.
- That when you engage, you want to understand how the discussions / information being shared is being used.
- It feels like Stats isn't fully discussing areas of concern and that MPP is looking for more free and frank discussions. That you are familiar with already published information.
- You understand the need to engage with people in groups, but its important not to engage with people in vacuums and to share information on what others (more technical folk) have said.
- We talked a little about use of official statistics and having information in one place to help people use the data
- We committed to catching up more regularly on current queries/engagements underway and to build in the above reflections into future engagement planning. I will put something in our diary for another catch up Maryke.

You noted Maryke had a question register for MPP queries to Stats and that you'd be happy to share that. If that is the case, that would be great.

James, I wanted to ask where your conversations with Gareth on 'the Impact of future census options of pacific data' got to? You mentioned this in our hui, but I wanted to check in on this specifically – perhaps a call is best?

I also wanted to add, in the last Future Census Stats/MPP engagement, we had an action to share with the 2023 Post-enumeration Survey publication dates. Please see below and let me know if it would be useful to set up a conversation on what analysis might help MPP understand the impacts on Pacific communities/participants?

The **Key results** content is expected to include:

- 2023 Census coverage and response rates for the total population and sub-populations of interest (e.g. age group, broad ethnic group etc.)
- media releases highlighting specific aspects of coverage
- analysis and explanation of coverage patterns
- detailed coverage results in tabular and graph form.

This is scheduled for release 9 December 2024. Link to corresponding 2018 output for reference: [Post-enumeration survey: 2018 | Stats NZ](#).

The **Methodology report** content is expected to include:

- 2023 Census coverage and response rates for the total population and sub-populations of interest (e.g. age group, broad ethnic group etc.)
- in-depth analysis and explanation of coverage patterns, including international comparisons
- comprehensive data collection and methodological information
- detailed coverage results in tabular, graph, and map form.

This is expected to be released in late February 2025. Link to corresponding 2018 output for reference: [Post-enumeration survey 2018: Methods and results | Stats NZ](#).

Ngā mihi,  
Hannah

**Hannah Wignall** (she/her)  
Kaiwhakahaere - Tuituinga | Kōtuitanga Hinonga|Kaiārahi Pūnaha Raraunga  
Engagement Manager | Agency Partnering |Data System Leadership  
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# Document 24

 Outlook

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## RE: Notes from today

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**From** Hannah Wignall <Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz>  
**Date** Mon 29/07/2024 12:00 PM  
**To** Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>  
**Cc** Lafaele Mapusua <Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz>

Thanks, sorry about my delay now.

See my responses in red.

Hope you had a good weekend!

---

**From:** Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 23, 2024 4:40 PM  
**To:** Hannah Wignall <Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz>  
**Subject:** RE: Notes from today

Good afternoon Hannah – apologies for the delay.

Please see my responses in green below.

And replied to Falaniko about the MOU 😊

**Maryke Barnard**  
**Operations Manager, Data and Insights**

s9(2)(a)

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**From:** Hannah Wignall <Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 18, 2024 1:26 PM  
**To:** Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>  
**Subject:** Notes from today

Hi,

Thanks for making the time to catch up. Hope you get on top of house stuff by the end of the week!

Only sending this as to help with your busy day, no pressure to respond immediately.

- You were going to intro me to the Manager of Kapasa/Yavu Team? Will do – just a quick clarification – is this more related to “how” to engage or is it more about “who”? I am hoping to support connections between Stats/MPP on the ‘who’, but also the ‘how’ (whilst noting, we have the pacific engagement leads here at Stats who have their own connects and approaches). In the first instance it would be good to look to the next round of future census public consultation (planned for ~mid-2025).
- You were going to give Falaniko & I and update on MOU from your end – emailed 😊 Saw that, amazing.

- We chatted a bit about the FC paper James had input into
- We talked about me sending through an email with what we think are the main questions/concerns people have and discuss approach to answering them in any future census engagement – James is happy to provide some feedback on these questions. Thanks I'll reach out to him this week.
- You were going to share with me your list of actions between MPP/Stats - it's coming 😊 thanks 😊
- You were going to check with Corina whether she would like us to set up a regular check in with Sean Broughton (GM Customers and Partnerships and Future Census Programme Lead) – I understand the meetings with Wendy is still in Corina's calendar. Yes correct. My bad – I forgot where the meetings with Sean to provide an update on the census transformation? It is to establish a regular future census check in with Sean and Corina, a chance for the conversation to progress outside of formal hui.

Ngā mihi,  
Hannah

**Hannah Wignall** (she/her)

Kaiwhakahaere - Tuituinga | Kōtuitanga Hinonga | Kaiārahi Pūnaha Raraunga  
Engagement Manager | Agency Partnering | Data System Leadership

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# Document 25

 Outlook

## Future Census Government Agency Information Session

From Sean Broughton <sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz>

Date Fri 2/08/2024 5:26 PM

Cc Anna McDowell <anna.mcdowell@stats.govt.nz>; Wendy Hamilton <Wendy.Hamilton@stats.govt.nz>; Roxane Gajadhar <Roxane.Gajadhar@stats.govt.nz>; Hannah Wignall <Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz>; Julie Dykes <Julie.Dykes@stats.govt.nz>; Jacinta Syme <Jacinta.Syme@stats.govt.nz>; Gary Dunnet <gary.dunnet@stats.govt.nz>; Gareth Minshall <gareth.minshall@stats.govt.nz>; Hannes Diener <Hannes.Diener@stats.govt.nz>; Lisa Cheney <Lisa.Cheney@stats.govt.nz>; Celeste Cutting <celeste.Cutting@stats.govt.nz>

 3 attachments (6 MB)

An introduction to the future census options Draft in confidence.pdf; Methodological feasibility of an admin-based census - progress to date and further work - Full - Draft in confidence.pdf; Ethnicity Quality Review from Admin Sources Draft in confidence.pdf;

Kia ora tātou,

Ngā mihi nui ki a koutou for your continued engagement and expertise to date. We've valued your high-quality submissions and feedback.

We'd like to share a proposed agenda for next week's session. There'll be time for discussion and whilst we've highlighted some common areas of interest from engagement to date, where we focus the discussion is flexible.

### Proposed agenda:

1. Welcome and session overview
2. Future Census milestones and timeline
  - a. Future Census Independent Evaluation Panel overview
  - b. Timeline of decisions and opportunities for input
3. Overview of what we've heard from submissions and engagement
4. Facilitated discussion on key areas of interest to agencies, including but not limited to:
  - a. Quality and control of key variables in administrative data (e.g. ethnicity data etc.)
  - b. Concepts not well measured in administrative data and the granularity that would be supported by survey data (need and level of surveying)
  - c. Supporting information needs for key communities and minority populations
5. Focus for subsequent sessions
6. Thank you and close

### Optional pre-reading material – not for distribution

We're sharing the following documents for reference and more information before next week's session. These documents have been prepared for the Future Census Independent Evaluation Panel. Please don't share these documents wider without checking in with Stats NZ first.

- **Methodological feasibility of an administrative data-based census progress to date and further work:** Detailed overview of the methodological feasibility of an administrative data-first census. Lists progress and critical areas that need to be progressed.
- **An introduction to future census options:** *Overview of the future census options, comparisons between each, and expected outputs.*
- **Ethnicity quality review from administrative data sources:** *Provides an assessment of the current quality of administrative data for deriving the ethnicity of the New Zealand population. Discusses an update to previously used methods for deriving ethnicity information from*

administrative data sources by comparing against the 2018 Census and extending to more detailed ethnicities and ethnic groups.

For those interested, we thought it would be useful to share a list of key published Administrative Population Census (APC) documents on Stats NZ's website:

- [Data sources, methods, and quality](#) Describes the data sources and methodology used to compile the second iteration of the APC and summarises its quality. Recommended as the main reference.
- [Changes to data, methods, and quality \(third iteration\)](#) Summarises changes made in the third iteration of the APC individual population and variables. The report is targeted at readers interested in the direction and evolution of the APC.
- [Information by variable](#) Provides details about the data sources, methods, and quality measures for each of the variables in the third iteration of the APC.
- [Information for Māori about the experimental administrative population census](#) Brings together information that is most directly relevant to iwi and Māori to support their use of the data and involvement in the development of the APC.
- [Data sources, methods, and quality for household information](#) Describes the data sources and general approach to the methods used to compile the admin-based household information.

We're looking forward to seeing you online from 11:00am on Thursday, 8 August 2024.

Mauri ora,

Sean

**Sean Broughton** (pronouns: he/him/his)

General Manager – Customers and Partnerships

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# Document 26

 Outlook

## Future Census - Government Agency Information Session

**From** Sean Broughton <sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz>

**Date** Mon 5/08/2024 11:42 AM


**To** Sean Broughton <sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz>; STOKES, Peter <Peter.Stokes@police.govt.nz>; Yanya.Nanayakkara@acc.co.nz <Yanya.Nanayakkara@acc.co.nz>; Linda.Hanson@acc.co.nz <Linda.Hanson@acc.co.nz>; Dan.Horne@acc.co.nz <Dan.Horne@acc.co.nz>; donald.riezebos@lgc.govt.nz <donald.riezebos@lgc.govt.nz>; Logan.Fenwick@dia.govt.nz <Logan.Fenwick@dia.govt.nz>; Ativalu.Lemuelu@dia.govt.nz <Ativalu.Lemuelu@dia.govt.nz>; Kristin.Leslie@elections.govt.nz <Kristin.Leslie@elections.govt.nz>; joanne.butterfield@ird.govt.nz <joanne.butterfield@ird.govt.nz>; Tina MacLean <tina.maclea@ird.govt.nz>; Peter.McAtee@kaingaora.govt.nz <Peter.McAtee@kaingaora.govt.nz>; Emma.Fergusson@kaingaora.govt.nz <Emma.Fergusson@kaingaora.govt.nz>; ajordan@linz.govt.nz <ajordan@linz.govt.nz>; aaron.norgrove3@mbie.govt.nz <aaron.norgrove3@mbie.govt.nz>; Eric Krasso Peach <eric.krassoipeach@mbie.govt.nz>; jacqui.ellis@mbie.govt.nz <jacqui.ellis@mbie.govt.nz>; deb.potter@ethniccommunities.govt.nz <deb.potter@ethniccommunities.govt.nz>; Fiona.Thomson@ethniccommunities.govt.nz <Fiona.Thomson@ethniccommunities.govt.nz>; James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>

**Cc** Hannah Wignall <Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz>; Simon Anastasiadis <Simon.Anastasiadis@sia.govt.nz>; Wing Cheuk Chan (CMDHB) <WingCheuk.Chan@middlemore.co.nz>; david.scott@education.govt.nz <david.scott@education.govt.nz>; paul.mahoney@education.govt.nz <paul.mahoney@education.govt.nz>; Shona Ramsay <Shona.Ramsay@education.govt.nz>; Lifeng Zhou <lifeng.zhou@TeWhatuOra.govt.nz>; Julia Carter <Julia.Carter@elections.govt.nz>; BRIGGS Jonathan <Jonathan.Briggs2@customs.govt.nz>; Adelaide Wilson <adelaide.wilson058@whaikaha.govt.nz>; Rob Howard <Rob.Howard@dia.govt.nz>; Julie Dykes <Julie.Dykes@stats.govt.nz>; Saburo Omura <Saburo.Omura@mbie.govt.nz>; Miranda Devlin <Miranda.Devlin@stats.govt.nz>; Stephanie Lacey <Stephanie.Lacey@hud.govt.nz>; Julia Taylor <Julia.Taylor@dia.govt.nz>

Kia ora,

A gentle reminder that you still have time to “register your attendance” to this incredible hui if you haven’t already done so.

Thank you

Sean Broughton (pronouns: he/him/his)  
General Manager – Customers and Partnerships  
Stats NZ | Tauranga Aotearoa | [stats.govt.nz](https://stats.govt.nz) | 

### About Aotearoa, for Aotearoa

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**Subject:** Future Census - Government Agency Information Session

**When:** Thursday, 8 August 2024 11:00 am-12:30 pm (UTC+12:00) Auckland, Wellington.

**Where:** Microsoft Teams Meeting

Kia ora tātou,

As you know, Stats NZ is on a journey to reimagine how we sustainably deliver quality data and statistics for Aotearoa New Zealand. We have an initial focus on population and social statistics, including the future of census.

We appreciate your expert feedback and advice, as well as discussions to date. Your contributions have been valuable in shaping our thinking.

Along these lines, we're pleased to invite you to a session for government agencies where we will begin to explore in more detail the opportunities and challenges that a change in census model might bring. The session is designed to respond to specific questions we've received from agencies so far and provide more information on the design and implementation processes from here – including opportunities for involvement and influence. We'll hold additional sessions focusing on key interest areas as we progress Future Census high-level and detailed design, from August 2024 through to 2025.

There'll be time to discuss key interest areas and ask additional questions. An agenda and relevant papers will be provided in advance.

### Session details:

When: Thursday, 8 August 2024, 11:00am – 12:30pm

Where: Online via Teams

RSVP: Please RSVP by accepting or declining this invitation

Who: While these sessions will start to tackle some of the more detailed data interests across government, they may also be of interest or value to policy staff. You're welcome to forward the invitation to them.

We look forward to your response and to seeing you at these sessions.

**Sean Broughton** (pronouns: he/him/his)

General Manager – Customers and Partnerships

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# Document 27

 Outlook

## Recap Info - Future Census Government Agency Information Session on Thursday 8 August

From Sean Broughton <sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz>

Date Fri 16/08/2024 3:56 PM

To Yanya.Nanayakkara@acc.co.nz <Yanya.Nanayakkara@acc.co.nz>; Linda.Hanson@acc.co.nz <Linda.Hanson@acc.co.nz>; Dan.Horne@acc.co.nz <Dan.Horne@acc.co.nz>; donald.riezebos@lgc.govt.nz <donald.riezebos@lgc.govt.nz>; Logan.Fenwick@dia.govt.nz <Logan.Fenwick@dia.govt.nz>; Ativalu.Lemuelu@dia.govt.nz <Ativalu.Lemuelu@dia.govt.nz>; Kristin.Leslie@elections.govt.nz <Kristin.Leslie@elections.govt.nz>; joanne.butterfield@ird.govt.nz <joanne.butterfield@ird.govt.nz>; Tina MacLean <tina.maclea@ird.govt.nz>; STOKES, Peter <Peter.Stokes@police.govt.nz>; Peter.McAtee@kaingaora.govt.nz <Peter.McAtee@kaingaora.govt.nz>; Emma.Fergusson@kaingaora.govt.nz <Emma.Fergusson@kaingaora.govt.nz>; ajordan@linz.govt.nz <ajordan@linz.govt.nz>; aaron.norgrove3@mbie.govt.nz <aaron.norgrove3@mbie.govt.nz>; Eric Krasso Peach <eric.krassoipeach@mbie.govt.nz>; jacqui.ellis@mbie.govt.nz <jacqui.ellis@mbie.govt.nz>; deb.potter@ethniccommunities.govt.nz <deb.potter@ethniccommunities.govt.nz>; Fiona.Thomson@ethniccommunities.govt.nz <Fiona.Thomson@ethniccommunities.govt.nz>; James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>; Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>

Cc Lisa Cheney <Lisa.Cheney@stats.govt.nz>; Jacinta Syme <Jacinta.Syme@stats.govt.nz>; Wendy Hamilton <Wendy.Hamilton@stats.govt.nz>; Gary Dunnet <gary.dunnet@stats.govt.nz>; Gareth Minshall <gareth.minshall@stats.govt.nz>; Hannah Wignall <Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz>; Celeste Cutting <celeste.Cutting@stats.govt.nz>; Matthew Hendtlass <Matthew.Hendtlass@stats.govt.nz>; Anna McDowell <anna.mcdowell@stats.govt.nz>; Roxane Gajadhar <Roxane.Gajadhar@stats.govt.nz>

 5 attachments (7 MB)

Presentation version Future Census Government Agency Info Session 8 August 2024 (1).pdf; An introduction to the future census options Draft in confidence.pdf; Methodological feasibility of an admin-based census - progress to date and further work - Full - Draft in confidence.pdf; Ethnicity Quality Review from Admin Sources Draft in confidence.pdf; Summary of 8 August Future Census Government Information Session - IN CONFIDENCE.pdf;

Kia ora tātou,

Ngā mihi nui for your participation at last week's Future Census Government Agency Information Session.

### Next government information session

We've begun planning for a second session based on your feedback and interests: supporting information needs for key communities and minority populations.

We'll focus on potential impacts of an administrative data-first model, as well as new opportunities to support information needs and data equity. Supporting papers will be provided.

Everyone who participated in last week's session will receive an Outlook invitation once the date for the next session is confirmed.

There's still time to provide feedback and inform future sessions using this simple form: [Post hui feedback form \(8 August Info session\)](#).

## Summary of 8 August 2024 information session

At the session, we provided an overview of Stats NZ's Future Census Programme timeline and summarised what we've heard from submissions and engagement. We then focused on quality and control of key variables in administrative data – exploring ethnicity data as a detailed example – as well as concepts not well measured in administrative data, and the role of surveying.

### Presentation and papers attached

The slide deck that supported last week's session and three background papers are attached\*. A reminder that these attachments are intended for participants of the information session and aren't for wider distribution without permission from Stats NZ.

*\*Stats NZ's currently updating the attached paper 'Methodological feasibility of an administrative data-based census progress to date and further work' for publication on our website soon.*

### Discussion themes and questions

There were a range of perspectives shared and many thoughtful pātai throughout the session. We've summarised key themes and responses in the attached PDF: 'Summary of 8 August 2024 Information Session – IN CONFIDENCE'.

Nga mihi

Sean Broughton (pronouns: he/him/his)

General Manager – Customers and Partnerships  
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# Document 28

Outlook

Re: SPR discussion / ISDS web presence

From James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>

Date Tue 15/10/2024 9:37 AM

To Celeste Cutting <celeste.Cutting@stats.govt.nz>

Cc Wendy Hamilton <Wendy.Hamilton@stats.govt.nz>; Hannah Wignall <Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz>; Simon Ross <Simon.Ross@stats.govt.nz>; Blair Cardno <blair.cardno@stats.govt.nz>; Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>; Lafaefe Mapusua <Lafaefe.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz>; Falaniko Tominiko <Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz>; Sean Broughton <sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz>

Fakaaloa lahi atu Celeste,

Many thanks for sharing your draft paper.

Your translation of new terms is also very helpful.

I'll send through an invite for 1-2 on 5 November. I'm keen to learn more from you about the ISDS given the potential for evidence based decision making. My focus is to understand the quality of information related to Pacific peoples.

Fakaauue lahi oue tulou,  
James

---

From: Celeste Cutting <celeste.Cutting@stats.govt.nz>

Sent: 14 October 2024 5:24 PM

To: James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>

Cc: Wendy Hamilton <Wendy.Hamilton@stats.govt.nz>; Hannah Wignall <Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz>; Simon Ross <Simon.Ross@stats.govt.nz>; Blair Cardno <blair.cardno@stats.govt.nz>; Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>; Lafaefe Mapusua <Lafaefe.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz>; Falaniko Tominiko <Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz>; Sean Broughton <sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz>

Subject: RE: SPR discussion / ISDS web presence

Kia ora James

The 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> suit me well also.

Thanks for your messages. I acknowledge the range of concerns you have raised. Much of this goes beyond my little patch of Stats but I totally agree we should be able to respond to the points you make. I'm sure much of this thinking has already been done, but it's entirely possible we have some gaps. We can have a chat about this when we meet up in early November.

As you have identified, there are a range of activities underway currently, and a lot of existing research to date, that has not been well coordinated and communicated. We are working on a more coherent set of artefacts and engagement opportunities, and what I can speak to is more specifically about the Integrated Statistical Data System (ISDS) Programme (previously called Statistical Registers).

We have intentionally changed the way we talk about 'Registers' to better represent the work we have in train. We have renamed what we had previously called the future Statistical Person Register to the Administrative Population Model (APM). The APM uses the term 'model' as it better reflects this is an imperfect list, derived from multiple administrative data sources, and for producing official statistics. This leverages and improves upon the IDI spine but adds considerable improvements. The APM has a spine with persistent IDs (for statistical and research purposes) and incremental data linking, and is being built outside of the IDI environment (but with similar protections in place).

The Statistical Location Register (SLR) as it exists in its current form is essentially an address list which uses an address as a proxy for a dwelling. The dwelling register you refer to in your feedback relates to the existing SLR, which has known issues and limitations and is not what will make up the location component of the future ISDS. We are in the early proof of concept stage of creating a Places Index, which represents not a one-dimensional list, but connected address, property, building and dwelling registers/spines. This can be used (in future, once built and productionised!) for a wide range of statistical uses.

My team is working on a technical paper that sets out where we are up to in our research towards the ISDS which we will share with you once published. I can also share with you a draft version of a paper we published in the SJIAOS (behind a paywall for the official version). I would also be keen to share with you shortly the revised statistical units model which sets out how our data model hangs together.

I want to thank you again for your messages and do look forward to discussing with you in greater detail soon!

Ngā mihi  
C

Celeste Cutting (pronouns: she/her/hers)

Kaiwhakahaere Wāhanga - Pūnaha Raraunga Tatauranga Pāhekoheko (ISDS) & Kohinga Raraunga | Unit Manager Integrated Statistical Data System

(ISDS) Futures & Data Acquisition

Strategic Data Management

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*I work flexibly – if you receive this email outside your usual working hours please respond at a time that suits you.*

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**From:** James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>  
**Sent:** Monday, October 14, 2024 12:21 PM  
**To:** Hannah Wignall <Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz>; Celeste Cutting <celeste.Cutting@stats.govt.nz>  
**Cc:** Wendy Hamilton <Wendy.Hamilton@stats.govt.nz>; Simon Ross <Simon.Ross@stats.govt.nz>; Blair Cardno <blair.cardno@stats.govt.nz>; Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>; Lafaele Mapusua <Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz>; Falaniko Tominiko <Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz>; Sean Broughton <sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz>  
**Subject:** Re: SPR discussion / ISDS web presence

Fakaaloa lahi atu Hannah,

Thanks for following up. Capacity in my team is stretched for the next few weeks. Things should be back to normal the first week of November. The 4th and 5th November look good.

Fakaauae lahi oue tulou,  
James

---

**From:** Hannah Wignall <Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz>  
**Sent:** 14 October 2024 8:54 AM  
**To:** James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>; Celeste Cutting <celeste.Cutting@stats.govt.nz>  
**Cc:** Wendy Hamilton <Wendy.Hamilton@stats.govt.nz>; Simon Ross <Simon.Ross@stats.govt.nz>; Blair Cardno <blair.cardno@stats.govt.nz>; Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>; Lafaele Mapusua <Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz>; Falaniko Tominiko <Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz>; Sean Broughton <sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz>  
**Subject:** RE: SPR discussion / ISDS web presence

Kia ora James,

Thank you for your email. I've included Sean, Falaniko and Lafaele in this thread for reference.

I'm jumping in here as I was due to reply to your previous email response indicating you were looking for more clarity around:

- statistical person register vs population registers,
- the legislative implications for registries (first requested at the Pacific fono back in June) vs the IDI spine, and
- the IDI quality assertions

I had a conversation with both Celeste and Simon last week and whilst you indicated you'd prefer a written response, we feel that a number of the concerns you have raised are best discussed, at least in part, in person. I'd like to suggest a hybrid, where we can clarify anything immediate over email, but that we do set up a time to discuss the above areas of interest.

Celeste/Simon – I'll let you suggest a couple of times that work for you. James if you want to indicate your availability for a discussion that would be helpful too.

Ngā mihi,  
Hannah

**Hannah Wignall** (she/her)  
Kaiwhakahaere - Tuituinga | Kōtuitanga Hinonga | Kaiārahi Pūnaha Raraunga  
Engagement Manager | Agency Partnering | Data System Leadership

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---

**From:** James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>  
**Sent:** Saturday, October 12, 2024 4:15 PM  
**To:** Celeste Cutting <celeste.Cutting@stats.govt.nz>  
**Cc:** Hannah Wignall <Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz>; Wendy Hamilton <Wendy.Hamilton@stats.govt.nz>; Simon Ross <Simon.Ross@stats.govt.nz>; Blair Cardno <blair.cardno@stats.govt.nz>; Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>  
**Subject:** Re: SPR discussion / ISDS web presence

Ni sa bula vinaka Celeste,

Since I haven't heard back it might be easier to provide some intuition for improving public communications related to population registers. It's not at all surprising that the Stats NZ website is silent on this topic because it is an Achilles heel of the census transformation proposal. This topic also has the potential to affect trust in government (in decline according to recent [GSS results](#)).

The Ministry for Pacific Peoples was invited to scrutinise the work of Stats NZ related to this topic at the beginning of the year (Cab papers: Modernising and transforming the 2028 Census: Public consultation on an administrative data-first approach for census; Modernising and transforming the 2028 Census: Public consultation document).

To date the Ministry has not had a substantive response from Stats NZ to resolve concerns and questions raised in that feedback. The Ministry has continually sought clarification from Stats NZ counterparts this year in order to reconcile Census Transformation and Social Investment capability assertions with more historic assessment of the Official Statistics System from Cabinet papers (and attached research papers) dating back nearly a decade. The Ministry has always been supportive of free and frank dialog with Stats NZ (as per our MoU) with the objective to validate the integrity of statistics related to Pacific peoples should it be warranted.

The Ministry was recently asked to give advice about the IDI as it relates to Pacific peoples. I decided to re-read several papers by Christine Bycroft which seem relevant to our discussion. In case it's useful I've attached (and linked) several papers related to the population register topic to aid intuition about my perspective. The themes of population registers, statistical person registers, and dwelling registers came up repeatedly. There seems to be a clear evolution which mirrors assertions in Stats NZ Cabinet papers that move from describing the need for a population register as the Nordic (and several Asian) countries have to a register of registers analogous to the IDI spine. Furthermore, the [Census 2023 Statutory Review](#) highlights significant failures of the dwelling register particularly in Auckland which has the largest population of Pacific peoples which is related to this discussion (p.4 and p26).

It's been very difficult to see how limitations described by Stats NZ have been addressed given we still cannot measure linkage error and linkage bias adequately from the standpoint of the IDI itself (eg type 2 error). From what I can see it is also not possible for Stats NZ to assess type 1 and type 2 error consistently for each of the agency registers and the linked attribute data collected by other agencies.

The IDI could be described as an important yet experimental fore-runner to what is needed for linked person data in a register-based system. However, the census comms and consultation material does not convey that the existing fragments are reliant on poorly planned and implemented censuses and have not been developed with a register-based system in mind. Furthermore, the IDI was designed for research purposes and not as a social investment monitoring and reporting instrument.

Several lines in one of the earlier papers from [Bycroft 2011](#) are notable:

- 'Highly accurate linkages are difficult to achieve without a common unique identifier. We are not aware of any country that has successfully implemented such an approach.'
- 'Development and testing would require major resourcing over a long period, and this approach could not be expected to provide a replacement for census in the short to medium term.'
- 'Countries that have replaced their traditional census have done so over a 20-30 year period.'
- 'It appears most unlikely that a population register linked to other administrative sources could provide a viable alternative to the census in New Zealand in the short to medium term.'
- 'Conceptually, 'counting the population' may sound simple, but this impression is deceptive. But in practice, it is the detailed distributions at subnational geographies (including small local areas), and by single year of age and sex, that are both critically important and difficult to measure accurately. Internationally successful systems are purpose-built, involving either a periodic full enumeration census, or an administrative population register.'

The Bycroft 2022 (attached) paper does not manage to address the limitations identified earlier (including in historic Stats NZ Cab papers) but assumes Stats NZ has access to good quality data. However, the example of poor linkage rates for Māori and Pacific clients of the Healthy Homes Initiative in my initial email (below) refute this assertion. Instead the 2022 paper lays a foundation for the current Stats NZ work programme but ultimately fails to demonstrate real world feasibility. It also does not address the relationship between the IDI spine and a statistical person register with the Privacy Act.

- 'New Zealand does have the advantage of good quality national data systems within government, and Stats NZ has access to that data for statistical purposes.'
- 'We will move away from using information gathered directly from New Zealanders, instead relying increasingly on data already held by other agencies. This data is routinely collected...'
- 'New Zealand has no unique national person identifier, and the creation of one has been ruled out by our Privacy Act.'

We know from a recent review of ethnicity data collection by Te Whatu Ora that standards are not being met. A review of the ED data system published by that same agency highlights the risks for assuming that agencies contributing to the IDI are collecting high quality information for the IDI. There are also implications for public trust and social license that aren't currently reflected in census modernisation consultation materials and social investment advice.

- [Ethnicity-Data-Action-Plan.pdf \(tewhatuora.govt.nz\)](#) (p27 shows examples of how inconsistently data is collected)
- [Data Review Report – Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora](#) highlights poor data handling practice is wide spread and documents a range of leadership and decision making failures at every level as well as an inability to identify mistakes.

The [Cab paper 2016](#) reiterates the research publications but also highlights the utility of health data which was ultimately undermined by the Healthy Homes intervention, the ethnicity data review and the ED data review in 2023/24.

- 'This is complex and cutting edge work, requiring new theory and methods. No other country has yet carried out an administrative census in the absence of a national population register. We are working with other countries, including the UK and Ireland, who face similar issues. This work is currently progressing well and on target for the 2019 feasibility test.'
- 'The feasibility test will maximize the opportunities presented by the 2018 Census to pilot a coverage survey.'
- 'Use of simulated data sets and the improved Ministry of Health data will provide opportunities to increase our knowledge of the quality needed for an administrative data census to be cost effective and what is still required to reach that quality.'

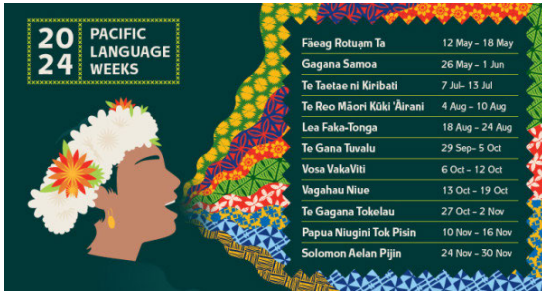
The [Cab paper 2015](#) appears to contradict the Privacy Act ruling discussed more recently at Stats NZ fono/Talanoa (**Future Census Pacific Design Workshop** 17 June 2024) and in the Bycroft 2022 paper. It's not clear that the Census Transformation Interagency Working Group considered advice from subject matter experts. The Privacy Act wasn't yet mentioned as a factor for declining to recommend a population register model. However, the Working Group did include untested and unsubstantiated public sentiment in the recommendation. There is also not evidence to support assertions made about what a population register would be likely or unlikely to deliver.

- 'A compulsory population register, while potentially less costly and more sustainable for census, would have high system cost, provide limited information and may be less acceptable to the public.'
- 'Further progression of the population register model is not recommended, at least in the foreseeable future. The population register model, which would require assignment of a unique identifier to every individual, was thoroughly discussed in the Census Transformation Interagency Working Group (see agencies listed in paragraph 82).'
- 'While a population register could provide a solid base for population counts, it would still require the bulk of attribute information to come from other administrative sources and be supplemented by surveys.'
- 'There was consensus that a population register would be unlikely to deliver significant service provision benefits beyond those that can be gained from further exploiting the use of current administrative sources.'
- 'Officials also agreed that a population register would put an unnecessarily high compliance burden on the New Zealand public.'

Vinaka Vakalevu,  
James

**Dr James Greenwell**  
Director, Data and Insights  
Ministry for Pacific Peoples

s9(2)(a)



**From:** Celeste Cutting <[celeste.Cutting@stats.govt.nz](mailto:celeste.Cutting@stats.govt.nz)>  
**Sent:** 03 October 2024 10:15 AM  
**To:** James Greenwell <[james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz)>  
**Cc:** Hannah Wignall <[Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz)>; Wendy Hamilton <[Wendy.Hamilton@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Wendy.Hamilton@stats.govt.nz)>; Simon Ross <[Simon.Ross@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Simon.Ross@stats.govt.nz)>; Blair Cardno <[blair.cardno@stats.govt.nz](mailto:blair.cardno@stats.govt.nz)>  
**Subject:** RE: SPR discussion / ISDS web presence

Kia ora James

Ngā mihi nui for your message. I think it would make most sense to kōrero about the points you have raised. Would you be happy to meet via teams in the next couple of weeks with myself and a couple of my team to walk you through our work and where we can answer your questions?

Could you do either 1-2pm next Wednesday 9 October or 2-3pm Monday 14 October?

Ngā mihi  
C

Celeste Cutting (pronouns: she/her/hers)  
Pouwhakahaere – Nga Kapuinga | Senior Manager – Statistical Registers  
Data Management and Operations  
Stats NZ | Tauranga Aotearoa | [stats.govt.nz](https://stats.govt.nz) | s9(2)(a)

*I work flexibly – if you receive this email outside your usual working hours please respond at a time that suits you.*

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**From:** James Greenwell <[james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz)>  
**Sent:** Monday, September 30, 2024 11:13 AM  
**To:** Celeste Cutting <[celeste.Cutting@stats.govt.nz](mailto:celeste.Cutting@stats.govt.nz)>  
**Cc:** Hannah Wignall <[Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz)>; Wendy Hamilton <[Wendy.Hamilton@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Wendy.Hamilton@stats.govt.nz)>; Simon Ross <[Simon.Ross@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Simon.Ross@stats.govt.nz)>  
**Subject:** Re: SPR discussion / ISDS web presence

Mālō e leilei Celeste,

Hopefully this will be helpful

It's good to hear there will be clearer communication about the term statistical person register and population register for the new ISDS information pages. This will be of interest to analysts and researchers and implicates public trust/social license. It's not apparent if this is a new concept or a synonym for population register. I could help to define these terms, describe the decision making process and the legislative implications? For example - it's not clear how a population register relates to the legislation and how we intend to/already use the IDI spine.

Apologies - I'm not very good at writing but here are a few top-of-minds related to definition clarity, decision making, legislation, and implications for Pacific data quality/trust/social license:

1. Context and definitions: This [link](#) from Sean Broughton illustrates the potential for ambiguity around statistical person register/statistical person frame/population register. Also, a number of European and Asian countries which implement very high quality and inexpensive register based censuses also implement population registers. The absence of a population register would make NZ an outlier among countries who successfully implement an admin or register-based census. We also do not implement a straightforward dwelling register which is related to this topic.

*'The breadth and quality of admin-based population information we are already able to produce is well ahead compared with countries that, similarly to New Zealand, do not have an established population register or national population identifiers and are looking to using admin data in their census.'*

*'Unlike many countries with a register-based census, New Zealand does not have a national identity number that can be used to link person-centred admin data to a central population file.'*

'While substantial admin data sources exist on properties, buildings, and addresses, the development of a places index is in the early stages. We have not yet demonstrated an ability to provide a census of dwellings and their attributes without the use of a full enumeration census. Significant work is required to source the data and develop the infrastructure and methods required to produce national and subnational dwelling counts from admin data and this will likely not include temporary dwellings.'

2. Legislation implications and decision making: Registers are mentioned elsewhere eg the [Data Investment Plan](#) and in papers from Christine Bycroft dating back to 2011. The discussion of registries highlights other issues that might require some comms/discussion in relation to the legislation, strategic needs/investments, and evidence based decisions. We should be clearer about what the ISDS will provide.

**Additional registers and foundational data**

<b>Current state</b>	A register is a specific type of dataset listing all members of a defined population. It is the sole authoritative source of that information, kept complete, accurate and up-to-date. For example, the companies register administered by the Companies Office is the single, authoritative data source for company information. Key features of a register are persistent unique identifiers, immutable entries, and live data. <b>Currently, there is no statistical person frame.</b> Additionally, the business, property, address, district valuation roll, and biodiversity registers require further investment. Foundational data such as imagery, LIDAR, rivers, and roads centrelines are needed to underpin other data.
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3. Trust and data quality: Currently, it's difficult to measure linkage error/bias firstly for the administrative registries and secondly for the IDI spine. The record linkage error/bias issue is also implicated in slides recently shared by Jared Mackley-Crump (Stats NZ) related to the IDI and Social Investment. Almost every slide contains assertions but the evidence behind them seems missing. Here are three things from those slides which relate to population register issue:

- a. The IDI may not be world leading among countries in Europe and Asia that implement a population register.
- b. Furthermore, it's not our only tool to understand groups of people, particularly when it comes to monitoring outcomes for Pacific peoples. It's unclear how suitable the IDI is to be a surveillance instrument. Stats NZ counterparts have also communicated to me that Stats NZ does not either collect or process ethnicity data at level 4 ethnicity from agencies that contribute to the Administrative Population Census. We can also see that the quality of ethnicity data at other levels is not very good.
- c. The Evaluation of the Healthy Homes Initiative is often held up as an exemplar social investment evaluation which used the IDI. However, it was only able to link about 50% of the eligible Māori and Pacific client population to the IDI spine. This highlights a significant record linkage issue that comes up again and again for IDI data related to Pacific peoples.

2.

**DRAFT** Stats NZ

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- Pinpoints needs and targets actions
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- Provides insights on groups over time
- Free for government agencies to use
- Safe and ethical with excellent data security

**CHALLENGES**

- Outdated and unstable infrastructure
- No real-time data
- Difficult for new users to learn
- Data quality depends on input

**EVALUATING THE HEALTHY HOMES INITIATIVE**

**METHOD**

- IDI was used to **combine and link data** from community service providers with government data on health, benefits, income and education

**VALUE OF IDI**

- Evaluated outcomes of over 75k people (**50% of all programme participants**)
- Demonstrated that the **benefits of the initiative outweighed the programme costs** within the first year (28% ROI in Year 1), from reduced hospitalisations, absences and benefit claimed



Mälō 'aupito,  
James

**Dr James Greenwell**  
Director, Data and Insights  
Ministry for Pacific Peoples  
Te Manatū mā ngā Iwi o te Moana-nui-ā-Kiwa

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**20  
24** PACIFIC LANGUAGE WEEKS

Fāeag Rotuam Ta	12 May – 18 May
Gagana Samoa	26 May – 1 Jun
Te Taotae ni Kiribati	7 Jul – 13 Jul
Te Reo Māori Kōkiri 'Āirani	4 Aug – 10 Aug
Lea Faka-Tonga	18 Aug – 24 Aug
Te Gana Tuvalu	29 Sep – 5 Oct
Vosa Vaka Viti	6 Oct – 12 Oct
Vagahau Niue	13 Oct – 19 Oct
Te Gagana Tokelau	27 Oct – 2 Nov
Papua Niugini Tok Pisin	10 Nov – 16 Nov
Solomon Aolan Pijin	24 Nov – 30 Nov

From: Simon Ross <[Simon.Ross@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Simon.Ross@stats.govt.nz)>  
Sent: 27 September 2024 3:40 PM  
To: James Greenwell <[james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz)>  
Cc: Hannah Wignall <[Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz)>; Wendy Hamilton <[Wendy.Hamilton@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Wendy.Hamilton@stats.govt.nz)>; Celeste Cutting <[celeste.Cutting@stats.govt.nz](mailto:celeste.Cutting@stats.govt.nz)>  
Subject: SPR discussion / ISDS web presence

Kia ora James

You and I had this exchange in the Information Group chat on Wednesday.

Paul's point was about ethnicity reference data for all of government (which we don't have a system for). It's not clear if your comment about a statistical person register related directly to Paul's concept or not.

Stats is doing work in this area under the Integrated Statistical Data System programme. Our website is largely silent on the subject, so I followed up on that with our lead on the ISDS Programme, Celeste Cutting. She will look at the programme having some web presence since it's a bit of a gap given that both the IDI and the Future Census work are both fairly well profiled.

I'm away for school holidays next week, but if you want to discuss this further you could go via Wendy and her team or connect with Celeste directly.

Ngā mihi  
Simon

James Greenwell (Unverified) 25/09/2024 2:37 pm

Paul - There doesn't seem to be a plan for a statistical person register that other countries in Asia and Europe use

James, I missed the context for this comment, but there is work going on at Stats as part of the development of the Integrated Statistical Data System (ISDS), a re

James Greenwell (Unverified) 3:29 pm

JG

Simon Ross 25/09/2024 2:59 pm

James, I missed the context for this comment, but there is work going on at Stats on a statistical person register as part of the development

I'd like to hear more about this if possible - This seems like a community consultation proposal which was consulted on.



Gareth Minshall 3:41 pm



Simon Ross 25/09/2024 3:30 pm

I'll be in touch. I'm also looking into their web presence (re: current lack of)

Great to progress this discussion. I think part of this is about language person register that pulls in linked administrative data (i.e. something that think James and Paul are referring to is more a population register system where information is used for statistical and often operational purposes across



Gareth Minshall 25/09/2024 3:41 pm

Great to progress this discussion. I think part of this is about language. What Stats NZ is looking at is a statistical person register...

Yes good point - Paul's point was about reference data for everyone. Longer be restricted by Stats' legislative scope.

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# Document 29



## Recap and information - Future Census Government Agency Information Session on Thursday 19 September

From Sean Broughton <sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz>

Date Wed 2/10/2024 1:45 PM

Cc Anna McDowell <anna.mcdowell@stats.govt.nz>; Gary Dunnet <gary.dunnet@stats.govt.nz>; Wendy Hamilton <Wendy.Hamilton@stats.govt.nz>; Roxane Gajadhar <Roxane.Gajadhar@stats.govt.nz>; Hannah Wignall <Hannah.Wignall@stats.govt.nz>; Simon Brown <Simon.Brown@stats.govt.nz>; Michael Alspach <Michael.Alspace@stats.govt.nz>; Celeste Cutting <celeste.Cutting@stats.govt.nz>; Clare O'Connell <Clare.O'Connell@stats.govt.nz>; Rosemary Goodyear <rosemary.goodyear@stats.govt.nz>

📎 6 attachments (3 MB)

Presentation pdf Future Census Government Agency Info Session 19 Sept 2024 (1).pdf; Supporting the information needs of key communities - Summary - Draft in confidence.pdf; Future Census context - Pacific data - Draft in confidence.pdf; Measurement of homelessness and severe housing deprivation - Considerations for Future Census - Draft in confidence deprivation.pdf; Future Census context - rainbow data - Draft in confidence.pdf; Future Census context - disability data - Draft in confidence.pdf;

Kia ora tātou,

Ngā mihi nui for your participation at last month's Future Census Government Agency Information Session.

### Next sessions

We've begun planning for a series of deep-dive sessions with some of our Future Census Design Team and subject matter experts. The sessions will be based on your feedback and interests. Everyone who has participated in these Future Census Government Agency Information Sessions will receive an email with more details once the dates for the deep dive sessions are confirmed.

### Feedback

We welcome any feedback you want to provide to inform future sessions, including whether there are any specific topics you'd like to explore in the upcoming deep dive sessions. You can continue using this simple form: <https://forms.office.com/r/xTVB2MLb1E>

### Summary of last month's session

At the session, we provided an overview of Stats NZ's social and population statistics programme, including the future census programme timeline. The session then focused on the topic of supporting information needs for key communities and minority populations.

### Discussion themes and questions

There were a range of perspectives shared and many thoughtful pātai throughout the session, including offers to be involved in the work ongoing. Pātai in the session focused on:

- implications for trust and confidence, social license, and public acceptability
- make data more available, particularly for the communities that the data is about
- implications, limitations, and opportunities for household surveys, including Stats NZ's capability and capacity to survey effectively
- process for continuing engagement with agencies and the Government Statistician's decision-making process for the manner of taking the next census

- fiscal envelope, investment, and costings

### **Presentation and papers attached**

The slide deck that supported the last session and the background papers are attached. A reminder that these attachments are intended for participants of the information session and aren't for wider distribution without permission from Stats NZ.

- Supporting the information needs of key communities – summary
- Future Census context – rainbow data
- Future Census context – Pacific data
- Future Census context – disability data
- Measurement of homelessness and severe housing deprivation – considerations for Future Census.

Nga mihi

**Sean Broughton** (pronouns: he/him/his)

General Manager – Customers and Partnerships

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# Document 30



## FW: Follow-up to last week's hui between Stats NZ & MPP

From Lafaale Mapusua <Lafaale.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz>

Date Tue 10/12/2024 11:31 PM

To Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>

FYI

**Fuimaono Faumuina Lafaale Mapusua** (he/him/his)

Faufautua Sīnia | Kaitohutohu Matua | Senior Advisor – Pacific Engagement

*I work flexibly - so while I may choose to send an e-mail outside ordinary working hours, I do not expect a response/action outside your own working hours.*

**From:** Sean Broughton

**Sent:** Tuesday, 10 December 2024 11:20 pm

**To:** corina.grey@mpp.govt.nz; james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz; danilo.almeida@mpp.govt.nz; Shari.Mason@mpp.govt.nz

**Cc:** Falaniko Tominiko ; Lafaale Mapusua ; Hannah Wignall

**Subject:** Follow-up to last week's hui between Stats NZ & MPP

Pō mārie ki a koutou,

Ngā mihi nui for your time on Friday, last week, to discuss the Government Statistician's in-principle decision on the manner of taking the next census, associated policy impacts (disruption and opportunities), and cost implications associated with improving the quality of admin data collections. I value the robustness of our kōrero. In our hui, I committed to sharing with you my thread with colleagues at MSD, given their lines of enquiry were similar to pātai raised by Corina and Shari (e.g. Future Census Independent Evaluation Panel recommendations report etc.) – *see the email thread below*. Some of this information (e.g. admin data variables etc.) is currently being refined and will be part of the collateral to support departmental consultation.

I also noted I'd share information about potential high-level impacts to household surveys, noting these will become clearer over the next 12+ months as design work progresses and subject to Cabinet considering and endorsing the Government Statistician's in-principle decision – *see below*.

The identified potential impacts to household surveys are:

- **Primary sampling unit (PSU) reformation**

- PSUs get updated following each census to account for changes in number of dwellings and number of people usually resident in the area. Under the Future Census model, PSUs will be reformed using admin data-based measures of people and dwellings. The shift to admin data-based measures introduces flexibility in the timing and frequency of PSU reformation. We do not expect negative quality impacts from the shift to using admin data-based measures.

- **Sample design and stratification**

- Census data is currently used to create many of the stratification variables we use in sample design (e.g. proportion of Māori or Pacific in each PSU etc.). These stratification variables will be derived from the admin data-based measures in the future. Again, we do not expect negative quality impacts from this shift.

- **Benchmarks and estimation**

- Household surveys currently use a range of population estimates as benchmarks in the estimation calibration processes.
- Person benchmarks are currently based on the Estimated Resident Population (rebased each census and then maintained overtime for population change via births, deaths, and migration). In the future, we expect these benchmarks to be based on admin data-based population estimates. We

expect improved flexibility in the range of benchmarks we could use in household survey estimation processes.

- Household benchmarks are currently based on dwelling and household estimates (rebased each census and then maintained overtime via building consents). In the future, we expect these benchmarks to be based on admin data-based household estimates. There is more work we need to do to improve the quality of admin data-based household estimates and to understand any potential impacts on their use as benchmarks for household surveys.
- **New Zealand Deprivation Index**
  - This is currently produced by Otago University using census data. The methodology used relies on a full field enumeration census to provide the concepts at fine geographic areas. Stats NZ use NZDep in sample designs as a stratification variable.
  - In the future, the geographic granularity needed for the current methodology will not be available. There is some experimental work into admin data for this purpose, but an alternative measure of deprivation based on admin data (and alternative sources) will need to be developed.
- **Linking of data sources**
  - As part of the delivery for future census, Stats NZ is progressing with delivery of an Integrated Statistical Data System (ISDS), which includes an Administrative Population Model (APM). This system is designed to support efficient use of admin data in the production of official statistics. The APM will include persistent IDs (rather than the current refresh approached used in the IDI).
- **Operational efficiencies**
  - The ISDS will enable us to improve the efficiency of our sample designs and collection operations. The integration of the APM with the Places Index (and derived dwelling register) will enable us to consider different sample approaches from our current area-based sampling, such as dwelling or person-based sampling. Having richer information about the types of people residing in different dwellings will enable us to improve our collection strategies and better target our collection efforts to improve response rates for populations of interest.

The approach to Cabinet we set out at our hui has changed and is currently with Mark and Rachael for consideration.

There'll be, at least, three Cabinet papers spanning the Government Statistician's in-principle decision, amendments to the Data and Statistics Act 2022 to enable greater flexibility with respect to carrying out a census, policy levers available to improve the quality of admin data collections (for use beyond census), and public consultation on topics to be collected for the next census (as required under the Data and Statistics Act 2022). This will be set out in more detail in the documentation you receive for departmental consultation, likely next week.

The first of those Cabinet papers will focus on the Government Statistician's in-principle decision. It'll be supported by collateral, including a high-level implementation plan and admin data variable list/table.

I know James is engaging methodological and subject matter experts across Stats NZ on 2023 Census, 2023 PES, Future/Next Census, APC, and household surveys. If it'd be helpful to have a free and frank non-technical kōrero about the mechanics of this, I'm happy to make time and come to you.

I've also copied in Falaniko, Lafaele, and Hannah, as I know they've been integral to engagement between Stats NZ and MPP.

Let me know if you have any pātai.

Mauri ora,

Sean

Sean Broughton (pronouns: he/him)

General Manager – Statistical Delivery, Population and Housing | Kaiwhakahaere Matua – Horanga Tauanga, Taupori me te Whāinga Whare

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**Executive Assistant:** Tracey Wilson | [Tracey.Wilson@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Tracey.Wilson@stats.govt.nz)

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**From:** Sean Broughton <[sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz](mailto:sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** Thursday, November 28, 2024 5:38 PM

**To:** David Rea <[david.rea001@msd.govt.nz](mailto:david.rea001@msd.govt.nz)>; Bryan Perry <[bryan.perry001@msd.govt.nz](mailto:bryan.perry001@msd.govt.nz)>; Hugh Webb <[Hugh.Webb004@msd.govt.nz](mailto:Hugh.Webb004@msd.govt.nz)>

**Cc:** Purvai Gupta <[Purvai.Gupta006@msd.govt.nz](mailto:Purvai.Gupta006@msd.govt.nz)>; Jodene Hogwood <[Jodene.Hogwood001@msd.govt.nz](mailto:Jodene.Hogwood001@msd.govt.nz)>;

Hannah Kerr <[Hannah.Kerr004@msd.govt.nz](mailto:Hannah.Kerr004@msd.govt.nz)>

**Subject:** RE: Future of the census

Kia ora David,

Ngā mihi for your email. Aroha mai for not responding sooner.

**Is there a table of the 2023 Census questions (personal and dwelling) that shows where information will be sourced in the future (i.e. administrative data or the proposed streamlined survey of the entire population). We are particularly interested in those areas where it is envisioned that agencies will be asked to change what data they are currently collecting (e.g. ethnicity, disability, household membership, family relationships etc.)**

While the Government Statistician's taken an in-principle decision on the manner of taking the next census, Stats NZ hasn't yet progressed high-level design. That's due to commence in early-2025. A key aspect of the high-level design process will be a second round of public consultation, as required under Section 36 of the Data and Statistics Act 2022, focussing on the data to be collected in the census. That consultation will also need to explore which topics can be derived from administrative data only, from survey data only, and from combined sources, while also leaving room to undertake further assessment of data quality.

*Further detail on the Census attributes graph [here](#) (Supplementary material for the Future Census consultation) and [here](#) (Experimental administrative population census (third iteration): Information by variable) provide an indication of what census attribute information could be derived from linked administrative data.*

In addition, as part of our current phase of agency engagement on the next census, we're seeking to understand from data supply agencies the impacts and financial implications of improving the quality of specific variables in administrative data collections. For example:

**Variables with no further work needed:**

- Date of birth/age
- Birthplace/country of birth
- Years since arrival in New Zealand
- Sex (noting administrative data currently supports the production of a binary concept that represents a combination of sex and gender, and doesn't align with the sex, gender, and variations of sexual characteristics data standard)

**Minimal further work needed:**

- Sources of personal income (noting self-employed lag)
- Total personal income (noting self-employed lag and it only includes reported income)
- Study participation (noting data provision lag)
- Sector of landlord
- Industry
- Sector of ownership

**Critical to improve:**

- Ethnicity (Level 4)
- Māori descent (noting the gap for individuals born overseas)
- Iwi affiliation
- Gender
- Usual residence address + derived 1-year-ago and 5-years-ago at usual address (noting gap for new migrants and young people)
- Dwelling address
- Dwelling occupancy
- Dwelling type

**Second priority to improve:**

- Relationship status – legally registered
- Number of children born

- Highest secondary school qualification
- Level of post-school qualification
- Post school field of study.

Within those variables flagged as *Critical to improve*, MSD is a key source for ethnicity, iwi affiliation, gender, and usual residence address. For those variables flagged as a second priority to improve, the gap is overseas-born residents. That'll require working with MBIE, in particular. Other variables will need to be sourced via the proposed Census Attribute Survey.

**Is it also possible to get a copy of the report of the Future Census Independent Evaluation Panel, as well as a summary of the recent consultation?**

The Future Census Independent Evaluation Panel report isn't yet public and in aligning with a Cabinet directive around communication on the decision for the next census, Stats NZ isn't sharing the report because of risks around unauthorised disclosure.

The Panel generally supported Stats NZ's intention to shift to an administrative data-first census approach, recognising the potential benefits of delivering robust, timely, targeted, and adaptable information in a sustainable way. However, the Panel's main concern was that the government's data and statistics system would not be ready to move to, and successfully implement, such an approach by 2028. This is similar to the view also provided in the Report of the Statutory Review of the 2023 Census available [here](#) (chapter 4).

Stats NZ received 467 written submissions responding to the public consultation discussion document. Overall, approximately two-thirds of respondents were supportive or neutral (50 percent supportive; 15 percent neutral/difficult to determine) of the proposed change. In addition, most submitters (58 percent) indicated they're okay with Stats NZ reusing the information that they've already provided to other agencies.

I've attached a recent slide deck Vince Galvin and I presented to the Research Association New Zealand. Slides 19–20 touch on the themes Stats NZ has heard via public consultation and engagement, while slides 22–25 touch on the quality of census attribute data from administrative data.

Let me know if you have any follow-up questions.

Mauri ora,

Sean

**Sean Broughton** (pronouns: he/him)

General Manager – Statistical Delivery, Population and Housing | Kaiwhakahaere Matua – Horanga Tauanga, Taupori me te Whāinga Whare

Stats NZ | Tātauranga Aotearoa | [stats.govt.nz](https://stats.govt.nz) | s9(2)(a)

**Executive Assistant:** Tracey Wilson | [Tracey.Wilson@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Tracey.Wilson@stats.govt.nz)

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**From:** David Rea <[david.rea001@msd.govt.nz](mailto:david.rea001@msd.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, November 26, 2024 2:02 PM

**To:** Sean Broughton <[sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz](mailto:sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz)>

**Cc:** Purvai Gupta <[Purvai.Gupta006@msd.govt.nz](mailto:Purvai.Gupta006@msd.govt.nz)>; Bryan Perry <[bryan.perry001@msd.govt.nz](mailto:bryan.perry001@msd.govt.nz)>; Jodene Hogwood <[Jodene.Hogwood001@msd.govt.nz](mailto:Jodene.Hogwood001@msd.govt.nz)>; Hannah Kerr <[Hannah.Kerr004@msd.govt.nz](mailto:Hannah.Kerr004@msd.govt.nz)>; Hugh Webb <[Hugh.Webb004@msd.govt.nz](mailto:Hugh.Webb004@msd.govt.nz)>

**Subject:** Future of the census

IN-CONFIDENCE

Hi Sean

We are putting together some advice about the Government Statisticians preferred approach for the future Census.

Would it be possible to get a little bit more information to help with this advice? In particular:

- is there a table of the 2023 census questions (personal and dwelling) that shows where information will be sourced in the future – ie administrative data or the proposed streamlined survey of the entire population. We are particularly interested in those areas where it is envisioned that agencies will be asked to change what data they are currently collecting – eg ethnicity, disability, household membership, family relationships etc.

- is it also possible to get a copy of the report of the Future Census Independent Evaluation Panel, as well as a summary of the recent consultation.

Many thanks 😊

David Rea

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# Document 31



## IN-CONFIDENCE:Re: Follow up: Future census engagement

From Corina Grey <corina.grey@mpp.govt.nz>

Date Thu 19/12/2024 4:30 PM

To Tennille Maxey <Tennille.Maxey@stats.govt.nz>; James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>; Danilo Coelho de Almeida <danilo.almeida@mpp.govt.nz>; Shari Mason <Shari.Mason@mpp.govt.nz>; Sean Broughton <sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz>

Cc Sam Baker <Sam.Baker@stats.govt.nz>; Sara Montgomery <Sara.Montgomery@stats.govt.nz>; Carly Skerrett <Carly.Skerrett@stats.govt.nz>; Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>

IN-CONFIDENCE

Kia ora Tennille and team

Thank you for sending this information through and for the heads up about the Cabinet paper.

[@Sean Broughton](#) - huge apologies, this email made me realise that I never responded to your follow-up email from our meeting a couple of weeks ago. An oversight on my part! I will do that now.

We are grateful for the time you've taken to engage with us on this matter and are committed to working closely with you on this programme of work. We will respond to your questions below in the New Year.

Have a lovely Christmas and look forward to continuing our work together in 2025.

Ngā mihi  
Corina

### Dr Corina Grey

Deputy Secretary - Policy and Insights  
Ministry for Pacific Peoples  
Te Manatū mō ngā Iwi o te Moana-nui-ā-Kiwa

s9(2)(a)

[www.mpp.govt.nz](http://www.mpp.govt.nz)



**From:** Tennille Maxey <Tennille.Maxey@stats.govt.nz>

**Sent:** Thursday, December 19, 2024 10:54 AM

**To:** Corina Grey <corina.grey@mpp.govt.nz>; James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>; Danilo Coelho de Almeida <danilo.almeida@mpp.govt.nz>; Shari Mason <Shari.Mason@mpp.govt.nz>

**Cc:** Sean Broughton <sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz>; Sam Baker <Sam.Baker@stats.govt.nz>; Sara Montgomery <Sara.Montgomery@stats.govt.nz>; Carly Skerrett <Carly.Skerrett@stats.govt.nz>

**Subject:** Follow up: Future census engagement

Kia ora koutou,

Thank you for making time to meet with us to discuss some of the impacts of the proposed change to the manner of taking the census. We appreciate the opportunity to further understand your level of support, concerns, and thoughts around mitigations, as well as the opportunity to explain the rationale behind the in-principle decision.

We are still at the start of a transformational change in the way we collect census data. Our next step is focussed on confirming direction. As such, the upcoming Cabinet paper is high-level, seeking Cabinet's approval to proceed with the proposed approach to taking census. This will provide the mandate to work with organisations on detailed design to mitigate risks and address user needs.

***A friendly reminder that the information provided in both this email and the attachments provided remain under embargo***

As promised in our recent hui, an information pack is attached which includes:

- a high-level overview of key milestones (attachment A)
- an early view of the population-level administrative data we will likely need for the next census (attachment B)
- the approximate release dates for key outputs (attachment C)
- an overview of the legal framework and privacy settings that the census operates within (attachment D).

We are working directly with the agencies listed in attachment B, to understand the potential for data supply agreements.

We are still working on a list of variables needed to produce a dwelling count.

I want to acknowledge the difficulties in determining the potential impact of the proposed change ahead of the design-work. Because of this, the level of engagement to date, and continued engagement, is invaluable. To help further planning and analysis, we were hoping that in the New Year you could advise:

- what you currently use from census data that is absolutely critical for your business
- whether there are any critical needs for census data that your business has, that you do not think will be met by the current schedule of data releases, as per the attachment.

It is important to note that if the status quo was maintained, the census would not be expected to deliver high-quality data, significantly impacting the measurement of small population groups in particular. The low response rates predicted will create quality issues, and the funding envelope available further restricts activities that would help sustain data quality, such as community supports, engagement and paper forms. These limitations were a significant driver of the in-principle decision.

If you can respond to us on these questions by 27 January 2025, we will be able to incorporate these into our ongoing planning.

Yesterday we sent the draft Cabinet paper for department consultation. Following the current DPMC guidance on accessing and sharing Cabinet paper material, we did not send Cabinet paper directly to individuals. For your agency, we sent the Cabinet paper to: [mppadvice@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:mppadvice@mpp.govt.nz), please contact the address owner to ensure you receive a copy and can provide feedback.

Thank you for the time you've already dedicated to supporting the work around the next census. Please be assured that, despite the pre-Christmas email, we aren't seeking anything further until late January. Please feel welcome to reach out to Sean or me if you would like to raise any further considerations.

Nga mihi,

**Tennille Maxey** (pronouns: she/her/hers)

Tennille Maxey - General Manager - Policy | Kaiwhakahaere Matua - Ngā Kaupapa Here  
Stats NZ | Tatauranga Aotearoa | [stats.govt.nz](https://stats.govt.nz)

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# Document 32

 Outlook

RE: Follow-up from MPP meeting 12 June

From Gareth Minshall <gareth.minshall@stats.govt.nz>

Date Wed 03/07/2024 10:03 AM

To James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>; Falaniko Tominiko <Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz>;  
Lisa Cheney <Lisa.Cheney@stats.govt.nz>

Cc Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>

 1 attachment (493 KB)

Pacific impact and opportunities of future census options V1 25 June 2024 GS JG MB.docx;

Hi James

Thanks for sending through. Sorry for the slow response

S9(2)(a)

I had a quick skim through the ACS article you sent through – it looks really useful and I think I agree with most of what is in there. Certainly, the messages around approaches for ensuring quality small area estimates are useful e.g. sample size matters, high potential for improvements if small area auxiliary data is available (e.g. data from APC used in estimation processes of the CAS), the use of model based estimation (e.g. small domain estimation) over design based (sum the weights). I think the fundamental point of, even with all the methodology available and a substantial sampling fraction, a large scale national sample survey like CAS is not going to provide quality data for very small populations (e.g. many of the L4 populations have less than 2000 people). Here I think it is best to acknowledge that so it is in the mix for the evaluation, and if the model is not full field enumeration be looking at what might be more effective approaches for supporting information needs for those communities.

I won't be able to get to running some updates on the doc till later in the week but have read through your comments and appreciate your team sending these through so quickly. I've attached some quick responses as I was reading through. Falaniko is updating the engagement to reflect your comments around framing which were really useful. As discussed this will keep the 'statements that we heard' type list and then have some content around framing.

One really important point in your comments were that the PES report noted poor quality for the measure of Pacific under-coverage (I assume this is more than higher sampling error) and that there was a lot of evidence that the ERP estimates of Pacific were under-estimated. This is important to understand (as it would have a significant impact on funding etc, plus more narrowly a lot of quality measures when assessing the quality of admin data will be based comparing the APC and Census to the ERP). I read through the PES 2018 report and couldn't see find this reference and chatted to Pop Insights team who produce the ERP and they weren't aware of systematic under-coverage in Pacific ERP estimates. So just following up about whether you have more information about this?

Otherwise some good points I jotted down were

- Ensuring framing is correct in the engagement session,
- Being clearer in a few places about population counts vs estimates,
- Noting the ERP vs census when describing the pop. Highlighting undercount of Pacific pop (e.g. if people are reliant on census rather than ERP data) leads to underfunding. This is really important point and relates to the point above on the quality of the ERP,

- Trying to include some comments about linking error, that this occurs pre Stats and post Stats getting the data, and the potential bias this introduces. I'm following up with the Stats team to see if there are handy figures on linking rates by ethnicity.

I'll send through an updated doc, but we don't need you to be signing off on it given times frames.

cheers,  
Gareth

---

**From:** James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>

**Sent:** Monday, July 1, 2024 11:05 AM

**To:** Gareth Minshall <gareth.minshall@stats.govt.nz>; Falaniko Tominiko <Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz>; Lisa Cheney <Lisa.Cheney@stats.govt.nz>

**Cc:** Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>

**Subject:** Re: Follow-up from MPP meeting 12 June

Talofa lava Falaniko, Gareth,

Apologies for sending additional material given your tight time frame. I thought you might be interested to see this if you haven't already.

I recently came across this paper about the American Community Survey (ACS). The ACS was referenced by Gary Dunnet at the MEC presentation at Stats NZ offices several weeks ago as an example of what we may be looking at to supplement the APC for Census 2028.

This is a concerning paper to look at given that the uncertainly margin of error (33% greater than census long form) that was anticipated was eclipsed by the fact that on average the margin ended up as 75% greater than census long form. Uncertainty is inherent in surveys like the ACS, however the amount of uncertainty especially for African Americans and by geography has far exceeded the US Census Bureau's expectations.

Fa'afetai tele lava,

James

**Dr James Greenwell**

Chief Data Scientist, Data and Insights

Ministry for Pacific Peoples

s9(2)(a)

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**From:** James Greenwell <[james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** 27 June 2024 4:21 PM

**To:** Gareth Minshall <[gareth.minshall@stats.govt.nz](mailto:gareth.minshall@stats.govt.nz)>; Falaniko Tominiko <[Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz)>;  
Lisa Cheney <[Lisa.Cheney@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Lisa.Cheney@stats.govt.nz)>

**Cc:** Maryke Barnard <[maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Subject:** Re: Follow-up from MPP meeting 12 June

Talofa lava Falaniko, Gareth,

Thanks for taking time to meet this morning. Apologies for the delay replying.

Here are a few items I agreed to supply. Attached are my team notes on the paper. Given the short turn-around it would be ideal to review the paper again if possible. Otherwise, MPP should not be credited in the review materials.

Please consider framing especially where it's possible to highlight that (rather than pointing at personal responsibility) the onus should be on our institutions to engender public trust and to adequately inform. It is well documented that our institutions don't do this well.

- The ED data review [Data Review Report – Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora](#) completed several months ago by Te Whatu Ora highlights how data collection and processing systems appear to be disorganised at every level of the health system for this single indicator. It would be completely safe to assume the same problems exist elsewhere given the interdependence of health data infrastructure. Unfortunately when we use IDI data there is an assumption that it is high quality but it's not clear what work Stats NZ does to validate the quality of information submitted by agencies. The review highlights how every level of leadership across multiple health agencies lacked proficiency in the work they oversaw and therefore couldn't be trusted to identify and solve data

quality problems. It also shows how the initial impulse of the system is to blame lower level data analysts instead of focusing on improving poor leadership and decision-making.

- The Te Aka Whaiora link has an action plan which on p27 shows how ethnicity data collection methods vary [Reports highlight need for improved quality of ethnicity data – Te Aka Whai Ora](#) it also discusses the issue further in the larger report linked on the same page.
- It might be useful to include the Census 2023 statutory review for the panel to review for added context. The review indicated that the household register was also problematic and it isn't clear what the remedy will be for Census 2028 or the implications for the APC.
- Record linkage (difficulty validating the APC without a population register for the register based census concordance)
  - o Linkage procedures are used in the IDI to link tax, births and visa data to create the spine; to link datasets within collections, e.g. datasets in the Ministry of Health collection; and to link collections to the spine.
  - o There are several types of record linkage procedure: deterministic, e.g. using a unique common identifier such as National Health Index (NHI); probabilistic, where record pairs are assigned a weight which should correlate with the probability of being a link; and a group of newer approaches e.g. machine learning. The IDI uses deterministic and probabilistic approaches.
- Linkage error and linkage bias (can occur at the agencies who supply admin data to the IDI and then again to the record linkage process to the IDI spine)
  - o Linkage error is inevitable in any record linkage project, including in the IDI. If linkage errors are not distributed evenly across groups, this can lead to bias. Bias in an analysis may lead to incorrect conclusions.
  - o The impact of linkage bias can be high even when the error is small; and even a large amount of error will not necessarily produce bias.
  - o The amount of bias will vary depending on the study population used, variables analysed and their relationships with one another. As a result, all IDI researchers need to have a working knowledge of linkage error and bias to guide interpretation of their findings.
- Related to data validation it may be useful for Stats NZ to discuss with the group that the PES could be used to see how well the admin data substitutions correlate with PES responses and also how accurate the dwelling register is.
- NZMJ article looking at HSU and census attached p.54 There are also other papers by Tahu Kukutai at Waikato University on the topic of admin data which may be relevant to include.
- We had a number of emails with Hannes about APC data quality assumptions and the APC ability to fulfill census functions. We tend to use a Stats NZ Cab paper identifying specific challenges of the APC and several papers written by Christine Bycroft as a framework to assess the 3<sup>rd</sup> APC iteration. Let me know if those exchanges or documents would be useful.

- In terms of standards we discussed - the Health System implements HISO [Identity standards – Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora](#)

- Finally - we are happy for MPP feedback on 2 cabinet papers related to Census Transformation 2028 to be shared or if those can't be shared and if it's easier the Nicholson Consulting consultation can be shared since it's very similar to MPPs Cabinet paper feedback. [Nicholson Consulting Submission: Modernising our Approach to the 2028 Census Consultation — Nicholson Consulting](#)

Fa'afetai tele lava,

James

---

**From:** Gareth Minshall <[gareth.minshall@stats.govt.nz](mailto:gareth.minshall@stats.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** 25 June 2024 4:57 PM

**To:** James Greenwell <[james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz)>; Falaniko Tominiko <[Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz)>; Lisa Cheney <[Lisa.Cheney@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Lisa.Cheney@stats.govt.nz)>

**Subject:** RE: Follow-up from MPP meeting 12 June

Hi James,

Falaniko and myself have drafted a document summarizing the impact and opportunities of different census models on Pacific Data for the evaluation panel. This will go along with a broader set of content, but we keen to pull together a summary for some of the key communities such as Pacific, Rainbow, Disability and iwi-Māori which highlights some of the issues most relevant for that sector / population. Unfortunately we didn't manage to keep it as short / tight as intended - I must admit we struggled to find the balance in providing informatoin and being succinct so sorry that it is a longer read than intended.

The content will be getting reviewed by staff at Stats NZ, but it would be great to get your comments and thoughts. I'm sending it through now so you have a chance to read before we talk on Thursday. If you are needing to prioritise time getting your input into the key messages in the summary would be really valuable.

Thanks again for being keen to input. Given the document is still in draft form I'd appreciate if it wasn't circulated more widely.

Cheers,  
Gareth

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**From:** James Greenwell <[james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** Thursday, June 20, 2024 8:56 AM

**To:** Gareth Minshall <[gareth.minshall@stats.govt.nz](mailto:gareth.minshall@stats.govt.nz)>

**Cc:** Sean Broughton <[sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz](mailto:sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz)>; Falaniko Tominiko <[Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz)>;

Lisa Cheney <[Lisa.Cheney@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Lisa.Cheney@stats.govt.nz)>; Maryke Barnard <[maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Subject:** Re: Follow-up from MPP meeting 12 June

Kia orāna Gareth,

Many thanks and I'm very grateful for your responses.

I'm happy to review the paper and meet with you and Falaniko next Thursday. I'm free to meet on Teams between 8 and 10:45.

I'll share these responses with my teammates

FYI - We're currently trying to understand how the quality of the household register affects these census 'quality' measures as well as the efficacy of the PES. We haven't been able to find much information about it nor how it may be biased from a Pacific data quality perspective.

As for Q4 - exactly - I'm interested to know if the PES will also enable us to see potential misclassification.

Fa'afetai tele lava

James

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**From:** Gareth Minshall <[gareth.minshall@stats.govt.nz](mailto:gareth.minshall@stats.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** 19 June 2024 9:56 PM

**To:** James Greenwell <[james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Cc:** Sean Broughton <[sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz](mailto:sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz)>; Falaniko Tominiko <[Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz)>;

Lisa Cheney <[Lisa.Cheney@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Lisa.Cheney@stats.govt.nz)>

**Subject:** Follow-up from MPP meeting 12 June

You don't often get email from [gareth.minshall@stats.govt.nz](mailto:gareth.minshall@stats.govt.nz). [Learn why this is important](#)

Hi James, nice to meet the other day. Just following up on a couple of things

### **Impact of future census options of pacific data**

As mentioned Falaniko and myself are looking to pull together a summary to provide the evaluation panel on the impact & opportunities of different census model on pacific data and it would be great to get your contribution and thoughts.

This will accompany other information so we are looking to keep it relatively short e.g. 3-4 pages.

The general flow is probably

- Key messages
- Pacific context
- Summary of what we've heard in engagement sessions
- Quality of admin data
- High level options for delivering survey content
- Probably opportunities / risks under different census options

The doc would sit with a few other documents of similar intent (e.g. summarising impact / opportunities for supporting data aspirations of rainbow communities, disability, iwi-Māori).

So wondering how your time is and how you would like to contribute? If it works for you we could send through an initial draft early next week and look to meet Thursday morning. Happy to shift to another day if that doesn't suit.

### **Some census 2023 questions**

Following up some of your queries ...

Q1: How did the response compare for Pacific from 2018 to 2023

In 2023 the interim collection response rate is 79.9% ([Interim coverage rates, collection response rates, and data sources for the 2023 Census | Stats NZ](#)).

For 2018 there were a couple of measures reported. From [Post-enumeration survey 2018: Methods and results | Stats NZ](#) "For the Pacific population group, the response rate was 63.7 percent for the traditional method and 72.0 percent for the new method". From talking to the census team, the new method is consistent with the measure that is reported in 2023. The document gives a good description of the different collection response rates used in 2018. Essentially it comes down to what is considered a sufficient response, with the new method requiring a minimal number of attributes to be completed via the household, dwelling or individual form whereas the traditional measure required the receipt of an individual form (but also no requirement for certain attributes).

So in short, the collection response rate for Pacific population group moved from 72% in 2018 to 79.9% in 2023. The PES coverage report is due to be published in Q1 2025 which will include updated measures.

Q2: Is it appropriate to compare differences between 2023 and 2018, or might these differences be due to methodological changes?

Your example here was the reduction in the proportion of the Pacific population who live in Auckland - is this a real world change that can be commented on, or is this potentially due to a change in the level of response or methods, and comparisons across time should be treated with caution?

I got some feedback from the census methodology team. They suggested the [Ethnicity – 2023 Census: Information by concept - Stats NZ DataInfo+](#) might be useful resource. This includes some information on the level of imputation etc for ethnicity variable and broken down by level 1 ethnicity. It also includes the note:

#### **Recommendations for use and further information**

Ethnicity data can be used in a comparable manner to the 2018 Census. When using the data, users should be aware:

- of the proportion of alternatively sourced ethnicity data at low levels of geography
- that all residual responses have been imputed or sourced from admin data for this variable for the census usually resident population count. The use of the census combined model ensures that the data is of high quality and comparable to the 2018 Census. Note that the 2013 Census did not use additional data sources or imputation which reduces comparability with the 2018 and 2023 Censuses.

In summary they noted that while the ERP will provide a better estimate when available, comparisons between 2023 and 2018 were appropriate (much more so than 2018 to 2013). Note, the APC also provides data that can be used to compare to census estimates or flows. For the example you gave the census team noted similar patterns were observed for Pacific but I haven't checked this out myself.

Q3: When will detailed ethnicity data (e.g. level 4) be released.

The ethnicity release 3rd of October will include level 4. Detail from the [2023 Census product and release finder](#): e.g. Ethnicity (detailed total responses level 4), age (5-year groups), and gender for the census usually resident population count, 2013, 2018, and 2023 Censuses

Q4: Will the PES be used to validate the admin information used for Census 2023 and will be able to see those results? or example as the recapture component - the PES will presumably obtain information from respondents missed by the census (initial capture) and where admin data was used. We'd like to understand the correlation between the admin data and PES.

I'm still getting a response on this and someone you can talk to directly. My understanding is that the PES coverage report will be reporting on the coverage of the combined response rather than on individual components. I think at the heart of what you are asking is whether the PES estimates both undercoverage and misclassification (e.g under/over reporting of pacific in admin data or imputation).

Hope this helps

Gareth

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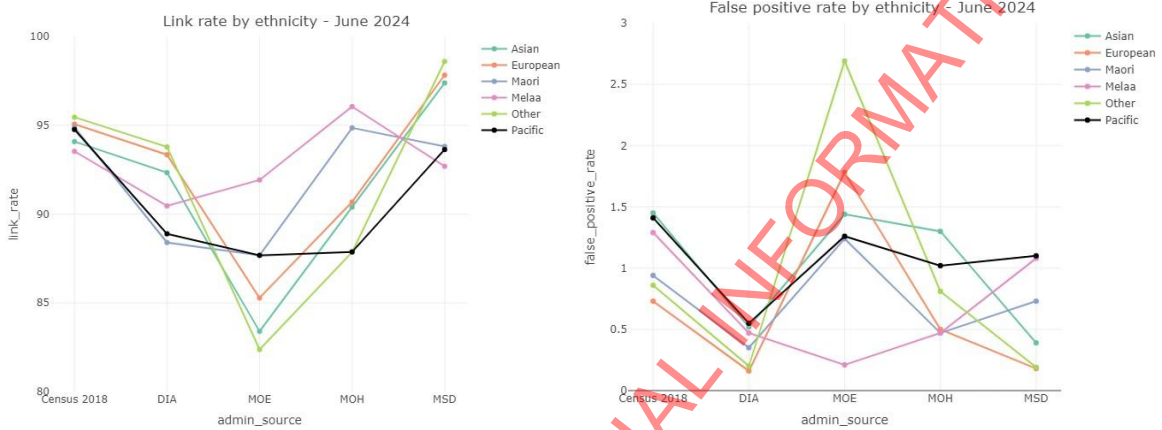
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# Document 32A

The graphs below pull out a subset of the graphs displaying link rates and false positive rates by ethnicity from the report 'IDI Bias Analyst Report – June 2024.html'.

## Summary graphs

The graphs below show the link rate and false positive rate by ethnicity for some of the admin data sources. I didn't have access to the underlying data so there is a risk of some transcribing error.



There is a bit of noise, but I think it is helpful to focus on the Pacific and use European as a contrast.

With the exception of MOE, the link rate of Pacific is between 0.3 and 4.4 percentage points lower than European. For MOE the link rate the link rate is 2.4 higher. A little surprisingly the link rate for Pacific is also lower than Asian in DIA, MOH and MSD.

Similarly, with the exception of MOE, false positive rates are higher for Pacific when compared to European. This varies between 0.5 and 1 percentage points.

	Link rate		False Positive	
	Pacific	European	Pacific	European
Census 2018	94.8	95.1	1.4	0.7
DIA	88.9	93.3	0.5	0.2
MOH	87.9	90.7	1.0	0.5
MOE	87.7	85.3	1.3	1.8
MSD	93.6	97.8	1.1	0.2

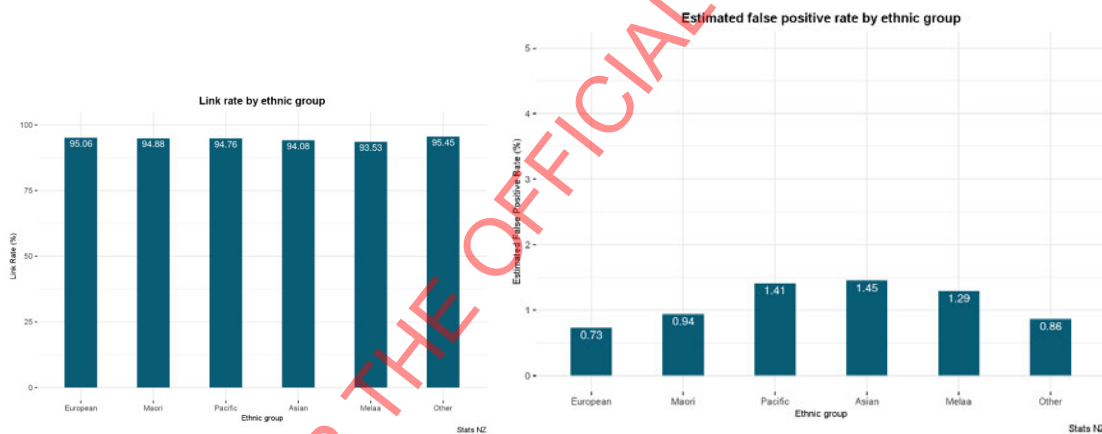
Over and above variation by ethnicity, the link rates highlight are a good reminder of the need to be treating linking error carefully. For example, a use case might be to use the IDI-ERP as a base

population linked to education or health outcomes. However, the link rate for Pacific would be around 88% so education attainment or interaction with health services would be under estimated using this approach without additional steps.

I think some care also needs to be taken when looking at the link rates. The datasets being linked include a wide range of data over a long time period, and link rates for particular types of activity will be higher than others. For example, for the MSD benefit payments typically go through IRD and have a very high link rate. Another example is that I think the Oranga Tamariki data include all notifications and the quality of some of this data (e.g. correct names, date of birth etc) will low compared to when children actively involved with the ministry. This doesn't mean the link rate should be ignored, more that for particular applications it is worth looking at the link rate for the subject population and activity type.

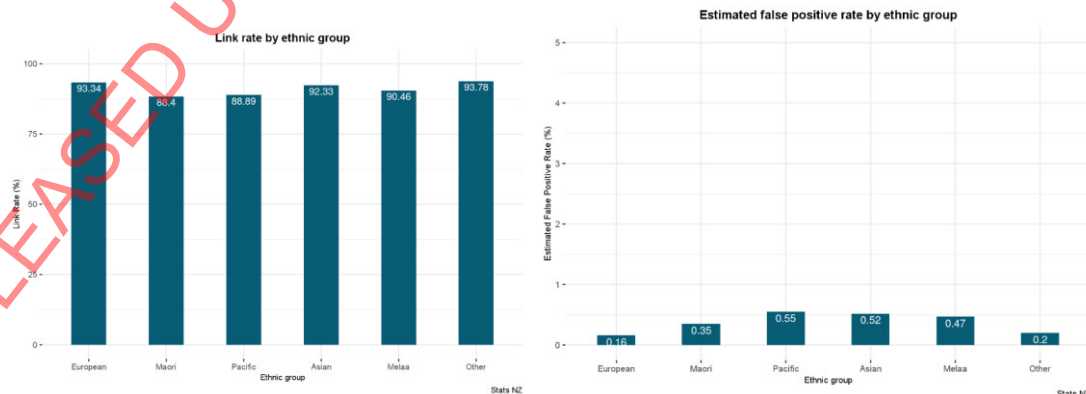
## Snips from IDI Bias Analyst Report – June 2024'

### Census 2018 to Spine

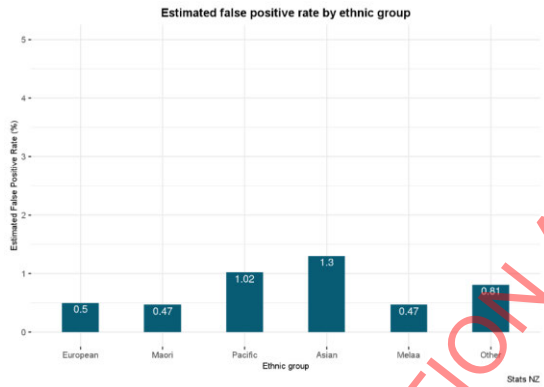
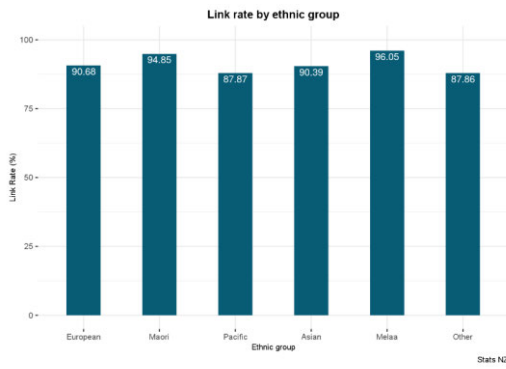


### DIA

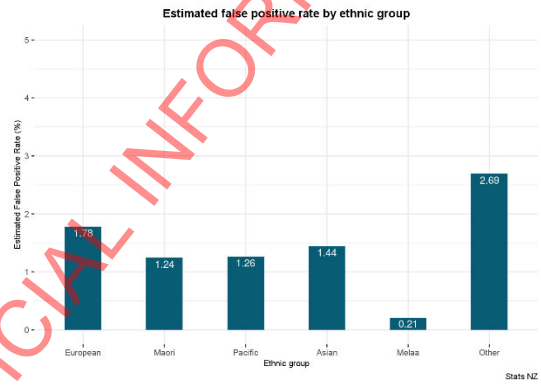
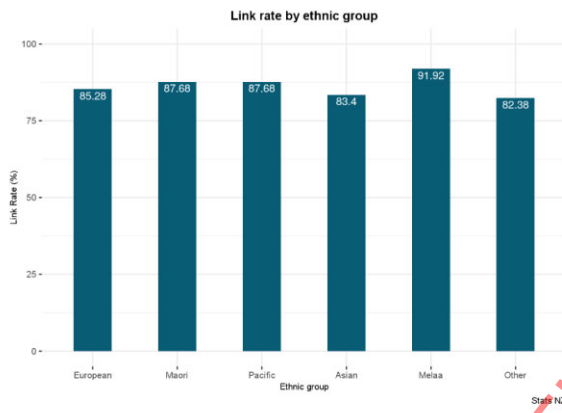
This will include births (which are part of the spine), deaths and marriages. Births will also include parents. Seems surprisingly low.



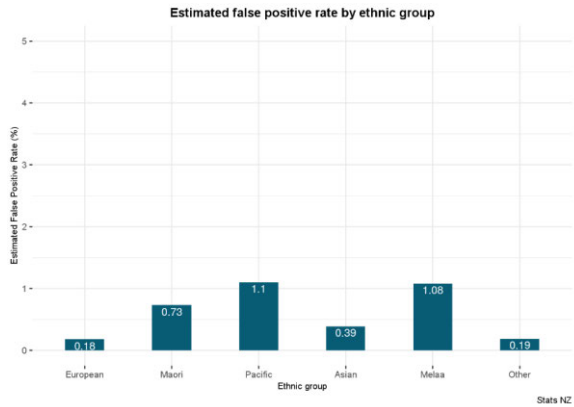
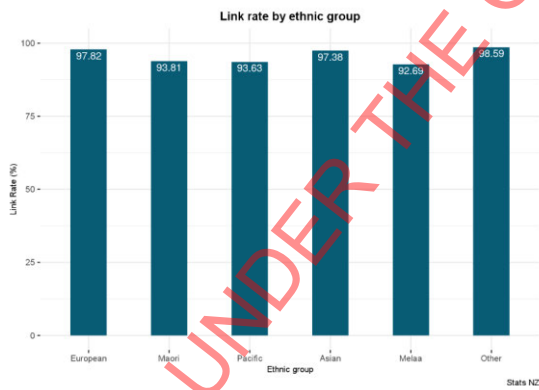
MOH




MOE



MSD



# Document 34

 Outlook

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**Fw: RIS Panel - Modernising the census**

---

**From** James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>

**Date** Fri 31/01/2025 1:57 PM

**To** Corina Grey <corina.grey@mpp.govt.nz>

**Cc** Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>

FYI

---

**From:** Tennille Maxey <Tennille.Maxey@stats.govt.nz>

**Sent:** 31 January 2025 8:36 AM

**To:** Peter Dolan <Peter.Dolan@health.govt.nz>; Rebecca Hollingsworth <Rebecca.Hollingsworth@sia.govt.nz>; James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>; Emma MacDonald <Emma.MacDonald@stats.govt.nz>

**Cc:** Marny Dickson <Marny.Dickson@stats.govt.nz>; Sean Broughton <sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz>

**Subject:** RIS Panel - Modernising the census

Kia ora,

Thank you so much for your recent engagement on the draft Cabinet paper on the approach to the next census. I'm reaching out to ask if you could please participate in a RIS panel on the proposal to conduct the next census via:

- ongoing admin data collection on key census variables
- a large annual sample survey (a census attributes survey) – surveying a proportion of the population throughout the year, every year, and
- other tailored solutions, e.g., targeted survey programmes – designed with key partners to address remaining gaps in data, such as those not well-represented in admin data.

Stats NZ does not have a standing internal RIS Panel. We are looking to form a Panel comprised of:

- Peter Dolan – Group Manager, Data Analytics and Surveys – Ministry of Health
- Rebecca Hollingsworth – Policy and Insights Manager – Social Investment Agency
- James Greenwell – Director, Data and Insights – MPP
- Emma McDonald – Director, Centre for Data Ethics and Innovation – Stats NZ

The Panel will be chaired/facilitated by Sarah Kerkin from Frank Advice. We have carefully considered the right composition of the Panel to ensure the best exploration of options and assessment of impact, and would very much appreciate and value your participation in the panel.

The Panel has been tentatively scheduled to meet on the week beginning 17 Feb, with papers provided two days prior.

Please let me know if you might be able to participate. We are happy to shift timing around to match diaries.

Thank you in advance,

Tennille

**Tennille Maxey** (pronouns: she/her/hers)

General Manager - Policy | Kaihautū Kaupapa Here

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# Document 47

**From:** [James Greenwell](#)  
**To:** [Carly Skerrett](#); [Tennille Maxey](#)  
**Cc:** [Sean Broughton](#); [Trish Mcauliffe](#); [Corina Grey](#); [Danilo Coelho de Almeida](#)  
**Subject:** IN-CONFIDENCE:Re: Re: [IN-CONFIDENCE] Invitation: Meeting to discuss the in-principle decision on the future of census  
**Date:** Thursday, 28 November 2024 9:08:16 am  
**Attachments:** [Outlook-gpoid2ru.png](#)  
[Outlook-ikk533mv.png](#)

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IN-CONFIDENCE

Halo Carly,

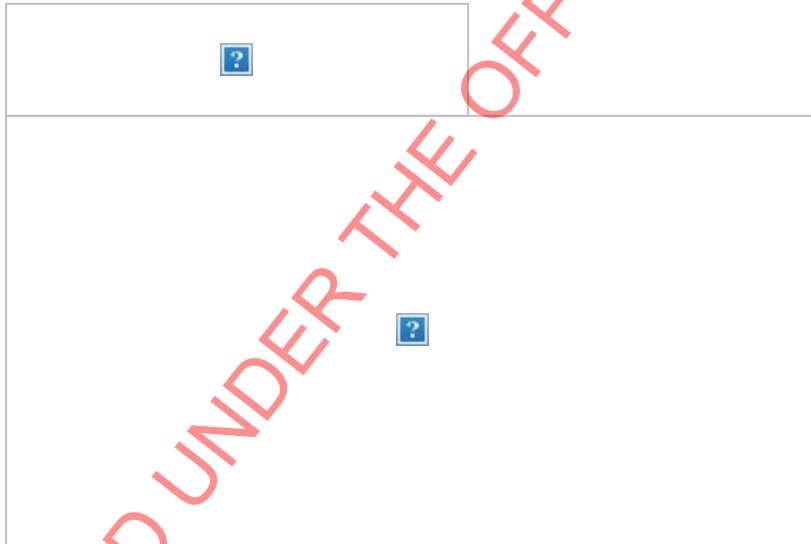
I'm also free the time Corina suggested (29/11 from 10-11).

Tagio tumas,  
James

**Dr James Greenwell**

Director, Data and Insights  
Ministry for Pacific Peoples  
Te Manatū mō ngā Iwi o te Moana-nui-ā-Kiwa

s9(2)(a)



IN-CONFIDENCE

---

**From:** Carly Skerrett <Carly.Skerrett@stats.govt.nz>  
**Sent:** 28 November 2024 8:19 AM  
**To:** Corina Grey <corina.grey@mpp.govt.nz>; Tennille Maxey <Tennille.Maxey@stats.govt.nz>; Danilo Coelho de Almeida <danilo.almeida@mpp.govt.nz>; James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>

**Cc:** Sean Broughton <sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz>; Trish Mcauliffe <Trish.Mcauliffe@stats.govt.nz>

**Subject:** RE: IN-CONFIDENCE:Re: [IN-CONFIDENCE] Invitation: Meeting to discuss the in-principle decision on the future of census

IN-CONFIDENCE

Kia ora Corina,

Thanks for your response, no worries on the delay, glad to have heard from you

We can do:

Wednesday 4 between 2-5pm

Friday 6 between 8-12am

If you can let me know an hour that works for you, I will send through a meeting invitation.

Ngā mihi

**Carly Skerrett** (pronouns: she/her)

Kaitohutohu Kaupapahere | Policy Advisor

Stats NZ | Tatauranga Aotearoa | [stats.govt.nz](https://stats.govt.nz)

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Please note, my usual hours are 7.30am - 4pm, I do not work Wednesdays

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IN-CONFIDENCE

**From:** Corina Grey <corina.grey@mpp.govt.nz>

**Sent:** Tuesday, 26 November 2024 2:42 pm

**To:** Tennille Maxey <Tennille.Maxey@stats.govt.nz>; Danilo Coelho de Almeida <danilo.almeida@mpp.govt.nz>; James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>

**Cc:** Sean Broughton <sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz>; Trish Mcauliffe <Trish.Mcauliffe@stats.govt.nz>; Carly Skerrett <Carly.Skerrett@stats.govt.nz>

**Subject:** IN-CONFIDENCE:Re: [IN-CONFIDENCE] Invitation: Meeting to discuss the in-principle decision on the future of census

IN-CONFIDENCE

Kia ora Tennille

Huge apologies - I completely missed this email last week. Unfortunately the only time I can do this week is Friday 10-11, but not sure how James and Danilo are placed? If that doesn't work, are there times that work for you on Wednesday 4 or Friday 6 December?

Thanks so much  
Corina

IN-CONFIDENCE

---

**From:** Tennille Maxey <[Tennille.Maxey@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Tennille.Maxey@stats.govt.nz)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 19, 2024 10:12 AM  
**To:** Corina Grey <[corina.grey@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:corina.grey@mpp.govt.nz)>; Danilo Coelho de Almeida <[daniilo.almeida@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:daniilo.almeida@mpp.govt.nz)>; James Greenwell <[james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz)>  
**Cc:** Sean Broughton <[sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz](mailto:sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz)>; Trish Mcauliffe <[Trish.Mcauliffe@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Trish.Mcauliffe@stats.govt.nz)>; Carly Skerrett <[Carly.Skerrett@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Carly.Skerrett@stats.govt.nz)>  
**Subject:** [IN-CONFIDENCE] Invitation: Meeting to discuss the in-principle decision on the future of census

Kia ora koutou,

Thank you for your agency's ongoing engagement in Stats NZ's work to develop a sustainable and modern approach to the census.

Following on from our Chief Executive's email to your CE (see below), we invite you to meet with us to discuss the Government Statistician's in-principle decision on the manner of taking the next census. The proposed approach is to use administrative data with an annual sample survey (a 'Census Attribute Survey') and other tailored solutions (e.g. smaller, more targeted surveys). This approach can be delivered with the funding available and will meet the core purposes of census, with tailored solutions providing for different information needs. The **attached** briefing provides more detail.

***Please note that the in-principle decision (as well as the attached briefing) is embargoed and needs to be treated with the highest level of confidentiality.***

As signalled in our CE's email, over the next two weeks, our Policy and Finance teams would like to talk with counterparts at your agency to fully understand and mitigate possible impacts, including financial implications, of the in-principle decision. This will inform a paper seeking Cabinet endorsement of the in-principle decision in March 2025. We expect departmental consultation on the Cabinet paper to occur in January-February and Ministerial consultation occurring shortly thereafter.

We expect these meetings to take approximately 1 hour. If you would like to meet with us, please indicate by Thursday 21 November if any of the following times would suit:

- Tuesday, 26 November, between 3-5pm
- Wednesday, 27 November between 2-5pm
- Friday, 29 November, between 9-11am

If none of these dates suit, we can also arrange times the following week, or early morning from 7.30-9am.

Please reply to [early.skerrett@stats.govt.nz](mailto:early.skerrett@stats.govt.nz) to set up a meeting.

If there are key contacts not included in this invitation who you think will be valuable in these conversations, please feel free to forward this on, but please keep the embargo in mind when you do so.

If you would like to discuss any aspect of this approach prior to our meeting, please contact [sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz](mailto:sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz) or myself rather than your regular Stats NZ relationship manager. Thank you for your continued support.

**Tennille Maxey** (pronouns: she/her/hers)  
Director of Policy | Kaihautū Kaupapa Here  
Stats NZ | Tauranga Aotearoa | [stats.govt.nz](https://stats.govt.nz)

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**From:** Kim Matthews <[Kim.Matthews@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Kim.Matthews@stats.govt.nz)> **On Behalf Of** Mark Sowden  
**Sent:** Monday, 18 November 2024 10:34 am  
**To:** Gerardine Clifford-Lidstone <[Gerardine.Clifford-Lidstone@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:Gerardine.Clifford-Lidstone@mpp.govt.nz)>  
**Cc:** Sean Broughton <[sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz](mailto:sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz)>; Tennille Maxey <[Tennille.Maxey@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Tennille.Maxey@stats.govt.nz)>  
**Subject:** Future Census Follow Up

Kia ora Gerardine,

Thanks for meeting with me in September to discuss Future Census.

I appreciate your support for the proposed approach (i.e. using administrative data combined with an annual sample survey and other tailored solutions), particularly given the constraints we will likely face if we continue with full enumeration. As we discussed, I believe this option offers the best path forward, acknowledging your agency may have some concerns around how we work to ensure the best data possible for Pacific communities.

Just a quick heads up following from my previous email – Tennille Maxey (Policy Director), Trish Mcauliffe (CFO) and Sean Broughton (GM - Statistical Delivery, Population & Housing) will be reaching out to Corina Grey, Danilo Almeida, and James Greenwell this week to schedule a discussion on impacts of the approach to MPP and ensure these are appropriately reflected in the draft Cabinet paper.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Thank you for your continued support.

**Mark Sowden** (pronouns: he/him/his)  
Government Statistician and Chief Executive | Tumu Whakarae  
Stats New Zealand | Tauranga Aotearoa | [stats.govt.nz](https://stats.govt.nz) |

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# Document 48

**From:** [James Greenwell](#)  
**To:** [Tennille Maxey](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Follow up: Future census engagement  
**Date:** Wednesday, 29 January 2025 11:03:28 am  
**Attachments:** [Outlook-20w4eueb.png](#)

---

Kia orāna Tenille,

It was great meeting you in person last week

Apologies for the delay replying to your request.

My teammates have been thinking about the request. In the absence of evidence, a formal decision and clear decision making processes we would prefer to have a talanoa with Stats NZ policy counterparts in the first instance rather than providing written feedback.

Please let me know if that would be suitable.

Meitaki,  
James

**Dr James Greenwell**

Director, Data and Insights  
Ministry for Pacific Peoples  
Te Manatū mō ngā Iwi o te Moana-nui-ā-Kiwa

s9(2)(a)

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**From:** Tennille Maxey <Tennille.Maxey@stats.govt.nz>  
**Sent:** 19 December 2024 10:54 AM  
**To:** Corina Grey <corina.grey@mpp.govt.nz>; James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>; Danilo Coelho de Almeida <daniilo.almeida@mpp.govt.nz>; Shari Mason <Shari.Mason@mpp.govt.nz>  
**Cc:** Sean Broughton <sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz>; Sam Baker <Sam.Baker@stats.govt.nz>; Sara Montgomery <Sara.Montgomery@stats.govt.nz>; Carly Skerrett <Carly.Skerrett@stats.govt.nz>  
**Subject:** Follow up: Future census engagement

Kia ora koutou,

Thank you for making time to meet with us to discuss some of the impacts of the proposed change to the manner of taking the census. We appreciate the opportunity to further

understand your level of support, concerns, and thoughts around mitigations, as well as the opportunity to explain the rationale behind the in-principle decision.

We are still at the start of a transformational change in the way we collect census data. Our next step is focussed on confirming direction. As such, the upcoming Cabinet paper is high-level, seeking Cabinet's approval to proceed with the proposed approach to taking census. This will provide the mandate to work with organisations on detailed design to mitigate risks and address user needs.

***A friendly reminder that the information provided in both this email and the attachments provided remain under embargo***

As promised in our recent hui, an information pack is attached which includes:

- a high-level overview of key milestones (attachment A)
- an early view of the population-level administrative data we will likely need for the next census (attachment B)
- the approximate release dates for key outputs (attachment C)
- an overview of the legal framework and privacy settings that the census operates within (attachment D).

We are working directly with the agencies listed in attachment B, to understand the potential for data supply agreements.

We are still working on a list of variables needed to produce a dwelling count.

I want to acknowledge the difficulties in determining the potential impact of the proposed change ahead of the design-work. Because of this, the level of engagement to date, and continued engagement, is invaluable. To help further planning and analysis, we were hoping that in the New Year you could advise:

- what you currently use from census data that is absolutely critical for your business
- whether there are any critical needs for census data that your business has, that you do not think will be met by the current schedule of data releases, as per the attachment.

It is important to note that if the status quo was maintained, the census would not be expected to deliver high-quality data, significantly impacting the measurement of small population groups in particular. The low response rates predicted will create quality issues, and the funding envelope available further restricts activities that would help sustain data quality, such as community supports, engagement and paper forms. These limitations were a significant driver of the in-principle decision.

If you can respond to us on these questions by 27 January 2025, we will be able to incorporate these into our ongoing planning.

Yesterday we sent the draft Cabinet paper for department consultation. Following the current DPMC guidance on accessing and sharing Cabinet paper material, we did not send Cabinet paper directly to individuals. For your agency, we sent the Cabinet paper to: [mppadvice@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:mppadvice@mpp.govt.nz), please contact the address owner to ensure you receive a copy and can provide feedback.

Thank you for the time you've already dedicated to supporting the work around the next census. Please be assured that, despite the pre-Christmas email, we aren't seeking anything further until late January. Please feel welcome to reach out to Sean or me if you would like to raise any further considerations.

Nga mihi,

Tennille Maxey (pronouns: she/her/hers)

Tennille Maxey - General Manager - Policy | Kaiwhakahaere Matua - Ngā Kaupapa Here  
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# Document 54

**From:** [Tennille Maxey](#)  
**To:** [James Greenwell](#)  
**Subject:** Update on census  
**Date:** Friday, 2 May 2025 11:03:00 am  
**Attachments:** s18(d)

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Kia ora James

I hope you are well. This week, Minister Reti lodged the census Cabinet paper. I've attached a copy for you. As per the guidance on unauthorised disclosure, please do not share this paper widely.

Please feel very welcome to get in touch if you have any questions. I know MPP have regular catch-ups with our Chief Methodologist, but we will also be in touch in due course about technical forums to help inform further design work.

Tennille

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# Document 59



## Fono to share the in-principle decision of future of Census.

**From** Falaniko Tominiko <Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz>

**Date** Thu 20/02/2025 9:08 AM

**To** Collin Tukuitonga <collin.tukuitonga@auckland.ac.nz>; malosii@justice.govt.nz <malosii@justice.govt.nz>; James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>; Maria Uluilalata <Maria.Uluilalata@mpp.govt.nz>; Penni Wolfram <penni.wolfram@mpp.govt.nz>; Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>; Serena Curtis <Serena.Curtis012@msd.govt.nz>; Gareth Williams <Gareth.Williams020@msd.govt.nz>; Junior Ulu <Junior.Ulu@health.govt.nz>; aumea.herman@health.govt.nz <aumea.herman@health.govt.nz>; Tapaeru.Minster@health.govt.nz <Tapaeru.Minster@health.govt.nz>; merivi.tiai@health.govt.nz <merivi.tiai@health.govt.nz>; Julienne.Faletau@health.govt.nzLi <Julienne.Faletau@health.govt.nzLi>; Linda Fatialofa <Linda.Fatialofa@TeWhatuOra.govt.nz>; zac.qereqeretabua@tewhatauora.govt.nz <zac.qereqeretabua@tewhatauora.govt.nz>; ofeina.barbarich-manuel@health.govt.nz <ofeina.barbarich-manuel@health.govt.nz>; William.fanene@police.govt.nz <William.Fanene@police.govt.nz>; David.PULEMAGAFA@police.govt.nz <David.PULEMAGAFA@police.govt.nz>; Su'a Thomsen [TSY] <su'a.thomsen@treasury.govt.nz>; mine.auelua@cert.govt.nz <mine.auelua@cert.govt.nz>

**Cc** Lafaele Mapusua <Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz>; Kath Lys <Kath.Lys@stats.govt.nz>

1 attachment (27 KB)

Confidentiality Agreement.docx;

### Greeting Pacific Leaders

Kia orana, Mālō e lelei, Fakaalofa lahi atu, Ni sa bula vinaka, Talofa lava, Mālo ni, Kam na mauri, Noa'ia, Halo Oleketa, Gude, Tēnā koutou katoa.

We trust this email finds you all well.

The Government Statistician has made an in-principle decision regarding the approach to the next census. This decision has been shaped by public consultation, feedback from stakeholders, and advice from an Independent Evaluation Panel. It outlines an approach that is responsive to the country's evolving data needs.

At present, the in-principle decision is under embargo as it progresses to Cabinet for consideration on the 17<sup>th</sup> of March. Stats NZ has sought and received approval from the Minister to re-engage with a small number of key Pacific partners who were involved in the Future Census consultation process in 2024, to inform them of this decision. As a valued member of our consultation group, we are inviting you to participate in this important fono.

### Fono Details

The fono will take place on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> March from 9.30am-12.30am. Those based in Wellington will have the option to attend the fono in person at our National Office, and those outside of Wellington will be able to join online.

The fono will be facilitated by Sean Broughton – General Manager Statistical Delivery, Population & Housing and Anna McDowell – General Manager Strategic Engagement, Maori Partnership & Data Capability.

We will be on hand to assist with the discussions.

### Confidentiality

Please note that any release of the decision will be subject to the confidentiality restrictions of the embargo. This means we will need a signed agreement from each person that they understand and agree to maintain confidentiality before we can present any information on the in-principle decision, and all embargoed information that is emailed out will be password protected.

We ask that if you wish to attend the fono:

- sign the attached confidentiality agreement
- provide on the agreement your mobile phone number (so we can text you a password for the information)
- indicate on the agreement whether you wish to join in person or online
- email the signed agreement to **Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz**, no later than 3pm Friday 28<sup>th</sup> February.

No pre-reading information will be released for the 7<sup>th</sup> March fono until we have received the signed confidentiality agreement.

### Engagement Purpose

Please note that this engagement is not intended to revisit or renegotiate the decision, but rather reflects our commitment to greater transparency. Through these discussions, we aim to ensure the decision is implemented in a way that aligns with the priorities already shared through our ongoing relationships, builds on our shared work, and delivers meaningful outcomes for all involved.

Once Cabinet has endorsed the decision, a public announcement will follow, and further opportunities for broader input will be available during a public consultation on census topics later in the year.

We deeply value the relationships we have built with you over this time and remain dedicated to ensuring these continue to guide us in delivering a responsive, inclusive, and impactful census for Aotearoa.

We apologise for the fast pace at which we are proceeding, but it is important that all requirements are met prior to the fono. We hope you will be able to attend.

Please do not forward this email onto any other people as you have been specifically selected for this fono.

Meitaki ma'ata, Mālō 'āupito, Fakaauē lahi, Vinaka vaka levu, Fa'afetai lava, Fakafetai lahi, Kam rabwa, Tenk yu tru, Tagio tumas, Ngā mihi,

Vaotui Seuлуpe Dr Falaniko Tominiko  
Principal Advisor  
Pacific Engagement & Strategy

Fuimaono Faumuina Lafaele Mapusua  
Senior Advisor  
Pacific Engagement & Strategy

Falaniko (Niko)

### Vaotui Seuлуpe Dr Falaniko Tominiko

Kaitohutohu Mātāmua – Principal Advisor, Pacific Engagement  
Stats NZ | Tātauranga Aotearoa | [stats.govt.nz](https://stats.govt.nz) | s9(2)(a)  
| M:Office | T:WFH | W:Office | T:WFH | F:Office |

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# Document 59A



## **Agreement to protect confidential information**

**Stats NZ Confidential Information** means information both oral and written, that

- is provided by Stats NZ 'in confidence', and/or
- you know, or ought to know is confidential, and/or
- is related, either directly or indirectly, to the in-principle decision on how Stats NZ will conduct the next census.

1. I agree to not use or disclose Stats NZ's confidential information to any person or organisation other than:

- a. to the extent that use or disclosure is necessary for the purposes of participating in the consultation/engagement process
- b. if Stats NZ gives prior written approval to the use or disclosure
- c. if the use or disclosure is required by law (including under the Official Information Act 1982), Ministers, parliamentary convention, or any other regulation, rules, or policy that is binding on you
- d. if the information has already become public, other than through a breach of the obligation of confidentiality by you.

2. I agree to:

- a. notify Stats NZ if I become aware of any suspected or actual unauthorised use or disclosure of Stats NZ confidential information
- b. comply with any reasonable direction of Stats NZ in relation to any suspected or actual breach of these obligations as Stats NZ reasonably requests.

3. I understand that if unauthorised disclosure occurs an investigation may take place, and I may be excluded from receiving confidential information in future.

4. This agreement shall continue until Stats NZ notifies you that this agreement is terminated.

**Signed:** *(Insert signature and type name, or type name)*

**Organisation or group:**

**Date:**

**Mobile phone number:**

(To ensure you receive access to any shared documents, please include your mobile number, as passwords will be sent via text)

**I wish to attend:** (circle or highlight one)

- In person at the Stats NZ Head Office in Wellington
- Online

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# Document 60

 Outlook

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**RE: REMINDER - Fono to share the in-principle decision of future of Census.**

---

**From** Lafaale Mapusua <Lafaale.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz>

**Date** Mon 3/03/2025 3:22 PM

**Cc** Kath Lys <Kath.Lys@stats.govt.nz>; Falaniko Tominiko <Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz>; Lafaale Mapusua <Lafaale.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz>

**IN-CONFIDENCE**

Noa'ia and warmest Pacific greetings,

Fakafetai to everyone who has RSVP'd and returned their completed confidentiality agreements. We appreciate your prompt response and commitment to attending the fono on 7th March. Vinaka also to those who have advised that they will not be available for our fono.

For those who have yet to respond, we understand that this is a busy time and are **extending the deadline to 4PM tomorrow (4/3/25)**. Please ensure that your completed confidentiality agreement is emailed to myself ([Lafaale.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Lafaale.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz)) by this extended deadline to confirm your attendance. As a reminder, no one will be able to attend the fono without having submitted a signed agreement.

Once we have received your RSVP and confidentiality agreement, we will send you an email with pre-reading material and instructions on how to access the secured collateral. Please be advised that this material is highly confidential, and the contents of the meeting are under embargo.

We kindly ask that you respect these confidentiality requirements and do not share the information with others.

We look forward to your participation in this important talanoa.

As always, if you have any questions regarding the subject matter, please let me know.

Ma le fa'aaloalo lava,

**Fuimaono Faumuina Lafaale Mapusua** (he/him/his)

Faufautua Sīnia | Kaitohutohu Matua | Senior Advisor – Pacific Engagement

*I work flexibly - so while I may choose to send an e-mail outside ordinary working hours, I do not expect a response/action outside your own working hours.*

---

**From:** Falaniko Tominiko <Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz>

**Sent:** Wednesday, 26 February 2025 10:47 am

**To:** Collin Tukuitonga <collin.tukuitonga@auckland.ac.nz>; MALOSII@justice.govt.nz; James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>; Maria.Uluilelata@mpp.govt.nz; Penni Wolfgramm <penni.wolfgramm@mpp.govt.nz>; maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz; Serena Curtis <Serena.Curtis012@msd.govt.nz>; Gareth Williams <Gareth.Williams020@msd.govt.nz>; Junior Ulu <Junior.Ulu@health.govt.nz>; Tapaeru.Minster@health.govt.nz; merivi.tiai@health.govt.nz; Julienne.Faletau@health.govt.nzLi; Linda Fatialofa <Linda.Fatialofa@TeWhatuOra.govt.nz>;

zac.qereqereta@tewhatauora.govt.nz; ofeina.barbarich-manuel@health.govt.nz;  
William.fanene@police.govt.nz; David.PULEMAGAFA@police.govt.nz; Mine.Auelua@cert.govt.nz;  
Toli.Sagaga@justice.govt.nz; Sela.finau@education.govt.nz; Ativalu.Lemuelu@dia.govt.nz; Utufa'asisili  
Rosemary Mose <Rosemary.Mose@nzqa.govt.nz>; kilisitina.fihaki@mbie.govt.nz;  
TofaSuafole.Gush005@whaikaha.govt.nz

**Cc:** Lafaele Mapusua <Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz>; Kath Lys <Kath.Lys@stats.govt.nz>

**Subject:** REMINDER - Fono to share the in-principle decision of future of Census.

**Importance:** High

Greeting Pacific Leaders

Kia orana, Mālō e lelei, Fakaalofa lahi atu, Ni sa bula vinaka, Talofa lava, Mālo ni, Kam na mauri, Noa'ia,  
Halo Oleketa, Gude, Tēnā koutou katoa.

This is just a friendly reminder about an email we sent to you last Thursday.

-----  
The Government Statistician has made an in-principle decision regarding the approach to the next census. This decision has been shaped by public consultation, feedback from stakeholders, and advice from an Independent Evaluation Panel. It outlines an approach that is responsive to the country's evolving data needs.

At present, the in-principle decision is under embargo as it progresses to Cabinet for consideration on the 17<sup>th</sup> of March. Stats NZ has sought and received approval from the Minister to re-engage with a small number of key Pacific partners who were involved in the Future Census consultation process in 2024, to inform them of this decision. As a valued member of our consultation group, we are inviting you to participate in this important fono.

#### **Fono Details**

The fono will take place on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> March from 9.30am-12.30am. Those based in Wellington will have the option to attend the fono in person at our National Office, and those outside of Wellington will be able to join online.

The fono will be facilitated by Sean Broughton – General Manager Statistical Delivery, Population & Housing and Anna McDowell – General Manager Strategic Engagement, Maori Partnership & Data Capability.

We will be on hand to assist with the discussions.

#### **Confidentiality**

Please note that any release of the decision will be subject to the confidentiality restrictions of the embargo. This means we will need a signed agreement from each person that they understand and agree to maintain confidentiality before we can present any information on the in-principle decision, and all embargoed information that is emailed out will be password protected.

We ask that if you wish to attend the fono:

- sign the attached confidentiality agreement
- provide on the agreement your mobile phone number (so we can text you a password for the information)
- indicate on the agreement whether you wish to join in person or online
- email the signed agreement to [Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz), no later than 3pm Friday 28<sup>th</sup> February.

No pre-reading information will be released for the 7<sup>th</sup> March fono until we have received the signed confidentiality agreement.

#### **Engagement Purpose**

Please note that this engagement is not intended to revisit or renegotiate the decision, but rather reflects our commitment to greater transparency. Through these discussions, we aim to ensure the decision is

implemented in a way that aligns with the priorities already shared through our ongoing relationships, builds on our shared work, and delivers meaningful outcomes for all involved.

Once Cabinet has endorsed the decision, a public announcement will follow, and further opportunities for broader input will be available during a public consultation on census topics later in the year. We deeply value the relationships we have built with you over this time and remain dedicated to ensuring these continue to guide us in delivering a responsive, inclusive, and impactful census for Aotearoa.

We apologise for the fast pace at which we are proceeding, but it is important that all requirements are met prior to the fono. We hope you will be able to attend.

Please do not forward this email onto any other people as you have been specifically selected for this fono.

Meitaki ma'ata, Mālō 'āupito, Fakaauē lahi, Vinaka vaka levu, Fa'afetai lava, Fakafetai lahi, Kam rabwa, Tenk yu tru, Tagio tumas, Ngā mihi,

Vaotui Seuлуpe Dr Falaniko Tominiko  
Principal Advisor  
Pacific Engagement & Strategy

Fuimaono Faumuina Lafaele Mapusua  
Senior Advisor  
Pacific Engagement & Strategy

Falaniko (Niko)

**Vaotui Seuлуpe Dr Falaniko Tominiko**

Kaitohutohu Mātāmua – Principal Advisor, Pacific Engagement

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| M:Office | T:WFH | W:Office | T:WFH | F:Office |

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# Document 61

 Outlook

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**RE: Coordinating MPP attendance at Stats NZ engagements**

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**From** Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>

**Date** Thu 6/03/2025 4:30 PM

**To** Lafaele Mapusua <Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz>; Ronja levers <Ronja.levers@stats.govt.nz>; Sandy Suei <sandy.suei@stats.govt.nz>

**Cc** Falaniko Tominiko <Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz>; James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>; Kath Lys <Kath.Lys@stats.govt.nz>

Fa'afetai tele lava Lafaele

Really appreciate your help – we look forward to working with your team to support Stats NZ engagements.

Please let me know how we can help.

See you tomorrow 😊

Thanks  
Maryke

**Maryke Barnard**  
**Director, Operations - Policy and Insights**

s9(2)(a)

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**From:** Lafaele Mapusua <Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz>

**Sent:** Thursday, 6 March 2025 11:05 am

**To:** Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>; Ronja levers <Ronja.levers@stats.govt.nz>; Sandy Suei <sandy.suei@stats.govt.nz>

**Cc:** Falaniko Tominiko <Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz>; James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>; Kath Lys <Kath.Lys@stats.govt.nz>

**Subject:** RE: Coordinating MPP attendance at Stats NZ engagements

Ni sa bula Maryke,

Thank you for sharing this with me during our fono earlier today.

We apologise that this was not coordinated properly to ensure that you were across everyone who was invited to the different fono. We hope there wasn't too much of an inconvenience caused.

We appreciate that there are multiple fono, similar to tomorrows one that different MPP staff were invited to without your knowledge.

I will work with Sandy to ensure this doesn't happen again and have cc'd in our Senior Project Manager so it is on her radar too.

Thank you again for your ongoing support. I'll see you tomorrow.

Vinaka vaka levu,

**Fuimaono Faumuina Lafaele Mapusua** (he/him/his)

Faufautua Sīnia | Kaitohutohu Matua | Senior Advisor – Pacific Engagement

*I work flexibly - so while I may choose to send an e-mail outside ordinary working hours, I do not expect a response/action outside your own working hours.*

---

**From:** Maryke Barnard <[maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** Thursday, 6 March 2025 10:55 am

**To:** Ronja levers <[Ronja.levers@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Ronja.levers@stats.govt.nz)>; Sandy Suei <[sandy.suei@stats.govt.nz](mailto:sandy.suei@stats.govt.nz)>; Lafaele Mapusua <[Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz)>

**Cc:** Falaniko Tominiko <[Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz)>; James Greenwell <[james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Subject:** Coordinating MPP attendance at Stats NZ engagements

Kia Orāna team

Hope you are well.

Thank you for the various invitation sent to MPP colleagues to attend Next census events over the next few days.

We hoping to coordinate MPP attendance at Stats engagements across our organisation. May I please ask that for the next round, the list of engagements you'd like MPP to attend is sent to me in the first instance?

Please let me know if you have any questions 😊

Meitaki Ma'ata  
Maryke

**Maryke Barnard**

Director, Operations - Policy and Insights  
Ministry for Pacific Peoples  
Te Manatū mō ngā Iwi o te Moana-nui-ā-Kiwa

s9(2)(a)

[www.mpp.govt.nz](http://www.mpp.govt.nz)



This email is from an external sender. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe

# Document 62



[WARNING: MESSAGE ENCRYPTED] Information relating to the Next Census fono on Friday 7 March

From Rachel McBeth <Rachel.McBeth@stats.govt.nz>

Date Thu 6/03/2025 2:36 PM

Cc Lafaale Mapusua <Lafaale.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz>

2 attachments (2 MB)

250306 Stats NZ Next Census update Pacific slides 7 March 2025 STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL EMBARGOED NOT FOR SHARING.pdf; PACIFIC FONO AGENDA 7 March 2025 v05.pdf;

Some people who received this message don't often get email from rachel.mcbeth@stats.govt.nz. [Learn why this is important](#)

Kia ora, Mālō e lelei, Fakaalofa lahi atu, Ni sa bula vinaka, Talofa lava, Mālo ni, Kam na mauri, Noa'ia, Halo Oleketa, Gude, Tēnā koutou katoa,

We hope this email finds you well and that your week is going smoothly.

Thank you for your patience as we finalised the content for tomorrow's fono.

As part of the strict confidentiality requirements surrounding the embargoed content related to the in-principle decision for the next census, we would like to extend our gratitude for signing and returning the confidentiality form. This action ensures compliance with the embargo process for this kaupapa.

By now, you should have received a text with the password for the embargoed information, which is attached to this email. Should you encounter any issues accessing either of the attachments, please reach out to [rachel.mcbeth@stats.govt.nz](mailto:rachel.mcbeth@stats.govt.nz) for assistance.

**A reminder that the information contained in the attached document is under embargo. The document should not be printed, downloaded or shared.**

## Fono Purpose

Please note that this fono is intended for us to share the decision with you, and reflects our commitment to greater transparency. The purpose of our talanoa is to ensure the decision is implemented in a way that aligns with the priorities we've already discussed through our ongoing relationships. We aim to build on our shared work and deliver meaningful outcomes for all involved.

Once Cabinet has endorsed the decision, a public announcement will follow, and additional opportunities for broader input will be available as we move into the design phases, and also through a public consultation on census topics later in the year.

As previously mentioned, we highly value the relationships we've built with you over time and remain committed to ensuring these continue to guide us in delivering a responsive, inclusive, and impactful census for Aotearoa.

We sincerely apologise for the late delivery of this content and deeply appreciate your ongoing patience and support in the work we are striving to achieve together.

### Attendance in person

If you are attending the fono in person, please make your way to the Stats NZ Wellington Office at 8 Willis Street just before 9:30am. The entrance to the building is between the stores *Macpac* & *Alchemy Equipment*. Upon arrival, please proceed up to reception on level one either via the spiral staircase at the back of the entrance foyer, or by using the lift located on the left before the security gates.

Once there the receptionist will take your names and provide you each with visitor lanyards. They'll also alert us to your arrival.

### Attendance online

If you are attending the fono online, please use the MS Teams details copied at the bottom of this email.

If you have any questions regarding the fono or if there are any changes to your attendance, please contact [Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz).

Meitaki ma'ata, Mälō 'āupito, Fakaaue lahi, Vinaka vaka levu, Fa'afetai tele lava, Fakafetai lahi, Kam rabwa, Tenk yu tru, Tagio tumas, Ngā mihi nui,

Rachel, Lafaele, and Team

**Rachel McBeth** (she/her/hers)

Senior Executive Assistant to:

**Tia Warbrick** - DGS/DCE Strategic Engagement, Māori Partnerships & Data Capability

**Anna McDowell** - General Manager, Strategic Engagement, Māori Partnerships & Outcomes

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### [Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 440 770 978 806

Passcode: Ds93Eh2g

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### Dial in by phone

+64 4 886 4823,,695132374# New Zealand, Wellington

[Find a local number](#)

Phone conference ID: 695 132 374#

### Join on a video conferencing device

Tenant key: [445005707@t.plcm.vc](mailto:445005707@t.plcm.vc)

Video ID: 133 930 610 9

[More info](#)

**Talanoa on the Government Statistician’s In-Principle Next Census Decision - Agenda**



<b>Date/Time:</b>	Friday 7 March, 9:30am – 12:30pm
<b>Location:</b>	Stats NZ Head Office – 8 Willis Street, Wellington Central, Wellington, Level 2, Rooms 2.04 & 2.05 (WLG) & Microsoft Teams
<b>Stats NZ Participants:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Sean Broughton</b>, General Manager – Statistical Delivery, Population and Housing</li> <li>• <b>Anna McDowell</b>, General Manager – Strategic Engagement, Māori Partnerships and Outcomes (online)</li> <li>• <b>Desmond Tupangaia</b>, General Manager - Business Enablement and Development</li> <li>• <b>Adele Quinn</b>, Principal Analyst - Population Statistics (online)</li> <li>• <b>Gareth Minshall</b>, Principal Analyst – Research and Development Hub (online)</li> <li>• <b>Jocelyn Morrison</b>, Principal Advisor – Design and Delivery</li> <li>• <b>Fuimaono Faumuina Lafaele Mapusua</b>, Senior Advisor – Pacific Engagement (Strategy)</li> <li>• <b>Vaotui Seulupe Dr Falaniko Tominiko</b>, Principal Advisor – Pacific Engagement (Strategy)</li> </ul>
<b>Invitees:</b>	University of Auckland; Ministry of Justice (Courts); Ministry for Pacific Peoples; Ministry of Social Development; Ministry of Health; Ministry of Education; Health NZ (Te Whatu Ora); NZ Police; The Treasury; Cert NZ; Ministry of Justice; Department of Internal Affairs; NZQA; Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment; Workforce Development Council; Corrections NZ; Pacific Data Sovereignty Network; Ministry of Disabled People (Whaikaha)
<b>Facilitator:</b>	Fuimaono Faumuina Lafaele Mapusua

Time	Item	Lead
<i>Opening</i>		
9:30 AM	Karakia / Welcome	Desmond
	Whakawhanaungatanga / Introductions	Desmond
	Apologies	Lafaele
	Fono outline	Desmond & Lafaele
<i>1. Recap: our journey to modernise the census</i>		
10:10 AM	Overview	Sean
<i>2. In-principle approach to the next census</i>		
10:20 AM	Key aspects of an admin data-first approach	Sean/Anna

	A staged implementation approach	
<i>3. What it means for Pacific communities</i>		
10:40 AM	Benefits of the new approach	Sean/Anna
	Trade-offs	
	Opportunities to improve the data system	
	Considerations for the shift	
<i>Break/kai</i>		
<i>4. Talanoa</i>		
11:15 AM	Next steps	Sean
<i>5. Introducing our Modernising Data and Statistics Programme</i>		
11:30 AM	Transforming how we produce data and statistics	Sean/Anna
<i>6. Questions Fesili? Fehu'i? Taro? Hūhū? Uianga? Kwesten?</i>		
11:45 AM	Open floor	Lafaele
<i>Closing remarks</i>		



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# Document 63



## Update - IN CONFIDENCE: Modernising the Census - Draft Cabinet paper for departmental consultation

From Marny Dickson <Marny.Dickson@stats.govt.nz>

Date Mon 10/03/2025 1:05 PM

To Carl Olive <Carl.Olive@mpp.govt.nz>; James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>; Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>; Lu Avia <lu.avia@mpp.govt.nz>

Cc Corina Grey <corina.grey@mpp.govt.nz>

Some people who received this message don't often get email from marny.dickson@stats.govt.nz. [Learn why this is important](#)

Tēnā tātou,

We would like to thank you for providing feedback on the Modernising the Census – Draft Cabinet paper for departmental consultation. We received a significant amount of feedback which has informed some key changes to the draft Cabinet paper prior to Ministerial consultation and has also been integral to upcoming design work. Many agencies were supportive of and understood the need to modernise the census and recognised the opportunity admin data presents. However, concerns were raised about:

- the scale and pace of change
- the technical and financial ability of agencies to deliver the data needed
- data quality in the short-term - mainly relating to reduced coverage of key population groups and the impact this could have.

We have amended the paper to include more detail on the potential impacts and programme governance, planning, and implementation. We also acknowledge the need to work closely with agencies to test requests for the data needed for census. The Cabinet paper will now commit to a report-back in October on this, following further engagement with agencies.

Please note the following key dates:

- Ministerial consultation on the Cab paper and RIS is now due to occur 10-14 March
- We are aiming for ECO on 26 March and Cabinet 31 March.

We would also like to specifically thank James for his role on the independent Regulatory Impact Assessment Panel. Early feedback from the RIS panel has been really helpful for us as we work to produce a new and improved final RIS to accompany the Cabinet paper. A significantly revised version of the RIS will be circulated to the RIS panel in advance of the RIS assessment panel meeting on Thursday this week.

Ngā mihi,

**Marny Dickson**

Principal Policy Advisor | Kaitohutohu Kaupapahere Mātāmua  
Data and Statistics Policy | Kaupapahere Ā-Ture  
Stats NZ | Tātauranga Aotearoa | [stats.govt.nz](https://stats.govt.nz)

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# Document 64

 Outlook

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**RE: ISDS programme**

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**From** Rosemary Stamm <Rosemary.Stamm@mpp.govt.nz>

**Date** Wed 16/04/2025 4:35 PM

**To** Celeste Cutting <celeste.Cutting@stats.govt.nz>

**Cc** James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>; Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>; Sandy Swei <sandy.swei@stats.govt.nz>; Ronja levers <Ronja.levers@stats.govt.nz>

Thank you, Celeste, I look forward to hearing from your team. Do you also have any publications of how the admin-based population estimates compare with the current population estimates produced using census 2023 or for 2018? If I am reading right it looks like the intention is to use capture-recapture on admin lists to produce population estimates in the future, proposed from 2026. Do you have these comparisons by ethnic groups and by disaggregated data for age and any level of geographic areas?

Fa'afetai,

**Rosemary Stamm** (*she/her*)

Senior Analyst

Data & Insights | Policy & Insights

**P** +64 4 909 0806

Level 2, 101 - 103 The Terrace

PO Box 833, Wellington 6140, New Zealand



Ministry for  
**Pacific Peoples**

Te Manatū mō ngā Iwi o te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa

---

**From:** Celeste Cutting <celeste.Cutting@stats.govt.nz>

**Sent:** Tuesday, 15 April 2025 2:56 pm

**To:** Rosemary Stamm <Rosemary.Stamm@mpp.govt.nz>

**Cc:** James Greenwell <james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz>; Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>; Sandy Swei <sandy.swei@stats.govt.nz>; Ronja levers <Ronja.levers@stats.govt.nz>

**Subject:** RE: ISDS programme

Talofa Java Rosemary

Apologies for the delay in responding.

We would love to chat to you about our mahi. I'm going to handover to Sandy and Ronja who are in our agency partnering team who will facilitate a session which addresses your areas of interest below (my team will be involved!). They are cc'd into this message and will be in touch with you.

In the meantime, I thought it might be useful to share an earlier presentation we provided to James and Maryke.

Talk soon!

Ngā mihi  
C

Celeste Cutting (pronouns: she/her/hers)

Kaiwhakahaere Wāhanga - Pūnaha Raraunga Tatauranga Pāhekoheko (ISDS) & Kohinga Raraunga |  
Unit Manager Integrated Statistical Data System (ISDS) Futures & Data Acquisition  
Strategic Data Management  
Stats NZ | Tatauranga Aotearoa | [stats.govt.nz](https://stats.govt.nz) | s9(2)(a)

*I work flexibly – if you receive this email outside your usual working hours please respond at a time that suits you.*

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**From:** Rosemary Stamm <[Rosemary.Stamm@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:Rosemary.Stamm@mpp.govt.nz)>  
**Sent:** Monday, 14 April 2025 9:40 am  
**To:** Celeste Cutting <[celeste.Cutting@stats.govt.nz](mailto:celeste.Cutting@stats.govt.nz)>  
**Cc:** James Greenwell <[james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:james.greenwell@mpp.govt.nz)>; Maryke Barnard <[maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz)>  
**Subject:** ISDS programme

Talofa lava Celeste,

I am e-mailing to connect about the work your team is doing on the ISDS programme and future census.

I work in the Data and Insights team at Ministry for Pacific Peoples and we have a work programme involved in understanding and improving the use of Pacific peoples' data across government. Part of our work requires understanding the future census and survey programmes and their impact on Pacific peoples data given the importance of data in policy, resource allocation, and decision making.

Would you be happy to arrange a time to meet to discuss your teams work programme with us?

We are particularly interested in the methodology and impact of the admin-based registers for individuals and for dwellings that form the basis of household data. We are also particularly interested in how the quality of admin-based data are being assessed. Understanding the work programme and methodology of the future census work, and nuisances in the data, particularly for Pacific peoples, will help us to provide robust advice.

Fa afetai tele lava

**Dr Rosemary Stamm** (she/her)  
Senior Analyst

Data & Insights | Policy & Insights

P +64 4 909 0806

Level 2, 101 - 103 The Terrace

PO Box 833, Wellington 6140, New Zealand



Ministry for  
**Pacific Peoples**

Te Manatū mō ngā Iwi o te Moana-nui-ā-Kiwa

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# Document 65

 Outlook

## Modernising the Census: Important Update

From Sean Broughton <sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz>

Date Wed 18/06/2025 10:02 AM

To Sean Broughton <sean.broughton@stats.govt.nz>

Cc Falaniko Tominiko <Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz>; Lafaele Mapusua <Lafaele.Mapusua@stats.govt.nz>; Desmond Tupangaia <Desmond.Tupangaia@stats.govt.nz>; Kath Lys <Kath.Lys@stats.govt.nz>

 1 attachment (168 KB)

250616 Stats NZ media release modernising the data system June 2025 IN CONFIDENCE NOT FOR SHARING.pdf;

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Talofa lava, Malo e lelei, Kia orana, Fakaalofa lahi atu, Mālo ni, Ni sa bula vinaka, Noa'ia, Fakatalofa, Kam na mauri, Kia ora, and warm Pacific greetings,

As a valued partner of Stats NZ, I wanted to confirm that later this morning we will announce our plans to modernise the New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings. Cabinet has endorsed the Government Statistician's preferred approach to create a more efficient, future-focused census, through prioritising the use of administrative data (admin data). This information is embargoed until the Minister of Statistics, Hon Dr Shane Reti makes the public announcement at 10:00am.

The new approach will use admin data, combined with a new annual sample survey, to produce census data and statistics about New Zealand each year from 2030. As part of the new approach, we will also work with our partners to develop tailored solutions, such as targeted surveys, to help ensure the data needs of iwi Māori and smaller population groups are met.

Details about the new approach to the census will be available on our website later this morning:

[www.stats.govt.nz/modernising-the-census](http://www.stats.govt.nz/modernising-the-census)

I have also attached a copy of Stats NZ's *embargoed* media release for your information.

### Why the census is changing

Traditional ways of collecting census data have become increasingly unsustainable. In New Zealand, and around the world, there are challenges with the traditional survey-first census approach, including rising costs, declining response rates, and disruption from external shocks.

At the same time, people need more relevant, timely information and insights to better inform their decision-making.

The new approach will make more efficient use of information already collected by government. It builds on the combined census models used in 2018 and 2023, where admin data was used to support survey information.

### Implementation and next steps

While admin data-first is the key component, surveys will continue to play an important role to test accuracy and gather more information.

To ensure the shift to an admin data-first census happens as smoothly as possible, additional time is being built into the process.

Data and statistics will be released in stages from 2028 when the first official population measures will be produced using admin data only, and in 2030 the first set of census data and statistics will be published using the

new approach.

Stats NZ is working with government agencies and Crown Entities to make the necessary admin data improvements, which will be facilitated in part through a Chief Executive group. Some legislative changes will also need to be made, including amendments to the Data and Statistics Act 2022.

### Thank you

The move to an admin data-first census will be confirmed as part of a broader announcement around modernising New Zealand's data system by the Minister of Statistics, Hon Dr Shane Reti, today. The wide-ranging changes also include a monthly Consumers Price Index (CPI) and work to meet new international standards for macroeconomic statistics (Measuring a Modern Economy programme). You can read more about the announcement in the attached media release and information will also be published on our website: [www.stats.govt.nz](http://www.stats.govt.nz)

Thank you for your continued interest and support. We look forward to working with you as we embark on this new approach to the census and our broader work to build a stronger, more modern data system.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Mauri ora,

Sean

**Sean Broughton** (pronouns: he/him)

General Manager – Statistical Delivery, Population and Housing | Kaiwhakahaere Matua – Horanga Tauanga, Taupori me te Whāinga Whare

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s9(2)(a)

**Executive Assistant:** Theresa McMaster | [Theresa.McMaster@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Theresa.McMaster@stats.govt.nz)

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# Document 66

 Outlook

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## RE: Future Census Consultation

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**From** Ronja levers <Ronja.levers@stats.govt.nz>  
**Date** Tue 12/08/2025 9:33 AM  
**To** Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>

Yes, sounds great!

**Ronja levers** (pronouns: she/her/ia)  
Kaitohutohu Matua | Kōtuitanga Hinonga  
Senior Advisor | Agency Partnering

---

**From:** Maryke Barnard <maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 12 August 2025 9:20 am  
**To:** Ronja levers <Ronja.levers@stats.govt.nz>  
**Subject:** RE: Future Census Consultation

Can we do 11.15am? I have meeting that finishes at 11am 😊

Annex is great!

**Maryke Barnard**  
Director, Operations - Policy and Insights  
s9(2)(a)

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**From:** Ronja levers <[Ronja.levers@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Ronja.levers@stats.govt.nz)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 12 August 2025 8:59 am  
**To:** Maryke Barnard <[maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz)>  
**Subject:** RE: Future Census Consultation

Yes please! How about the Annexe Café upstairs at Whitcoulls tomorrow 11am?

**Ronja levers** (pronouns: she/her/ia)  
Kaitohutohu Matua | Kōtuitanga Hinonga  
Senior Advisor | Agency Partnering

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**From:** Maryke Barnard <[maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz)>  
**Sent:** Monday, 11 August 2025 9:11 pm  
**To:** Ronja levers <[Ronja.levers@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Ronja.levers@stats.govt.nz)>  
**Subject:** RE: Future Census Consultation

Shall we catch up on Thursday? That would be lovely.

Can meet at a café half way? You'd be welcome to come to Te Iho Bowen House as well.

**Maryke Barnard**

Director, Operations - Policy and Insights

s9(2)(a)

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**From:** Ronja levers <[Ronja.levers@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Ronja.levers@stats.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** Monday, 11 August 2025 4:40 pm

**To:** Maryke Barnard <[maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz)>; Falaniko Tominiko <[Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz)>

**Subject:** RE: Future Census Consultation

Talofa, 2pm sounds great on Wednesday 😊

Maryke, let's make a time to have coffee together also

s9(2)(a)

Talk soon!

**Ronja levers** (pronouns: she/her/ia)

Kaitohutohu Matua | Kōtuitanga Hinonga

Senior Advisor | Agency Partnering

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**From:** Maryke Barnard <[maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** Monday, 11 August 2025 4:25 pm

**To:** Falaniko Tominiko <[Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz)>

**Cc:** Ronja levers <[Ronja.levers@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Ronja.levers@stats.govt.nz)>

**Subject:** RE: Future Census Consultation

Meitaki Falaniko & Ronja – would 2pm on Wednesday work?

**Maryke Barnard**

Director, Operations - Policy and Insights

s9(2)(a)

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**From:** Falaniko Tominiko <[Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** Monday, 11 August 2025 12:45 pm

**To:** Maryke Barnard <[maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Cc:** Ronja levers <[Ronja.levers@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Ronja.levers@stats.govt.nz)>

**Subject:** RE: Future Census Consultation

Talofa Maryke

Yes I am free to meet on Wednesday 😊

Falaniko (Niko)

**Vaotui Seulupe Dr Falaniko Tominiko**

Kaitohutohu Mātāmua – Principal Advisor, Pacific Engagement

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**From:** Maryke Barnard <[maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** Sunday, 10 August 2025 9:12 pm

**To:** Falaniko Tominiko <[Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz)>

**Cc:** Ronja levers <[Ronja.levers@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Ronja.levers@stats.govt.nz)>

**Subject:** RE: Future Census Consultation

Kia Orāna Falaniko

My sincere apologies for the delayed replied.

Thank you so much for reaching out and it sound like a great idea to me to engage the CAPLG.

We are still working through the All-of-Government Data Advisory decision with the group.

Would you and Ronja be available to meet on Wednesday to discuss?

Apologies again for the delay!

Meitaki ma'ata

Maryke

**Maryke Barnard**

**Director, Operations - Policy and Insights**

s9(2)(a)

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**From:** Falaniko Tominiko <[Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Falaniko.Tominiko@stats.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, 6 August 2025 10:14 am

**To:** Maryke Barnard <[maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz](mailto:maryke.barnard@mpp.govt.nz)>

**Cc:** Ronja levers <[Ronja.levers@stats.govt.nz](mailto:Ronja.levers@stats.govt.nz)>

**Subject:** Future Census Consultation

Kia orana Maryke

I hope this message finds you well.

We are currently looking at consulting with various groups on the Future Census model cabinet approved a few months ago.

One group I think that is important to connect with is the All of Government Pacific Cross Agency Group that MPP has.

Is there any chance of us engaging with this group?

Meitaki maata

Falaniko (Niko)

**Vaotui Seulupe Dr Falaniko Tominiko**

Kaitohutohu Matamua – Principal Advisor, Pacific Engagement

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| M:Office | T:WFH | W:Office | T:WFH | F:Office |

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# Appendix Two

## Weekly Report entries to the Minister for Pacific Peoples

DATE	Weekly Report Entry
2-Feb-24	<p><b>4.2 Data &amp; Insights Directorate IDI Project Scoped</b></p> <p>An Integrated Data Infrastructure (IDI) research project is being scoped by analysts in the Data &amp; Insights Directorate with support from the Ministry of Health analysts to understand implications for Pacific data underpinned by official statistics and other data sources. Delivery of the project is expected by 30 June 2024 contingent on Stats NZ review processes. The project will expand our evidence base for interpreting information derived from the IDI about Pacific peoples. The project aims to compare administrative and census-based denominators in addition to the ability of those sources to classify ethnicity. Comparisons will relate data quality to the standards specified in the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Zealand Data and Information Management Principles and Official statistics system principles and protocols for producers of Tier 1 Statistics.</li> <li>• Delivery of the project is expected by 30 June 2024 (contingent on Stats NZ review processes).</li> </ul> <p><i>Maryke Barnard, Operations Manager, Data and Insights</i></p>
9-Feb-24	<p><b>3.1 Cross-agency engagement to improve data quality for Pacific peoples</b></p> <p>The Ministry is engaging with strategic partners across the government data ecosystem to raise the quality of data held by government and collaborate on key insights products. The Data and Insights analytical programme will also deliver insights to support those engagements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work is well advanced on a refreshed Memorandum of Understanding with Statistics New Zealand that includes a focus on collaborating on their agency's census transformation work and understanding implications for Pacific data quality.</li> <li>• The Ministry is in the process of entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Health to underpin collaborative work on a Pacific health chartbook. The updated chartbook will bring together current information about the health status of Pacific peoples while also highlighting the need to improve data quality.</li> <li>• The Ministry is also collaborating with the Health Quality and Safety Commission on its mortality review function and an avoidable mortality dashboard, providing technical advice and expertise to ensure data for Pacific peoples is interpreted and reported in a robust manner.</li> </ul> <p><i>Dr Corina Grey, Deputy Secretary, Data and Insights</i></p>
1-Mar-24	<p><b>4.1 Engagement on Stats NZ's proposed Census Transformation Programme</b></p> <p>On 20 February 2024, the Ministry met with Stats NZ to discuss working relationships and Stats NZ's proposal to transform the approach to Census 2028. This approach would replace the traditional population-wide census survey with administrative data collected across a range of government agencies and supplemented by the increased use of smaller population-based surveys. The Ministry is concerned about the potential impact of these proposed changes on the quality of data for Pacific peoples, which is critical for planning, funding, and resource allocation. The Ministry is also seeking more detail on the engagement process for the proposed transformation programme to ensure that Pacific peoples and communities are meaningfully involved, and that agencies and communities understand the potential impact of changes. The Ministry has provided detailed feedback through consultation on Stats NZ's Cabinet paper Modernising the approach to 2028 Census as summarised in the Ministry's Advice section of your Weekly Report.</p> <p><i>Dr Corina Grey, Deputy Secretary, Data and Insights</i></p>
8 Mar-24	<p><b>4.1 Cross-agency engagement with Stats NZ on the Ethnicity Standards Review</b></p> <p>In 2019, Stats NZ initiated the Ethnicity Standards Review to enhance the reflection of New Zealand's diverse population. On 1 March 2024, the Ministry attended the first meeting of the expert group and will play a crucial role in connecting Pacific communities with data holders. The expert group comprising the Ministry, other agencies, academics, and community groups will convene every two months until the end of 2024 to finalise recommendations for the updated Ethnicity Standards. The standard is a hierarchical classification of four levels. It provides a benchmark for the Stats NZ census and other agencies that collect ethnicity data. We will continue to keep you updated on this work as it progresses.</p> <p><i>Maryke Barnard, Operations Manager, Data and Insights</i></p>
15-Mar-24	<p><b>4.1 Cross-agency engagement with Stats NZ on the Ethnicity Standards Review with the Ministry of Ethnic Communities</b></p> <p>On 6 March 2024, the Ministry met with the Ministry for Ethnic Communities (MEC) to discuss how we can align our contributions to the Stats NZ Ethnicity Standards Review. In 2019, Stats NZ initiated the Ethnicity Standards Review to enhance the reflection of New Zealand's diverse population. Both agencies are members of the expert group tasked with providing recommendations for a revised standard that better reflects New Zealand's diverse population. The Ministry and MEC will share and coordinate our respective data quality work programmes to ensure there is a deep understanding of the implications of the census review programme across government. We will continue to keep you updated on this work as it progresses.</p> <p><i>Maryke Barnard, Operations Manager, Data and Insights</i></p>
29-Mar-24	<p><b>3.1 Cross-agency engagement with Stats NZ on modernising the 2028 Census.</b></p> <p>The Ministry continues to contribute to Stats NZ's engagement with government agencies about their plans for Census 2028 and the proposed shift to an 'administrative data-first approach'. On 13 March 2024, the Ministry attended a workshop about the experimental Administrative Population Census to provide feedback on its third iteration. On 25 March 2024, the Ministry attended Stats NZ's workshop, Future Censuses – 2028 and Beyond, for officials working with Pacific data in government agencies. The Ministry's key concerns are the light touch virtual engagement approach, poor quality of ethnicity and other data collected for administrative purposes, the inability to accurately count the population (particularly by region and small area unit) and the current lack of infrastructure across government to ensure standardised collection and reporting of data. The next step will be for the Ministry to provide feedback on Stats NZ's Pacific Data Strategy. We will continue to keep you updated on this work as it progresses.</p> <p><i>Maryke Barnard, Operations Manager, Data and Insights</i></p>

10-May-24	<p><b>4.2 Cross-agency engagement with Stats NZ on the Census 2028 Transformation Programme</b></p> <p>On 17 April 2024, the Ministry submitted feedback on Stats NZ's Cabinet paper and accompanying Discussion Document, outlining Stats NZ's plan to begin public consultation on modernising the approach to the 2028 Census. On 6 May 2024, we received a response from Stats NZ acknowledging our feedback and work to date to understand the potential impact of changes. Stats NZ has also asked us to contribute to the design of their consultation processes and signalled their intention to stay closely connected throughout the transformation process. Our response to Stats NZ reemphasised our commitment to work together to better understand the quality of Census and administrative datasets and ensure meaningful engagement with Pacific communities. We will also meet with Stats NZ about their recent Report of the Statutory Review of New Zealand's 2023 Census (published on 23 April) to discuss implications for Pacific peoples' data.</p> <p><i>Dr Corina Grey, Deputy Secretary, Data and Insights</i></p>
31-May-24	<p><b>3.3 Cross-agency engagement with Stats NZ on the Ministry of Ethnic Communities</b></p> <p>On 10 May 2024, the Ministry met with the Ministry for Ethnic Communities (MEC) to discuss aligning our contributions to the Stats NZ Ethnicity Standards Review. To coordinate our respective data quality work programmes, the Ministry will request MEC's feedback on our survey data quality analysis, and the Ministry will review MEC's outcomes framework currently in development. The Ministry will also join MEC and other population agencies on a combined request for custom Census 2023 and household survey data to share costs and reduce the servicing burden for Stats NZ. We will continue to keep you updated on this work as it progresses.</p> <p><i>Dr Corina Grey, Deputy Secretary, Data and Insights</i></p>
5-Jul-24	<p><b>4.2 Cross Agency Engagement with Stats NZ Regarding the Implications of Future Census</b></p> <p>The Ministry has been deliberate in embedding new analytical capabilities to expand its public sector influence to spotlight the implications of Pacific data quality limitations. On 27 June 2024, the Ministry met with Stats NZ counterparts to input into the briefing 'Impacts and Opportunities of Future Census Design Options for Pacific Data'. The primary audience is an independent evaluation panel set up to advise the Government Statistician. The paper will be used to inform the panel about implications of future census proposals and opportunities to address long-standing data needs. It aims to include an:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• overview of the context of Pacific data</li> <li>• a summary of key messages received during the public consultation; and</li> <li>• an overview of the quality of administrative data, and the ability of census options to support Pacific data needs.</li> </ul> <p>The Ministry has advised Stats NZ that the brevity of the paper will not adequately convey the implications for Pacific data quality especially if panel members lack familiarity with Pacific data quality challenges, and the technical competency to assess complicated methodology options.</p> <p><i>Dr Corina Grey, Deputy Secretary, Policy and Insights</i></p>
19-Jul-24	<p><b>3.2 Supporting rainbow+ peoples data quality improvement</b></p> <p>On 11 July 2024, the Ministry attended an all-day workshop facilitated by Stats NZ to improve the quality of data about rainbow+ peoples. This is in the context of Stats NZ's decision to redesign Census 2028 to prioritise an administrative data-first approach to collecting population level data about New Zealanders. The workshop was a success in generating ideas for Stats NZ to improve the quality of data about rainbow+ peoples, such as partnering with community organisations and researchers to collect and analyse data about this group. The Ministry provided feedback about the need for earlier engagement with Pacific rainbow+ peoples ensuring that both ethnicity and rainbow+ data is collected more effectively by government agencies. The Ministry will continue to work with Stats NZ and community organisations to ensure better data is available, as part of their work programme focused on improving data and insights about Pacific rainbow+ peoples.</p> <p><i>Tuiloma Lina-Jodi Vaine Samu, Director of Pacific Identities &amp; Advisory</i></p>
2-Aug-24	<p><b>4.3 Cross-agency Census 2023 data workshop - Reducing data access barriers</b></p> <p>On 25 July 2024, the Ministry attended a cross-agency workshop hosted by Stats NZ to coordinate Census 2023 data requests. The workshop included 8 agencies that require bespoke population statistics based on Census 2023. Ordinarily the release of census data poses a challenge for agencies to access population specific statistics, particularly for Pacific peoples. The process has previously resulted in duplicated effort for Stats NZ. Specific actions from the workshop included: developing a common understanding of how agencies use population statistics, describing data needs beyond the scope of planned Stats NZ releases, and identifying overlapping data requests from agencies. This is the first time agencies have attempted to coordinate data requirements in order to decrease duplication and find cost savings. Besides reducing access barriers for government agencies, there are likely to be efficiencies in the way official statistics are used across government stemming from improved coordination. The Ministry anticipates that the heightened coordination will also support agencies to better account for Pacific data quality issues in their analyses.</p> <p><i>Dr Corina Grey, Deputy Secretary, Policy &amp; Insights</i></p>
13-Sep-24	<p><b>4.3 Memorandum of understanding between the Ministry and Stats NZ</b></p> <p>On 11 September 2024, the Ministry signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Stats NZ. The MOU will remain in effect until 11 September 2027. The MOU focuses on enhancing the quality of Pacific data produced by government agencies. The main objectives are to work with Stats NZ counterparts to raise awareness of data quality challenges and support cross-agency efforts to improve the collection, analysis and reporting of data for and about Pacific peoples. The MOU also defines roles and responsibilities of the Ministry and Stats NZ. It positions the Ministry as the domain lead for government data about Pacific peoples and acknowledges the roles of Stats NZ as the lead agency for government-held data. Key elements of the MOU include an annual work programme, the establishment of an All-of-Government Pacific Data Advisory Group, and ongoing collaboration between Stats NZ and the Ministry to deliver Pacific data equity across government and the Census 2028 Modernisation Programme proposing to shift to an 'administrative data-first approach'.</p> <p><i>Dr Corina Grey, Deputy Secretary, Policy &amp; Insights</i></p>

11-Oct-24	<p><b>4.4 Summary of the latest release from Census 2023</b></p> <p>On 3 October 2024, Stats NZ released a selection of individual and dwellings data from Census 2023. The data primarily include usually resident population counts disaggregated by Pacific ethnic group, age, gender, and geographic area, including regions, territorial authorities, and health boundaries. Between Census 2018 and 2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was an average population increase of 18% among different Pacific groups (Samoan, Tongan, Cook Islands Māori, Niuean, Fijian, Tokelauan).</li> <li>• At least half of Pacific peoples from all populations live in the Auckland region, except for the Tokelauan population (27% in Auckland and 48% in Wellington).</li> <li>• In Auckland, more than half of the Pacific population lives in four of the 21 Auckland Local Boards. In eight of these Boards, Pacific peoples comprise 25% to 70% of the total population under 15 years.</li> <li>• More than half the total population under 15 years in the Manurewa, Ōtara-Papatoetoe, and Māngere Ōtāhuhu Local Boards are Pacific peoples. This has implications for the allocation of targeted education resources.</li> </ul> <p>The release also included social attributes like languages spoken and individual home ownership which have not yet been disaggregated by ethnicity. Samoan is the third most widely spoken language (110,541 speakers) after English and Māori. Auckland continues to have the lowest rate of home ownership (59%) compared with all other regions. There are some challenges interpreting the results for Pacific peoples. The release is based on people counted on census night, supplemented with administrative data sources and previous censuses, which have known inaccuracies, particularly for Pacific peoples. Census 2023 also has documented complications related to the dwelling register, which may negatively impact the reliability of statistics. A precise estimate of the population undercount may not be available until early 2025. The Ministry continues to work with Stats NZ and other government agencies to improve the quality of data and insights for Pacific peoples.</p> <p><i>Dr Corina Grey, Deputy Secretary, Policy &amp; Insights</i></p>
25-Oct-24	<p><b>4.2 Update on Stats NZ Ethnicity Standard Review</b></p> <p>On 4 October 2024, Stats NZ agreed to commission new analyses and revise timeframes for the Ethnicity Standard Review, based on advice about significant evidence gaps, led by the Ministry, Health NZ, the Ministry of Health and the University of Waikato. The public consultation process to revise the Standard (originally scheduled for November 2024) has been tentatively rescheduled to take place after July 2025. Stats NZ has indicated that further investigation on the use of ethnicity data and implications of proposed changes will be required. This will also involve consulting with agencies accountable for ethnicity data collection, such as Health NZ, the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education. The purpose of the Standard is to enable government agencies to group and organise ethnicity data meaningfully and systematically. The objective of the Review is to improve consistency in the collection and use of ethnicity data across the Government Data System. This work is also a prerequisite for the proposed Census 2028 model, which relies entirely on administrative data for population enumeration. <span style="color: red;">s9(2)(f)(iv)</span></p> <p>Therefore, understanding agencies' ability to implement the standard will provide crucial evidence before the standard can be changed.</p> <p><i>Dr Corina Grey, Deputy Secretary, Policy &amp; Insights</i></p>
24-Jan-25	<p><b>4.2 Ongoing work programme with Stats NZ</b></p> <p>The Ministry signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for three years with Stats NZ on 11 September 2024, which you were briefed about. The agreement recognises the Ministry's role as the Crown's domain lead for Pacific peoples' data across the government data system. The MoU links directly to the Ministry's Performance Improvement Review 2024, which highlighted the need to improve data quality across government and led to the subsequent establishment of a combined Policy and Insights Directorate within the Ministry. The objective of the MoU is to work with Stats NZ to raise awareness of data quality challenges and support cross-agency efforts to improve the collection, analysis and reporting of data for and about Pacific peoples. The Ministry has a significant programme of ongoing work with Stats NZ focusing on 3 areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the establishment of an All-of-Government Pacific Data Quality Advisory Group</li> <li>• provision of technical advice and data analysis to inform Census Modernisation planning</li> <li>• analysis using data from the Integrated Data Infrastructure to inform the Ethnicity Standard Classification review.</li> </ul> <p>As the new Minister of Statistics, this will enable ongoing collaboration and the Ministry will continue to update you on the findings from our analytical projects and advice around community engagement processes through the Weekly Report. The Ministry will update you in the next Weekly Report about our agency feedback on the Cabinet Paper: Modernising the Census by taking an Administrative Data-First Approach. We will also update you on how our feedback was used by Stats NZ for the related Cabinet Paper: Realising Social Investment Through Better Use of Data.</p> <p><i>Dr Corina Grey, Deputy Secretary, Policy &amp; Insights</i></p>

31-Jan-25	<p><b>4.1 Modernising the approach to census data collection</b></p> <p>Stats NZ is currently seeking agency feedback on its draft Cabinet paper - Modernising the census by taking an administrative data-first approach: Approval of policy decisions. Overall, the Ministry supports census modernisation, particularly when it addresses well-documented data quality gaps. There are long-standing data quality issues relating to Pacific peoples, including an undercount of the Pacific population in official statistics. Updating the approach to the census is an opportunity to address these issues. However, Stats NZ has not provided an estimate of full costs to the government, which will need to develop essential data infrastructure and processes by 2028. The data currently collected by government agencies does not include critical population demographics required for evidence-based decision-making, and it is unclear how these gaps will be managed in the approach to census modernisation. Any significant change or reduction in data access creates specific risks for the Ministry and other government agencies, including misallocation of resources, inequity of service delivery and inability to evaluate programme impacts. The Ministry has provided detailed feedback on the Cabinet paper to Stats NZ, including that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• any changes should bring the quality of data for Pacific peoples up to standard</li> <li>• a cost-benefit analysis of the proposed approach compared to the traditional census would assist with outlining the trade-offs and their potential impacts for government</li> <li>• agencies that collect government data will need to consider the cost implications of the proposals, which should include implications for service planning, funding and for developing new data infrastructure by 2028 or 2030</li> <li>• the Ministry would welcome further information from Stats NZ on the outcomes of public consultation and any proposals for an all-of-government approach.</li> </ul> <p>The Ministry will continue to work with Stats NZ on the census work programme. Officials are available to discuss the feedback with you or provide more detail if required.</p> <p><i>Dr Corina Grey, Deputy Secretary, Policy &amp; Insights</i></p>
7-Feb-25	<p><b>4.2 Engagements with Stats NZ on Integrated Data Infrastructure and Social Investment</b></p> <p>On 31 January 2025, Stats NZ held a workshop for government analysts to identify challenges related to social investment analysis using the Integrated Data Infrastructure (IDI). The Ministry's feedback focused on the proposed approach of using the IDI as the benchmark for social investment, and the limitations of using the IDI for describing unmet need and outcomes for Pacific peoples. There is also a direct link to proposed Next Census plans, which will disrupt the ability to monitor data quality and trends in outcomes for populations using the IDI. Stats NZ has advised that the IDI is currently unable to provide many basic social attribute indicators at the quality needed for social investment (e.g., New Zealand Deprivation Index data, disability, Severe Housing Deprivation, combined information on people, dwellings and location data, languages spoken, religious affiliation, education qualifications, and family and household data) and the evaluation of government services for Pacific peoples. The Ministry is working with Stats NZ to ensure that official statistics related to Pacific peoples are of high quality. The Ministry's Memorandum of Understanding with Stats NZ recognises the Ministry as the Crown's domain lead for Pacific peoples' data across the government data system. Stats NZ has recently invited the Ministry to participate in its Regulatory Impact Statement Panel related to the Next Census proposal. Other members of the Panel include the Ministry of Health and Social Investment Agency. Membership on this Panel addresses the Performance Improvement Review recommendation for the Ministry to influence the collection and use of data related to Pacific peoples.</p> <p><i>Dr Corina Grey, Deputy Secretary, Policy &amp; Insights</i></p>
21-Feb-25	<p><b>1.2 Key focus areas for improving data for Pacific peoples across government</b></p> <p>At your officials meeting on 10 February 2025, you requested information on key areas in your Statistics portfolio to improve data for Pacific peoples. You have previously been briefed on the lower quality of data for Pacific peoples compared to other population groups, including a long-standing undercount of Pacific peoples in official statistics. There are opportunities in your Statistics portfolio to improve the quality of ethnicity data by clarifying roles and responsibilities for data quality standards. Why a focus on improving the quality of ethnicity data is important Government agencies need timely, high-quality data to develop effective policies and programmes and take a social investment approach. A lot of the data collected and used by agencies is available in Stats NZ's Integrated Data Infrastructure (IDI). The IDI is also central to Stats NZ's Next Census proposal. However, a major issue with the IDI is the inconsistent collection, recording and reporting of ethnicity data across different government datasets. As ethnicity has consistently been shown to be a strong marker of need (independent of other variables, including socioeconomic deprivation and rurality), this issue poses a significant barrier to the effective implementation of a social investment approach across government. There are existing levers that Stats NZ and the Government Statistician could use to address the quality of ethnicity data in the IDI, including: Mandating and regularly monitoring the implementation of data standards across government, including the Ethnicity Standard Classification. The Standard Classification sets out how all agencies should collect, record and report ethnicity data. However, implementation of this Classification is highly variable across government.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updating data quality frameworks, such as the Principles and Protocols For Producers of Tier 1 Statistics, and supporting government agencies to implement them.</li> <li>• Supporting the coordination of IDI resources across government.</li> </ul> <p>The Ministry has a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Stats NZ and a joint programme of work to improve data quality for Pacific peoples, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing an all-of-government Pacific data quality advisory group.</li> <li>• Contributing to Stats NZ's Ethnicity Standard Classification Review.</li> <li>• Supporting Stats NZ on its Regulatory Impact Statement Panel to resolve gaps in the Data and Statistics Act 2022.</li> </ul> <p>There are other opportunities to strengthen work between the Ministry, Stats NZ and other agencies responsible for the collection and reporting of data for Pacific peoples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Previously, a meeting between Stats NZ, Health and Ministry officials was raised as an opportunity to discuss issues related to Stats NZ's previous Cabinet paper on the Next Census proposal. This meeting would be useful, as concerns raised by the Ministry of Health and Ministry for Pacific Peoples have not been resolved.</li> <li>• The Ministry can work with your Stats NZ officials to ensure that its upcoming Cabinet paper for Next Census addresses the issues raised here and in our agency feedback to date.</li> </ul> <p><i>Dr Corina Grey, Deputy Secretary, Policy &amp; Insights</i></p>

4-April-25	<p><b>1.2 Ministry representation on the Stats NZ Regulatory Impact Statement Panel</b>  Between 17 February and 13 March the Ministry was represented on the independent Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) panel for Stats NZ to assess the quality of advice supporting the upcoming Cabinet paper for the Next Census programme. A consensus was not achieved but the majority of panellists concluded that the interim RIS partially meets the quality assurance criteria. The panel noted the interim RIS does not yet contain any monetised costs, and that the absence of quantified costs, risks, and wider benefits make it hard to assess the difference between options under consideration for the next census. The panel anticipates that more complete information in the final RIS should make these choices clearer. The Ministry's conclusions on the panel were consistent with advice previously provided by the Ministry on Next Census Cabinet papers. The Ministry panellist was also concerned that the impact analysis did not consider advice received from experts, anticipate the need for a contingency plan (in the absence of a thorough analysis of options) or examine the reliability of population statistics under the preferred option. Additional feedback provided by the Ministry highlights the need for more detailed information about implications for the quality of population statistics, specifically for Pacific peoples. The Ministry will continue to keep you updated on the feedback we share with Stats NZ regarding the Next Census work programme.  <i>Dr Corina Grey, Deputy Secretary, Policy &amp; Insights</i></p>
20-Jun-25	<p><b>1.5 Chief Executives' Meeting: Strengthening Collaboration Between Stats NZ and the Ministry</b>  Following recent briefings on Pacific data in the IDI and Toloa Scholarships monitoring, the Government Statistician and Secretary for Pacific Peoples met on 12 June 2025 to discuss improving Pacific data quality and cross-agency coordination. The meeting reaffirmed a strong partnership between agencies with complementary expertise. Discussions focused on enhancing Pacific data in the IDI, aligning with statistical standards and Social Investment goals based on evidence of need, and leveraging the Government Chief Data Steward to address systemic data gaps. The Ministry also highlighted opportunities to make new data sources—such as Toloa Scholarships and Whānau Ora Services—available to IDI researchers. Concerns were raised about the Next Census and Ethnicity Standard Review, particularly risks to Pacific data integrity and public trust. Officials agreed to continue momentum through monthly talanoa sessions, with the Ministry reaffirming its leadership in Pacific data governance. Next steps include defining joint actions and timelines, with regular updates to you through the weekly report.  <i>Dr James Greenwell, Interim Deputy Secretary, Policy &amp; Insights</i></p>
18-Jul-25	<p><b>2.1 Media responses</b>  This week the Ministry responded to questions from Pacific Media Network regarding the government's approach to ensuring accurate data is collected on Pacific communities along with Stats NZ. It is anticipated that the changes to Census will continue to be a key topic of concern for Pacific communities, academics and media. The Ministry also confirmed to the Post that there are currently no restructures underway, in response to questions that were put to a number of agencies. Information was provided to your office on both issues.  <i>Jaimee Burke, Director Communications, Corporate &amp; Support Service</i></p>
18-Jul-25	<p><b>3.2 Co-presentation with Health Entities at New Zealand Population Conference 2025</b>  On 11 July 2025, the Ministry co-presented with Health NZ and the Ministry of Health on collaborative efforts to improve standards for ethnicity data analysis. The presentation focused on the challenges of selecting appropriate population denominators and comparator groups, and the need to support good practice in an environment where population statistics are undergoing Significant transformation. The Ministry's value-add lies in our technical leadership, cross-agency coordination, and commitment to advancing high-quality data practices that inform health Service design and evaluation to meet Pacific peoples' needs. The Ministry's work to improve standards is particularly timely given the broader changes outlined in the keynote addresses, which focused on the shift from traditional census enumeration to the use of administrative data. Demographers are interested to identify ways to maintain the integrity of population statistics and reduce risks to data continuity, granularity, and public trust. The Ministry intends to play a key role in advancing a pathway toward census-quality population statistics for Pacific peoples by 2030.  <i>Dr James Greenwell, Interim Deputy Secretary, Policy &amp; Insights</i></p>
25-July-25	<p><b>1.2 Summary of Pacific Data Quality Analysis in Government Household Surveys</b>  In 2024, the Ministry reviewed six household surveys used for government planning and funding. The Ministry found consistent limitations in Pacific data quality, including small sample sizes, under-representation, barriers to participation, and a lack of Pacific-specific benchmarks. These issues are especially relevant to the Next Census, which may rely on household surveys instead of full-field enumeration for social attribute information. Design choices currently reduce the reliability household surveys for Pacific populations. The Ministry recommended three actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increase Pacific sample sizes and response rates</li> <li>• apply established data quality frameworks</li> <li>• coordinate surveys as a government-wide programme.</li> </ul> <p>The Ministry continues to engage across agencies on the findings it has presented at multiple conferences and plans to publish shortly. This work positions the Ministry to influence survey design and support the Next Census in delivering inclusive and reliable data. A summary of findings will be released in the coming months to support the Stats NZ Chief Methodologist in improving survey methods.  <i>Dr James Greenwell, Interim Deputy Secretary, Policy &amp; Insights</i></p>

8-Aug-25	<p><b>1.2 Summary of Pacific Data Quality Analysis in Government Household Surveys</b></p> <p>In 2024, the Ministry reviewed six household surveys used for government planning and funding. The Ministry found consistent limitations in Pacific data quality, including small sample sizes, under-representation, barriers to participation, and a lack of Pacific-specific benchmarks. These issues are especially relevant to the Next Census, which may rely on household surveys instead of full-field enumeration for social attribute information. Design choices currently reduce the reliability household surveys for Pacific populations. The Ministry recommended three actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increase Pacific sample sizes and response rates</li> <li>• apply established data quality frameworks</li> <li>• coordinate surveys as a government-wide programme.</li> </ul> <p>The Ministry continues to engage across agencies on the findings it has presented at multiple conferences and plans to publish shortly. This work positions the Ministry to influence survey design and support the Next Census in delivering inclusive and reliable data. A summary of findings will be released in the coming months to support the Stats NZ Chief Methodologist in improving survey methods.</p> <p><i>Dr James Greenwell, Interim Deputy Secretary, Policy &amp; Insights</i></p>
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**Second opinion advice on changes to the census**

Modernising and transforming the 2028 Census: Public consultation document	
<b>Agency</b>	Stats NZ
<b>Date feedback provided</b>	17 April
<b>Type of paper</b>	Cabinet policy paper
<b>Cabinet Committee</b>	Cabinet Economic Policy Committee
<b>Summary of paper</b>	<p>Last month, the Cabinet Expenditure and Regulatory Review Committee (EXP) endorsed plans to transform and modernise the 2028 Census. In response to a request from Cabinet, this paper seeks approval for the online discussion document which forms the basis of the public consultation component of the census transformation process currently underway.</p> <p>Public consultation is expected to commence on 8 May for a period of six weeks via online submissions and a light-touch social media programme. The online submissions will be based on the discussion document that outlines the intention to move away from a full enumeration survey to an administrative data-first approach.</p> <p>Following the public consultation, Stats NZ design work, and analysis by an evaluation panel, a high-level model for the 2028 Census will be identified and presented to Cabinet later this year.</p> <p>The Ministry has previously highlighted the impact of the proposed engagement approach and recommended changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administrative data are largely based on who can access services and are therefore known to undercount Pacific peoples. The proposed changes by Stats NZ would likely result in further deterioration of the quality of data on Pacific peoples, households and populations.</li> <li>• In addition to the six-week online discussion document, further consideration is required to ensure appropriate consultation with Pacific peoples and communities.</li> </ul>
<b>Feedback provided</b>	<p>Feedback from the Ministry centred on the following issues that we believe are either missing or not covered sufficiently in the Cabinet paper and/or public consultation discussion document:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Awareness of the likely negative impact on the quality of data available for population planning, policy advice and decision-making.</li> <li>2. Highlighting risks and implications of the changes for enumerating the population and particularly ensuring Pacific peoples are counted.</li> <li>3. Analysis or discussion of how the technical challenges (e.g. quality control and assurance, consistency and standardisation of definitions across diverse admin datasets) that have previously been identified by Stats NZ will be overcome.</li> <li>4. Information about the financial implications across government (not just Stats NZ) of the proposed changes is currently incomplete.</li> <li>5. Implications of the current plans for limited agency and public engagement.</li> </ol>

<b>Ministry position</b>	The Ministry for Pacific Peoples supports evidence-based opportunities to improve data equity, accuracy and reduce costs. We are committed to supporting and working closely with Stats NZ in ensuring official statistics are of high quality and in engaging Pacific peoples, communities and organisations in this consultation process.
<b>Feedback incorporated into final report</b>	TBC

s9(2)(f)(iv)

Modernising the approach to 2028 Census	
<b>Agency</b>	Stats NZ
<b>Date feedback provided</b>	27 February 2024
<b>Type of paper</b>	Cabinet policy paper
<b>Cabinet Committee</b>	Cabinet Economic Policy Committee
<b>Summary of paper</b>	<p>Stats NZ is engaging with other government agencies about plans to transform Census 2028 to an 'administrative data-first' approach. This will replace the traditional population-wide census survey with administrative data and supplemented by population-based surveys.</p> <p>Administrative data are largely based on who can access services and are therefore known to undercount Pacific peoples. The proposed changes by Stats NZ would likely result in further deterioration of the quality of data on Pacific peoples, households and populations.</p> <p>One of the key drivers of the proposed changes is cost savings. The delivery cost for Census 2023 was an estimated \$317 million. By not holding a regular census, Stats NZ would save money as an organisation, but there would not necessarily be cost savings across government, as compliance costs for routinely collected data and supplemental surveys would</p>

	<p>likely be transferred to other agencies. There is good evidence that the census provides value for money (approximately \$2.2 billion, or around \$4 of benefit for each dollar spent, according to a 2021 report).</p> <p>Stats NZ is proposing a three-pronged engagement approach:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Targeted engagement (already underway) with key stakeholders and partners.</li> <li>2. Online public consultation (via discussion document) over four weeks in April 2024.</li> <li>3. A light-touch social media public engagement programme.</li> </ol>
<b>Feedback provided</b>	<p>Feedback from the Ministry centred on the following issues:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Highlighting the impact of the proposed changes on data equity for Pacific peoples (as the proposed changes are likely to result in a degradation of the quality of data the government holds on Pacific peoples and communities).</li> <li>2. Clarification on the costs of the proposed transformation. Currently, the paper is focused on cost savings for Stats NZ, but the costs of the transformation will likely transfer the burden of data compliance and costs to other government agencies.</li> <li>3. Including evidence from independent reviews of the census and experience internationally.</li> <li>4. Seeking assurance from Stats NZ that there would be strong data governance and oversight to ensure data quality standards are met and maintained.</li> <li>5. Ensuring there is a robust and meaningful engagement with Pacific data experts, organisations and communities.</li> </ol>
<b>Ministry position</b>	The Ministry would like to be strongly engaged in this programme as it has important and significant implications for the quality, accuracy and use of data on Pacific peoples and populations in New Zealand.
<b>Feedback incorporated into final report</b>	TBC

s9(2)(f)(iv)

s9(2)(f)(iv)