

## **Delivery Plan for the Long Term Strategy for Population Surveys in Scotland 2009 – 2019**

1. The Scottish Government's Long Term Strategy for Population Surveys in Scotland 2009 – 2019 was published in June 2009. This paper sets out the proposed delivery plan for the strategy.
2. There are five strands to the strategy – harmonisation, data management, respondent burden and response rates, analysis and dissemination and the Scottish Household Survey. The delivery plan has been designed around these five strands and the initial pieces of work required have been identified under each strand.

### **Short term work**

3. Areas considered priorities for the next six months are:

#### Harmonisation

- Add sexual orientation/identity to the socio-economic set of core questions,
- Complete the set of harmonised core questions,
- Review the procurement procedures of the main Scottish Government population surveys and move towards a more harmonised approach.

#### Data management

- Investigate the costs and benefits of clustering in the main Scottish Government population surveys,
- Review the data coding conventions of the main Scottish Government population surveys,
- Develop a process to quickly respond to people who want to know if they have legitimately been contacted as part of a Scottish Government survey.

#### Respondent rates and respondent burden

- Develop guidance to minimise respondent burden.

### **Medium term work**

4. The pieces of work required in the first 2-3 years are:

#### Harmonisation

- Promote the harmonised core questions,
- Adopt the finalised core questions into the Scottish Household Survey (SHS), the Scottish House Condition Survey (SHCS), the Scottish Health Survey (SHeS) and the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS),
- Look to extend the set of harmonised questions as appropriate.

#### Data management

- Develop a method to combine the samples for the main Scottish Government population surveys,
- Investigate a centralised sampling system,

- Investigate the future data storage options for Scottish Government population surveys,
- Investigate using harmonised data to create an expanded sampling frame,
- Review the data structure conventions of the main Scottish Government population surveys,
- Investigate the disclosure procedures of Scottish Government surveys.

#### Respondent rates and respondent burden

- Investigate the response rates of Scottish Government Surveys,
- Investigate ways to improve response rates,
- Monitor respondent burden.

#### Analysis and dissemination

- Promote the use of Scottish Government survey data,
- Produce a dissemination strategy for Scottish Government statistics that will cover the main population surveys,
- Review the data access procedures of the main Scottish Government population surveys,
- Develop informed consent forms and permissions statements,
- Review the meta data standards of the main Scottish Government population surveys.

#### The Scottish Household Survey

- The work plan for the SHS will be written when the remit of the up coming SHS review has been established. The review will be a medium term priority.

#### **Long term work**

5. Long term pieces of work are:

#### Analysis and dissemination

- Analyse pooled sample data,
- Develop a dissemination strategy for pooled samples,

#### Respondent rates and respondent burden

- Consider how to bring local surveys into the co-ordination process

6. More detail on each item can be found in Annex 1 or by clicking on the item.

7. We would like the SPSCC to consider the following questions:

- Have all work streams that will enable the strategy to be delivered been correctly identified?
- Are the priorities for the next six months correctly identified?
- Can gaps in the delivery plan, including timeframes, be filled?

**Alex Stannard**  
**July 2009**

## Annex 1 – Delivery Plan for the Long Term Strategy for Population Surveys in Scotland 2009 – 2019

Throughout the Delivery Plan ‘Big 4’ refers to the Scottish Household Survey, the Scottish House Condition Survey, the Scottish Health Survey and the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey.

### Harmonisation

Add sexual orientation/identity to core questions	
Description	Seek Scottish Population Surveys Co-ordination Committee agreement to include sexual identity in the topics covered by the harmonised core questions
Output	Sexual identity included as a core variable topic
Lead	Social Justice Analysts
Other groups involved	Scottish Population Surveys Co-ordination Committee Survey Harmonisation Co-ordinator
Time needed	1 day
Planned start date	Already started
Planned completion date	July 2009
Notes	Work involves Social Justice Analysts writing a paper outlining issues for the Scottish Population Surveys Co-ordination Committee

Complete the set of harmonised core questions	
Description	Agree the final harmonised core questions to be adopted in the Big 4 Scottish Government population surveys
Output	21 finalised core questions
Lead	Survey Harmonisation Co-ordinator
Other groups involved	Scottish Population Surveys Working Group
Time needed	25 days in total, spread out over nine months
Planned start date	Already started
Planned completion date	End FY 2009/10
Notes	Limiting long term illness may take longer depending on outcome of the current consultation

Promote harmonised core	
Description	Promote the finalised harmonised questions both within Scottish Government and across the wider analytic community within Scotland
Output	Harmonised questions used in most population surveys in Scotland
Lead	Survey Harmonisation Co-ordinator
Other groups involved	Analysts Network Co-ordinator Topic experts General Register Office for Scotland
Time needed	Ongoing
Planned start date	Already started
Planned completion date	Ongoing
Notes	Work will involve seeking opportunities to promote the core questions.

Adopt finalised set of core questions in Big 4	
Description	Adopt finalised core questions into questionnaires for the Big 4 population surveys
Output	Core data from the Big 4 surveys
Lead	Survey Managers
Other groups involved	Contractors
Time needed	Process incorporated into annual questionnaire reviews
Planned start date	Already started
Planned completion date	2012
Notes	Survey Managers report to the Scottish Population Surveys Working Group as questions are adopted.

Extend the core	
Description	Look at areas of over lap between the Big 4. Investigate any data gaps in the National Performance Framework and Single Outcome Agreements. Look to harmonise outputs across areas of over lap where appropriate and fill data gaps.
Output	1) Paper highlighting over laps across surveys 2) Paper discussing data gaps 3) Finalised non-core harmonised questions where appropriate
Lead	
Other groups involved	Survey Harmonisation Co-ordinator Scottish Population Surveys Working Group Improving Local Indicators Project Co-ordination Group
Time needed	1) 4 days 2) 4 days 3) Dependent on results of outputs 1) and 2)
Planned start date	
Planned completion date	
Notes	Outputs 1) will feed into the Improving Local Indicators Project Co-ordination Group discussions. Output 2) <i>may be</i> provided by that group.

Procurement review	
Description	Review the procurement procedures of the Scottish Government surveys. Produce common procurement procedures if appropriate.
Output	1) Paper on Big 4 procurement procedures. 2) Set of procurement procedures and guidance (if appropriate)
Lead	
Other groups involved	Survey Managers Contractors Procurement experts
Time needed	1) 2 weeks 2) 2 weeks
Planned start date	
Planned completion date	Scottish Population Surveys Co-ordination Committee meeting Autumn 2009
Notes	

### Data Management

Clustering	
Description	Investigate the costs and benefits of clustering in surveys
Output	Paper on costs and benefits of clustering for consideration by Survey Managers and Scottish Population Surveys Co-ordination Committee
Lead	Survey Harmonisation Co-ordinator
Other groups involved	Contractors Survey Managers
Time needed	2 weeks
Planned start date	
Planned completion date	Scottish Population Surveys Co-ordination Committee meeting Autumn 2009
Notes	This paper will feed into the Scottish Household Survey review.

Combine samples	
Description	Develop a robust methodology to combine the samples for core data.
Output	1) Establish a method for testing design effects and produce a discussion paper on considerations for combining samples 2) Discussion paper on options to combine samples 3) Peer review proposed methodology 4) Agreed methodology 5) Pooled sample dataset
Lead	Survey Harmonisation Co-ordinator
Other groups involved	Survey Managers Contractors Academics Office for National Statistics Stats group
Time needed	1) 15 days 2) 3) 4) 5)
Planned start date	
Planned completion date	End FY 2011/12
Notes	Work will involve closely working with Office for National Statistics who are also looking to combine samples as part of their Integrated Household Survey Project.

Sampling	
Description	Investigate the benefits and costs of different sampling systems, including centralised sampling. Make recommendation to the Scottish Population Surveys Co-ordination Committee. Consider ease of access to data held by contractors.
Output	Paper on different sampling systems including recommendation. Scottish Population Surveys Co-ordination Committee decision on sampling system Decision adopted by Big 4
Lead	Survey Harmonisation Co-ordinator
Other groups involved	Survey Managers Contractors Office for National Statistics
Time needed	2 weeks
Planned start date	Late 2010
Planned completion date	
Notes	Adoption by Big 4 may be long term depending on contractual arrangements

Data storage	
Description	Consider the data storage requirements for pooled sampling. Investigate the costs and benefits of centralised data storage, contractor data storage, or procuring data storage. Consider security of data if held centrally and risks of loss.
Output	1) Paper on data storage 2) Decision adopted by Big 4
Lead	Survey Harmonisation Co-ordinator
Other groups involved	Survey Managers Contractors Information Services and Information Systems Office for National Statistics
Time needed	1) 3 weeks
Planned start date	Late 2010
Planned completion date	
Notes	Adoption by Big 4 may be long term depending on contractual arrangements

Expanded sampling frame	
Description	Investigate the possibility of using harmonised core data to produce a sampling frame for specialist and longitudinal research. Carefully consider the ethical implications of an expanded frame. Consider who would have access to the frame, for what purposes and who would be ultimately responsible for the frame.
Output	Paper on creation of an expanded sampling frame
Lead	
Other groups involved	Survey Harmonisation Co-ordinator Information Services and Information Systems Office for National Statistics Office of the Chief Researcher
Time needed	1 week
Planned start date	2011/12
Planned completion date	
Notes	Could impact on common consent forms

Data structure conventions	
Description	Investigate data structure standards and the appropriateness of adopting common standards across Scottish Government surveys
Output	Scottish Population Surveys Co-ordinating Committee decision on adopting common data structure standards
Lead	Nic Krzyzanowski for the Scottish Household Survey
Other groups involved	Survey Harmonisation Co-ordinator Scottish Population Surveys Working Group Information Services and Information Systems
Time needed	2 weeks
Planned start date	
Planned completion date	
Notes	

Coding conventions	
Description	Investigate coding conventions and the appropriateness of moving towards common coding conventions
Output	Scottish Population Surveys Co-ordination Committee decision on adopting common coding conventions
Lead	
Other groups involved	Survey Harmonisation Co-ordinator Scottish Population Surveys Working Group
Time needed	2 weeks
Planned start date	
Planned completion date	Scottish Population Surveys Co-ordination Committee meeting Autumn 2009
Notes	

Disclosure	
Description	Investigate the disclosure procedures of the Big 4 surveys and look at areas for improvement. Make recommendations to Big 4.
Output	Paper and recommendations on disclosure procedures
Lead	
Other groups involved	Survey Harmonisation Co-ordinator Survey Managers Office for National Statistics Disclosure cross office group
Time needed	2 weeks
Planned start date	
Planned completion date	
Notes	

Sampled individuals	
Description	Develop a process to quickly respond to people who want to know if they have legitimately been contacted as part of a Scottish Government survey.
Output	Method to quickly respond to people who want to know if they have legitimately been contacted as part of a Scottish Government survey.
Lead	Survey Harmonisation Co-ordinator
Other groups involved	Scottish Population Surveys Working Group Contractors Office for National Statistics
Time needed	1 week
Planned start date	July 2009
Planned completion date	Scottish Population Surveys Co-ordination Committee meeting Autumn 2009
Notes	

**Respondent Burden and Response Rates**

Response rates	
Description	Investigate response rates of Scottish Government surveys, including the impact of differential response rates on Scottish Government surveys and comparisons to other surveys (UK and international). Consider impact on analysis including accuracy of sub group comparisons.
Output	Paper on response rates for Scottish Government surveys
Lead	
Other groups involved	Survey Harmonisation Co-ordinator Survey Managers Contractors Office for National Statistics
Time needed	4 weeks
Planned start date	
Planned completion date	
Notes	<i>Possible intern</i>

Improving response rates	
Description	Investigate different methods of increasing response rates. Consider previous research into response rates the success of different methods.
Output	Paper and recommendations on ways to improve response rates
Lead	
Other groups involved	Survey Harmonisation Co-ordinator Scottish Population Surveys Co-ordinating Committee Contractors Office for National Statistics
Time needed	2 weeks
Planned start date	
Planned completion date	
Notes	Timing depends on response rates paper (i.e. how much of a priority this work is) <i>Possible intern</i>

Respondent burden	
Description	Develop guidance to help ensure respondent burden is kept to a minimum
Output	
Lead	Statistics Reform and Assessment Team within Office of the Chief Statistician
Other groups involved	Stats group
Time needed	
Planned start date	Already started
Planned completion date	End of 2009
Notes	The Scottish Government is preparing a set of Corporate Statements to demonstrate our commitment to the new Statistics Code of Practice. One of these statements will cover respondent burden.

Monitor Respondent burden	
Description	Monitor the number and length of Scottish Government population surveys in the field.
Output	Six monthly monitoring reports
Lead	Survey Harmonisation Co-ordinator
Other groups involved	Survey Managers Contractors
Time needed	Ongoing
Planned start date	July 2009
Planned completion date	Ongoing
Notes	

Local surveys	
Description	Consider ways to bring local government surveys into the co-ordination process to reduce respondent burden and increase efficiency
Output	Local surveys brought into the co-ordination process
Lead	
Other groups involved	
Time needed	
Planned start date	
Planned completion date	
Notes	

### **Analysis and Dissemination**

Analyse core data	
Description	Analyse the data from the harmonised core.
Output	
Lead	Survey Harmonisation Co-ordinator
Other groups involved	Scottish Population Surveys Co-ordinating Committee Topic experts
Time needed	
Planned start date	
Planned completion date	
Notes	

Promote use of Scottish Government survey data	
Description	Promote the use of Scottish Government survey data across the analytic community in Scotland
Output	Increase use of Scottish Government survey data across stakeholders
Lead	
Other groups involved	Office of the Chief Statistician Stats group Dissemination Cross Office Group Longitudinal Research Analysts Network
Time needed	Ongoing
Planned start date	Already started
Planned completion date	Ongoing
Notes	

Review dissemination procedures	
Description	Development a data dissemination strategy for Scottish Government Statistics
Output	Data dissemination strategy
Lead	Scotland Performs and Dissemination Team with the Office of the Chief Statistician
Other groups involved	Dissemination Cross Office Group
Time needed	
Planned start date	October 2009
Planned completion date	
Notes	

Look at data access procedures	
Description	Review the data access procedures of the Big 4 and produce common data access procedures. Consider creation of a data access panel to ensure consistency of approach. Investigate different access requests each of the Big 4 get and in what volume.
Output	Common data access procedures
Lead	
Other groups involved	
Time needed	
Planned start date	
Planned completion date	
Notes	

Consent forms	
Description	Developed informed consent forms and permissions statements. Consider best way to inform and get consent for data linkage and follow up research.
Output	Common consent forms
Lead	
Other groups involved	Survey Harmonisation Co-ordinator Survey Managers Contractors Office of the Chief Researcher General Register Office for Scotland
Time needed	
Planned start date	
Planned completion date	
Notes	

Develop dissemination strategy for pooled samples	
Description	Develop an output strategy for pooled sample estimates. Consider what data will be published and when.
Output	Dissemination strategy
Lead	Survey Harmonisation Co-ordinator
Other groups involved	Scottish Population Surveys Co-ordinating Committee
Time needed	4 weeks
Planned start date	
Planned completion date	
Notes	

Meta data	
Description	Review the meta data of the Big 4 and produce harmonised meta data standards.
Output	Harmonised meta data standards
Lead	Survey Harmonisation Co-ordinator
Other groups involved	Scottish Population Surveys Co-ordinating Committee
Time needed	2 weeks
Planned start date	
Planned completion date	
Notes	

### Scottish Household Survey

Scottish Household Survey review	
Description	
Output	
Lead	
Other groups involved	
Time needed	
Planned completion date	
Notes	

To be completed once the remit of the up coming Scottish Household Survey review has been established.