# American Community Survey Program Review

# The American Community Survey



- *The U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) is an ongoing survey that provides population and housing characteristics updated every year.*

- *The statistics produced by the ACS are available as 1-, 3-, and 5-year estimates for the nation, states, counties, cities, and communities, and are used for planning of programs, products, goods, and services.*

In December 2010, the ACS released its first-ever 5-year data products, an important milestone for the program.

# ACS Program Review Milestones

The ACS is collecting input from stakeholders on ACS program components as part of an overall Program Review to ensure continued effectiveness.

- The Census Bureau's director commissioned a team to plan and implement the ACS Program Review assessment.

- ACS Program Review Team formed and planning initiated.

- Outreach to Census leadership for input to ACS program components.

- Strategy formed for external stakeholders to provide input to ACS program review.

- Outreach to external stakeholders for input to ACS program review components.

- Feedback shared with a National Research Council Panel.

- Planned release by the Panel of recommendations for ACS program optimization.

# Today's Objectives

**Objectives:**

- Review program components
- Describe scope of the program review

**Discussion:**

- Opportunities to engage with the ACS Program
- Our plans to share what we learn
- Developing an effective strategy for building on this process after the Program Review is officially complete

# ACS Program Review Components

| External Review | |
|---|---|
| Communications and Stakeholder Management Review | Feedback on engagement and outreach strategies with stakeholders. |
| Methodological Review: | Input on the current ACS survey design and methods, as well as potential alternatives to improve the quality of the ACS data. |
| Research and Evaluation Review: | Thoughts on language tools and testing of translations as well as targeted messaging (as methods to improve mail responses). |
| Data Products Review: | Input on ACS data products and their uses. |
| **FYI - Internal Review only** | |
| Strategic Review | Feedback on foundational strategic documents, which provide vision, goals, objectives, and linkages to ACS work. |
| Program Management Process Review | Input on governance and program management processes and structures to strengthen and support the ACS program. |
| Systems Engineering and Integration Process Review | Input on selected systems engineering processes and structures to technically strengthen and support the ACS program. |
| Business Process Improvement Review | Improve the efficiency and flexibility of the ACS business processes/operations. |

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# Communications and Stakeholder Management Review

**Objective:  Develop a Strategic Communications and Stakeholder Management Plan.**

- Briefed new members of Congress

- Identified stakeholders

- Conducted stakeholder analysis

- Prototype an overall ACS program communications approach using program review template

- Develop Communication and Stakeholder Management Plan for ongoing program

- Establish data users group

- Interchange with Census Advisory Committees

- Obtain input from other stakeholders

# Methodological Review

**Objective:  Examine the current survey design and methods, as well as identify potential alternatives to improve the quality of the ACS data.**

- Established Design Baseline

- CNSTAT Panel – started Fall 2011

- Interchange with CSAC and REAC

    – Specifically Internet Data Collection

    – Generally, responses to questions

- Obtain input from other stakeholders

# Research and Evaluation Review

**Objective: Develop a program level Research and Evaluation Plan that aligns with program vision, goals, objectives, and strategies.**

- Inventory research projects
- Align with strategic plan
- Interchange with Advisory Committees
  - Specifically Internet Data Collection
  - Generally, responses to questions
- Obtain input from other stakeholders

# Data Products Review

**Objective: Determine whether the current approach of generating 1-, 3-, and 5-year products on an ongoing basis is cost effective.**

- Interviewing federal data users
- Population Reference Bureau workshop with data users
- Census workshop with federal data users
- Conducting CNSTAT Workshop with non-federal data users
- Engagement with Association of Public Data Users
- Interchanges with Census Scientific Advisory Committee
- National Research Council panel review

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# Discussion

- Opportunities to engage with the ACS Program
- Our plans to share what we learn

  http://www.census.gov/acs/www/about_the_survey/acs_program_review/

- Developing an effective strategy for building on this process after the Program Review is officially complete

- Contact Us: ACS.Program.Review@census.gov