



RFQ ABS2019.287.0001

**Attachment B: Contact material testing research
brief**

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Purpose

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) invites a proposal from Kantar | Public Division to undertake testing to inform the design of contact materials for the Census campaign. Testing will help determine messaging on when to complete the Census, benefits of participation, and inclusion of compulsory and penalties.

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Background

The Census

The ABS is Australia's national statistical agency. It provides key statistics on a wide range of economic, environmental and social issues.

The Census is the largest statistical collection undertaken by the ABS, and one of the most important. The *Census and Statistics Act* requires that the Australian Statistician conducts a Census every five years. The next Census will take place in August 2021.

Census data provides a snapshot of the nation. Data collected over time helps tell the story of how Australia is changing. It gives governments, businesses, communities and others information to plan the right services in the right place, particularly those that impact our lives - such as housing, social security, transport, education, industry, shops and health care.

The scope of the Census is all people in Australia on Census night, including Norfolk Island, the Cocos (Keeling) Islands and Christmas Island.

Participation is compulsory and while penalties may apply if a person refuses to complete the Census, the ABS's priority is to get informed and willing cooperation from everyone.

The ABS is focused on updating its processes and using an online Census digital service to help people participate, while providing alternatives for those who choose (or need) to use a paper form, complete a short form or complete via interview.

In 2016 the ABS achieved a 94.8 per cent response rate, which was lower but comparable to 2011 and 2006¹. We need to achieve a similar result in 2021 – at least 95 per cent.

Need for research on contact materials

The Census includes everyone in Australia on Census night. In 2021 Census, it estimated that S47E percent of householders will be sent a letter. The letter will provide people with a Census number and temporary password to access the online form. The remaining S47E percent of dwellings will get a paper form delivered by a field offer (for example remote locations and retirement villages in mail-out areas).

Testing of this material is required to ensure it effectively conveys information that will motivate and facilitate timely and accurate participation.

¹ Census Independent Assurance Panel to the Australian Statistician, *Report on the Quality of 2016 Census Data*, June 2017

Communicating when people can respond

In Australia, people are counted where they stayed on Census night. This is referred to as a “place of enumeration” Census. The ABS has previously asked the public to complete the Census on a specific reference night.

In 2016, Census communication emphasised completion on the night. However, individuals did have a window of time to complete the form, with the online form available from 25 July to 23 September in 2016.

After the online form outage on Census night, the ABS was criticised for not advising people they had a window of time to respond. The Senate Inquiry stated: “The online site was always planned to be online from July 25 to September 23, to allow people a large window to complete the form... ABS needs to be clearer that August 9 is the reference date and it needs to be completed as close to the date as possible.”

The ABS has undertaken research to inform a decision to address this concern.



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Messaging on Census outcomes

The Census has traditionally communicated its importance on informing electoral boundaries, GST allocation and universal services (education, health and transport).

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ABS has identified a number of community level outcomes from the Census (Attachment 2). Research is required to identify which outcomes have wide-reaching appeal in communication, including in letters, envelopes and/or paper forms delivered to households, and which cannot be dynamically tailored to different audiences.

The ABS feels it is still important to acknowledge universal uses of Census, in addition to focusing on individual and collective benefits, such as informing distribution of GST to states and territories (and by default, informing the funding of education, health and infrastructure), and determining electoral boundaries.

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Target audiences

The focus for this research is:

Primary

- Everybody in Australia on Census night aged over 18 years (except foreign diplomats and their families) within metro and regional areas.
- Populations in rural areas are more likely to receive the paper form will be required for testing of the benefits messaging due to its placement on the paper form.

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Research objectives

Research will be conducted nationally with members of the general public with a focus on less compliant segments, and those who are more likely to delay completion [REDACTED]

S47E. A selection of locations should be weighted to accurately represent the national population.

As detailed on page 2, behavioural economic research has been previously undertaken and has provided insights into letter and envelope design. Further research is required to inform the areas detailed above in “Need for research on contact materials”.

1. Response window

The research needs to determine the most effective way of communicating the response window, with a particular emphasis on encouraging people to complete as soon as they receive their information (do it now).

The response window messaging will be included in advertising, PR, and also on the letters sent to dwellings asking people to complete their Census online.

2. Letters and envelopes

The research needs to determine how the design and wording of the letters and envelopes can address multiple challenges, including:

- ensuring people open the envelope immediately and recognise its importance
- motivating people to log on and complete the Census online
- ensuring people understand what they need to do, how to do it and by when
- encouraging people to complete as soon as they receive their information (do it now).

Letters (in envelopes) will be delivered to approximately **S47E** of households and will invite people to participate in the Census online.

3. Paper Census form

The research needs to determine what examples of Census data use best resonate with people who are likely to receive a paper form. The paper form will be distributed mostly to remote dwellings and areas where there are a high percentage of older people.

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S47E However, it will feature examples about the value of participating in the Census on the back page. A personal form (as opposed to a household form) will also be distributed to people in non-private dwellings such as hospitals, hostels, hotels, caravan parks etc.

4. Compulsory messaging

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Research methodology

The proposed methodology must clearly outline how it will meet the research objectives noted above. Kantar | Public Division should recommend the most appropriate research methodology in this current climate, given the restrictions of indoor and outdoor gatherings due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The methodology should include a comparison of the relative advantage or disadvantage and risks of recommended methodologies.

It must demonstrate how it will ensure the research is representative of people living in metropolitan, regional and remote areas across all states and territories.

Kantar will be required to ensure research is not undertaken in a way that would present a positive or negative bias toward particular messages, communication methods or expectations of target audiences.

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Spending Proposal

Spending Proposal for 2021 Census – Concept testing to inform letters and envelope design	
Admin Details	
Procurement Registration Number:	ABS2020.194
Contact Name and Phone Number:	S22 [REDACTED]
Alternate Contact Name and Phone Number:	S22 [REDACTED]
Contract Manager:	S22 [REDACTED]
Estimated commitment being approved (inc GST):	\$ 99,880.00
Are there any Capital Expenditure components:	Yes
Cost Centre: Natural Account: Project Code: (Project Code is required for all Assets. Please add additional lines if multiple cost centre / includes Capital and Operating) Refer to knowledge document – OneGov – Chart of accounts	S22 [REDACTED]
Period of proposed arrangement being approved: (Delegate approval will be sought prior to extension options being exercised)	S22 [REDACTED]
Is the proposed arrangement an ordinary service/function of Government or does it have legislative authority from another source? (If there is no legal authority for the spending proposal, this must be addressed before any approvals can be given)	Yes - ordinary service/function of Government
Consultancy: Reason: (select a reason from the list for the Consultancy)	Yes Independent market research
Does the Indigenous Procurement Policy Apply? (Policy applies to procurments \$80k <=> \$200k contact Procurement for further information)	Yes
Are the goods and/or services sourced from an Indigenous Supplier?	Mandatory Whole of Government Process
Does this proposal contain an ICT component that requires endorsement from a TSD Official? (Non TSD delegates must obtain written endorsement from a TSD official prior to approach the market and/or purchasing ICT Solutions for the ABS – Hardware, Software, Services)	No
Name of approving Delegate: Position of approving Delegate: (An official may only exercise their delegation for spending that will be charged against their own Resource Centre)	Nick Stathis Program Manager Communication & Parliamentary Branch

1. Purpose

The purpose of this spending proposal is to gain approval to proceed with the procurement of concept testing of letters and envelope design from Kantar Public Division for an estimated value of up to \$99,880.00 (including GST) for a proposed period of 3 months.

2. Background/Context

The Census includes everyone in Australia on Census night. In 2021 Census, it estimated that **S47E** percent of householders will be sent a letter. Testing of this material is required to ensure it effectively conveys information that will motivate and facilitate timely and accurate participation.

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The additional research will deliver the following to ABS:

1. Benefits of Census data

The research will determine the most effective approach for using examples of Census data within communication materials.

2. Response window

The research needs to determine the most effective way of communicating the response window, with a particular emphasis on encouraging people to complete as soon as they receive their information (do it now).

3. Letters and envelopes

The research needs to determine how the design and wording of the letters and envelopes can motivate engagement and response.

4. Paper Census form

The research needs to determine what examples of Census use best resonate with people who are likely to receive a paper form. The paper form will be distributed mostly to remote dwellings and areas where there are a high percentage of older people.

5. Compulsory messaging

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Concept testing outcomes

Concept testing contact materials will identify the most effective messaging to inform the design of contact materials for the 2021 Census campaign.

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Commonwealth Contract – Consultancy Services



Australian Government

Commonwealth Contract – Consultancy Services

Reference ID: ABS2020.194

Customer

Customer Name: Australian Bureau of Statistics
Customer ABN: 26 331 428 522
Address: ABS House
45 Benjamin Way
Belconnen ACT 2617

Supplier

Full Name of the Legal Entity: Taylor Nelson Sofres Australia Pty Ltd trading as Kantar Public
Supplier ABN: 38 000 601 221
Address: 24 Railway Road
Subiaco WA 6008

Statement of Work

C.A.1 Key Events and Dates

This Contract commences on the Contract Start Date or the date this Contract is executed, whichever is the latter, and continues for the Contract Term unless:

- a) it is terminated earlier; or
- b) the Customer exercises the Contract Extension Option, in which case this Contract will continue until the end of the extended time (unless it is terminated earlier).

Event	Details
Contract Start Date:	S22
Contract Term:	S22
Contract Extension Option:	This Contract Term may be extended by agreement between the parties.

C.A.2 The Requirement

Working in collaboration with the Customer (ABS), the Supplier (Kantar Public) will undertake formative research to inform 2021 Census communications. Services to be delivered under this contract are detailed in the attached proposal Annexure 1 (Kantar proposal).

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