

RESEARCH REPORT SERIES  
(*Survey Methodology #2016-02*)

**Evaluating the Decennial Census Call-In Option:  
Results from an Interviewer Debriefing of the  
2015 National Content Test**

Elizabeth M. Nichols  
Erica L. Olmsted-Hawala  
Jonathan M. Katz

Center for Survey Measurement  
Research and Methodology Directorate  
U.S. Census Bureau  
Washington, D.C. 20233

Report Issued: August 12, 2016

*Disclaimer:* This report is released to inform interested parties of research and to encourage discussion. The views expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the U.S. Census Bureau.



## Abstract

In 2015, the U.S. Census Bureau conducted the 2015 National Content Test. This test was conducted to study the effect of different ways of asking demographic questions in preparation for the 2020 Census. Sample households could report online, by paper, or call a toll free number and report their data over the telephone with a Census Bureau interviewer. Interviewers used an online instrument to administer the questions and record the answers respondents gave. This online instrument was very similar to the one available to respondents who wanted to report online without any interviewer assistance.

This report documents the findings from interviewer debriefings held after the call-in operation was completed. The discussion during the debriefings focused on the online instrument used during the call-in operation. Suggestions were made to create a more concise series of questions to collect the names of the people living at the household, to use one question to collect race and Hispanic origin instead of separate questions to collect that information, and to provide information about re-entering the survey only if the respondent wants to end the survey prematurely. Other suggestions to improve the interview for a telephone mode were also made.

**Keywords:** decennial census, call-in option, interviewer debriefing, 2015 National Content Test, Telephone Questionnaire Assistance (TQA)

**Suggested Citation:** Elizabeth M. Nichols, Erica L. Olmsted-Hawala, Jonathan M. Katz. (2016). **Evaluating the Decennial Census Call-In Option: Results from an Interviewer Debriefing of the 2015 National Content Test.** *Center for Survey Measurement Research Report Series (Survey Methodology #2016-02)*. U.S. Census Bureau. Available online at: <<http://www.census.gov/srd/papers/pdf/rsm2016-02.pdf>>.

## 1. Introduction

In preparation for the 2020 Census, the U.S. Census Bureau conducts several tests, including the 2015 National Content Test (NCT). The NCT is a large-scale test designed to mimic many of the operations carried out in the decennial census. The actual census in 2020 will collect names, addresses and basic demographic for each person living in the U.S. as of April 1, 2020. The NCT collected the same information for a sample of addresses as of September 1, 2015. The primary goal of the NCT was to test questions and response options in order to collect census data accurately and efficiently. The NCT sample of households was mailed several invitations to complete the census online or by telephone starting on August 24, 2015. A paper questionnaire was mailed two to three weeks after the initial invitation to households which had not responded online or by telephone.

There are three Census Bureau call centers – the Hagerstown Contact Center (HCC) in Hagerstown, Maryland, the Jeffersonville Contact Center (JCC) in Jeffersonville, Indiana, and

the Tucson Contact Center (TCC) in Tucson, Arizona. Staff at these contact centers fielded the incoming calls from the NCT. Interviewers could either answer questions respondents had regarding the NCT, help respondents to complete it on paper (and subsequently mail it in), or collect and record the NCT responses over the phone. The entire operation was called the Telephone Questionnaire Assistance (TQA) and if interviewers conducted an interview, they accessed the online census questionnaire called the “Centurion” instrument.

To evaluate the 2015 NCT TQA, interviewer debriefings were conducted. Debriefings were held with staff at the three contact centers who conducted the 2015 NCT TQA Centurion instrument interviews.

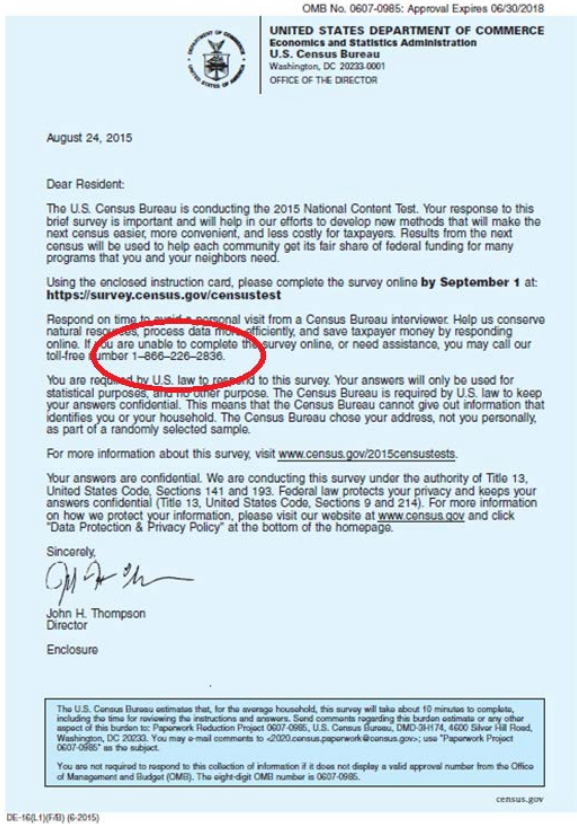
The purpose of the debriefing was to collect data on how the instrument worked for the interviewer and for the respondent during a TQA call. These 2015 debriefing results will be used as a baseline and compared to results from a planned 2016 Census Test debriefing on the 2016 TQA instrument to see if the changes made to the TQA instrument between 2015 and 2016 improved the questionnaire.

This report describes the methods used to gather the feedback from the TQA interviewers from the 2015 NCT and the results of the debriefing.

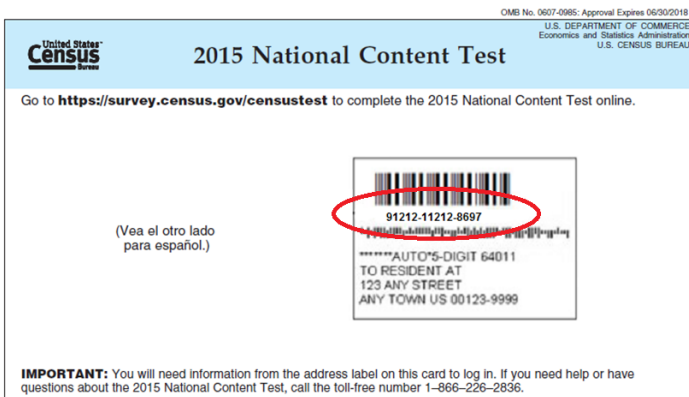
## **2. Methods**

The 2015 NCT TQA is designed to take approximately 10 minutes and covers all the content included in the decennial census: address, housing status (owned, rent, vacant, etc.) and then for occupied units the name, sex, age and date of birth, relationship to householder, race/origin, ethnicity, and any other addresses where the person lived or stayed around census day for each member of the household.

On August 24, 2015, the Census Bureau sent letters to approximately 1.2 million (20,000 in Puerto Rico and 1.18 M stateside) addresses with information instructing the recipient to respond and answer questions in the 2015 NCT. Figure A shows one of the letter invitations tested. In all correspondence, the URL for the online questionnaire was first followed by a paragraph providing a telephone number (circled in red) for those who needed assistance or could not complete the census online. In the ideal situation, letter recipients completed the online questionnaire by themselves. However, contact centers were open to receive calls August 24 through October 31 of 2015 for those who needed assistance. For authentication purposes, respondents who called in were asked to provide a 14-digit user identification number or User ID (circled in red in Figure B) from the “Internet Card.” The Internet Card was included as a separate mailing piece with the letter. The Centurion instrument contained provisions for conducting the interview in lieu of having a User ID in the event that respondents could not find the card or threw it away. In the majority of cases, the respondent could provide a User ID and hence the interviewer comments in the debriefing focused on cases where a User ID was provided.



**Figure A: 2015 NCT letter inviting the recipient to complete the census questionnaire with the telephone number for the TQA circled in red.**



**Figure B: 2015 NCT Internet Card with User ID circled in red**

Approximately 1,100 interviewers and staff from all three contact centers were trained and answered calls to the TQA toll-free lines for the 2015 NCT. For the debriefing, supervisors at each call center selected the interviewers to participate with the stipulation that the interviewer completed TQA Centurion interviews for callers who provided a User ID and for callers who did not provide a User ID. All total, 18 interviewers (six from each telephone center) and four supervisors participated in the debriefings.

Three separate one-hour interviewer debriefings were held with staff from each contact center on October 22 or 23, 2015. The debriefings were conducted remotely from headquarters to each contact center using Video Teleconference (VTC) equipment. This equipment allowed for shared audio and video of staff participating in the debriefing, as well as a shared desktop application between headquarters and the contact center. Staff from the Center for Survey Measurement (CSM) who were familiar with the 2015 NCT instrument moderated the sessions. Headquarters staff who worked on the 2015 NCT were invited to attend either in person at headquarters or over the telephone. These staff members listened to the debriefings and were offered the opportunity to ask questions at the end of the debriefing.

About a week prior to the debriefing session, the 18 interviewers were asked to complete a debriefing questionnaire. The questionnaire, loosely based on prior interviewer debriefing questionnaires used by CSM staff, collected information on where the interviewer worked, approximately how many 2015 NCT TQA cases the interviewer completed, and if the interviewer had experience with other census questionnaires. The questionnaire then asked about the interviewer's general satisfaction with the 2015 NCT TQA, what questions were received negatively by respondents or were confusing to respondents, what questions were difficult to read as worded, any problems with the Spanish translation, and what the interviewer would like to change in the instrument. Data were also collected about the TQA interface, specifically how the interface worked for them and if they had any problems using it when a member of the public called in with a question. See Appendix A for the debriefing questionnaire itself. This questionnaire was used as a loose guide for the live debriefing sessions, and interviewers also had ample opportunity to raise issues that were not explicitly covered in the questionnaire.

During the debriefing sessions, the conversation was not recorded, rather notes were taken. The conversation focused on the questions in the 2015 TQA Centurion instrument which were confusing to respondents, perceived negatively by respondents, or were difficult to read as worded. Interviewers also shared what they thought worked well in the instrument and what they would like to change. Completed debriefing questionnaires were collected, mailed back to headquarters, and analyzed by headquarters staff. Summarized data from the oral debriefing and completed questionnaires are included in this document.

### **3. 2015 National Content Test TQA Centurion instrument**

The 2015 NCT TQA Centurion instrument was used by interviewers and other staff in the TCC, JCC, and HCC. The design of the instrument was nearly identical to the design of the online questionnaire that a letter recipient would use if completing it by him or herself. Questions were asked one after the other using a linear navigation path, meaning that to get to a prior question, the interviewer would have to navigate back to questions one by one without the ability to jump to a particular screen. To get to the next question, the interviewer would use the forward navigation button within the instrument. Interviewers asked respondents for their residential

address or confirmation of their address, names of everyone living at the address on Census Day, demographics of those people, and then other addresses where the people in the housing unit stayed. The roster, demographics, and other addresses were asked in a topic-based format. This meant that the basic topic was asked about the first person on the roster (e.g.: What is NAME's sex?), and if there was another person on the roster the question was asked again and so forth before moving on to the next topic. Pictures of the screens (or screen shots) are found in Appendix A<sup>1</sup>.

Table 1 provides an overview of the question topics and order for the respondents who called in with a User ID. Table 1 also outlines the different experimental treatments within the TQA questionnaire. Because the goal of the 2015 NCT was to determine the optimal question or question sequence for the content items, each housing unit was systematically assigned to a particular sequence of questions to collect these data based on their User ID. The questions differed for building the household roster, collecting relationship, race and ethnicity. Although the TQA debriefing was not organized to directly compare and contrast the different experimental treatments, often the interviewer comments indicated that particular questions worked better than the other questions and hence it is important to understand the different sequences to interpret the results.

---

<sup>1</sup> The screen shots in Appendix A came from the TQA programming specification. Some of the screens might have been updated once the instrument was built.

Table 1: 2015 NCT question sequence flowchart for the User ID path

Question Topic	Q#	Question content, order and skip sequence for a typical path with a User ID. When there is an experimental path, both versions are listed.
Login	1	Collect the User ID (Figure 21) → Q2
Address verification	2	Confirm the address associated with that User ID → Q3 if address is correct
	3	PIN and Verification question for re-entry (Figures 19 and 20) → Q4
	4	Ask if the respondent is living or staying at the address → Q8 if respondent lives there → Q5 otherwise
	5	Determine if anyone is living or staying at the address → Q6 if unit is vacant → Q7 if unit is occupied
	6	Collect reason for vacancy → Q7
	7	Collect respondent's current address → Q8
	Building the roster of people who should be counted at that residence	8
9		Determine whether there are other people who live at the residence Version 1: List of the residence rules and a box to enter the total number of people who should be counted at the residence (see
		Figure 11) Version 2: Question asking if anyone else lives there. → Q10 if there are more people than the respondent → Q11 if only the respondent lives at the residence
	10	Collect the names of the other people Version 1: Includes space for up to 5 additional names with option of adding more names Version 2: Includes space for one name with option of adding more names → Q11
	11	Collect names of people often forgotten to be included, such as babies and people not related to the respondent (Figure 10) → Q12
	12	Collect names of people often forgotten to be included, such as people without a permanent place to live → Q13
	13	Review the names and correct spelling. Allow people to be added or deleted from the list. → Q14
Tenure	14	Collect whether the residence is rented or owned by the occupants (Figure 17) → Q15
Householder	15	Collect who the householder is (that is, who owns the home or rents the home) → Q16



Demographics	16	Collect relationship to the householder for each person Version 1: Response choices do not separate same sex couples from opposite sex couples Version 2: Response choices separate same sex couples from opposite sex couples (Figure 14) → Q17	Overcount questions –  These questions are asking about other addresses where someone could get double counted or should be counted in the census	21	Collect seasonal home or second residence addresses → Q22
	17	Collect sex for each person on roster → Q18		22	Collect parent, grandparent, or another person’s address (Figure 18) → Q23
	18	Collect date of birth and age for each person on roster (Figure 16) → Q19		23	Collect college addresses → Q24
	19	Collect Hispanic origin and/or race for each person on roster Version 1: Hispanic origin question is separate from the race question (Figures 12 and 13) Version 2: Hispanic origin question is combined with the race question and Middle Eastern is a response choice → Q20		24	Collect job addresses if live there (including military addresses) → Q25
	20	Collect ethnicity/origin/ancestry for each person on roster Version 1: Only a write-in field is available to collect ethnicity/origin/ancestry (Figure 15) Version 2: Top 6 ethnicity/origin/ancestry choices for that “race” are available as a checkbox in addition to a write-in field → Q21		25	Collect nursing home or other such group quarter address → Q26
		26		Collect jail or prison addresses → Q27	
		27		Collect any other address → Q28 if any other address was mentioned → Q30 otherwise	
		28		For each person with more than one address, identify which address they live or stay at most of the time → Q29	
		29		For each person with more than one address, identify which address they stayed at on September 1, 2015 → Q30	
		End	30	Submit and collect information on how they heard about the census	

## 4. Results

The data presented below are organized by the three sections of the debriefing questionnaire: Background, General Evaluation, and Debriefing Topic. The background and general evaluation data were consolidated from the returned questionnaires. The data presented in the debriefing topics were gathered orally during the 1-hour sessions and through the questionnaires.

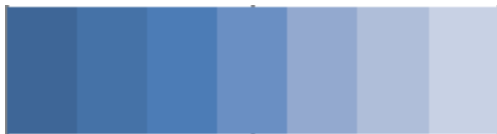
### a. Background

The majority of the interviewers said they had conducted between 100 and 400 interviews; however, the TCC interviewers conducted fewer, for example, four of the six interviewers conducted 30 interviews or fewer. One JCC interviewer and three TCC interviewers conducted interviews using the Spanish translated TQA Centurion instrument. One TCC interviewer conducted interviews in Korean, translating the English version on-the-fly.

More than half of the interviewers had conducted interviews for a previous census field test, and most of those interviewers reported that the 2015 NCT TQA Centurion instrument was as “smooth” as other interviews they had conducted. A few interviewers reported that the interview was not smooth compared to other census interviews. Those interviewers cited reliance on the mouse, instrument phrasing (e.g., the questions in the instrument were optimized for self-response and not for interviewer-administration), confusing race questions, and the repetitiveness of the questions as reasons why it was not as smooth as other census interviews.

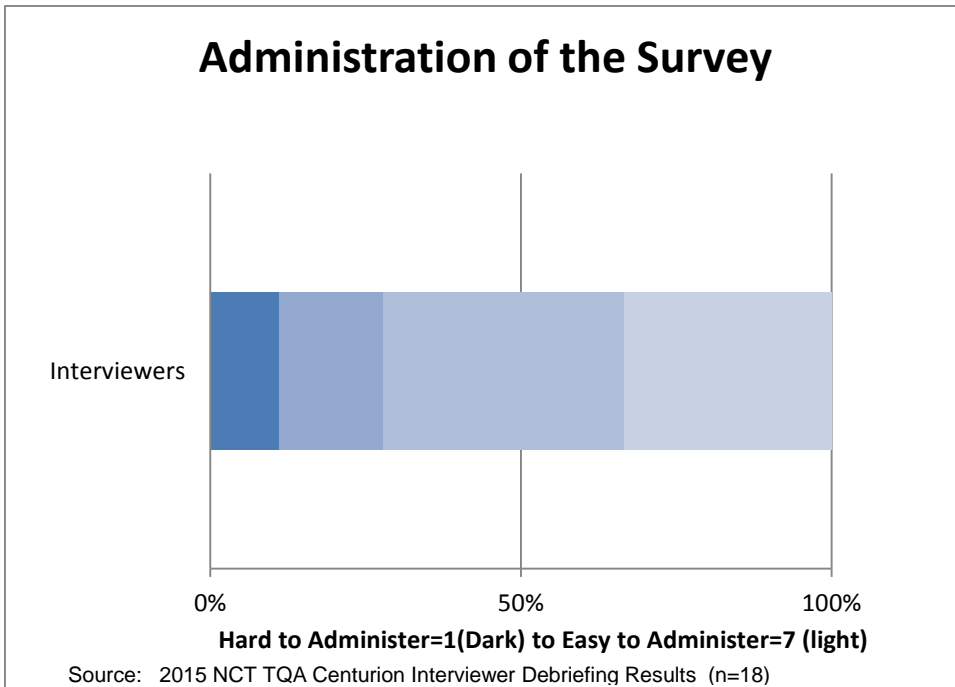
### b. General evaluation

Interviewers were asked to rate the 2015 NCT TQA Centurion instrument using a series of eight questions with Likert-like response options. The topics ranged from how the instrument worked for them overall to how it worked for small households and larger households. Each interviewer rated each item independently. Data were then combined across all interviewers and a percent for each rating was calculated to total 100 percent. Results are graphed in Figures 2 through 9 below. Darker colors represent a more negative impression of the survey instrument and lighter colors represent a more positive impression. For comparison purposes, the range of possible scale colors is shown in Figure 1.

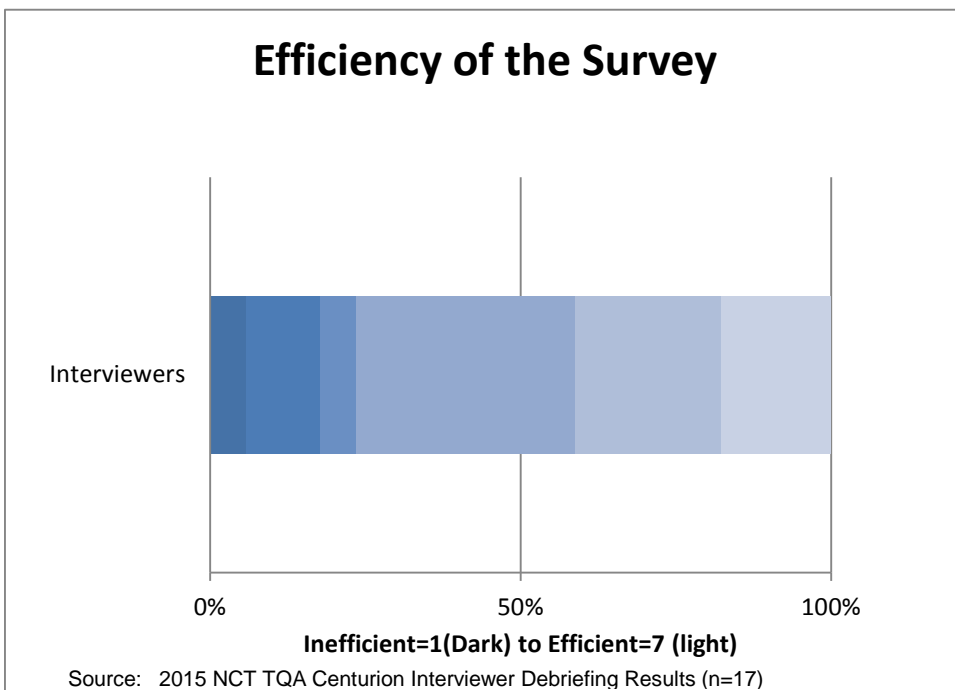


**Figure 1: Range of scale colors for ratings**

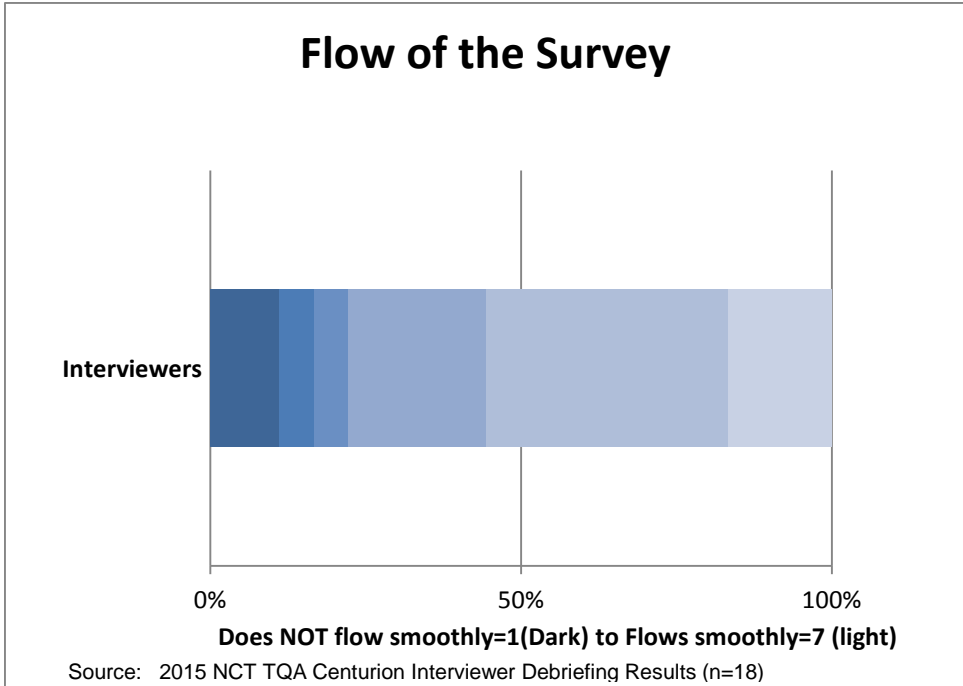
With the exception of the repetitiveness of the survey instrument, over half of the interviewers rated the TQA Centurion instrument positively on all aspects presented.



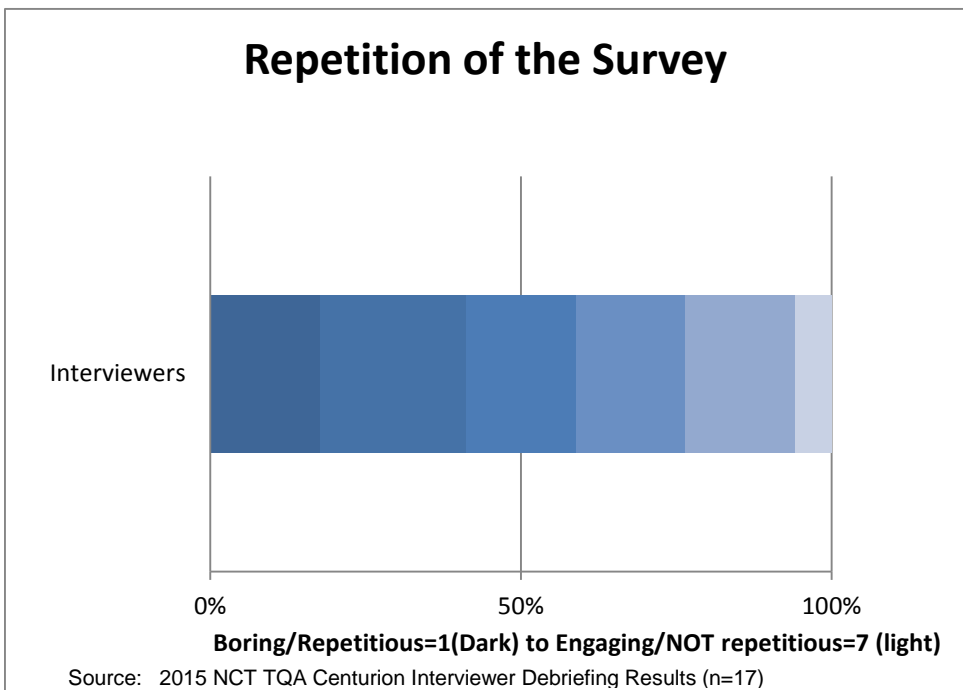
**Figure 2: Interviewers' reported level of satisfaction with the administration of the survey**



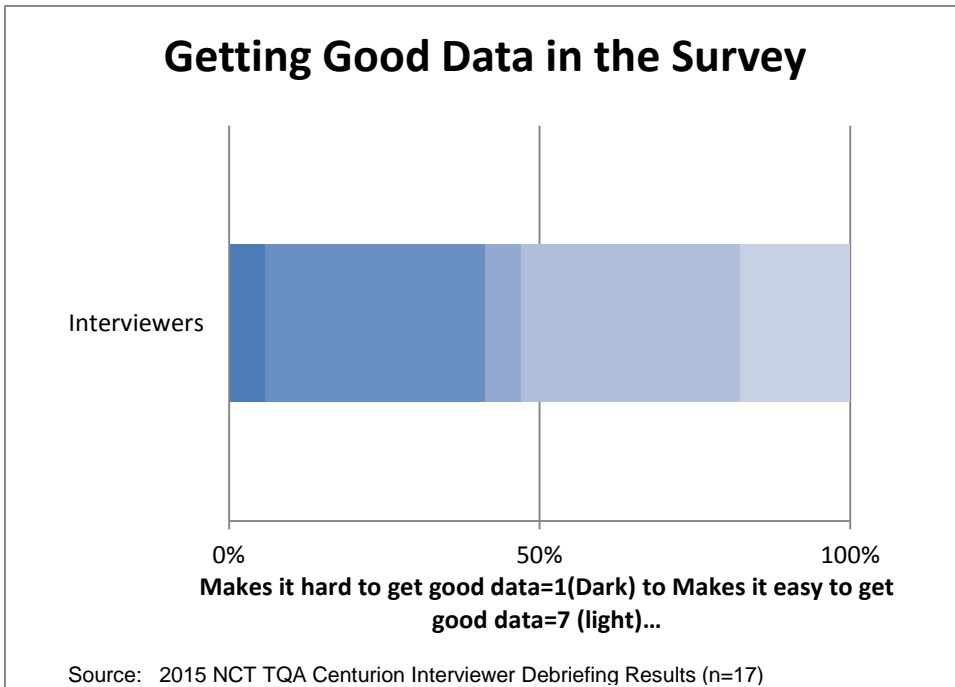
**Figure 3: Interviewers' reported level of satisfaction with the efficiency of the survey**



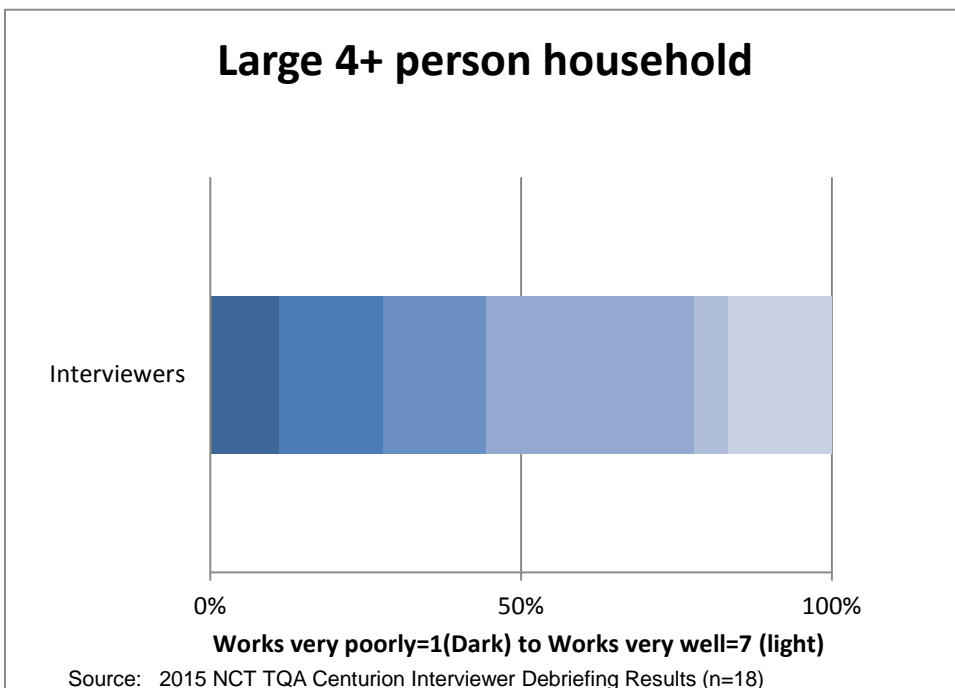
**Figure 4: Interviewers' reported level of satisfaction with the flow of the survey**



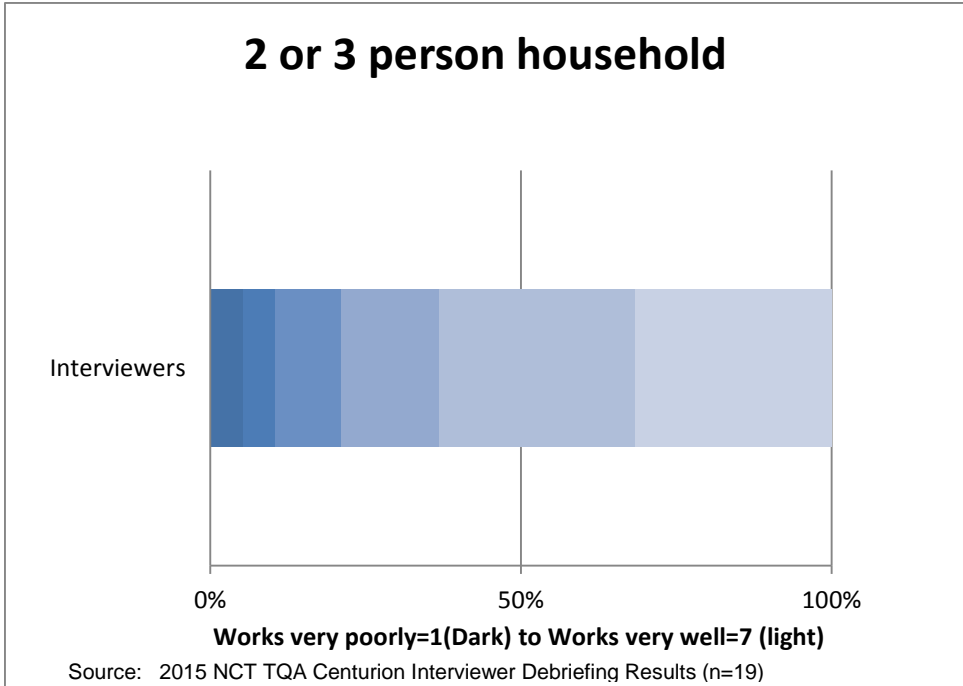
**Figure 5: Interviewers' reported impressions of how repetitive the survey is**



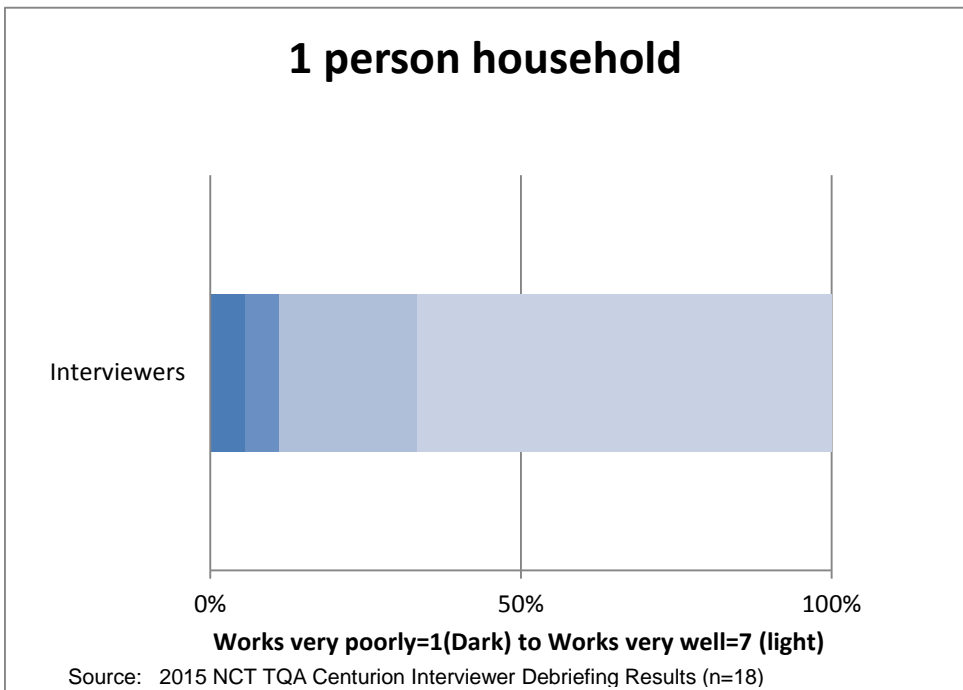
**Figure 6: Interviewers' reported impressions on how hard it is for the survey to collect good data**



**Figure 7: Interviewers' reported evaluations of how well the survey works for large (4+ person) households**



**Figure 8: Interviewers’ reported evaluations of how well the survey works for average-sized (2-3 person) households**



**Figure 9: Interviewers’ evaluation of how well the survey works for single person households**

### c. Debriefing Topics

Although the moderators covered the themes for the debriefing (e.g., questions received negatively by respondents; questions that were confusing), in the order presented in the questionnaire, often the same survey question (or question series) was mentioned under multiple themes in both the oral and written debriefings. In the results presented below, the question problems are presented only once and under the topic deemed most appropriate. Positive features of the 2015 TQA Centurion instrument were also mentioned during the oral debriefing. Those features are included under their own subheading.

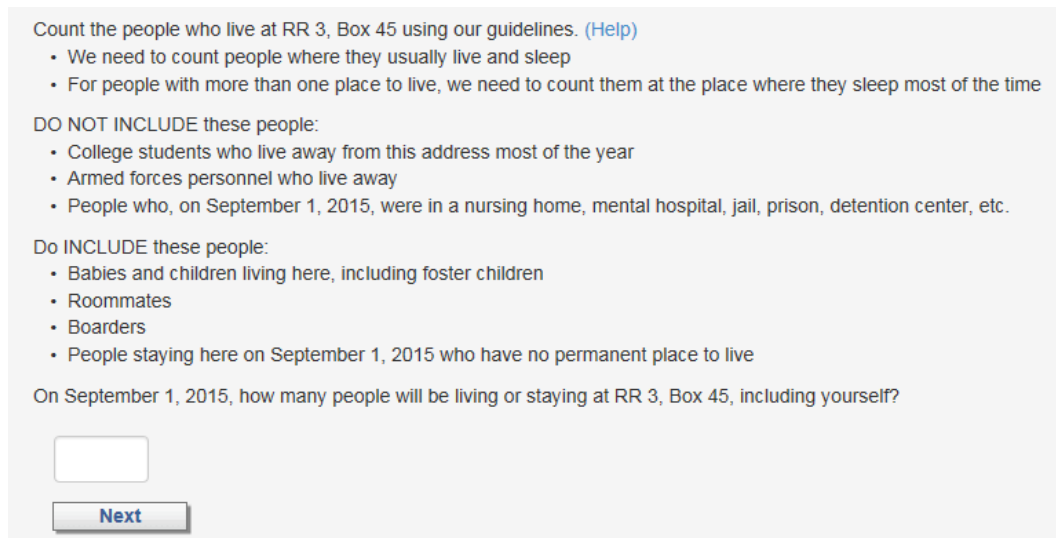
#### Questions that received negative comments from respondents

1. There were a total of six questions (Q8-Q13 in Table 1) used to build the roster of people living at the residence. The numerous roster questions received negative comments from interviewers in all three contact centers. Interviewers in two contact centers mentioned roster questions as an issue that was perceived negatively by respondents. In the third contact center, the number of roster questions was mentioned as something they would like to change.
  - a. Interviewers said that there were too many roster questions, especially for single-person households. Interviewers would have to read five roster-type questions (they would only skip Q10 in Table 1) in a single-person household. One interviewer said that we “lost credibility” when we asked and verified the roster so many times. “A lot of redundancy” and “trying to drag it out of them” were other quotes from interviewers describing the roster sequence.
  - b. The list of names already mentioned by the respondent was included as part of the question stem for Questions 10 through 13 (see Figure 10 for an example). Interviewers were supposed to read these names to ensure the roster was correct and complete and so that the respondent would not mention the same names again. Interviewers said that having to read the names at each question was the main reason the series sounded redundant.
  - c. One of the questions contained the list of residence rules about who to include and who to exclude (Question 9/Version 1 in Table 1 and in Figure 11). Staff at all three centers mentioned that this version was too wordy and that the instructions on that page were repeated in the questions on the subsequent screens. There were also negative comments about the paragraph that preceded this screen. (We do not have a picture of that paragraph.) In the written debriefing notes, one interviewer wrote that the date September 1 was repeated four times in the paragraph. In the questionnaire, another interviewer pointed out inconsistency in the text. For example, the text says “we need to count people where they lived most of the time ... [and then the text] goes on to list ‘do not include scenarios.’”
  - d. During the oral debriefing, interviewers in one center mentioned the American Community Survey (ACS) roster and said that it works well. The roster building

sequence for the ACS has approximately five questions, but interviewers do not read the list of residence rules.



**Figure 10: 2015 NCT roster question which shows the list of previously reported residents to be read as part of the question.**



**Figure 11: One version of the question determining how many people live at the residence (This is known internally as the *popcount* screen because there is a list of residence rules and a population count box on the screen.)**

2. Both versions of the race and Hispanic origin questions (Q19 in Table 1) received negative comments from interviewers in all three contact centers. However, there were more problems when the questions were separated (Version 1) than when they were combined (Version 2).
  - a. Interviewers said that after the summer<sup>2</sup>, many respondents were tired of the race questions. They said that some people said the government was causing some of the race problems by asking the question.

<sup>2</sup> Racially-charged incidents in Baltimore, MD and in Charleston, SC occurred during the summer of 2015.



- b. Interviewers said that respondents also wanted to know why the government needed all the information on the detailed ethnicity.
- c. Interviewers said that some respondents refused to answer the question and some respondents were offended. Several said we were “All Americans.”
- d. One interviewer claimed that race is a perpetual problem in all surveys and not just the census.
- e. With regard to Q19/Version 1, one interviewer said the design and sequence of the questions that separate Hispanic origin from race (see Figures 12 and 13) created a problem. On the telephone, the respondent does not know that race follows the Hispanic origin question. The Hispanic question strikes respondents as “out of nowhere” and “off-putting.” This interviewer described respondents assuming that we were “targeting Hispanics.”
- f. One interviewer suggested that an alphabetic listing of race response options might not be as offensive.

Is John A Doe Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish?  
Select one or more boxes AND enter ethnicities.  
(Help)

- No, not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin
- Yes, Mexican, Mexican Am., Chicano
- Yes, Puerto Rican
- Yes, Cuban
- Yes, another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin  
Enter, for example, Salvadoran, Dominican, Colombian, Guatemalan, Spaniard, Ecuadorian, etc.

**Figure 12: 2015 NCT Hispanic origin question in the version which separated Hispanic origin from race**

**What is John A Doe's race? (Help)**  
 Select all boxes that apply **AND** enter ethnicities.

White  
 Enter, for example, German, Irish, English, Italian, Lebanese, Egyptian, etc.

Black or African Am.  
 Enter, for example, African American, Jamaican, Haitian, Nigerian, Ethiopian, Somali, etc.

American Indian or Alaska Native  
 For example, Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government, Nome Eskimo Community, etc.

Chinese  
 Filipino  
 Asian Indian  
 Vietnamese  
 Korean  
 Japanese  
 Other Asian  
 Enter, for example, Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, etc.

Native Hawaiian  
 Samoan  
 Chamorro  
 Other Pacific Islander  
 Enter, for example, Tongan, Fijian, Marshallese, etc.

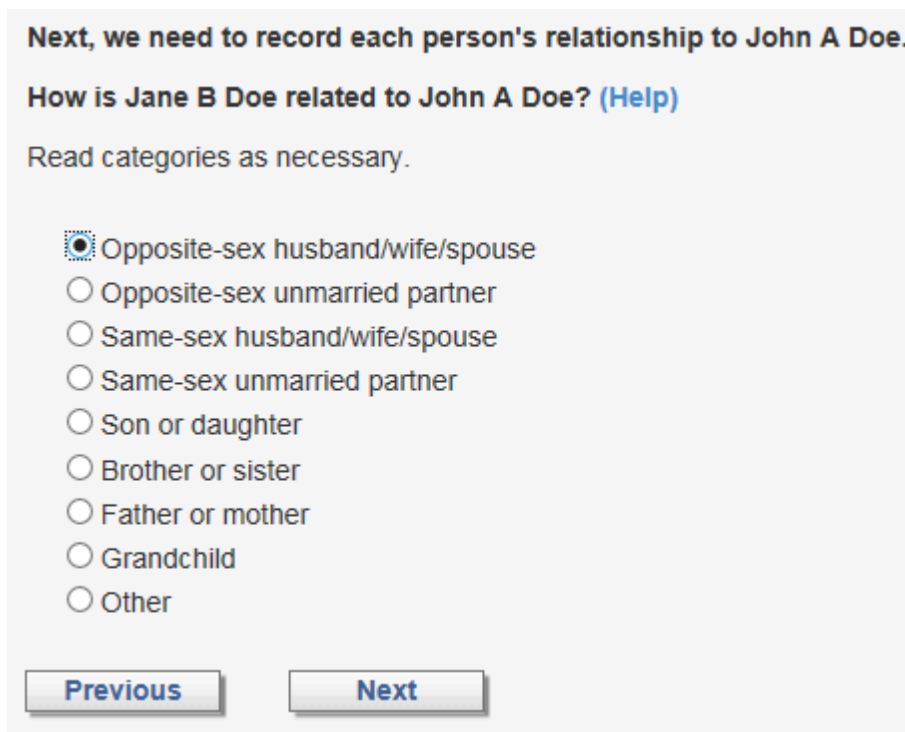
Some other race or ethnicity  
 Enter race or ethnicity

**Figure 13: 2015 NCT race question in the version which separated Hispanic origin from race. Race follows the Hispanic origin question in this panel.**

3. The version of the relationship question which separated the same-sex response categories (and unmarried partners) from the opposite-sex response categories question (Q16/Version 2 in Table 1) received negative comments from interviewers in all three centers.
  - a. Interviewers said that respondents were uncomfortable in 90 percent of the interviews that included the same-sex categories (see Figure 14) in the relationship question. One interviewer said she lost four calls at that question because the respondent “didn’t want to get into that.”
    - i. Interviewers suggested we move the sex question before the relationship question and use a strategy similar to what the American Community Survey (ACS) does. Currently in the ACS, the relationship question comes before sex and the “original” relationship categories of “Husband or Wife” and “Unmarried partner” are used, not "opposite sex" and "same sex". There is an edit "check" in the interviewer-administered modes which is triggered when husband/wife is selected and both have the same sex. Based on how the check is written, the interviewer should not be confirming or asking the

respondent to clarify anything. The check is there to remind interviewers to check their keying for these variables.

- ii. Interviewers said that the list is too long and too detailed. We should simplify it, such as by asking whether they were married or unmarried.



Next, we need to record each person's relationship to John A Doe.

How is Jane B Doe related to John A Doe? (Help)

Read categories as necessary.

- Opposite-sex husband/wife/spouse
- Opposite-sex unmarried partner
- Same-sex husband/wife/spouse
- Same-sex unmarried partner
- Son or daughter
- Brother or sister
- Father or mother
- Grandchild
- Other

Previous Next

**Figure 14: 2015 NCT relationship question with Opposite-sex/Same-sex categories**

4. Interviewers in one center mentioned that respondents refused to give their personal email (Q8 in Table 1).
5. In the written comments, interviewers in two of the centers cited negative reactions to our mailing material. Some respondents did not appreciate receiving mailings after they had already answered the census while other respondents suggested to interviewers that the mailings were threatening.

#### Questions that were confusing

1. The Race and Hispanic origin questions were cited as confusing by interviewers in all three contact centers. Specifically, the ethnicity/origin/ancestry follow-up question (Q20 in Table 1) that requested a write-in answer was very problematic, as was the version with Hispanic origin and Race (Q19/Version 1 in Table 1) as separate questions.
  - a. Q19 was asked to determine race category(ies). A separate ethnicity/origin/ancestry follow-up question was asked for each race category selected for each individual. If for example, “White” and “Asian” were selected for a

person named John Doe, the next question would be, “What are John Doe’s White details?” (see Figure 15) followed by a similar question on the next screen, “What are John Doe’s Asian details?” Interviewers in all centers said the follow-up questions were confusing to respondents. Interviewers described the question “White details” as “really weird.” They said respondents did not know what this question meant. They also said that respondents did not know what was meant by categories, but some interviewers said that question version with “White categories” was a little better than the version with “White details.” Regardless, after reading the question, interviewers had to read the list of examples so that respondents would know what we were asking for.

- i. Interviewers said that some people do not understand the concept of ethnicity at all. Some people seem to understand the word nationality rather than the words category or detail. To clarify the question, interviewers also said they explained with additional phrases, such as, “where your family originally came from” or “where your ancestors were from.” Interviewers also used the terms ancestry, origin, or ethnic origin to explain what we wanted.
  - ii. In the written debriefing, one interviewer suggested using the term “nationality” when collecting race details.
- b. Interviewers said many respondents had no idea what their ancestry was and so just picked “English.” English is listed as the first example for a White race.
  - c. Foreign-born respondents answered “American” for their children born in the U.S.
  - d. Nationality versus race was very difficult for Hispanics when the two questions were split because respondents had to choose a race immediately after they had chosen Hispanics.
  - e. Another problem with the separate Hispanic origin and Race questions was that if the respondent chose White for the Hispanic person, the next question was what their White details were and there were no Hispanic examples listed. Another interviewer suggested to list Hispanic nationalities as part of the examples when the Hispanic origin and Race question were separated.
  - f. These interviewers said that the combined Hispanic origin and Race questions worked well.

Next, we will collect detailed information for each category selected.

You said that John A Doe is:

White  
Asian

What are John A Doe's specific White details? — Enter, for example, German, Irish, English, Italian, Polish, French, etc. Note, you may report more than one group. (Help)

Previous Next

Figure 15: 2015 NCT White details question

2. As part of collecting date of birth (Q18 in Table 1), the interviewer first asks for the person’s date of birth as shown at the top of Figure 16. If the month, day and year is given, then an age populates into the field shown in the bottom portion of Figure 16. The interviewer was to read “Verify or enter correct age...” to the respondent. The age verification statement was cited as confusing by interviewers in all three centers.
  - a. Interviewers said respondents thought we were telling them September 1, 2015 was their birthday when they read the verification question/statement. Respondents would answer “no.” Interviewers suggested asking, “Just to confirm, as of September 1, 2015, you were 27 years old.” Another solution mentioned was “So you were still 27 years old on September 1, 2015.”

What is John A Doe's date of birth? (Help)

Month  Day  Year

Verify or enter correct age as of September 1, 2015. For babies less than 1 year old, do not enter the age in months. Enter 0 as the age.

Previous Next

Figure 16: 2015 NCT date of birth question and age verification statement

3. The tenure question (see Figure 17 and Q14 in Table 1) was cited as confusing by interviewers in two of the centers.
  - a. The response categories for this question are very long and respondents had difficulty understanding the distinct responses. One interviewer said he had to repeat the choices over and over and ultimately asked whether the person owns the house or rents it.
  - b. Another interviewer said some respondents hear only the last part of the response choice and interpret the question to be “does someone else besides them own or rent the house” because they do not hear “you” and instead only hear the “or someone else.”

- c. Tenure question needs “OR”s added between the categories; otherwise the respondent answers “Yes” or “No” to the question.
- d. In the written debriefing, one interviewer suggested rewriting the question into two questions, "Do you own, rent or occupy without payment of rent? If owned then, “With a mortgage or free and clear?”

On September 1, 2015, will the house, apartment, or mobile home at 123 Main St Apt 1 be owned by you or someone in this household with a mortgage or loan (including home equity loans), owned by you or someone in this household free and clear, rented, or occupied without payment of rent? (Help)

Owned by you or someone in this household with a mortgage or loan? *Include home equity loans.*  
 Owned by you or someone in this household free and clear (without a mortgage or loan)?  
 Rented?  
 Occupied without payment of rent?

[Next](#)

**Figure 17: 2015 NCT tenure question**

- 4. Two questions in the “overcount” series were problematic.
  - a. In the question about jails/prisons (Q26 in Table 1), for a single-person household, the question, “Recently, did NAME stay in a jail or prison? The word “recently” needed a definition as in were you recently in jail or prison. Interviewers said respondents were confused and wanted to know if recently was 3 months or 12 months ago.
  - b. When asked about other locations where they lived, specifically In the question about staying with a parent/grandparent (see Figure 18 and Q22 in Table 1) the concept of “staying there” generated respondent confusion and questions as to what we mean; whether it was a few days, weekends, or just daytime. The help for these questions was not helpful and did not clarify the meaning of the word “stay.”

Do any of these people sometimes live or stay somewhere else with a parent, grandparent, or other person? (Help)

Yes  
 No

**Figure 18: 2015 NCT example question which uses the term "stay"**

- 5. The tenure question (see Figure 17 above) references a “house, apartment or mobile home.” The lack of a *fill* was confusing. One respondent told the interviewer, “I live in a house, why do you keep saying apartment or mobile home.”

### Questions that were difficult to read as worded

1. On two screens, questions were difficult to read aloud because of programming errors affecting the question text.
  - a. One interviewer said the Hispanic origin question (Q19, Version 1 in Table 1) was worded incorrectly. This interviewer said that the question text only included the word “Mexican” where it should have said “Mexican, Mexican American, etc.” We were unable to clarify which path created this error.
  - b. The NCT was conducted in Puerto Rico. One interviewer said that the Puerto Rico address *fill* was wrong on multiple screens. This seemed to happen when the interviewer had to type in the address. The *fill* was residence.
2. At the beginning of the questionnaire, a “verification” question is asked in case respondents exit the survey partway through and then want to return to the online questionnaire (see Figures 19 and 20 and Q7 in Table 1). The purpose is to authenticate the respondent’s identity in order to access the partially-completed survey. Respondents were given a choice of multiple verification questions in a drop-down menu and needed to select only one and answer it. This screen was mentioned by staff in all three centers as a question they could not read as worded.
  - a. Interviewers had to tell respondents to just pick one verification question because, as it is written, respondents were answering all four verification questions. Adding “Please choose one question” to the text was suggested in the written responses on the questionnaire.
  - b. Additionally, when interviewers began to read “In case you need to get back in...” respondents would respond, “Aren’t you going to do it for me?” Interviewers want a better introduction to the verification questions, if those questions are kept in their current position in the TQA interview.
  - c. Setting up the PIN and security question seemed particularly pointless over the phone. One suggestion by interviewers was to have it at the end of the session, if they do not complete the interview. Interviewers reported that they did not have even one instance of people calling back and using a security question or PIN.
  - d. One interviewer suggested allowing the respondents to set up their own questions.

[Instructions](#)    [FAQs](#)    [Save and Log Out](#)

**This survey will take approximately 10 minutes.**

**To maintain the confidentiality of your data, you will need to answer a verification question to return to the survey in case you leave the survey before submitting your data.**

**Please select a verification question.**

*Read all verification questions to the respondent.*

Verification Question:

Please select a verification question.

Response:

**Figure 19: 2015 NCT verification question**

Verification Question:

Please select a verification question.

What color was your first car?

What is the name of your first pet?

In what city were you born?

What is your paternal grandfather's first name?

**Figure 20: List of available verification questions in the 2015 NCT**

3. There was not enough scripted wording to help the respondent find the User ID (see Figure 21 and Q1 in Table 1). This problem was mentioned by staff at two of the centers.
  - a. Respondents had no idea where to find the 14-digit User ID number. Some of the mailings didn't have it either which made it very difficult for interviewers.
  - b. Interviewers needed to verbally add "above the address and below the barcode" when describing how to find the User ID.



Please answer the questions below:


Language:  English  Spanish

This interview may be recorded for quality assurance purposes. Do I have your permission to record this interview?  
(Esta entrevista podría ser grabada con fines de garantizar la calidad. ¿Tengo su permiso para grabar esta entrevista?)


Please give me your 14-digit User ID. This ID can be found below the barcode on the materials we mailed you.  
(Haga el favor de darme su Número de Identificación de Usuario de 14 cifras. Este número se encuentra debajo del código de barras en los materiales que le enviamos por correo.)

- Use the example below to help the respondent locate their User ID.
- Keep in mind that not all respondents will have a User ID. If the respondent does not have or is unable to provide a User ID, use the "click here" link under the LOGIN button.

Example Access Code



#####-#####-####



\*\*\*\*\*AUTO\*5-DIGIT 64011  
TO RESIDENT AT  
123 ANY STREET  
ANY TOWN US 00123-9999

Respondent User ID:

If the respondent does not have a User ID, [click here](#)

**Figure 21: 2015 NCT screen for entering the User ID**

4. Asking for email address (see Figure 22 and Q8 in Table 1) was mentioned by staff at two of the centers.
  - a. For the people who called in, asking for their email address bothered some respondents because “90 percent” of them did not have an email address. Interviewers added the statement, “Would you like to provide...” Then respondents would say, “I told you that at the beginning, ...” Some interviewers said they verified the question, “You do not have one – is that correct?” This topic led to a bigger issue that the people who called in, many of whom were older, felt pushed around by the government telling them to get on a computer.

What is your name, phone number, and email address? We will only contact you if needed for official Census Bureau Business. (Help)

Repeat back the email address to the respondent to confirm it was entered correctly.

First Name  Middle Name

Last Name

Telephone Number

Email address:

**Figure 22: 2015 NCT screen to obtain name, phone number, and email address**

5. Questions which generated confusion and which were received negatively, such as the rostering, race, tenure and relationship categories, were also mentioned in the written notes on the questionnaire as being difficult to read as worded. During the oral debriefing, the residence rules or, “the big long paragraph that precedes the roster count screen” (see Figure 11 above) was mentioned by staff in two centers.
  - a. The paragraph starts, “We need to count people where they live most of the time....” The address was included three or four times in the paragraph. One interviewer said, “We lost people on that paragraph.”

#### Other aspects interviewers would like changed in the 2015 NCT TQA Centurion Instrument

1. Interviewers suggested being able to record sex and relationship as they build the roster. The interview would go smoother with that design because that is when that data naturally comes up.
2. They recommended “a short and sweet roster building procedure” and to find out right away if anyone lived anywhere else. Again, ACS was cited as a survey that did this well. In the written comments, one interviewer suggested eliminating the long who to count, and who not to count and the long paragraph (see Figure 11), and ask instead, “Who was living or staying there <date>?”
3. In both the oral and written comments, interviewers noted that they would like a keyboard-driven data entry. Interviewers said that typing in the numbers for date of birth would be much easier if they could key it in rather than using the mouse and selecting from the drop down list. Use of the mouse slowed these interviewers as they are accustomed to keyboard entry. The date of birth (specifically the year) was mentioned as the most tedious by several interviewers.
4. There were no instructions on how to conduct a proxy interview and the interview did not flow well for proxies. For example, in the situation where a daughter calls in to report census data for her elderly father and the daughter does not live with the father, the instrument collects the daughter’s information (see Q6 in Table 1) and not the father’s information.
5. Addresses are collected in the instrument. In the written comments, one interviewer commented that collecting the address for a household member who stays at the residence briefly is unnecessary. The interviewer added that finding how long and when the household member stayed at a particular address “would reduce this burden” and still provide an accurate count at the address on census day.
6. To reduce the burden of collecting addresses in the *overcount* question series (Q21-29 in Table 1), if several people stay at the same address, the instrument allows the interviewer to select a previously reported address, instead of making him or her type the address again. However, interviewers noted that for proxy and seasonal address situations, the instrument did not keep the original address. In either of these

- situations, the new address was collected. When the interview went to the *overcount* questions, respondents frequently mentioned the original address, which was not part of the pick lists. The interviewer had to retype the address.
7. Often people in the same household have the same last name. Interviewers suggested using predictive text on the last name in multi-person households with the previous last name as one of the choices. Another solution mentioned would be to prefill the last name for “Persons 2 +” with the last name of the first person.
  8. In the current TQA platform and in every TQA call, interviewers have to ask at the beginning of the call – “How did you get our number?” but at the end of the instrument we have basically the same question – “How did you learn about this survey?” The question in the Centurion instrument should be removed because having both is redundant.

### Spanish Translation

1. There were mixed opinions about the quality of the Spanish translation. One interviewer said the translation was okay and better than other surveys. Other interviewers said it was too wordy and too formal; it was not basic Spanish.
2. The following questions caused the most problems:
  - a. Housing screens were problematic. The response categories of the tenure question are really long. One suggestion made was “Are you renting, or are you buying with a mortgage or loan?”
  - b. The long relationship questions with the same sex and opposite sex categories were difficult to read. Respondents would ask the interviewers, “What did you say?”
    - i. It would be simpler if the respondent could just answer the question and then the interviewer would field-code and use his/her own discretion if there was ambiguity about the choice.
3. Puerto Rico address questions were very confusing to enter. One interviewer did not know what to enter in some of the fields. The way Puerto Ricans record their addresses is very different than the address fields presented. Usually, there was no building number or apartment number to enter.
4. In the written comments, there were two additional comments about ancestry and the race categories. The interviewer recommended changing the “ethnicity” question to be more simple (interviewer wrote "estadio civil?"). An interviewer also wrote, “Spaniard is white” which means perhaps the Hispanic question was confusing to respondents.

## Other issues

1. Comments on the mailing materials
  - a. Interviewers noted that the hard push for Internet confused a lot of people. They thought they had no other option but to answer their census questions on the Internet. These people were mostly older, do not have computers and/or have concerns over giving information over Internet.
  - b. Mailing materials need to clearly tell respondents that the paper form is coming and that they can complete the survey over the phone. The materials in this test did not do either. Often people called in but did not know they could complete the form via the telephone. Interviewers also thought mailing the form first would help. These interviewers said that the method used in the 2015 NCT will hurt the count. They suggest adding text to the letters something like, “Can’t complete online? – You will be mailed a paper questionnaire.”
  - c. The multiple mailings and emails were problematic, especially after the respondent has completed the questionnaire.
    - i. The additional mailing generates most of the calls. At about three weeks into the data collection, interviewers estimated that 20-30 calls a day occurred because someone was checking on their response to make sure we received it.
    - ii. Interviewers also mentioned that the multiple emails “were not appreciated” by respondents.
    - iii. During the last census test, they also received calls about the multiple mailings.
2. Interviewers suggested that a protocol is needed for situations when respondents call in to check the status of their form.
  - a. To check whether the form is complete, interviewers enter the 14-digit User ID number. Most of the time it is complete and they can reassure respondents. Sometimes it has not been completed. And, sometimes the opposite happened--- that is, the respondent called in to complete the form and it had already been completed.
  - b. Interviewers would prefer to have a tab that said “Survey was submitted” so they could quickly check to see if the survey was completed instead of the current procedure of trying to access the survey.
  - c. Similarly, they would like to have a checkbox for “Checking that survey was submitted” on the purpose-of-call screen. Currently, they type in that information.
  - d. Staff at two centers said that respondents wanted to get a confirmation number. One interviewer gave them the call key # (i.e., the WebTQA’s case ID) to reassure them it was submitted.

3. The protocol for respondent break-ins during the administration of a question should be clarified and perhaps rethought.
  - a. It was not exactly clear whether interviewers could record the response when the respondent interrupted their reading the question with the answer. One interviewer said that he/she would take the response and then clarify. This comment did not seem to be on any particular question, but rather about all the questions.
4. Calls about adding a person to the form.
  - a. Some people call in because they forgot to include someone and their roster was locked. Interviewers suggested allowing them to unlock the roster in order to add someone.
5. TQA Q&A design suggestion.
  - a. When the public called to ask questions about the 2015 NCT very often they had multiple questions, such as “Is it mandatory?” or “What is this survey about?” Interviewers said it was hard to keep up with the questions. The answer to one question was on one screen and the answer to the second question was on a different screen. The interviewer had to read the answers as worded, but it took time to find the correct answer. Interviewers suggested an easier solution would be to have the answers on one screen, or to allow them to answer the question without having to search and click.

#### Positives mentioned during the oral debriefings

1. Interviewers said that if respondents called in, 95 percent understood the census and wanted to participate in it. It took about 9-10 minutes to complete the form for a household size of 2 to 3 people.
2. HCC interviewers said that there were no problems with the *overcount* questions. They said that they were relieved when they got to those questions. However, JCC interviewers said that some respondents reacted negatively to the *overcount* questions, saying they had reported that information in the beginning of the interview. TCC staff did not comment on the *overcount* questions.
3. There was predictive text available for the ethnicity/origin/ancestry write-in field. The predictive text on this page worked well.
4. The combined Race and Hispanic origin question with the Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) category worked the best. Across all three centers, there was no negative feedback with adding the MENA category, even though interviewers did not frequently select it. And one interviewer wrote that he appreciated the combined Hispanic origin and race question.

Additional comments on the other parts of the TQA interface (from #7 and #8 on the questionnaire)

1. General comments:
  - a. One interviewer wrote they would like a “better A to Z” menu and “an option for already done” (which was mentioned during the oral debriefing.)
  - b. Another interviewer suggested a larger “primary quality control monitor/interviewer monitor” would allow all submenus to be viewed. In the 2015 NCT, these submenus could not be seen on the smaller monitors. This interviewer provided an example of how the submenu could not be seen.
  - c. An interviewer wrote, "multiple mailings added a lot of additional calling."
  - d. An interviewer wrote that it was difficult not to answer questions in their own words, like the basic questions.
  - e. An interviewer added it was "time consuming to search for the question and hope the answer you needed popped up."
  - f. One interviewer wrote that the production 2015 NCT Web TQA was inconvenient to use. This interviewer added that by reading questions off the screen, it was difficult to answer questions quickly. The interviewer also said that respondents would ask multiple questions and that the interviewer was unable to answer all the questions in a timely manner. It took them too much time to pull up the answer and then to find the right key words for the next question.
2. Keyword comments: Words missing from the TQA A to Z included “legal,” “resident,” “postcard,” “Internet address to respond,” “deadline,” “seasonal residence,” “foreign citizen (not U.S.),” and “proxy interview-when a family nonhousehold member calls to do the interview for an ill or aging parent.” One interviewer wrote that he/she “didn’t use it much.” Another interviewer wrote “not many [comments] after I could not get first 2 or 3 to come up with a response.” This comment implies the interface did not work well for the interviewer.

## **5. Discussion**

Several suggestions were made during the debriefing that should be considered for future census tests. These include:

1. Use the combined race question with the MENA category. The separate Hispanic Origin and Race questions caused difficulty and confusion over the telephone, especially when the respondent needed to provide an ethnicity for each race for a Hispanic person. The combined race question with the MENA category did not pose these problems.
2. Consider further research aimed at collecting a person’s heritage, ethnicity, nationality, or ancestry. The questions tested in the 2015 NCT did not work well over

- the telephone. Specifically, the use of the term “details” combined with a race is atypical and should not be used again. Other terms mentioned during this debriefing (e.g., ethnicity, origin, ancestry) should be considered, as these terms helped clarify what is intended. The goal should be that the interviewer does not necessarily need to read the list of examples to be sure that the respondent understands what we want.
3. Consider a more concise roster question series for telephone interviews. Specific examples and suggestions for modifying the current roster series were offered and include simplifying the roster questions by eliminating the residence rule text and not requiring the interviewer to reread the list of names at each roster question. They found that reading the names at the review screen sufficient.
  4. Allow keyboard entry; for example, allow them to type “1” for male instead of using a mouse to select the radio button for that choice. Also consider changing the collection order (for example, collect sex first and then relationship or collect sex and relationship during the roster process if the respondent offers that information) to make the interview quicker and smoother, which allows us to collect more sensitive data – such as relationships - without losing interviews.
  5. Consider modifying the text on the entry screen, the age verification screen and when asking for email address. Consider adding “ORs” between the tenure response fields in the short term as more research on that question should be conducted.
  6. Eliminate, move, or modify the PIN verification screen and the final question about how someone heard about this survey.
  7. Investigate the errors interviewers reported: Puerto Rico address fill and a “Mexican question.”
  8. Develop a proxy path.
  9. Maintain all addresses associated with the User ID and allow reuse of them within the interview to speed the interview.
  10. Develop text to clarify time periods for questions that use the terms “recently” and/or “staying.” Place the updated clarifications in Help.
  11. Improve the TQA application to allow interviewers to accomplish frequently occurring tasks, and accessing the answer to respondent questions more easily.
  12. Improve the messaging in mailing materials to reduce the necessity for calls. Suggestions include communicating that if the respondent can’t complete the form online, he/she will be mailed a paper questionnaire and being clear that he/she can complete the form over the telephone.
  13. Clarify procedures for respondent break-ins and rethink the use of verification techniques during the interview.
  14. Develop a procedure for checking on submitted surveys and add a confirmation number.

## **Acknowledgements**

The authors thank Nancy Bates and Joanne Pascale for their debriefing questionnaire, Mikelyn Meyers and Yazmin Argen Garcia Trejo for their note-taking, and Theresa DeMaio and Joanne Pascale for their review. We also thank the headquarters and contact center staff who helped facilitate the debriefing and the TQA staff who participated.



Appendix A – Debriefing questionnaire

Hagerstown interview debriefing

Date: Thursday, October 22, 2015

Time: 10:30 am - 11:30 am EST

Jeffersonville interview debriefing

Date: Friday, October 23, 2015

Time: 10:30 am – 11:30 am EST

Tucson interviewer debriefing

Date: Friday, October 23, 2015

Time: 10 am -11 am MST; 1 pm EST

Goal: Capture interviewer feedback on the 2015 National Content Test (NCT) TQA Centurion instrument

**A. Background Information:** (Please complete this section prior to October 22/23, 2015. We will not discuss #1 or #3 during the debriefing session.)

1. In which telephone center do you work? (Circle one)

Jeffersonville   Tucson   Hagerstown

2. Approximately how many CATI interviews did you conduct for the 2015 National Content Test?

3. Have you conducted other CATI interviews for the census? *For example the 2015 or 2014 Census Tests Centurion or the 2010 Census, including NRFU and reinterview operations.*

Yes (if Yes, answer a and b below)   No

a. How smoothly did this interview go compared to others you have conducted?

b. Why was it better or worse than prior census interviews?

**B. General Evaluation** (Please complete this section prior to October 22/23, 2015. We will not discuss your answers during the debriefing session.)

1. Please rate the 2015 NCT TQA Centurion instrument overall by circling one of the numbers on the following scales:

Hard to administer	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Easy to administer
Inefficient	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Efficient
Does NOT flow smoothly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Flows smoothly
Boring/Repetitious	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Engaging/NOT repetitious
Makes it hard to get good data	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Makes it easy to get good data

2. Please circle the number which best represents your opinion as to how well the 2015 NCT TQA Centurion instrument worked in the following types of households:

Large 4 + person households:

Works very poorly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Works very well
-------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----------------

2 or 3 person households:

Works very poorly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Works very well
-------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----------------

1 person households:

Works very poorly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Works very well
-------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----------------

**C. Debriefing topics:** We will discuss Questions 1-6 below on October 22/23, 2015. We have attached the screens of the 2015 NCT TQA Centurion following this page.

Please feel free to make written comments on the attached screens in addition to answering the questions below. We will collect your written comments at the end of the debriefing and these written comments will help us, especially if we run out of time during the debriefing.

1. Did respondents make any negative comments during the interview about the questions being asked?
  - a. Which question(s) received negative comments?

2. Did respondents seem to understand the questions?
  - a. Which questions were difficult for them?

3. Were any of the questions difficult to read as worded?
  - a. Which questions were you tempted to reword?

- b. How would you ask those questions?

Appendix A – Debriefing questionnaire

4. If you could change anything about this survey, what would you change and why would you change it? Think about –
  - a. the questions,
  - b. the order of the questions,
  - c. the response categories,
  - d. the layout of the screens
  - e. anything elseComment -

5. Did you conduct any interviews using the Spanish version of the instrument? (If yes, answer (a) and (b) below).
  - a. Were there any particular questions in the Spanish version of the survey that respondents had trouble answering?

- b. If you could change anything about the Spanish translation of the survey, what would you change and why?

Appendix A – Debriefing questionnaire

6. Is there anything else you would like to add about the 2015 National Content Test questionnaire?

7. EXTRA - Space for additional comments on the other parts of the TQA interface. Please comment on what worked well in the interface and what could be improved.  
(We will not discuss these comments during our session on October 22/23 but rather will collect your comments and forward them to the staff working on the TQA interface for the next census test.)

8. EXTRA – What are key words you searched on and couldn't find in the A to Z index list or search engine, or any question you had difficulty finding an answer for?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Etc.

Appendix A – Debriefing questionnaire

2015 National Content Test interview - TQA Centurion screens

Initial screen (Q1 in Table 1)

Please answer the questions below:


Language:  English  Spanish

This interview may be recorded for quality assurance purposes. Do I have your permission to record this interview?  
(Esta entrevista podría ser grabada con fines de garantizar la calidad. ¿Tengo su permiso para grabar esta entrevista?)

Please give me your 14-digit User ID. This ID can be found below the barcode on the materials we mailed you.  
(Haga el favor de darme su Número de Identificación de Usuario de 14 cifras. Este número se encuentra debajo del código de barras en los materiales que le enviamos por correo.)

- Use the example below to help the respondent locate their User ID.
- Keep in mind that not all respondents will have a User ID. If the respondent does not have or is unable to provide a User ID, use the "click here" link under the LOGIN button.

Example Access Code



#####

\*\*\*\*\*AUTO\*5-DIGIT 64011  
TO RESIDENT AT  
123 ANY STREET  
ANY TOWN US 00123-9999

Respondent User ID:

If the respondent does not have a User ID, [click here](#)

Appendix A – Debriefing questionnaire

Confirming address (Q2 in Table 1)



AN OFFICIAL WEBSITE OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT  
United States<sup>™</sup>  
Census  
Bureau

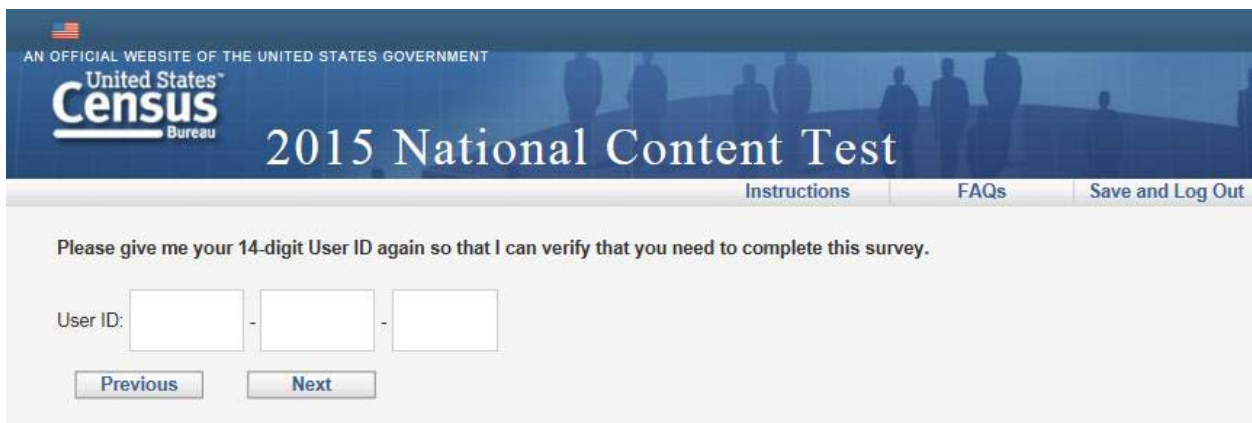
## 2015 National Content Test

[Instructions](#) | [FAQs](#) | [Save and Log Out](#)

Are you completing the 2015 National Content Test for RR 3, Box 45 Flat, KS 12345? ([Help](#))

Yes  
 No

If they responded “No” then asked for User ID again



AN OFFICIAL WEBSITE OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT  
United States<sup>™</sup>  
Census  
Bureau

## 2015 National Content Test

[Instructions](#) | [FAQs](#) | [Save and Log Out](#)

Please give me your 14-digit User ID again so that I can verify that you need to complete this survey.

User ID:  -  -

## Appendix A – Debriefing questionnaire

### Verification question (Q7 in Table 1)

<a href="#">Instructions</a>	<a href="#">FAQs</a>	<a href="#">Save and Log Out</a>
------------------------------	----------------------	----------------------------------

**This survey will take approximately 10 minutes.**

**To maintain the confidentiality of your data, you will need to answer a verification question to return to the survey in case you leave the survey before submitting your data.**

**Please select a verification question.**

*Read all verification questions to the respondent.*

Verification Question:

Please select a verification question.

Response:

Verification Question:

<p>Please select a verification question.</p> <p>What color was your first car?</p> <p>What is the name of your first pet?</p> <p>In what city were you born?</p> <p>What is your paternal grandfather's first name?</p>
--



Appendix A – Debriefing questionnaire

Logging in without an ID (not in Table 1)

**What is your email address?**

Email Address:

No email address available.

Please select the state, or Puerto Rico, in which you lived on September 1, 2015.

Select State

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that, for the average household, this survey will take about 10 minutes to complete, including the time for reviewing the instructions and answers. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this burden to: Paperwork Reduction Project 0607-0985, U.S. Census Bureau, DMD-3H174, 4600 Silver Hill Road, Washington, DC 20233. You may e-mail comments to [2020.census.paperwork@census.gov](mailto:2020.census.paperwork@census.gov); use "Paperwork Project 0607-0985" as the subject.

Respondents are not required to respond to any information collection unless it displays a valid approval number from the Office of Management and Budget. The eight-digit OMB number is 0607-0985.

**Please confirm that the email address you provided is correct. You will need to enter this same email address if you return to the survey.**

**Is your email address - johndoe@email.com?**  
Spell out the email address to the respondent for verification.

Yes  
 No

Appendix A – Debriefing questionnaire

With the User ID – confirming that they live or stay at the address (Q3 in Table 1)

AN OFFICIAL WEBSITE OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT  
United States<sup>™</sup>  
Census  
Bureau

## 2015 National Content Test

[Instructions](#) | [FAQs](#) | [Save and Log Out](#)

On September 1, 2015, will you be living or staying at 4007 Feline Way? ([Help](#))

Yes  
 No

If they lived at the address (Q8 in Table 1)

AN OFFICIAL WEBSITE OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT  
United States<sup>™</sup>  
Census  
Bureau

## 2015 National Content Test

[Instructions](#) | [FAQs](#) | [Save and Log Out](#)

**What is your name, phone number, and email address?** We will only contact you if needed for official Census Bureau Business. ([Help](#))  
Repeat back the email address to the respondent to confirm it was entered correctly.

First Name  Middle Name

Last Name

Telephone Number  
(  )  -

Email address:

Appendix A – Debriefing questionnaire

If they did not live at the address (Q4 in Table 1)

AN OFFICIAL WEBSITE OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT  
United States<sup>™</sup>  
Census  
Bureau

## 2015 National Content Test

[Instructions](#) | [FAQs](#) | [Save and Log Out](#)

Will anyone be living at 4007 Feline Way on September 1, 2015? ([Help](#))

Yes  
 No  
 Don't Know

[Previous](#)      [Next](#)

(Q5 in Table 1)

AN OFFICIAL WEBSITE OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT  
United States<sup>™</sup>  
Census  
Bureau

## 2015 National Content Test

[Instructions](#) | [FAQs](#) | [Save and Log Out](#)

What is the primary reason why no one will be living or staying at 4007 Feline Way on September 1, 2015? The unit will be— ([Help](#))

For rent  
 Rented, not occupied  
 For sale only  
 Sold, not occupied  
 For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use  
 For migrant workers  
 Other

[Previous](#)      [Next](#)

Appendix A – Debriefing questionnaire

Address screens (Q6 in Table 1)

[Instructions](#)   [FAQs](#)   [Save and Log Out](#)

**Where will you be living on September 1, 2015? (Help)**  
Please select the type of address associated with your residence.

**Address type:**    Street Address    Rural Route    P.O. Box

Address Number:    Street Name:    Apt/Unit:   
*For example:*                      (5007)                      (N Maple Ave)                      ("Apt. A" or "Lot 3")

City:    State:    ZIP Code:

Puerto Rico Address Screens

[Instructions](#)   [FAQs](#)   [Save and Log Out](#)

**Where will you be living on September 1, 2015? (Help)**

**Address type:**  
 Barrio or other area   Barrio:   
 Urbanization  
 Other type of address  
 Condo/Residencial

Barriada:    Comunidad:    Sector:    Parcela:

Address Number:    Street Type:    Street Name or Carretera or Ramal:    Apt/Unit:

KM.HM

Municipio:    State:    ZIP Code:

OMB No.: 0607-0985   Approval Expires: 6/30/2018   [Accessibility](#)   [Privacy](#)   [Security](#)

Appendix A – Debriefing questionnaire

Another address screen (Continuation of Q6 in Table 1)

AN OFFICIAL WEBSITE OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT  
United States<sup>™</sup>  
Census  
Bureau

## 2015 National Content Test

[Instructions](#) | [FAQs](#) | [Save and Log Out](#)

Please describe the physical location where you will be living on September 1, 2015. [\(Help\)](#)  
Please provide as much information as possible, including city, state and ZIP code.

For example:

- a location description such as "The apartment over the gas station in Selma, CA" or "The brick house with the screened porch on the northeast corner of Main Street and First Avenue in Suitland, MD 20746;" or
- a name of a park, street intersection, or shelter if you were experiencing homelessness on September 1, 2015, as well as the name of the city and state. For example: "Friendship Park, Paoli, PA."

Note: If you have a street address associated with your residence, such as one you would provide to have a package delivered to your home, please go to the previous screen to enter the street address.

[Previous](#) | [Next](#)

Address screen (Continuation of Q6 in Table 1)

[Instructions](#) | [FAQs](#) | [Save and Log Out](#)

Here is the address you submitted, using standard abbreviations and formatting.

Please review your address for common errors, such as misspellings in the street name or city name, missing apartment numbers, or an incorrect ZIP Code.

123 MAIN ST APT 1  
CITY, CA 12345

Is the address above correct?

Yes  
 No

[Previous](#) | [Next](#)

## Appendix A – Debriefing questionnaire

There were two different ways to collect if there were other people besides the respondent at the residence

### Building the roster of people who live at the residence (Version 1 of Q9 in Table 1)

Count the people who live at RR 3, Box 45 using our guidelines. [\(Help\)](#)

- We need to count people where they usually live and sleep
- For people with more than one place to live, we need to count them at the place where they sleep most of the time

DO NOT INCLUDE these people:

- College students who live away from this address most of the year
- Armed forces personnel who live away
- People who, on September 1, 2015, were in a nursing home, mental hospital, jail, prison, detention center, etc.

Do INCLUDE these people:

- Babies and children living here, including foster children
- Roommates
- Boarders
- People staying here on September 1, 2015 who have no permanent place to live

On September 1, 2015, how many people will be living or staying at RR 3, Box 45, including yourself?

[Next](#)

(Version 2 of Q9 in Table 1)

On September 1, 2015, will there be anyone else besides you living or staying at 123 Main St Apt 1? [\(Help\)](#)

- Yes
- No

[Previous](#)

[Next](#)

Appendix A – Debriefing questionnaire

There were two different displays for the main roster screen –

(Version 1 of Q10 in Table 1)

**What is the name of each person who will be living or staying there on September 1, 2015? (Help)**  
Enter names until you have listed everyone who will be living or staying there, then continue to the next page.

**The names listed so far are:**  
**John A Doe**

First Name	Middle Name	Last Name
<input type="text" value="First Name"/>	<input type="text" value="Middle Name"/>	<input type="text" value="Last Name"/>
<input type="text" value="First Name"/>	<input type="text" value="Middle Name"/>	<input type="text" value="Last Name"/>
<input type="text" value="First Name"/>	<input type="text" value="Middle Name"/>	<input type="text" value="Last Name"/>
<input type="text" value="First Name"/>	<input type="text" value="Middle Name"/>	<input type="text" value="Last Name"/>
<input type="text" value="First Name"/>	<input type="text" value="Middle Name"/>	<input type="text" value="Last Name"/>

[Click here to add more people](#)

(Version 2 of Q10 in Table 1)

**What is the name of each person who will be living or staying there on September 1, 2015? (Help)**  
Enter names until you have listed everyone who will be living or staying there, then continue to the next page.

**The names listed so far are:**  
**John A Doe**

First Name	Middle Name	Last Name
<input type="text" value="First Name"/>	<input type="text" value="Middle Name"/>	<input type="text" value="Last Name"/>

[Click here to add more people](#)

## Appendix A – Debriefing questionnaire

### Roster question (Q11 in Table 1)

On September 1, 2015, will there be any additional people staying there who you did not mention yet? For example, babies, foster children, other relatives, roommates, or other people not related to you?

So far you have told me about the following people:

John A Doe

Jane B Doe

Jim C Doe

[\(Help\)](#)

Yes

No

	First Name	Middle Name	Last Name
Enter Name:	<input type="text" value="First Name"/>	<input type="text" value="Middle Name"/>	<input type="text" value="Last Name"/>

[Click here to add more names](#)

[Previous](#)

[Next](#)

### Roster question (Q12 in Table 1)

So far you have told me about the following people:

John A Doe

Jane B Doe

Jim C Doe

Will there be anyone else staying there on September 1, 2015 who has no permanent place to live? [\(Help\)](#)

Yes

No

[Previous](#)

[Next](#)

### Review of names (Q13 in Table 1)

So far you have told me about the following people: [\(Help\)](#)

You will not be able to make changes to the list later.

John A Doe

[Edit](#)

[Delete](#)

Jane B Doe

[Edit](#)

[Delete](#)

Jim C Doe

[Edit](#)

[Delete](#)

[Add Person](#)

Is the list correct?

[Next](#)



## Appendix A – Debriefing questionnaire

### Demographics – Owner or Renter or Tenure (Q14 in Table 1)

On September 1, 2015, will the house, apartment, or mobile home at 123 Main St Apt 1 be owned by you or someone in this household with a mortgage or loan (including home equity loans), owned by you or someone in this household free and clear, rented, or occupied without payment of rent? ([Help](#))

- Owned by you or someone in this household with a mortgage or loan? *Include home equity loans.*
- Owned by you or someone in this household free and clear (without a mortgage or loan)?
- Rented?
- Occupied without payment of rent?

[Next](#)

### Demographics – Householder (Q15 in Table 1)

Of the people who will be living at 123 Main St Apt 1, who will own the house, apartment, or mobile home on September 1, 2015? ([Help](#))

- John A Doe
- Jane B Doe
- Jim C Doe
- None of the above

[Previous](#)

[Next](#)

Demographics – Relationship (Version 1 of Q16 in Table 1) (This shows how Other is expanded)

**Next, we need to record each person's relationship to John A Doe.**

**How is Jane B Doe related to John A Doe? ([Help](#))**

Read categories as necessary.

- Husband or wife
- Unmarried partner
- Son or daughter
  - Biological son or daughter
  - Adopted son or daughter
  - Stepson or stepdaughter
  - Foster child
- Brother or sister
- Father or mother
- Grandchild
- Other
  - Parent-in-law
  - Son-in-law or daughter-in-law
  - Other relative
  - Roomer or boarder
  - Housemate or roommate
  - Other nonrelative

Demographics – Relationship (Version 2 of Q16 in Table 1)

**Next, we need to record each person's relationship to John A Doe.**

**How is Jane B Doe related to John A Doe? (Help)**

Read categories as necessary.

- Opposite-sex husband/wife/spouse
- Opposite-sex unmarried partner
- Same-sex husband/wife/spouse
- Same-sex unmarried partner
- Son or daughter
- Brother or sister
- Father or mother
- Grandchild
- Other

**Previous**

**Next**

Here is the example of how the categories expand

**Next, we need to record each person's relationship to John A Doe.**

**How is Jane B Doe related to John A Doe? (Help)**

Read categories as necessary.

- Opposite-sex husband/wife/spouse
- Opposite-sex unmarried partner
- Same-sex husband/wife/spouse
- Same-sex unmarried partner
- Son or daughter
- Brother or sister
- Father or mother
- Grandchild
- Other
  - Parent-in-law
  - Son-in-law or daughter-in-law
  - Other relative
  - Roomer or boarder
  - Housemate or roommate
  - Other nonrelative

**Previous**

**Next**

Appendix A – Debriefing questionnaire

Demographics: Sex (Q17 in Table 1)

**Is John A Doe male or female? (Help)**

Male

Female

Edit check for correct relationship-sex selection.

**Let me confirm that I have your answers correct. I recorded that Jane B Doe is John A Doe's opposite-sex husband/wife/spouse. Is that correct?**

Yes

No

Demographics: Date of Birth and Age (Q18 in Table 1)

**What is John A Doe's date of birth? (Help)**

Month  Day  Year

**Verify or enter correct age as of September 1, 2015. For babies less than 1 year old, do not enter the age in months. Enter 0 as the age.**

Appendix A – Debriefing questionnaire

Demographics: Hispanic Origin and Race separated with no Middle Eastern/North African response option (Version 1 of Q19 in Table 1)

**Is John A Doe Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish?**

Select one or more boxes **AND** enter ethnicities.

[\(Help\)](#)

- No**, not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin
- Yes, Mexican, Mexican Am., Chicano
- Yes, Puerto Rican
- Yes, Cuban
- Yes, another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin

Enter, for example, Salvadoran, Dominican, Colombian, Guatemalan, Spaniard, Ecuadorian, etc.

**Previous**

**Next**

**What is John A Doe's race? [\(Help\)](#)**

Select all boxes that apply **AND** enter ethnicities.

- White  
Enter, for example, German, Irish, English, Italian, Lebanese, Egyptian, etc.

- Black or African Am.  
Enter, for example, African American, Jamaican, Haitian, Nigerian, Ethiopian, Somali, etc.

- American Indian or Alaska Native  
For example, Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government, Nome Eskimo Community, etc.

- Chinese
- Filipino
- Asian Indian
- Vietnamese
- Korean
- Japanese
- Other Asian  
Enter, for example, Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, etc.

- Native Hawaiian
- Samoan
- Chamorro
- Other Pacific Islander  
Enter, for example, Tongan, Fijian, Marshallese, etc.

- Some other race or ethnicity  
Enter race or ethnicity

**Previous**

**Next**

## Appendix A – Debriefing questionnaire

### Demographics Hispanic origin and Race Combined with a Middle Eastern/North African response option (Version 2 of Q19 in Table 1)

**What is John A Doe's race or origin? Is John A Doe White, Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin, Black or African American, Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or Some other race or origin? ([Help](#))**

Select all boxes that apply **AND** enter details.

Note, you may report more than one group.

- White  
For example, German, Irish, English, Italian, Polish, French, etc.
- Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish  
For example, Mexican or Mexican American, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Dominican, Salvadoran, Colombian, etc.
- Black or African Am.  
For example, African American, Jamaican, Haitian, Nigerian, Ethiopian, Somali, etc.
- Asian  
For example, Chinese, Filipino, Asian Indian, Vietnamese, Korean, Japanese, etc.
- Middle Eastern or North African  
For example, Lebanese, Iranian, Egyptian, Syrian, Moroccan, Algerian, etc.
- American Indian or Alaska Native  
For example, Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government, Nome Eskimo Community, etc.
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander  
For example, Native Hawaiian, Samoan, Chamorro, Tongan, Fijian, Marshallese, etc.
- Some other race, ethnicity, or origin

[Previous](#)

[Next](#)

Appendix A – Debriefing questionnaire

Demographics: Ethnicity collected on a separate screen

(Version 1 of Q20 in Table 1)

Next, we will collect detailed information for each category selected.

You said that John A Doe is:  
**White**  
**Asian**

What are John A Doe's specific **White** details? — Enter, for example, German, Irish, English, Italian, Polish, French, etc. Note, you may report more than one group. ([Help](#))

[Previous](#) [Next](#)

(Version 2 of Q20 in Table 1)

Next, we will collect detailed information for each category selected.

You said that John A Doe is:  
**White**  
**Asian**

What are John A Doe's specific **White** details? — Enter, for example, German, Irish, English, Italian, Polish, French, etc. Select all boxes that apply and/or enter details in the space below. Note, you may report more than one group. ([Help](#))

- German
- Irish
- English
- Italian
- Polish
- French

Enter, for example, Scottish, Norwegian, Dutch, etc.

[Previous](#) [Next](#)

## Appendix A – Debriefing questionnaire

### Overcount screen example (Q22 in Table 1)

Some people live or stay in more than one place, and we would like to make sure everyone is only counted once.

This is who we have listed at 123 Main St Apt 1:

- John A Doe
- Jane B Doe
- Jim C Doe

Do any of these people sometimes live or stay somewhere else with a parent, grandparent, or other person? ([Help](#))

Yes

No

[Previous](#) [Next](#)

### (Q23 in Table 1)

This is who we have listed at :

- John K Doe
- Jane C Doe
- Jamie Doe

Do any of these people live or stay somewhere else while attending college? ([Help](#))

Yes

No

[Previous](#) [Next](#)

### (Q24 in Table 1)

This is who we have listed at :

- John K Doe
- Jane C Doe
- Jamie Doe

Do any of these people sometimes live or stay somewhere else to be closer to a job (including military assignments)? ([Help](#))

Yes

No

[Previous](#) [Next](#)



Appendix A – Debriefing questionnaire

(Q21 in Table 1)

This is who we have listed at :

John K Doe  
Jane C Doe  
Jamie Doe

Do any of these people sometimes live or stay at another home, like a seasonal or second residence? Do not include situations you have already told us about. (Help)

Yes  
 No

(Q27 in Table 1)

This is who we have listed at :

John K Doe  
Jane C Doe  
Jamie Doe

Do any of these people sometimes live somewhere else for any reason other than those just mentioned? Do not include situations you have already told us about. (Help)

Yes  
 No

*Some people live or stay in more than one place, and we would like to make sure everyone is only counted once.*

*This is who we have listed at 123 Main St Apt 1:*

John A Doe  
Jane B Doe  
Jim C Doe

Do any of these people sometimes live or stay somewhere else with a parent, grandparent, or other person? (Help)

Yes  
 No

**Who?** Check all that apply.

John A Doe  
 Jane B Doe  
 Jim C Doe

Appendix A – Debriefing questionnaire

An example of what the address screen looked like when collecting an address from one of these questions.

Please provide the full address of the place where Jim C Doe sometimes lives or stays with a parent, grandparent, or other person. Fill in as much information as you know. [\(Help\)](#)

Please select the type of address associated with this residence.

**Address type:**       Street Address       Rural Route       P.O. Box

Address Number:       Street Name:       Apt/Unit:   
*For example:      (5007)      (N Maple Ave)      ("Apt. A" or "Lot 3")*

City:       State:       ZIP Code:

If you do not know the address, please enter as much information as you can about the location. For example, enter the city and state, landmarks or cross streets, whether it is outside the U.S. (if applicable), and so on.

(Q28 in Table 1)

**Where does Jim C Doe live or stay most of the time? [\(Help\)](#)**

123 Main St Apt 1  
 The place with a parent, grandparent, or other person at 321 Elm St  
 Equal time at all places  
 Some other place  
 Don't know

(Q29 in Table 1)

**Where will Jim C Doe be staying on September 1, 2015? [\(Help\)](#)**

123 Main St Apt 1  
 The place with a parent, grandparent, or other person at 321 Elm St  
 Some other place  
 Don't know

Appendix A – Debriefing questionnaire

Closeout

AN OFFICIAL WEBSITE OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT  
United States™  
Census  
Bureau

# 2015 National Content Test

[Instructions](#) | [FAQs](#) | [Save and Log Out](#)

Please click the button below to submit your answers to the U.S. Census Bureau. You will then receive a date/time confirmation of your submission.

[Submit](#)

(Q30 in Table 1)

AN OFFICIAL WEBSITE OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT  
United States™  
Census  
Bureau

# 2015 National Content Test

[Instructions](#) | [FAQs](#) | [Save and Log Out](#)

**Thank you for completing the 2015 National Content Test.**

Your answers have now been submitted to the U.S. Census Bureau.  
( July 21, 2015 2:17 pm ET )

Please take a moment to answer the question below.

**How did you learn about this survey? — Check all that apply.**

- In a postcard, letter, or other mailed invitation
- Through text, email, or telephone
- Through an online ad or social media site (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube)
- Through the newspaper, television, or radio
- Through a business or City/County government
- At a local event or community organization
- Through a friend, relative, or neighbor
- Other, please specify:

[Finish](#)