

# APPENDIX 1: MODERNISING AND TRANSFORMING THE APPROACH TO CENSUS

## CENSUS IS HUGEY VALUABLE FOR NEW ZEALANDERS

We collect information from people and organisations to produce high-quality economic, environmental, population and social statistics for New Zealand. The census, conducted every five years, is a vital source of population data and is a critical input into key economic indicators like quarterly GDP. Census data informs policies, guides service delivery, and fuels economic growth. It supports social investment, determines electoral boundaries, and informs planning and funding decisions for health, education, infrastructure and more.

## 2023 CENSUS HIGHLIGHTED THE NEED TO MOVE BEYOND TRADITIONAL SURVEY METHODS...

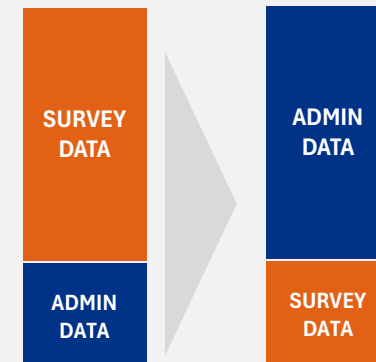
By combining survey data with administrative data (i.e. data that public or private agencies already hold as part of their routine business), we expect to deliver data covering around 97% of the population through Census 2023 (final figures TBC in late 2024). Despite the success of 2023 Census, the current approach is unsustainable. It is reliant on conducting a large-scale survey every five years with a substantial field workforce. It is also susceptible to external events (e.g. natural disasters), is becoming costlier, and faces challenges in meeting response targets, echoing global experiences.

## ...AND SHIFT TO AN ADMINISTRATIVE DATA-FIRST APPROACH

The future of the census lies in prioritising administrative data, supplemented by surveys where necessary. This approach will reduce costs over time, be more resilient, and boost data collection efficiency by reusing existing government data and make outputs more flexible and frequent. The United Kingdom, the United States, and Canada are already adopting similar strategies, with the latter two already employing elements we are considering.

## OUR PROPOSED SHIFT

From this...



...to this.

## WE NEED TO START THE NATIONAL CONVERSATION AND LAY THE GROUNDWORK NOW BEFORE DESIGNING A NEW MODEL

### CONSULTATION & ENGAGEMENT (PHASE ONE)

- Targeted engagement meetings with key stakeholders/partners on data needs and technical matters
- Six-week formal public consultation (with supporting discussion document)
- Public engagement programme (via social media)

### MINISTERIAL & CABINET CONSIDERATION

- To consult (Mar 2024)
- To preferred approach (Sep 2024)

### DETAILED DESIGN

- Supported by consultation and engagement phases two and three – ongoing targeted engagement and a second round of public consultation in 2025

