

Update on Census-Based Commuting Programs and Products

U.S. Census Bureau, SEHSD
Census for Transportation Planning
Subcommittee Meeting
TRB 2016 – Washington, DC

ACS Content Test

New Travel Mode Categories Tested

| Current Categories | Final Proposed Categories – Travel Mode |
|---|---|
| <p>How did this person usually get to work LAST WEEK? If this person usually used more than one method of transportation, mark the one used for most of the distance.</p> <p>Car, truck, or van Bus or trolley bus Streetcar or trolley car Subway or elevated Railroad Ferryboat Taxicab Motorcycle Bicycle Walked Worked at home → SKIP to question 39a Other method</p> | <p>How did this person usually get to work LAST WEEK? Mark ONE box for the method of transportation used for most of the distance.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Car, truck, or van <input type="checkbox"/> Bus <input type="checkbox"/> Subway or elevated rail <input type="checkbox"/> Long-distance train or commuter rail <input type="checkbox"/> Light rail, streetcar, or trolley <input type="checkbox"/> Ferryboat <input type="checkbox"/> Taxicab <input type="checkbox"/> Motorcycle <input type="checkbox"/> Bicycle <input type="checkbox"/> Walked <input type="checkbox"/> Worked at home → SKIP to question 39a <input type="checkbox"/> Other method</p> |

Testing Modification to Question on Time of Departure for Work

Current Question

What time did this person usually leave home to go to work LAST WEEK?

Hour __ Minute__ a.m. p.m.

Proposed Version 1

What time did this person usually arrive at work **LAST WEEK?**

Hour __ Minute__ a.m. p.m.

Proposed Version 2

LAST WEEK, what time did this person's **trip to work usually begin?**

Hour __ Minute__ a.m. p.m.

Current Phase of Testing

- Cognitive testing completed and recommended changes implemented in test questionnaire.
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- Field testing/data collection phase starts March 2016.
- Research and Evaluation begins August 2016.

Other Content Testing Activity – Reducing Respondent Burden

- ACSO reviewed all items on the ACS questionnaire to identify those of high collection ‘cost.’
- Cost components include:
 - Cognitive burden
 - Sensitivity
 - Overall difficulty
 - Number of complaints
 - Seconds taken to answer
 - Item response rate (county level)

Place of Work Flagged as High Cost

- The place of work question scored high on several cost components:
 - Median time to answer, cognitive burden, sensitivity, overall difficulty, and complaints.

30

At what location did this person work LAST WEEK? *If this person worked at more than one location, print where he or she worked most last week.*

a. Address (Number and street name)

If the exact address is not known, give a description of the location such as the building name or the nearest street or intersection.

b. Name of city, town, or post office

c. Is the work location inside the limits of that city or town?

- Yes
 No, outside the city/town limits

d. Name of county

e. Name of U.S. state or foreign country

f. ZIP Code

Possible POW Address Question Modifications to Test

- Remove “Name of” for each address component
- Add check boxes for addresses outside of U.S. (this skips subsequent address questions)
- Reorder ‘county’ and ‘city limits’ to come after ZIP
- This iteration applies to paper form only
- More internet testing options down the road

Potential short-term redesign of ACS data products

Goals:

- Bridge the gaps in ACS estimates by modifying existing tables or introducing limited sets of new tables
- Ongoing examination of table and geographic summary level usage metrics
- Evaluation of data products at different population thresholds

Short-term change options for current data products

1. A set of super Collapsed Tables (50 tally tables) that contain 10 or less estimates for each table
2. A set of univariate tables (95 total tables)
3. A set of tables (60 total tables) using all lines in the first hierarchy under the universe total line
4. A set of Detailed Tables with 15 cells or less
5. 1-year Detailed Tables at the 20,000 population threshold
6. A new ACS product similar to Selected Population Profiles (SPPs) without race iterations, applying applicable threshold rules pertaining to SPP
7. A set of mini Data Profiles using the proposed estimates from options 1-6

New Employer File

- ACSO purchased a new employer file in late 2015 (implemented in early 2016).
- Employer file is used for matching POW locations during geocoding process.
- Clerical staff constantly adds to employer file address database.

Digging into ACS records with missing workplace block location

- Project Objective: Identify trends in workers whose workplace block cannot be geocoded.
- Focus on characteristics such as region, income, industry, age, race, ethnicity, foreign-born status.
- Separate analysis for paper, internet, CATI/CAPI survey modes.

Release of New County-Level Commuting Flows

- New commuting flows page:
 - www.census.gov/hhes/commuting/data/commutingflows.html
- Includes flows from 1990, 2000, 2006-10, 2009-13
- New 2009-2013 5-year county-to-county (and MCD) commuting flows
 - Total worker counts
 - Means of transportation (4 categories)
- Metro area redefinition expected using mid-decade ACS 5-year estimates (2011-2015)

Resources for Census Products

- Census Bureau General assistance with AFF
301-763-INFO (4636) or 800-923-8282
- Census.gov FTP Technical Support
301-763-2626
- Journey to Work and Migration Statistics Branch
301-763-2454