

2018 Census External Data Quality Panel: Meeting 1 Minutes

Date and time	29 August 2018, 9am to 1pm
Location	Stats NZ, Auckland Office 48 Greys Avenue, Auckland Central
Present - panel members	Richard Bedford - Chair- AKL Alison Reid - AKL Ian Cope – Video Conference (VC) Barry Milne - AKL Thomas Lumley - VC Tahu Kukutai – audio conference until 11:20 then VC Len Cook - AKL
Present – Stats NZ	Liz MacPherson - AKL Kathy Connolly - AKL Vince Galvin - AKL Gareth Meech - AKL Stephanie Prosser - AKL Michelle Feyen - from 11.20 - AKL Aimee Byrne (minute taker) - AKL Denise McGregor - from 11.20 - WLG Michael Berry - from 11.20 Christine Bycroft - from 11.20 Richard Stokes - from 11.20
Abbreviations	EDQP: External Data Quality Panel TOR: Terms of Reference GS: Government Statistician
Meeting minutes	<p>09.00 - Welcome and introduction to the panel session</p> <p>The Chair welcomes everyone and discusses the agenda for the day. He asks everyone to give their name and background as an opportunity to talk about skills and experience each panel member brings.</p> <p>Each panel introduced themselves and some took the opportunity to express concerns about data quality. Panel members confirm they are happy to be part of the group and to contribute moving forward.</p> <p>Liz MacPherson, the Government Statistician takes the opportunity to thank panel members for attending. Asserted that Stats NZ will be open with the panel. Liz has expectation the panel will provide an independent report when it's finished. She appreciates having the people around table to help get them get them where they need to. Hopes to produce high quality data that is fit for purpose.</p> <p><u>The chair opens the floor for comments, questions and suggestions.</u></p> <p><u>Terms of Reference discussions:</u></p> <p><i>Panel report:</i></p> <p>There was a discussion about the panel terms of reference - specifically to the description of the report, and who signs off the final report. It is confirmed the chair will sign off the report.</p>

Error in document noted stating that the Government Statistician and chair will sign-off report. It was also noted about the reference to greater use of admin data. Agreed to amend both points.

Discussion of disagreement between panel members:

There was a discussion about what would happen if the panel members were to be unable to agree.

The chair acknowledges the panel need to allow for a situation where there may be differences of view and they can be acknowledged in the report

Discussion of conflict of interest:

The panel raised that it may be difficult to dissociate advice from their other interests. The chair responds emphasizing there is information that will be discussed during EDQP meetings that cannot go back to the other organisation.

Liz described that the panel member was selected due to their specific experiences along with census experience. Suggests it would be useful for member to have conversation with employer if concerned.

Liz goes on to say that Stats NZ are looking for diversity of thought for the EDQP. Wants the panel to work through issues and states this will take testing from whole lot of different perspectives.

AP 1-1: Gareth agrees to panel member suggestion of having a conflict of interest template which he will send out.

Gareth explains that the Stats NZ Terms of Reference (TOR) was closely based on the Office of National Statistics (ONS) UK Census independent panel TOR. Also explains that he spoke to Australia Bureau of Statistics (ABS) however theirs had a different focus in that they only looked at final data with good independent report. Iterates the key difference for the Stats NZ panel is that we want advice and will take it into account.

The chair suggests that the TOR 'in scope' section can be established as the group goes forward. The panel will discuss operational strategies going forward, although this is not a current focus.

Panel members sign letter of appointment.

AP 1-2: Gareth to send independent ABS report to panel.

Māori and general electorates

The panel discussed the potential implication for Māori electoral population & Māori electorates. It is a distinctive issue due to statutory requirement.

AP 1-3: Set up some time to talk in next meeting to talk about electoral legislation and how it's calculated and prepare something to send out.

Liz states that Stats NZ will have two external reviews for the 2018 Census. As Government Statistician she has three approaches:

1. The External Data Quality Panel (EDQP) set up to obtain best possible quality census data. There will be lessons learned along the way.
2. Understand how 2018 Census got to this outcome. Investigate what did and didn't go as planned - to inform what we can be done in the future as Stats NZ are currently planning the next census.

3. External review of the 2018 Census. It is expected that the external reviewers will want to talk to the EDQP and learn their views along the way about quality of data. Both groups work will go alongside each other.

Liz emphasizes the focus of EDQP group is on the data and the external review focus is learning lessons of entire process.

The panel describes the data quality challenges will include:

- small areas, deprivation indexes, health board funding, meshblock data, and availability and quality of admin data.

9.45 - Declaration of secrecy and census embargo constraints discussion.

Packs of the panel papers will be kept at Stats NZ in between meetings - which includes notebooks. Declaration of secrecy is explained, and all present panel members are asked to sign copies. Remaining panel members will sign at the next meeting.

Gareth emphasises the importance of declaration for protecting confidentiality of respondent's data. It is unlikely for members of the panel to see unit record data; Stats NZ will be avoiding this if possible.

If the panel members were to see any information that could identify someone, they are not allowed to talk to anyone about it. Unrounded numbers will often be used. The panel is not allowed to take any data away or talk to anyone.

The however chair explains that Stats should anticipate other people will be asked about the panel and what the panel is for. The chair has the opinion the panel should work with a very high level of trust. Stats NZ need to be prepared that panellists will be frank about the nature issues being talked about and thinks it is important the panel feel responsible about what can or can't be said.

From time to time however, a panel member may need to ask a well-informed colleague for advice – the chair doesn't believe Stats NZ should not be concerned about this. This is not breaching confidentiality but exercising the opportunity to bring the best advice to the panel.

Discussion of trust and embargoed data.

Gareth confirms over next couple of months there will be data presented to panel that is not final information. Numbers will change during processing and while asking advice from panel.

The chair points out that Stats NZ is asking for a judgement and that it's like dealing with the process of different views, ensuring to bring best advice. The panel is a group of informed people who are already conscious that the current situation but may not have all the information.

Liz clarifies for panel to work well there needs to be trust. Explains as Gareth mentioned, the panel are being brought in within usual embargo. Stats NZ wouldn't ordinarily put this information (or information out currently) out public until the point of publishing data. Stats NZ have thought long and hard about what has been published, and the results that are out are published as 'interim results'. The panel will be working through where the census is now- which will change along course. Liz expresses issue that panellists do need to be upfront that they are on panel, why they are on panel and the sorts of issues the panel will be considering, for example 'electoral data'. Advises the panel can say 'yes we will be looking at this issue and the impacts.' However, she clarifies she is uncomfortable going out now and saying what is put out in public domain in the interim, is now different.

The chair clarifies the panel does not intend to go out to do that. However, the question was if panel members talk with people - while retaining confidence with people they work with, can there be a good and open discussion? States the panel will be careful with what they say. Stats have also acknowledged (critically) in their document there is a historical process, of greater under enumeration over time. The chair believes Stats NZ needs to maintain this level of honesty going forward. Ability to have conversation that could be relevant. The ability to have conversation with people around issues relevant to EDQP.

Liz ultimately wants the group to give confidence for the decisions to be made. Within the panel - encourages discussions to be frank. As well as openness, the panel need to maintain confidentiality.

Another member agrees with discussion. Answers there is no black and white. Understands the need to exercise best judgement at all times.

There will be expectations at some stage that the network (Māori Data Sovereignty) will be making comment on the report when it is published. Expresses that they don't see issue maintaining confidentiality leading up to publication of report. There are also higher-level issues that people have ongoing interest in and panel may want to engage on some level without revealing details. May need to have conversation about that later. Doesn't see problem about being on the panel.

The other panel members are happy with principles.

Suggestion to have key messages to use.

The panel recommends Stats prove a set of key messages the panel could use – similar to what the ONS provided.

Documentation to be signed.

Gareth requests that panel members re-read and sign the appointment letter, to sign the declaration of secrecy and sign the IRD declaration form. Gareth to witness signatures.

Discussion of how Stats NZ will store panel members notes/packs.

A member questions ask whether the information/notes left by panel members will be locked up securely by Stats NZ. Stats confirmed that the information will be taken to Wellington and will be secured with a lock until next meeting. Some concerns are noted about needing to hand back notes as Stats NZ will have the only copy.

Discussion of paper with fee information:

Request to panel members to provide all details for payment depending on tax status etc.

Minor corrections are made to name titles.

Liz informs panel of proposed media release.

Liz highlights that there will be high level of interest in the panel. Expresses interest in Stats NZ releasing a media release to saying what panel is, who the members are and also to publish the TOR. Liz confirms panel members can clarify to people that they are on panel if asked.

Suggestion that panel members be given a set of key messages after each meeting. The panel would like to see media release before publishing. The chair will be only spokesperson if needed.

The chair asks group are there any other issues to raise.

Request for more information about address frame checks

A member questions how Stats NZ are sure they have followed the obligation of the Statistics act in the census electronic system.

Liz indicates that this is something the external review would do. She informs Stats NZ worked with legal counsel team around legal obligations.

Another member requests feedback about Stats NZ meeting its legal obligations. They would not like to give advice on the panel unless she knows the legal obligations had been met. Based on panel comments - Stats NZ agrees to provide something to panel on legal / statutory obligations.

The chair raises discussion of the final report.

The chair states it won't be confidential and will be available to wider audience. Liz proposes to release report alongside first publication of census results.

A member does not think a day for report can be confirmed yet. Raises that if there is a very big delay for results, there may need to publish the report ahead of data release. There would usually be an accompanying methodology report for people to understand the report. The release date is something the panel and Stats NZ can work through.

Another member questions whether there is required/ statutory date that the data has to be released? Stats confirms there is not, but needs to meet electoral and boundary review timelines – which have some flexibility at the moment.

Gareth explains Stats NZ are happy to provide resource for the writing of the report.

Liz informs the panel that Stats NZ also have an internal quality panel that will be available for EDQP. The panel appreciates having the offered by expertise Stats NZ however raises the EDQP need to be mindful of the independence of their report. Liz strongly agrees but wants the panel to feel they can call on Stats NZ people if they need to.

11:20 (Thomas left and the following joined the meeting: Tahu on VC, Christine VC, Mike & Denise VC , Michelle Feyen joined, Richard Stokes CHCH)

2018 Census model strategy and answer Q&As

Kathy and Steph present to panel.

Issues / questions raised during presentation:

Processes:

A member questions recruitment as it was different for 2018 Census. Asks were field staff trained by Stats NZ? Stats NZ Recruitment company employed staff - (Organised time sheet etc) - however Stats NZ still trained the staff.

The chair is interested in the processes of the different stages of establishing whether someone has filled in the census. (Gives example of someone absent from usual residence on night).

Questions about what was the control over ensuring that people had completed the census? Stats NZ – notes there were some challenges. Explains part of the problem of processing and timing was that it was not in real time. This was a reflection of not being able to test this system prior.

Important to note great level of change for this time that is outside the tested experience.

Targeted operations:

The chair questions whether the census generally got good support from local communities given the importance of data for them. Stats NZ – responds that it did & named communities. Support also from migrant communities and local government advocate programme which connected throughout census.

A member questions was there ever a thought offer other language forms other than Te Reo. Stats NZ - was considered, but it would have been a complicated process. Instead the call centre offered language help. Another member clarifies that the language approach NZ used was very consistent with UK and Australian census. These challenges existed even in the traditional model.

Stats confirmed 7 different languages pamphlets were produced. Call centre had 9 languages available. Tablets had 25 languages.

Stats NZ worked with ethnic organisations to help provide support. Prioritized parameters were around Te Reo, and security. Had a lot of questionnaire problems to solve, and choices had to be made. Action point to collate and send out information around languages for 2018 Census.

Targeted areas:

One member states that looking at targeted areas would imply a lot for Auckland. Stats NZ - informs maps of targeted areas will be shown in another meeting.

PES:

A member questions requests the response rate for the 2018 PES? Stats NZ – informed PES has not been processed.

KPI's:

Stats presented that the communications campaign for Stats NZ performed well. Panel members question the methodology of independent agency used for KPI of awareness. Action point to send more information.

A member expresses that they finds it problematic that Māori did not have the same KPI as rest of population especially given they are a targeted group. Does not understand rationale that Stats NZ would build inequity in targets.

The panel questions whether the KPIs were low, so that the target could be met. Stats NZ - explains that the research was done to establish a baseline for KPIs. So, for the case of Māori the baseline was set for a lower level of awareness. Additionally, the baselines were set 3 years before census, and they were measured November 2017 to see the effect the campaign had.

Paper forms:

The chair questions the number of people who requested and completed census by paper.

A member raises that in the past when census was not online, the census didn't have rely on people's initiatives. The 2018 Census has introduced quite a few trigger points. Suggests it would be helpful to get a flow chart to show approach to trigger responses for people to complete the census.

Household forms & field officers

A member points out that NZ is unique to other countries that do the census (UK/Australia) in that they don't have just household forms, have personal form. Questions whether this had an impact. Stats NZ - it did made it harder this time.

Another member discusses that having field officers on the ground is the only way from changing a non-response to respond. Understand change in staff number 2018 Census, questions whether this is evidence of not having enough staff.

Triggers for risks:

A member questions what the critical triggers were - that provided a trigger or information that there was a problem. Would like deeper understand outcomes. Stats NZ - agrees Stats can prepare the triggers where decisions were made, e.g. staying longer in the field & assisted completion events. The MIS (management information system) as a way to track target response groups.

Kathy provides overview of what things didn't go well.

Kathy explains ABS have visited and they would be happy to provide presentation of their thoughts and gave examples of things that didn't go well.

The chair comments that by using new system for recruitment, and suggested Stats NZ had lost a lot of knowledge that previous field staff had. Suggests that Stats NZ underestimated the skills the old enumerators had in getting forms completed.

Vince presents the current numbers for processing

It is re-iterated that the numbers shown are still shifting as processing is ongoing. Panel informed that the next meeting will focus on data.

A member points out numbers imply a low growth rate between 2013 and 2018, which is not credible. Stats NZ - Stats have been monitoring numbers in categories - numbers have jumped around. Still a lot of cleaning up to do.

The member questions whether Stats NZ can break down partial information from people who did it on web vs paper system. Stats NZ - Stats are questioning everything – including online and paper.

1pm – The chair concludes the meeting and thanks members for participation:

The chair explains it has been useful to get frank summary of how things went - how you thought things and it has been helpful to see high level data. Hopes to see more data at the next meeting.

If people attend meetings Stats NZ should set up one-on-ones and they will be fully briefed.

The chair shares concern that the panel shouldn't get too broad if looking at quality of data.

Agrees a high-level summary is needed as the number of changes to this year census was big. Some members are interested in understanding the bias.

Another member questions if there is sense for timing of indicative response rates for Māori. Stats hopes to have high level information of this for next meeting.

Action log

Ref	Date raised	Description	Owner	Date required	Progress	Date closed
AP 1-1	29/8/18	TOR: Amend section of report where it states that the GS will sign off on the panel report. Include reference that advice on admin data is wanted - make this more explicit. - Add line to TOR around statutory requirements. - Add line to TOR around impacts of census data on iwi and Māori.	Gareth and Richard B	Before Oct meeting		Open
AP 1-2	29/8/18	Send independent ABS report to members.	Gareth	Before Oct meeting		Open
AP 1-3	29/8/18	Set up some time to talk in next meeting to talk about electoral legislation and how it's calculated - and prepare something to send out.	Gareth	Before Oct meeting		Open
AP 1-4	29/8/18	Create and send out template for conflicts of interest.	Gareth	Before Oct meeting		Open

AP 1-5	29/8/18	Give information on how respondents were to meet their legal obligations.	Gareth	Before or at Oct meeting		Open
AP 1-6	29/8/18	Complete declaration of secrecy docs for Tahu and Ian	Gareth	At Oct meeting		Open
AP 1-7	29/8/18	Confirm dates of next meetings.	Richard	At Oct meeting		Open
AP 1-8	29/8/18	Collate and send out information about languages (what was considered & priorities).	Gareth	Before Oct meeting		Open
AP 1-9	29/8/18	Find out the response rate of the PES	Gareth	At Oct meeting		Open
AP 1-10	29/8/18	Find out the methodology of the independent agency that measured the 'awareness' KPI.	Richard S	Before Oct meeting		Open
AP 1-11	29/8/18	Prepare information for critical triggers.	Gareth	Before Nov meeting		Open
AP 1-12	29/8/18	Provide information of bias.	Gareth	At Oct meeting		Open
AP 1-13	29/8/18	Provide rough indication of Māori response rates for next meeting.	Gareth	At Oct meeting		Open

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