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From: [redacted] <[redacted]@abs.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 10 October 2019 4:23 PM
To: s 22 <[redacted]> <[redacted]@TREASURY.GOV.AU>

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Subject: ADDITION: Updated QTBs for ABS- 2021 Census [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi s 22

In addition to the updated QTBs sent through earlier, please find below a new QTB prepared on the 2021 Census Test content.

QTB reference number (ABS PDMS)	Title	Document
QB19-000006	Australian Bureau of Statistics - 2021 Census Test Content	(See attached file: QB19-000006.docx)

Kind Regards,

s 22

Parliamentary and Partnerships Section | Communication and Parliamentary Branch | **Australian Bureau of Statistics**

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Basics

Edit Logging

Edit Log	10/10/2019 12:58:19 PM; s 22 10/10/2019 02:01:55 PM; [redacted]	Document created. Fields changed: Body
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Hi s 22

As requested, please find below the updated versions for our existing QTBs on the 2021 Census.

As discussed, we have indicated the sections in the documents where changes were made. An additional QTB on content for the Census Test is also being prepared.

QTB reference number (ABS PDMS)	Title	Document
QB19-000003	Australian Bureau of Statistics - 2021 Census Test	<i>(See attached file: QB19-000003.docx)</i>
QB19-000004	Australian Bureau of Statistics - Value of the Census	<i>(See attached file: QB19-000004.docx)</i>
QB19-000005	Australian Bureau of Statistics - 2021 Census Topic Recommendations	<i>(See attached file: QB19-000005.docx)</i>

Please let us know if there are any queries.

Kind Regards,

s 22

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AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS - 2021 CENSUS TEST CONTENT

Key Message:

- The Australian Statistician is responsible for determining the content and the objectives of the testing program for the Census.

Key Facts And Figures:

- The decision has been made to include the topics of non-binary sex, chronic health conditions and service with the Australian Defence Force in the Census test which is currently underway.
- To limit time and effort required by the public to complete the Census test, and in light of other testing already undertaken, the ABS decided to not include questions relating to other potential new topics under consideration.
- The ABS has made recommendations to the Government on topics that could be included in the 2021 Census. This was based on extensive public consultation, stakeholder engagement and testing activities.
- The Government determines the content of the Census and has yet to make a decision on what topics will be included in the 2021 Census.
- Last year the ABS released a short-list of eight topics that were being considered for inclusion in the 2021 Census. Of these, three have been included in the field test - non-binary sex, chronic health conditions and service with the Australian Defence Force.
- Inclusion, or not, of questions in this Census test may not reflect the questions that will be included in the 2021 Census as government has not yet made this decision. This field test, while very important, is only one step in a comprehensive testing program that the ABS will run in the lead up to the Census. Learnings from this test and other testing, including a full readiness test in 2020, will inform the processes, systems and forms to be used in the 2021 Census.

Coalition Action:

- The Government will decide on the topics for the 2021 Census and will issue a Census regulation with the list of topics. This is expected to be tabled in Parliament in early 2020.

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QTB Number	QB19-000006	Adviser	Other
Contact Officer	Chris Libreri	Contact Number	s 22
Division responsible	Census Division, Australian Bureau of Statistics		
Office Responsible	The Hon Michael Sukkar MP	Date of Update	10 October 2019

AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS - 2021 CENSUS TEST CONTENT

Background:

- Last year the ABS released a short-list of eight topics that were being tested for inclusion in the 2021 Census:

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- Non-binary sex and/or gender identity
- Sexual orientation

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- Since this time, questions have been developed and tested for each of these short-listed topics. The testing has involved focus group discussions and cognitive interviewing techniques with respondents using draft versions of the Census form.
- Questions on gender identity and sexual orientation were included in this testing. Additionally the ABS has asked a question about sexual orientation in other surveys for more than a decade.
- The Australian Statistician is responsible for determining the content and the objectives of the testing program for the Census. The decision to include the topics of non-binary sex, chronic health conditions and service with the Australian Defence Force was made by the Statistician, not by the Government.

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QTB Number	QB19-000006	Adviser	Other
Contact Officer	Chris Libreri	Contact Number	s 22
Division responsible	Census Division, Australian Bureau of Statistics		
Office Responsible	The Hon Michael Sukkar MP	Date of Update	10 October 2019

AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS - 2021 CENSUS TOPIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Key Message:

- An extensive consultation and a public submission process has been undertaken on potential topics to be included in the 2021 Census. The Government will ensure that the information collected in the next Census reflects Australia's priority information needs, while also being mindful of the burden on the community to complete the Census.

Key Facts And Figures:

- The ABS has engaged in extensive community consultation, has received hundreds of submissions, and undertaken some statistical testing of possible Census topics.
- Last year the ABS released a short-list of eight topics that were being tested for inclusion:

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- Non-binary sex and/or gender identity
- Sexual orientation.

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- There is a limit to the number and type of questions that can be reasonably asked through a Census, due to the burden on respondents, the space limitations of a paper form, and the cost of collecting and analysing the information collected. While a number of new topics would be of value, it is not feasible to add them all to the 2021 Census.
- Determining which topics should be asked in a Census requires choices between competing alternatives, while also being mindful of the overall burden placed on the community to complete such a comprehensive Census as we have in Australia.

Coalition Action:

- The ABS has made recommendations to Government on topics that could be included in the 2021 Census. The Government will decide on the topics for the Census and will issue a Census regulation with the list of topics. This is expected to be tabled in Parliament in early 2020.

QTB Number	QB19-000005	Adviser	
Contact Officer	Chris Libreri	Contact Number	s 22
Division responsible	Census Division, Australian Bureau of Statistics		
Office Responsible	The Hon Michael Sukkar MP	Date of Update	10 October 2019

AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS - 2021 CENSUS TOPIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Background:

- The Census provides a contemporary picture of Australian society every five years. As the Census is collected from the entire population in Australia, it is a critical source of information on the population, allowing for an understanding of small areas and small groups in ways that surveys do not provide. The total number of topics and range of subjects has changed over time, and Australia has one of the longest and most comprehensive Census collections.
- There has been no change in the list of topics for both the 2011 Census and 2016 Census, meaning topics have not changed since the 2006 Census. The ABS has recommended changes that aim to ensure the 2021 Census reflects current information needs, balanced with considerations of capability to ask questions that produce reliable data. There is a strong case to maintain a large number of questions from past Censuses to produce reliable trends over time.

QTB Number	QB19-000005	Adviser	
Contact Officer	Chris Libreri	Contact Number	s 22
Division responsible	Census Division, Australian Bureau of Statistics		
Office Responsible	The Hon Michael Sukkar MP	Date of Update	10 October 2019

Probable media interest in 2021 Census
Secretariat WDB

s 22 10/10/2019 09:15 AM

Basics

s 22 Staff/ABS 10/10/2019 09:24 AM

Send	To 's 22 @TREASURY.GOV.AU> cc s 22 /Staff/ABS@ABS, Secretariat WDB@ABS, "AT DLO" <ATDLO@TREASURY.GOV.AU> bcc
Subject	Probable media interest in 2021 Census
Protective Mark	UNCLASSIFIED
Categories	Liaison with Minister's Office\Media\2019

Hello s 22

Further to my voicemail, we wanted to let you know that there is likely to be further interest in relation to the Census test/2021 Census and sex and gender.

The National LGBTI Health Alliance has issued a [media release](#) in support of including questions on [sexual orientation](#) and gender identity in the 2021 Census. We are advised that they are due to be interviewed the Feed on SBS on Friday and are also starting a letter campaign. You may have seen that the #CountUsIn2021 has been getting some traction on Twitter.

We are handling any media inquiries and have an earlier media statement [on our website](#). We are also preparing QTBs. I understand that the Minister is overseas next week, has it been decided who will be acting in his portfolios or will responsibility fall to the Treasurer? Happy to discuss further.

Cheers,
s 22

Director
Transformation, Internal and Media Communications | Communication and Parliamentary Branch |
Australian Bureau of Statistics

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