Report to the Minister of Statistics & Associate Minister of Statistics:
Census Programme Update September 2022

Date	5 October 2022	Priority	M	Ref number	MM2373
Will be discussed at	Hon Dr David Clark: TBC				
	Hon Meka Whaitiri: TBC				
Purpose	Provide a monthly update on progress of the 2023 Census, including the status of major programme milestones, issues, planned releases, and engagement activity.				

Recommended action

It is recommended that you:

1. **Note** the overall status of the programme as currently on track, with associated risks and issues that may impact this status under active management.

NOTED

Simon Mason
**Deputy Government Statistician
and Deputy Chief Executive –
Census and Collections
Operations**

Hon Dr David Clark
Minister of Statistics
Date:

Hon Meka Whaitiri
Associate Minister of Statistics
Date:

Programme status update

1. The Census Programme ("**Programme**") is currently on track. The overall status is reporting Amber[1] and is forecast to be Amber next month. This status is consistent with the view of external assurance providers.

2. An Amber status is defined as 'problematic – may not be on target to succeed but with appropriate mitigation and focus is not expected to impact the critical path'. An Amber status is not uncommon for high-risk programmes of this nature.

3. There are a number of factors contributing to the current Amber status, with various responses and mitigations to these in place, as detailed below. Mitigations and controls are carefully planned and monitored to ensure their effectiveness to treat issues, and suitability to manage the impact of risks should they occur.

   - External and environmental risk including COVID-19 and the impact it is having socially and economically, including on community priorities and sentiment, inflation, and the labour market continues to impact the Programme.

   - Growing and significant anti-government sentiment and reducing trust and confidence in the government in parts of the community continues. There is a risk that this negative sentiment will impact the trust and confidence in Stats NZ and/or the 2023 Census and will in addition negatively impact responses to the 2023 Census. Marketing, communications, and engagement activities are specifically focused on building trust and confidence ahead of the census operational period.

   - The labour market is an ongoing challenge, and as a result recruitment continues to track slightly behind schedule. In mid-September the Programme was recruiting for 32 roles, with 72 budgeted roles to fill over September and October. Stats NZ has been engaging with other agencies to share data analytics opportunities to support census. Labour market pressures are expected to extend to recruitment for census collectors for the 2023 Census, with a range of mitigations in place.

   - The Programme is actively managing delays in the appointment of people and the delivery of business processes and systems for data processing, analysis, preparation, and dissemination which is impacting the data dress rehearsal. Planning is well underway, and contingency plans are in place

   - Programme costs are tracking within the reforecast of the budget, and there is a continued focus on cost containment. A request to release the remaining $17.6m in contingency funding was approved by Joint Ministers on 2 October 2022. s 9(2)(f)(iv)

4. Planning led by Te Kāhui Raraunga, the operating arm of the Data Iwi Leaders Group, for Te Mana Whakatipu (iwi-led data analytics and collections) continues with iwi collectives – Ōhau Far North and Toitū Tairāwhiti, as well as Te Whānau ā Apanui. Decisions on a final design are due. Hui between Stats NZ and the iwi collectives are well underway.

5. A detailed programme status update is available in Appendix 1, and delivery of major milestones and deliverables is discussed below.

Major milestones and deliverables

6. There is one outstanding milestone to be completed:

Milestone	Comment
Te Mana Whakatipu (iwi-led collections) design and collaboration	Led by Te Kāhui Raraunga, iwi engagement is now underway with the Ōhau Far North and Toitū Tairāwhiti collectives, and Te Whānau ā Apanui. A draft plan, and scope and involvement summary was delivered on 12

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[1] See Appendix 3 for full explanation of the Census Programme's Red-Amber-Green (RAG) status system.

Milestone	Comment
	August 2022. Some further detail has been requested, which is due early October. Te Kāhui Raraunga and iwi to confirm decisions on feedback provided on the detailed plan.

7. One milestone was due for completion in September:

Milestone	Comment
Collections development and functional testing complete	This milestone represents the point at which all of the technical solutions that are required for the census have been completed and fully tested. This milestone has largely been met, with final sign-off scheduled for mid-October, 2022.

8. With the announcement of the timing of the 2023 Census, one October milestone has been completed – 'Proclamation of Census Day'.

9. Two milestones/deliverables remain in active management:

Milestone	Comment
Next Level Design: Development of the next level of designs for the 2023 Census.	Except for the Data Delivery design, Iteration 5 was completed by 30 June 2022. Data Delivery design was met in the third week of September 2022.
Final 2023 Census design signed off	The field collection model is 100 percent complete and was completed on schedule by June 2022. Completion of this milestone is dependent on the Data Delivery Next Level Design milestone (see above), which was completed in September 2022.

Issues

10. One issue was escalated to the Senior Responsible Officer for resolution in July. This issue is in relation to confirmation of remedial work being required to the R environment issue to meet the needs of the 2023 Census. Approval to proceed with a new R environment was provided in July and funds have been allocated. This project is underway and is currently on track.

11. All remaining issues are being managed at Programme level. There is one new issue since the last report, and one issue has been closed. The remaining Programme-level issues have the oversight of the Programme Director, the Programme Leadership Team, and the Programme Management Office and have effective treatments or mitigations in place.

12. Appendix 2 provides a breakdown of issues, plus resolution actions planned or being taken.

Publications and releases

13. Our schedule of public releases and website updates is provided below. We will provide you with updates on the following publications and topics closer to the time of release, through the weekly ministerial updates and via your office.

Content	Timing
Census timing announcement, including the release of: ▪ Government Statistician announcement ▪ 2023 Census Strategy one pager ▪ Collection model for the 2023 Census	28 September – completed, with follow up media activity

Content	Timing
▪ Using a combined model for the 2023 Census ▪ 2022 field test report for the 2023 Census ▪ Updates to www.census.govt.nz	
Further updates to support understanding of census design (including content on the impact for Māori; communications, engagement, and marketing strategy; priority response groups; accessibility and languages approaches)	October and November
Design of forms report – information on decisions to finalise questions on forms for the 2023 Census (including published samples of the 2023 Census forms)	Mid-October
Privacy by design approach for the 2023 Census web content, including third party assurance review of the approach	Mid-October
National trust and confidence marketing campaign – focusing on myth busting and managing disinformation about census	Mid-late October

Key engagement activity

14. The following table summarises key engagement activity underway within the Programme.

Engagement	Timing
Regional census customer and community briefings – 40 locations across New Zealand	From 14 October, through November
Te Taumata Whakaritenga reference group meeting	October 2022 (date to be confirmed)
Data ILG-led engagement with iwi for Te Mana Whakatipu (iwi-led data analytics and collection pilot)	Engagement with iwi collectives and Te Whānau ā Apanui underway
Community engagement on the combined census model/use of admin data and on the census data release schedule	September – October
Community engagement sentiment monitoring	Ongoing
Community engagement teams – relationship development (regional and local levels – especially priority response groups)	Ongoing
Collaborations with national and regional organisations (with a focus on supporting responses from priority response groups)	Ongoing – focused engagement currently with organisations we will partner with to deliver Assisted Completion Locations (community-led assisted completion support)
Engagement with community partners to produce Value of Data campaign	Central West/North Wellington launched September; Central North early October. Work underway on national campaign for Rainbow and disabled people communities

2023 Census high-level plan

15. Appendix 4 provides you with a high-level plan of Programme activity.

Appendix 1: Detailed programme status report and critical milestones

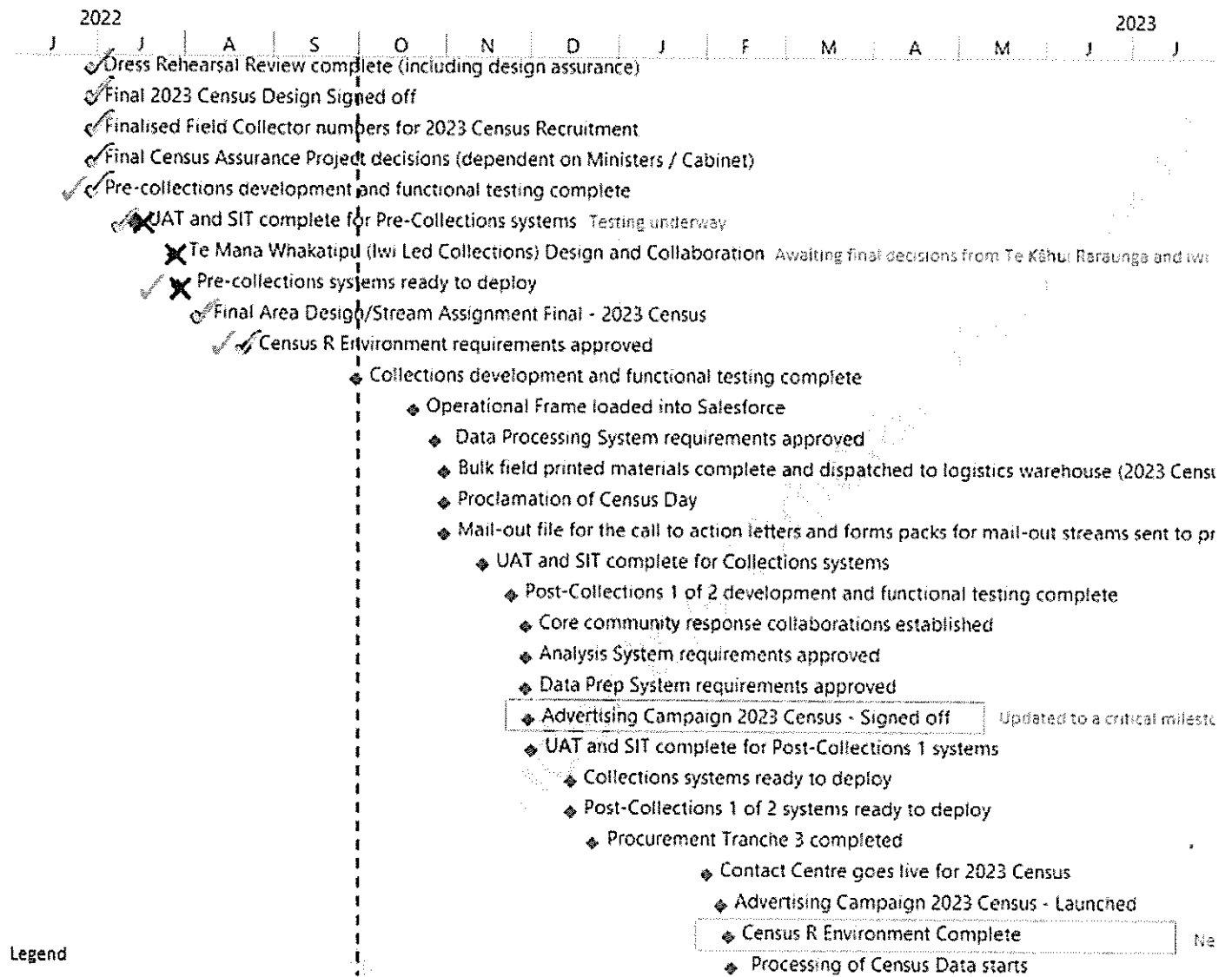| Programme	2023 Census	Current Phase	Phase 5 - Dress Rehearsal & Readiness	Report Date	
SRO	Simon Mason	Programme Director	Les Greeff		

Programme Objective

The objective of this programme is to design, develop, and deliver the 2023 Census, consistent with the approved Investment Objectives

Overall Programme Status Commentary

The Programme is currently generally on track with some problematic risks and issues, i.e., the overall status is reporting Amber and is Programme is on schedule versus the Red plan, i.e. with the exception of the design, build and delivery of the data delivery solution. The scheduled for September 2022. Design Assurance is tracking to plan and largely complete. An end-to-end review of the 2023 Census Des attended, with positive feedback. Regular sessions are being held with the Māori Collective Reference Groups (Taumata). The Iwi Led Coll managed by the DILG, and work is progressing to establish the required delivery structures for this initiative. Programme Costs are trackir containment and scope management will require significant focus to ensure adherence to budget. Recruitment and on-boarding of the co recruitment has commenced for the 320 team leaders required. Two major issues are under active management, i.e. delays to the finalis and the provision of a new R environment to replace the Corporate environment.

Area	Previous period	Reporting period	Comments
Scope	G	G	The scope of the Programme has been confirmed in the PMP, which was approved in December 2020, and is under focussed consideration, as detailed in this pack.
Schedule	A/G	A/G	With the exception of the Data Delivery solutions progress is to date generally on track versus the revised plan approved in schedule, and the Earned Value has recovered to plan. An update to the baseline plan (i.e. Baseline 4) was approved by the Delivery dates, which are being reviewed. The final version of the Baseline #4 plan is included in this Board pack for approv;
Budget	A	A	The nett spend for August was $200k less than the budget. The MYA (both Census and Coverage, excluding iwi-led) full 5-ye versus an Opex appropriation of $251m and it is anticipated the remaining contingency of $9m will be spent. Spend was unc was on target, i.e. the nett spend was circa $200k under the proforma budget. Known unknowns exceed the remaining cont levers may need to be pulled to keep the total cost within appropriation. s 9(2)(f)(iv) s 9(2)(f)(iv) The request to Joint Ministers to release the remaining contingency of $17.6m has been submitted for considerat
Resources	A	A	As of the 15 September, we have budget for 340 positions, of which 308 are currently filled. Active recruitment is underway
Risks	A	A	There are 16 key risks under priority management at this stage include those relating to effective partnerships between Stat have residual ratings of "High". Most risks have treatments and/or mitigations that are effective or partially effective, 2 risk:
Issues	A	A	There are 6 issues highlighted within this report that are under active management, including staff wellbeing, recruitment, s impacts of Covid, the need to respecify the processing system, delays to the Admin Data Environment, and delivery of the D treatments and/or mitigations that are effective or partially effective.
Quality	G	G	There are no issues related to the quality of final deliverables produced to date. DPMC have completed their review of the provided, which is largely favourable. Planning for IQA review number 5 and the December Gateway reviews is underway f
Dependencies	A/R	A/R	The status is amber/red due to two major dependencies (i.e., Dissemination tools, and the Iwi Led Collections Delivery and (initiated between the Programme and Insights and Statistics, to progress the Dissemination Tools initiative.
Benefits	G	G	Work has progressed to identify the Key Result Areas (KRAs) and the associated Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to ensure drivers. The final set of KPIs related to Māori and Pacific Peoples outcomes are included in this Board pack for approval
Delivery Partnerships	G	G	Contracts are in place with 14 service providers, including PKSM, Te Takere, NZ Post, TIMG, Spark, Telnet, Assurity, Deloitte, recruitment of the required collectors has commenced, and is due in September, 2022. The performance of all service provi

Critical milestones

2022												2023
J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J

✓ Dress Rehearsal Review complete (including design assurance)
✓ Final 2023 Census Design Signed off
✓ Finalised Field Collector numbers for 2023 Census Recruitment
✓ Final Census Assurance Project decisions (dependent on Ministers / Cabinet)
✓✓ Pre-collections development and functional testing complete
  ✓✗ UAT and SIT complete for Pre-Collections systems Testing underway
    ✗ Te Mana Whakatipu (Iwi Led Collections) Design and Collaboration Awaiting final decisions from Te Kāhui Raraunga and iwi
  ✓✗ Pre-collections systems ready to deploy
    ✓ Final Area Design/Stream Assignment Final - 2023 Census
      ✓✓ Census R Environment requirements approved
        ◆ Collections development and functional testing complete
          ◆ Operational Frame loaded into Salesforce
            ◆ Data Processing System requirements approved
            ◆ Bulk field printed materials complete and dispatched to logistics warehouse (2023 Censu
            ◆ Proclamation of Census Day
            ◆ Mail-out file for the call to action letters and forms packs for mail-out streams sent to pr
              ◆ UAT and SIT complete for Collections systems
                ◆ Post-Collections 1 of 2 development and functional testing complete
                  ◆ Core community response collaborations established
                  ◆ Analysis System requirements approved
                  ◆ Data Prep System requirements approved
                  ◆ Advertising Campaign 2023 Census - Signed off   Updated to a critical mileste
                  ◆ UAT and SIT complete for Post-Collections 1 systems
                    ◆ Collections systems ready to deploy
                    ◆ Post-Collections 1 of 2 systems ready to deploy
                      ◆ Procurement Tranche 3 completed
                        ◆ Contact Centre goes live for 2023 Census
                        ◆ Advertising Campaign 2023 Census - Launched
                        ◆ Census R Environment Complete   Ne
                        ◆ Processing of Census Data starts

Legend

✗ Milestone missed – not recoverable	✓ Completed after scheduled date
✓ Completed on schedule	✓ Partially Completed – approval required	✗ Milestone missed - recoverable

Appendix 2: Issues report

Programme level issues	Status	Resolution overview
Staff workload and wellbeing Challenges have been experienced in sourcing and contracting staff with the required skills. Staff are under considerable pressure. COVID-19 has aggravated this. *Issue raised: 21 April 2020*	Worse	Staff wellbeing is an important focus for the Progr: "grassroots" wellbeing team is in place. Focus on prioritisation, external suppliers, and recruitment; I has been contracted to assist with the delivery of work. Staff are being encouraged to take leave A audit report (April 2022) confirmed the Programm(the right steps to address this issue, but increased and leave exacerbating this issue and vacancies wellbeing issues. Work is being prioritisation/depr: across workstreams and escalated to enterprise I(
Programme resourcing Resourcing gaps are impacting workstreams' ability to meet timeframes. Recruitment is taking up a considerable amount of workstream leads' time. *Issue raised: 21 April 2020*	Worse	A resource management forum has been establisl focused on workforce planning to the end of 2022 contract has been extended to June 2023. Discus regarding recruitment are being held at an organis level, to draw on the expertise and talent across tl organisation. While progress is being made with a average of 30 new staff recruited every month, th(ongoing need to fill vacancies.
Impact of COVID-19 on staff workload and capacity COVID-19 is impacting work priorities and producing additional work, particularly for engagement given travel restrictions and community priorities, and dress rehearsal operations. *Issue raised 23 August 2021*	Closed	In light of the Omicron outbreak, there continues t significant focus on COVID-19 impacts across all Daily monitoring of risks is informing operational I(team decisions on a daily basis. Staff are now returning post COVID-infection, and hoped the number of staff on leave due to COVID reduce from now.
Corporate R environment not fit for purpose	Improving	After several months of investigation and requiren gathering, urgent remedial work is required in the $900,000.

Programme level issues	Status	Resolution overview
The current R environment has stability, performance, security, and license issues deeming it not fit for purpose to meet census use cases.		Approval to proceed with a new R environment wi provided in July, a vendor and project manager hi appointed, and this project is underway and is cur track.
Impact of lack of dress rehearsal for data delivery The business processes, systems (processing, analysis, data prep, and dissemination) and have not been delivered to schedule across data delivery workstreams, impacting on the objectives for the data dress rehearsal and timing of census data.	Improving	A revised plan has been agreed and this activity v merged into the delivery and testing of the Respoi Data Processing solution, now scheduled for mid-2023. This delay will not impact the critical path. F run be deferred to February 2023. Alternate plan (October including incremental testing and sign off
Impact of high attrition rates on the 2023 Census Programme Staff losses due to low unemployment, high demand for talent, and workload issues on staff; programme impacts aggravated by tight labour market	Worse	Implementation of a retention strategy is being pri Escalated to Stats NZ and Programme governanc on proactive approach to retain talent. Leaders en with staff on their growth plans. Vacancies and illr exacerbating this issue.
Impact of the design for iwi-led collections and analytics is not completed by the end of July Work to design iwi-led collection has been progressing slower than expected which has started impacting collection operations development work. There may be a need for an alternate approach to collections, which may impact response rates for Māori.	New	An interim management structure has been estab iwi-led collections. Regular monthly updates are p the board. KPMG was contracted to produce the l and detailed plans. Design and capability build se being scheduled, with weekly updates. A number sessions were held with the iwi-led collections tea September to review the draft programme plan an an involvement summary. The aim is for details to finalised in the first week of October 2022.

Appendix 3: RAG status guide:

RAG status	Red	Amber - Red	Amber	Amber – G
Headline	Highly problematic	Problematic	Problematic	Problemat areas
Overall status	Not on target to succeed 'Extreme' priority rated issues, from which it is only possible to recover with significant executive management intervention and focused implementation of mitigating actions. Risks are rated as 'extreme' at residual level, <u>and</u> mitigations are not effective. Risks are expected to eventuate.	Not on target to succeed. 'Very high' priority rated issues, from which it is predicted it is only possible to recover with significant senior management focus to implement the mitigating actions. The profile of risks includes several 'extreme' at current level, and 'very high' at residual level, <u>and</u> mitigations are slipping or poor.	May not be on target to succeed. 'High' priority rated issues, from which it is predicted that with support, appropriate mitigation and focus will not impact the critical path. The profile of risks includes several 'very high' at current level, and 'high' at residual level. Mitigations in place but are at risk of slipping.	Deviating fr some speci critical area Minor / 'me issues with actions in p with workst support anc expected tc successful impact key There are r rated as 'm residual lev appropriate in place.
Escalation	Escalate to Chief Executive	Escalate to Senior Responsible Officer	Escalate to Programme Director	Escalate to workstrean
Workstream reporting	Not possible to recover even with suitable mitigation and focus.	Possible to recover with significant senior management focus to implement the mitigation actions. Go-to-green plan required.	Support needed from workstream leads to implement the mitigating actions.	Minor issue managed a at the proje workstrean

Appendix 4: 2023 Census – High-level plan

	2020	2021	2022	2023
		J F M A M J J A S O N D	J F M A M J J A S O N D	J F M A N
Surveys and operational readiness		2021 Field Test (final prep, go live & review) — Integration testing	DR 'Census Day' 8 March — Dress Rehearsal (DR) (final prep, go live & review) — IT build and test phase	Census Day 7 March — 2023 Census (final prep, go live & review)
Census design		NLD 2 — NLD 3 — NLD 4	Next Level Design 5 (NLD 5)	
Census content (forms)		Confirm form topics and questions	Final field collection design	
Products & services mix		Consultation, validation — Iwi-Māori		
Iwi/Māori		Collaboration established — Iwi-led collection design and collaboration	Iwi-led collections preparations and delivery	
Field operations		Field systems and processes for DR — DR field recruitment & training — Field operational support DR	Operational refinement — Field recruitment & training — Field operations	
Engagement		Key community response partnerships established	Partnerships operational — Ongoing community and customer engagement — Community sentiment / Design assurance / Combined model Release schedule	
Comms and marketing campaigns			Website go live — DR support — Value of data campaign — Trust & conf	Proactive stakeholder comms and media engagement — 2023 Census cam|
Releases, announcements and events			Value of Data marketing campaign (Gisborne May; South Auckland July; Northland August)	Value of Data marketing campaign (Central West/North Wellington September; Central North September; from October Rainbow and Disabled people) — 28 September – Timing announcement