

**US Bureau of the Census
2008 Census Dress Rehearsal
Responses to Public Comments**

What is the anticipated mailback response rate? The response rate we expect to obtain during the mailout/mailback operation is 50% in Stockton, CA and 55% in Fayetteville, NC, while a response rate of 46% is expected during the update/leave operation that is only conducted in our Fayetteville office.

Would you please explain why all replacement questionnaires will be in English.

While we've tested the replacement mailing in our intercensal tests, we're going to have to address and mail as many as 40 million replacement questionnaires in 2010. The added complexity of including two form types in the replacement mailing is a risk that we were not willing to assume.

There seems to be variation in the use of "2008 Census Dress Rehearsal" and "2008 Dress Rehearsal" in letters, envelopes, and questionnaires, and it does not appear to be a matter of availability of space—e.g., the longer title is used in the Bilingual questionnaire (DX-1E/S) while the shorter title is used in English only (DX-1). It's not clear why you wouldn't want to consistently refer to the "2008 Census Dress Rehearsal."

Yes, we believe we've fixed this issue.

I would like more information on the cognitive testing done on the letters as the advance letter seems most confusing with the first sentence referring to a "2008 Dress Rehearsal Form." It seem likely that people would find this confusing because they don't naturally associate dress rehearsals with a Census. In constrast, the first paragraph of the DC-16(L) letter appears to do an excellent job of introducing and explaining what the dress rehearsal is all about. It's not clear why you wouldn't want to use this in your advance letter.

The only cognitive testing we have done for the letters related to the privacy and confidentiality language. We have planned to conduct cognitive testing in March and April, 2008 of all elements of the actual Dress Rehearsal mailing package, including the advance letter, cover letter, reminder card, envelopes, and replacement mailing. We will include your concern about the advance letter in the test protocol and make appropriate revisions for the 2010 letters if that is what the research supports.

Please provide more information on how the question on the person living or staying somewhere else (question #10 for Person 1, and question #7 for other persons) will be used.

The goal of the overcount question is to identify people who may have been incorrectly listed on the household roster and in the household population count. Responses to the overcount question allow the Census Bureau to make a preliminary assessment of the number of households that possibly have people listed in the household in error. It also provides information about the respondent's comprehension of the question by looking at item nonresponse.

In the 2008 Dress Rehearsal, when a respondent indicates one or more people in the household have another residence where they live or stay, the case will be sent to the Coverage Follow-up (CFU) operation to resolve the suspected coverage error.

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