Evaluation of New Zealand's future census options for 2028 and beyond

A report prepared by the Future Census Independent Evaluation Panel

7 August 2024

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1.   Executive summary

The NZ Government Statistician convened an independent panel of 10 members to review and evaluate 5 options for the future of census. The primary task of the panel was to make a recommendation for which option is to be preferred for Census 2028 and future censuses. The panel has completed this task and has also made numerous recommendations which span topics including:

- necessary changes in the admin data first approach;
- governance, risk, change management; and
- the all-too-important underlying requirement that Stats NZ maintain and improve the trust and confidence of New Zealanders.

The drive to make a fundamental change to the census model is a function of both issues and opportunities. The five options all have their relative merits and consequential weaknesses; there will be a need for compromise whichever pathway is ultimately taken. The panel recommends that a long-term strategic approach be taken for how Stats NZ move from the status quo to use of an admin data first enumeration of individuals and dwellings complemented with a census attribute survey which aligns with the other household surveys currently in use by Stats NZ. This process of change must be staged in order to reduce the risk of losing the trust and confidence of the people upon which a census depends, as well as the decision makers that rely on the data that these people provide.

The effectiveness of successive censuses has reduced as New Zealanders, in particular those groups with a low trust in government, have been harder to reflect in the published results. The cost of trying to obtain responses from the harder to reach parts of the NZ population, among other factors, has driven up the cost of the census. While a census collected on a five-year cycle has merit, the need for more timely reporting, and the risks associated with civil emergencies lead to a view that NZ will be better served in the future if we move to more frequent, quality surveying for those official statistics that cannot be obtained by way of admin data.

There is an opportunity to increase the use of technology and methodology to make much better use of the administrative data which is already being collected by Government agencies. This initiative must be complemented by a high-quality programme of surveys which extend beyond the scope of current Stats NZ household surveys.

Future censuses comprised of a combination of administrative data and well-designed surveys could help to deliver better and more timely data with a lower burden on New Zealanders. Moving away from a full enumeration census also provides the opportunity to reprioritise resources towards new survey approaches that could collect more detailed and

potential new population attributes. This includes opportunities to work directly with iwi-Māori to gather the information needed for both iwi-Māori purposes and official statistics.

There are real risks with the shift to this future state. The ability to produce robust statistics on numerically small populations - either communities of people, and/or small geographic areas - is a methodological challenge which was well served by the traditional full enumeration census. In addition, a reliance on administrative data can have in built bias that will undercount some groups such as rainbow communities. Moving away from the full enumeration method has particular risks that need to be managed and prioritised.

The transition itself is complex and has many moving parts which need to be carefully managed including developing:

- methodology
- partnerships with iwi-Māori
- improving the coverage and quality of admin data
- improving current surveys and creating new ones
- technology
- workforce
- while also maintaining or improving the trust and confidence all New Zealanders can have in the official statistics system.

In essence, the panel has determined that Census is a change leader for Stats NZ's approach to its core business. For the future census transformation to effectively benefit all New Zealanders, Stats NZ needs to change its fundamental operating model. It must move away from the siloed and independent operation of statistical programmes and projects and towards an integrated approach to data collection, publication of official statistics, and all points in between. It is essential that Stats NZ effectively manage a range of risks and enhance critical relationships with iwi-Māori and other priority populations.

2.   Introductory comment from the Chair

This report is a collective effort of ten panel members brought together to undertake an intense evaluation of five options for the future of census. In taking on the role of Chair, I quickly came to understand that few panel members were likely to have worked together prior to joining the panel. This report is testimony to the diligence, forbearance, and professionalism shown by each panel member, as well as a surprising amount of enthusiasm for the task at hand. Panel members have learned, debated, and been tested during the time we have spent together. Each of us has brought our individual experience and expertise to the process; we had to learn about each other very quickly, and I can only offer my sincere thanks for the way each panel member has helped make my job as Chair a relatively comfortable journey. Doing our work online for the first few weeks and only coming together in person for three days is a big ask for work of this importance. I do feel that we have individually and collectively risen to the challenge asked of us.

On a personal note, I wish to thank the Government Statistician for inviting me to chair this panel. I'm confident other panel members would also express similar thanks for the opportunities they've been given to contribute. Being part of this process will have flow-on value for the work each of us does with official statistics in future.

The cooperation received from Stats NZ staff has been critical to our success. On behalf of the panel, I wish to offer specific thanks to Lisa Cheney (Future Census Design Lead) who made sure the panel had access to as much information as we could manage in our short time with this work. Paul Robinson (Future Census Project Manager) has ensured the process of being a panel was well coordinated, leaving us able to put the vast majority of our energy into the evaluation and report creation process. My role as Chair has been made easier because I have been able to rely on these two critical staff members in particular.

The subject matter experts from Stats NZ provided excellent and unbiased comments, both in written form and in a series of quite intense interactions. These staff showed an awareness of the complexity of their work and the commitment shown to supporting the panel's deliberations was of the highest standard. The quality of their work suggests the future of census is in good hands.

3.   Panel membership

Future Census: Independent Evaluation Panel Biographies

02 Aug 2024

Chair: Dr Jonathan Godfrey ONZM

Panel Members

- Geoff Bowlby
- Grace Campbell-Macdonald
- Malaetogia Jacinta Fa'alili-Fidow
- Dr Jesse Whitehead
- Moira Clunie MNZM
- Ngapera Riley
- Professor Philippa Howden-Chapman
- Russell Craig
- Tanya Albert

Biography: Dr Jonathan Godfrey ONZM (Panel Chair)

Role: National President, Blind Citizens NZ; Senior Lecturer in Statistics, Massey University

Dr Jonathan Godfrey is a leader and advocate within the disability community with a focus on disability data and upholding the rights of disabled people. He led the Independent Monitoring Mechanism Delegation to Geneva in 2022 when NZ was examined by the UN Committee on NZ's progress implementing the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. His expertise in disability rights have seen him work with a wide range of Government agencies, including being a current member of Stats NZ's Data Ethics Advisory Group.

Jonathan is believed to have been the first totally blind person to gain employment as a lecturer in statistics worldwide. He teaches undergraduate statistics courses at Massey University and supervises graduate students who apply statistical techniques in their applied areas of research.

Jonathan's research is focused on the needs of the thousands of blind people around the world who need additional tools to make the visual elements of statistical thinking and practice less of a barrier. He also engages with staff and postgraduate students on campus who need statistical advice. His primary interests in statistics are in disability data and evidence, experimental design, and problems arising from missing data.

Biography: Geoff Bowlby (Panel Member)

Role: Assistant Chief Statistician – Statistics Canada

Geoff Bowlby has been an executive with Statistics Canada for 17 years, with a background as an economist and project manager. He is currently the Assistant Chief Statistician, Census, Regional Services and Operations Field.

Prior to taking on this role in 2024, Geoff was Canada's Census Manager and steered our most extensive and complex statistical program through the pandemic-impacted 2021 Census. In addition, Geoff is known for his work running the data collection operations and other regional services for Statistics Canada. He was also director responsible for the monthly Labour Force Survey, one of the world's largest on-going household surveys, and was the director of Special Surveys, a division managing ad hoc cost-recovery household surveys.

Geoff is an economist who loves to work with the information to develop stories on the state of the nation. He also enjoys the management of large and complex projects, such as the Census of Population. Geoff has appeared before many House of Commons and Senate Committees and has chaired a number of United Nations task forces. He is currently running two UN task forces, which are revising and adding to the international manuals being developed for the next worldwide round of population and housing censuses.

Outside of work, Geoff is active with his family. For years, he coached his son's hockey team and attended figure skating to cheer on his two daughters. He and his high school sweetheart wife are particularly proud of their 100 year old home on the historic Rideau River near Burritt's Rapids, south of Ottawa, which they have lovingly restored themselves. Although his children are older now, he remains active in his community and serves on the Board of Directors for the Kemptville Hospital Foundation.

Geoff has a BA (Economics) from Glendon College at York University and MA (Economics) from the University of Waterloo. In

	addition, he graduated from the University of Ottawa's Certificate Program in Public Sector Leadership in 2020.
	Biography: Grace Campbell-Macdonald Role: Director: Regulatory and Advisory – National Cyber Security Centre. Grace is a director at the National Cyber Security Centre with a 20-year career across a range of government agencies in both policy and operational roles. Her interest in the Future Census is in the timeliness and utility of the data to inform analysis, advice and service design. She also has an interest in how the census data is secured so that trust and confidence in government systems is not undermined.
	Biography: Malaetogia Jacinta Fa'alili-Fidow Role: Director Strategy, Moana Connect Jacinta has extensive leadership and management experience in health research, public health and Pacific wellbeing in New Zealand. Her work aims to bridge government, academia and Pacific communities to champion authentic positive change for Pacific. As the founding Managing Director of Moana Connect, Jacinta empowers the importance of Pacific world-views, and the prominence of self-determination in all Moana Connect's work, including evaluation, research and advocacy. She is now Director, Strategy working with an incredible team undertaking various projects in the health and social sectors. Jacinta has a public health background and has recently completed a PhD on Pacific child resilience pathways drawing on the Growing Up in New Zealand Study, titled 'Vā o Tamaiti'. Her past experiences include various roles at the Health Research Council of NZ, Ministry of Health and the University of Auckland. Malaetogia Jacinta is Samoan and hails from the villages of Levi Saleimoa, Faleula and Saleaula.

	Biography: Dr Jesse Whitehead Role: Senior Research Fellow at Te Ngira: Institute for Population Research, University of Waikato Jesse's work has a primary focus on health equity and population health. Jesse's interdisciplinary research integrates insights from fields such as populations studies, demography, rural health, and Geographic Information Systems. Jesse's co-Chairs the Hauora Taiwhenau Rural Health Network Rural Health Research and Education Chapter and contributed to the development of the Geographic Classification for Health. Jesse's current research interests include working to support the development of resilient and equitable health systems through refining measures of spatial equity and access to health and social services and understanding demographic change in a changing environment.
	Biography: Moira Clunie MNZM Role: Project Lead, Te Ngākau Kahukura Moira's work focuses on making Aotearoa safer and more affirming for rainbow/LGBTI+ people. They are Project Lead for Te Ngākau Kahukura, which works to change systems and environments so that rainbow people across Aotearoa feel safe, valued, and that they belong in the places where they live, learn, and access healthcare and social support. Moira supported Stats NZ's development for the data standard for gender, sex, and variations of sex characteristics as a member of the external advisory group, and has worked to improve rainbow data through work with other government agencies, academic researchers and service providers.

Moira is an Associate Investigator for the Counting Ourselves trans and non-binary health survey. They co-Chair the Gender Affirming Primary Care Advisory Group for Te Whatu Ora Health New Zealand, and volunteer as co-Chair for the Policy and Advocacy Committee of PATHA (the Professional Association for Transgender Health Aotearoa). Moira has served in a range of advisory roles related to rainbow wellbeing and holds a Master of Social and Community Leadership with a focus on rainbow community leadership in suicide prevention.

Biography: Ngapera Riley

Role: Chief Executive Officer – Figure.NZ

Ngapera currently leads Figure.NZ, a charity that builds scalable technology to help democratise NZ's public data and develops data literacy programs for charities and NGOs.

Ngapera works closely with Māori business and education efforts across New Zealand. She currently holds board positions with the Simplicity Trust, Inzone Education Foundation, and Te Ohu Whai Ao Trust, and Te Kaenga Hou Trust.

She is also part of the working group Te Pokapu for the Māori Data Sovereignty Network. She has worked in an advisory capacity for Stats NZ on a number of projects including Māori business definitions and Tatauranga Umanga Māori, and Aotearoa Data Explorer.

Biography: Philippa Howden-Chapman, CNZM, QSO, FRSNZ

Role: Distinguished Professor of Public Health – University of Otago

Philippa Howden-Chapman is a Distinguished Professor of Public Health at the University of Otago, Wellington. She is Co-Director of He Kāinga Oranga/ Housing and Health Research Programme and Director of the NZ Centre for Sustainable Cities. She has conducted a number of randomised community housing trials in partnership

with local communities, which have had a major influence on housing, health, and energy policy. She has a strong interest in reducing inequalities in the determinants of health and has published widely in this area, receiving a number of awards for her work.

In 2014, Philippa and her research team were awarded the Prime Minister's Science Prize, and she was the first woman and social scientist to win the prize. In 2021, she was awarded the Royal Society of NZ Rutherford Medal. She has been Chair of the International Council of Science Union, *Scientific Committee for Health and Wellbeing in the Changing Urban Environment: A systems analysis approach* and the WHO Housing and Health Guidelines Development Group, a member of the Children's Commissioner's Expert Advisory Group on Solutions to Child Poverty and a director on the Board Kāinga Ora-Homes and Communities. She is a Fellow of the Royal Society of New Zealand.

Biography: Russell Craig, MInstD

Role: Independent Data and Digital Technology Expert Advisor

Russell is an expert in cloud computing, AI and data governance, digital identity and the intersection of technology and public policy. He has had an extensive global career as a trusted advisor focused on helping governments, businesses and not-for-profit organisations get the best from their investments in digital technologies.

From 2014 to 2023 Russell was Microsoft New Zealand's National Technology and Security Officer, working with both public and private sectors across New Zealand on digital strategy development and implementation, helping them to define and realise broad transformational opportunities and manage associated risks.

Russell's current work is focused on responsible and ethical use of both data and technology, helping New Zealand organisations improve their data governance skills and practices, and the value

of their data. He is currently a member of Stats NZ's Data Ethics Advisory Group.

Biography: Tanya Albert

Role: Data Analyst, Ngati Rangi

Tanya has been the lead data analyst at Ngāti Rangi for the last six years, where she has developed her skills in data collection, data cleaning, and analysis.

Her primary goal is to leverage data-driven insights, identifying trends, patterns, and opportunities, to make a positive impact on the wellbeing of whānau. Her approach has been to support iwi aspirations by leveraging data for informed decision-making. She has become proficient in trouble-shooting and resolving database system issues; focusing on enhancing the data systems in use.

Tanya is part of the cohort for He Aho Kura Whakina, an IDI research programme with Te Kāhui Raraunga and is also pursuing a micro-credential in digital health through Health Informatics NZ, focusing on enhancing digital health competencies.

She has been part of a collaborative project with Stats NZ and data analysts from a range of iwi providers intended to achieve data-driven decision-making.

Tanya is a dedicated professional, bringing a wealth of experience in the Whānau Ora domain. She has particular expertise in navigating the Whānau Tahi database, a Dynamics 365 system used for managing Whānau Ora data. Her work is driven by a passion for using data to benefit iwi, hapori, and whānau.

4.   Panel endorsements

The evaluation of Future Census Design Options and the accompanying recommendations have been completed in line with the Terms of Reference (see Appendix 1).

These recommendations included in the report represent the consensus of the Independent Evaluation Panel, as confirmed by the signatures of the Panel Chair and members below.

Name	Role	Signature	Date
Dr Jonathan Godfrey ONZM	Panel Chair	s 9(2)(a)	30 Aug 2024
Geoff Bowlby	Panel Member		30 Aug 2024
Grace Campbell-Macdonald	Panel Member		02 Sep 2024
Malaetogia Jacinta Fa'alili-Fidow	Panel Member		27 Aug 2024
Dr Jesse Whitehead	Panel Member		28 Aug 2024
Moira Clunie MNZM	Panel Member		06 Sep 2024
Ngapera Riley	Panel Member		12 Sep 2024
Professor Philippa Howden-Chapman	Panel Member		30 Aug 2024
Russell Craig	Panel Member		27 Aug 2024
Tanya Albert	Panel Member		30 Aug 2024

5.   The options explained

Census 2028 will be an administrative data (admin data) -first census, where:

- Admin data provides:
  - o base population estimates to low-level geographies; and
  - o a range of individual and household attributes.
- Survey data provides:
  - o information on census attributes not available from admin sources, including being a vehicle for meeting emerging or unmet data needs;
  - o a sampling frame for targeting content to key population groups; and
  - o quality measures on admin data used for census.

The five options all have a shared base of data available through admin sources, which has been developed and published as the experimental Admin Population Census (APC). While many information needs can be supported solely by admin data, there are important data needs that are not; all future census options include a significant level of survey collection to help deliver to other key data needs.

There are five high-level options for the survey component of 2028 Census, with the three annual sample survey options (Options 3-5) available for the 2033 cycle. These options are distinguished by size, frequency, and collection windows, with Options 3-5 being variants of an annual 5% (achieved) sample census attribute survey.

- Option 1 is a full-field enumeration in 2028 with targeted non-response follow-up and a target response rate of 80%. The 2033 census cycle will then follow one of Options 3-5.
- Option 2 is a 25% (achieved) sample survey of occupied dwellings in 2028, with an achieved sample rate (ASR) target of 75%. The 2033 census cycle will then follow one of Options 3-5.
- Options 3-5 are a 5% (achieved) sample survey of dwellings annually from 2026, with an ASR target of 75%. Published estimates for some groups will be based on data collected over up-to 5 years. These three options are distinguished by the collection design and the level of integration with the Stats NZ household survey programme. Option 3 retains the census day concept, while Options 4 and 5 have continuous collection likely to be aligned to July-June years. Options 4 and 5 are distinguished by the level of integration with the Stats NZ household survey programme, with Option 5 adding core content to existing surveys to reduce the required additional sampling.

6.   High level recommendation on options for the 2028 and 2033 cycles

The strategic intent of Stats NZ means that the future of census will change, and that Aotearoa New Zealand's official statistics system is moving towards greater use of admin data supported by quality surveys. There are different ways to deliver a census under these conditions, and the panel were presented with five different options across two census cycles. For the Census 2028 cycle the panel were tasked with recommending one of options 1-4, while for the Census 2033 cycle the panel were tasked with recommending one of options 3-5. These options have different strengths and weaknesses and involve trade-offs to make progress towards the stated goal of Stats NZ to "produce a more robust and sustainable census programme that can adapt to changing data needs and delivers more timely and targeted data". The panel were asked to consider the following criteria when making our recommendations:

1. Information needs and data quality;
2. Delivers for and with Māori, iwi and hapū;
3. Level of dependence on response rates;
4. Complexity;
5. Timeline to deliver;
6. Change impact;
7. Strategic enablement;
8. Trust and confidence; and
9. Risk.

Our recommendation does not consider the cost or potential social and economic benefits of each option as this information was not available to the panel.

It was agreed that successful implementation of any of the five options presented requires significant improvements to admin data and surveying if Stats NZ is to move away from a full enumeration census model. The future of statistics and the wider New Zealand data system are complementary and interdependent; both must be progressed.

It is the view of the Panel that the official statistics system of NZ is not likely to be capable of implementing any of Options 3-5 in the time required for the Census 2028 cycle. In addition, without significant commitment to a concerted effort to improve admin data, these options will not be possible for the Census 2033 cycle. This is a particular concern for iwi-Māori and priority populations. Option 2 does not provide a solution to these issues, leaving Option 1 as the recommended choice for the Census 2028 cycle.

There are other concerns that have also influenced this recommendation. While improvements to admin data are necessary under all options, the way that such improvements are achieved matters. This process is important because it can either increase or decrease public trust and confidence, perceptions of data safety, the strength of

partnerships with iwi-Māori and priority populations, and the abilities of agencies and end-users to understand, use, and have confidence in official statistics. In addition, the future census change program is complex, with many interrelated components beyond admin data and methodological approaches. It also matters how other aspects of the future census change programme are implemented for the same reasons.

Ultimately, these factors will affect the overall success of the Stats NZ census transformation and the resilience of the wider Aotearoa New Zealand data system.

There is support from the panel for improving Aotearoa New Zealand's data ecosystem, recognising that this has the potential for benefits beyond the ability of Stats NZ to deliver robust, timely, targeted and adaptable information in a sustainable way. Progress on partnering with, investing in, and working to serve the needs of iwi-Māori and priority populations is essential to successfully implementing future censuses. This is particularly true for Option 5, which provides more scope for partnership and community led surveying. The Panel believes that this long-term objective is unlikely to be fully realised in the years immediately following an Option 1 based Census 2028. Therefore Option 4 provides the basis for census 2033 and a platform to progress a strategic direction towards Option 5.

Recommendation 1: That the Government Statistician propose Option 1 for Census 2028.

Recommendation 2: That Stats NZ commit to Option 4 for Census 2033 (from 2029) and move to Option 5 for censuses in subsequent cycles.

7. Proactive release of this report

The Panel believes it is in the best interests of the future of official statistics in NZ for this report to be openly available.

Recommendation 3: That this report be proactively released into the public domain by the Government Statistician in a timely manner.

Recommendation 4: That this report be an appendix to the Cabinet Paper relating to the Future of Census.

Recommendation 5: That critical agencies upon which Stats NZ depends upon for admin data receive a copy of this report. This will allow their response to the Cabinet Paper to be informed by the efforts of the panel as soon as is reasonably possible, providing additional time to consider the full implications of the recommendations herein, which may or may not appear in the main cabinet paper.

8.   Te Tiriti o Waitangi

Te Tiriti analyses

The significant changes to the data environment in Aotearoa that would result from the proposed census transformation would likely have a large impact across other Kawanatanga agencies and departments, as well as for Iwi and Māori organisations. This will likely impact on the ability for Kawanatanga agencies to meet their te Tiriti obligations, while simultaneously disrupting the ability of Iwi and Māori organisations to monitor the actions of the Crown - including through lack of access to the data needed to bring future te Tiriti o Waitangi claims.

As noted in Te Kāhui Raraunga Māori Data Governance Model, "Article 2 of te Tiriti guarantees the protection of iwi and hapū tino rangatiratanga over their taonga which, in a modern context, includes data. In its report into *Claims concerning New Zealand law and policy affecting Māori culture and identity* (WAI 262), the Waitangi Tribunal concluded that te reo Māori and mātauranga Māori are taonga and, as such, the government is required to actively protect these taonga, while also requiring of Māori to actively learn, use, innovate and transmit to future generations. Data includes aspects of mātauranga as well as additional knowledge essential to the ability of Māori to exercise and transmit to future generations whanaungatanga, kaitiakitanga and rangatiratanga. In its report on The Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (WAI 2522), the Waitangi Tribunal did not specify which kinds of data are taonga in their own right but recognised that mātauranga included Māori rights and interests in the digital domain and this placed "a heightened duty on the Crown to actively protect those rights and interests, particularly in a field that is subject to rapid change and evolution" (Waitangi Tribunal, 2021, p. 53). It also recognised that "from a te ao Māori perspective, the way that the digital domain is governed and regulated has important potential implications for the integrity of the Māori knowledge system, which is a taonga" (Waitangi Tribunal, 2021, p. 53)."

It is concerning that, to date, there do not appear to have been any detailed (independent or in house) Te Tiriti analyses of any of the five options, or of the Future Census work programme, and their impact on Māori. Understanding detailed information about the Te Tiriti implications of proposed changes is essential.

> **Recommendation 6:** That Stats NZ commission independent Te Tiriti analysis of each of the Future Census options. This should have been done before this point. Stats NZ should continue to consult with Data Iwi Leaders Group, using the analysis to align future census design with Te Tiriti. The Te Tiriti analysis reports must be proactively released including to iwi partners. The majority view of the panel is that Stats NZ commission the

Te Tiriti analysis to feed into the design decisions going forward. It is critical to note that some Panel Members assert that a decision should not be made by the Government Statistician about Census options until Te Tiriti analysis has occurred.

Engagement with Māori

The Data and Statistics Act 2022 outlines the requirements for the Government Statistician to engage with Māori. In particular, section 14[1], sets out the duties of the Government Statistician in relation to te Tiriti. Under the Act[2], the Government Statistician must recognise the interests of Māori in the collection of data, production of statistics, and access to and use of data for research as tools for furthering the economic, social, cultural and environmental wellbeing of Māori (including iwi and hapū), and the way in which data is collected, managed and used for the production of official statistics and for research. The Government Statistician must also foster the capability and capacity of Māori to collect and use data for the production of statistics, access and use data under the Act for research, and engage with the Government Statistician under the Act. In addition, the Act outlines requirements for the Government Statistician and Stats NZ to engage with Māori on multi-year data and statistical programmes, the Census, and on Standards.

The level of engagement that the Government Statistician has had with Māori on the design of the future census programme and the specific options being considered is unclear and may risk the perception that the Data and Statistics Act is not being adhered to.

> **Recommendation 7:** That Stats NZ improve engagement with iwi-Māori to ensure meaningful partnerships for chosen options and pathways.

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[1] Section 14 Duties of Statistician relating to Tiriti o Waitangi/Treaty of Waitangi

The Statistician must, in performing the Statistician's functions under this Act, recognise and respect the Crown's responsibility to give effect to the principles of te Tiriti o Waitangi/the Treaty of Waitangi by recognising the interests of Māori in—

(i)the collection of data, the production of statistics, and access to, and use of, data for research as tools for furthering the economic, social, cultural, and environmental well-being of Māori (including iwi and hapū); and

(ii)the way in which data is collected, managed, and used for the production of official statistics and for research

[2] Section 19 Engagement with Māori on multi-year data and statistical programme

• When preparing a draft multi-year data and statistical programme, the Statistician must engage with Māori in ways that the Statistician is satisfied will promote the fulfilment of the Statistician's duty in section 14(a).

Section 35 Engagement with Māori on census

• Before determining the manner of taking, and the data to be collected in, a census of population and dwellings, the Statistician must engage with Māori in ways that the Statistician is satisfied will promote the fulfilment of the Statistician's duty in section 14(a).

Iwi data and Māori Data Sovereignty

The Future Census transformation does provide opportunities for the collection and dissemination of more frequent information, including the potential for priority populations, community groups, and data users to influence collection priorities. However, it is unclear how Stats NZ plan to leverage the proposed Future Census options to enhance Māori Data Sovereignty, or how each of the proposed options may risk eroding Māori Data Sovereignty.

The strategic shifts in data collection and data re-use require ethical checks and balances that uphold Māori data sovereignty, protect privacy, ensure fairness and collective benefit. Ethics processes must be incorporated regardless of which options are undertaken. The re-use of data in an admin data first approach must align to indigenous data sovereignty principles that allow for equitable participation and access by iwi-Māori. In practice, this means the resourcing of iwi-Māori participation and autonomy over their own processes. The panel notes the call for establishment of a Chief Māori Data Steward.

> **Recommendation 8:** That Stats NZ must continue work to implement the Māori Data Governance Model and develop a clear plan to ensuring that the technological and methodological solutions to delivering future censuses are in alignment with the principles of Māori Data Sovereignty and Māori Data Governance. The guidance in this includes considering and working to answer the following questions:
>
> 1. Does the proposal allow for the Māori exercise of rangatiratanga while recognising the right of the Crown to govern?
>
> 2. Have Māori had a role in design/implementation?
>
> 3. Does the proposal:
>   - enhance Māori wellbeing?
>   - build Māori capability or capacity?
>
> 4. Is there any aspect of this issue that Māori consider to be a taonga?
>
> 5. Does the proposal aim to achieve equitable outcomes?
>
> 6. How does the proposal differ from previous efforts to address the issue?
>
> 7. How does the proposal demonstrate that policymakers have looked at the proposal from the perspective of legal values such as natural justice, due process, fairness and equity?

8. How does the proposal demonstrate that policymakers have looked at the issue from the perspective of tikanga values?

Recommendation 9: That Stats NZ should invest in partnering with iwi to support iwi to self-collect iwi affiliation data.

9.   Admin data first strategy

The Panel accepts that change in what constitutes a census is a certainty, but improvements in both admin data (and surveys) are required if New Zealand is to move away from a full enumeration census model. An admin first strategy will pose a significant risk to official statistics if there is not a secure, consistent, timely, robust, and publicly acceptable supply of admin data from government agencies and the broader data system. Both the population and dwellings spines of the proposed Integrated Statistical Data System require better and more data from administrative and survey sources if the full enumeration census is no longer available.

An admin first strategy means that the work of Stats NZ and wider New Zealand data system are complementary and interdependent; both must be progressed. While Stats NZ has made progress working with other agencies to improve the quality of admin data, much faster and comprehensive progress is needed. Improving the quality of admin data is critical to future census, will support the achievement of the Stats NZ strategy and will support agencies to improve their service delivery and evaluation.

The supply of official statistics will only succeed if there is significant and cooperative commitment from a wide range of agencies. The 'iwi-Māori and priority populations' section of this report identifies some of these gaps.

Through both the Government Statistician and the Government Chief Data Steward, Stats NZ has powers to set and provide assurance on data standards and require the supply of data from the broader data system.

Whilst a move towards admin first data has potential to provide Māori data more frequently, Iwi data will be significantly impacted.

> **Recommendation 10:** That Stats NZ effectively utilise all available levers to uplift the pace of the system changes needed to support the supply of quality and timely admin data from other government agencies. In order for an admin-first attribute survey, the panel recommends that the first iteration of this work is completed by 30 June 2027 to support Census 2033 (field collection from 2029). This work must have ongoing evaluation and development to improve quality for future Census.

> **Recommendation 11:** That Stats NZ fully incorporate the requirement of census to count individuals and dwellings into the Data Investment Plan.

This needs to include a prioritised list of admin data standards needed to fulfil the requirements of the future census.

Recommendation 12: That Stats NZ continue to improve the Admin Population Census so that it improves in both quality and coverage for all sub-populations. For this to be realised, a concerted effort across government agencies, not just Stats NZ, must occur.

An admin data first census system imposes a commitment on agencies to commit resources to comply and actively contribute to a successful all of government admin data first official statistics system.

Recommendation 13: That Stats NZ communicate to agencies what the system priorities are to lift the admin data first census system through any available funding via the Data Investment Plan.

Recommendation 14: That Government Agencies must show how they will actively commit to an all of Government admin data first strategy by 30 June 2025 as set out in the Data Investment Plan.

Recommendation 15: That the Government Chief Data Steward report annually to Cabinet on all of government progress to achieve the admin data first strategy and, as needed, advise on what actions are required to lift progress.

Recommendation 16: That Stats NZ have a clear plan to develop both government and public trust in the acquisition of admin data – including through both privacy, ethics, and security mechanisms – that are required to produce high-quality admin data.

10. Risks

Recommendations relating to some of the following subsections are left to other sections of this report where the identified risks are expanded upon.

Cost pressures and uncertainties

The panel is aware that budgets and verified costings for all five options were not available. The analysis has therefore focused on the options without knowing how much has been allocated to each element of required expenditure within the options. The panel does know about various placeholders in the budgets for activities and outcomes that the panel has seen as implicitly part of the relevant option. This includes for example, targeted surveys following or coupled with each annual data collection as described in Options 3-5.

The panel was informed that reasonable estimates of total expenditure exceed the current multi-year appropriations for Census 2028. Questions remain unanswered to the extent to which necessary expenditure for Stats NZ infrastructure are apportioned properly between Census and other core Stats NZ activities.

Concern must be expressed that the options as described are not seen as affordable and that in order to meet budgetary constraints, the activities within an option could be reduced. This would then put the panel's recommendation for Options 4 and 5 in jeopardy.

The panel notes that significant investment in a number of areas is required prior to 2028 which are necessary to progress Options 3-5 in the census 2033 funding cycle.

> **Recommendation 17:** That Stats NZ prioritise the full and appropriate costing of activities for Census 2028. In addition, that the costs that are not solely related to Census 2028 activities must be apportioned carefully.

Analysis of options

The panel determined that Option 5 is effectively the same as Option 4 in the 2028 Census cycle, and that only Options 3-5 were under serious consideration for the Census 2033 cycle. In order to meet our terms of reference (see Appendix 1), the panel has reviewed the options as they stand. There was not sufficient opportunity to offer alterations to the options or to formulate another option.

The panel has determined that the interests of New Zealand are best served if the panel created this report and formulated the associated recommendations. Stats NZ and the Government Statistician in particular, may wish to reflect on these recommendations if any alteration to the proposed options is entertained.

> **Recommendation 18:** That the Government Statistician reconvene this panel if any substantial alterations to the proposed options are incorporated into the Government Statistician's recommendation to Cabinet for the manner of taking Census 2028.

Strategy

The proposed Future Census options offer the potential for Stats NZ to provide more frequent data, and to more flexibly respond to community data needs through the increased use of survey tools. The admin-first nature of the proposed Future Census options is also likely to result in lower costs and a move away from a 'surge' approach to providing census data, thereby increasing the sustainability of the census. The additional investments in infrastructure that would be required to deliver the selected Future Census option will also add value to the government data ecosystem. However, it is important to note that the pace of change is challenging and poses a risk to short-term deliverables. While the proposed Future Census reduces the direct costs to Stats NZ, there is likely to be a cost burden transferred to other agencies that will be required to collect and improve the quality of admin data. Estimates of the benefits of the Census have been produced and outweigh the costs of running the census (In Aotearoa the benefits associated with the census are conservatively estimated at around $2.8 billion nationally (Bakker, 2021) and at a net value of $500 million for Māori (Bakker, 2019); it is acknowledged that these estimates may now be out of date. It is unclear whether the proposed Future Census options would provide a similar level of benefit.

> **Recommendation 19:** That Stats NZ promote the potential benefits of the selected Future Census options (both 2028 and 2033).

Speed of change

There are logistical challenges and concerns around whether Stats NZ, and other government agencies that are expected to improve the quality of their admin data, are ready and have the time or capacity to deliver the proposed Future Census options. Specifically, there are challenges around the time needed to ensure:

- Co-design and meaningful engagement

- Development and testing of designs

- Technological readiness

In addition, there are concerns around whether data users, community groups and the wider public are ready for the shift in understanding Census data as a 'snapshot' to an admin-first enumeration with additional rolling attribute surveys. While many groups may eagerly anticipate the availability of more frequent information, it is unclear whether they are ready to understand and work with the more complex and nuanced data that will be produced under the proposed Future Census options. This will likely involve additional learning requirements and the need for education, training and support as new datasets will have different data sources, different sampling errors, different levels of uncertainty, making it more difficult to disentangle statistical 'noise' from any underlying 'truth'. There are also likely to be new and different ways for data users to work with these new datasets.

Administrative data

No matter which options are chosen, future census outcomes will be increasingly reliant on the availability and quality of admin data. Ongoing change across the entire government data system will be a prerequisite for success. The Government Statistician and Government Chief Data Steward should ensure that these changes are coherent, well understood, and acted on by relevant agencies, and that they are supported by an effective and appropriately funded data investment plan and ongoing investment in overall data governance across NZ government, including in the area of strong data ethics.

Stats NZ has made a strong case for a shift to an admin data first strategy, drawing mostly on efficiencies, opportunities and international case studies to make a compelling case. However, the limitations of an admin data first strategy are equally strong when considering the ability to reflect the diversity of Aotearoa and their needs, particularly iwi affiliation, disabled people, rainbow populations, homelessness and Pacific peoples. These population descriptions contribute to the function, care and progress of our people and society and are also the envy of many systems around the world. These are significant trade-offs which are unable to be addressed by census attributes surveys, but may be addressed if Stats NZ are committed to the following:

- **Prioritise quality improvements in admin data**
  Stats NZ to draw on its strategic and legislative roles to work in partnership with key agencies to prioritise the improvements in admin data to reflect diverse population demographics. Despite the complexities, prioritisation of these improvements must begin immediately to ensure the overall success of Future Census. In particular, demographics for Level 4 ethnicity, Māori

descent and iwi affiliation, gender identity and disabled people must be improved for a minimum of three large data sources.

- **Establishment of admin data governance arrangements**
  A strong governance framework (see below) can give effect to the prioritisation of admin data improvements and the actions needed to begin this work. External independent members working within a specific Terms of Reference can provide necessary additional perspectives.

- **Support for the admin data first strategy**
  Stats NZ needs to be fully transparent about the benefits and opportunities of an admin data first strategy. Stats NZ will need to tailor the campaign to various audiences beyond primary stakeholders. Stats NZ also needs to recognise that this has data sovereignty implications.

Quality of admin data

Work has been undertaken and continues to focus on improving the quality of admin data. This is important under all Future Census scenarios where an admin-first approach is used to enumerate the population. While the current data system generally works well for a large proportion of the population the challenge is to improve it for Māori, Pacific, rainbow and disabled populations. To mitigate against this, further improvements to admin data are still required, including:

- Improving the quality of ethnicity data, particularly level 4 ethnicity, and when individuals identify with multiple ethnic groups;

- Improving the quality of dwelling and address information (which is essential for accurate geographic enumeration);

- Addressing biases within admin data – people who use services are better represented; people with stable residential addresses are more likely to have accurate address information; and

- Addressing inconsistencies within admin data held by the same agency.

There is a significant risk in relying on external agencies to collect high quality data on behalf of Stats NZ. If this is done well, there is a substantial opportunity to improve the quality of data across all of government. However, this depends on the ability and appetite for agencies to invest in data improvements.

NB: recommendations to support the above comments appear later in this report.

Perception of unethical practices

Stats NZ and the Government Statistician have new powers under the Data and Statistics Act (2022) to require another agency to collect data that is not directly for their purpose as an agent of Stats NZ. This has several risks. This may exacerbate concern and potentially cause an erosion of public trust as people become more aware of Stats NZ long-standing powers to collect data from other agencies that may not have always been appropriately highlighted by the collecting agency through privacy statements (as required by law). This is particularly true in contexts where information from vulnerable individuals is collected, or when receipt of service is conditional on providing personal data. There are ethical risks that need to be considered, including avoiding perceptions that Stats NZ is contributing to inappropriate government sharing of identifiable information (regardless of existing de-identification and confidentialisation processes).

The panel notes that Stats NZ already follows international best practice with the Five Safes Framework, Nga Tikanga Paehere, the Data Ethics Advisory Group and others. This work needs to be maintained and enhanced.

> **Recommendation 20:** That Stats NZ continue to use transparent processes based on existing and new ethical frameworks that improve trust and confidence.

There are significant risks to official statistics if Stats NZ cannot rely on a secure, consistent, timely, and publicly acceptable supply of admin data from a large number of Government agencies, iwi, non-governmental organisations, the private sector, and individuals. While agencies have committed to supporting Stats NZ, the pace of change will be determined by those agencies. This leaves Stats NZ and the future of official statistics vulnerable to decisions made (or deferred) by other agencies. Steps must therefore be taken to increase the rate of cooperation and the quality of the admin data that will also be of greater value to those other agencies.

Both the Government Chief Data Steward and Government Statistician have the ability to set standards related to data and statistics that Agencies must comply with. Stats NZ should set expectations on what will be the priority for Agencies through annual monitoring and oversight from Cabinet.

Given significant improvement in quality and timely admin data is required from other Government agencies, the supply of official statistics will only succeed if there is significant and cooperative commitment from a wide range of agencies, and therefore the levers to ensuring this change must be enhanced.

Recommendation 21: That serious consideration be given to separating the role of Government Chief Data Steward from that of Government Statistician or Chief Executive so that there is little risk that actions taken by the Government Chief Data Steward can be seen to favour the business direction/imperatives of Stats NZ.

Recommendation 22: That the Government Chief Data Steward formulate a cross-Government programme of change as a matter of urgency and that this be used as the road map for the newly repositioned Government Chief Data Steward.

Recommendation 23: That the Government Chief Data Steward be responsible to a Cabinet Minister whose other responsibilities pose minimal conflicts of interest.

Recommendation 24: That the Government Chief Data Steward be responsible for the progress reports which will be monitored by Cabinet, perhaps by way of delegated authority to an external board or a governance structure to be determined and responsible to Cabinet.

Recommendation 25: That Stats NZ advances its admin data first framework in a way that implements zero trust architecture and modern data security, privacy, and ethical practices.

Geographic granularity

The status quo census model provides a high level of information at a detailed and granular geography. This information is important for iwi-Māori, service providers, policymakers, priority community groups, and researchers to understand how and where the attributes of populations differ. The ability to design effective place-based solutions relies on access to high quality place-based data. While it is true that a large sample survey approach will provide estimates about people residing within each Statistical Area 2 (SA2), the reliability of this information reduces at the (smaller) Statistical Area 1 level. In addition, reliability is lower for groups where the accuracy and completeness of admin data (and particularly address information associated with admin data) is lower. For instance, younger people, iwi-Māori, level 4 Pacific and other ethnic groups, rainbow populations, and transient populations among others. The Future Census options pose a significant risk to the ability to provide detailed attribute information about the Aotearoa New Zealand population with suitable geographic granularity and with the ability to disaggregate by important demographic characteristics such as age, gender, and ethnicity. This issue will be exacerbated for numerically small populations, with higher levels of uncertainty associated with information about these groups at the small geographic level.

> **Recommendation 26:** That Stats NZ must continue to develop approaches that ensure reliable and granular geographic information is available for *all* populations and particularly priority population groups.

Intersectionality

The status quo Census currently provides the ability to explore intersectionality between population demographics and attributes collected by the Census, including the ability to disaggregate information.

There are also significant challenges to being able to understand intersectionality under the proposed Future Census options. The future census options, which involve a move away from attempted full attribute enumeration and towards attempted attribute enumeration of ~25% of the total population, do not guarantee that this will be maintained to the same level of precision or granularity. The removal of full-enumeration census survey mean that it will no longer be possible to produce "true" counts of different cross tabulated and intersecting population attributes, particularly for priority populations and numerically smaller groups.

> **Recommendation 27:** That Stats NZ work with priority communities to better understand intersectionality issues, and to ensure reliable and granular data is collected which then allows for intersectionality to be represented in population statistics.

Data equity

Closely related to the above points, the proposed Future Census changes risk creating and perpetuating data inequities. The impact of proposed Future Census changes will disproportionately impact priority populations, very likely resulting in less detailed and accurate attribute information for Māori, Pacific, rainbow, disabled, ethnic communities, iwi, and other numerically small populations. Under Options 2 to 5, the overarching goal is to survey 25% of the population over a five-year period. The concern is that numerically smaller populations will actually be surveyed in much smaller numbers than what is required to produce reliable estimates.

11. Governance matters

The proper preparation and conduct of a Census requires strong governance, even when change between censuses is kept to a minimum. Censuses are some of the largest and most complex programmes that any government organisation will attempt, and thus require a great deal of management and oversight. This requirement for strong governance is enhanced by the changes that will be implemented in the lead up and conduct of the 2028 and 2033 censuses, such as the new admin data population and dwelling counts, as well as the census attributes survey and its new features, such as sampling and ongoing data collection.

The panel notes from the review of Census 2023 that Census 2023 had effective governance.

Recommendation 28: That the Government Statistician establish a governance structure similar to Census 2023 for Census 2028 and beyond. These governance arrangements should have a mix of independent and internal expertise (including the Government Statistician and key members of the Executive Leadership Team) and chaired by one of the independent members. The independent membership should include expertise in the governance of large, complex programmes, international expertise, iwi-Māori, as well as any other external representatives required.

Recommendation 29: That the Government Statistician establish governance arrangements before the end of 2024 which should focus on preparations for both 2028 and 2033. Once established, these arrangements should remain ongoing as the Census Programme moves through its phases.

Recommendation 30: That Stats NZ appoints a single, accountable Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) as the lead manager of the project. This SRO will be accountable to both the Board and the ELT table and should be the primary representative of the Census outside of Stats NZ. Within the team led by SRO there should be considerable programme management expertise.

Recommendation 31: That Stats NZ establish a review process with the objective of supporting improvement in trust and confidence, including but not limited to the social acceptability of large-scale admin data use.

This external review should regularly review the policies, practices, processes and systems adopted by Stats NZ for safeguarding data. This independent, external review should be reported to the Programme Board who should be required to consider all recommendations, from which an action plan should be developed to ensure all agreed-upon improvements noted in the review are implemented.

12. IDI-specific comments

When the data from a full enumeration census is combined with admin data in the IDI, census data becomes *de facto* part of the IDI spine. The coverage of census data has decreased in recent censuses, but the fully enumerated data collection has a much greater benefit for combination matching with admin data collected by key Government agencies and data collected in Stats NZ surveys. Critical data that needs to be part of the IDI spine but is either currently not adequately available in admin data or will not be available if Stats NZ does not continue a full enumeration census option, includes critical demographic data which will help identify ethnic, disabled, and rainbow communities. Not having sufficient ethnicity, disability and rainbow data in the IDI spine will compromise the ability of agencies to determine the quality or uptake of their services unless those agencies already know they have a need to collect this data as part of their core business.

Recommendation 32: That Stats NZ make significant investment to ensure the features of the IDI spine are retained and improved as Stats NZ increases its reliance on an admin data first approach.

Recommendation 33: That Stats NZ ensure the IDI incorporates essential demographic identifiers including ethnicity and disability status for the entire population.

13. Links to/with other Stats NZ household surveys

Options using a census attribute survey, and Option 5 in particular, are more likely to succeed if the suite of Stats NZ household surveys take advantage of the improvements in data collection proposed for census attribute survey options. For example, a key element of all options is the multi-modal data collection which should assist hard to reach communities and therefore increase their participation in all Stats NZ data collections, or at least reduce any decline in overall response rates. It seems logical that improvements in respondent engagement, infrastructure development, staffing matters, and many more facets of operating a data collection programme would be best achieved if each data collection exercise of Stats NZ's data collection programme could learn from past collections and benefit future collections.

In the vast majority of documents the panel has reviewed, the priority communities of Tāngata Whenua, disability, rainbow and Pacific people are the ones that receive a specific mention. Notwithstanding the importance of these communities, there are other subsets of the NZ population for whom there is a need to think about data collections, such as teenagers and older people who may have issues specific to their stage of life. For example, a survey targeting first and second year high school students could be conducted every two years, probably with cooperation from the Ministry of Education. A survey of this type, while currently outside Stats NZ policy, could help younger New Zealanders see the value of their data in decisions made about their futures, help decision makers become more aware of the emerging issues for the future NZ population, etc.

> **Recommendation 34:** That all Stats NZ household surveys move to multi-modal data collections in order to complement the chosen census model and the admin data first approach.

> **Recommendation 35:** That Stats NZ incorporate additional modules targeted for priority communities within the data collections of all household surveys, especially those communities not well served under the admin data first strategy.

> **Recommendation 36:** That Stats NZ evaluate the suite of surveys for how well they meet the needs and interests of sectors of NZ society that go beyond the key priority communities often given exclusive mention in plans.

Enhancing Te Kupenga

Te Kupenga currently targets 8,000 Māori. This is an opportunity to collect better data more regularly for Māori, particularly around Te Reo Māori.

Recommendation 37: That Stats NZ consider increasing the frequency of Te Kupenga to be held no less frequently than once in each four years moving forwards.

Recommendation 38: That Stats NZ consider increasing the sample size of Te Kupenga.

Recommendation 39: That if the Government Statistician chooses either Options 1 or 2, that there is a firm commitment made to running Te Kupenga following Census 2028, or if either of Options 3 or 4 are chosen, that the next Te Kupenga be conducted in 2027.

14.   Iwi-Māori and priority populations

All future census options rely heavily on admin data to count the entire population, ensure that everyone is visible in the data, and provide sufficient definition to be useful for planning, decision making and service provision. Stats NZ and the wider data ecosystem need time to prepare for this change, and time to improve admin data. The recommended Future Census option and proposed pathway provides more time to: prepare for this change; undertake work to address risks around reputation, trust and confidence; and improve the quality of data needed to undertake this change. This also gives Stats NZ time to prepare the wider public for this change, provide transparency and bring everyone along the journey together. However, it must be recognised that the trade-offs between the proposed Future Census options significantly affect iwi-Māori and priority populations. Data are a taonga to be treated with care. This includes but is not limited to information about languages - including Te Reo Māori, religion, rainbow communities, housing quality, and importantly the ability to understand intersectionality for priority populations and disaggregate information.

There needs to be clear guarantees that Stats NZ will provide transparency and work with iwi-Māori and priority populations to provide better quality information that are valuable for priority populations and help to achieve their aspirations.

Recommendation 40: That Stats NZ ensures critical improvements in key admin data by 2028 to allow movement beyond Option 1. Note that this will require incentives and enforcement along with cross -government cooperation and is likely to require system funding. There needs to be concerted effort to improve the following critical existing admin data sets, as these targeted and prioritised activities deliver the most value and improvements to data quality for iwi-Māori and priority communities. This will better describe the diversity of Aotearoa New Zealand, and also supports agencies to deliver their own services better. The explicit data attributes that need attention are[3]:

1. Level 4 ethnicity collection and provision: from Ministry of Health/Te Whatu Ora, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Social Development and Immigration NZ

2. Iwi affiliation collection: Department of Internal Affairs

3. Māori descent collection: Ministry of Education

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[3] The agencies specified are those that are currently considered by Stats NZ to be able to provide the best coverage across Aotearoa and are the most appropriate to collect that dataset (in terms of the context people are engaging with them).

4. Gender collection: everywhere - enforce the mandated standard and provide education for agencies (to ensure the standard is used appropriately, accurately and with consideration of privacy and safety)

5. Accurate and up to date address collection everywhere, including identification of temporary dwellings

Recommendation 41: That Stats NZ pursue and affirm active partnerships (ongoing for all options) with the following communities:

- Iwi-Māori;

- Pacific;

- Asian;

- Rainbow;

- Disability; and

- People and organisations who work with/for transient populations.

Recommendation 42: That Stats NZ prioritise coordination across agencies and non-governmental organisations to support quality information in the dwelling register.

Recommendation 43: That Stats NZ work with rainbow communities to determine an appropriate data framework for indicators and explore whether there are any appropriate potential admin data sources of rainbow demographic variables.

Recommendation 44: That Stats NZ take a greater role in the development of the Patient Profile/National Health Index (PPNHI) initiative[4] (currently led by Te Whatu Ora) which links disability status to the NHI as this is the most promising opportunity for a robust and meaningful approach which honours the needs of disabled people to receive the right services AND leads to improved assessment of disability status for the purposes of disaggregated data.

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[4] Executive Summary - Annual Report 2022/23 | Whaikaha - Ministry of Disabled People The Patient Profile and National Health Index Project is a Te Whatu Ora-led project to identify all disabled people and their access needs, to monitor outcomes and enhance service responsiveness and accessibility.

Recommendation 45: That Stats NZ investigate sources of high-quality family data in admin data sources (family defined by individuals); (additionally will support improvements to address information)

Recommendation 46: That the Government Chief Data Steward ensures Government agencies use an ethnicity standard that does not create a prioritised ethnicity indicator but retains the integrity of ethnicity as would be selected by individuals using the agency's services. These concerns may be addressed in the revision of the ethnicity standard, but the standard must become mandatory.

Recommendation 47: That Stats NZ actively create opportunities and resource pathways for communities to run their own surveys, e.g. A Pacific census of all Pacific people, which would provide opportunities for the communities to attempt a full enumeration of their populations.

Recommendation 48: That Stats NZ work with admin data providers to ensure that people are aware their data is being provided to Stats NZ. It is noted that there is no ability to opt in or out of the sharing.

Recommendation 49: That Stats NZ work to address concerns about intersectionality for priority populations. Specifically, this must ensure that rainbow communities, iwi-Māori, Pacific, Asian, disability, and transient populations are properly represented.

Recommendation 50: That Stats NZ develop and report against a 'data equity' plan to ensure that priority populations are not disproportionately negatively impacted by the selected Future Census options.

Recommendation 51: That Stats NZ invest in ensuring that priority populations and numerically smaller groups have their information needs met and supported, while ensuring that Stats NZ retains the "brand" of collecting and producing high quality and trusted data. This needs to include providing investment, support and training in capacity building for priority data users.

Recommendation 52: That Stats NZ and other government agencies work to improve the quality of admin data for priority populations so that it is at least the same quality as for the total population.

Disability-specific comments

The nature of disability and the extent to which New Zealanders deem themselves to be disabled according to the social model of disability are constantly evolving. The ten-year period between the Household Disability Survey (HDS) 2013 and HDS 2023 is far too long for NZ to meet its obligations under Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). Only the HDS can adequately hope to measure the prevalence of disability in New Zealand as a whole nation, and the extent to which this prevalence is linked to ethnicity, gender, age, iwi affiliation, or belonging to a rainbow community. The UN Committee's comment on NZ's implementation of Article 31 notes the need to build a data framework that allows disaggregation by disability and other demographic aspects of people's lives, and in particular, allowing for intersectionality of demographic classifiers.

There is a clear need for Government agencies to understand the needs of their disabled clients. The Washington Group Short Set on Functioning (WGSS) are used in Stats NZ's household surveys (General Social Survey, Household Labour Force Survey, Household Economic Survey) in addition to Census 2018 and 2023. This is the *de facto* standard for admin data at present, but the WGSS should NOT be used to determine access to services or reasonable accommodations to support access to Government services. The WGSS is medically driven, but it is not a diagnostic tool. The WGSS has value as a robust, albeit imperfect, indicator of disability which leads to the ability to disaggregate outcomes by disability status but is not relevant to individuals. Each Government agency that serves disabled people must know what aspects of disability are relevant to providing their services.

Recommendation 53: That Stats NZ lead work into establishing how diverse aspects of disability will be used to create a more useful measure of disability status for the IDI.

Recommendation 54: That Stats NZ work with all Government agencies that intend to collect admin data that has a disability component to ensure that the results can add value to the process of a more complete disability status indicator based on admin data coming from multiple sources.

Collecting disability data

There is concern that disabled people are under-represented in admin data for two reasons: 1) they do not use services, and 2) they are not identifiable as disabled in a given admin context. Furthermore, under the social model of disability, a person may be deemed or self-identified as disabled while being nondisabled in another context. Questions must be asked if in fact disability is a relevant question to ask of clients receiving a government service or being included in a government process.

Recommendation 55: That the Government Chief Data Steward adopt an ethical framework overseeing the relevance for collecting disability status and that the Government Chief Data Steward and/or Chief Privacy Officer be given a mandatory/regulatory role in determining/approving the appropriateness of asking about disability status in a given admin context.

In their submission to the Future of Census, Whaikaha noted that "The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's (DPMC) latest report on the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy contained serious gaps in outcomes to track progress for disabled children."

Recommendation 56: That Stats NZ work with DPMC, representatives of disabled people, and other necessary agencies to improve measurement of wellbeing of disabled children, and children living in households with disabled adults.

Under current settings, the HDS and Te Kupenga are run following alternate censuses, meaning that the ability to understand the prevalence, nature, and outcomes are poorly understood for Tāngata Whaikaha Māori. The panel notes the evidence provided as part of the Wai 2575 claim pertaining to data about Tāngata Whaikaha Māori.

Recommendation 57: That Stats NZ consider incorporating a Te Ao Māori view of disability into future iterations of the Te Kupenga Survey.

The panel notes that the ability to conduct the HDS is not affected by the choice of future census, and that disability remains a core feature of the General Social Survey, Household Labour Force Survey, Household Economic Survey, and the census attribute survey options.

Recommendation 58: That the inclusion of the WGSS must be protected as a matter of priority in all current and future Stats NZ household surveys.

Recommendation 59: That Stats NZ undertake the HDS at a much greater frequency, whether this be a post-censal survey or as an added module for participants in other Stats NZ surveys such as a census attribute survey.

Recommendation 60: That in order for NZ to meet its obligations under Article 33 of the UNCRPD, Stats NZ must work with the Independent Monitoring Mechanism to better understand the data requirements of NZ's monitoring of its implementation of the UNCRPD.

Access to processes and outcomes for disabled people

Stats NZ has an obligation under Article 9 of the UNCRPD to make its services and processes accessible to disabled people on an equitable basis with other New Zealanders. This includes how data is collected and disseminated. In order to understand how best to meet the needs of disabled people, Stats NZ must have a plan for improving access for disabled people to all of its services and processes. Equity for disabled people is not likely to be achieved unless effort is made to better understand the concerns and issues disabled people have. This includes what issues need to be given more attention in the HDS, the frequency of the HDS, the impact of future data collection modes on inclusion of disabled people in all household surveys, and the ability to easily interact with data systems that allow researchers to investigate the issues that affect the lives of disabled people.

Recommendation 61: That Stats NZ work with the disability sector to develop an action plan for improving its services and processes in line with the objectives of Articles 9 and 31 of the UNCRPD.

Recommendation 62: That in order to meet its obligations under Article 4(3) of the UNCRPD, Stats NZ commits to an ongoing relationship with disabled people's organisations and the involvement by disabled people and their representatives in all matters pertaining to data about or collected from disabled people.

Rainbow-specific comments

The Census is a unique source of data and insight on New Zealand's rainbow population. Any move away from a Census approach that includes a full enumeration survey of the population risks losing this insight. There is not an easy methodological fix for this:

- The census attribute survey under Options 2-5 is not big enough to provide useful rainbow demographic data. In particular it will be unable to precisely estimate transgender, non-binary and intersex populations, and any groups that sit at the intersections of two minority experiences (e.g. rainbow disabled people, or rainbow Pacific people).

- There are no sources of admin data that include rainbow demographic markers: sexual orientation, transgender experience or innate variations of sex characteristics. Sources that record someone's gender and sex assigned at birth, which might be used to derive transgender data, are inaccurate and inconsistent for transgender people.

- It is not likely that administrative sources of rainbow data would become available in the near future. It is not usually relevant, safe or desirable to have government agencies collect detailed information about someone's sexual orientation, whether they are transgender, and whether they are intersex or have an innate variation of sex characteristics. When not protected well in agency settings or institutions like medical providers or schools, such information can expose individuals to discrimination and violence.

- A 'register' approach that creates a list of rainbow-identified people for statistical purposes is not planned, nor is it likely to be acceptable, for similar reasons.

- Because of the relatively small census attribute survey sample size in options 3-5, there is no representative frame available for a post-Censal rainbow survey

- Non-probabilistic surveys can be undertaken - some large-scale community-led examples exist that cover parts of the rainbow population. Such approaches can collect more detailed data that is relevant to rainbow experiences. However, these approaches inherently tend to reach those with closer community connections and a clearer sense of their own identity, and therefore would be less representative of the whole rainbow population.

- 'Panel' type methodologies requiring opt-in approaches could also be explored, but would likely also produce results that represent those who are more connected to rainbow communities and identity, rather than the broader rainbow population.

It is known from research and survey data that rainbow people face discrimination in a range of forms including violence, family rejection and social marginalisation. These

experiences lead to higher rates of serious negative outcomes including suicidality, health disparities, homelessness and addiction.

Despite this wealth of research, there is very little whole-population data comparing rainbow population experiences with other people in New Zealand. As a result, rainbow health and social disparities are systemically under-recognised in government strategies and across health and social service systems, and responses to improve outcomes are under-resourced. There is no government agency responsible for rainbow wellbeing and limited relevant expertise within agencies. Stats NZ has a critical role in building capacity and understanding about rainbow data across government.

Rainbow advocacy for inclusion in the Census has been consistent since the 1990s, and the inclusion of demographic questions in Census 2023 was a significant step. The 2023 Census will be the first where we see rainbow experiences and lives enumerated and reflected. It is important that it is not the last.

Recommendation 63: That Stats NZ resources a specific work programme to enable the agency to work with rainbow data experts and across other government agencies to continuously improve how rainbow data is conceptualised, collected and reported on in surveys and administrative sources. Stats NZ must ensure that this work includes expertise in transgender and intersex data, and Māori and Pacific conceptualisations of rainbow, takatāpui, MVPFAFF+[5] and related identities and experiences.

Recommendation 64: That Stats NZ further explore and continue to test moving the Census and other surveys towards asking directly about gender modality or transgender status, and away from the current 'two step' method. This would reduce the risk of inaccuracies for transgender and non-binary populations introduced by administrative sources of sex and gender data.

Recommendation 65: That Stats NZ explore options for collaborating with and resourcing community-led non-probabilistic surveys to improve insight into rainbow experiences, and consider how additional surveys could be developed, such as for the intersex population.

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[5] Te Mana Ola: The Pacific Health Strategy MVPFAFF+ is a term coined by Phylesha Brown-Acton. It stands for the names of the broad gender spectrum from across the Pacific region: mahu (Tahiti and Hawaii), vakasalewa (Fiji), palopa (Papua New Guinea), fa'afafine (Samoa), akava'ine (Cook Islands) fakaleiti (leiti) (Tonga) and fakafifine (Niue).

Recommendation 66: That Stats NZ affirm and build on their unique leadership role in promoting and advocating for the value and importance of rainbow data across agencies and continue to grow cross-government rainbow data expertise and infrastructure in partnership with rainbow communities and data experts.

Pacific Peoples

The Future Census options present significant implications for enumerating Pacific peoples. Notably that Pacific peoples is a heterogenous group with 17 Pacific ethnic groups reflected up to Level 4 classification. The key concerns with the Future Census Options are:

- Small Pacific ethnic groups included in level 4 of the classification would be inadequately represented in census attribute survey data for options that do not include full field enumeration.

- A move from full field enumeration model would also reduce the quality of wider set of census attributes for small Pacific ethnic groups (e.g. the proportion of people living in a damp home). Many of these populations have less than 2000 people and, even with the scale of surveying intended, would not be well supported by a sample survey.

- There are significant trust and confidence issues among the Pacific communities in both the quality and use of admin data.

Recommendation 67: That the Government Chief Data Steward ensures that Level 4 ethnicity data is collected through key admin data sources.

Recommendations for improving Pacific data equity have been described and outlined by the Ministry for Pacific Peoples as part of its Long-Term Insights Briefing[6]. These include:

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[6] Ministry for Pacific Peoples (2022). Long Term Insights Briefing 2022 - Improving Pacific Data Equity: Opportunities to enhance the future of Pacific wellbeing.

Focus Area 1: Collaborate and partner with Pacific peoples and communities

Options 3 – 5 include opportunities for Pacific-specific research premised on meaningful partnerships with Pacific stakeholders. It is imperative that these partnerships continue to be maintained regardless of the options chosen including:

- Pacific communities [7](including ethnic-specific groups and networks, churches, providers and services)

- Pacific researchers and subject matter experts (within Pacific-owned and mainstream organisations)

- Pacific Ministry and units across government (including Ministry for Pacific Peoples, Te Whatu Ora/Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Department of Internal Affairs and Ministry of Social Development Pacific Teams)

- Pacific businesses (company owners including Pacific Business Trust and Pacific Business Hub).

Pacific stakeholders must play a key role in socialising the census shifts and supporting Pacific communities in understanding the impacts of the new census approaches. Pacific leadership of census and survey activities, both with and within Stats NZ, has immense potential for producing meaningful data about Pacific peoples.

Recommendation 68: That Stats NZ affirms its commitment and resource the partnership approach with Pacific stakeholders including Pacific communities for Pacific-led data collection aligned to Pacific people's priorities and frameworks including the Pacific Data Strategy.

Recommendation 69: That Stats NZ ensure that a Pacific perspective is represented within governance frameworks for Future Census work.

Recommendation 70: That Stats NZ develops an awareness campaign for Future Census includes a Pacific component for tailored approaches with Pacific communities.

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[7] includes individual Pacific ethnic groups

Focus Area 2: All-of-Government approach to Pacific data

This focus aligns to the earlier recommendations regarding admin data across government systems. Pacific peoples acknowledge the complexity of achieving an all-of-government approach to Pacific data as has been reinforced during this evaluation process, Ministry for Pacific Peoples acknowledges existing work progress and developments that can be leveraged to progress this goal. However, it also refers to the opportunity for a Pacific Wellbeing Survey that is premised on genuine partnerships with Pacific organisations and communities (see Focus Area 1).

Good alignment to the Social Statistics Roadmap as well as building on existing Pacific Wellbeing Frameworks and evidence for all Pacific peoples are crucial. Again, see Focus Area 1.

> **Recommendation 71:** That Stats NZ works with the Ministry for Pacific Peoples and Pacific stakeholders (including Pacific communities) to develop a Pacific wellbeing data framework.

> **Recommendation 72:** That Stats NZ turn intention into firm commitment for a Pacific well-being survey run prior to 2030 and that this is formally incorporated into the survey schedule for each of the Future Census options.

Pacific data sovereignty

The Pacific Data Sovereignty Committee & Network is a voluntary organisation that has an established Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Statistics New Zealand and the Ministry for Pacific Peoples. The MoU recognised the members potential and capabilities in mobilising Pacific communities to engage in Stats NZ data systems and through its advocacy, act as an independent reviewer of data approaches and systems, particularly in relation to their impacts on Pacific peoples. Upholding PDS principles[8] and working in partnership with PDS members helps to leverage Pacific expertise for Future Census recommendations.

> **Recommendation 73:** That Stats NZ updates its Pacific Data Strategy to reflect the selected Future Census approach.

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[8] Pacific Data Soreignty Network and Moana Connect (2021) Consultation Document

Issues related to transient populations

There is a critical need to prioritise and coordinate admin data to support a dwelling register. Including non-permanent dwellings in the dwelling register would ensure that the transient and homeless populations, who are disproportionately Māori, Pacific, and rainbow, are measured and included in population data. This extension should enable these populations to be identified, supported, and housed. In recognition of this gap, Stats NZ is currently carrying out work on a Places Index work with LINZ and Territorial Authorities.

> **Recommendation 74:** That Stats NZ work with broader community sectors to improve the integration of dwelling-related information. This needs to facilitate full coverage of dwellings in Aotearoa, including temporary and non-private dwellings, such as camping grounds and boarding houses.

Timeline to deliver

The compressed time for data collection efforts resulting from a point in time census (Options 1-3) limit the opportunity for data collection efforts to assist respondents in need. Options 4 and 5 create a greater opportunity for Stats NZ staff to assist respondents who are less able to complete census for themselves. Furthermore, Options 4 and 5 create a greater opportunity for staff to explain the importance of completing the survey and should help the response rates by communities that have shown greater reluctance to date; response rates should therefore be enhanced under Options 4 and 5; they increase the likelihood that Stats NZ will recognise Māori customs, rights and interests in the way data will be collected, managed, and used.

Level of dependence on response rates

While the issue of response rates is critical, it is the panel's view that emphasis must be placed on measuring the response rates for hard-to-reach populations in particular. Resources should be applied in a fashion that matches the risk of nonresponse.

> Census response is not just a matter of how long the form is and how many questions a person must answer. Improvements in the data collection system can also reduce respondent burden. While options 2 to 5 place less burden on individual respondents on average, there is an increased importance on more fully engaging with selected respondents.

15.   Technology-specific comments

Stats NZ's future technology strategy and investments will be complex and very large and in scale and scope. They must support not only future census requirements but also the wider needs of both Stats NZ and the government data system. While the term is overused, Stats NZ is faced with a profound digital transformation that carries considerable risk. The need for this transformation to extend over a decade or more both creates risk and potentially mitigates it.

The panel notes that Stats NZ has already done significant work on its future technology requirements under each option.

NZ Government cloud first policy directs agencies to:

- adopt public cloud services in preference to traditional ICT systems;

- have a plan for how they intend to use public cloud services; and

- make adoption decisions on a case-by-case basis following a risk assessment.

In the process, agencies are required to consider accountability, ethics, transparency, and collaboration in relation to Māori data, when making decisions about adopting cloud services.

Recommendation 75: That Stats NZ ensure that it appropriately adheres to the cloud first policy when designing and implementing technology capabilities required to enable future approaches to the census. Technology transformation must also consider Māori Data Sovereignty principles.

Recommendation 76: That Stats NZ ensure, to the greatest extent possible, the technology capabilities it implements to enable future census activities are designed to support its wider statistical data collection and management requirements (including the needs of the wider government data system where appropriate) so as to maximise the Return on Investment (RoI) on taxpayers' investment in these systems. Given the added complexity of the Census, these corporate tools should first consider the requirements of the Census before building the features needed for the non-Census programmes of Stats NZ.

Stats NZ already recognises that all future census options require a very significant level of investment in transformation of its present ICT capabilities. Overall costs and implementation risks will be very high.

Recommendation 77: That Stats NZ ensures that exemplary governance arrangements are established for the design and implementation of its ICT strategy and work programme, which must include significant external expertise.

The way that Stats NZ selects, deploys and operates its future technology platforms will have significant bearing on the levels of trust and confidence the public can have in the protection of the information under the control of Stats NZ. In particular, to support public trust and confidence, it is essential that Stats NZ implement the following recommendations.

Recommendation 78: That Stats NZ fully complies with all relevant aspects of the Protective Security Requirements and NZ Information Security Manual, adopts an "assume breach" security posture, and explicitly implements a zero-trust approach to information security.

Recommendation 79: That Stats NZ commits to implementing state-of-the-art data privacy and data governance practices and capabilities that are rigorously implemented, and are subject to regular third-party audit.

Recommendation 80: That Stats NZ invests in a strong data ethics framework to guide its future data collection and analysis activities.

Recommendation 81: That Stats NZ ensure it fully understands the Capital Expenditure (CAPEX) and Operational Expenditure (OPEX) implications of moving to cloud-based enterprise ICT solutions. Relying on the current strong Stats NZ balance sheet and the potential of converting CAPEX to OPEX is potentially risky. Stats should ensure that Ministers and The Treasury understand the future OPEX requirements that Stats' ICT transformation will create and ensure that it is adequately baseline funded for ICT OPEX in future budget rounds.

Stats must also recognise that, invariably, moving to public cloud capabilities involves an increase in overall ICT costs in the first instance, before long-run efficiencies and savings can be realised. It must ensure that it is able to fund these transitional costs of change.

Recommendation 82: That Stats NZ devotes sufficient time and resources to the transition plan as there will be inevitable business change and change requirements in the transition from on-prem to the cloud.

Te Whata is a successful example of investment in iwi-Māori data infrastructures that work for Māori.

Recommendation 83: That Stats NZ continue to improve and support the development and scaling up of Mana Motuhake data infrastructure across all aspects of the data life cycle.

Technology is a critical enabler, but effective programme governance is needed to ensure that there is not an undue emphasis on technology over other elements to deliver successful future census.

16. Appendix 1: Terms of reference

Purpose

The Future Census Independent Evaluation Panel (the Panel) is convened by the Government Statistician to provide an independent review and evaluation of the concept design and engagement feedback for each of the Future Census options. The Panel is convened to enable a robust, defendable, and fulsome review, evaluation, and recommendation process.

Each Future Census option will be evaluated against a prepared evaluation criteria provided to the Panel and a recommendation report will be delivered. The recommendation report to the Government Statistician will be prepared and presented by the Panel to the Stats NZ Transformation Board and will form a key input into the Government Statistician's in-principle decision on the preferred manner of taking of the 2028 Census and beyond. The Government Statistician will then seek Ministerial and Cabinet endorsement.

Specifically, the Panel will:

i.   participate in the independent review and evaluation of the concept design and engagement feedback for each of the Future Census options.

ii. evaluate and score each option against the defined evaluation criteria and using the scoring guide.

iii. decide and agree on a preferred option for 2028 Census and beyond (noting further design work will be required on any recommended option)

iv. prepare and endorse a report detailing their recommended option, which is to be provided to the Government Statistician and the Stats NZ Transformation Board at the conclusion of the review period (2 August 2024).

v.   incorporate explicit description of additional criteria used in its evaluation that fall outside Stats NZ provided evaluation criteria. This may include dissenting views, additional concerns, assessment of risk or benefits, and caveats which will aid understanding of the Panel's final recommendation(s).

Scope

There are five Future Census options within scope of the review, covering three methodological approaches for fulfilling the responsibilities for the manner of taking a census under the Data and Statistics Act 2022.

The approaches (and related options) are:

Administrative data first and full enumeration survey
1. Population counts and some variables from administrative data plus full enumeration census survey for variables not found in administrative data.

Administrative data first and five-yearly attribute survey
2. Population counts and some variables from administrative data plus five-yearly 'census day' large scale attribute survey for other variables (approximately 25 percent of the population)

Administrative data first and annual attribute survey
3. Population counts and some variables from administrative data plus annual 'census day' attribute survey (approximately five percent of population) for other variables (pooled across five years)
4. Population counts and some variables from administrative data plus rolling attribute survey for other variables (continuous survey of approximately five percent of the population pooled across five years)
5. Population counts and some variables from administrative data plus census attribute survey embedded within Stats NZ's household survey programme for other variables (approximately five percent of the population across census and other household surveys pooled across five years)

Material that details the conceptual design of each of these options, including information on people, process, data, and infrastructure needs (and associated timelines etc.) will be provided by the secretariat for review and evaluation by the Panel. In addition to this, relevant information learned through Stats NZ ongoing public consultation and targeted engagement (with agencies, Te Tiriti partners, and priority communities) will also be provided by the secretariat. Material will be given prior to the panels first meeting and the Chair and Panel Members can request additional documentation, or face to face Q&A sessions with Stats NZ subject matter experts through the secretariat during the Panel process.

Membership

The Chair and Panel Members are required to attend each planned meeting during the review period, where possible. The Secretariat will endeavour to schedule meetings to ensure maximum attendance. Where a Panel Member is unable to attend, delegation of attendance is not permitted. If unable to attend Panel Members will be provided with the relevant papers and can request a catch-up session with the secretariat which will be scheduled at their convenience.

Any changes in Panel membership need to be agreed by the Chair and the Government Statistician.

Designation	Name
Chair	Dr Jonathan Godfrey
Member	Jacinta Fa'alili-Fidow
Member	Professor Philippa Howden-Chapman
Member	Moira Clunie
Member	Grace Campbell-Macdonald
Member	Geoff Bowlby
Member	Russell Craig
Member	Dr Jesse Whitehead
Member	Ngapera Riley
Member	Tanya Albert
Secretariat	Lisa Cheney
	Paul Robinson
	Karen Piercy
	Chris Almario

Conflicts of interest

Stats NZ recognises that membership of the Panel is from a diverse range of community groups and sectors across Aotearoa New Zealand, as well as an international Census expert. The Chair and Panel Members may have activities or interests broader than Stats NZ that create a conflict of interest. Actual, potential, and perceived conflicts of interest will be declared upon signature to the letter of appointment from the Government Statistician.

The Secretariat maintains a declaration of interest register for all perceived, potential, and actual financial and non-financial interests for the Chair and Panel Members. A clear conflict of interest plan will be developed as part of the initial meeting of the Panel and will be agreed amongst all Members and approved by the Chair.

The Secretariat ensures the declarations are current and will update the register with any new declarations through the review period and will and notify the Chair accordingly. The Chair will discuss potential conflicts of interest with the Government Statistician (or delegate identified by the Government Statistician), and the secretariat will then assist with the documentation of an agreed a conflict-of-interest management plan.

Fees and remuneration

The Chair and Panel Members will be paid fees and costs relating to meeting attendance, in accordance with the *Cabinet Fees Framework for members appointed to bodies in which the Crown has an interest*.

Panel Members will be remunerated at a (pro-rated) daily rate of $616 plus GST, consistent with the Cabinet Fees Framework for fees for statutory bodies. The Chair will be remunerated at a (pro-rated) daily rate of $974 plus GST.

Stats NZ will assist in any administration related to system set up prior to the Chair and Panel Members invoicing for their time. Invoices can be submitted on a weekly basis and will be paid within 10 business days.

The Chair and Panel Members may be paid extra fees when significant preparation and/or travel time is required prior to meetings.

Members who are employees of the wider State Sector are not entitled to be paid fees for group business if this is conducted during regular paid work time (i.e. Members cannot be paid twice by the Crown for the same hours).

The Secretariat will book travel and accommodation on behalf of the Chair and Panel Members but will not reimburse for travel or accommodation booked without prior approval.

The Secretariat will reimburse the Chair and Members for incidental costs directly incurred as part of performing their duties as a Chair or Member of the Panel, provided these have prior approval (i.e. printing costs, parking to attend relevant meetings).

Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Chair	• Guide the Panel through the review process to effectively review, understand, and assess the options presented. • Manages the review process with the Panel to the agreed outcome objective within the prescribed time frames. • Support the Panel in working towards a consensus view of the

option (and a back-up option, if desired) for recommendation to the Government Statistician.

- Set the tone of the review process to ensure the Panel successfully fulfils its purpose.
- Sets the tone to ensure an effective governance culture is developed and maintained.
- Is the official spokesperson for the Panel as the key advisor to the Government Statistician regarding the Panel's operations.
- Assists with facilitation of effective meetings which stimulate robust debate and critical thinking.
- Ensures diverse and or conflicting views are openly discussed and debated and that all Panel Members feel they have a voice.
- Supports the membership of, and approves any changes to, the Panel's membership, in consultation with the Government Statistician.
- Escalates (with support from the facilitator) any topic or issue that cannot be resolved, or a decision which cannot be reached by the Panel, to the Future Census Board or and/or Government Statistician to be resolved.
- Ensures there is a clear conflict of interest management plan in place that has the visibility of all Panel Members.
- Final approval of the report to the Government Statistician, to be presented to the Stats NZ Transformation Board.

Panel Members	• Actively participate in the review process with the Panel to the agreed outcome objective within the prescribed time frames.
	• Participate fully with the Panel through the review process to effectively review, understand, and assess the options presented for review.
	• Support the Chair in contributing to discussions and decisions.
	• Support other Panel Members in working towards a consensus view of the option (and a back-up option, if desired) that is to be recommended to the Government Statistician.
	• Support the Chair and the other members of the Panel to ensure the Panel successfully fulfils its purpose.
	• Champions the work of the Panel and never disagrees with outcomes outside of Panel meetings.
	• Does the necessary preparation before meetings to ensure robust decision-making and complete their respective actions.
	• Always acts in the collective interest of the Panel and its objective(s).
	• Ensures they provide visibility of any real, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest, via the conflicts of interest form, and actively

supports the conflict-of-interest plan coordinated and managed by the Chair.

- May recuse themselves or be asked to step out of meetings where appropriate (e.g. in response to a conflict of interest).
- Takes responsibility to contribute to the content of the recommendation report.
- Endorse the overall Panel recommendation report for the Chairs approval.

Attendees	- Can support the discussion.
	- Do not have voting rights.
	- May recuse themselves or be asked to step out of meetings where appropriate (e.g. in response to a conflict of interest or privileged discussions etc.).
Observers	- Attend the meeting, at the discretion of the Chair, to ensure alignment between their respective functional areas and make connections, where required.
	- Do not have voting rights.
	- May recuse themselves or be asked to step out of meetings where appropriate (e.g. in response to a conflict of interest or privileged discussions etc.).

Panel Support: The Panel is supported by the following parties:

Role	Responsibilities
Transformation Board	- Responsible for providing governance and advisory support, if required.
	- Promotes centre of excellence governance practices in supporting the effective operations of the Panel.
	- Provides an escalation point for the Panel if required.

| Stats NZ Secretariat, | • Stats NZ will provide a secretariat function, made up of three Stats NZ Staff, one who will assist the Chair in facilitating the meetings, one that will provide logistics support and one who will provide support to the Chair and Panel Members in drafting their report. |
| | • In conjunction with the Chair, the facilitator (within the secretariat) is responsible for supporting the overall progression of the review. |

Other duties of the secretariat include:
- Support the Chair with determining and confirming agendas for meetings and document review.
- Supporting the Chair to facilitate effective meetings that stimulate robust debate and critical thinking.
- With the agreement of the Chair, escalating any topic or issue that cannot be resolved, or a decision which cannot be reached by the Panel, to the Stats NZ Transformation Board or and/or Government Statistician to be resolved.
- Enabling connections to other Stats NZ organisational functions and subject matter experts.
- Coordinating and distributing evaluation material and providing a quality assessment of all material submitted to the Panel. Provision of the Evaluation Criteria and Framework that will be used by the Chair and Panel Members to undertake the evaluation of the five Future Census options.
- Providing feedback to subject matter experts and others as appropriate (including on behalf of the Panel).
- As required, records, maintains, and disseminates actions, decisions, forward agenda items, risks and manages these on behalf of the Chair.
- Coordinates the physical and virtual environment of the Panel and arranges meeting logistics.
- Promotes centre of excellence governance practices in supporting the effective operations of the Panel.
- In conjunction with Chair, inducts new Panel Members.
- Drafts the recommendation report for review and endorsement (via signature) by the Chair and Panel Members.

Subject matter experts	• Provide subject matter expertise/input/advice to the Panel, in group and 1:1 meetings (if required).
	
	• Represents a functional area in the business – related to their area of expertise or function.
	
	• Works to ensure clear understanding for the Panel of the five Future Census options, including:
	    o The concept design options.
	    o The key requirements to be met for each option.
	    o How those requirements will be met.
	    o The key differences between concept design of each option and how they are delivered.

Logistics and administration

Meeting operations

The Chair and Panel Members are supported by the Secretariat, including a Facilitator, to ensure the effective and efficient operation of the review process by putting in place the following arrangements, in consultation with the Chair:

Topic	Role
Frequency	• The Panel will meet over the four-week period as defined by an agenda to be confirmed with the Chair. Additional meetings may be scheduled when needed, and Members are notified of these as early as possible. All procedures, rules, and practices for regular meetings stay in place for additional meetings.
Notice of meetings	• Panel Members are advised of the meeting dates. Urgent meetings may be convened with the Chair's agreement.
Setting the agenda	• The Chair sets the agenda with the support of the Secretariat.

Quality of research, papers, and other information	• A range of collateral pertaining to the concept design of the options under review will be collated and provided to the Panel, both prior to the first meeting and throughout the Panel Evaluation Period. The Panel can request and review any other information it considers relevant to its review and evaluation, provided the information is in existence.
	• Where there is summarised research which may utilise embargoed data, there will be an internal Stats NZ process to release this research. The Panel will be notified of this prior to receiving and or reviewing. Review under embargo will be subject to the confidentiality certificate – signed by all Panel Members.
	• Good quality papers are important. Stats NZ assures that that all research, papers, and other information provided to the Panel and have had appropriate analysis/assessment and quality assurance undertaken to ensure clarity and subsequent robust discussion and decision-making.
Distribution of review collateral	• Review collateral will be provided to the Panel prior to the first meeting and throughout the Panel Evaluation Period.
Actions arising from meetings and workshops	• Where appropriate, the Secretariat will record any actions arising from meetings and workshops. Follow-up and completion on any actions will be noted for the Chair, as required.
Escalation Process	• Should the Chair or any Panel Member need to bring any matter for escalation, they should in the first instance notify the Chair.
	• The escalation request will be acknowledged to the notifier along with the steps and personal involved in any necessary review. A timeframe for response will also be provided with acknowledgement. The Secretariat will support the Chair in this process.

Decision rights

Topic	Role
Decision-maker(s)	• The aim is to achieve consensus, and the principles of collective responsibility apply. The Chair may, however, bring discussion to an end and determine a position based on majority consensus.
Quorum	• A quorum protocol is not required for review meetings to proceed. For the meetings where the future census design options are evaluated against the evaluation criteria, all Panel Members should be present. Any non-attendance must be approved by the Chair.
Delegated Financial Authority	• There is no delegated financial authority

Declarations of Interest	• The Secretariat will coordinate and maintain declarations of interests for all perceived, potential, and actual financial and non-financial interests for the Chair and all members of the Panel. They will ensure the Panel are aware of the requirement to notify immediately any new declarations for the duration of the panel review period. The Secretariat will follow the conflicts of interest procedure if a potential, perceived or actual interest is identified at a meeting.

Communication and reporting

Topic	Role
Reporting	• Given the short-term nature of the Panel, there is no formal requirement for regular reporting on progress from the Chair. Where possible, weekly meetings will be held between the Chair and the Government Statistician.

Panel engagement beyond scope of this terms of reference

It is envisaged by Stats NZ that there will be opportunity beyond the scope of this terms of reference for the Chair and Panel Members to maintain connection with the design process in relation to the manner of taking the 2028 Census and beyond.

While still in the early stages of conception, this ongoing engagement could be in the form of individual and/or collective opinions and/or advice.

The above mentioned is included for noting by the Chair and Panel Members and options for future involvement could be discussed during the review period and prior to the end date of the Panel.

Review of terms of reference

The terms of reference will be reviewed by the Panel Members prior to sign-off by the Chair and Government Statistician. The terms of reference will be reviewed as required.