

1999 Census Rehearsal update

1. The Census Rehearsal, a final simulation of all methods, procedures and systems to be used in the 2001 Census started on 25th April with the conduct of a large scale field test covering some 147,600 households throughout the UK. The test areas were in the English districts of Bournemouth, Leeds and Lincoln, in Ceredigion and Gwynedd in Wales, in Dundee City and Angus in Scotland, and in the Coleraine and Limavady areas in Northern Ireland. Although participation in the Rehearsal was voluntary the response was encouraging with 53 per cent of forms received for the UK overall.
2. Percentage of forms received by area were:

England and Wales	53%
Leeds	44%
Lincoln	60%
Wales	62%
Bournemouth	46%
Scotland	55%
Angus	70%
Dundee	45%
Northern Ireland	59%
3. Processing of the information collected in the Rehearsal has started and fully coded data will be available by Christmas. Rehearsal testing to date has concentrated on front-end activities such as publicity, data collection and data capture but it will continue through the entire range of all the downstream processes required to undertake the 2001 Census. Evaluation is underway and shortly representatives from all three Census Offices will be meeting to address any major concerns arising from the Rehearsal, identify key issues and agree the strategic approach for 2001.
4. The Census Offices appreciate the support received with the Rehearsal from many in the user community and wish to take the opportunity to thank all those involved for their assistance. Further information on findings from evaluation of the Rehearsal and progress towards 2001 will be reported in the next issue of Census News and will also be posted on the ONS website <http://www.ons.gov.uk>.
5. **Advisory Group members are asked to note the response rates to the Rehearsal and progress to date.**