



**MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT
GOVERNMENT OF THE COOK ISLANDS**

**STATISTICS
OFFICE**

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Ms Laura Reed
2006 Census Administrator
Census Infrastructure Business Unit
Statistics New Zealand
Christchurch

Ph:+64 3 964 8450
Fax:+64 3 964 8601

Dear Laura

23rd Population Census Conference, Christchurch, 16 – 18 April 2007

Please find attached my report on the above conference. I apologise for the delay in submitting this report due to pressure of work and also the need to identify the priority issues that needs to be addressed.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate staff of Statistics New Zealand for the excellent organisation of this conference, the facilities, logistics, meals, accommodation and best of all the Akaroa tour, which was marvellous, and that you and others should be commended for the effort.

Personally I would like to say thank you for organising my travel and accommodation, for your patience especially the numerous times I asked for changes in my travel itinerary. My husband and daughter would also like to convey their appreciation for being included in the tours and dinners.

Thank you again and regards to all.

Taggy Tangimetua
Government Statistician and Head of Census Programme

PO Box 41, Rarotonga, Cook Islands
Phone (682) 29511 • Fax (682) 21511
E:Mail: info@stats.gov.ck
Webpage: www.stats.gov.ck

REPORT ON

23rd Population Census Conference, Christchurch, 16 – 18 April 2007

The 23rd Population Census Conference held in Christchurch, New Zealand from 16 - 18 April 2007 was organised by the Association of National Census Statistics Directors of Asia, America and the Pacific (ANCSDAAP) and hosted by Statistics New Zealand.

Statistics New Zealand with SPC support was successful in securing NZAID funding for six Pacific Island countries to attend the conference. A requirement of attendance was that the delegate was required to present a paper on Census of population work within their country covering the work done on the recent census or the planning work that is being undertaken for the next census. The person attending should have some knowledge on the population census either at the planning or management level.

At this conference, the six Pacific islands representatives, Cook Islands, Niue, Samoa, Tonga, Kiribati and Tokelau (represented by Stats New Zealand) were allocated a two hour session to make presentation and to share their experiences in ***Census Planning and Management in their Country***. This was the theme of the Pacific Island session at the conference.

As the Cook Islands representative and Manager of Statistics Office and Head of the Population Census, my presentation covered the following issues:

1. Census management

- legislation and organisational responsibility
- user consultation
- Budget and Resources
- National priorities as a risk

2. Census fieldwork organisation

- Mobilisation of fieldstaff and training
- Field listing and maps (Digital mapping vs hand sketched)

3. Census coverage

- Population mobility (inter-island and international movement)

- Census type (Dejure vs Defacto)
- Timing of the census (too near the festive season)

4. Data Dissemination

- The use of maps (PopGIS) as a tool for dissemination, etc

The presentations delivered at this conference were very interesting and stimulating. I obtained some ideas of improving the Cook Islands next round of censuses. Apart from the actual presentations, I gauged a lot just from talking with other members of the conference. From the conference I realised that the core of the problem is the general lack of awareness of the uses of Population Census and statistics in general and also the Statistical System. If society is fully aware of the importance and uses of Population census then the problem of non-compliance, non-response, budget and resource allocation, mobilisation of field staff, etc would be reduced and become less of a problem.

The plan is:

1. To develop an advocacy plan:

- An advocacy campaign targeted at government, parliament and senior public servants.
- Information to respondents, targeted at either specific local communities or the whole spread of public opinion; this can involve pamphlets, advertising, radio programs or television programs.

Information and examples from other countries can be used especially Stats New Zealand, Australia Bureau of Statistics, etc.

2. To develop a Dissemination plan:

- Giving society something back for its help in compiling official statistics is extremely important. Every day, countries face the challenge of ensuring the widest possible dissemination of statistics at lowest possible cost. The use of PoPGIS maps, graphics, easy and simple tables etc. would greatly assist. .
- Establishing effective news media. Dealing with the news media requires some general 'rules of the game' on dissemination, such as how to present news releases, organise a news conference etc.

3. Statistical capacity building

- training, usage of technology to improve statistical activities, participation in international and regional forums
 - documentation of procedures and methodologies, concepts and definitions
 - automation of field maps
 - seek advice on the effects and impact of changing census dates to avoid period of travels (holidays, festive seasons)
- 4. Deriving Census data for MDG and National Development Plans requirement**
- seek advice on the effects and impact of changing census dates to avoid period of travels (holidays, festive seasons)

To enable this plan to be implemented assistance will be sought from outside organisation such as Statistics Programme of SPC, New Zealand Statistics, etc. As for the data dissemination plan, I will need to ask Statistics Programme of SPC to assist in fully integrating the system of PopGIS into the current statistical system. Efforts to improve co-ordination and collaboration for data collection, processing, analysis and dissemination should be encouraged.