



Form Design Testing
(Census Paper 02/03)

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INTRODUCTION

This report outlines the form design testing program undertaken for the 2001 Census and consolidates the earlier reports prepared after every test. It reviews the objectives of the program, describes the form design testing of each topic or issue examined and provides recommendations to be considered for the next census in 2006.

The objectives of this report are to provide readers with a better understanding of the way the 2001 Census form design was developed and to document the 2001 Census testing program.

The testing program was initially aimed at testing the Intelligent Character Recognition (ICR) version of the form and then at maximising the accuracy of responses for the 2001 Census questions. The assessment of the performance of the questions was generally based on:

- comparing the performance of differently worded questions and response categories for existing and new variables;
- comparing the performance of differently placed questions and response categories for existing and new variables;
- assessing the merit of general instructions to assist respondents;
- comparing the performance of various sequencing instructions;
- comparing the performance of write-in and self coded response categories for the same topic; and
- using follow-up interviews to determine the consistency of responses given during testing.

To obtain maximum effect in field tests, cognitive testing (e.g. focus groups and observation studies) was conducted for selected topics. Cognitive testing gave valuable first-hand insight into respondent understanding which helped in the development and refining of question designs. Moreover, it helped in assessing the level of reliability of data for further clarification of the results and also for further analysis of the question design.

It should be noted that due to the voluntary nature of census tests, the non-response rate was generally higher in tests than in the actual census.

For each of the following tests, except the November 1997 Disability Test, two forms were used. These forms were handed out to alternate dwellings in the testing areas. The form which had the experimental questions was tested against the control form, which was generally similar to the 1996 Census Form. Wherever possible the 1996 Census results for the Collection Districts (CD) in the test areas were used as a benchmark.

2001 Census Test Program

The 2001 Census testing program was undertaken to develop the most suitable form designs, field and processing procedures possible for the 2001 Census. A series of seven tests, including a dress rehearsal were carried out in various cities and rural locations.

One of the key issues for the 2001 Census testing program was the possibility of including disability as a topic in the 2001 Census. As stated in 2001 Census of Population and Housing: ABS Views on Contents and Procedures (ABS Cat No. 2007.0): 'The ABS view is that this topic should be included in the 2001 Census, but only if the testing program produces questions which provide high quality data'. An additional field test was conducted in November 1997 specifically to test possible disability questions. Possible disability questions were again tested as part of the more general September 1998 test.

The field tests conducted are outlined below (a summary is given in Appendix 1).

May 1997

2001 Census Paper - Form Design Testing

The first test in preparation for the 2001 Census was held in Brisbane on Tuesday, 27 May 1997 where 5529 dwellings were enumerated. The test was primarily used to determine the viability of Intelligent Character Recognition (ICR) as the processing system for the 2001 Census and to test a number of other form design issues.

Optical Mark Recognition (OMR) and ICR forms were used for this test. Two forms (Form 1 and Form 2) were used to test alternative approaches. Form 1, the OMR form was the same form as that used for the 1996 Census with only minor changes. Form 2, the ICR form was similar to the OMR form in content and question order, but with a different format for many of the questions. No Personal Forms were used in the test.

While the overall test performance of the ICR form, as measured by question non-response, was inferior to the OMR form, the ICR form design performed sufficiently well in this test to justify further development for the 2001 Census.

November 1997

The second test was held in Melbourne on Tuesday, 26 November 1997. There were 2000 dwellings enumerated. The test was a targeted test of possible disability questions. One version of the form, Form 3, was used to test two questions to establish disability. The first question was used to determine difficulties experienced and the second to determine the cause of the difficulties. A follow-up survey was conducted after the test using questions based on those used to establish disability in the ABS Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (Cat No 4433.0). No Personal Forms were used in this test.

September 1998

The third test was held in Adelaide on Tuesday, 1 September 1998 where 5425 dwellings were enumerated. Two ICR forms (Form 4 and 5) were used to test alternative approaches. Form 4, the control form, was similar to the ICR form used for the May 1997 Test. Form 5, the experimental form included design and question wording changes. A follow-up survey was conducted after the test using questions based on those used to establish disability in the ABS Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (Cat No 4433.0). No Personal Forms were used in this test.

August 1999 (Major Test)

The Major Test for the 2001 Census was held in Sydney and the Eurobodalla region on the South Coast of New South Wales on Tuesday, 10 August 1999 where 19,755 dwellings were enumerated. Two forms (Form 6 and 7) were used to test alternative form designs. Form 6, the control form, was similar to that used for the September 1998 test. Form 7, the experimental form incorporated the design and question wording changes being tested. Two Personal Forms (Form 6 and 7) were also used in the test.

October 1999 (Indigenous Major Test)

Interview Forms, known as Special Indigenous Forms, used to enumerate Indigenous people in remote areas, were tested in late October 1999 in the Indigenous community of Nguju on Bathurst Island. The purpose of the test was to evaluate the effectiveness of a new Special Indigenous Household Form and form design changes made to the Special Indigenous Personal Form to align it with changes made to the mainstream forms. Two form types were used in the test; a Special Indigenous Household Form and two versions of the Special Indigenous Personal Form.

June 2000 (Dress Rehearsal)

The Dress Rehearsal for the 2001 Census was held in parts of Melbourne and the town of Mildura and its surrounds on Tuesday, 30 June 2000. As the 2001 mainstream forms were finalised by this stage, it was a test of field and data processing procedures only.

August 2000 (Indigenous Dress Rehearsal)

An Indigenous Dress Rehearsal was conducted in parts of Western Australia and Queensland in the remote indigenous communities of Cosmo Newbury, Kurrawang and Woorabinda in August 2000 as part of the Dress Rehearsal. Three form types were used in the test; a Special Indigenous Household Form, a Special Indigenous Personal Form and a Dwelling Check List. Form design changes and field procedures were tested for all forms. However there was insufficient time to evaluate the impact of the form design changes prior to the Indigenous forms being sent to the printers for the census.

A detailed discussion of the testing undertaken for each topic and issue tested on both the mainstream and Indigenous Census Forms follows.

1. AGE

1996 CENSUS QUESTION

4 Mark the person's age last birthday.

- If age is less than one year, mark box (0) as (θ).
- Mark one box for each person . For example, for a for a person aged 19 years:

Years:
(0) (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) (8)
(9) (10) (11) (12) (13) (14) (15) (16) (17)
(18) (19) (20) (21) (22) (23) (24) (25) (26)
(27) (28) (29) (30) (31) (32) (33) (34) (35)
(36) (37) (38) (39) (40) (41) (42) (43) (44)
(45) (46) **EXAMPLE** (51) (52) (53)
(54) (55) (56) (57) (58) (59) (60) (61) (62)
(63) (64) (65) (66) (67) (68) (69) (70) (71)
(72) (73) (74) (75) (76) (77) (78) (79) (80)
(81) (82) (83) (84) (85) (86) (87) (88) (89)
(90) (91) (92) (93) (94) (95) (96) (97) (98)
() 99 years or more

Years:
(0) (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) (8)
(9) (10) (11) (12) (13) (14) (15) (16) (17)
(18) (19) (20) (21) (22) (23) (24) (25) (26)
(27) (28) (29) (30) (31) (32) (33) (34) (35)
(36) (37) (38) (39) (40) (41) (42) (43) (44)
(45) (46) (47) (48) (49) (50) (51) (52) (53)
(54) (55) (56) (57) (58) (59) (60) (61) (62)
(63) (64) (65) (66) (67) (68) (69) (70) (71)
(72) (73) (74) (75) (76) (77) (78) (79) (80)
(81) (82) (83) (84) (85) (86) (87) (88) (89)
(90) (91) (92) (93) (94) (95) (96) (97) (98)
() 99 years or more -
Please specify.....years

1.1 BACKGROUND

In the 1996 Census the age question consisted of a list of OMR response categories, presented as a row of numbers going from left to right. The non-response rate, using this format, was low at 0.6%. With the change to ICR format for the 2001 Census, various forms of ICR write-in response boxes were tested in the May 1997 and September 1998 Tests, and at cognitive testing in April 1998.

The use of an example, demonstrating how a respondent should answer the question was also tested at cognitive testing in April 1998 and in the September 1998 Test.

1.2 TEST RESULTS

1.2.1 May 1997 Field Test

In May 1997, two versions of the age question were tested. Form 1 included the 1996 Census OMR question, while Form 2 included three ICR write-in response boxes. The instructions on both forms remained unchanged from the 1996 Census.

Testing revealed a significantly higher non-response rate for Form 2 (the ICR format of the question) at 6.2% compared to 1.2% for Form 1 (the OMR format of the question). Factors which were thought to have contributed to the higher non-response rate included a different question design, the relative amount of space given to the ICR format of the question and the write-in response boxes. Consequently it was recommended that the format of the question be made more noticeable in future testing.

1.2.2 April 1998 Cognitive Test

In response to the results obtained in the May 1997 Test, two versions of the age question were tested in focus groups in April 1998. Form 1 consisted of three linked write-in boxes for age and an example of how to answer the question. Form 2 consisted of two separate write-in boxes, an OMR category for 100 years or more and an example of how to answer the question. The write-in boxes were made larger to make them more noticeable to respondents.

As well as the different versions of the questions, additional space was allocated to the question on the form to increase respondents awareness of the question.

Testing revealed respondents preferred the two box version of the question. Respondents also concluded the example was useful. However, error analysis indicated when an example was presented a large minority of respondents did not follow the example.

It was recommended that the two box version of the question with an example supported by a leading zero be adopted for the next field test. However, discussions with the form processing section indicated that a leading zero was not required as the scanners could read the numbers in either box.

1.2.3 September 1998 Field Test

Form 4

What was the person's age last birthday?

- If age is less than one year, write '0'. Age
 Years
 () 100 years or more

Form 5

What was the person's age last birthday?

- If age is less than one year, write '0'. Age
 Years
- Example, for a person aged 9 years: Age
 Years
 () 100 years or more

In September 1998, two versions of the age question were tested. Form 4 included two write-in response boxes which were larger than those used in the May Test and an OMR category for '100 years or more'. Form 5 was identical except for the inclusion of an example, showing how to complete the question. Age '9' was used in the example. Again, questions were designed to occupy more space on the form in response to the May 1997 Test findings.

As shown in Table 1.1 non-response rates were much lower than for the May 1997 Test. The non-response rate for Form 4 was 0.9% and 0.6% for Form 5. The non-response rates were comparable to the non-response rate for test CDs for the 1996 Census (0.6%). Non-response rates were marginally higher for Form 4 than Form 5, however the differences were negligible suggesting the example used in Form 5 had minimal impact on response rates.

TABLE 1.1: NON-RESPONSE RATES FOR AGE QUESTION*

Forms	Non-Response Rate (%)
1996 Census**	0.6
Form 2 - May 1997	6.2
Form 4 - September 1998	0.9
Form 5 - September 1998	0.6

* Dummy forms excluded.

** 1996 Census figures are for the September Test CDs.

It was recommended that the Form 5 version of the age question be used in subsequent tests and that response rates continue to be monitored.

1.3 CHANGES MADE FOR THE 2001 CENSUS

Overall testing indicated that an ICR format can be successfully used to collect age data and that an example marginally improved response rates. Consequently for the 2001 question the OMR format for the question was replaced with a combined ICR/OMR format consisting of two write-in response boxes and an OMR category for '100 years or more'. An example showing how to answer the question was also included.

1.4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Analysis of the 2001 data will be needed to monitor non-response rates and distribution of responses. A comparison of 1996 and 2001 age data will also need to be undertaken. In addition it would be useful to monitor the '100 years or more' category to see the extent of use.

Finally, for the 2006 Census, consideration should be given to replacing age last birthday with date of birth to test if day, month and year of birth yield better data quality than stated age. This will also enable the collection of actual age for persons aged one hundred years or over. Hence, it is suggested that testing of a date of birth question be undertaken in the lead-up to the 2006 Census.

2. ANCESTRY

2.1 BACKGROUND

A question on each person's ancestry (ethnic or cultural origin) was asked for the first time in the 1986 Census. This was the result of investigation by the 1986 Population Census Ethnicity Committee on the need for data on ethnicity other than Language, Birthplace or Birthplace of Parents. The question was designed to identify the respondent's origin rather than a subjective perception of their ethnic background. Evaluation showed that it was not useful for this purpose as there was a high level of subjectivity and confusion about what the question meant, particularly for those people whose families had been in Australia for many generations. As a consequence, Ancestry was not included in either the 1991 or 1996 Censuses.

As a result of user demands, the ABS established a Census Consultative Group on Ancestry to seek user input to identify user requirements for these data and to develop and test questions which may provide acceptable and accurate data at a reasonable cost. Users required a measure of groups who could not be identified by proxy measures such as Birthplace of Parents or Language Spoken at Home. Examples of these groups included New Zealand Maoris, Chinese of South East Asian origin and Indians from Fiji.

The Ancestry question was tested in the May 1997 Test, with inconclusive results on the impact of the additional question on response rates to other ethnicity questions. This was also evident during the telephone follow-up conducted after the test, where respondents were unable to define the term consistently, providing a variety of definitions. This variable was re-tested in the August 1999 Major Test.

Subsequent discussions of the Consultative Group identified that the major policy issues were for those people who were either born overseas or whose parents were born overseas. Using this restricted criterion, 1986 Census and test data were reanalysed and the Ancestry data for this subgroup of the population was considered as acceptable.

2.2 TEST RESULTS

2.2.1 May 1997 Field Test

Form 1

No ancestry question tested

Form 2

What is the person's ancestry?

- For example: Vietnamese, Hmong, Dutch, Kurdish, Australian South Sea Islander.
- Provide more than one ancestry if necessary.

- Australian
- British
- Irish
- Italian
- German
- Greek
- Chinese
- Other - please specify
-
-

A question relating to Ancestry was included on Form 2 of the May 1997 Test, but not on Form 1. The question tested was similar to the 1986 question with the addition of some pre-coded response categories.

As seen in Table 2.1, the non-response rate for Ancestry for Form 2 was fairly low at 5.2% which compared favourably with the non-response rates for related variables.

TABLE 2.1: NON-RESPONSE FOR ANCESTRY & RELATED VARIABLES

Ethnicity Variables	Form 1 (%)	Form 2 (%)	1996 Census (%)*
Birthplace of Individual	4.2	4.7	5.9
Birthplace of Male Parent	4.6	5.8	5.6
Birthplace of Female Parent	4.4	5.6	5.2
Ancestry	n.a.	5.2	n.a.
Language Spoken at Home	4.4	5.5	5.9
Religion	10.1	25.9	10.5

* 1996 Census figures are for the May Test CDs.

If an additional question is to be used in the future, it is recommended to monitor response rates of the other ethnicity variables, as the higher non-response rates shown for all ethnicity variables on Form 2 compared with Form 1 could be related to the inclusion of the additional Ancestry question on Form 2.

Telephone Follow-up

After the May 1997 test, telephone follow-up was conducted. The main objective was to determine if respondents understood the ancestry question, and to determine how they worked out their answers. The results from the telephone follow-up are shown in the table below:

TABLE 2.2 MEANING OF ANCESTRY

Category	No.*	Percent (%)
Forebears/ancestors	108	55.9
Ethnic group or culture from which the person was descended	25	12.9
Parents/Grandparents	14	7.3
Nationality	6	3.1
Other	17	8.8
Don't know	23	11.9
Total	193	100.0

* Some respondents provided more than one answer and some did not provide an answer.

Of the 193 persons followed up, 56% thought ancestry meant forebears/ancestors and 13% decided their ancestry according to their ethnic group or culture from which the person was descended.

Other criteria used to decide ancestry included:

- birthplace;
- person's original country;
- personal opinion; and
- first fleet.

Overall, respondents understood the ancestry question reasonably well, however the answer for this question was worked out by the participants in different ways. For those respondents who did not answer the question, the main reason provided was the uncertainty of how many generations to go back.

Although a good response rate was achieved for this question, the basis for answering the question differed. Respondents were uncertain of the meaning of ancestry and responded either on the basis of their forebears or ethnic origin.

It was recommended to retest the inclusion of an Ancestry question in the next test.

2.2.2 August 1997 Cognitive Test

Focus group testing was conducted in Sydney in August 1997, using the same forms used for the May 1997 Test. The outcome of this test was that the ancestry question in its current design did not provide enough explanation as to what is meant by ancestry. The ICR design of the question proved to be successful.

2.2.3 October 1998 Cognitive Test

The second stage of focus group testing was conducted in October 1998 to test the revised question wording. Two forms were tested: Form 1 asked about the person's ancestry whereas Form 2 asked about the person's cultural background.

Discussion in all six focus groups indicated there was some degree of confusion over the meaning of both ancestry and cultural background. Further consideration should be given to the examples included on the form in the question, in particular, ancestries such as Arabic and Maori, which are not nation specific. The Census Guide should also include clarification of the term eventually used.

It was recommended that the ancestry question (or Form 1) should be used as the preferred question in the 2001 Census.

2.2.4 August 1999 Field Test (Major Test)

Form 6

What is the person's ancestry?

- For example: Arab, Vietnamese, Hmong, Dutch, Kurdish, Australian South Sea Islander, Maori.
- Provide more than one ancestry if necessary.

- British
- Irish
- Italian
- German
- Greek
- Chinese
- Australian
- Other - please specify
-
-

Form 7

What is the person's ancestry?

- For example: Vietnamese, Hmong, Dutch, Kurdish, Australian South Sea Islander, Maori.
- Provide more than one ancestry if necessary.

- English
- Irish
- Italian
- German
- Greek
- Chinese
- Australian
- Other - please specify
-
-

The test was conducted in Sydney in August 1999. Two forms, Form 6 and Form 7, were used to test:

- the effect of placing 'Australian' as the last response category on both forms;
- the inclusion of the examples 'Arab' on Form 6 and 'Maori' on both forms; and
- the inclusion of two different response categories, British on Form 6 and English on Form 7.

The following observations can be made from data presented in Table 2.3:

- there was a 0.1% difference in non-response rates between Form 6 (8.7%) and Form 7 (8.8%) which was not statistically significant.
- the distribution for both forms indicates that more respondents provided a British rather than English ancestry. However the percentage distribution of the combined respondents to British and English in Form 7 is almost equivalent to the percentage distribution for British only in Form 6.

TABLE 2.3: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES FOR FIRST RESPONSE TO ANCESTRY

	Form 6*		Form 7*	
	No.	%	No.	%
British	5,218	31.3	3,945	24.0
English	2	0.0	1,763	10.7
Irish	942	5.7	986	6.0
Italian	377	2.3	370	2.3
German	316	1.9	302	1.8
Greek	309	1.9	370	2.3
Chinese	700	4.2	684	4.2
Australian	4,444	26.7	3,617	22.0
Other	2,883	17.3	2,957	18.0
Not stated	1,454	8.7	1,449	8.8
Total	16,645	100.0	16,443	100.0

* System created records, overseas visitors and Personal Form records excluded.

In the May 1997 Test, 46.6% of persons responded 'Australian' as a single response to the ancestry question. This compares with 31.6% for Form 6 and 26.5% for Form 7. Placing 'Australian' as the final response has reduced the frequency with which this category was used.

There was a larger percentage of respondents who indicated that their ancestry was Arab on Form 6 than Form 7 (60 persons, or 0.4% compared to 13 persons, or 0.1%). It is likely that this result is attributable to Arab being one of the examples given on Form 6. After discussion with the Classification and Data Standards Section, it was decided that Arab should be replaced by Lebanese in the examples.

The following observations can be made from data presented in Table 2.4 in which Ancestry is cross-classified with parents' and individual's country of birth:

- the vast majority (99.1%) of respondents who stated that both parents were born in Australia also gave their birthplace as Australia; and
- those who stated that both parents were born overseas were much more likely to nominate an overseas ancestry, regardless of whether they themselves were born in Australia or overseas. Approximately half (52.8%) of those who stated that they and both their parents were born in Australia gave an overseas ancestry. This suggests that the ancestry question is being interpreted as pertaining to cultural tradition rather than birthplace of immediate antecedents or their own birthplace.

TABLE 2.4: BIRTHPLACE BY ANCESTRY *

Parents' Birthplace	Individual's Birthplace	Australian Ancestry		Overseas Ancestry	
		No.	%	No.	%
Both parents born in Australia	Australia	6,500	84.7	7,265	34.7
	Overseas	53	0.7	66	0.3
One parent born in Australia and one overseas	Australia	942	12.3	2,581	12.3
	Overseas	41	0.5	221	1.1
Both parents born overseas	Australia	115	1.5	2,453	11.7
	Overseas	27	0.4	8,327	39.8
Total		7,678	100	20,913	100

* Inadequately Described and Not Stated responses excluded.

2.3 CHANGES MADE FOR THE 2001 CENSUS

A simplified ICR question with more relevant examples has been included on the 2001 Census form. The response categories/options selected were based on likely response patterns and immigration patterns over the past 15 years. For those ancestries not listed on the form, an 'Other please specify' category was provided.

2.4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Evaluation of the 2001 question will focus on whether the question provides data of sufficient quality for people born overseas or whose parents were born overseas and whether this combination of questions is more useful than that provided from fully detailed birthplace of parents questions.

3. BIRTHPLACE OF PARENTS

1996 CENSUS QUESTIONS

15 In which country was the person's father born?

- Australia
- England
- Scotland
- Italy
- Greece
- New Zealand
- The Netherlands
- Other - please specify

.....
.....

16 In which country was the person's mother born?

- Australia
- England
- Scotland
- Italy
- Greece
- New Zealand
- The Netherlands
- Other - please specify

.....
.....

3.1 BACKGROUND

The 1996 Census question format incorporated both OMR and written responses, with a list of the seven most commonly reported countries followed by 'Other - please specify'.

In the May 1997 Test, ICR versions of the questions were tested. Only two response categories were provided, 'Australia' and 'Other - please specify'. Although results were generally favourable in the May Test it was decided that, for the September 1998 Test, both Forms 4 and 5 would be reverted to the 1996 OMR format to reduce respondent burden as far as possible. The Form 4 and 5 versions of the birthplace of parents questions differed from the 1996 version in that the response categories provided were changed with 'The Netherlands' being replaced with 'China (other than Taiwan and Hong Kong)' to reflect changes in immigration patterns.

For the August 1999 Test a decision was made to test new question wording with two response categories only. In Form 6, the question tested was 'Was the person's father/mother born in Australia or overseas?' The question in Form 7 was 'In which country was the person's father/mother born?' Only two response categories were provided in either version of the form. In Form 6, the response categories were 'Australia' and 'Overseas' while in Form 7 they were 'Australia' and 'Other country'. This was as a result of the outcomes of discussions with users through the Consultative Committee on Ancestry so as to keep respondent burden and census costs in line with the 1996 Census. (see Ancestry for further details)

3.2 TEST RESULTS

3.2.1 May 1997 Field Test

Form 1

Used the 1996 Census question format.

Form 2

In which country was the person's father born?

- Australia
- Other - please specify
-
-

In which country was the person's mother born?

- Australia
- Other - please specify
-
-

In May 1997 an OMR and ICR version of the questions were tested. Response rates showed a better level of response in the OMR form. It was decided for the 2001 Census to revert to the OMR format in order to reduce respondent burden.

3.2.2 September 1998 Field Test

The main objective of this test was to evaluate the changed response categories in the parents country of birth questions. The questions tested were the same on both Forms 4 and 5, the response category Netherlands was changed to China (other than Taiwan and Hong Kong).

The change in response categories did not affect the response distribution or the non-response rates of either birthplace of parents question. In both the 1996 Census and the September Test, the non-response rate for birthplace of male parent was higher than for birthplace of female parent. The reason for this discrepancy is not obvious but may simply be due to the proportion of people who lack this knowledge about their father. Since similar results were recorded in both the 1996 Census and previous census tests, form design issues do not appear to be the explanation.

The non-response rates for both birthplace of parents questions were higher in the September test than in the 1996 Census. As higher non-response rates are a regular feature of tests, it is not thought that form design issues were the cause of the higher non-response rates.

Although there was evidence of a possible 'list effect' it was very minor. Further observations need to be made concerning the non-response rates.

3.2.3 October 1998 Cognitive Test

Testing of the Birthplace of Parents topic was conducted as a result of discussions at a meeting with the Census Ethnicity Consultative Committee. At the meeting, considerable pressure was being exerted on the census program to reduce respondent burden and thereby the number of questions on the form. It was made clear that if the Ancestry topic was included on the 2001 Census Form, the Birthplace of Parents topics in the 1996 format would have to be omitted. As a compromise, the meeting proposed an abbreviated Birthplace of Parents question which would save considerable space on the form, but reduce coding alternatives to 'Australia' or 'Overseas'. Two versions of the Birthplace of Parents question were tested in focus groups in Sydney.

Form 1

Where were the person's parents born?

. Mark one box for the person's mother and one box for the person's father.

- Mother born in Australia
- Mother born overseas
- Father born in Australia
- Father born overseas

Form 2

Were the person's parents born overseas?

. Mark one box for the person's mother and one box for the person's father.

- Mother born Overseas
- Yes No
- Father born overseas
- Yes No

Testing focussed primarily on participant reaction to the Birthplace of Parents and Ethnicity topics. As a result, several proposals for question design improvement were raised. Testing revealed that, on average, in excess of one person in each group failed to mark a second box indicating the father's birthplace. This result was not surprising considering the question was the only one on the form requiring a minimum of two marks. Comments made by participants during the discussion suggested that once the first mark was made, answering the question was thought to be completed. It was recommended to reduce response categories.

3.2.4 April 1999 Cognitive Test

Two question designs were tested. The wording of the questions was the same as those used in the May 1997 Test, however the response categories were different. The response categories on Form 1 were 'Australia' and 'Overseas' and on Form 2 were 'Australia' and 'Overseas country'.

Participants in each of the focus groups found it easy to answer both questions relating to their father's and mother's country of birth. It was recommended that the response categories for the Birthplace of Parent questions should be 'Australia' and 'Overseas', because it avoided householder confusion about whether or not to provide an actual country as a written response as part of their answer on the Census Form.

3.2.5 August 1999 Field Test (Major Test)

Form 6

Was the person's father born in Australia or overseas?

- Australia
- Overseas

Was the person's mother born in Australia or overseas?

- Australia
- Overseas

Form 7

In which country was the person's father born?

- Australia
- Other country

In which country was the person's mother born?

- Australia
- Other country

Following the recommendations from the April 1999 Cognitive Test, new question wording and the effect of the reduced response categories were tested in the Major Test. The differences in the question wording and response categories did not result in significant differences in the distribution of responses or non-response rates between Forms 6 and 7 for country of birth for either parent, as shown in Tables 3.1 and 3.2.

TABLE 3.1: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES FOR BIRTHPLACE OF MALE PARENT*

Birthplace of father	Form 6		Form 7		96 Census**	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Australia	8,785	50.9	8,554	50.5	22,875	50.7
Overseas/Other country	7,461	43.2	7,472	44.1	21,361	47.4
Not stated	1,021	5.9	920	5.4	847	1.9
Total	17,267	100.0	16,946	100.0	45,083	100.0

* System created records and overseas visitors excluded.

** 1996 Census figures are for the August test CDs.

TABLE 3.2: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES FOR BIRTHPLACE OF FEMALE PARENT*

Birth place of mother	Form 6		Form 7		1996 Census**	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Australia	9,029	52.3	8,816	52	24,206	53.7
Overseas/Other country	6,834	39.6	6,749	39.8	20,180	44.8
Not stated	1,404	8.1	1,381	8.1	697	1.5
Total	17,267	100.0	16,946	100.0	45,083	100.0

* System created records and overseas visitors excluded.

** 1996 Census figures are for the August Test CDs.

An interesting outcome, was that on both Forms 6 and 7 the non-response rate for birthplace of mother (8.1%) was higher than the birthplace of father (5.7%). This finding reverses the observed trend for the 1996 Census and previous tests, and reasons for this were unclear.

The non-response rates were also higher than for the September 1998 Test, where rates of 4.9% for Birthplace of Father and 2.7% for Birthplace of Mother were obtained. The reason for this difference was not clear but seems unlikely to be related to form design issues.

Given that both versions of the question and their corresponding response categories resulted in similar outcomes, it would be preferable to adopt the Form 6 version of the question. This version of response categories was also the version favoured by the majority of focus group participants in April 1999.

3.3 CHANGES MADE FOR THE 2001 CENSUS

Due to the inclusion of an ancestry question in the 2001 Census Form, the Birthplace of Parents questions have been reduced in size with only two response categories provided. The format of the 2001 Census question will only ask whether the person's parents were born in Australia or Overseas, in contrast to the extended multi - optional questions asked in the 1996 Census.

3.4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

The Ancestry or Ethnicity module including the two birthplace of parents questions will come under scrutiny for the 2006 Census. Ethnicity will be the focus of user consultations, to determine its analytical usefulness, based on the question's performance in the 2001 Census.

4. COMPUTER USE AT HOME AND INTERNET USE

4.1 BACKGROUND

Questions on the use of personal computers and the internet were included for the first time in the 2001 Census. Unfortunately the decision to include these topics came too late for field testing of the questions in the 2001 Census test program. However, extensive cognitive testing was undertaken in February 2000. This resulted in modifications to the originally proposed questions.

4.2 TEST RESULTS

4.2.1 February 2000 Cognitive Test

Form 1

Did the person use a personal computer at home last week? No
 Yes

- See page 3 of the Census Guide for more information.

Did the person use the Internet last week? No
 Yes, at home
 Yes, at work
 Yes, elsewhere

- See page 3 of the Census Guide for more information.
- Mark all applicable boxes.

Form 2

Did the person use a personal computer at home last week? No
 Yes

- See page 3 of the Census Guide for more information.

Did the person use the Internet last week? No
 Yes, from home
 Yes, from work
 Yes, elsewhere

- See page 3 of the Census Guide for more information.
- Mark all applicable boxes.

Computer Use at Home

Twelve focus groups reflecting a broad cross-section of the Australian population were conducted with Market Attitude Research Services in Sydney during a four day period in February.

The same question design for the 'Computer Use at Home' question was tested on both focus group Forms 1 and 2. After completing the census form and the private evaluation questionnaire all participants were asked to raise any concerns, problems or other issues for discussion before the group focused on the specific questions relevant to the testing.

The question related to usage of a personal computer at home during the last week. Participant discussions identified there was a level of over-reporting for a small proportion of respondents who answered yes. While most people who answered yes did so correctly, there were a small number of respondents who answered yes even though their personal computer use at home occurred 3 to 4 weeks ago and not in the last week. Parents also included their children using a computer at school if the household did not have a home computer.

Respondents who adopted this behavior did so in the belief that the question was important and consequently answered in the affirmative.

Overall, the question as tested worked successfully. It was suggested that the question could be included on the 2001 Census Form in the format tested if a low level of over reporting a yes response is considered acceptable. However, testing identified concern about the question having an adverse impact on older Australians and lower socio-economic groups who may be embarrassed by not having a computer.

Another issue identified in testing was that some respondents defined last week to be either the last seven days or last week Monday to Sunday. It was considered worthwhile to clarify the definition of last week in the Census Guide.

Internet Use

Two versions of the question were tested, Forms 1 and 2, which differed only in the response categories. Form 1 provided the response categories of 'at work', 'at home' and 'elsewhere' and Form 2 provided the categories 'from work', 'from home' and 'elsewhere'.

Testing showed that the question worked effectively. In-depth probing and discussion identified that in all cases the participants (or their household members) who answered yes had used the Internet at home, work or elsewhere within the last week.

Thus, it was found that the question had been successfully designed and should be included as tested for the 2001 Census.

However, there was a slight level of confusion for some respondents as they assumed that like the Computer Use at Home question, the question referred only to home use of the internet.

Discussion with the participants about their preference of the words 'at' and 'from' in the response categories identified that Form 1 which used the word 'at' was preferable.

4.3 CHANGES MADE FOR THE 2001 CENSUS

It was recommended that the Computer Use at Home question be included in the 2001 Census exactly as tested.

It was also recommended that the version of the Internet Use question which used the words 'at' in the response categories be included on the 2001 Census Form.

4.4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

As this is a new topic for 2001, the data quality for this topic will need to be evaluated and the effect of the questions inclusion on the quality of data obtained from other questions on the census form be ascertained.

5. DISABILITY

5.1 BACKGROUND

Disability over time has proved to be a difficult concept to measure because it is dependent on respondent perceptions of whether or not they are disabled, rather than on strict definitions.

As survey information cannot be produced for small geographic areas or population groups, there is a high level of demand for the census to collect information on the prevalence of disability in the Australian population.

A range of disability questions was tested in the lead up to the 1996 Census. However, none were found to provide results sufficiently comparable to those obtained from surveys. Consequently disability was not included as a topic in the 1996 Census.

A Disability Census Consultative Committee was established in the lead up to the 2001 Census to investigate the need for disability data and to provide assistance in the development of questions. Following discussions with the Disability Census Consultative Committee, two versions of questions were designed and tested in focus groups in August 1997 and May 1998. Participants included both younger and older age groups, people with intellectual, physical and psychiatric disabilities and their carers, and Indigenous people.

Field testing of disability questions, based on focus group recommendations, was undertaken in November 1997 and September 1998. Analysis of field test data involved the comparison of responses to the disability census test questions with the responses to questions from a follow-up survey conducted after the census tests. The follow-up survey questions were based on questions used to establish disability in the ABS Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (Cat. No.4433.0).

Criteria used to assess the outcome of field tests included the closeness of the census and follow-up survey disability rates, and the proportion of false positives (those who reported a disability in the census but not in the survey) and false negatives (those who reported a disability in the survey but not in the census).

5.2 TEST RESULTS

5.2.1 August & September 1997 Cognitive Tests

August 1997: Form 1

18 Does the person have a physical or mental illness, health problem or disability that has lasted six months or more?

- No > **Go to 20**
 Yes

19 Does this long-term condition cause you difficulty with or stop you doing any of the following?

- Provide more than one answer if necessary.

- Physical activities (e.g. Walking, kneeling, climbing stairs)
 Communicating in own language (e.g. talking, hearing)
 Learning, understanding or remembering things
 Any other difficulty - please specify

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- None of the above

September 1997: Form 4

For developing public policies and community based programs, there is a need to measure the extent of disability existing in Australia.

17 Does the person have a health problem that has lasted six months or more, Yes No

or

does the person have a disability? Yes No

18 Tick YES or NO for each of the following:

Does the person...

- have difficulty in doing everyday activities such as eating, showering or dressing? Yes No
- have difficulty talking to or hearing other people? Yes No
- have difficulty learning or remembering things? Yes No
- have difficulty reading or understanding things? Yes No
- have difficulty walking, kneeling or climbing stairs? Yes No
- have difficulty living in independent housing without help from other people? Yes No
- have difficulty doing any other things people of the same age usually do? Yes No

Two sets of disability questions were designed and tested in three rounds of focus group discussions. The focus groups held in Sydney between August and October 1997 involved people with disabilities including intellectual, physical and psychiatric disabilities, carers of aged persons and people with disabilities and Indigenous persons. Each set of questions contained a 'difficulties' question and an 'activity limitation' question. The order and wording of these questions varied between forms. Forms 3 and 4 also contained an introductory statement.

Focus group discussions indicated that questions on Form 1 and 2 were unsuccessful because most aged people with a health problem or activity restriction and people with an intellectual disability or physical disability were not successfully measured as question wording did not seem appropriate to their circumstances. The redesigned questions on Forms 3 and 4 were found to work more successfully, with Form 3 (which asked about activity limitation first) providing a more reliable measure. Additionally most participants except Indigenous people preferred this option.

Focus group testing also indicated that the introduction was also successful in concept, however the term 'public policies' was found to confuse many participants.

5.2.2 November 1997 Field Test

In November 1997, based on focus group recommendations, two questions were tested to establish disability. Questions tested were the same as those on Form 3 in the September 1997 Focus Group except for the introductory statement where the term 'health policies' replaced 'public policies'.

The November 1997 Test (Form 3) produced a disability rate of 14.5% compared to the follow-up survey rate of 23.1%. The disparity between these figures and the high false negatives indicated that the questions only captured a proportion of the disabled population. See Table 5.1 below.

5.2.4 September 1998 Field Test

In September 1998, two revised questions were tested to establish disability. Form 4 included the same question as tested on Form 3 in the May 1998 Focus Group Test while Form 5 included that used on Form 4 in the May 1998 Focus Group Test. The introductory statements used on both Form 4 and 5 were the same as the one used on Form 3 in the November 1997 Field Test.

The questions were designed to test:

- whether a different type of response category for the 'difficulties' question improved the match between the census test and the follow-up survey data; and
- whether disability identified by the census questions had an acceptable, close and stable relationship to an identifiable subset of the survey disability population.

In the September 1998 Test the gap between the census and survey disability rates narrowed on both forms, however, this was at the expense of higher false positives rates.

To establish whether disability identified by the census test question had a relationship with an identifiable subset of disabilities identified in the survey, the definitions of disability used in the census test questions were made more restrictive in an attempt to derive more severely affected subsets of the population.

Results of the analysis indicated that no gains were made by matching the survey and census disability populations by restricting the disability definition. The differential between census and survey disability rates increased as the definition of disability tightened. A similar pattern was found for false negatives. False positives remained consistently high.

5.3 CHANGES MADE FOR THE 2001 CENSUS

Results from field testing did not strengthen the case for including disability as a topic in the 2001 Census. Consequently it was recommended that disability should not be included in the 2001 Census due to the difficulty of designing a set of questions to accurately collect the information on a self enumerated form.

5.4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Extensive testing has been undertaken in the lead up to both the 1996 and 2001 Censuses. The tests have shown that questions cannot provide results, which can be compared in any meaningful way with those collected in a survey. Experiences in other countries has been similar.

The ABS will continue to monitor overseas experience with census disability questions. However, given the outcomes of the extensive testing program to date, it is recommended that the disability topic not be considered for inclusion in the 2006 Census.

6. HIGHEST LEVEL OF SCHOOLING COMPLETED (IN 1996 CENSUS: AGE LEFT SCHOOL)

1996 CENSUS QUESTION

22 How old was the person when he or she left primary or secondary school?

- For persons who returned after a break to complete their schooling, mark the age at which they last left school.

- Still at primary or secondary school
- Did not go to school
- 14 years or younger
- 15 years
- 16 years
- 17 years
- 18 years
- 19 years or older

6.1 BACKGROUND

A question relating to Highest Level of Schooling Completed was first asked in 1966. In 1976 the question was changed to Age Left School to overcome reporting problems due to the lack of standardisation across States and the different systems used overseas. This practice was continued up until, and including, the 1996 Census.

Evaluation of 1996 Census data (1996 Census of Population and Housing Fact Sheet 18 - Age Left School) revealed a significant inconsistency in responses to this question when compared to related questions. Ten percent of responses to the 'Still at primary or secondary school' category of this question also had responses to Full/part-time Student and Type of Educational Institution Attending which indicated they were not attending an educational institution.

An ICR format was tested in May 1997. Respondents were asked to write in the actual age at which they left school, thus providing more detailed information than was available from the 1996 question. Focus group testing in June 1998 provided some options for rewording the question and the response categories.

In the Major Test, given that common terminology had been in place for some years, the question reverted to 'Highest Level of Schooling Completed'. Two versions of the question were tested.

6.2 TEST RESULTS

6.2.1 May 1997 Field Test

Form 2

How old was the person when he or she left primary or secondary school?

- For persons who returned after a break to complete their schooling, print the age at which they last left school.

- Years of age
- Still at primary or secondary school
- Did not go to school

Two versions of the Age Left School question were tested in May 1997. Form 1 included the 1996 Census OMR question while a combined ICR/OMR format was used on Form 2. On Form 2 respondents were able to indicate the age at which they left school in two ICR boxes, or tick OMR boxes indicating that they were still at primary or secondary school or had never attended school.

Form 1 (OMR version) resulted in a non-response rate of 9.3% while Form 2 (ICR version) of the question resulted in a non-response rate of 12.7%. This was consistent with the generally higher non-response rates for other ICR response formats. It was recommended that the placement of this question be reviewed with the aim of making it more noticeable.

6.2.2 June 1998 Cognitive Test

Focus group testing in June 1998 tested the question and response categories used on Form 2 in the May 1997 Test.

Results from testing indicated considerable confusion with the question:

- one third of persons from a non-English speaking background answered the question incorrectly or not at all;
- one third of persons 60 years and over answered the question incorrectly or not at all; and
- one half of those aged 16 to 24 years and one third of the control group provided their age on leaving primary or secondary school but also answered that they were 'still at primary or secondary school'.

The main issues were:

- people currently attending secondary school often wrote the age when they completed primary school and also marked 'still at primary or secondary school';
- people from a non-English speaking background (who had tertiary education qualifications) did not answer the question because they were confused as to whether they had to give ages for both leaving primary school and secondary school or because to them the term 'school' referred to university education; and
- people aged 60 years and over were confused as to whether they should give both the age they left primary school and the age they left secondary school.

To address these issues it was recommended to:

- divide the 'still at primary or secondary school' response box into two; one for primary school and one for secondary school;
- include an instruction indicating that university level education was not relevant; and
- re-frame the question to focus on secondary school.

However, none of these recommendations were adopted for the next test.

6.2.3 September 1998 Field Test

Forms 4 & 5

How old was the person when he or she left primary or secondary school?

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Did not go to school |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Still at secondary school |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Years of age |
- For persons who returned after a break to complete their schooling, print the age at which they last left school.

In September 1998, only one version of the question was tested on both forms.

The September 1998 Test examined the issue of people indicating they were 'Still at primary or secondary school' for Age Left School and also marking 'No' in the Full/part-time Student question. The test produced a smaller occurrence of this anomaly (0.8%) compared to the 1996 Census (1.2%), however this was still greater than the 1991 Census (0.04%). The Census figures are for the September Test CDs only.

Examination of age for this population in the 1996 Census and the September 1998 Test suggests that the majority of individuals were probably not at school, as they were aged 21 years or more.

It was suggested that the difference in the anomaly between the 1991 Census, 1996 Census and the September 1998 Test resulted from the more complex question wording used in 1996 Census and the September 1998 Test. It was thus recommended to revise the question wording to refer to school only. Additionally, re-ordering of the response categories, compared to the 1996 Census, resulted in an increase in responses for the first category, leading to a recommendation to retest this objective with two different orders of response categories to distinguish any list effect. Neither of the recommendations was adopted.

The September 1998 Test also reworded the 'Still at primary or secondary school' category to 'Still at secondary school'. This was on the basis that this question is only asked of persons aged 15 years or more and that these people are unlikely to be still at primary school. This change did not appear to have any effect, so it was recommended that it be changed to 'Still at school' to simplify the response further. This recommendation was adopted.

6.2.4 April 1999 Cognitive Test

In April 1999, the topic shifted from Age Left School to Highest Level of Schooling Completed. Two versions of the question were tested in focus groups. Form 1 was 'What is the highest **level** of primary or secondary school the person has completed?' and Form 2 was 'What is the highest **year** of primary or secondary school the person has completed?'. Both versions were successful. The word 'level' was recommended to be included in the question and the word 'year' in the response categories.

6.2.5 August 1999 Field Test (Major Test)

Form 6

What is the highest year of primary or secondary school the person has completed?

- For persons who returned after a break to complete their schooling, mark the highest year completed when they last left.
- See page 9 of the Census Guide for more information about year equivalents.

- Still at school
- Did not go to school
- Year 8 or below
- Year 9 or equivalent
- Year 10 or equivalent
- Year 11 or equivalent
- Year 12 or equivalent

Form 7

What is the highest level of primary or secondary school the person has completed?

- Mark one box only.
- For persons who returned after a break to complete their schooling, mark the highest level completed when they last left.
- See page 9 of the Census Guide for more information about year equivalents.

- Still at school
- Did not go to school
- Year 8 or below
- Year 9 or equivalent
- Year 10 or equivalent
- Year 11 or equivalent
- Year 12 or equivalent

In the Major Test, two versions of the question were tested. Form 6 asked for the 'highest year' while Form 7 asked for the 'highest level'. Response categories referring to 'year or equivalent' were also tested. An additional instruction, 'Mark one box only', was added to Form 7.

Form 7 with 10.5% non-response fared better than Form 6 with 12.4%. The distribution of responses did not differ significantly between the two forms.

There was an extremely low incidence of double marking for both questions and therefore the extra instruction on Form 7 to 'Mark one box only' was considered to be unnecessary.

It was recommended to use the question and response categories on Form 7 but omitting the instruction to 'Mark one box only'.

Telephone Follow-up

Telephone follow-up was conducted to ascertain the accuracy of responses to the highest year/level of schooling question on the Census Test forms. The rate of correct responses was higher for Form 7 than for Form 6 across all demographic groups sampled.

6.3 CHANGES MADE FOR THE 2001 CENSUS

A number of recommendations made were not adopted for the qualification questions in the 2001 testing program due to the development of the Australian Standard Classification of Education (ASCED).

Following developments in education and training and the introduction of the Australian Qualifications Framework, the Australian Bureau of Statistics Classification of Qualifications was considered to be reduced in its usefulness as a tool for the analysis of education and training statistics. This led to the development of the ASCED which was designed to classify education according to Level and Field - the two main aspects of primary interest to users of educational statistics.

As ASCED details were not finalised until late in the testing program it was decided to undertake a thorough review of non-school qualifications in the lead up to the 2006 Census.

So for the 2001 Census the question 'What is the highest level of primary or secondary school the person has completed?' was included. The response categories included 'Still at school', 'Did not go to school' and a range of 'years or equivalents'.

An instruction to 'Mark one box only' was retained to ensure consistency with other questions.

6.4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Further evaluation will be required to monitor the problem of respondents indicating that they are 'still at school' but providing responses that were inconsistent with those recorded for Full/part-time Student and Type of Educational Institution Attending.

All qualification questions, both school and non-school, will be reviewed as part of the 2006 Census form design program.

7. HOUSEHOLD PAYMENTS

1996 CENSUS QUESTION

44 How much does your household pay for this dwelling?

- Include rent and mortgage repayments and site fees if caravan or manufactured home in caravan park or manufactured home estate. \$□□□□.□□ per week
- Exclude water rates, council rates, repairs, maintenance and other Fees. **OR** \$□□□□.□□ per fortnight
- If no payments please mark 'NIL' box. **OR** \$□□□□.□□ per month
□ NIL

7.1 BACKGROUND

A question on mortgage repayments was asked for the first time in the 1976 Census. The question was simplified for the 1981 Census to ask only whether there was a mortgage and the monthly payments on the total mortgage on the dwelling. Since the 1986 Census, the question has asked the monthly payment being made on the loan(s) for the dwelling.

Because of the emergence of rent-buy schemes, and strong user demand for actual amounts rather than range data, a new approach to collecting the data was required for the 1996 Census. Consequently a question collecting actual amounts paid for the dwelling was asked in the 1996 Census. Type of tenure responses were used to determine whether payments were recorded as rent or loan repayments.

A new ICR question format was tested on the May 1997 Test.

Feedback from the 1996 Census Hotline indicated that the sequencing order of Questions 44 (household payments) and 45 (tenure question) should be reversed as respondents had to attempt to answer the household payment question before being given the opportunity to state whether in fact the dwelling was rented or mortgaged. It was thought that this would result in a more logical sequencing of questions in the September 1998 test, therefore, a new sequencing order and placement of the question was tested.

7.2 TEST RESULTS

7.2.1 May 1997 Field Test

For this Test, two forms were tested, Form 1 was the 1996 Census OMR question and Form 2 the new ICR format with response boxes and an additional instruction not to include cents. The changes were to improve the quality of responses to the household payment question and to achieve a higher recognition rate for ICR processing of write-in responses on the form.

Non-response rates were within the 'normal' range of acceptance for a test, Form 1 (OMR) had a non-response rate of 4.5% and Form 2 (ICR) 5.2%. The 1996 Census non-response rate for the question was 4.5%.

As there were problems encountered with printing the dollar sign, comma, decimal point and zeros, there was no evaluation of this objective. It was recommended that the topic be retested in the next test.

7.2.2 September 1998 Field Test

As recommended from the May 1997 Test, this question was re-tested in order to evaluate the change in position (reversed order) of the household payment and tenure questions.

In the Test, a new sequencing order of questions was tested. On Form 4 the household payment question was located before the tenure question while on Form 5 the order was reversed.

The non-response rate for the household payment question was lower on Form 5 (14.5%), than Form 4 (15.8%). The lower non-response rates for both questions on Form 5 suggests that the new sequencing order of questions encouraged respondents to answer the questions more logically and shows that the new sequencing order of questions worked well.

It was recommended that the sequencing order of household payment and tenure questions included on Form 5, be adopted.

7.3 CHANGES MADE FOR THE 2001 CENSUS

The household payment question preceded the tenure question on the 2001 Census. An additional instruction 'do not include cents' was added and the wording of the first instruction was simplified.

7.4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

The quality of data for this topic from the 2001 Census will be monitored to see if the position of the question on the form and the sequencing of the question has had an effect on the quality of the data collected.

8. INCOME

1996 CENSUS QUESTION

- 29 What is the gross income (including pensions and allowances) that the person usually receives each week from all sources?**
- . Mark one box only.**
- . Count all income for each person including:**
family payment
additional family payment
rental assistance
pensions
unemployment benefits
student allowance
maintenance
(child support)
worker's compensation
superannuation
wages
salary
overtime
commissions and bonuses
interest received
dividends
rents received
(less expenses of operation)
business or farm income
(less expenses of operation)
- . Do not deduct:**
tax
superannuation
health insurance
- \$1,500 or more per week
(\$78,000 or more per year)
- \$1000 - \$1,499 per week
(\$52,000 - \$77,999 per year)
- \$800 - \$999 per week
(\$41,600 - \$51,999 per year)
- \$700 - \$799 per week
(\$36,400 - \$41,599 per year)
- \$600 - \$699 per week
(\$31,200 - \$36,999 per year)
- \$500 - \$599 per week
(\$26,000 - \$31,199 per year)
- \$400 - \$499 per week
(\$20,800 - \$25,999 per year)
- \$300 - \$399 per week
(\$15,600 - \$20,799 per year)
- \$200 - \$299 per week
(\$10,400 - \$15,599 per year)
- \$160 - \$199 per week
(\$8,320 - \$10,399 per year)
- \$120 - \$159 per week
(\$6,240 - \$8,319 per year)
- \$80 - \$119 per week
(\$4,160 - \$6,239 per year)
- \$40 - \$79 per week
(\$2,080 - \$4,159 per year)
- \$1 - \$39 per week
(\$1 - \$2,079 per year)
- Nil income
- Negative income

8.1 BACKGROUND

A question on income was first asked in the 1933 Census in an attempt to measure the effects of the Depression. It was re-included in 1976 and for all subsequent censuses. Statistics on personal, family and household income are produced from this question.

The question asked each person to indicate the range within which their gross income from all sources falls. In 1996, categories for 'Nil' and 'Negative' income were provided to overcome an apparent cause of non-response from low income earners. To ensure that the 'nil income' category did not lead to biased results, the highest income categories were listed first.

In May 1997, the question was converted to ICR format and the response categories were retained as collecting actual dollar amounts would lead to lower response rates. The location of the question was also tested. Cognitive testing was conducted in June 1998 to assess respondents understanding of the question. In September 1998, two forms were used with a combined new response category of 'nil and negative' income.

8.2 TEST RESULTS

8.2.1 May 1997 Test

The Income question was tested in order to evaluate the effect of placing the question at the bottom of the page.

The non-response rates for Form 1, 2 and the 1996 Census were 9.7%, 10.6% and 9.4% respectively. The difference between Form 1 and 2 is approximately 1%, suggesting that the placement of the question had minimal impact on response rates.

The distribution of responses was very similar to the 1996 Census for both form types and there were no questionable discrepancies.

Although the non-response rate for Form 2 was higher, the spacing used in Form 2 was easier to read than in the previous format and could be a consideration in reducing non-response rates. It was recommended that the half page spacing of the question on Form 2 be retained for future testing.

June 1998 Cognitive Test

The income question was tested to assess participants understanding of the question.

The question was found to work successfully. Discussion with participants identified that they had generally considered their different sources of income to work out their answer. The terms 'Nil income' and 'Negative income' were also found to be generally understood even though in most cases these categories did not apply to the participants.

It was recommended that the design of the income question as tested be retained and that the 'Nil income' and 'Negative income' categories be retained.

8.2.2 September 1998 Test

In this test, two forms were used. Both versions of the form had the same question, the response categories 'nil and negative income' were combined into one response category, because of space restrictions on the form. The question was again located at the bottom of the page. Because there was insufficient space on the form the spacing used in Form 2 was not adopted.

The non-response rate was considerably higher in the September test (9.8%) than in the 1996 Census for the same CDs (2.9%). However, it is expected that non-response rates in a test would be higher than those in a Census given the sensitivity of the question and the fact that the test was voluntary. The effect of combining the 'nil' and 'negative' categories was impossible to determine.

In the 1996 Census, 5.2% recorded 'negative' and 'nil' responses, compared with 4.2%, in the combined category 'nil or negative' income in the test (see Table 8.1 below). As these figures are similar, it appears that combining the response categories has not adversely affected the outcome.

TABLE 8.1: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES FOR THE INCOME QUESTION**

Income	1996 Census*		September 1998 Test	
	No.	%	No.	%
Negative income	39	0.4	n.a.	n.a.
Nil income	484	4.8	n.a.	n.a.
Nil or negative income	n.a.	n.a.	382	4.2
\$1 to \$499	6982	68.9	5509	60.8
\$500 or more	2333	23.0	2284	25.2
Not stated	293	2.9	886	9.8
Total	10131	100.0	9061	100.0

*The 1996 figures are for the September test CDs.

** For persons aged 15 years or more, excluding dummy forms and overseas visitors.

As nil and negative income are usually reported by respondents who own their own businesses and a majority of them are found in rural areas, it was suggested to re-test the combined categories as well as the separate categories in the Major Test which included rural areas. However, these recommendations were not implemented.

8.3 CHANGES MADE FOR THE 2001 CENSUS

The Income question used in the 2001 Census was similar to the 1996 question, with the exception of:

- changes to reference sources of income to reflect 2001 terminology;
- the inclusion of an instruction to refer respondents to the Census Guide for more information; and
- the placement of the question at the bottom of the page.

8.4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

The 2001 income question should be monitored to ensure that the repositioning of the question does not affect data quality. For 2006, investigate the inclusion of salary packaging in the income question and alternative sources of income to reflect changes in society.

9. INDUSTRY

1996 CENSUS QUESTION

36 What kind of industry, business or service is carried out by the employer at that address?

- Describe as fully as possible, using two words or more, for example, dairy farming, footwear manufacturing.

Industry, business or service of employer

.....
.....
.....

9.1 BACKGROUND

A question on the industry of a person's employment has been included in one form or another in all censuses. The industry coding for the 2001 Census will use the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC).

Industry was tested in May 1997 to assess the feasibility of directly coding Industry without register matching. Telephone follow-up was conducted with those people who either did not answer the question or provided a one word answer. In September 1998, a new structured coding approach for industry coding was tested and additional questions were tested to improve reliability.

With changes to the ABS Business Register, it will no longer be possible to use employers' address for the purposes of coding industry. Testing was undertaken to find a more effective direct industry question which will provide better information and allow for more reliable coding.

9.2 TEST RESULTS

9.2.1 May 1997 Field Test

Form 1 (same as 1996 Census)

What kind of industry, business or service is carried out by the employer at that address?

- Describe as fully as possible, using two words or more, for example, dairy farming, footwear manufacturing

Industry, business or service of employer

.....
.....
.....

Form 2

What goods are produced at, or services provided from, that workplace address?

- Describe as fully as possible, using two words or more, for example, plastic pipe manufacturing, building houses, footwear retailing, life insurance services

Goods produced or services provided

□□□□□□□□
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□□□□□□□□

Two versions of the question were tested in May 1997 to assess the feasibility of directly coding Industry without register matching. The same two-stage industry question format as used in the 1996 Census was used for the May 1997 Test. On Form 1 the question was of a similar format as in 1996 and on Form 2 the industry question was modified and additional industry examples were provided.

The non-response rate for the industry question was higher for Form 2 (4.4%) than for Form 1 (3.2%) and the 1996 Census (2.4%).

It is unlikely that the ICR (Form 1) design of the question was responsible for the differences. This change could be attributed to question wording and the addition of new examples.

As the response pattern for both forms were similar (see Table 9.1 below), directly coding industry without business register matching was considered feasible. The similarity of the distribution between the results from Form 1 and Form 2 gave an indication that the ICR format will collect the information successfully.

TABLE 9.1: DISTRIBUTION OF CODED RESULTS FOR INDUSTRY QUESTION*

Industry	Form 1		Form 2		1996 Census**	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	3	0.2	10	0.5	17	0.3
Mining	8	0.4	6	0.3	18	0.4
Manufacturing	187	9.7	179	9.0	500	10.0
Electricity, Gas & Water Supply	6	0.3	13	0.7	26	0.5
Construction	89	4.6	92	4.6	210	4.2
Wholesale Trade	89	4.6	99	5.0	260	5.2
Retail Trade	233	12.1	259	13.1	612	12.2
Accom., Cafes & Restaurants	152	7.9	140	7.1	400	8.0
Transport & Storage	75	3.9	72	3.6	193	3.9
Communication Services	36	1.9	27	1.4	78	1.6
Finance & Insurance	58	3.0	91	4.6	185	3.7
Property & Business Services	242	12.6	237	12.0	618	12.3
Govt., Admin & Defence	112	5.8	101	5.1	301	6.0
Education	169	8.8	167	8.4	453	9.0
Health & Community services	224	11.6	256	12.9	601	12.0
Cultural & Recreational Services	66	3.4	63	3.2	165	3.3
Personal & Other Services	79	4.1	78	3.9	202	4.0
Non-classifiable economic units	34	1.8	6	0.3	50	1.0
Not Stated	61	3.2	87	4.4	121	2.4
Total	1,923	100.0	1,983	100.0	5,010	100.0

* Dummy forms excluded.

** 1996 Census figures are for the May test CDs.

Telephone Follow-up

Telephone follow-up was conducted after the May Test for those people who did not answer the question or provided a one word answer. Respondents were asked to describe the main business activity of their employer at the address where they work. Answers were compared to responses on Form 2. Results indicated that 48% of respondents gave the same answer, while 52% of respondents gave a different response.

It was recommended that further testing be undertaken on question wording.

9.2.3 September 1998 Field Test

Form 4

Which best describes the business of the employer?

- . Mark **ONE** box only.
- . If 'Other' is marked, please specify (eg. Agriculture, Transport, Insurance, Education)

- Manufacturing
- Wholesaling
- Retailing (incl. Take-aways)
- Accommodation, Cafes & Restaurants
- Community & Health Services
- Other - (please specify)
- □□□□
- □□□□

Please list the main goods produced or main services provided by the employer's business.

- . Describe as fully as possible, using two words or more.
- . For example, wheat and sheep, bus charter, health insurance, primary school education, civil engineering consultancy service, house building, steel pipes.

Goods Produced/Services Provided

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Form 5

Please identify the industry best describing the employer's business.

- . Mark **ONE** box only.
- . If 'Other' is marked, please specify (eg. Agriculture, Transport, Insurance, Education)

- Manufacturing
- Wholesaling
- Retailing (incl. Takeaways)
- Accommodation, Cafes & Restaurants
- Community & Health Services
- Other - please specify
- □□□□
- □□□□

Please list the main goods produced or main services provided by the employer's business.

- . Describe as fully as possible, using two words or more.
- . For example, wheat and sheep, bus charter, health insurance, primary school education, civil engineering consultancy service, house building, steel pipes.

Goods Produced/Services Provided

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In the September Test, it was decided to explore a structured coding approach to industry coding and an additional new industry question was developed to improve the reliability of coding. Two forms were used to test the new question wording, the additional question provided a full listing of industry divisions as response categories. Analysis of this objective was undertaken by the Industry and Classifications Section.

A Structured Coder and Standard Coder were used to assess the accuracy and speed of coding. Both coders yielded similar results. The Structured Coder was easier to use as it was more intuitive. With further development the Structured Coder would become a more efficient coding tool than the Standard Coder.

The additional question with the Industry divisions was successful, however it was recommended that further testing be conducted before a decision is reached.

9.3 CHANGES MADE FOR THE 2001 CENSUS

For the 2001 Census, the Industry question was split into two questions one asking 'Which best describes the business of the employer?' with an additional question asking, 'What are the main goods produced or main services provided by the employer's business?'

The instruction, 'Mark one box only' was included in question 38 to maintain consistency with the Census form. A second instruction 'If "Other" is marked, please specify (e.g. Agriculture, Transport, Insurance, Education)', was also included.

9.4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

It was recommended that a detailed evaluation of industry coding procedures and questions used in the 2001 Census be undertaken to ascertain whether the new structured coding methodology was successful and whether the questions were designed effectively to facilitate coding procedures.

10. JOB LAST WEEK

1996 CENSUS QUESTION

31 In the main job held last week, was the person:

- Mark one box only.
- If the person had more than one job last week then 'main job' refers to the job in which the person usually works the most hours.

- A wage or salary earner?
- A helper not receiving wages?

Conducting own business in a limited liability company

- With employees?
- Without employees?

Conducting own business which is not a limited liability company

- With employees?
- Without employees?

10.1 BACKGROUND

This question, while not a census variable in itself, helps determine a person's labour force status by classifying an employed person as an employee, employer, own account worker, or a contributing family worker.

In the 1996 Census, additional categories were included in the main job last week question to differentiate between business people in limited liability companies and those not in limited liability companies. This was done to improve comparability between the status of employment data in the Census and the ABS Labour Force Survey (LFS).

The difference between the 1991 Census data and the 1996 Census data, for status in employment, was largely due to the introduction of the limited liability categories in 1996. Unlike the 1991 Census, compared to the Labour Force Survey the 1996 Census overstated the number of employees and understated the number of employers and self-employed people.

In the 1996 Census there was a higher percentage of employees (90.9%) than indicated by the August 1996 LFS (85.1%). In contrast, the findings for employers and own account workers were lower in the Census (2.6% and 5.8% respectively) than in the LFS (4.1% and 9.9%). The results for contributing family workers were similar in the Census (1.0%) and the LFS (0.9%).

It was anticipated that testing a change of order of the 'own business' response categories may shed some light on respondent understanding of the question, as may a change in wording for the unincorporated business category.

10.2 TEST RESULTS

10.2.1 April 1998 Cognitive Test

Focus groups were conducted in April 1998 to test the use of new words for 'Not a limited liability company'. Two versions of response categories were tested. Form 1 was the same as the 1996 Census Form while Form 2 reversed the order of the response categories placing 'conducting own business which is a limited liability company' second. Form 2 also changed words from 'conducting own business which is not a limited liability company' to 'conducting own business which is a sole trader, partnership or trust'.

Focus group discussion found that almost all small business owners were largely unaware of the term 'limited liability company'. However, small business owners who were unable to define this term and to whom it was inapplicable were able to correctly describe their business legal structure as a sole trader, partnership or trust. It was therefore recommended that the Form 2 version of the question be adopted.

10.2.2 September 1998 Field Test

Form 4

In the main job held last week, was the person:

- Mark one box only.
- If the person had more than one job last week then 'main job' refers to the job in which the person usually works the most hours.

- A wage or salary earner?
- A helper not receiving wages?
- Conducting own business which is not a limited liability company**
- With employees?
- Without employees?
- Conducting own business in a limited liability company**
- With employees?
- Without employees?

Form 5

In the main job held last week, was the person:

- Mark one box only.
- If the person had more than one job last week then 'main job' refers to the job in which the person usually works the most hours.

- A wage or salary earner?
- A helper not receiving wages?
- Conducting own business which is a sole trader, partnership or trust**
- With employees?
- Without employees?
- Conducting own business in a limited liability company**
- With employees?
- Without employees?

In September 1998, two versions of the question were tested: Form 4 used the same response categories as Form 1 in the April 1998 Cognitive Test but with the order reversed; and Form 5 was identical to Form 2 in April 1998. Thus the only difference between the two forms was the terminology for the 1996 Census category: 'not a limited liability company'.

Non-response rates for Form 4, Form 5 and the 1996 Census for the same CDs were all relatively low (3.0%, 2.2% and 2.1% respectively).

TABLE 10.1: JOB LAST WEEK 1996 CENSUS & SEPTEMBER 1998 TEST*

Job Last Week	1996 Census**		Form 4		Form 5	
	No.	%***	No.	%***	No.	%***
A wage or salary earner	4,366	86.3	2,019	89.1	1,864	87.8
A helper not receiving wages	25	0.5	11	0.5	11	0.5
Conducting own business in a limited liability company	276	5.5	62	2.7	39	1.8
Conducting own business which is not a limited liability company	390	7.7	173	7.6	209	9.8
Not stated	106	n.a.	69	n.a.	48	n.a.
Total	5,163	n.a.	2,334	n.a.	2,171	n.a.

* For persons aged 15 years or more, excluding dummy forms and overseas visitors.

** The 1996 figures are for the September 1998 Test CDs.

*** Percentages exclude 'Not stated'.

Table 10.1 shows that the new wording 'conducting own business which is a sole trader, partnership or trust' in Form 5 produced results (9.8%) which were considerably higher than those for both Form 4 (7.6%) and the 1996 Census (7.7%). As there was no difference in the category order between Forms 4 and 5, this suggests that respondents more readily recognised the new label for their type of business. Furthermore, the double negative 'not a limited liability company' and 'without employees' in the parallel category in Form 4 may also have had a lowering influence on the Form 4 results. Neither Form 4 nor Form 5 appeared to have corrected the discrepancies between the 1996 Census and LFS findings, although the Form 5 design may have marginally improved comparability.

It was recommended to evaluate user demand for this topic and consider recommending it's exclusion for 2001. If the question were to be retained, then it was recommended to use the simpler wording and responses as in the 1991 Census.

10.2.3 April 1999 Cognitive Test

Form 1

In the main job held last week, was the person:?

- Mark **ONE** box only.
- For a person working in their own limited liability company, mark the first box.

- A wage or salary earner?
- A helper not receiving wages?

Conducting own business which is a sole trader, partnership or trust

- With employees
- Without employees

Form 2

In the main job held last week, was the person:?

- Mark **ONE** box only.

- A wage or salary earner?
- A helper not receiving wages?
- Conducting own business in a limited liability company

Conducting own business which is a sole trader, partnership or trust

- With employees
- Without employees

Focus groups were conducted in Sydney in April 1999 to test the wording of the response categories. Both forms contained the category : 'Conducting own business which is a sole trader, partnership or trust'. The forms differed in that Form 1 had no category for limited liability company whereas Form 2 contained a single category for this response with no further sub-categories.

Wage and salary earners and those operating partnerships, trusts and sole traders answered the questions correctly. Most wage and salary earners and some business owners did not know the meaning of limited liability whereas Pty Ltd was more widely known.

Persons involved in incorporated companies were often confused, especially by the Form 2 design. However they also tended to provide multiple answers to the Form 1 question.

The Form 2 version was recommended but with the reference to 'limited liability company' being expressed by the term 'Pty Ltd'.

10.2.4 August 1999 Field Test (Major Test)

Form 6

In the main job held last week, was the person:

- Mark one box only.
- If the person had more than one job last week then 'main job' refers to the job in which the person usually works the most hours.
- For a person working in their own limited liability Company (or Pty Ltd) mark the first box.
- See page 11 of the Census Guide for more information.

- A wage or salary earner?
- Conducting own business with employees?
- Conducting own business without employees?
- A helper not receiving wages?

Form 7

In the main job held last week, was the person:

- Mark one box only.
- If the person had more than one job last week then 'main job' refers to the job in which the person usually works the most hours.
- For a person working in their own limited liability Company (or Pty Ltd) mark the first box.
- See page 11 of the Census Guide for more information.

- A wage or salary earner?
 - A helper not receiving wages?
- Conducting own business which is a sole trader, partnership or trust**
- With employees
 - Without employees

For the Major Test, Form 6 contained simplified wording and categories from the 1991 Census as per the September 1998 recommendation. Form 7 was a simplified version of the question used in Form 5 but excluding the response 'conducting own business in a limited liability company'. An instruction was added to both forms to aid respondents who were owners of a limited liability company, to correctly identify themselves as wage and salary earners. Finally, instructions referred to 'limited liability company (or Pty Ltd)' since focus group testing suggested this term was better understood.

Non-response rates for Forms 6 and 7 and the 1996 Census for the same CDs were all low (1.6%, 1.6% and 1.7% respectively).

TABLE 10.2: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES FOR EMPLOYEES AND OTHER EMPLOYED PERSONS FOR JOB LAST WEEK *

Job last week***	Form 6	Form 7	'96 Census**	Aug '96 LFS (Aust.) (a)	Aug '99 LFS (Aust.) (b)	'96 Census (Aust.)
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Employees	83.4	87.2	92.6	85.1	84.5	90.9
Other employed persons	16.6	12.8	7.4	14.9	15.5	9.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

* For persons aged 15 years or more, system created records and overseas visitors excluded.

** These 1996 figures are for the August Test CDs.

*** Percentages exclude 'Not stated'.

(a) 6302.0 Labour Force Australia, August 1996.

(b) 6302.0 Labour Force Australia, August 1999.

Results for Form 6 and 7 shown in Table 10.2 appear to have corrected the discrepancy between the Job Last Week categories in the Census and LFS data. This is attributed to the new instruction in the Job Last Week question: 'For a person working in their own limited liability company (or Pty Ltd) mark the first box'.

The results from the August test align more closely with both the August 1996 and 1999 LFS results than those for any Census or any other test results. However, caution should be used in interpreting some of these results. This is because, firstly, the comparison is between data taken in August 1996 (Census and LFS) and August 1999 (Test), and secondly, the LFS data is for total Australia while the August Test is for selected CDs.

Results from Form 6 were better than from Form 7 as Form 6 data is more closely correlated to LFS data than Form 7 data. The proportion of helpers in Form 7 appears too high when compared with previous Census and Test results.

10.3 CHANGES MADE FOR THE 2001 CENSUS

The Form 6 version of the question was used: this is the 1991 Census question but with slight changes to the two response categories for 'Conducting own business' as shown below.

1991 Census

Conducting own business but not employing others?
Conducting own business and employing others?

2001 Census

Conducting own business with employees?
Conducting own business without employees?

10.4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Many users are looking for an expanded understanding of labour force experience for small geographic areas and for small population groups rather than simple measures of employment and unemployment. Issues including multiple job holding and time at current main job may be more relevant to understanding needs at the small area level to complement the employed and unemployed questions. The occupation and industry questions provide extremely detailed information about the main job but none at all about other jobs.

The fundamental issue is how closely Census labour force measures need to be to those from the LFS. Perhaps users would be better served by devoting census form space to other labour force issues (e.g. multiple job holding) rather than to efforts to refine the measurement of status of the worker.

11. LANDLORD

1996 CENSUS QUESTION

- 46 If this dwelling is being rented, who is it rented from?
- Private landlord not in the same household
 - Real estate agent
 - State public housing department
 - Community or co-operative housing group
 - Employer - Government
 - Employer - other
 - Other

11.1 BACKGROUND

Between the 1991 and 1996 Census a notable decline in the reported number of Victorian public housing tenants was noted. In May 1998, a discussion paper 'Under Enumeration of Public Housing Tenants in Victoria' was presented by the ABS Housing Statistics Unit Advisory Group to promote discussion on possible reasons for the decline in the public housing tenants.

Findings indicated that language problems of first generation migrants, cultural aversion to government surveys, and changes between the 1991 and 1996 Census landlord question may have accounted for the apparent decline in public housing tenants.

To improve the level of response rates for public housing tenants in the 2001 Census re-ordering of response categories was tested in the September 1998 Test.

11.2 TEST RESULTS

11.2.1 September 1998 Field Test

In the September 1998 Test, two sets of the response categories were tested. Form 4 response categories were positioned in the same order as the 1996 Census question while on Form 5 the relevant public housing response category was listed first. As the September 1998 Test was conducted in South Australia, the 'South Australian Housing Trust' was listed on both versions of the form as the public housing response category.

As shown in Table 11.1 the non-response rates for the question in the September 1998 Test were much lower for Form 5 than Form 4.

TABLE 11.1: NON-RESPONSE RATES FOR LANDLORD QUESTION*

Form Type	Non-Response Rate (%)
1996 Census**	2.1
Form 4 - September 1998	3.1
Form 5 - September 1998	1.4

* Dummy forms excluded.

** 1996 Census figures are for the September Test CDs.

Testing revealed a higher non-response rate for Form 4 at 3.1% compared to 1.4% for Form 5, indicating that listing the public housing response category first had a positive effect on response rates for public housing tenants.

As indicated in Table 11.2, re-ordering response categories on Form 5 had minimum impact on response distributions. Form 5 resulted in a slightly lower proportion of respondents indicating that they were renting from the South Australian Housing Trust at 28.6% compared to 30% for Form 4.

TABLE 11.2: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES FOR LANDLORD QUESTION*

Type of Landlord	Form 4		Form 5	
	No.	%	No.	%
Private landlord not in household	181	37.5	230	40.6
Real estate agent	106	21.9	111	19.6
South Australian Housing Trust	145	30.0	162	28.6
Community/co-operative housing group	18	3.7	31	5.5
Employer - Government	5	1.0	5	0.9
Employer - Private	0	0.0	0	0.0
Other	13	2.7	19	3.4
Not stated	15	3.1	8	1.4
Total	483	100.0	566	100.0

* Dummy forms excluded.

It was recommended that testing the new order of response categories on Form 5 be undertaken on a larger sample. However, it was later decided that further analysis and testing would not reveal anything else, so the new order of response categories was adopted for the census.

Following testing of positions of the household payment and tenure questions in the September 1998 Test it was recommended to retain the reversed order of these questions for 2001 Census. To facilitate this change it was suggested to modify the landlord question to account for respondents who mark the 'Being purchased' category in the tenure question and thus do not need to answer the question concerning landlord status. It was proposed that this could be done by including an additional response category 'Not rented' or an explanatory dot point indicating that the question only needs to be answered if the dwelling is rented. However, this proposal was not tested and not adopted.

11.3 CHANGES MADE FOR THE 2001 CENSUS

To improve response rates particularly for public housing tenants, re-ordered response categories (with the public housing response category listed first) were included in the 2001 landlord question.

11.4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Analysis of the 2001 data for landlord question will be needed to monitor response rates and response patterns, particularly for public housing tenants.

12. LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME

1996 CENSUS QUESTION

17 Does the person speak a language other than English at home?

- If more than one language, indicate the one that is spoken most often.

- () No, English only > go to 19
- () Yes, Italian
- () Yes, Greek
- () Yes, Cantonese
- () Yes, Mandarin
- () Yes, Arabic
- () Yes, German
- () Yes, other - please specify

.....

12.1 BACKGROUND

The six most common language responses from the 1991 Census were again listed in the 1996 Census, generally in descending order of frequency. In the 1996 Census there were more Vietnamese speakers than German. Therefore, to reflect this change, the September 1998 Test revised the response categories.

12.2 TEST RESULTS

12.2.1 September 1998 Field Test

Forms 4 & 5

Does the person speak a language other than English at home?

- If more than one language, write the one that is spoken most often.

- No, English only > go to 18
- Yes, Italian
- Yes, Greek
- Yes, Cantonese
- Yes, Mandarin
- Yes, Arabic
- Yes, Vietnamese
- Yes, other - please specify

.....

In the September 1998 Test, the response category 'German' was replaced with 'Vietnamese' in the language spoken at home question on both Forms 4 and 5. There was very little difference in the non-response rates between both forms (2.2%) and the 1996 Census (1.1%).

TABLE 12.1: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES FOR LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME*

Language	Forms 4 & 5		1996 Census**	
	No.	%	No.	%
English only	7,792	72.2	8,717	72.3
Italian	1,097	10.2	1,295	10.7
Greek	585	5.4	697	5.8
Cantonese	64	0.6	68	0.6
Mandarin	15	0.1	10	0.1
Arabic	23	0.2	24	0.2
German	66	0.6	102	0.8
Vietnamese	62	0.6	67	0.5
Other	854	7.9	947	7.9
Not stated	236	2.2	129	1.1
Total	10,794	100.0	12,056	100.0

* Dummy forms excluded.

** 1996 Census figures are for the September Test CDs.

Table 12.1 shows the distribution of responses for the question in the September 1998 Test and the 1996 Census. The overall pattern of responses obtained in the test for the language categories did not differ markedly from those obtained in the 1996 Census. The proportion of respondents providing 'Vietnamese' as a response on the test forms was 0.6% compared with 0.5% for the 1996 Census. This was expected due to the ease of marking the category and the increase in numbers of Vietnamese residing in the test area in Adelaide. The inclusion of the 'Vietnamese' category clearly had no adverse effects on the expected results.

In contrast, the proportion of respondents providing 'German' as a response on the test forms was 0.6% compared with 0.8% for the 1996 Census. This was also expected due to the exclusion of 'German' as a response category from the list of response categories.

It was therefore recommended that the revised category 'Vietnamese' be retained for the 2001 Census.

12.3 CHANGES MADE FOR THE 2001 CENSUS

For the 2001 Census, the new list of language response categories, which includes Vietnamese, was included in the question.

12.4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Distribution of responses from the 2001 Census will need to be monitored to ensure the relevance of the response categories.

13. METHOD OF TRAVEL TO WORK

1996 CENSUS QUESTION

38 How did the person get to work on Tuesday, 6 August 1996?

- If the person used more than one method of travel to work, mark all relevant boxes.
 - Train
 - Bus
 - Ferry or tram
 - Taxi
 - Car - as a driver
 - Car - as a passenger
 - Motorbike or motor scooter
 - Bicycle
 - Walked only
 - Worked at home
 - Other
 - Did not go to work

13.1 BACKGROUND

The response categories on the 1996 Census did not cover all possible methods of travel to work and so consideration was given to expanding the response categories. In response to user requests a variety of wording and layout changes were tested in the lead-up to the 2001 Census for the method of travel question, primarily involving changes to question wording, response categories and instructions.

13.2 TEST RESULTS

13.2.1 May 1997 Field Test

In the May 1997 Test, two versions of the question were tested. Form 1 included the 1996 Census OMR question, while Form 2 included an ICR question. On Form 2 light rail was added to the train category in response to user requests.

Testing revealed a higher non-response rate for Form 2 at 3% compared to 2.4% for Form 1 and the 1996 Census (1.8%). A similar distribution of responses was obtained for 'Train' and 'Train/light rail' at 4% and 4.3% respectively. Although the percentage was higher for Form 2, results were inconclusive because there were no light rail networks in Brisbane.

It was recommended to retest the light rail category where light rail networks existed and to create a new response category incorporating light rail with the tram rather than the train category because they were more similar modes of transport.

13.2.2 May 1998 Cognitive Test

In response to the results obtained in the May 1997 Test, two versions of the method of travel to work question were tested in focus group discussions and in-home observations in May 1998. Form 1 included the Form 2 (May 1997 Test) question wording, while Form 2 included revised question wording, 'Indicate all methods of travel used to get to the main job on....', the separation of the tram and ferry response categories and the subsequent addition of light rail to the tram response category.

Testing revealed that the revised question was successful. However in-home observations indicated that respondents preferred to answer the question based on their 'usual' method of travel rather than the methods used on census day. It was recommended that the revised question be tested in the September 1998 Test.

13.2.3 September 1998 Field Test

Form 5

On most days last week, how did the person get to work?

- If the person used more than one method of travel to work, mark all relevant boxes.

- Worked at home
- Walked only
- Bicycle
- Motorbike or motor scooter
- Car - as passenger
- Car - as driver
- Taxi
- Tram (including Light Rail)
- Bus
- Train
- Other - please specify
-
-
- Did not go to work

In the September 1998 Test, two versions of the question were tested. Form 4 included the 1996 Census question wording while Form 5 question wording was made consistent with time periods in the Labour Survey at the request of major users. Response categories were also reversed on Form 5.

At the request of users both forms included two lines of ICR boxes underneath the 'Other - please specify' response to allow assessment of 'Other - please specify' responses and the 'Ferry or tram' response category was replaced by two new categories 'Ferry' and 'Tram (including light rail)'.

As shown in Table 13.1, minimal differences in responses between forms were found except for the category 'Did not go to work'. Of Form 4 respondents, 7.6% marked 'Did not go to work' while only 2.5% of Form 5 respondents gave this response. The revised question wording on Form 5 was thought to have contributed to this pattern. The Form 4 question was concerned with method of travel to work on a specified single day while Form 5 was concerned with a weekly period.

TABLE 13.1: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES FOR METHOD OF TRAVEL TO WORK QUESTION*

Mode of travel	Form 4		Form 5	
	No.	%	No.	%
Train	42	1.8	37	1.7
Bus	121	5.2	125	5.8
Ferry	0	0.0	0	0.0
Tram (including Light Rail)	0	0.0	1	0.1
Taxi	5	0.2	6	0.3
Car as driver	1,521	65.2	1,476	67.9
Car as passenger	152	6.5	153	7.0
Motor bike/motor scooter	7	0.3	10	0.5
Bicycle	43	1.8	40	1.8
Walked only	62	2.7	41	1.9
Worked at home	70	3.0	74	3.4
Other	24	1.0	19	0.9
Did not go to work	177	7.6	55	2.5
Not Stated	110	4.7	134	6.2
Total	2,334	100.0	2,171	100.0

* Dummy forms excluded.

The revised wording of the method of travel to work question on Form 5 was also identified as the main reason for the higher non-response rate for Form 5 at 6.2% than Form 4 at 4.7%. The question had greater conceptual complexity and it was thought this might have contributed to the higher non-response rate. It was therefore recommended that consultation with users be undertaken about the conceptual revision and that the reverse order of categories be re-tested.

Analysis of written responses in the 'Other - please specify' category indicated 1% of respondents provided a written response in this category. Overall, 43.5 % indicated that their method of transport included travel in a commercial vehicle, while 34.8% gave a response that was listed as a response category. Hence, it was recommended to:

- remove the 'Other - please specify' write-in boxes;
- create a response category to cater for people who use trucks or other commercial vehicles; and
- include an additional instruction to help reduce responses to the 'Other' category.

As in the previous test, results of the 'Tram (including Light Rail)' response were inconclusive as Adelaide only had one tram and no light rail system. It was therefore recommended that further testing be undertaken.

13.2.4 May 1999 Cognitive Test

Two versions of questions were tested in focus groups in May 1999. As users had indicated that there were increasing numbers of people working at home the location of the 'Worked at home' response was tested. Form 1 included the response category 'Worked at home' as the last response category while on Form 2 it was located first.

Testing revealed that respondents who worked from home preferred the location on Form 2. However, other participants preferred the major categories such Train, Bus and Ferry to be at the top of the list because they were more common.

Testing also found that many respondents were reluctant to record multiple methods of travel because the instruction 'Mark all relevant boxes' was either not read or noticed, or perceived as 'confusing' and 'bureaucratic'

It was recommended that 'Worked at home' should remain first on the list and that the instruction to record multiple responses be written in plain English.

13.2.5 August 1999 Field Test (Major Test)

In August 1999, two revised versions of the question were tested on Form 6 and 7. Both questions asked respondents how they got to work on census test day, for their main job held last week and included:

- a revised instruction in bold print asking respondents to 'mark all methods used'; and
- the response category 'Truck'.

On Form 6 the response categories were positioned in the same order as the 1996 Census while on Form 7 the 'Worked at home' response was positioned first.

Testing showed higher non-response rates than the 1996 Census which was 1.4%. Form 6 resulted in a higher non-response rate at 4% compared to Form 7 at 3.5%. A similar distribution of responses was obtained for both forms.

Testing also revealed a higher proportion of respondents marking 'Truck' and fewer marking 'Other'. As the number of persons marking 'Truck' was greater than those marking some other categories it was recommended that this category be retained.

Placing the response category 'Worked at home' at the top of the list on Form 7 resulted in a higher response rate at 5.8% compared to 4.4% on Form 6. Ease of finding this category on the form was thought to have contributed to the higher response rate and it was recommended to retain this position. However, after discussions with Department of Transport users, it was decided not to implement the recommendation because of the impact on time series data.

Revising the instruction 'mark all methods used' had little impact on the proportion of respondents who used multiple modes of transport. Similar proportions of multiple responses were obtained on the

1996 Census, and on Forms 6 and 7 (11.7%, 11.3% and 11.1% , respectively). As results were inconclusive it was recommended to retain the bolded instruction and to undertake further testing in the lead up to the 2006 Census.

13.3 CHANGES MADE FOR THE 2001 CENSUS

The method of travel to work question remained the same as the 1996 Census. However, changes were made to the instructions and response categories. To address respondents reluctance to mark multiple methods of travel 'Mark all methods used' replaced the instruction 'Mark all relevant boxes'. An instruction advising respondents that more information is available in the Census Guide was also included in the question. The 'Ferry or tram' response category was replaced by two new categories 'Ferry' and 'Tram (including light rail)' and the response category 'trucks' was included.

13.4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Analysis of the 2001 method of travel to work data will be needed to monitor non-response rates and distribution of responses to check 1996/2001 response comparability. In addition it would be useful to monitor proportions of multiple responses.

14. NON-SCHOOL QUALIFICATIONS

1996 CENSUS QUESTIONS

23 Has the person completed a trade certificate or any other educational qualification since leaving school?

- () No >**Go to 28**
- () No, still studying for first qualification >**Go to 28**
- () Yes, trade certificate/apprenticeship
- () Yes, other qualification

24 What is the highest qualification the person has completed since leaving school?

•For example, trade certificate, bachelor degree, associate diploma, doctorate.

Full name of qualification
.....
.....
.....

25 What is the main field of study for the person's highest qualification completed?

•For example, history, plumbing, primary school teaching.

Field of study
.....
.....
.....

26 At which institution was the person's highest qualification completed?

•If completed overseas, also state which country.

Name of Institution
.....
.....
.....

27 In which year did the person complete their highest qualification?

- () Before 1971
- () 1971 - 1980
- () 1981 - 1985
- () 1986 - 1990
- () 1991 - 1992
- () 1993 - 1994
- () 1995 - 1996

14.1 BACKGROUND

Please note: readers linking this report to other Census reports or data should be aware that the variable names below have the prefix, **Non-School Qualification:** , omitted for the sake of brevity. When referring to other published material, users will need to prefix the references below with **Non-School Qualification:** .

Up until, and including, the 1996 Census data was collected on post-school qualifications only. In line with proposed changes to the ABS Classification of Qualifications, the Non-School Qualifications (NSQ) questions in the 2001 Census were to have a new emphasis to include qualifications attained at school as part of Australian Qualifications Framework.

Five qualification questions on the census form are used to produce three census variables:

- Field of Study;
- Level of Education; and
- Year Completed.

The difference between the number of questions and the number of variables is due to:

- the use of an indicator question (Q23) to separate different classes of respondents and to direct them to the next appropriate question; and
- a question on Institution which is not itself a variable but is used to assist in coding Level of Education and Field of Study.

In the May 1997 Test, evaluation was undertaken on the transition of OMR response categories to ICR response categories. As questions relating to NSQ have traditionally had the highest non-response rates on the census form, it was important to determine whether the changes increased non-response rates.

Further testing was conducted in September 1998 and August 1999 on modifications made to both the questions and the response categories to align the data to probable changes in the ABS Classification of Qualifications.

14.2 TEST RESULTS

14.2.1 May 1997 Field Test

In May 1997, two versions of the questions were tested. On Form 1 the NSQ questions were the same as those on the 1996 Census Form. On Form 2 the questions were modified to an ICR format. Specifically, on Form 2, OMR response parentheses were replaced with either ICR response boxes or ICR write-in response boxes, and write-in lines were replaced by ICR write-in response boxes. These changes affected both the size and position of questions.

The non-response rates for Form 2 were uniformly higher than for Form 1 as shown in Table 14.1. The reasons for the higher non-response rates were not obvious so further testing was recommended.

TABLE 14.1: NON-RESPONSE RATES FOR THE MAY 1997 TEST

Variable	Form 1 (OMR) (%)	Form 2(ICR) (%)
Indicator	n.a.	n.a.
Level of education	12.3	14.8
Field of Study	5.8	8.7
Institution	n.a.	n.a.
Year Completed	4.9	14.2

14.2.2 June 1998 Cognitive Test

Form 7

Has the person completed a school, trade or any other educational qualification?

- No, has not completed Year 10 or equivalent
> **Go to 23**
- Yes, completed Year 10 or equivalent only
> **Go to 23**
- Yes, completed Year 11 or equivalent only
> **Go to 23**
- Yes, completed Year 12 or equivalent only
> **Go to 23**
- Yes, AQF qualification
- Yes, trade certificate/apprenticeship
- Yes, other qualification

Two versions of the NSQ questions were tested on Form 6 and Form 7 in focus groups in June 1998. Form 6 contained similar questions to Form 2 in the May 1997 Test. Form 7 included a major change to the indicator question wording and response categories which attempted to make the question relevant to the newly introduced Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).

Form 7 performed poorly with not one participant having heard of the AQF and many participants completing complex multiple responses to the question. It was thus recommended to retain the Form 6 version until further question design options for the AQF were considered and successfully tested.

Other findings were:

- about half of participants wrote the actual name of their qualification in the response to the Level of Education question while the remainder followed the examples and wrote the level of the qualification;
- there was a lack of space in the institution question to write the full name of the institution. It was thus recommended to increase the answer space for this question; and
- the common answer pattern for Year Completed was for the answer to relate to the year of completing the course and not the year the award was made. This was consistent with the aim of the question.

14.2.3 September 1998 Field Test

Form 4

24 Has the person completed a school, trade or any other educational qualification?

- No > **Go to 29**
- No, still studying for first qualification > **Go to 29**
- Yes, trade certificate/apprenticeship
- Yes, other qualification

25 What is the highest qualification the person has completed?

- For example, trade certificate, bachelor degree, associate diploma, doctorate, certificate 2, advanced diploma, SACE.

Full name of qualification
□□□□□□□□
□□□□□□□□
□□□□□□□□
□□□□□□□□

26 What is the main field of study for the person's highest qualification completed?

- For example, history, plumbing, primary school teaching, beauty salon practice, civil works.

Field of study
□□□□□□□□
□□□□□□□□
□□□□□□□□
□□□□□□□□

27 At which institution was the person's highest qualification completed?

- If completed overseas, also state which country.

Full name of institution
□□□□□□□□
□□□□□□□□
□□□□□□□□
□□□□□□□□

28 In which year did the person complete their highest qualification?

Year study completed
□□□□

Form 5

24 Has the person completed a school, trade or any other educational qualification?

- No has not completed Year 10 or equivalent > **Go to 29**
- Yes, only completed Year 10 or equivalent > **Go to 29**
- Yes, only completed Year 12 or equivalent > **Go to 29**
- Yes, trade certificate/apprenticeship
- Yes, other qualification

25 What is the highest qualification the person has completed?

- For example, trade certificate, bachelor degree, associate diploma, doctorate, certificate 2, advanced diploma.

Full name of qualification

26 What is the main field of study for the person's highest qualification completed?

- For example, history, plumbing, primary school teaching, beauty salon practice, civil works.

Field of study

27 At which institution was the person's highest qualification completed?

- If completed overseas, also state which country.

Full name of institution

28 In which year did the person complete their highest qualification?

- Example Year study completed

Year study completed

In September 1998, two versions of the NSQ questions were tested. The questions had the following changes:

- For Indicator, both forms contained a revised wording for Indicator based on the question on Form 7 in June 1998. Form 4 used the 1996 Census response categories while Form 5 used a set of response categories specifically designed to cater for Year 10 and 12 qualifications;
- Institution was allocated an extra line of response boxes;
- Year Completed, the worst performer in May 1997, had the size of the ICR Boxes increased for both Form 4 and Form 5, and an example included on Form 5; and
- Field of Study had additional examples included in the instruction on both Form 4 and Form 5.

Non-response rates for Year Completed were 12.1% and 8.8% for Form 4 and 5 respectively. These rates were regarded as an improvement on the May 1997 Test. The example provided appeared to have had some impact on the non-response rates.

For Indicator, Form 5 non-response was 15.9% compared to Form 4 with 11.6%. However the proportion of 'No' responses for Form 5 was considerably lower than for Form 4 and the 1996 Census, suggesting that respondents who selected year 10 and 12 categories would, if these categories were not available, predominantly select 'No'. Further testing seemed warranted for variations of the response categories paying particular attention to reducing the high non-response rate when Year 10 or Year 12 categories are included.

None of the NSQ questions can be considered in isolation as the users interaction with the earlier questions affects the success of later questions. The Form 5 questions were considered to be the most effective, if the scope of the questions was to include Senior Secondary Certificates of Education (SSCE).

14.2.4 April 1999 Cognitive Test

The Indicator question was examined in focus groups in April 1999. The question wording 'Has the person completed a trade certificate or any other educational qualification?' was successful in that most people who had an 'other educational qualification' answered in the positive and successfully answered Questions 16 - 18. It was recommended to retain the question wording. This recommendation was adopted.

For response category order of the Indicator question, it was recommended that 'No, still studying for first qualification' be placed ahead of 'No' as many respondents answered 'No' without realising there was a second and perhaps more relevant negative response. Additionally it was recommended to re-word the response description 'No' to 'No educational qualifications completed'. Neither recommendation was adopted.

The Level of Education question had two differently worded versions tested. On Form 1 'What is the level of the highest qualification the person has completed?', and on Form 2, 'What is the name of the highest qualification the person has completed?'.

The variation in wording between 'level' and 'name' caused shifts in the way the question was answered. Specifically, for those participants who had a post-school qualification, around half gave the same answer for both versions according to the examples provided. However the remaining half answered differently and usually wrote the name of their qualification on Form 2 and the more correct answer (as requested by the examples provided) on Form 1. It was thus recommended to use the Form 1 wording. The recommendation was not adopted for the Major Test as again both versions of the form were tested.

14.2.5 August 1999 Field Test (Major Test)

Form 6

What is the name of the highest qualification the person has completed?

- For example, trade certificate in plumbing, bachelor of arts, associate diploma of welfare studies, certificate 2 in horticulture, advanced diploma in hospitality.

Full name of qualification

□□□□□□□□
 □□□□□□□□
 □□□□□□□□

Form 7

What is the level of the highest qualification the person has completed?

- For example, trade certificate, bachelor degree, associate diploma, certificate 2, advanced diploma.

Level of qualification

□□□□□□□□
 □□□□□□□□
 □□□□□□□□

Further testing of Level of Education was undertaken in the Major Test in August 1999. Form 6 asked for the 'name' of the highest qualification completed while Form 7 asked for the 'level'. In addition Form 6 included specific examples rather than generic examples of qualifications.

The Form 7 version of the highest qualification question and accompanying examples resulted in lower non-response than did the Form 6 version and additionally provided a higher proportion of detailed responses to the Field of Study question. The Form 7 version was therefore recommended.

Of concern was the fact that the questions were not capturing vocational qualifications obtained as part of secondary schooling. To overcome this it was recommended to include additional instructions in the Census Guide.

Additionally in order to address non-response rates for persons aged 65 and over, of 8.4% (Form 6) and 11.8% (Form 7), it was recommended to provide examples in the Census Guide of school leaving levels more relevant to this age group.

14.3 CHANGES MADE FOR THE 2001 CENSUS

A number of recommendations made were not adopted for the qualification questions in the 2001 testing program due to the development of the Australian Standard Classification of Education (ASCED).

Following developments in education and training and the introduction of the Australian Qualifications Framework, the Australian Bureau of Statistics Classification of Qualifications was considered to be reduced in its usefulness as a tool for the analysis of education and training statistics. This led to the development of ASCED which was designed to classify education according to Level and Field, the two main aspects of primary interest to users of educational statistics.

As ASCED details were not finalised until late in the testing program it was decided to undertake a thorough review of non-school qualifications in the lead-up to the 2006 Census.

So for the 2001 Census, only the following changes were adopted:

- the question wording on all questions was changed to remove the phrase 'since leaving school' to accommodate AQF or vocational certificates;
- two instructions were added to the Indicator question; to mark one box only; and, to refer to the Census Guide on treatment of AQF and vocational certificates;
- the Level of Education question wording was modified by the addition of 'the level of' and the examples were updated;
- examples were also expanded for the Field of Study question; and
- Institution was unchanged.

14.4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

The new qualifications framework was endorsed too late to have a major impact on the question design for the 2001 Census. This in itself will require a thorough review of the questions around schooling and educational qualifications for 2006. The continued relevance of Highest Level of Schooling Completed also needs to be considered carefully in this context.

15. NUMBER OF MOTOR VEHICLES

1996 CENSUS QUESTION

- 42 How many registered motor vehicles owned or used by members of this household were garaged or parked at or near this dwelling on the night of Tuesday, 6 August 1996?
- Exclude motorbikes, motor scooters, tractors.
 - Include company vehicles kept at home
- | | |
|-----|--------------------------|
| () | None |
| () | 1 motor vehicle |
| () | 2 motor vehicles |
| () | 3 motor vehicles |
| () | 4 motor vehicles or more |

15.1 BACKGROUND

In the 1996 Census the variable motor vehicles excluded motorbikes and scooters. However, users thought that the inclusion of 'motorbikes and scooters' as a separate response category would provide a more detailed distribution of vehicles. The inclusion of a pair of ICR response boxes for respondents to record the number of 'Motorbikes and scooters' was tested in the May 1997, September 1998 and August 1999 Tests.

15.2 TEST RESULTS

15.2.1 May 1997 Field Test

Form 1

- How many registered motor vehicles owned or used by members of this household were garaged or parked at or near this dwelling on the night of 27 May 1997?
- Exclude motorbikes, motor scooters, tractors.
 - Include company vehicles kept at home.
- | | |
|-----|--------------------------|
| () | None |
| () | 1 motor vehicle |
| () | 2 motor vehicles |
| () | 3 motor vehicles |
| () | 4 motor vehicles or more |

Form 2

- How many registered motor vehicles owned or used by residents of this dwelling were garaged or parked at or near this dwelling on the night of 27 May 1997?
- Include company vehicles kept at home.
 - If none, write '0'.
- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Motorcars, vans and trucks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Motorbikes and scooters |

In May 1997, two versions of the number of motor vehicles question were tested. Form 1 included the 1996 OMR question, while Form 2 included two ICR write-in response boxes for 'Motorcars, vans and trucks' and 'Motorbikes and Scooters', and an additional dot point asking respondents to write '0', if they had no registered motor vehicles. The question on Form 1 was located at the bottom of the page, while on Form 2 it was located at the top.

As indicated in Table 15.1, testing revealed a higher non-response rate for Form 2 (the ICR format of the question) at 11.2% compared to 10.4% for Form 1. The non-response rates for Forms 1 and 2 were also considerably higher than for the 1996 Census.

TABLE 15.1: NON-RESPONSE RATES FOR NUMBER OF MOTOR VEHICLES AND MOTORBIKES*

Test	Motor vehicles (%)	Motorbikes and scooters (%)
May 1997 - Form 1	10.4	n.a.
May 1997 - Form 2	11.2	n.a.**
September 1998 - Form 4	7.2	n.a.
September 1998 - Form 5	5.4	82.5
August 1999 - Form 6	32.0	53.4
August 1999 - Form 7	31.0	53.1

* Dummy forms excluded.

** Data available on form but not processed.

Testing also indicated that a lower percentage of respondents stated zero motor vehicles on Form 2 (25.5%) compared to Form 1 (27.5%) and the 1996 Census (29.5%). The inclusion of the new response category 'Motorbikes and scooters' was thought to have contributed to the lower response rate on Form 2. However, as Computer Assisted Coding (CAC) was not able to capture 'Motorbikes and scooters' separately, it was recommended that the new response category be retested.

As the patterns of distributions were similar, it was thought the location of the question at the bottom of the page had no effect, so it was recommended to retain the top of the page location for future tests if space on the form was not an issue.

15.2.2 September 1998 Field Test

In the September 1998 Test, two versions of the question were tested to re-evaluate the response category 'Motorbikes and scooters'.

Form 4 included two ICR write-in response boxes for 'Motor vehicles, vans and trucks' and instructions asking respondents to exclude 'motorbikes, motor scooters, tractors' and write '0', if they had none. Form 5 included the same question as in the May 1997 Test (Form 2).

The non-response rates for Forms 4 and 5 were considerably higher at 7.2% and 5.4% respectively than the 1996 Census which was 3.1%. The addition of the new response category were thought to have contributed to the lower non-response rate for Form 5.

The overall distribution of responses for Forms 4 and 5 were similar to those from the 1996 Census. Slightly fewer respondents stated 'none' to the 'Motorcars, vans and trucks' category on Form 5 compared to Form 4. Furthermore, the number of respondents answering 'none' was relatively small compared with the large proportion of respondents who answered 1 or 2 motorcars, vans and trucks. In contrast a non-response rate of 82.5% was obtained for the 'Motorbikes and scooters' category with only 53 (2.3%) of respondents on Form 5 answering one or more motorbikes and scooters and 15.1% answering none.

With such a small proportion of respondents answering the 'Motorbikes and scooters' category it was recommended to retest the question.

15.2.3 August 1999 Field Test (Major Test)

In the Major Test forms 6 and 7 were identical except that 'Motor cars, vans or trucks' response category on Form 6 was replaced with 'Motor vehicles' on Form 7. Both versions of the question tested an ICR response category for 'Motorbikes and motor scooters', a new response category 'Motor vehicles' and an instruction asking respondents to 'Please mark both sets of boxes'.

Testing revealed a slightly higher non-response rate for Form 6 at 32% compared to 31% for Form 7. The non-response rates for motor vehicles for Forms 6 and 7 were much higher than observed in previous tests and the 1996 Census. The non-response rate for 'Motorbikes and motor scooters' was considerably lower than the September 1998 Test. The inclusion of an instruction asking respondents to 'Please mark both sets of boxes' was thought to have contributed to the increased response rate for 'Motor bikes'. However the non-response rates for 'Motorbikes and motor scooters' were still high at 53.4% for Form 6 and 53.1% for Form 7.

The distribution of responses for the number of motor vehicles varied between forms with Form 7 closer to the expected distribution than Form 6. The distribution of responses for the option 'Motorbikes and motor scooters' were similar for both forms.

It was recommended to retain the instruction to mark both sets of boxes, adopt the response wording 'motor vehicles' and process motorbikes and motorcars in the same variable, as well as separately in the Dress Rehearsal to allow analysis of the distribution of the two categories combined.

15.3 CHANGES MADE FOR THE 2001 CENSUS

For the 2001 Census an ICR format consisting of two response categories, 'Motor vehicles' and 'Motorbikes and motor scooters', and an additional instruction to mark both sets of boxes were adopted.

15.4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Analysis of the 2001 Census data for motor vehicles and motorbikes will be needed to monitor non-response rates and distribution of responses for each variable to determine whether the additional category was successful. It may also be useful to analyse the distribution of motor vehicles and motorbikes combined.

16. PERSON'S WORKPLACE ADDRESS (IN 1996 CENSUS: EMPLOYER'S WORKPLACE ADDRESS)

1996 CENSUS QUESTION

- | | |
|---|---|
| 35 For the main job held last week, what was the employer's workplace address? | Street number and name
..... |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• For persons with no fixed place of work (eg. taxi driver, pilot, courier) write 'no fixed address'. | Suburb, rural locality or town
..... |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• This information is used to accurately code the number of people employed in different industries. | State/Territory Postcode
..... |

16.1 BACKGROUND

In previous censuses Industry was coded by matching answers from this question to names and addresses of employers kept on the Business Register. However for the 2001 Census, questions on business name and workplace address will not be used to code a respondent to a particular industry. This is due to recent changes made to the Business Register and the high maintenance costs and poor data quality of matching with the census. Industry coding will now be done from other census questions, however where there are difficulties business name may be used.

Data on journey to work is also derived from coding address of usual residence and workplace address to obtain origins and destinations of travel to work. To obtain workplace address in the 1996 Census, respondents were asked to write in their 'employer's workplace address'. However, this question did not appear to capture actual workplace address as some respondents gave their employer's head office or postal address rather than where they actually worked.

A revised question asking for respondent's workplace address was tested in the May 1997 Test and at cognitive testing in May 1998. A combined question asking for name and address of work place was tested in August 1999 to try to avoid misinterpretation of the word 'employer', so that respondents would provide their employer's business name and the address where they actually worked, rather than the employer's head office.

At the request of users, instructions were tested in the August 1999 Test to encourage taxi drivers and bus drivers to provide their regular or first journey of the day rather than to mark 'No fixed address' and, to specifically advise persons who work at home on how to answer the question.

16.2 TEST RESULTS

16.2.1 May 1997 Field Test

In the May 1997 Test, changes were made to the question when testing the journey to work topic. Form 1 included the 1996 Census question, while Form 2 included a revised question asking respondents to record their 'workplace address' for their main job held last week. An explanatory statement was also included on Form 2 about 'daytime populations' to reflect the primary use of the data.

Testing revealed that Form 2 had a higher non-response rate at 6.7% compared to Form 1 at 5.1%. Both rates were higher than the 1996 Census (May Test CDs) at 3.8%.

Telephone Follow-up

Telephone follow-up of 61 Form 2 respondents was conducted after the May 1997 Test. Results indicated that:

- 98% of those persons contacted interpreted the question correctly and provided their actual workplace address; and
- 90% of respondents understood the meaning of daytime populations.

Follow-up of 87 respondents revealed that 17.2% did not provide an answer to the person's workplace address question. The main reason given for not providing a response was that they did not know the address of their workplace (40%).

Collector Debriefing

Collector Debriefing reports also indicated that several respondents had not known the address of their workplace and that the term 'daytime populations' had not been fully understood.

No calls to the hotline were received about the person's workplace address question.

As the overall quality of responses appeared to have been enhanced it was recommended to retain the Form 2 version of the question, including the statement on daytime populations.

16.2.2 May 1998 Cognitive Test

In May 1998 the 1996 Census question was retested to determine respondent understanding. Testing revealed that asking employer's workplace address was interpreted correctly by most participants. However a small number of participants provided an employer's workplace address where they had not worked that day, indicating further testing was required.

16.2.3 August 1999 Field Test (Major Test)

Forms 6 and 7

For main job held last week, what was the name and address of the person's usual workplace?

- For persons who worked from home, provide name of business and home address.
- For persons with no fixed place of work provide name of business and;
 - if the person usually travels to a depot to start work, provide depot address;
 - otherwise write 'no fixed address'.

Business name

Street number

Street name

Suburb, rural locality or town

State/Territory Postcode

In the August 1999 Test, a combined version of employer's business name and workplace address question was tested on both Forms 6 and 7. Questions also contained two instructions highlighting the need to provide a depot address if respondents usually travel to a depot and a home address if they normally work from home.

The question placement was also tested in the August 1999 Test. On Forms 6 and 7 the question was located after the method of travel to work question while in previous tests it had been located with the industry questions.

Testing revealed a higher non-response for Forms 6 and 7 at 10.3% and 10.0% respectively than the 1996 Census at 3%. Question composition and placement may have contributed to the higher non-response rate, however the reasons for the high non-response were not clear. It has been suggested that a campaign urging respondents not to fill in the questions may have taken place in the eastern suburbs of Sydney. Another possible reason for high non-response rates may be the hail storm that affected parts of Sydney, particularly the eastern suburbs, just before the test.

A lower response rate for the category 'No fixed place of work' than for the 1996 Census was obtained, indicating that the additional instruction may have helped to reduce the response to this category.

Based on test results it was recommended to retain the two separate questions (employer's business name and person's workplace address), with the additional instructions and that the questions be located within the industry group of questions. This recommendation was adopted.

16.3 CHANGES MADE FOR THE 2001 CENSUS

Overall, testing indicated respondents were more likely to provide their correct workplace address rather than their employers' head office or postal address when asked to provide 'the person's workplace address'. Consequently, this format was retained for the 2001 Census along with three additional instructions:

- asking the respondent to provide their home address if they worked from home;
- asking the respondent to provide their depot address if they travel to a depot to start work; and
- indicating that the information is used to calculate daytime populations.

The questions also remained within the industry group of questions.

16.4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Analysis of the 2001 data for workplace address will be needed to monitor non-response rates and the distribution of responses. In addition it would be useful to undertake further testing of the placement and wording of the combined business name and workplace address question if the focus of the question remains in the journey to work topic rather than in the industry topic.

17. REGISTERED MARITAL STATUS

1996 CENSUS QUESTION

- 6 What is the person's present marital status?
- () Never married
 - () Widowed
 - () Divorced
 - () Separated but not divorced
 - () Married

17.1 BACKGROUND

A question on marital status has been included in all previous censuses.

Information from this topic is used by the ABS to maintain the accuracy of the estimated resident population by marital status.

In September 1998, to achieve consistency with ABS standards, testing occurred on change in response category from 'Separated but not divorced' to 'Separated'. While, in August 1999, an instruction was tested to clarify the question's intention to record the Registered Marital Status rather than the Social Marital Status,.

17.2 TEST RESULTS

17.2.1 September 1998 Field Test

Form 4

- What is the person's present marital status?
- Never married
 - Widowed
 - Divorced
 - Separated but not divorced
 - Married

Form 5

- What is the person's present marital status?
- Never married
 - Widowed
 - Divorced
 - Separated
 - Married

In September 1998 a response category change was tested. On Form 5, the 'Separated but not divorced' response category was changed to 'Separated'. Form 4 retained the 1996 Census response categories.

TABLE 17.1: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES FOR MARITAL STATUS*

Form 4	No.	%	Form 5	No.	%
Never married	1,355	29.6	Never married	1,226	27.3
Widowed	362	7.9	Widowed	371	8.3
Divorced	286	6.2	Divorced	280	6.2
Separated but not divorced	99	2.2	Separated	122	2.7
Married	2,483	54.1	Married	2,497	55.5
Total	4,585	100.0	Total	4,496	100.0

* Persons aged 15 years or more. Dummy forms and overseas visitors excluded.

As shown in Table 17.1, the 'Separated' and 'Never married' response categories were the only two categories where any discernible differences were recorded. Of the Form 4 respondents, 99 persons (2.2%) marked the 'separated but not divorced' response category. This differs from the Form 5 respondents of whom 122 persons (2.7%) marked the 'Separated' option.

A possible explanation for the slight discrepancy is found in the respective number of 'Never married' responses. Some 29.6% of Form 4 respondents and 27.3% of Form 5 respondents marked the 'Never Married' response category. As 'Separated but not divorced' suggests a marriage has taken place, Form 5 respondents who have separated from a de facto relationship may be more likely to mark 'Never married'.

Although there was justification to change the response category to 'Separated', some confusion about the definition or interpretation of what constitutes a marriage was detected. It was recommended that two versions of the question be tested in the Major Test: one version referring to registered in the text of the question; and a second version to include an instruction clarifying that the question pertains to registered marriages.

17.2.2 August 1999 Field Test (Major Test)

Form 6

What is the person's present marital status?

- Never married
- Widowed
- Divorced
- Separated but not divorced
- Married

Form 7

What is the person's present marital status?

- 'Married' refers to registered marriages.

- Never married
- Widowed
- Divorced
- Separated but not divorced
- Married

The response category 'Separated but not divorced' was retained for both Forms 6 and 7. After discussions with the Classifications and Data Standards section it was decided to only implement, the addition of an instruction 'Married' refers to registered marriages.' This was adopted for Form 7. The recommendation from the September 1998 Test to include a reference to registered in the question text was not adopted.

As shown in Table 17.2, slightly higher response rates were reported for the 'Never married' category for Form 7 which contained the new instruction. Response rates for the categories 'Married', 'Separated' and 'Divorced' were not affected by the change.

TABLE 17.2: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES FOR MARITAL STATUS IN AUGUST 1999*

Marital status	Form 6		Form 7		1996 Census**	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Never married	4,859	33.9	4,934	34.9	14,385	38
Married	7,050	49.2	6,978	49.3	16,952	44.8
Separated but not divorced	379	2.6	362	2.6	1,176	3.1
Divorced	946	6.6	943	6.7	2,632	6.9
Widowed	1,092	7.6	932	6.6	2,726	7.2
Total	14,326	100.0	14,149	100.0	37,871	100.0

* Persons aged 15 years or more, excluding system created records and overseas visitors.

** 1996 Census figures are for the August 1999 Test CDs.

However, lower rates for the 'Widowed' category were also reported for Form 7. A comparison of the age distributions for the Form 6 and Form 7 samples revealed an increase of only 0.1 % in the proportions of people aged 60 years and over in the Form 6 sample. Since the reporting rates for the 'Separated' and 'Divorced' categories did not differ between the two forms, it seems unlikely that the lower rate for 'Widowed' occurred as a result of the changes.

While differences in the distribution of responses between Forms 6 and 7 were not large, chi square testing revealed that they were statistically significant at the 0.05 level. However, the difference in the response rate for the 'Widowed' category appears to have contributed as much to the finding of significance as the difference for the 'Never married' category.

Since the addition of an instruction resulted in a small increase in the ratio of 'Never married' to 'Married' respondents in the expected direction and no increase in non-response rates it was recommended that the instruction be retained for the 2001 Census.

17.3 CHANGES MADE FOR THE 2001 CENSUS

For 2001, the response category 'Separated but not divorced' was retained, and the instruction "Married' refers to registered marriages' was included in the registered marital status question.

17.4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

With a review of ABS standards for family data proposed, the adequacy of census questions on marital status and relationship should be thoroughly reviewed.

18. RESIDENTIAL STATUS IN NON-PRIVATE DWELLING

1996 CENSUS QUESTION

5 Relationship

- For a person staying in accommodation such as a hotel, hostel, hospital, staff or student quarters, etc, on the night of 6 August 1996, mark whether:

Persons employed in accommodation

- Owner, proprietor > **Go to 6**
- Staff, (e.g. porter, cook, teacher, warden etc.) > **Go to 6**
- Family of owner or staff > **Go to 6**

Residents in accommodation

- Guest > **Go to 6**
- Patient > **Go to 6**
- Inmate > **Go to 6**
- Resident > **Go to 6**
- Other > **Go to 6**

- For a person staying in a private dwelling on the night of 6 August 1996, mark how he or she is related to Person1/Person 2 (as shown on the Household Form).

- Husband or wife of Person 1
- De facto partner of Person
- Child of both Person 1 and Person 2
- Child of Person 1 only
- Child of Person 2 only
- Unrelated flatmate or co-tenant of Person 1
- Other relationship to Person 1 - please specify

18.1 BACKGROUND

Information about relationship in non-private dwellings (NPDs) has been collected in all Censuses. Until 1996, this information was collected as part of the question about relationship to others in the dwelling. There was some confusion with respondents answering this question in the 1996 Census, especially for people in some types of non-private dwellings which resulted in some multiple marking.

In the August 1999 Test the relationship question was split into two questions on the Personal Form. The split question was expected to increase respondent understanding of the relationship question and decrease the incidence of multiple marking and incorrect responses.

The non-response rate for residential status was quite high on both forms, 23.1% on Form 6, and 20.1% on Form 7 compared to the 1996 Census at 8.5%.

For persons who completed a Personal Form within a household, there was a zero non-response rate for the residential status question. This was due to the small number of dwellings in the sample which required and completed a Personal Form.

The results of reversing the order of response categories was successful. They indicated that the major proportion of persons residing in the NPDs in the sample were correctly classified as 'residents in the dwellings'. This result warrants the reversal of categories to be retained for the 2001 census.

18.3 CHANGES MADE FOR THE 2001 CENSUS

For the 2001 Census, the question was split into two questions; with the first relating to residential status in an NPD, and the second relating to relationship in a private dwelling. The order of response categories were reversed in the residential status question with categories for residents in the premises preceding categories for persons employed in these premises. An additional instruction was included in the residential status question instructing persons visiting or staying in a private dwelling to go to the next question.

18.4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

The data quality of the new split format of the question will need to be closely monitored and evaluated in the 2001 Census.

19. RELIGION

1996 CENSUS QUESTION

10 What is the person's religious denomination?

- Answering this question is **OPTIONAL**.
- If no religion, mark last box.

- () Catholic
- () Anglican (Church of England)
- () Uniting Church
- () Presbyterian
- () Greek Orthodox
- () Baptist
- () Lutheran
- () Other - please specify
.....
- () No religion

19.1 BACKGROUND

An optional question on a person's religion has been included in all previous censuses. In the 1996 Census, a self-coding OMR question was used. For the May 1997 Test, an ICR format of the question was tested and the results showed a significant increase in non-response rates. For the September 1998 Test it was recommended that the question revert to the ICR format to ease respondent burden. A number of submissions received, raised the issue of the term 'Religious denomination' being inappropriate for non-Christians and that the response categories contained only Christian denominations. So, for the September Test, new question wording, response categories and an additional instruction were tested.

For the August 1999 Test, a change to the 'Catholic' response category was made to differentiate other Catholic religions.

19.2 TEST RESULTS

19.2.1 May 1997 Field Test

Form 2

10 What is the person's religious denomination?

- Answering this question is **OPTIONAL**.
- If no religion, write 'none'.

Religious denomination
□□□□□□□□
□□□□□□□□
□□□□□□□□

In the May 1997 Test, two versions of the religion question were tested, an OMR question the same as the 1996 Census (Form 1) and an ICR question (Form 2) which consisted of a number of ICR response boxes for a write-in response. The ICR question showed a significantly higher non-response rate of 25.9% than the OMR question at 10.1%. The suggested reasons for this difference included the change in question design from self-coding to write-in, the voluntary nature of the question and the change in position of the question from the first of the ethnicity-related questions to the last.

To ease respondent burden, it was recommended that the layout of the religion question revert to the OMR version for the September 1998 Test.

19.2.2 September 1998 Field Test

Forms 4 & 5

What is the person's religion?

- Answering this question is **OPTIONAL**.
- For example, Salvation Army, Hinduism, Judaism or Humanism.
- If no religion, mark last box.

- Catholic
- Anglican (Church of England)
- Uniting Church
- Presbyterian
- Greek Orthodox
- Baptist
- Lutheran
- Islam
- Buddhism
- Other - please specify
-
-
- No religion

In the September Test, new question wording was used, 'What is the person's religion?' and the response categories reverted back to the OMR format on both Forms 4 and 5. In addition, the two most common non-Christian religions, 'Islam' and 'Buddhism' were included as response categories with additional examples of other religions and belief systems such as 'Salvation Army', 'Hinduism', 'Judaism' and 'Humanism' included in the instruction.

The non-response rates for the September Test were substantially lower than the May Test. The non-response rate was 9.9% for Form 4 and 6.9% for Form 5 in comparison to 25.9% for Form 2. The use of a list of self-coding responses for the test appeared to affect the rate of non-response considerably.

The response rates for the additional non-Christian categories of 'Islam' and 'Buddhism' were marginally higher in the September Test (0.7% and 1.0%) than the 1996 Census (0.6% and 0.7%). This could be attributed to the inclusion of these categories on the form or to the recent demographic changes which show there has been an increase in the numbers of Chinese immigrants whose religion is 'Buddhism'.

The response rates for the religions included as examples in the test (i.e. Salvation Army, Hinduism and Judaism) were the same as in the 1996 Census (0.4%, 0.1% and 0.1% respectively). The response rate for the 'Humanism' category was negligible.

Since the response rates were not affected by these changes, it was suggested that the new question wording, additional response categories and instruction be retained for the Major Test.

19.2.3 August 1999 Test (Major Test)

Form 6

What is the person's religion?

- Answering this question is **OPTIONAL**.
- For example, Salvation Army, Hinduism, Judaism or Humanism.
- If no religion, mark last box.

- Catholic
- Anglican (Church of England)
- Uniting Church
- Presbyterian
- Greek Orthodox
- Baptist
- Lutheran
- Islam
- Buddhism
- Other - please specify
-
-
- No religion

Form 7

What is the person's religion?

- Answering this question is **OPTIONAL**.
- For example, Salvation Army, Hinduism, Judaism or Humanism.
- If no religion, mark last box.

- Catholic (not Eastern Churches)
- Anglican (Church of England)
- Uniting Church
- Presbyterian
- Greek Orthodox
- Baptist
- Lutheran
- Islam
- Buddhism
- Other - please specify
-
-
- No religion

For the Major Test, the question remained the same as that tested in the September 1998 Test. To differentiate Maronite, Melkite and Ukranian Catholic respondents from 'mainstream' Catholic respondents, 'not Eastern churches' was added to the 'Catholic' response category on Form 7 only.

Analysis of the number of respondents who stated Eastern Catholic religions in the 'Other - please specify' category on Forms 6 and 7 as a proportion of all Catholic (ie. Eastern and Western Catholic denomination) responses was conducted. Results from the 1996 Census showed that the numbers of people estimated to belong to one of the three Eastern Catholic religions across Australia was very small, representing only 0.4% of all Catholics.

Examination of the sample of responses to the 'Other - please specify' category confirmed that the number of respondents reporting an Eastern Catholic religion remained extremely small. However, as shown in Table 19.1, larger numbers of people reported Eastern Catholic religions on Form 7.

TABLE 19.1 DISTRIBUTION OF EASTERN CATHOLIC RESPONSES TO 'OTHER - PLEASE SPECIFY' CATEGORY

Religion	Form 6		Form 7	
	No.	%	No.	%
Non-Catholics	8,392	61.3	8,470	62.4
Catholic	4,555	33.2	4,420	32.6
Eastern Catholic	3	0.0	16	0.1
Not stated	750	5.5	668	4.9
Total	13,700	100.0	13,574	100.0

* Includes data from both Household and Personal Forms

The non-response rate for Form 7 (12.3%) was slightly higher than for Form 6 (11.0%). A possible explanation for this could be the fact that respondents who identify with the Eastern Churches may have responded to the instruction 'not Eastern Churches' by simply not answering the question, rather than choosing the 'Other-please specify' category.

The inclusion of the qualifying statement 'not Eastern Churches' to the 'Catholic' response category on Form 7 resulted in a significant increase in the reporting rate for Eastern Catholic religions. However, this was accompanied by a significant increase in the non-response rate.

Therefore, it was recommended that the generic category of 'Catholic' be retained for the 2001 Census.

19.3 CHANGES MADE FOR THE 2001 CENSUS

For the 2001 Census, new question wording 'What is the person's religion?', new response categories 'Islam' and 'Buddhism' and additional examples of religions and other belief systems were included in the religion question.

19.4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Should there be a continuing demand for information on specific Eastern Catholic denominations, consideration should be given to testing this question for the 2006 Census.

20. RETENTION

20.1 BACKGROUND

Name-identified information from previous Australian censuses has been destroyed after the completion of statistical processing. However, for the 2001 Census, the Government accepted the recommendation of the report, *Saving Our Census and Preserving Our History* to retain name-identified census information.

The Committee's report concluded that saving name-identified census information 'would make a significant contribution towards preserving Australia's history' (*Saving Our Census and Preserving Our History*, Pg. 135). This was thought to be particularly true for the 2001 Census as it coincided with the Centenary of Federation. The Government's decision to retain name-identified information was for the 2001 Census only, with this matter to be reconsidered for future censuses.

To ensure that high levels of public confidence and cooperation were maintained, and to respect the wishes of those who did not want their information retained, the Government decided that information would only be kept for those persons who explicitly agreed to it being retained.

A retention question was formulated in consultation with the Privacy Commission and two versions were tested in focus group discussions conducted in Sydney during February 2000.

20.2 TEST RESULTS

20.2.1 February 2000 Cognitive Test

Form 1

22 Does each person in this household agree to their name and address and other information on this form being kept only by the National Archives of Australia and then only made publicly available after 99 years?

- See page 7 of the Census Guide for more information
- Leave blank for those persons whose views are not known to you

Person 1	Person 2	Person 3	Person 4	Person 5	Person 6
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, agrees	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, agrees	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, agrees	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, agrees	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, agrees	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, agrees
<input type="checkbox"/> No, does not agree	<input type="checkbox"/> No, does not agree	<input type="checkbox"/> No, does not agree	<input type="checkbox"/> No, does not agree	<input type="checkbox"/> No, does not agree	<input type="checkbox"/> No, does not agree

23 Please check that the answers to question 22 accurately reflect the view, where known, of each person in relation to the retention of their census information, that you have not missed any pages or questions and sign here.

Signature

.....

Date

.....

Form 2

22 Does each person in this household agree to their name and address and other information on this form being kept only by the National Archives of Australia and then only made publicly available after 99 years?

- Answering this question is **OPTIONAL**
- See page 7 of the Census Guide for more information
- Leave blank for those persons whose views are not known to you

Person 1	Person 2	Person 3	Person 4	Person 5	Person 6
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, agrees	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, agrees	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, agrees	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, agrees	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, agrees	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, agrees
<input type="checkbox"/> No, does not agree	<input type="checkbox"/> No, does not agree	<input type="checkbox"/> No, does not agree	<input type="checkbox"/> No, does not agree	<input type="checkbox"/> No, does not agree	<input type="checkbox"/> No, does not agree

23 Please check that the answers to question 22 accurately reflect the view, where known, of each person in relation to the retention of their census information, that you have not missed any pages or questions and sign here.

Signature

.....

Date

.....

The question wording on both Form 1 and 2 was the same. On Form 2 there was an additional instruction added indicating that the question was optional.

Testing indicated that between 70% and 90% of participants responded ‘Yes’, and that the question had no impact on how respondents answered other questions on the form.

Testing also revealed that the Form 2 version of the question was more successful than Form 1, as it stated explicitly that answering the question was optional. The instruction also helped to diffuse respondent concern about the issue.

Despite the success of the question testing, some design issues were identified. These included:

- clumsy wording of question 23 which discouraged respondents from reading the question;
- the lack of an explanation about the use of retained information; and
- a lack of clarity for some respondents on the purpose of the retention question.

Recommendations from focus group testing included the:

- addition of an introductory statement to encourage respondents to check other household members retention preferences;
- inclusion of statements advising that answering the retention question is optional and explaining what happens if an answer is left blank; and
- restructuring of the signature question to include dot points to help clarify what respondents should do before they sign the census form.

20.3 CHANGES MADE FOR THE 2001 CENSUS

The same question tested in focus groups was used for the 2001 Census, except for some minor rewording. Statements explaining that answering the question was optional and what happens if an answer is left blank and encouraging the respondent to check other household member's preferences were also included in the 2001 question.

20.4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

At this stage, the decision to retain name-identified census information is for the 2001 Census only. However, if the Government continues to pursue this issue, field testing will need to be undertaken in the lead up to the 2006 Census. The effects of the retention question on the 2001 Census data will also need to be evaluated.

21. TENURE

1996 CENSUS QUESTION

45 Mark the box which best describes this dwelling.

- Owners include owners of caravans, manufactured homes or houseboats regardless of whether or not the site is owned.

- Fully owned →Go to 48
 Being purchased →Go to 48
 Being purchased under a rent/buy scheme
 Being rented
 Being occupied rent-free
 Being occupied under a life tenure scheme →Go to 48
 Other

21.1 BACKGROUND

Feedback from the 1996 Census Hotline indicated that the sequencing order of the household payment question and the tenure question should be reversed as respondents had to attempt to answer the household payment question before being given the opportunity to state whether the dwelling was rented or mortgaged. A reversed order of questions was tested in the September 1998 Test.

21.2 TEST RESULTS

21.2.1 September 1998 Field Test

In the September 1998 Test, a new location for the tenure question was tested. On Form 4 the tenure question was located after the household payment question, as in the 1996 Census, while on Form 5 the order was reversed. This was thought to be a more logical order of questions.

As shown in Table 21.1, non-response rates for the tenure question for both Form 4 and Form 5 were lower than in the May 1997 Test but considerably higher than in the 1996 Census.

TABLE 21.1: NON-RESPONSE RATES FOR TENURE QUESTION*

Forms	Non-Response Rate (%)
1996 Census**	2.2
Form 2 - May 1997	8.5
Form 4 - September 1998	6.3
Form 5 - September 1998	4.0

* Dummy Forms excluded.

** 1996 census figures are for the September Test CDs.

Testing revealed a higher non-response rate for Form 4 at 6.3% than Form 5 at 4.0%. The lower non-response rate for Form 5 indicated that the new question order may have been more logical and therefore easier for respondents to answer.

TABLE 21.2: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES FOR TENURE QUESTION*

Tenure	Form 4		Form 5	
	No.	%	No.	%
Fully owned	1,136	49.9	1,166	51.6
Being purchased	478	21.0	407	18.0
Rent/buy scheme	3	0.1	8	0.4
Rented	459	20.1	541	24.0
Rent free	9	0.4	12	0.5
Life tenure scheme	19	0.8	15	0.7
Other	31	1.4	19	0.8
Not stated	143	6.3	90	4.0
Total	2,278	100.0	2,258	100.0

* Dummy forms excluded.

The distribution of responses was similar for both forms except for the 'rented' category. A possible explanation was that the placement of the household payment question preceding the tenure question on Form 4 influenced respondents' interpretation of the household payment question as applying to rental respondents only and the tenure question applying to purchasers and owners of dwellings. Thus respondents were less likely to mark the 'rented' category in the tenure question.

Overall testing indicated that reversing the order of the household payment and tenure questions may have influenced respondents to follow and answer the questions more logically and this reduced non-response rates to the question. Therefore it was recommended to retain the order on Form 5 for the 2001 Census and consider modifying the landlord question to account for recommended changes to tenure questions (Refer topic 11: Landlord).

21.3 CHANGES MADE FOR THE 2001 CENSUS

For the 2001 Census the tenure question preceded the household payment question.

21.4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Analysis of the 2001 data for tenure will be needed to monitor non-response rates and the distribution of responses to check the comparability of responses to previous censuses.

22. USUAL RESIDENCE

1996 CENSUS QUESTIONS

7 What is the person's usual address?

- 'Usual' address is that address at which the person has lived or intends to live for a total of 6 months or more in 1996. () The address shown on the front of this form
- For persons who now have no usual address, write 'no usual address'. () Elsewhere in Australia - please specify address
Street number and name
.....
Suburb, rural locality or town
.....
State/Territory Postcode
.....
- For boarders at boarding school or college, give address at boarding school or college. () Other country

8 What was the person's usual address one year ago (at 6 August 1995)?

- If the person is less than one year old, leave blank. () Same as in question...
- For persons who had no usual address on 6 August 1995, give the address at which they were then living. () Elsewhere in Australia - please specify address
Street number and name.
.....
Suburb, rural locality or town
.....
State/Territory Postcode
.....
- () Other country

9 What was the person's usual address five years ago (at 6 August 1991)?

- If the person is less than five years old, leave blank. () Same as in question...
- For persons who had no usual address on 6 August 1991, give the address at which they were then living. () Same as in question...
() Elsewhere in Australia - please specify address
Street number and name
.....
Suburb, rural locality or town
.....
State/Territory Postcode
.....
- () Other country

22.1 BACKGROUND

A question on a person's place of usual residence at census time was first included in the 1961 Census.

There were three usual residence questions asked in the 1996 Census. These questions related to usual address one year ago, five years ago and on census night.

Cognitive testing was conducted in April 1998 to evaluate new question wording in both Forms 1 and 2. Test versions included new wording for usual residence for questions 7, 8 and 9.

For the September 1998 Test, new response categories for persons 2 to 6, new question wording and a new instruction were tested.

22.2 TEST RESULTS

22.2.1 April 1998 Cognitive Test

Form 2

Note that only the modifications to the questions are shown.

Where does the person usually live?

- For persons who usually live in another country and who are visiting Australia for less than one year, mark 'Other Country'.
 The address shown on the front of this form.
 Elsewhere in Australia - please ...
.....

Where did the person usually live one year ago (at 22 April 1997)?

- If the person is less than one year old, leave blank.
 Same as in question 7
- For persons who had no usual address on 22 April 1997, give the address at which they were then living.
 Elsewhere in Australia - please ...
.....

Where did the person usually live five years ago (at 22 April 1993)?

- If the person is less than five years old, leave blank.
 Same as in question 8
- For persons who had no usual address on 22 April 1993 give the address at which they were then living.
 Elsewhere in Australia - please ...
.....

Two forms were used, Form 1 had the question format used in the 1996 Census and Form 2 had new question wording for usual residence (and for usual residence 1 and 5 years ago), asking respondents: 'where does the person usually live?' and an extra explanatory point, 'For persons who usually live in another country and who are visiting Australia for less than one year, mark "Other Country".'. '.

It was identified in focus groups that respondents could correctly answer the questions and describe their usual residence. Therefore, it was recommended that the 'Other country' response box should be positioned before the 'elsewhere in Australia - please specify address' response box and categories (however, this recommendation was not adopted).

A problem identified from overseas visitors was, respondents wrote the overseas address in the response boxes, rather than ticking the Other country response box. No difficulty was experienced with the new question wording on Form 2 for the residence questions.

22.2.2 September 1998 Field Test

Forms 4 & 5

Note that only the modifications to the questions are shown.

Where does the person usually live?

- For persons who usually live in another country and who are visiting Australia for less than one year, mark 'Other Country'.
- For other persons, 'usually lives means that address at which the person has lived or intends to live for a total of six months or more in 1998.

Persons 1-6

- The address shown on front of this form
- Elsewhere in Australia - please specify address
.....

Where did the person usually live one year ago (at 1 September 1997)?

If the person is less than one year old, leave blank.

For persons who had no usual address on 1 September 1997, give the address at which they were then living.

Persons 1-6

- Same as in question 7
- Elsewhere in Australia - please specify address
.....

Where did the person usually live five years ago (at 1 September 1993)?

- If the person is less than five years old, leave blank.
- For persons who had no usual address on 1 September 1993, give the address at which they were then living.

Persons 1-6

- Same as in question 8
- Elsewhere in Australia - please specify address
.....

Two form types were used, Form 4 and 5, both form types had the same format as Form 2 used in April 1998 cognitive testing.

The results showed that there was no change in the distribution of responses for the usual residence question between the September Test and the 1996 Census for the 'Enumerated at home' and 'Elsewhere in Australia' categories.

TABLE 22.1: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES FOR ALL PERSONS FOR USUAL ADDRESS*

Usual Address	Form 4 & 5		1996 Census**	
	No.	%	No.	%
Enumerated at home	10,601	98.0	11,797	97.7
Elsewhere in Australia	180	1.7	259	2.1
Other country	22	0.2	27	0.2
Other responses	13	0.1	n.a.	n.a.
Total	10,816	100.0	12,083	100.0

* Dummy forms excluded.

** 1996 Census figures are for the September test CDs.

TABLE 22.2: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES FOR ALL PERSONS FOR USUAL ADDRESS ONE YEAR AGO*

Usual Address One Year Ago	Form 4 & 5		1996 Census**	
	No.	%	No.	%
Enumerated at home	9,163	88.0	10,194	86.2
Elsewhere in Australia	1,150	11.0	1,529	12.9
Other country	87	0.8	102	0.9
Other responses	17	0.2	n.a.	n.a.
Total	10,417	100.0	11,825	100.0

* Dummy forms excluded.

** 1996 Census figures are for the September test CDs.

TABLE 22.3: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES FOR ALL PERSONS FOR USUAL ADDRESS FIVE YEARS AGO*

Usual Address Five Years ago	Form 4 & 5		1996 Census**	
	No.	%	No.	%
Enumerated at home	6,734	68.6	7,463	66.5
Same as one year ago	446	4.5	501	4.5
Elsewhere in Australia	2,371	24.1	3,002	26.7
Other country	227	2.3	261	2.3
Other responses	37	0.5	n.a.	n.a.
Total	10,417	100.0	11,825	100.0

* Dummy forms excluded.

** 1996 Census figures are for the September test CDs.

As seen in Tables 22.1, 22.2 & 22.3, the new response categories in the usual residence questions did not unduly affect the distribution of responses, thus it is beneficial to retain the new question wording and response categories for the Major test. It was difficult to determine whether the addition of the new instruction in the usual residence question reduced respondent burden on overseas visitors.

22.3 CHANGES MADE FOR THE 2001 CENSUS

For 2001, question wording, for usual residence at census time, was changed to: 'Where does this person usually live?'. Also, the inclusion of a new instruction: 'For persons who usually live in another country and who are visiting Australia for less than one year, mark 'Other country'. The response categories remained the same as in the 1996 Census.

22.4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Evaluate the inclusion of the new instruction on reducing respondent burden for overseas visitors. Continue to monitor the distribution of responses for all usual residence questions for individual persons.

23. YEAR OF ARRIVAL IN AUSTRALIA

1996 CENSUS QUESTION

- 13 In what year did the person first arrive in Australia to live here for one year or more?
- Before 1981
 - 1981- 1985
 - 1986 - 1990
 - 1991
 - 1992
 - 1993
 - 1994
 - 1995
 - 1996
 - Will be here less than one year

23.1 BACKGROUND

A question on date of first arrival in Australia or number of completed years of residence in Australia, has been asked of overseas-born residents in all Australian censuses since 1911.

In May 1997, testing focussed on the change to an ICR format. In 1998 testing was conducted on inclusion of an example of how to complete the ICR boxes.

23.2 TEST RESULTS

23.2.1 May 1997 Field Test

Form 2

- In what year did the person first arrive in Australia to live here for one year or more?
- Year
 - Will be here less than one year

In the May 1997 Test, the Form 1 version of the question was the same as for the 1996 Census while on Form 2 (see above) respondents wrote the year of arrival in Australia in 4 ICR boxes or marked an ICR box if they would be here less than one year.

Form 1 had a non-response rate of 3.3% and Form 2 had a non-response rate of 6.0%. The higher non-response rate for Form 2 was attributed to the question being smaller and less noticeable together with increased user load from writing in four numerals rather than marking a box.

It was recommended to review the layout of the question with a view to making it more noticeable.

23.2.2 April 1998 Cognitive Test

In April 1998, focus groups were used to test the inclusion of an example under the question and an increase in the size of the response boxes.

Participants in focus groups supported the idea of having examples in the questions. The consensus was that although not every example would be read, the examples were useful when it wasn't clear how to answer a question. It was recommended that examples continue to be shown. This recommendation was adopted for testing in September 1998.

Discussion with participants found no clear preference for box size. Examination of census forms showed that participants adapted the size of their response to the box size. It was therefore recommended that the 2001 Census form retain the smaller box size. However this recommendation was not adopted as, to improve ICR processing, most numeric response boxes were increased in size.

23.2.3 September 1998 Field Test

Form 4

In what year did the person first arrive in Australia to live here for one year or more?

Year

() Will be here less than one year

Form 5

In what year did the person first arrive in Australia to live here for one year or more?

Year

Example: 1 9 3 1 Year

() Will be here less than one year

In September 1998, for both Form 4 and 5, the question was moved to the bottom of the page and the ICR box size was increased. These modifications also made the question more noticeable. An example was included on Form 5.

The non-response rates for both Forms 4 and 5 were both lower than for the May 1997 test. Non-response was marginally higher for Form 5 (4.9% compared to 4% for Form 4).

The distribution of responses for both form types was similar for all categories except the '1952-1990' category which was 6.0% lower for Form 5 and the '1996' category which was 2.2% higher for Form 5. It was not possible to analyse the years '1952 to 1990' in smaller ranges as Year of Arrival in Australia was not specified in single years in the processing specifications.

The example provided on Form 5 did not have any adverse impact on response rates. There was no evidence of bias to the example response '1951'. However, it was recommended to re-test the use of an example on one version of the form only and to further monitor the distribution of responses and non-response rates. This recommendation was not adopted.

23.3 CHANGES MADE FOR THE 2001 CENSUS

In the 2001 Census, this question asked overseas-born respondents to write in the actual year they arrived in Australia. An example of how to complete the ICR boxes was placed beneath the question. The OMR box indicating that the respondent will be here less than one year was retained.

23.4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

At this stage there are no future directions for this topic.

24. THE AGE 15 YEARS BANNER INSTRUCTION

1996 CENSUS QUESTION

Only continue for persons aged 15 years or more

24.1 BACKGROUND

This instruction was designed to alert people to the fact that subsequent questions dealt with issues such as educational qualifications, employment and income, which did not usually apply to people under 15 years. This ensured people did not spend time filling in unnecessary answers.

In the May 1997 Test, the format of the age 15 years banner instruction was the same as that used in the 1996 Census and testing was concerned with the font size and the effect of the different position of the 'Only continue for persons aged 15 years or more' instruction.

Also, Focus Group testing was conducted in June 1998 for the age 15 years banner instruction in conjunction with the qualification question.

24.2 TEST RESULTS

24.2.1 May 1997 Field Test

Form 1

Only continue for persons aged 15 years or more

Banner located at the top of the page and the font size was Helvetica Narrow 20.

For Form 2, the age 15 years banner instruction was located two thirds of the way down the page and the font size was Helvetica Narrow 22.

The wording of the instruction was the same as that used in the 1996 Census and testing was only concerned with the effect of the different location and the font size.

Analysis of commission error (or the rate of respondents that do not follow the sequencing instructions) and omission errors (or non-response) was conducted on test data. Table 24.1 shows that omission error rates for the variables selected were lower on average in the May Test than the 1996 Census. The non-response rate for Form 2 was greater than for Form 1. It was difficult to conclude whether this difference was attributable to the location of the instruction or to the different formats used. The instruction was only one factor affecting the non-response. The ICR format on Form 2 was another consideration.

TABLE 24.1: OMISSION ERROR RATES FOR SELECTED VARIABLES*

Variable	1996 Census** %	Form 1 %	Form 2 %
Age left school	12.0	9.3	12.7
Non School Qualification indicator	12.4	11.0	13.1
Income	11.5	9.7	10.6
Full-time/Part-time job	11.1	8.8	8.5
Average	11.8	9.7	11.2

* Dummy forms excluded.

** 1996 Census figures are for the May test CDs.

Table 24.2 illustrates that the commission error rate for various variables were less for Form 2 than for Form 1 and the 1996 Census. The data suggests that Form 2 yielded better commission error rates than Form 1 but it was difficult to attribute such a difference only to the position of the instruction.

TABLE 24.2: COMMISSION ERROR RATES FOR SELECTED VARIABLES*

Variable	1996 Census**	Form 1	Form 2
	%	%	%
Age left school	2.5	2.3	1.0
Non School Qualification indicator	2.2	2.1	1.0
Income	3.7	4.0	1.9
Average	2.8	2.8	1.3

* Dummy forms excluded.

** 1996 Census figures are for the May test CDs

Overall, the change in position of the instruction resulted in a higher non-response rate and a lower commission error rate for Form 2.

It was recommended to continue using the larger font size (Helvetica Narrow 22).

June 1998 Cognitive Testing

The age 15 years banner instruction was further tested in conjunction with the qualification questions in cognitive testing, conducted in Sydney in June 1998.

The location of the instruction was half way down the page, slightly different to the May Test, which placed the instruction two thirds down the page.

Testing found that the design was successful. Participants correctly followed the sequence instruction and it was concluded that the age format of the instruction should be retained.

24.3 CHANGES MADE FOR THE 2001 CENSUS

The age 15 years banner instruction has remained in the same position on the form as it was in the 1996 Census, at the top of the page. Font size was increased in the 2001 Census from Helvetica - Narrow 20 to 22.

24.4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

The commission and omission error rates should continue to be monitored in future testing for the 2006 Census.

25. CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT

1996 CENSUS FORM

Confidentiality

Your completed form remains confidential to the Australian Bureau of Statistics as required by the Census and Statistics Act. No information will be released in a way that would enable an individual or household to be identified.

25.1 BACKGROUND

Over time, privacy and confidentiality have been identified as issues that are of increasing concern to respondents. Experience from the 1996 Census indicates that these issues are significant at two levels. Firstly, respondents are concerned that the information they provide is protected from collection staff, and secondly, respondents are concerned that their information will be passed to other government agencies or private sector organisations.

A large number of respondents rang the 1996 Census Hotline seeking information about privacy and confidentiality. It was therefore considered that a clear and unambiguous statement on this topic may ease concerns and, consequently, calls to the 2001 Census Inquiry Service. Thus alternative wordings for the statement on confidentiality were tested.

Please note: the statement on the front page of the Census Form has been headed either Confidentiality or Privacy at different times.

25.2 TEST RESULTS

25.2.1 May 1997 Field Test

Form 2

Privacy

Your privacy is protected by law. No one outside the Australian Bureau of Statistics can see your form or link your answers with your name and address.

In testing conducted in May 1997, Form 1 included the 1996 Census confidentiality statement. On Form 2 the statement was entitled Privacy.

Census Test Hotline

There were 17 calls about privacy and confidentiality i.e. 6% of all inquiries to the Census Test Hotline. Thirteen of these callers required privacy envelopes. Privacy envelopes are used where the respondent does not wish the Collector to see their completed census form.

The remaining callers were respectively concerned about:

- providing age due to privacy reasons;
- release of private phone numbers; and
- release of information to other government departments.

Collector Debriefing

Comments received from Collector debriefing indicated that privacy and confidentiality are ongoing concerns in the community. Generally it was felt by many of the Collectors that no-one believed the privacy statement on the front page of the test forms. Many people queried why they had to provide their name and the Collectors felt that having to provide names constrained the completion of test forms. Some people felt their names and addresses would be given to a direct marketing company while many people did not like providing their name, address or phone number.

The changes made to the privacy statement received minimal response, making it difficult to evaluate. The data collected indicated that there is a proportion of the population who are reluctant to provide their name and this may be a factor that hinders the completion of census forms as a whole.

25.2.2 February 2000 Cognitive Test

The following privacy statement was tested using focus groups.

Privacy

Your privacy is protected by law.

Results from testing showed that participants considered the statement:

- was too brief;
- failed to specify the legal basis of privacy protection; and
- lacked any description of how the ABS protected a respondent's privacy.

It was recommended that the privacy statement should include:

- more information about the legal basis under which the ABS protects information obtained about households and individuals during the census;
- the penalties which will be incurred by the ABS (or its personnel) if privacy is breached;
- the compulsory nature of the Census; and
- the procedures adopted during the Census processing to protect the privacy of the Australian public.

Following the Government's decision to give respondents the opportunity to agree to their name-identified census information being retained, the confidentiality statement had to be substantially revised to accord with recommendations from the Privacy Commissioner.

25.3 CHANGES MADE FOR THE 2001 CENSUS

The 2001 Census confidentiality statement included a specific reference to the option to agree to one's information being provided to the National Archives of Australia for release in 99 years time. It also directed respondents to the Census Guide for more information.

25.4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

The confidentiality statement should continue to be monitored against the areas of respondent concern.

26. DWELLING VS HOUSEHOLD TERMINOLOGY

26.1 BACKGROUND

The concept of dwelling on the census form was introduced for the 1996 Census for questions that referred to the actual structure in which a respondent lived.

The census defines occupied private dwellings as the premises occupied by a household on census night. A household is defined as either a group of two or more related or unrelated people who reside in the same dwelling, regard themselves as a household and make common provisions for food or a person living in a dwelling who makes provisions for their food without combining with any other person.

To alleviate any confusion between 'structure' (dwelling) and 'people' (household) and to maintain consistency, the May 1997 Test assessed the impact of replacing the word 'household' with 'dwelling'.

26.2 TEST RESULTS

26.2.1 May 1997 Field Test

Two versions of the census form were tested in the May 1997 Test. On Form 1 the use of the word 'dwelling' reflected the 1996 Census form use. In contrast, on Form 2 'dwelling' replaced 'household' in the name, address, persons temporarily absent and number of motor vehicles questions.

Analysis of the calls made to the Census Hotline and Collector Debriefing discussions indicated that the changes went unnoticed and were not a source of confusion for respondents. No calls were received at the hotline regarding the use of the words 'dwelling' or 'household' and only one query was received by a Collector from a respondent from a Non-English speaking background concerning the meaning of 'dwelling'.

It was recommended to re-test the term 'dwelling' and document any specific problems that people from a Non-English speaking background may experience. Although this objective was not tested in later tests, no further problems were encountered.

26.3 CHANGES MADE FOR THE 2001 CENSUS

The term 'dwelling' replaced the term 'household' in the name, address, persons temporarily absent and number of motor vehicles questions.

26.4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Retest the term 'dwelling' in the lead up to the 2006 Census and monitor any specific problems encountered by respondents.

27. HOTLINE NUMBER

1996 CENSUS FORM

Help Available

If you have any difficulty filling out this form, please ask your Collector for help, or telephone the Census Hotline on 131 608.

27.1 BACKGROUND

A large number of incoming calls were made to the 1996 Census Hotline number and resulted in Telstra experiencing difficulties in handling the number of calls received. This difficulty was due to an estimated 2 million attempts to call the 1996 Hotline number. A second hotline number was established for the May 1997 Test to evaluate whether two numbers, one dealing with requests for additional forms, the other dealing with form inquires would better manage hotline demand.

27.2 TEST RESULTS

27.2.1 May 1997 Field Test

Forms 1 and 2

Help Available

Ask your Collector, or to get more forms, ring 3222 6228. For other help, ring 3222 6297.

In May 1997, two hotline numbers were established. One number dealt with requests for additional forms while the second dealt with inquires relating to the form. Both numbers were located under the 'Help Available' section on Form 1 and 2 and were identical in terms of wording and position, although the spacing and font differed between forms.

As shown in Table 27.1, a higher number of calls were made to the 'Other Help' number, than the 'More Forms' number, 120 calls compared to 108 calls. However, 79% of calls made to the 'More Forms' number were identified as being made to the incorrect number. In contrast, of the callers who required more forms, 96% phoned on the 'More Forms' hotline number. The results indicate that respondents will use two phone numbers. However the first number listed is the one callers are most likely to use, often without checking that it is the correct one.

TABLE 27.1: TOTAL NUMBER OF CALLS TO EACH PHONE NUMBER

Phone Number	Reason	No. of calls to the correct number	No. of calls to the incorrect number	Other	Total
(07) 3222 6228	More forms	23	85	0	108
(07) 3222 6297	Other help	119	1	0	120
Not specified	n.a.	6	0	0	6
Other	n.a.	0	0	1	1
Total		148	86	1	235

As shown in Table 27.2 the inquiry with the highest frequency was from respondents arranging collection of test forms (19%) while the inquiry with the lowest frequency was from respondents wanting to know why their suburb was chosen (1% of inquiries). However, as a large number of hotline operators did not specify on the data collection forms the type of test form being queried, analysis of specific inquiries was difficult.

TABLE 27.2: INQUIRIES TO THE HOTLINE

Inquiry type	Form 1	Form 2	Form not specified	Total (a)	Inquiries as a % of total inquiries
Arranging collection	8	4	39	51	19
Is this test genuine?	11	5	9	25	9
Dwelling unoccupied on census night	2	1	18	21	8
Mail back/privacy envelope required	3	2	17	22	8
Content of the form	10	9	1	20	8
Other	3	-	16	19	7
Compulsion	3	2	13	18	7
Refusals	1	-	16	17	6
Am I involved in the census test?	4	-	11	15	6
Another form required	1	-	13	14	5
Form not delivered	1	-	12	13	5
Collectors help needed	2	2	8	12	5
Reply paid address supplied	5	3	1	9	3
Confidentiality	-	-	6	6	2
Why was this suburb chosen?	2	-	1	3	1
Total	56	28	181	265	100

(a) More than one reason may be listed for each form, therefore the total number of reasons does not equal the actual number of calls received

Overall:

- 40% of inquiries to the two hotline numbers were related to the actual operation of the census, i.e. delivery, collection, privacy and mail-back envelopes;
- 37% were related to question content, refusals, confidentiality; and
- 23% were related to the actual operation of the census test, such as the compulsory/voluntary nature of the test and whether the test was genuine. All but one call regarding this subject were received on the correct number.

From the results of the May 1997 Test, it was recommended that further testing using more explicit instructions be undertaken to further evaluate respondents understanding of instructions and the effectiveness of using of two hotline numbers. However the development of new technology in communication indicated that two hotline numbers would not be required for the Census Inquiry Service, so this recommendation was not adopted.

27.3 CHANGES MADE FOR THE 2001 CENSUS

Only one public telephone number, 137 219 was used in the 2001 Census to access the Census Inquiry Service (CIS). The number was located under the 'Help Available' section on the front of the form. This section instructed respondents to 'Refer to the Census Guide or ask your Collector or phone the Census Inquiry Service on 137 219' for help. This number was also included on page 2 of the Census Guide. Two other numbers were also listed in the Census Guide a 'Deaf, Speech and Hearing Impaired' (TTY) number, 137 201, and a language assistance number, 137 206.

27.4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Evaluation of the calls received to the 2001 Census Inquiry Service will determine whether further development of the CIS is required.

28. HOW TO COMPLETE THE FORM

28.1 BACKGROUND

On the 1996 Census Form, a How to Mark instruction was placed at the top of every page.

In order to reduce respondent confusion and the incidence of incorrect marking of the ICR form, respondents were given instructions on the front page.

In May 1997, instructions including examples for how to mark the questions, how to use block letters to complete write-in boxes and how to complete write-in questions using wrap around text were tested.

For the September 1998 Test, more specific instructions on how to write alpha and numeric characters in the response boxes were tested. A separate instruction and example of how to wrap around text were also tested.

28.2 TEST RESULTS

28.2.1 May 1997 Field Test

Form 1 had the same format as the 1996 Census. Form 2 tested a new instruction on how to mark and how to wrap around text. An instruction at the top of each page on how to use block letters to fill in the form was also tested.

Testing revealed that respondents were not consistent in their use of wrap around text and that some questions attracted a higher level of 'one word per line' answers than others. It also showed a high degree of compliance with the instructions to complete the form in block letters.

Further testing of the instructions was recommended to make them more prominent and to identify the best method of getting the instructions to write in block letters and to wrap around text across to respondents. It was also recommended to review the instructions and the example provided on the front of the form, as well as to review the number of lines provided for write-in answers. It was thought that this may generate longer answers.

To reduce the effect of incorrect marking of the form, it was suggested to:

- mark the box with a cross, instead of a tick; and
- have a faintly marked cross printed inside every answer box to ensure that a cross is the only mark used, this would encourage respondents to mark inside the box provided.

All of the above issues were tested in the next test.

Telephone Follow-up

Telephone follow-up with respondents was conducted after the May 1997 Test, to assess the instructions. Respondents were asked if they read the instruction on the front of the form, why they did not wrap their answers around a line and if they would have wrapped their answers around a line if they had read the instruction.

For those who did not read the instructions, the reasons provided included:

- a presumed knowledge of how to fill out a form; and
- an unwillingness to read the instructions.

From telephone follow-up it was found that, people generally knew how to complete the form.

From respondents followed up, who had provided 'one word per line' answers in the May Test only 37% of them had read the instructions. The reasons given for not wrapping around the answers were:

- did not read the instructions;
- did not understand the instructions;
- wrapping around text was confusing; and
- it was easier not to wrap around text.

28.2.2 April 1998 Cognitive Test

Following the recommendations from the May 1997 Test, a cognitive test was undertaken in April 1998 to further evaluate the instructions on the front page of the form. Testing found that participants usually only skimmed over the page to find out key information. Many participants did not answer the form in the way specified on the test form. Their usual writing behaviour or their not reading the front page influenced how they wrote within the answer boxes.

Results showed that generally respondents followed the instructions provided to complete the form in block letters. Also, there was no consistent use of wrap around text and although respondents focussed on the 'how to answer' section, the most frequently occurring error in all questions was squeezing text inside the response boxes.

Testing recommended that the How to Complete the Form section on the front page be improved. It was recommended that:

- instructions for writing in block letters should be included on each page of the form;
- an example of how to break up a long word and wrap text around two lines be included on the front page of the form;
- if there was sufficient space on the form, consideration should also be given to adding an extra line of response boxes to the industry and employer's business name questions.

28.2.3 September 1998 Field Test

A new instruction advising respondents on how to wrap around text was tested in the September 1998 Test on Form 5 only. Form 4 included the same wrap around text instruction as Form 2 for the May Test.

Overall 54% of responses were correctly wrapped around on Form 5 compared to 40% on Form 4. This was a considerable improvement over May 1997 Field Test results where only 34% of responses were correctly wrapped around. It was therefore recommended to:

- provide additional examples of how to wrap around text;
- add an extra line of response boxes to the employer's business name and industry questions;
- review the number of lines provided for the questions which may generate longer answers; and
- consider providing instructions to respondents on what to do when there is insufficient space on the form to answer the question.

28.3 CHANGES MADE FOR THE 2001 CENSUS

For 2001, the instructions and examples provided on the front page of the form were the same as those tested in September 1998.

28.4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Review the quality of answers provided in the ICR form and continue testing to improve the instructions for completion of the ICR form.

29. INTELLIGENT CHARACTER RECOGNITION

29.1 BACKGROUND

An Intelligent Character Recognition (ICR) form was first tested in July 1992, to assess the possibility of using ICR technology in the 1996 Census. From the test results, a decision was made not to proceed with the development of an ICR system of processing for the 1996 Census. However, it was to be considered for processing the 2001 Census.

An ICR form was next tested in May 1997, to re-examine the effectiveness of an ICR form design, analyse the quality of responses obtained, evaluate the reaction of respondents who filled in the ICR forms and measure respondent burden.

The ICR form was further developed and tested in the September 1998 Test.

29.2 TEST RESULTS

29.2.1 May 1997 Field Test

This test was primarily used to determine the viability of ICR as the processing system for the 2001 Census and to test a number of other form design issues.

Two forms were used in the test. Form 1, Optical Marker Recognition (OMR) was the same as that used for the 1996 Census. Form 2 was the ICR form which included new ICR formats for all questions. The main change implemented was converting response categories in some questions on the form from self-coded responses to write-in responses.

Non-response rates for the ICR form were higher than for the OMR form. The non-response rates for all variables are shown in Table 29.1. There were also some differences in the response patterns for some questions. The obvious differences were for those questions which were self-coded on Form 1 but had a write-in response on Form 2. For most of the other questions the differences were not as marked.

The write-in questions, most notably numeric questions on the ICR form generally performed the worst. However, although the response rates were lower than for the OMR form, there was more detail provided in the ICR write-in answers. The questions which had the highest non-response rates were age, religion and year qualification completed.

The age question showed a much higher non-response rate on Form 2 (6.2%) compared to Form 1 (1.2%), which was attributed to the different question design on the two forms. The differences were the relative amount of space taken by the questions as well as the write-in versus mark-box response categories.

The religion question also showed a marked difference between the two form types. Form 1 recorded a non-response rate of 10.1%, and Form 2, 25.9%. This was mainly attributed to the question design changing from a self coded question to a write-in response and the location of the question on the form. On Form 1, it was the first of the ethnicity related questions, but on Form 2 it was the last of the ethnicity related questions.

TABLE 29.1: NON-RESPONSE RATES BY FORM TYPES*

Variables	FORM 1 (OMR)	FORM 2 (ICR)
Age	1.2	6.2
Marital Status	1.5	1.4
Usual Address	2.0	5.3
Usual residence 1 year ago	4.4	4.4
Usual residence 5 years ago	7.1	7.7
Country of birth	4.2	4.7
Year of arrival to Australia	3.3	6.0
Father's birthplace	4.6	5.8
Mother's birthplace	4.4	5.6
Language spoken at Home	4.4	5.5
Proficiency in English	2.8	3.8
Indigenous origin	4.4	4.5
Religion (optional)	10.1	25.9
Citizenship	4.1	5.1
Full-time/Part-time student	6.3	6.1
Educational institution	3.8	4.5
Age left school	9.3	12.7
Qualification level	12.3	14.8
Qualification field	5.8	8.7
Year qualification completed	4.9	14.2
Income	9.7	10.6
Full-time/Part-time job	8.8	8.5
Job last week	2.5	2.0
Occupation	2.7	3.0
Destination zone	5.2	6.9
Industry	3.2	4.4
Hours worked	2.6	5.8
Method of travel to work	2.4	3.0
Number of motor vehicles	10.4	11.2
Number of bedrooms	6.3	7.2
Housing loan repayments/Rent	4.5	5.2
Tenure	7.7	8.5
Landlord type	1.9	2.8
Furnished / Unfurnished	1.6	2.8

* Dummy forms excluded.

The year qualification completed had the second highest non-response rate on the ICR form. The non-response rate for Forms 1 and 2 were 4.9% and 14.2% respectively. The poor response rate for Form 2 was thought to have been caused by the smaller amount of space allocated to the question and the fact that a write-in response was required. Form 2 also had higher non-response rates than Form 1 for all the Qualification questions.

Also in this test, an analysis was conducted on the time respondents took to complete the form. Results (refer to Topic 33: Time taken to complete the household form) indicated that the time taken to complete both forms was similar, indicating no increase in respondent burden.

Analysis from the test showed that the ICR form design performed adequately in the test and that the extent and readability of information provided in write-in boxes appeared acceptable for both data quality and processing costs. It was recommended that the form should be further developed to enable the ABS to achieve the significant gains in timeliness and cost savings possible from an ICR based processing system.

Telephone Follow-up

In total, 197 respondents were followed-up about the general ICR form layout. This follow-up revealed that respondents were generally satisfied with the ICR forms. Some of the findings were:

- 95% felt the instructions were clear;
- 91% said the number of boxes provided were sufficient; and
- 88% were satisfied with the size of the boxes.

Collector Debriefing

Collector Debriefing indicated that generally the ICR form was considered an easier form to complete, than the ICR form. There was no evidence of higher refusal rates for the ICR forms reported in debriefing. Other comments made during the sessions were:

- the number of boxes provided were not sufficient for some answers, particularly for the Qualification, Industry and Usual Address questions (this outcome contrasts with the telephone follow-up in which 91% of respondents thought that the number of boxes provided was sufficient);
- elderly people found it harder to write inside the boxes; and
- wrap around was generally not understood by the public.

29.2.2 September 1998 Field Test

For the September 1998 Test, modifications were made to the ICR format. More space was allocated to the age, year of arrival, year qualification completed, hours worked, number of motor vehicles and number of bedrooms questions on the form. The numeric response boxes were also made larger and this in turn made the questions more noticeable to respondents. To ease respondent burden with write-in responses, the religion, country of birth and language questions reverted to a list of response categories being provided.

Overall these changes had the desired effect on the non-response rates with most questions having a much lower non-response rate than for the May 1997 Test. Table 29.2 shows the non-response rates for Form 2, May 1997 Test (ICR Form) and the September 1998 Test forms.

TABLE 29.2: NON-RESPONSE RATES* : MAY 1997 AND SEPTEMBER 1998 TESTS

Variables	Form 2 (May 97)	Form 4 (Sept 98)	Form 5 (Sept 98)
Age	6.2	0.9	0.6
Marital status	1.4	0.6	0.7
Usual address	5.3	0.1	0.0
Usual residence 1 year ago	4.4	2.9	2.1
Usual residence 5 years ago	7.7	4.1	4.0
Country of birth	4.7	2.8	2.3
Year of arrival to Australia	6.0	4.0	4.9
Father's birthplace	5.8	4.9	4.9
Mother's birthplace	5.6	2.9	2.5
Language spoken at home	5.5	2.8	1.6
Proficiency in English	3.8	3.4	2.4
Indigenous origin	4.5	2.5	1.9
Religion (optional)	25.9	9.9	6.9
Full-time/Part-time student	6.1	4.8	4.2
Educational institution	4.5	7.5	6.5
Age left school	12.7	10.8	9.8
Qualification level	14.8	15.4	12.8
Qualification field	8.7	8.7	6.4
Year qualification completed	14.2	12.1	8.8
Income	10.6	9.7	9.8
Full time/Part time job	8.5	6.3	5.8
Job last week	2.0	3.0	2.2
Destination zone	6.9	12.3	9.4
Industry	4.4	7.5	6.0
Hours worked	5.8	4.9	4.2
Method of travel to work	3.0	4.7	6.2
Number of motor vehicles	11.2	7.2	5.4
Number of bedrooms	7.2	4.6	3.2
Housing loan repayments/rent	5.2	15.7	14.5
Tenure	8.5	6.3	4.0
Landlord	2.8	3.1	1.4

* Dummy forms excluded.

Testing indicated that ICR proved to be a more cost effective technology than OMR and improved processing timeliness whilst maintaining data quality. It was recommended to be adopted for processing in the 2001 Census.

29.3 CHANGES MADE FOR THE 2001 CENSUS

The 2001 Census form was converted to ICR format and ICR technology adopted for the processing system.

29.4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Response rates from the 2001 Census will need to be monitored and the testing program will need to continue work on improving the design of the ICR form.

30. INTERNET FORM

30.1 BACKGROUND

From 1 July 2001, the Electronic Transactions Act (ETA) applied to all Australian Commonwealth entities unless specifically exempted by regulation. Under the Act, if a person or business is required or permitted to give information in writing to a Commonwealth entity the requirement is taken to have been met if the person gives the information by means of an electronic communication. However, the Act also provides that the requesting Commonwealth entity can specify the particular information technology (IT) requirements to be used.

The date of effect of the ETA (1 July 2001) and the legal advice received on its application to ABS collections came late in the cycle for the 2001 Census. It was therefore not possible to develop and test field procedures and to put IT systems and infrastructure in place in time to facilitate electronic lodgement on a wide scale for 2001. The 2001 Census electronic lodgement strategy, therefore, aimed to ensure electronic lodgement facilities were available and to caution respondents about potential confidentiality problems if data were submitted via the internet.

The Census Internet Form

A single session (i.e. not resumable) Internet 'Web-style' form was developed. Due to the size of the Census form, the Internet form was developed in multiple sections which once completed were either saved or submitted. There was no option to return to completed sections of the Internet form. The sections of the form consisted of:

- an introductory section which provided the same information as the front page of the paper form;
- a section for entry of dwelling details;
- a section for brief details of the persons who stayed in the dwelling on Census Night;
- a section for each person in the dwelling generated from the details provided in the previous section; and
- a section for brief details of each person who normally lives in the dwelling but was absent on Census Night.

The householder needed access to an IBM compatible computer with Microsoft Internet Explorer version 4.0 or above to complete the form.

The Internet form included completion checks for mandatory fields. Before a section was saved, respondents were asked to check that the information they had entered was correct. Help was available through hyperlinks to the Census Guide. The Internet form automatically sequenced the user through the questions by removing those questions which were not applicable.

30.2 TEST RESULTS

Two otherwise identical versions of the Internet form with different levels of automatic editing were tested in focus groups in Sydney and at usability testing in the ABS Research and Development Centre in Canberra. The versions used were:

- Version 1.09 which contained edits on only the first eight questions on the paper form; and
- Version 1.10 which contained edits that checked **all relevant** questions had been answered. It made the first eight questions from the paper form mandatory, and removed the edits on the Religion and Retention questions.

Focus group testing was conducted externally by Market Attitude Research Services. The participants were aged 20 to 70 years and possessed computer and internet skills.

Usability testing was conducted by the ABS Usability Team. Participants were volunteers from within the ABS of either sex and who were either born overseas or of non-English speaking background or both.

30.2.1 April 2001 Cognitive Test

The Internet form was focus-group tested in April 2001. Overall, users expressed high levels of satisfaction with the form. Version 1.10 was preferred as users appreciated the assistance to ensure the accuracy and completeness of their answers.

The following issues were identified:

- some users were concerned that they could not correct an answer after that section of the form had been confirmed;
- some users were dissatisfied with the way the page or its questions jumped as questions were completed;
- the time taken to automatically compose further sections of the form was perceived as excessive;
- an expectation of users was that the ABS provide acknowledgement that the form had been received; and
- some users expressed the need for a resumable form to allow more convenient completion of the form.

30.2.2 May 2001 Usability Test

The Internet form was usability-tested in May 2001.

Overall, users were very positive about the internet form. Following the testing session, ten of the twelve participants stated that given a choice, they would prefer to complete the Internet form rather than the paper form. There was widespread acceptance of a relatively high level of validation editing.

Testing identified several issues which may be detrimental to data quality. The issues were concerned with the difference between the way users see the paper form and the electronic form. Using the paper form, the user sees the complete picture, i.e. the current question and its documentation, a complete set of answer options, the preceding and following questions and the answers already given for each person. While with the current version of the Internet form, the auto-scrolling and dynamic nature of the form restrict the user in the number of visual cues they have to interpret the question. There were many questions where users needed to refer to the Census Guide because given the information they could see, they did not understand the question fully. However, the Census Guide link was consistent with the paper form in that it only appeared beside a few of the questions.

Other findings were:

- inconsistency of auto-scrolling which caused disorientation and user annoyance;
- the electronic question format lacked the visual cues available in the paper form to assist the user in his/her decision-making;
- the user information that was provided was confusing;
- a Census Guide which was not visually obvious on the form, not context-sensitive for every question and was difficult to navigate;
- further development required of the timing and clarity of the edit messages associated with validation editing; and
- a resumable and savable form was regarded as necessary by users.

30.3 CHANGES MADE FOR THE 2001 CENSUS

It was decided not to adopt any recommendations from usability testing due to the limited time available for making changes to the 2001 Census Internet form and the possibility of any changes made impacting adversely on other aspects of the form.

30.4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

The 2006 Census Internet form will be developed on an entirely new platform. Recommendations from the usability testing report and the results of acceptance testing will be incorporated into future development.

31. PERSONS TEMPORARILY ABSENT

1996 CENSUS QUESTION

41 Are there any persons who usually live in this household who were absent on the night of Tuesday, 6 August 1996?

No - **Go to 42**

Yes - **Please complete one separate column for each person absent**

31.1 BACKGROUND

The 1986 question saw a significant change to the way in which data on families was collected in the census. An extra section to improve the quality of family coding was included on the form to capture the basic details of usual residents of the household who were temporarily absent on census night.

The question on usual residents temporarily absent (URTA) in the 1996 Census was similar to the one asked in 1991. The question was located at the back of the form before the dwelling questions.

Examination of 1996 data, showed that some respondents included people at both the person's name and the URTA questions. An edit designed to check for duplication of responses was examined after the 1996 Census. Where coders confirmed there was a duplication, the person was deleted from the Census file. Thus, the edit assumed that the response to the URTA question was correct and the response to the person's name question was incorrect. The edit was thought to be a source of error and required further investigation. Therefore an evaluation of responses to the May 1997 Test was undertaken.

31.2 TEST RESULTS

31.2.1 May 1997 Field Test

In the May 1997 Test, the question tested on both versions of the form was the same as the 1996 Census question. Investigation into the reasons why data was provided for a person in the main section of the form and also in the URTA section was conducted after the test in telephone follow-up.

Telephone follow-up

Telephone follow-up was conducted with those respondents who had answered both the person's name question and the URTA question. There were nine cases identified where both questions were answered.

The results showed there was confusion about how to answer the URTA question. It identified that there were some people who were absent on census night who were included in both questions when they should have only been included in the URTA question. There were also some who were included in the URTA question when they were not absent on Census night.

It was decided that the instruction in the person's name question to 'Include any person who returned on (date following Census night) without having been counted elsewhere' was a possible source of the confusion. It instructed the respondent to include in the question any person who returned to the dwelling after census day, whereas the URTA question asked for those who were usually present but temporarily absent on census night to be counted in that question. This could be the reason why persons were counted in both questions.

31.3 CHANGES MADE FOR THE 2001 CENSUS

For the 2001 Census, question wording was changed in line with recommendations made after testing the use of the word 'dwelling' on the form. The word 'household' was replaced by the word 'dwelling' (Refer to Topic 26: Dwelling vs Household Terminology).

An instruction was added to the URTA question, 'Usually lives means that address at which the person has lived or intends to live for a total of six months or more in 2001', to align the question with the usual residence question.

31.4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

For the 2006 Census, review the edit and evaluate 2001 Census data to see if respondents are still answering the URTA question incorrectly or are answering both the URTA and person's name questions.

In the test program for 2006, review the inclusion instruction for the person's name question to remove any source of confusion for respondents. Also look at including an additional instruction in the URTA question to instruct respondents not to include persons who have already been listed in the person's name question.

The possibility of including further instructions in the Census Guide should also be considered.

32. SCANNING FORMS

32.1 BACKGROUND

In the 1996 Census, Collectors were required to:

“Scan the form for completeness paying particular attention to making sure questions 1-7 have not been missed. Do not check the accuracy of the answers.”

Collector debriefing was conducted after the May 1997 Test to ascertain if scanning forms was a worthwhile activity and whether it improved the quality of data.

32.2 TEST RESULTS

32.2.1 May 1997 Field Test

Collector Debriefing

Collectors attended debriefing sessions after the May 1997 Test.

The time spent scanning the forms spanned from 5 to 30 seconds, depending on the number of pages scanned.

Generally, Collectors only scanned the first pages of the form. They usually only checked the first and back page. It required too much time to scan the entire form and the lighting available was often insufficient for the forms to be scanned effectively.

The respondent's attitude also contributed to whether the form was scanned and whether blank pages were queried. If the Collector did find a blank page, the person was usually queried but often the person chose not to complete the missing data. As census tests are not compulsory this was acceptable. Those people who deliberately left the questions blank advised, when asked, that they were not interested in providing the information. It was also difficult for the Collector to know which questions needed to be answered by the respondent and which did not. The general feeling of the Collectors was that scanning did not improve the completeness of the data collected.

It would seem that scanning did not lead to improved data quality. When blank pages were detected, respondents usually could not be persuaded to complete the page(s) and often left them blank intentionally. Given that Collectors often feel uncomfortable performing this activity it may be better to ask the respondent if they experienced difficulties completing the form and then, if necessary, scan the form. Scanning the form was considered to be time consuming and its value may be minimal.

It was recommended to adopt the Collector approach of asking the respondent if they experienced any difficulties in completing the form and then scanning the forms if necessary.

After the May 1997 Test, scanning forms was not further evaluated until the June 2000 Dress Rehearsal.

32.2.2 June 2000 Field Test (Dress Rehearsal)

It was recommended that scanning be trialled in the June 2000 Dress Rehearsal. Half of the households in the test had their census forms scanned by their Collector and the other half were asked whether they had any difficulties completing the census form. Collectors then discussed their experiences and opinions at debriefing to determine which procedure worked best.

As a result of the trial it was decided to adopt the procedure of scanning at the door.

32.3 CHANGES MADE FOR THE 2001 CENSUS

In 2001, Collectors were instructed to:

'... ask the householder if they found the form straightforward to complete while you are scanning it. Scanning is briefly looking at, but not reading, the responses on the form. You are to scan pages 2 and 3 (questions 2-8) of the Household Form and no more. If these two pages are complete, then you are to assume that the rest of the form has been filled in.

If questions on pages 2 and 3 (questions 2-8) have not been answered, ask the householder whether they had any trouble answering the questions on the form and offer to help them.....'

32.4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

It is recommended that quantitative studies of scanning forms be conducted to determine both the affect on data quality and the staff resources required.

33. TIME TAKEN TO COMPLETE THE HOUSEHOLD FORM

33.1 BACKGROUND

The time taken to complete the Household form varies according to how many questions each person has to answer, the complexity of their answers, and how simple each question is to answer for each person, including the extent of a person's memory recall.

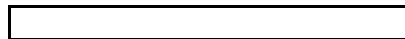
In May 1997, with the introduction of an ICR form and more write-in questions respondent burden was increased, therefore it was necessary to measure the length of time taken to complete the form, to provide an indication and measure of respondent load. This was next measured in the August 1999 Test.

Estimates of the time taken to fill in each census form were last obtained in the August 1989 Test for the 1991 Census Form.

33.2 TEST RESULTS

33.2.1 May 1997 Field Test

Time taken to complete form in minutes



In May 1997, a sheet was handed to respondents to fill in the time taken to complete their forms. The time taken data collected was matched against Collection District and Record Number so the number of persons in a household and the form type could be included in the analysis.

As the question was not included on the test form, only 2,806 or approximately 51% of dwellings provided all necessary details to allow for complete data analysis.

TABLE 33.1: TIME TAKEN TO COMPLETE FORM 1 BY NUMBER OF PERSONS IN DWELLING

Time taken (in minutes)	Number of persons in dwelling							Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	>6	
1 < 10	123	53	12	1	-	-	-	189
10 < 20	299	239	63	51	16	3	-	671
20 < 30	75	99	57	29	16	9	-	285
30 < 40	36	51	30	26	9	3	1	156
40 < 50	7	11	13	6	5	2	-	44
50 < 60	-	1	2	3	-	-	-	6
60 and over	8	7	6	8	4	2	-	35
Total	548	461	183	124	50	19	1	1,386
Mean	14.4	18.1	23.1	27.2	27.9	28.4	**	23.2(Avg)
Median	10	15	20	20	20	25	**	n.a

** Insufficient data for valid conclusion.

TABLE 33.2: TIME TAKEN TO COMPLETE FORM 2 BY NUMBER OF PERSONS IN DWELLING

Time taken (in minutes)	Number of persons in dwelling							Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	>6	
1 < 10	90	33	10	2	-	-	-	135
10 < 20	311	215	68	30	12	4	-	640
20 < 30	82	129	65	33	15	5	-	329
30 < 40	40	73	33	33	20	7	-	212
40 < 50	10	16	7	9	5	-	-	47
50 < 60	2	3	1	-	-	1	-	7
60 and over	14	16	3	5	7	3	2	50
Total	549	485	193	112	59	20	2	1,420
Mean	16.5	20.7	21.5	26	32.4	30.6	**	24.6(Avg)
Median	12	17	20	21.5	30	30	**	n.a

** Insufficient data for valid conclusion.

As shown in Table 33.1 and 33.2, the mean time taken to complete Form 1 (1-6 persons) was 23.18 minutes compared to Form 2 where the mean time was 24.62 minutes. Given that the 1989 form contained an extra six questions, it was concluded that respondent burden had not increased.

As the data indicated that Form 2 took slightly longer to complete than Form 1 especially for larger households, it was recommended to be retested to ensure that respondent burden has not increased.

33.2.2 September 1999 Field Test (Major Test)

Forms 6 & 7

To assist us, could you please estimate the time taken to complete the form in the box provided.

Time taken to complete form
□□ minutes

For the September 1999 test, a question asking respondents to record their estimated time taken to complete the form was included on both test Forms 6 and 7. There was very little difference, between Forms 6 and 7, in the time taken to complete the form. However both forms showed that, time taken was affected by certain factors, such as household size, language spoken and age.

These differences were expected, as time taken should increase with the size of the household, in those age groups where larger households are to be found, and in non-English speaking background households. These differences were found on both forms, which suggests that neither form was better than the other. As seen in Table 33.3, the mean time taken for both Forms 6 and 7 improved compared to the May 1997 Field Test.

TABLE 33.3: MEAN TIME TAKEN TO COMPLETE THE MAY 1997 FIELD TEST AND THE SEPTEMBER 1999 MAJOR TEST, BY HOUSEHOLD SIZE*

Mean Time Taken (in minutes)	Form 1	Form 2	Form 6	Form 7
	23.2	24.6	21.9**	21.7**

* Excludes Not Stated.

** Excludes households that reported times of 60 minutes or over.

Collector Debriefing

Feedback from the Collector Debriefing indicated that the question on time taken should be highlighted on Page 1, as most respondents did not realise that they had to keep track of the time taken to complete the form. It was recommended that for future tests, this question be included on the front page of the form.

33.3 CHANGES MADE FOR 2001 CENSUS FORM

The question was not included in the 2001 Census form. It is only included on test forms to monitor respondent load.

33.4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

There is a need to monitor the time taken to complete the form in future tests to ensure there is no increase in respondent burden.

Respondents should be made aware, preferably on the front page, that they need to keep track of the time taken to complete the form.

34. SPECIAL INDIGENOUS FORMS

34.1 BACKGROUND

The 2001 Indigenous Enumeration Strategy (IES) addresses cultural factors that are potential barriers to the effective enumeration of Indigenous Australians. To assess several aspects of the IES, including form design, Indigenous Census Tests were conducted in the Indigenous communities of Nguiu (NT) in October 1999, as part of the Major Test and Cosmo Newbury, Kurrawang (WA) and Woorabinda (QLD) in August 2000, as part of the Dress Rehearsal.

As in the 1996 Census, interviewer based Special Indigenous Forms (SIFs) were developed to enumerate nominated discrete indigenous communities for the 2001 Census.

Thirteen changes to SIFs were tested on one Special Indigenous Household Form (SIHF) and two versions of the Special Indigenous Personal Form (SIPF) in the October 1999 Test in response to recommendations made after the 1996 Census and changes made to the mainstream forms.

Based on recommendations made in the 1999 Indigenous Test and additional changes made to the mainstream form, further changes were made to the SIFs for the August 2000 Indigenous Dress Rehearsal. However, the impact of these changes was not formally evaluated. Further changes were also made after the August 2000 Dress Rehearsal, and again these were not formally evaluated in the lead up to the 2001 Census.

Following is a summary of 1999 Indigenous Test results, recommendations and changes made for the 2001 Census.

34.2 OCTOBER 1999 FIELD TEST

34.2.1 Changes to SIHF

34.2.1.1 A four page version of the Household Form

A four page version of the Household Form was tested in the 1999 Test following feedback from Community Coordinators, Census Field Officers (CFOs) and Special Indigenous Managers (SIMs) indicating that some of the Interviewers were not recording information on the reverse side of the single page 1996 Household Form.

Testing resulted in inconclusive findings. As shown in Table 34.1 below wide variations in non-response rates on the SIHF for dwelling variables were found compared with the 1996 Census. Wide variations were also found for personal variables on the SIHF compared with the SIPF, as displayed in Table 34.2

TABLE 34.1: NON-RESPONSE RATES FOR DWELLING QUESTIONS ON HOUSEHOLD FORM, 1999 TEST AND 1996 CENSUS

Variables	1999 Test %	1996 Census* %	Difference
No. of Motor Cars, Vans, Trucks	8.3	4.8	3.5
No. of Motorbikes and Motor scooters	10.4	n.a.	n.a.
Structure of Dwelling	9.3	8.6	0.7
No. of Bedrooms	9.8	24.1	-14.3
Rent (weekly)	15.5	0.0	15.5
Tenure Type	11.9	24.1	-12.2
Landlord Type	11.7	0.0	11.7

* Data is only for persons enumerated on SIFs

As some communities had very high non-response rates for dwelling variables in the 1996 Census it was considered that with improved training the four page version was more likely to improve the overall data quality. Consequently, it was recommended to retain the four page version of the SIHF. This recommendation was implemented for the Dress Rehearsal and 2001 Census.

TABLE 34.2: DIFFERENCE IN NON-RESPONSE RATES BETWEEN SPECIAL INDIGENOUS HOUSEHOLD AND PERSONAL FORMS FOR DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

Questions	1999 Household Form %	1999 Personal Form %	Difference
First name	0.0	3.3	-3.3
Surname	3.3	0.4	2.9
Sex	0.0	1.5	-1.5
Age	2.5	0.2	2.3
Relationship to person 1	10.8	1.5	9.3

34.2.1.2 Motorbike and motor scooters as a separate response category

1996 SIHF

How many registered cars were parked at this place last night?

- Do not count motorbikes, motor scooters, tractors.
- None
- 1 car
- 2 cars
- 3 cars
- 4 cars or more

1999 SIHF

How many registered vehicles were parked at this place last night?

- Please mark both sets of boxes.
- If none, write '0'
- Motor cars, vans or trucks
- Motorbikes and motor scooters

To align the SIHF with the mainstream Household Form, separate ICR write-in boxes for 'Motor cars, vans or trucks' and for 'Motorbikes and motor scooters' were tested in the 1999 Test along with revised wording to the question ('registered vehicles' replaced 'registered cars').

Testing revealed a higher non-response rate for 'Motor cars, vans or trucks' for the 1999 Household Form at 8.3% compared to the 1996 Census at 4.8%. While the non-response rate for 'Motorbikes and motor scooters' was higher at 10.4% it was considerably lower than the September 1998 Mainstream Form Test at 82.5%.

Interviewer debriefing indicated that the ICR boxes were easy to use, but the term 'registered' motor vehicles was not completely understood. Following testing it was recommended to adopt the new format and improve training methods for this question. This recommendation was implemented for the Dress Rehearsal and 2001 Census.

34.2.1.3 New response categories to the structure of dwelling question.

1996 SIHF

**Is this place a house?
(Interviewer to answer)**

- No - shack, tent, caravan, humpy, wiltja > **No more questions on this form**
- Yes

1999 SIHF

**Is this place a house?
(Interviewer to answer)**

- No - caravan, tin shed or cabin > No more questions
- No - humpies, tents or sleepouts > No more questions
- Yes

To maintain consistency with response categories used in CHINS it was decided to test new response categories 'No - caravan, tin shed or cabin' and 'No - humpies, tents or sleepouts' in the 1999 structure of dwelling question.

Due to the generic nature of the housing in Nguiu, these response categories could not be fully tested. However to maintain consistency with CHINS and increase available output it was recommended to retain these new categories. This recommendation was implemented in the Dress Rehearsal and 2001 Census.

34.2.2 Changes to the SIFP

34.2.2.1 Instructions on how to mark questions and complete response boxes in block letters

As indicated in Table 34.3, despite written instructions on the front of the form and being given instructions in training, Interviewers generally failed to respond in block letters or demonstrate the correct way to wrap responses onto the following line.

TABLE 34.3 PROPORTION OF RESPONSES THAT WERE NOT BLOCK LETTERS OR INCORRECTLY WRAPPED

Question s	Some Lower Case Lettering		Incorrectly Wrapped	
	No .	%	No.	%
How are you related to Person 1 (Q4)	409	62.0	61	8.0
Type of Job (Q30 - Form 1 & Q28 - Form 2)	113	63.0	94	52.0
Industry (Q32- Form 1 & Q30 - Form 2)	53	47.0	73	65.0

However as Table 34.4 shows interviewers were able to mark OMR boxes appropriately.

TABLE 34.4 INCORRECT USE OF OMR BOXES BY INTERVIEWERS

Variable	No.	%
Sex	17	1.8
Registered Marital status	6	0.7
Language Spoken at Home	34	3.8
Type of Educational Institution Attending	7	3.3

Following testing it was recommended to address the incorrect marking of forms in training sessions.

34.2.2.2 ICR Form and ICR boxes

1999 SIPFs - 1 & 2

Language Spoken at Home

Do you speak an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander language at home ?

- If Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander language, please give the name of the language.
- If more than one language, indicate the one that is spoken most often

() No, speaks only English > Go to 15

() Yes - please write language

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Name of Course

What is the name of that course?

- If more than one course, ask for the name of the highest level course.
- For example, trade certificate, bachelor degree, associate diploma.

Full name of course

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

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□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

Field of Study

What did you study?

- For example, plumbing, primary school teaching.

Field of study

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

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Name of Institution

What was the name of the place you studied at?

- Include external and correspondence institutions.

Name of institution

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Year Course Finished

In which year did you finish that course?

Year course finished

□□□□

34.2.2.3 Age Question

1996 SIFP

How old are you?

.....years

Mark age on grid.

- If age is less than one year, mark box (0) as (θ).
- Mark one box, for example, (←)

Years:
 (0) (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) (8)
 (9) (10) (11) (12) (13) (14) (15) (16) (17)
 (18) (19) (20) (21) (22) (23) (24) (25) (26)
 (27) (28) (29) (30) (31) (32) (33) (34) (35)
 (36) (37) (38) (39) (40) (41) (42) (43) (44)
 (45) (46) (47) (48) (49) (50) (51) (52) (53)
 (54) (55) (56) (57) (58) (59) (60) (61) (62)
 (63) (64) (65) (66) (67) (68) (69) (70) (71)
 (72) (73) (74) (75) (76) (77) (78) (79) (80)
 (81) (82) (83) (84) (85) (86) (87) (88) (89)
 (90) (91) (92) (93) (94) (95) (96) (97) (98)
 () 99 years or more

1999 SIFPs -1 & 2

How old are you?

- If age is less than one year, write '0'.

Years

() 100 years or more

2001 mainstream form testing indicated that a combined ICR/OMR format (consisting of two write-in response boxes and an OMR category for 100 years or more) and an example, on how a person should answer could be used to collect age data. The changes to the 2001 Mainstream Forms necessitated testing on the SIFs.

Testing revealed a lower non-response rate for the ICR format of the question at 0.5% compared to the 1996 Census at 1.7% . As shown in Table 34.6, distributions of responses were similar to the 1996 Census. Furthermore, feedback from interviewers indicated preference for writing in age rather than searching for OMR boxes for the appropriate response. Consequently, it was recommended to adopt the ICR/OMR format for the 2001 Census. This recommendation was implemented in the Dress Rehearsal and 2001 Census.

TABLE 34.6: DISTRIBUTION OF AGES 1999 TEST AND 1996 CENSUS

Age Group* 1999 Ages	(1996 Ages)	1999 Indigenous Test**		1996 Census	
		No.	%	No.	%
0-2	(n.a.)	57	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
3-13	(0-10)	201	22.6	253	22.3
14-22	(11-19)	216	24.2	308	27.1
23-32	(20-29)	182	20.4	218	19.2
33-42	(30-39)	138	15.5	154	13.6
43-52	(40-49)	92	10.3	117	10.3
53-62	(50-59)	41	4.6	47	4.1
63-72	(60-69)	12	1.4	12	1.1
73-82	(70-79)	2	0.2	5	0.4
83 or more	(>80)	3	0.3	3	0.3
Not Stated		4	0.5	19	1.7
Total		948	100.0	1,136	100.0

* In order to compare the 1999 distribution with 1996 Census data, three years was added to each response from 1996.

**Each range for 1999 is calculated as a proportion of the 891 respondents alive for the 1996 Census.

34.2.2.4 New question on relationship

1996 SIPF

Are you more closely related to anyone else here in this house?

- No → Go to 6
- Yes, who?

Name

.....

Relationship to eg. grandson, niece, daughter

.....

.....

1999 SIPF-1

Are you more closely related to anyone else here in this house?

- No → Go to 6
- Yes, who?

Name

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

Relationship e.g. grandson, niece, daughter

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

1999 SIPF- 2

If your parent(s) are staying in this house, what are their names?

Father's name

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

Mother's name

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

The relationship question in the 1996 Census was not well understood by Indigenous persons, resulting in poor data quality. A new relationship question was developed and tested on Form 2, which attempted to provide extra information about parents of persons in the household, particularly the parents of dependent children.

Testing revealed no appreciable differences in family type data collected on Form 1 and 2 indicating that relationship data of similar quality was obtained from both versions of the form. Feedback from interviewers also indicated that neither question was adequate.

Hence it was recommended that the relationship question used in the 1996 Census be retained for the Dress Rehearsal and 2001 Census and that further testing be conducted in the lead up to the 2006 Census. The 1996 Census question was included on the Dress Rehearsal and 2001 Census SIPF.

34.2.2.5 Removing 'tribally married' from the married category in the marital status question.

1996 SIPP

Are you married?

- Prompt categories below.
 - () Never married
 - () Widowed
 - () Divorced
 - () Separated but not divorced
 - () Married/Tribally married

1999 SIPFs- 1 & 2

Are you married?

- Prompt categories below.
 - Never married
 - Widowed
 - Divorced
 - Separated but not divorced
 - Married

'Tribally married' was included with the married response category in the 1991 and 1996 Census as there was a demand for 'tribally married' as a second option with 'married' in remote Indigenous communities. With the developments in the marital status question, the question is now used as a registered marital status question rather than a social marital status question. As tribally married was considered to be a social marital status it was decided to remove 'Tribally married' from the married response category.

As shown in Table 34.7 a distinctly different distribution of responses for Form 1 compared to Form 2 was found, with Form 1 responses being more similar to the 1996 Census. Combined counts for Form 1 and Form 2 revealed a total of 48% of the applicable population were recorded as 'Never married' in the 1999 Indigenous Test compared to 38.4% in the 1996 Census, while 41% stated they were 'Married', compared to 47.9% in the 1996 Census.

TABLE 34:7 DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES FOR MARITAL STATUS IN THE 1999 TEST AND THE 1996 CENSUS

Marital Status	Form 1		Form 2		Total Forms 1 & 2		1996 Census*	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Never Married **	140	39.3	168	58.9	308	48.0	291	38.4
Widowed	24	6.7	19	6.7	43	6.7	50	6.6
Divorced	2	0.6	1	0.4	3	0.5	5	0.7
Separated	5	1.4	3	1.1	8	1.2	49	6.5
Married **	184	51.7	79	27.7	263	41.0	363	47.9
Not Stated	1	0.3	15	5.3	16	2.5	n.a.	
Total Applicable	356	100.0	285	100.0	641	100.0	758	100.0
Not Applicable	184	-	123	-	307	-	376	-
Total	540	-	408	-	948	-	1,134	-

* Data is only for persons enumerated on SIFs.

** Figures include imputed Marital Status.

The shift of responses from 'Married' to 'Never married' was thought to be a more accurate reflection of 'registered marital' status, hence it was recommended to retain the new question. This recommendation was implemented in the Dress Rehearsal and 2001 Census.

34.2.2.7 Highest Level of Schooling Completed

1996 SIHF

How old were you when you left primary or secondary school?

- For persons who returned after a break to complete their schooling, mark the age at which they last left school.
- If they did not go to secondary school, mark the age at which they left primary school.

- Still at primary or secondary school
- Did not go to school
- 14 years or younger
- 15 years
- 16 years
- 17 years
- 18 years
- 19 years or older

1999 SIPF- 1

What is the highest level of primary or secondary school you have completed?

- Mark one box only.
- For persons who returned after a break to complete their schooling, mark the highest level completed when they last left.

- Still at school
- Did not go to school
- Year 8 or below
- Year 9 or equivalent
- Year 10 or equivalent
- Year 11 or equivalent
- Year 12 or equivalent

1999 SIPF - 2

What is the highest level of primary or secondary school you have completed?

- Mark one box only.
- For persons who returned after a break to complete their schooling, mark the highest level completed when they last left.

- Still at school
- Did not go to school
- Completed primary school
- Attended secondary school
- Completed secondary school (Year 10)
- Completed secondary school (Year 12)

In line with mainstream form testing, Highest Level of Schooling Completed was tested in place of Age Left School. Different response categories were tested on Form 1 and 2 in an attempt to simplify responses so that Indigenous Interviewers could better explain the question to respondents. New categories on Form 2 equated to those used in mainstream forms. (Refer to Table 34.8 below).

As shown in Table 34.8, the non-response rate for Form 1 (the new level of schooling question) was markedly higher at 22.2% compared to Form 2 at 6.6%. Both non-response rates were also considerably higher than the 1996 Census. It was thought that the difference in response rates was attributable to Interviewer error, skipping over the question and respondents not being able to remember their level of schooling. However, in contrast to the high non-response rates, field observations and feedback from Interviewers indicated that the question on Form 1 was more easily understood than the question on Form 2.

TABLE 34.8: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES FOR HIGHEST LEVEL OF SCHOOLING COMPLETED, 1999 TEST AND 1996 CENSUS

Categories	Form 1		Form 2		1996 Census*	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Still at school	11	3.1	13	4.5	70	9.2
Did not go to school	2	0.6	4	1.4	5	0.7
Year 8 or below	17	4.8	29	10.1	-	-
Year 9 or equivalent	17	4.8	6	2.1	-	-
Year 10 or equivalent	202	56.7	198	69.2	-	-
Year 11 or equivalent	16	4.5	-	-	-	-
Year 12 or equivalent	12	3.4	17	5.9	-	-
Total Level/age left school stated	264	74.2	250	87.4	655	86.4
Not Stated	79	22.2	19	6.6	28	3.7
Not applicable	184	-	122	-	376	-
Total applicable	356	100.0	286	100.0	758	100.0
Total	540	-	408	-	1,134	-

* Data is only for dwellings enumerated on SIFs.

As categories on Form 1 were more appropriate and better understood by Interviewers, and to maintain consistency with the mainstream form it was recommended to adopt the version on Form 1 for the Dress Rehearsal and 2001 Census. This recommendation was implemented.

34.2.2.8 Job Last Week

1996 SIPF & 1999 SIPF -1

Did you work for someone else or yourself last week?

- Someone else > **Go to.....**
- Self

Last week, did you have any people working for you?

- No
- Yes

1999 SIPF - 2

Last week, in your paid job did you work for?

- Someone else
- For yourself
- With employees
- Without employees

The two-part job last week question was not well understood by Indigenous people in the 1996 Census and subsequently produced poor quality data. The main cause of the confusion was the words 'did you work for someone else or yourself last week'. Some people took them to mean that if they were physically working by themselves then they were actually self-employed. Consequently the question was reworded into one question to determine whether people were employees, or self-employed with or without employees. This was tested on Form 2.

The non-response rates for both versions of the questions were high. The total non-response rate for Form 2 was 69.1% (one question) compared with 60.8% and 85.2% respectively for questions on Form 1 (two questions), which indicated that the questions were not well understood by interviewers or respondents. This was supported by Interviewer comments at debriefing.

Following testing it was recommended to either attempt to develop a simpler question format for the Dress Rehearsal and 2001 Census or delete the question from the form. This question was not included on the Dress Rehearsal or 2001 Census SIPF.

34.2.2.9 Simplified Occupation Question

1996 SIFP

What job did you do last week?

- For example, cleaner, council labourer, truck driver station hand.

Name of job

.....

What type of work did you do in that job(s) last week?

- For example, cleaning school, mowing lawns, rubbish collection, mustering cattle.

Type of job

.....

1999 SIFP - 1

What job did you do last week?

- For example, cleaner, council labourer, truck driver station hand.

Name of job

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

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What type of work did you do in that job(s) last week?

- For example, cleaning school, mowing lawns, rubbish collection, mustering cattle.

Type of job

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

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1999 SIFP- 2

What type of work did you do in that job(s) last week?

- For example, cleaning school, mowing lawns, rubbish collection, mustering cattle.

Type of job

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

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As shown in Table 34.9 a markedly higher non-response rate was found for Form 2 at 32.4% than Form 1. Both rates were also considerably higher than in the 1996 Census (8.8%). Analysis of the written responses on Form 1 indicated that 45.7% of respondents provided the same or similar responses to both questions while 28.8% provided different responses.

Overall, results of testing indicated that more information can be collected from two questions than one. Therefore it was recommended to retain the two occupation questions for both the Dress Rehearsal and 2001 Census. This recommendation was implemented.

TABLE 34.9: NON-RESPONSE RATES FOR THE OCCUPATION QUESTIONS, 1999 TEST AND 1996 CENSUS

Variable	Form 1 %	Form 2 %	1996 Census %
Type of job	22.9	32.4	-
Name of job	22.2	n.a.	-
Occupation	22.5	32.4	8.8

34.2.2.9 New question wording which combined Employer's Business Name and address in one question

1996 SIPP

What is your employer's address?

Street number and name
.....
Community, rural locality or town
.....
State/Territory Postcode
.....

What work does your employer do?

- For example, raising cattle, community services, community council.

.....
.....

1999 SIPFs 1 & 2

Who did you work for last week and what was your employer's address?

- If it is the community, give the community's name.
- If funded by CDEP, also write 'CDEP'.
- If they worked for themselves, write name of business.

Name of business
□□□□□□□□□□□□□□
□□□□□□□□□□□□□□
□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

Street number
□□□□□□

Street name
□□□□□□□□□□□□□□
□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

Community, rural locality or town
□□□□□□□□□□□□□□
□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

State/Territory Postcode
□□□ □□□□

Testing of the mainstream form generated a different question to that used in the 1996 Census for employer business name and employer's workplace address. The main change was that the two questions were combined into a single question asking both employer name and address. A combined question was tested on Form 1 and 2 in the 1999 Test.

Testing revealed a high non-response rate for both Form 1 and Form 2 at 60.1% and 45.1%, respectively, indicating a lack of understanding of the question. Although the non-response rates were high, the data is not extensively used for remote Indigenous communities. In line with mainstream form recommendations it was decided to retain the 1996 Census question versions for both the Dress Rehearsal and 2001 Census. This recommendation was adopted.

34.2.2.10 Banner Instruction 'No further Questions'

In 1996, respondents who did not have a paid job last week (in question 28) were sequenced to 'Looking for work' (question 39) and 'Availability to start work' (question 40). While those respondents who did have a job answered all the labour force questions (questions 29 to 37) and received a 'No More Questions' banner at question 38. This meant they were not required to answer the looking for work and availability to start work questions, which immediately followed the banner instruction.

To maintain the consistency with mainstream forms the banner was removed for the 1999 Test, sequencing employed persons to answer the looking for work questions.

Testing revealed that removing the banner instruction reduced the number of non-responses to the looking for work and availability to start work questions. However, a high number of commission errors were found for respondents who were not required to answer the availability to start work question indicating that the instruction not to continue if the respondent had not looked for work should be made more prominent.

To bring the SIFs in line with the mainstream forms it was recommended to remove the banner instruction for the Dress Rehearsal and 2001 Census. This was adopted.

34.3. August 2000 Indigenous Dress Rehearsal

Following the 1999 Indigenous Test, a number of additional changes were made to the SIFs for the August 2000 Indigenous Dress Rehearsal.

Changes made to the SIHF included rewording of the rent question to a weekly amount rather than a fortnightly amount because in many communities rent is paid weekly rather than fortnightly. Changes made to the SIPF included:

- the inclusion of three additional questions: computer use at home, Internet use and agreement to the retention of their name identified census data;
- the inclusion of an additional response category, 'Yes worked in own business' to the Job last week question to compensate for the removal of the occupation question 'Did you work for someone else or your self last week?' and 'Last week, did you have any people working for you?'; and
- the inclusion of 'truck' to the list of response categories in the method of travel to work question.

The impact of these changes was not formally evaluated after the 2000 Indigenous Dress Rehearsal. However, the following recommendations were made for the 2001 Census. Although formal testing was not undertaken some of these recommendations were implemented for the 2001 Census, particularly on the 2001 SIHF.

SIHF

- replace the 'Description of place' with 'Address/Description of Place';
- replace the tick box for 'Sex' with 'M' or 'F' with ICR marking as the tick box was thought to confuse people;
- revise the sequencing instructions for dwelling variables;
- change the location of the number of motor vehicles question from first to last position to aid question sequencing, particularly for unoccupied private dwellings;
- change the location of the response categories 'Yes rented' and 'Community or co-operative housing group' in the tenure and landlord questions to the first option on their respective pick lists as they were the most frequently answered categories;
- revise wording of the title 'List all people who live here and visitors' to 'List of all people who live here and are staying here'; and
- include the instruction 'Interviewer to answer' in the dwelling structure question

SIPF

- revise the wording of the relationship question as it was found to be confusing;
- include a sequence instruction ('and go to Q10') in the second instruction in the usual residence questions, one and five years ago;
- include 'AIM' and 'Baha'i' as additional response categories in the religion question;
- revise the sequencing instructions in the banner question;
- replace the response 'Yes at this place' with 'Same as in question 7' and 'Same as in question 8' in the usual residence question one and five years ago, respectively so that information does not have to be written again; and
- move the response category 'Yes, Aboriginal' to top of the list in the Aboriginal /Torres Strait Islander origin question.

34. 4 CHANGES MADE FOR THE 2001 CENSUS

Form design changes between the 1996 and 2001 SIFs generally reflected changes made on the mainstream forms. Other changes were made to improve reporting and understanding by Indigenous people.

As in the 1996 Census the questions were suitable for Interviewer use. However, unlike the 1996 forms the 2001 SIFs used ICR technology.

Major changes to the SIHF included:

- increasing the Household Form to four pages;
- adding a separate response category for motorbikes and motor scooters to the number of motor vehicles question;
- adding a 'No - humpy, tent or sleepout' category to the dwelling structure question;
- revising the order of the dwelling structure categories so that 'Yes' appears as the first response category;
- rewording the rent question to include a 'weekly' amount rather than a 'fortnightly' amount;
- revising the position and sequencing of the dwelling questions;
- replacing the 'description of place' with 'Address/Description of Place';
- replacing the tick box for 'Sex' with 'M' or 'F' as the tick box can confuse people with ICR marking; and
- changing the location of 'Yes rented' and 'Community or co-operative housing group' to the first option in the landlord and tenure questions.

Major changes to the SIPF included:

- adopting ICR format for the age question;
- removing tribally married from the response categories in the marital status question;
- revising the order of response categories in the religion question and adding a new response 'Aboriginal Evangelical Missions';
- replacing the age left school question with the highest level of schooling completed question;
- removing the 1996 two-part labour force questions;
- removing the banner instruction 'No further Questions' (question 38);
- including three additional questions: computer use at home, Internet use and agreement to the retention of their name identified census data;
- including an additional response category, 'Yes worked in own business' in the job last week question;
- including an additional response category 'truck' in the method of travel to work question;

- replacing the response 'Yes at this place' with 'Same as in question 7' and 'Same as in question 7' and 'Same as in question 8' in the usual residence question one and five years ago, respectively; and
- using a question rather than a banner to sequence respondents under the age of 15 to answer the question asking if the person agrees to their name identified census information being retained.

34.5 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

The SIFs will be evaluated in terms of the quality of the data obtained from them in the 2001 Census. This evaluation will determine whether changes are needed to the interviewer-based questions for the 2006 Census.

APPENDIX 1: SUMMARY OF CENSUS FIELD TESTS

Test Date	Form Types	State	Location	No. of dwellings
May 1997	Form 1 (OMR) Form 2 (ICR)	QLD	Brisbane	5,529
26 November 1997	Form 3	VIC	Melbourne	Approx. 2000
1 September 1998	Form 4 Form 5	SA	Adelaide	5,425
10 August 1999 Major Test	Form 6 Form 7	NSW	Sydney	19,702
26 October 1999	Special Indigenous Forms (part of Major Test)	NT	Nguiu	Entire community
27 June 2000	Dress Rehearsal	VIC	<u>Statistical Local Areas (SLA):</u> Knox-North, Monash-Waverley East, Whittlesea South, Frankston East, Frankston West, Mildura Part A and Mildura Part B.	40,097
August - September 2000	Indigenous Dress Rehearsal	WA	Cosmo Newbury, Kurrawang	30
		QLD	Woorabinda	88

APPENDIX 2: SUMMARY OF COGNITIVE TESTS

Ref. No.	Date	Location	Sessions	Interviews	Total Participants
J276	6-8 August 1997	Sydney (south and west)	7		106
"	25-26 Sept. 1997	Sydney (south)	7		Incl. above
"	14 October 1997	Sydney (Redfern)	1		Incl. above
J310	6-7 April 1998	Sydney (south and west)	7	30	52
J319	14 May 1998	Sydney (west)	5		25
J321	1 June 1998	Sydney (west)	4		35
J336	12-13 Oct. 1998	Sydney (south, west and east)	6		45
J361	30-31 March 1999	Sydney (south and west)	6		42
J368	20-22 April 1999	Sydney (south and CBD)	6		49
J433	15-18 Feb. 2000	Sydney (Miranda, Parramatta, north, inner west and east)	12		94
J440	14-16 March 2000	Sydney (west and CBD)	12		91
J500	4-5 April 2001	Sydney (south and CBD)	4		19

APPENDIX 3: TOPICS EVALUATED BY FIELD TEST

Topics	May 1997	November 1997	September 1998	August 1999	October 1999
1. Age	X		X		
2. Ancestry	X			X	
3. Birthplace of Parents	X		X	X	
4. Computer Use at Home and Internet Use					
5. Disability		X	X		
6. Highest Level of Schooling Completed	X		X	X	
7. Household Payments	X		X		
8. Income	X		X		
9. Industry	X		X		
10. Job Last Week			X	X	
11. Landlord			X		
12. Language Spoken at Home			X		
13. Method of Travel to Work	X		X	X	
14. Non-School Qualifications	X		X	X	
15. Number of Motor Vehicles	X		X	X	
16. Person's Workplace Address	X			X	
17. Registered Marital Status			X	X	
18. Residential Status in Non-Private Dwelling				X	
19. Religion	X		X	X	
20. Retention					
21. Tenure			X		
22. Usual Residence			X		
23. Year of Arrival in Australia	X		X		
Issues					
24. Age 15 Years Banner Instruction	X				
25. Confidentiality Statement	X				
26. Dwelling vs. Household Terminology	X				
27. Hotline Number	X				
28. How to Complete the Form	X		X		
29. Intelligent Character Recognition	X		X		
30. Internet Form					
31. Persons Temporarily Absent	X				
32. Scanning Forms	X				
33. Time Taken To Complete the Household Form	X			X	
Special Indigenous Topics and Issues					
34. Special Indigenous Forms					X

APPENDIX 4: TOPICS TESTED BY COGNITIVE TESTS

Topics	Month and year of cognitive testing											
	8 / 9 7	9 / 9 7	1 / 0 7	4 / 9 8	5 / 9 8	6 / 9 8	1 / 0 9 8	3 / 9 9	4 / 9 9	2 / 0 0	3 / 0 0	4 / 0 1
1. Age			X									
2. Ancestry	X	X	X				X					
3. Birthplace of Parents							X	X				
4. Computer Use at Home and Internet Use									X			
5. Disability	X	X	X		X							
6. Highest Level of Schooling Completed						X		X				
7. Household Payments												
8. Income						X						
9. Industry												
10. Job Last Week				X								
11. Landlord												
12. Language Spoken at Home												
13. Method of Travel to Work				X				X				
14. Non-School Qualifications				X		X		X				
15. Number of Motor Vehicles												
16. Person's Workplace Address				X								
17. Registered Marital Status												
18. Residential Status in Non-Private Dwelling												
19. Religion												
20. Retention									X			
21. Tenure												
22. Usual Residence				X								
23. Year of Arrival in Australia				X								
Issues												
24. Age 15 Years Banner Instruction						X						
25. Confidentiality Statement									X			
26. Dwelling vs Household Terminology												
27. Hotline Number												
28. How to Complete the form												
29. Intelligent Character Recognition	X	X	X									
30. Internet Form												X
31. Persons Temporarily Absent												
32. Scanning forms												
33. Time Taken to Complete the Household Form												
Special Indigenous Topics and Issues												
34. Special Indigenous Forms												
Other test subjects												
Box size				X								
Household Guide								X			X	
Response areas without borders				X								
Use of crosses vs ticks				X								

APPENDIX 5: NON-RESPONSE RATES FOR TOPICS BY FIELD TEST AND FORM

Variable*	May 1997		September 1998		August 1999	
	Form 1	Form 2	Form 4	Form 5	Form 6	Form 7
Age	1.2	6.2	0.9	0.6	4.6	4
Ancestry	n.a.	5.2	n.a.	n.a.	8.7	8.8
Australian Citizenship	4.1	5.1	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Birthplace of Male Parent	4.6	5.8	4.9	4.9	5.9	5.4
Birthplace of Female Parent	4.4	5.6	2.9	2.5	8.1	8.1
Birthplace of Individual	4.2	4.7	2.8	2.3	5.7	5.7
Computer Use at Home	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Employer's Business Name	-	-	-	-	10.3	10
Full-time/Part-time Job	8.8	8.5	6.3	5.8	9.1	8.4
Full/Part-time Student Status	6.3	6.1	4.8	4.2	6.5	6
Highest Level of Schooling Completed (In 1996 Census: Age Left School)	9.3	12.7	10.8	9.8	12.4	10.5
Hours Worked	2.6	5.8	4.9	4.2	2.3	1.9
Household Payments	4.5	5.2	15.8	14.5	54	54
Income	9.7	10.6	9.7	9.8	13.8	12.3
Indigenous Status	4.4	4.5	2.5	1.9	4.6	4.8
Industry	3.2	4.4	7.5	6	1.5	1.7
Internet Use	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Job Last Week	2.5	2	3	2.2	1.6	1.6
Landlord	1.9	2.8	3.1	1.4	0.8	1
Language Spoken at Home	4.4	5.5	2.8	1.6	5.7	5.7
Method of Travel to Work	2.4	3	4.7	6.2	4	3.5
Non-School Qualification: Field of Study	5.8	8.7	8.7	6.4	13.7	12.2
Non-School Qualification: Level of Education	12.3	14.8	15.4	12.8	16	13.6
Non-School Qualification: Year Completed	4.9	14.2	12.1	8.8	16.2	14.4
Number of Bedrooms in Private Dwelling	6.3	7.2	4.6	3.2	28.9	28.2
Number of Motor Vehicles	10.4	11.2	7.2	5.4	32	31
Person's Workplace Address	5.1	6.7	-	-	10.3	10
Proficiency in Spoken English	2.8	3.8	3.4	2.4	5.3	5.3
Registered Marital Status	1.5	1.4	0.6	0.7	3.5	3.4
Religion (optional)	10.1	25.9	9.9	6.9	11	12.3
Retention	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Tenure	7.7	8.5	6.3	4	29.9	29.1
Type of Educational Institution Attending	3.8	4.5	7.5	6.5	7.3	6.7
Usual Residence Census Night	2	5.3	0.1	0.01	0.2	0.3
Usual Residence One Year ago	4.4	4.4	2.9	2.1	5.3	5.2
Usual Residence Five Years Ago	7.1	7.7	4.1	4	6	6
Year of Arrival in Australia	3.3	6	4	4.9	1.3	1.3

* Not all of these variables were topics that were tested.

APPENDIX 6: CENSUS PAPERS

2001 Census Papers

02/01 *2001 Census: Digital Geography Technical Information Paper*

02/02 *2001 Census: Form Design Testing*

1996 Census Working Papers

96/2 *1996 Census Form Design Testing Program*

96/3 *1996 Census of Population and Housing: Digital Geography Technical Information Paper*

97/1 *1996 Census: Homeless Enumeration Strategy*

99/1 *1996 Census: Industry Data Comparison*

99/2 *1996 Census: Labour Force Status*

99/3 *1996 Census Data Quality: Housing*

99/4 *1996 Census: Review of Enumeration of Indigenous Peoples in the 1996 Census*

99/6 *1996 Census Data Quality: Occupation*

00/1 *1996 Census Data Quality: Journey to Work*

00/2 *1996 Census Data Quality: Qualification Level and Field of Study*

00/3 *1996 Census Data Quality: Industry*

00/4 *1996 Census Data Quality: Income*

If you would like a copy of any of these papers, or have any other queries, please contact [Rosa Gibbs](mailto:rosa.gibbs@abs.gov.au) on (02) 6252 5942 or email: [<rosa.gibbs@abs.gov.au>](mailto:rosa.gibbs@abs.gov.au).

The papers are also available on the ABS website at [<http://www.abs.gov.au>](http://www.abs.gov.au). From the ABS home page, select **Census or 2001 Census, Census Information, Fact Sheets and Census Papers, Other Publications**, then **Working Papers** or, **About Statistics, ABS Papers** then **Working Papers**.