

## **2010 CENSUS BUREAU PRESS BRIEFING**

**AUGUST 10, 2010**

**STAN ROLARK:** Okay, good morning. We'll get started now. My name is Stan Rolark. I'm Chief of the Census Bureau's Public Information Office. I'd like to offer a warm welcome to the media in the room and to those on the phone. We're very, very happy to have you here today. Today's a good day.

We have two speakers for you today. We have Department of Commerce Secretary Gary Locke and Census Bureau Director Robert Groves. They'll both speak to you today about milestones and progress with the 2010 Census.

Secretary Locke will give his remarks first. After his remarks, we'll have a short Q&A session. He has a very tight schedule, so we won't have time for a lot of questions, but we'll have a short Q&A session. And I just want to remind everyone that we'll have one question per reporter. We'll just take questions in the room for Secretary Locke. And when you do ask your question, please give you name and your media affiliation.

After Secretary Locke finishes his remarks, Dr. Groves will stay and talk a little bit more to you about the progress of the 2010 Census.

So with that, what I'd like to do is bring up Dr. Robert Groves. Dr. Groves?

**ROBERT GROVES:** Thank you, Stan. Good morning. I'm really happy to be here, and I'm happy to introduce Commerce Secretary Gary Locke, if for no other reason to have a public reason to thank him for all the help he's given to the 2010 Census. He's actually here to make a special announcement that we're proud of. And with no further ado, I introduce the Secretary.

**GARY LOCKE:** Thanks, Dr. Groves. It's really a pleasure to be here, and great to be here with so many of our colleagues who helped make the 2010 Census a resounding success, especially Dr. Bob Groves, the Director of the Census Bureau.

Bob will be speaking with you in just a moment, as Stan indicated. But Bob and his team, working with the senior leadership at the Department of Commerce, achieved incredible results with the 2010 Census, and substantial cost savings for the American taxpayer.

The 2010 Census is a textbook example of President Obama's Accountable Government Initiative, which aims to cut waste while delivering taxpayers better services at a very efficient price.

The 2010 Census has been a priority of mine since my very first day as Commerce Secretary. And I mean that literally. I remember in end of March 2009, I took a Sunday night redeye flight from Seattle to arrive in DC Monday morning at about 6:00 a.m. And after a quick hotel shower, I went straight to the national Census partners kickoff event. I think it was at the Willard Hotel. And this is right before setting foot into the Commerce Department building.

The 2010 Census has been a top priority of mine because a lot is riding on the 2010 Census. The Census will determine how more than \$400 billion is allocated every single year, and for the next ten years, to local communities for everything from education, to senior services, to police and roads.

The 2010 Census will serve as the basis for the Congressional redistricting that states will undertake in 2011.

And the 2010 Census is the largest civilian undertaking in US history, with some 565,000 Census workers conducting field operations in all 50 states and the territories.

In the process, the Census Bureau has actually partnered with some 255,000 community-based organizations, ranging from religious groups, nonprofit organizations, to businesses.

So I'm very, very proud to announce today that because of the exceptional efforts of our Census Bureau and its partners and the cooperation of the American people that the 2010 Census is both on schedule and 22% under budget for this fiscal year, when most of the operations occurred.

This did not happen by chance. The senior management at the Department of Commerce and the Census Bureau leadership ran a tight ship. We demanded accountability, and we made sure that we stretched every taxpayer dollar as far as it could go.

Before this Census began, experts inside and outside the government predicted that longstanding operational and fiscal problems at the US Census Bureau would doom the 2010 count to cost overruns and diminished participation by the American people. I remember during my confirmation process that I was warned to expect a train wreck.

In 2009, the Commerce Department's own Inspector General, as well as the Government Accountability Office, ranked the 2010 Census as one of the federal government's programs most likely to fail. That did not happen. In fact, the 2010 Census achieved a mailback response rate of 22% [sic], which defied the predictions of the experts, matched the 2000 response rate, and we believe that when all the numbers are finally crunched, may actually exceed the 2000 response rate. And this 72% [sic] mailback response reversed a decade-long decline in mailback response.

There is no one silver bullet that created this success. The Census Bureau professionals developed a very strong operational design that included innovations, including a reengineered address list and a short, ten-question questionnaire. Other innovations were more mundane, but no less meaningful.

For example, one of the strategies that the Census Bureau took to boost mailback response was to resend questionnaires to people in areas with low mailback rates from the year 2000, with the thinking that some people just needed a simple reminder, or may have thrown out their very first questionnaire.

This was a huge money saver for the American taxpayer, because every 1% increase in the mailback response rate saved \$85 million by reducing the number of the expense of door-to-door canvassing.

Some of these adjustments were underway at the outset of President Obama taking office, but their ultimate success was guaranteed by the Commerce Department's ethic of constant improvement and constant search for efficiencies over the last 17 months.

The Census Bureau operation team held daily meetings to troubleshoot problems with the Bureau's field operations control system, which was a very high-risk software system used to manage the work of the 565,000 Census takers conducting multiple field operations. This was an untested system, rushed into operation after the debacle with the handheld computers that never worked and that were abandoned in 2008, before President Obama even took office.

As the entire Census Bureau and Commerce Department undertook these internal management reforms, we also revamped our public outreach efforts. The Obama Administration budgeted more money for additional advertising in hard-to-count areas, advertising in more languages, and a four-fold increase in staff supporting the 255,000-member partnership program.

And our advertising was more targeted than ever before. In 2009, we created a media buy reserve that permitted us to track lagging responses in individual cities, and thus intervene in those areas with additional advertising. So on March 30th of 2010, the Census Bureau senior leadership team identified some 23 media markets with a total

population of some 17.7 million households. Now, that's households that we believed seriously lagged in response, compared to the rest of the country.

And after intervening with more advertising in these media markets, the low performers were reduced, by April 20th, less than a month later, to only 10 communities with total population of 1.6 million households.

All of these specific measures were an outgrowth of the Commerce Department's commitment to applying the type of core management principles that can solve any operational challenge: relentless attention to detail, setting ambitious goals and then creating precise metrics to measure performance. These were the principles that I depended on during my term-- two terms as Governor of the State of Washington, and those are the principles that helped make the 2010 Census a resounding success.

Also, these were the same principles that we used to achieve some \$500 million in savings, or 25% of the budget on the digital television conversion program.

At least half of the savings that we achieved in the Census can be directly attributed to better management, better productivity among our Census workers, and the fact that our impressive mail response rate reduced the number of Census employees we had to send door to door counting households.

The other half of the savings came from a reserve fund that we had set aside to deal with operational problems, as well as other unforeseen circumstances that fortunately never arose.

So this is an accomplishment that we're very proud of. And I'm especially proud of the work of our senior leadership team at the Department of Commerce, but most proud of the unbelievable leadership provided by Dr. Groves and his entire team at the Census Bureau. And I'm also proud of the American people for understanding the importance of

the Census to their communities, and in participating in much higher numbers than anyone ever thought.

We're just really pleased that things are going along so well. We're on time and under budget.

And with that, I'll answer any questions that you have before we bring on Dr. Groves.

**STAN ROLARK:** Let me just remind everyone, we'll have one question per reporter. When you do have a question, please give your name and your affiliation.

**ED O'KEEFE:** Ed O'Keefe with the *Washington Post*. Secretary Locke and Director Groves both, one of the things that your colleagues mentioned last night, in addition to the high response rate and the other work that you guys have done in the last 18 months, is the fact that you had a much more qualified, experienced workforce than you did in previous years. And I'm wondering if you two could talk to that a little bit, and how that may have helped keep the costs down.

**GARY LOCKE:** Well, actually, I had several friends who are retired people from either police and some from state government who were part of the door-to-door operations, who signed up to be a Census worker, and very proud to contribute to this civic undertaking. And we've heard from others, all across the country, that with this highly skilled, dedicated workforce, they themselves came up with innovations and ideas on how to be more efficient and to speed up the process, thereby saving the Census Bureau and the American taxpayers money.

So we're really proud that with that more highly skilled workforce that we had, a lot of people who've worked on campaigns, both Democratic and Republican campaigns, who worked on the address canvassing list, who then signed up to go door to door on the enumeration, that whole highly skilled workforce came up with efficiencies on their own and ideas that were then incorporated, community-wide and even system-wide.

**MAX CACAS:** Hi, Max Cacas from Federal News Radio in Washington. Mr. Secretary, I was wondering if you could give us your best figure so far as to the total for the savings that you've realized. I understand that the Census isn't complete yet, it still has some other work to go, but what kind of a figure do you have so far that you can report about how much you've saved so far?

**GARY LOCKE:** We believe that we've saved, so far, \$1.6 billion. And while we still have a few months left to go, the operations are winding down. We're now focused on quality control measures. That's why there'll be some triple checking, some households that will be resurveyed, just to double check. And Dr. Groves can talk a little bit about that.

But we also have reserves set aside for those programs as well. So as of now, of operations to date, we've saved \$1.6 billion.

**MICHAEL DOYLE:** Michael Doyle with McClatchy Newspapers. You've emphasized the cost savings and efficiencies. What information, if any, do you have on your quality control efforts and what sort of error rate you're meeting compared to the previous Census?

**GARY LOCKE:** Actually, Dr. Groves has some very interesting statistics on that and will be happy to share that as part of his more detailed discussion. But we're very, very proud of what the quality control measures are indicating.

**STAN ROLARK:** We have time for one more question. Any other questions in the room? Okay, thank you very much.

**GARY LOCKE:** With that, I'd like to turn it over to Dr. Groves. Great job.

**ROBERT GROVES:** Let me share with you the Secretary's happiness at this event, and reemphasize that there's some heroes in this that created these savings. One, the American public, as our little sign behind us notes, really is to be thanked for what they did. They produced that 72% response rate that produced a smaller workload for following up. The smaller workload created about \$600 million of the savings that the Secretary just reported.

And I want to take a minute to thank the team at Census. When I came in, in July 2009, it was an institution that had received a lot of criticism, mainly around the handheld computer development and the resulting expensive changes in design. The team that I've worked with over the past few months has been totally dedicated to doing a cost-efficient Census. We scrubbed budgets. We tried to find ways to get more efficient. And at every opportunity in the decision-making process, they were there to figure out how to do things.

We had a big contingency ready to spend if software systems didn't work. And for those of who you've been following this story for some time, you know that there were predictions all over the place that we were headed for a disaster on the software side.

Well, my colleagues at Census figured out workaround after workaround. We pieced together a software system that worked. It did its job on time and under budget. It took a lot of work; they worked really hard at that.

So this is really a tribute to my new colleagues at Census, as well as the American public.

I want to give you an update on where we are, as I've done in these operational press briefings in the past. Let me tell you what we've finished up. The non-response follow-up stage, where we called on 47 million households, we knocked on their doors and sought data from them, we've finished that. It was on time and \$600 million under budget.

The workers on this were more productive than we imagined, this workforce that the Secretary mentioned. We now have empirical data. They were better than the workforce in 2000. They worked more hours. They needed the money. They concentrated and focused on their task, and they produced a great non-response follow-up effort.

For the first time, we have, as a quality control procedure, checked every enumerator's work, checked a portion of their work. Every enumerator has had some of their work completely redone. And then we compared what we call the reinterview results with their original interview results as a way to catch quality control problems.

We now have data on how that turned out. Only .2%, so one-fifth of 1% of the enumerators were found to have violated training guidelines on how the data were collected. When we found a violation of the thousand or so interviewers, out of the 500-600,000, we completely redid their work. That number, that .2%, is something we're proud of.

On the other hand, a result of non-response follow-up that we now know is, this year, for about 22% of the households that we followed up on, 22% of the 47 million, after repeated efforts -- we called six times over different days, different times of the day -- we were not able to talk to a person in the housing unit themselves, and we sought population counts for that housing unit from a building manager in an apartment building or a multiunit structure, or a neighbor, 22% of the households had information on their population from those kind of proxy reports. We call those proxy reports.

Last decade, that 22% was about 17%. So that's going on the negative side. We would have preferred to have interviewed every one of those, but the result is about 22% of them were interviewed through a proxy method.

Another operation we've just finished up is called the coverage follow-up operation in Census Bureau jargon. Let me tell you why this is a cool thing to do. Do you remember on your forms, for every person, you were asked a question, "Does this person sometimes

live somewhere else?" This was a new question. It was introduced in the 2010 Census to counteract duplication.

For houses that had those checks, we called back, just to make sure we understood where the person should be counted, whether they might have been counted twice. That operation started in April; we finished that up recently. And that operation is a quality input to the 2010 Census that has made it better, we're confident.

We are now at the tail end of another operation. For all of the housing units that we thought were vacant over the past few weeks, or we couldn't find them -- we had an address on the list, we went out to the place, to the site, we couldn't even find the housing unit -- we double check those. We've sent out yet another person to make sure we got it right. That operation is finishing up. There were about 5.6 million addresses that were treated that way.

And then, in something we're really proud of, we got very late additions to the address list from the Postal Service, addresses that they just started delivering to. And we're going out to those, about three million of those, 3.1 million of those.

Now, what we're finding on this operation is that when you combine the 5.6 million that were vacant or deletes when we went out there, with the 3.1 million new addresses, about 27% of the sum of those are occupied, were occupied on April 1. We're picking up new folks. We're measuring new folks in this late operation because of these supplemental adds. Didn't do this in the past. So this, too, we're hopeful will make for a better Census.

We will start, or we've started, I guess, already an operation called field verification. Now, some of you may remember, in the midst of the Census, in 7-Elevens, convenience stores, at libraries, there was a little folder with so-called Be Counted questionnaires. If for some reason your apartment or your house didn't receive a questionnaire in the mail, you could have picked up one of those forms and filled it out, reported your address and sent it in. We got a bunch of those.

We're checking the addresses of those right now, because we want to make sure we can verify that the form that was filled out and mailed in can be associated with a house we can find on site. So we're checking those. We're at about 60% complete on those.

We've added, in another operation, some new checks, again for quality control procedures. You may have recalled that when we had a-- we cut off the mail returns at a certain point in late April, and then began the non-response follow-up procedure. We continued to get some returns; we processed those returns. And if we got a late return, we attempted to avoid visiting that house. We did that. Then we processed those returns. And what we found was that some of them were actually blank returns. People mailed in a questionnaire, filled out nothing on the questionnaire. Or filled out just the population count.

Post-processing, we have about 400,000 of those forms, 415,000 of those forms. We're going back out to those houses right now. That's going to start tomorrow. Just to make sure that we get the best population count we can out of those housing units. So that's a late addition.

And then we have about 300,000 houses we're going out at the same time where the enumerator has information that the housing unit was occupied on April 1, but we don't know how many people live there. We're going to try one more time on those.

These are all examples of something that we feel strongly about. We're going to stay out in the field until we have a resolution on every address, and we understand the population characteristics of every address we can. The Census is not over. Even though we've made this announcement of cost savings, we're still plugging away, trying to improve the count as best we can.

So now let me look forward. There's an operation that's going to start pretty soon. We call it the coverage measurement operation. What's that all about? That is a very large, highest

quality survey we can possibly do. The purpose of the survey is to estimate how good the Census is.

It is a sample of about 187,000 housing units around the country. Interviewers are going to start knocking on those doors. You have about a one-in-700 chance of having your house in that sample. So not very many houses are going to be in the sample. The interviewers are going to look different, too, than our enumerators.

So we should alert the public that when the enumerators for the coverage measurement task knock on the door, they'll have a laptop computer. They'll have a black Census bag, but it's not going to look like the Decennial Census bag. They'll have a badge. And they're going to ask in-depth questions to make sure they know whether we have counted that house correctly in the Census. They are checking the Census in a real way.

The results of this work will be ready, not until 2012. We do a whole lot of careful matching in order to figure out how many people were missed, how many people were counted twice. We use this vehicle, this coverage measurement survey to do that.

There is one result of this already though that's really cool. They went out, these interviewers went out and listed a bunch of addresses. These interviewers are much more highly skilled in listing houses and addresses than we were able to afford for the gigantic address canvassing operation we did last year.

We then matched the houses they found out there to the master address list we had. It's sort of the first hint at how good our master universe list is. When we match it up, we get better match rates than we got in 2000, for the same time. This was the list as it was before we began the entire Census operation.

This is real good news. It looks like the quality of the master address list is good for the 2010 Census, as measured by this match.

So we'll continue to do these sorts of small operations, all aimed at either improving the quality or measuring the quality of the Census.

Let me just run through what's going to happen over the coming months with regard to data releases. We have a real hard deadline of December 31st to present to the country, to the President, the state level counts. And we're tasked with the arithmetic of figuring out how many representatives each state gets. So by December 31st, that will be revealed; state level counts, house members per state.

In February through March, we will start releasing, state by state, data that will be used for redistricting within the states. This will be a file that has block level counts by race, ethnicity and housing unit counts by occupancy status.

In April, we'll release population in housing counts for the US, for regions, divisions, broken by American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian areas.

In May, we will release population and housing characteristics for areas including Congressional districts for the 111th Congress.

And then in summer and starting later, we will start issuing more and more detailed reports.

So again, to sum up, December is the big first date, where the reapportionment-related data estimates or statistics will be released. Then April is the deadline for all the redistricting data. And then we'll start releasing more and more individual reports.

So that's about where we are, and that's kind of a foreshadowing of what the data products will look like.

In our next briefing, which will be mid-September or so, I want to go into more depth into how we will compare the Census to other ways of measuring the population,

demographic analysis and this coverage measurement program. So we'll also be able to talk in much more detail about our data processing operations that are going on throughout the fall, just to give you a sense of where we are on those things.

So let me stop. I'm happy to field questions.

**STAN ROLARK:** Okay, let me just remind everyone that if you have a question, please give your name and your media affiliation before you ask your question. Also, we have folks on the phone. Let me remind them as well, that if you're on the phone and you have not let the operator know that you have a question, please do so now so you can be put in that queue.

So do we have a question in the room?

**MICHAEL DOYLE:** Mike Doyle with McClatchy Newspapers. Some former Census workers in California who had been under the control of the Los Angeles office have filed complaints with the Inspector General's office alleging mismanagement and pressure that raised questions in their minds about the accuracy of their counts. Are you specifically aware of these complaints, and if you are, what are you doing about that?

**ROBERT GROVES:** Let me give a bigger picture on this. This is the time that two things are happening. Or the last few weeks, two things have been happening. We've been finishing up this big workload of non-response follow-up. These are tough cases to work. If you imagine yourself an enumerator for a minute, you've knocked on a door five times, six times. The operation is coming to an end. And this is stressful for enumerators.

It's also the case that enumerators-- and so, in those kind of cases, to go back to that point, it's often that there are complicated judgments that have to be made by our field staff. It is at this moment that complaints, like the Fresno complaint, comes up every Census. If you study the history of censuses, it's completely understandable, because the work is much more stressful.

It's also the time-- I've done hundreds of surveys in my life with temporary workers. And it's a happy and sad time at the end of an operation. People are losing their jobs. They know they're going to lose their jobs. Yet, the work must be finished. So the work environment gets complicated.

I'm aware of the Fresno incident. And there are other incidents like that around the country. Let me tell you what we do on every one of those. As soon as we get word, and the word comes in various ways, we alert the Inspector General's office that does independent investigations of this. And then we do our own investigation.

We find out whether there's merit to the accusations. When there is, I can tell you we completely redo the work. So if we find that an accusation on the part of an enumerator about some inappropriate behavior going on with regard to handling the data has occurred, and is a valid accusation, we will identify the set of cases that could have been affected, we go a little wider than that, and we completely redo that work.

I don't know the today status of the Fresno incident. I know people are out there doing exactly what I just said -- What's wrong? Is there something we need to repair? And how can we repair it? We will repair every case that we see was handled improperly. That's the way we do it.

**STAN ROLARK:** While we're still waiting to queue up questions on the phone, we'll take another question in the room.

**REID DAVENPORT:** Reid Davenport with McClatchy Papers. You mentioned that half of the savings came from not spending the emergency funding. So would this be considered, could this be good to [32:30] reallocation of funds rather than savings since we can't use it?

**ROBERT GROVES:** That's a great question. The question is about the contingency funds and how should one think about the contingency funds. Should we claim those as savings or not. Those contingency funds were set up before I was here. In my professional opinion, it was a wise thing that the Congress did and OMB did, to have that contingency funding.

My memory, by the way, is of the 1990 Census that had no such contingency funding. And in late spring, the Census ran out of money. It required a supplementary appropriation and a lot of fear that the Census was actually going to be damaged by that.

So I think it's a wise thing to have contingency funds. We had great good fortune this year. There were no major hurricanes that wiped out large portions of the population. There weren't earthquakes. We have done censuses in hurricanes, earthquakes, volcanoes, all sorts of things, right. We had some minor flooding in small numbers of areas that were tragedies in those local areas. But we evaded a large-scale national disaster.

I remind us that about a year ago, we were worried that the H1N1 epidemic might be a disaster for this country. We had preparations for that, too. We had to prepare for all these possible horrible events. They didn't take place.

We also had to prepare for what everyone was saying was a very high-risk set of software systems. And as I said in my opening remarks, the folks at Census have been working around the clock to avoid those. And we pieced together that.

So that's the reason for the contingency. Whether you call that a savings or not is up to you. That money is going back to the US taxpayers though, unambiguously.

**STAN ROLARK:** I understand that we do have a question on the phone. Operator, do we have a question on the phone?

**OPERATOR:** Deborah Berry. And state your affiliation.

**DEBORAH BERRY:** Gannett, Washington Bureau.

**STAN ROLARK:** Can you repeat your name and your affiliation again, please?

**DEBORAH BERRY:** Deborah Berry. I'm with Gannett's Washington bureau.

**STAN ROLARK:** Okay, go right ahead.

**DEBORAH BERRY:** Mr. Groves, can you speak to-- you talked last year about the special efforts in the Gulf Coast to count residents, particularly in the wake of Katrina and other hurricanes. Can you talk a little bit about how did that go and the response rate in that area?

**ROBERT GROVES:** So this is a question about the Gulf Coast area, where some of you may remember, instead of mailing questionnaires to areas that in 2000 were mailed, because of the dynamic nature of the housing stock, we actually hand delivered questionnaires. Something's that much more expensive than the mail.

So the question is really about how did it go. One impact of that is we now know-- we dropped off questionnaires to a lot of units that, in the judgment of our field workers, could be inhabited, but weren't being inhabited. And that depressed the participation rate in the Gulf Coast area, because there were a lot of questionnaires delivered to housing units that were completely vacant. They weren't mailed back. So the participation rate figures that we were reporting were depressed by that.

We don't have the results yet, or I haven't seen the results yet, of the non-response follow-up stage in those areas. We'll have that over the coming weeks. And that would be a better answer to your question than I have now.

I do know that I spent a lot of time in the Gulf Coast area, and also on the Texas/Mexico border. And in those areas, the partner activities that we had going were just heartwarming. People were working real hard to make sure their communities were counted accurately, and any success we had in that area is really due to their efforts as well as ours.

**STAN ROLARK:** Okay, question in the room? Max?

**MAX CACAS:** Hi, Dr. Groves, Max Cacas from Federal News Radio. I'm wondering, sir, when a couple times we've talked, you've discussed the possibility that after the dust settles and you guys have had a chance to catch your breath a little bit that an assessment of technology is going to be part of the triage of the Census after you've delivered your reports.

And I'm wondering if one of the questions you're going to be asking will be sort of a what-if. What if the handhelds had worked? Would they have made an impact on the parts that they were slated to have worked in? And do you have any feel right now about whether they would have made a difference for the enumerators in the field and their efficiency? And will that be something that you'll be looking at?

**ROBERT GROVES:** Good questions. So this is looking ahead now. We are indeed doing these kind of lessons learned and deep dive into review. And this is both software systems and other field operations. It's actually a wonderful part of the culture of the Census Bureau to do that. And we have to be wise readers of those participants in this.

We are heavily focused, thinking ahead to 2020, on cost savings. We're asking ourselves the question, how can we radically reduce the cost of a decennial census in the United States without harming the quality of the Census? This is out-of-the-box thinking that's required.

The handhelds are part of the most expensive component of a decennial census. The human resources required in this non-response follow-up, when people are knocking on doors, is really very expensive. So our focus is how to reduce the number of people needed to follow up.

The handhelds would make them more efficient in most thinking professionally. It would also permit us to extend what we're starting to develop, and that is real-time monitoring of Census activities in a way that you could have management interventions to save, to become more efficient.

So handhelds would permit immediate transfer of data to a central processing unit, a central office; downloading of new workload to an enumerator, to deploy them in areas where they're needed; and that kind of constant feedback loop about how you're doing. That could improve management efficiency.

But I think what we'd like to do is have fewer people out there to begin with. If you really want to save money, increasing the ability of people to self-respond in ways that fit their lifestyle is what we've got to focus on.

**STAN ROLARK:** I understand we do have a question from the phone lines. Operator, do we have a question? Could you please give your name and your media affiliation?

**OPERATOR:** John Smith, and state your affiliation.

**STAN ROLARK:** Okay, your question, please?

**JOHN SMITH:** Hello, this is John Smith from the *Oceanside Gazette*. I'm just wondering, can you talk [40:42] follow-up operation.

**ROBERT GROVES:** I'm sorry, I couldn't understand your question. Could you do it one more time?

**JOHN SMITH:** Can we please talk about the [40:51] residual follow-up operation.

**ROBERT GROVES:** Somebody has to help me. Did anyone--?

**STAN ROLARK:** Can you repeat that one more time, please? We're having a little trouble.

**JOHN SMITH:** Apparently there's a new operation called the non-response follow-up residual operation, and I'm trying to determine what is the purpose of this operation in the scheme of the 2010 Census?

**ROBERT GROVES:** The non-response follow-up operation itself, or the non-response reconciliation?

**JOHN SMITH:** Yes, the reconciliation [41:23] residual follow-up to that operation.

**ROBERT GROVES:** Okay, let me go over that again. There are about 700,000 households. When we examined forms we received from them posed certain puzzles to us. About 400,000 of them came in with very little information on the form. Some of them are totally blank. We didn't know that immediately. We had to let it go through the processing machines to discover that.

We're going back out to those houses to try to get person-level information on the houses. So they returned a form, but with insufficient information.

And then we have other forms that were collected by our enumerators during non-response follow-up where the enumerator judges the house was occupied on April 1, but we don't have a count of people who were living there. And we're going back out to those. That's about 300,000.

So both of these, some of these in prior censuses, decades ago, were just left as they were. We have enough time, we have enough money; we're going back out to see whether we can get good data from those 700,000 households.

**JOHN SMITH:** Isn't 700 a very large--

**STAN ROLARK:** We're going to have to limit it to one question per reporter. Do we have a question in the room, please? Yes?

**MICHAEL DOYLE:** Mike Doyle, McClatchy Newspapers. You identified the 1,000 or so potential problem enumerators that you're examining. Do you find any trends there or patterns in the type of mistakes made or the regions where they were working?

**ROBERT GROVES:** We don't. It's only 1,000 spread over 5-600,000. So looking for patterns is kind of tough. And I haven't seen any. We do know a few things about the characteristics of the cases that failed this match. They tend to occur at the end of the operation. This fits actually the question you asked before.

And this fits everything we know about surveys, too. When interviewers or enumerators get under stress at the tail end, when things have to be finished, and they're dealing with a reluctant respondent or a respondent who's never home, it is at those moments that these sorts of breakdowns in training procedures seem to take place disproportionately.

Our data fit that. So in a way, that's one answer to your question. This is a tail-end phenomenon disproportionately.

Now, it's a tail-end phenomenon, both because of the stress thing, and also, in addition to getting every enumerator's work, a portion of their work to check, our local Census offices are observing, and our crew leaders are observing the interviewers every day. And if they begin to suspect that an enumerator is violating training guidelines -- say, you're starting to turn in a whole lot of hours of work and there's not much output -- then their

work will be inspected and redone. And those tend to, you tend to get that kind of evidence towards the end of the operation, too.

So those are kind of targeted inquiries into the work of an individual enumerator. And that's another reason it's at the back end.

**STAN ROLARK:** Okay, as I understand, we have no questions on the phone. We have time for just a couple more questions. Behind Max.

**NICHOLAS BALLASY:** Nicholas Ballasy with CNS News. I wanted to ask you, was the accuracy of the Census overall affected at all by the IT issues that were reported continuously by the Inspector General?

**ROBERT GROVES:** We don't have any evidence that there were quality impacts on this. I can tell you, there were scary moments among the management team. This is a great team. We meet every day at 4:30, and it is a room where decisions are made based on data. But there were moments when the software was fragile that those meetings were tension filled.

I think that there are impacts on that. There are some cost impacts at the local Census office level, because we had to employ people in night shifts at times to get data checked in. We don't have any evidence that it harmed the quality of the data we've received. The problem was really in throughput of getting completed forms into the processing centers that was the major concern.

So we'll know. One of the things we're doing is a big analytic task of checking what happened to every case in the universe, basically. And it'll be interesting to see -- this will take a while, many months of analysis -- to ask the question about whether cases that were held up in this backlog that occurred early in the system have any different quality aspects than those that were handled later.

We'll know eventually, but so far we have no signals that there was a big quality hit, or any quality hit because of this.

**STAN ROLARK:** We have one final question.

**JESSICA REDDICK:** Hi, I'm Jessica Reddick from *US News*. And I was just wondering if it'll be possible to get any preliminary estimates before the December 31st official release date?

**ROBERT GROVES:** You mean estimates of population counts?

**JESSICA REDDICK:** Of reapportionment and that type of thing.

**ROBERT GROVES:** No, I wouldn't think so. This is a heavily guarded secret for a lot of different reasons. The next news conference will take you through all the things we do to make sure we got the data right. And this is going to take all fall. You'll be astounded at how careful we are with every record.

So when we release the counts, that will be the first release. We'll know the counts a little before you know the counts, but we won't give you any early estimates. Despite great interest in that.

**STAN ROLARK:** Okay, thank you. And with that, we'll call this to a close. Let me remind everyone that you can get a media kit on line. You can go to [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov). You can also go to [2010census.gov](http://2010census.gov), get some good information as well.

If you have any questions, you want to follow up, you can call the Public Information Office. That number is 301-763-3691.

Thanks to Dr. Groves and certainly Secretary Locke today for their comments. And thank you for attending.

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