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MEMORANDUM FOR Distribution List

From: Daniel H. Weinberg **{Signed Sept. 7, 2010}**
Acting Chief, American Community Survey Office

Subject: Final Results – CATI/CAPI/TQA Interviewer Debriefing to Assess
the Impact of the Revised 2008 Instrument

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Attached are the final results of an evaluation of the impact of the revised 2008 CATI/CAPI and
Telephone Questionnaire Assistance (TQA) American Community Survey Housing Unit
instrument. In 2008, new questions were added to the survey and some question text was
modified. Also as part of the revised content, the basic demographic section was changed from
asking all questions to every household member before proceeding to the next one (person-based
approach) to ask one question for every household member and then proceed to the next question
(topic-based approach).

The goal of this research was to learn from interviewers any issues or concerns about the
implementation of the new or revised questions and procedures in the 2008 CATI/CAPI/TQA
instruments. Based on their initial experiences, interviewers provided feedback on the new and
modified questions and procedures that will be used to identify potential areas that need further
clarification or additional training.

Initial analysis showed a preference for a topic-based approach to ask demographic questions, as
opposed to a person-based approach. Not surprisingly, this study also indicated some data
collection challenges in sensitive topics like race, Hispanic origin, and ancestry. These topics

require special skills from the interviewers to gain respondent cooperation with the survey. Other questions like marital history, number of rooms, health insurance coverage, and property value were also challenging to the interviewers and respondents in terms of wording and content issues, respondent reluctance, and interviewer discomfort.

Attachment: - ACS-HU CATI/CAPI 2008 Debriefing Project
            - Appendices 2008 Debriefing Report

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ACS-Housing Unit CATI/CAPI Debriefing Project: Lessons Learned from the Field

FINAL REPORT

U S C E N S U S B U R E A U

Helping You Make Informed Decisions

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ACS-HU CATI/CAPI DEBRIEFING PROJECT:
Lessons Learned from the Field
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I. INTRODUCTION

The American Community Survey (ACS) is an on-going, monthly household survey that provides estimates of housing, social, and economic characteristics every year for all states, as well as for all cities, counties, metropolitan areas, and population groups of 65,000 persons or more. The ACS provides more accurate and up-to-date profiles of America's communities every year, not just every 10 years. Community leaders and other data users will have more timely information for planning and evaluating public programs for everyone. The survey is conducted using mail self-response, and for households that do not respond by mail, interviewer staff use computer-assisted interviewing technology (by telephone or personal visit). The ACS is a mandatory survey and households selected for the survey are required by Title 13 of the United States Code to complete the questionnaire that is mailed to them or provide the survey information to a Census Bureau representative. The materials mailed to the address indicate that this is a mandatory survey.

In 2006, a Content Test was conducted to evaluate potential changes to the 2008 questionnaire and instruments. This evaluation focuses on the changes to the instruments and not changes to the mail questionnaire. Based on the results of the 2006 Content Test and the requirement to match the 2010 Census content, the following major changes to the CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interview)/CAPI (Computer Assisted Personal Interview) instrument were implemented in January 2008:

Modified Questions

- The Basic Demographic section was changed from asking all questions to every household member before proceeding to the next one (person-based approach) to ask one question for every household member and then proceed to the next question (topic-based approach).
- Marital Status was moved from the Basic Demographic section to the Detailed Person section.
- Examples of different Hispanic origins were added to the other Hispanic origin field.
- The Race question was expanded to include "Negro" as part of the "Black/African American" answer category, and examples were added to the "Other Pacific Islanders" categories.
- The Migration question (residence one year ago) was revised to ask for the street address where the person lived one year ago.
- The Disabilities and Activities of Daily Living section was significantly revised.

Deleted Questions

- Years of military service
- Seasonal residence

Additional Topics

- Health Insurance Coverage questions
- Marital History questions
- Veterans Affairs (VA) Service-Connected Disability questions

II. PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

The object of this evaluation was to learn from interviewers any issues or concerns about the implementation of the new or revised questions and procedures in the 2008 CATI, CAPI, and Telephone Questionnaire Assistance (TQA) instruments. Based on their initial experiences, interviewers provided feedback on the new and modified questions and procedures that will be used to identify potential areas that need further clarification or additional training.

III. METHODOLOGY

The study consisted of two phases. In Phase One, a sample of interviewers from the telephone centers as well as field representatives (FRs), lead field representatives (LFRs) and senior field representatives (SFRs) from the Regional Offices (where here after refer to the combination of the three types of field representatives as LSFRs) responded to a questionnaire tailored to their data collection mode (see Appendices B and C). CATI interviewers completed their questionnaire in January 2008. CAPI LSFRs completed their questionnaire in April and May of 2008. A stratified random sampling was used to select all interviewers based on years of experience, job title, and interviews completed in the past month. For CATI, 100 interviewers were selected at random for the questionnaire phase. For CAPI, 250 interviewers FRs and senior field representatives were selected at random (20 LSFRs per region and 10 LSFRs working on the Puerto Rico Community Survey-PRCS). The demographics of the interviewers can be seen in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1: Selected characteristics of CATI Interviewers in questionnaire phase of Debriefing Project.

CATI	Years of Experience		Job Title			Number of Interviews in January 2008	
Telephone Center	**Less than 3**	**More than 3**	**Interviewer**	**Monitor**	**Supervisor**	**Less than 40**	**More than 40**
Hagerstown, MD	20	5	25	0	0	13	12
Jeffersonville, IN	32	18	48	2	0	26	24
Tucson, AZ	14	11	25	0	0	12	13

Table 2: Selected characteristics of CAPI LSFRs participating in the questionnaire phase of Debriefing Project.

CAPI	Years of Experience		Job Title			Number of Interviews in January 2008	
Regional Office	**Less than 3**	**More than 3**	**FR**	**SFR**	**LFR**	**Less than 40**	**More than 40**
Boston	14	6	19	0	1	9	11
Boston-PRCS	3	7	9	1	0	3	7
New York	9	11	18	1	1	6	14
Philadelphia	11	9	20	0	0	12	8
Detroit	5	15	14	4	2	10	10
Chicago	11	9	17	1	2	5	15
Kansas City	8	12	18	0	2	8	12
Seattle	8	12	14	6	0	6	14
Charlotte	9	11	15	0	5	8	12
Atlanta	12	8	18	1	1	5	15
Dallas	8	12	16	2	2	3	17
Denver	7	13	16	1	3	4	16
Los Angeles	13	7	17	3	0	6	14

Results from Phase One were keyed and summarized before the start of Phase Two of the project. These results were used to draft the discussion questions for Phase Two (see Appendices D and E). In Phase Two, a different set of interviewers and LSFRs participated in focus groups with the intention to further clarify and discuss any issues related to the 2008 instrument implementation. Focus groups with CATI interviewers took place in June, July, and August of 2008. The CATI focus groups were conducted at each of the telephone centers: Hagerstown (1 session), Tucson (2 sessions), and

Jeffersonville (2 sessions). Focus groups for CAPI took place in August and September of 2008. Participants in the CAPI focus groups were from 4 regional offices: Kansas City (2 sessions), Los Angeles (2 sessions), Philadelphia (1 session), and Charlotte (1 session). CAPI sessions were limited to four regional offices due to budget constraints. For the CATI focus group, a total of 45 interviewers were selected at random from all three call centers, while for CAPI a total of 43 LSFRs participated in the sessions.

This evaluation focuses on the following issues

- *Wording/Content:* Do the questions contain terms or concepts that respondents find confusing or difficult to understand?

- *Procedural Issues:* Are the data collection procedures clear or do some procedures need to be improved?

- *Cultural Issues:* Are certain population groups more sensitive to particular topics than other?

- *Respondent Discomfort:* Do respondents show discomfort or reluctance to answer the questions?

- *Interviewer/FR Discomfort:* Do the interviewers feel uncomfortable asking the questions as worded?

- *Training Needs:* Do interviewers need additional training on the new content and procedures?

IV. FINDINGS

Based on the analysis of the paper questionnaires (Phase One) and the focus group debriefings (Phase Two), the following questions were identified as the most problematic based on the aforementioned criteria. For more details on the specific results from Phase One, please refer to the tables on Appendix A.

- **Race**-On the paper debriefing interviewers frequently marked the category *"Respondents show discomfort or reluctance to answer the questions"* for this particular question, especially when it comes to the Hispanic population. Hispanic respondents feel they do not fall into any of the offered race categories. They feel the term "Hispanic" is a race of its own and often feel uncomfortable being made to choose between white, black, and other race groups. Hispanics tend to associate race as skin color, rather than a social construct. Also, many of our interviewers expressed their discomfort of the necessity to use the word "negro" when asking the race question. They feel it is an offensive and derogatory description of the African-American population

- **Hispanic Origin & Race**-The biggest problem reported by interviewers was confusion that Hispanics have relating Hispanic origin to race, since most of them consider "Hispanic" as a race category. This causes the interviewer to repeat the race question as well as rewording it so the respondent understands. These two questions are often confused with the ancestry question.

- **Number of Rooms**- On the paper debriefing questionnaire interviewers frequently marked the category "*Respondents give answers other than the response categories, causing you to probe further to mark an appropriate answer category.*" Interviewers described this question as confusing and too wordy. After describing what rooms can be determined as a "separate" room, the respondents begin naming rooms that are not permissible to be included on the survey. At that point it requires the interviewer to provide further explanation. During the focus group discussion some interviewers suggested asking the number of bedrooms question before the number of rooms.

- **Health Insurance Coverage**- Interviewers stated that respondents regularly feel the Health Insurance section is extremely lengthy and convoluted. A large number of interviewers suggested that this question should be asked only once and should include all the participants listed on the survey. Some interviewers suggested either a topic-based approach for this question or exploring the possibility of having a filter question like the Current Population Survey March Supplement (CPS-ASEC) to determine which questions from this series should be asked.

- **Work Last Week (Employment Status)**- Interviewers mentioned this question is confusing and worded poorly. Interviewers always find themselves repeating the question for additional clarification. One of the most frequent comments made by interviewers and LSFRs that it would be less time consuming if the question merely read " Did you work last week?"

- **Weeks Worked**-The "Weeks Worked" question (How many weeks did you work in the past 12 months?) was frequently reported to be too confusing. Part of the confusion was attributed to the specific response categories, especially for respondents having intermittent jobs, as well as the reference period. One example provided during the focus group discussions was respondents whose profession is teaching. Since teachers work 9 to 10 months out of the year but continue to earn salaries all year long, they are unsure how to answer correctly.

- **Marital History-** On the paper debriefing form, interviewers frequently marked the category *"You are uncomfortable asking the questions as worded"* for these questions. The main reason is that the marital history section was

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described as being intrusive and nosy. Respondents as well as interviewers do not understand the benefit of asking these questions on this survey. Some interviewers reported skipping questions due to their discomfort, or having respondents getting angry at these questions. One of the biggest risks of this series is that these questions are the mid-point of the CATI/CAPI instrument, and there is a chance that respondents will refuse to continue with the survey. One interesting finding on this series is that some Spanish-speaking interviewers regularly have to probe on the number of marriages question, since Hispanics tend to count civil and religious ceremonies as two separate marriages.

- **Value of Property-**Interviewers reported difficulty with the Value of Property item because of the current economic climate. Some respondents didn't know the value or gave an unrealistic answer. Interviewers were asked by respondents if they could provide a range choice.

- **Food Stamps**- Interviewers expressed that even though the wording is fine, the placing of the question seems a little odd (right after utilities and before mortgage questions). Interviewers had no specific recommendation on where to place the question.

V. OTHER FINDINGS

Based on results from questionnaires and the focus group sessions, other topics and procedural issues were identified and discussed:

- **Topic Based Approach**- Depending on the telephone center facility, 65-80% of the CATI interviewers preferred the topic-based approach for the basic demographics section of the instrument. 156 CAPI LSFRs preferred the Topic-based approach versus 40 LSFRs preferred Person-based and 44 LSFRs had no preference.

- **Length of Instrument**- Many interviewers expressed concern that the 2008 instrument was longer. However, data has shown interview length has not increased significantly in 2008 and after the first few months has returned to 2007 levels.

- **Shift+F6 Function Key (CAPI FRs only)-** An overwhelming majority (over 90%) of CAPI LSFRs thought the new Shift+F6 function key which displays the ALMI map for a specific case is very helpful.

- **Help Screens-** Approximately 90% of the interviewers who completed the paper debriefing found the help screens to be a very useful tool in convincing respondents to answer specific questions in the ACS. Interviewers indicated that the language of the help screens sounded legal-like, which encouraged respondents to participate. In terms of the "Uses of Data" section on the help

screens, using a scale of 1 to 5 (with 1 being "Not Beneficial at All" and 5 being "Very Beneficial") interviewers were asked to rate the "Uses of Data" on the help screens of the instrument when addressing respondents' questions or concerns. Between 86-92% of all CATI interviewers and 86.8% of LSFRs provided a rating of 3 or higher; therefore a majority thought the "Uses of Data" section on the help screens offers a great deal of assistance and is quite beneficial.

- **Flashcard Booklet-** Comments were mixed about the flashcard booklet. During the focus group sessions, some LSFRs expressed that the booklet is a helpful tool, while others see it as a "carrying obstacle" when conducting interviews.

- **Refresher Training**- In November and December of the 2007 the interviewers participated in a training class that helped prepare them to conduct interviews using the 2008 instrument. Using a scale of 1 to 5 (with 1 being "Poorly Prepared" and 5 being "Very Well Prepared") they were asked to rate the class. 96% of all CATI interviewers and 94.8% of LSFRs provided a rating of 3 or higher.

- **Manual**- Interviewers were asked if there was anything they would like to see added, removed, or changed in their manuals. For CATI, an affirmative response to changes in the manual varies by center (37.5% in Tucson, 62.5% in Hagerstown, and 50% in Jeffersonville). For the CAPI LSFRs, only 22% would like to see changes. However, during the focus group sessions, they indicated a preference to see the manual text added to the instrument help screens, which would alleviate the responsibility of them having to carry the manual around, and if possible, to have an electronic version of the manual on their laptops.

- **Re-verifying the Sample Address-** A new procedure implemented in January 2008 required CATI interviewers to re-verify the sample address on callbacks to cases. Participants of the debriefing were asked if the new procedure was easy to do and if it was beneficial. Practically all participants noted the procedure was extremely easy and beneficial, and it helped reassure them that they were reaching the correct sampling unit. Very few comments were made that it was somewhat time consuming and a bit unimportant.

In general, the feedback received from CATI interviewers and LSFRs on these procedures was very positive, and most of their suggestions expressed a genuine interest to improve the data collection process.

VI. NEXT STEPS

After the debriefing was conducted, the American Community Survey Office (ACSO) took several steps to address most of the issues presented by the interviewers. One immediate action was to prepare a comprehensive list of questions raised during the debriefing. These questions were related to survey topics that were unclear to the interviewers. ACSO compiled these questions and submitted the list to the subject matter experts in the Population and Housing and Household Economic Statistics divisions. Answers to these questions were provided as topics for the monthly interviewers' memos (both CATI and CAPI) in 2009. Some of the topics covered in the FR memos were clarification on: value of property, marital status, ancestry, number of marriages, and health insurance coverage. Other topics that needed further clarification have also been addressed via modifications to the interviewers' manual. This evaluation has served to document the most important issues raised by interviewers in the field, as well as providing more information for further data collection research. This report is also a way to document problematic questions that may be considered for future content testing.

VII. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: SUMMARY TABLES FROM CATI/CAPI QUESTIONNAIRE DEBRIEFINGS

Table A-1: Selected Characteristics of Participating CATI NR Interviewers by Telephone Center

Characteristic	Jeffersonville	Hagerstown	Tucson
Job Title			
• Interviewers	48	25	25
• Monitors	2	0	0
• Supervisors	0	0	0
Mode			
• CATI only	25	13	12
• TQA only	5	2	1
• Both CATI/TQA	20	10	12
Years of Experience			
• Less than One Year	9	13	8
• Between 1-3 Years	23	7	6
• More than 3 Years	18	5	11
Number of Completed Interviews			
• 0-10	5	4	1
• 11-20	3	5	3
• 21-40	18	4	8
• 41-60	9	5	7
• 61-80	8	5	2
• 81 +	7	2	4

Table A-2: CATI NR Interviewer Responses to Specific ACS Questions

Survey Question	Respondents Asks to Repeat Question	Terms or Concepts are difficult or confusing to respondent	Respondent give different answers, causing you to probe	Respondent shows discomfort or reluctance to answer	You are uncomfortable to ask the question as worded
Basic Person					
• Relationship	5	5	5	10	2
• Sex	1	0	0	3	12
• Date of Birth	0	0	3	49	1
• Hispanic Origin	27	27	31	18	5
• Race	26	33	46	27	29
Housing					
• Year Built	2	1	4	0	1
• Number of Rooms	30	32	23	2	7
• Number of Bedrooms	5	4	3	3	4
• Plumbing, Kitchen, and Telephone Service	4	2	2	5	4
• Food Stamps	0	1	1	4	3
• Value of Property	7	0	4	37	1
• Tenure (Owned or Rented)	8	1	4	9	0
Detailed Person					
• Citizenship	3	2	4	17	4
• Education	10	5	11	4	15
• Migration	4	4	4	11	5
• Health Insurance Coverage	30	35	28	17	8
• Disability	3	2	9	7	3
• Marriage and Marital History	6	8	2	34	42
• Service-Connected Disability	3	1	1	2	1
• Work Last Week (Employment Status)	18	14	14	8	3
• Weeks Worked	16	18	13	4	5

Note: CATI Interviewers were allowed to check more than one response category per survey question.

Table A-3: CATI NR Interviewer Responses to Specific 2008 Debriefing Questions

Specific Issues	Number of CATI Interviewers
Techniques to Overcome Reluctance (Question 5)	
• Explain Community Benefits	58
• Explain the statistical importance of the question	40
• Reassure them of the Privacy and Confidentiality Act	35
• Give the respondent the option to refuse or guess an answer	17
• Reword question to make it more understandable	10
• Ask the respondent what they are afraid of; allow them to vent	6
• Refer respondent to Census website for more information	3
How beneficial are the "Uses of Data" on the Help Screens (Question 6)	
• 1 (Not beneficial at all)	3
• 2	7
• 3	24
• 4	28
• 5 (Very beneficial)	37
Topic-Based or Person-Based Approach? (Question 7)	
• Topic- Based	62
• Person-Based	14
• No Preference	14
How well did the refresher training prepare you for the new 2008 instrument? (Question 8)	
• 1 (Poorly Prepared)	1
• 2	3
• 3	21
• 4	41
• 5 (Very Well Prepared)	34
Any changes to the CATI NR Interviewer Manual? (Question 9)	
• Yes	48
• No	48

Table A-3: CATI NR Interviewer Responses to Specific 2008 Debriefing Questions (cont.)

Specific Issues	Number of CATI Interviewers
Address Verification Screen (Question 10)	
• Easy and Beneficial	49
• Reaffirming/Reassuring	16
• Helpful	12
• Important	2
• Time Consuming	5
• Impersonal	4
• Unimportant	4
• Difficult/Confusing	2

Table A-4: Selected Characteristics of Participating CAPI LSFRs by Regional Office

Characteristic	TOTAL (ALL REGIONS)	Boston	Boston-PRCS	New York	Philadelphia	Detroit	Chicago
Job Title							
• FR	211	19	9	18	20	14	17
• LFR	19	1	0	1	0	2	2
• SFR	20	0	1	1	0	4	1
Years of Experience							
• Less than One Year	29	5	1	3	5	1	5
• Between 1-3 Years	89	12	2	6	6	4	6
• More than 3 Years	132	13	7	11	9	15	9
Number of Completed Interviews							
• 0-10	3	0	0	0	1	0	0
• 11-20	11	0	0	0	2	3	1
• 21-40	71	9	3	6	9	7	4
• 41-60	76	7	3	6	6	5	6
• 61-80	40	3	1	4	0	2	6
• 81 +	49	1	3	4	2	3	3

Table A-4: Selected Characteristics of Participating CAPI LSFRs by Regional Office (cont.)

Characteristic	Kansas City	Seattle	Charlotte	Atlanta	Dallas	Denver	Los Angeles
Job Title							
• FR	18	14	15	18	16	16	17
• LFR	2	0	5	1	2	3	0
• SFR	0	6	0	1	2	1	3
Years of Experience							
• Less than One Year	1	1	3	2	2	0	1
• Between 1-3 Years	7	7	6	10	6	7	12
• More than 3 Years	12	12	11	8	12	13	7
Number of Completed Interviews							
• 0-10	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
• 11-20	2	0	1	1	0	0	1
• 21-40	6	6	6	3	3	4	5
• 41-60	5	9	3	5	7	9	5
• 61-80	6	1	3	3	4	3	4
• 81 +	1	4	6	7	6	4	5

Table A-5: CAPI LSFRs Responses to Specific ACS Questions

Survey Question	Respondents Asks to Repeat Question	Terms or Concepts are difficult or confusing to respondent	Respondent give different answers, causing you to probe	Respondent shows discomfort or reluctance to answer	You are uncomfortable to ask the question as worded
Basic Person					
• Relationship	7	3	7	20	7
• Sex	1	0	0	3	8
• Date of Birth	0	0	2	45	2
• Hispanic Origin	17	17	28	16	6
• Race	30	33	61	27	10
Housing					
• Year Built	8	1	8	3	1
• Number of Rooms	18	19	32	6	4
• Number of Bedrooms	2	1	6	4	1
• Plumbing, Kitchen, and Telephone Service	2	2	0	8	16
• Food Stamps	1	0	2	21	2
• Value of Property	13	4	5	47	2
• Tenure (Owned or Rented)	0	2	1	2	1
Detailed Person					
• Citizenship	4	1	2	35	2
• Education	2	3	10	1	4
• Migration	6	3	1	13	3
• Health Insurance Coverage	15	15	18	11	14
• Disability	1	2	7	4	5
• Marriage and Marital History	10	6	6	85	40
• Service-Connected Disability	2	1	1	1	1
• Work Last Week (Employment Status)	13	11	10	9	2
• Weeks Worked	19	11	20	9	1

Note: CAPI LSFRs were allowed to check more than one response category per survey question.

Table A-6: CAPI LSFRs Responses to Specific 2008 Debriefing Questions

Specific Issues	Number of CAPI LSFRs
Techniques to Overcome Reluctance (Question 5)	
• Explain Community Benefits	61
• Explain the statistical importance of the question	47
• Reassure them of the Privacy and Confidentiality Act	90
• Give the respondent the option to refuse or guess an answer	24
• Reword question to make it more understandable	30
• Ask the respondent what they are afraid of; allow them to vent	8
• Allow the respondent to read the help screen for that question	12
• Try not to make eye contact	5
How beneficial are the "Uses of Data" on the Help Screens (Question 6)	
• 1 (Not beneficial at all)	11
• 2	21
• 3	82
• 4	70
• 5 (Very beneficial)	65
Topic-Based or Person-Based Approach? (Question 7)	
• Topic- Based	162
• Person-Based	41
• No Preference	47
How well did the refresher training prepare you for the new 2008 instrument? (Question 8)	
• 1 (Poorly Prepared)	5
• 2	6
• 3	43
• 4	82
• 5 (Very Well Prepared)	112
Any changes to the CAPI FR Manual? (Question 9)	
• Yes	55
• No	195

Note: The total number of participants was 250, however not all of them answered ALL the questions.

Table A-6: CAPI LSFRs Responses to Specific 2008 Debriefing Questions (cont.)

Specific Issues	Number of CAPI LSFRs
Any difficulties entering the CAPI instrument precodes not listed in Cards A (Relationship) and E (Highest Degree Completed)? (Question 10)	
• Yes	21
• No	229
Any difficulties entering the correct response using Card B (Hispanic Origin)? (Question 11)	
• Yes	6
• No	244
Any difficulties entering the correct response using Card C (Race)? (Question 12)	
• Yes	25
• No	225
Is there anything you want to change in the flashcard booklet? (Question 13)	
• Yes	42
• No	208
Do you think is easier to access ALMI using Shift+F6 than the ALMI standalone functionality? (Question 14)	
• Yes	210
• No	17
Have you encountered any difficulty using the Shift+F6 functionality? (Question 15)	
• Yes	63
• No	180
Do you think the Shift+F6 functionality has improved your ability to locate addresses and assign geocodes? (Question 16)	
• Yes	139
• No	104

Note: The total number of participants was 250, however not all of them answered ALL the questions.

Table A-6: CAPI LSFRs Responses to Specific 2008 Debriefing Questions (cont.)

Specific Issues	Number of CAPI LSFRs
On the Assignment Tab, has the CATI Language and the Geocoding Information been helpful? (Question 17)	
• Yes	102
• No	132
Is there anything you would like to change in Case Management? (Question 18)	
• Yes	69
• No	173

Note: The total number of participants was 250, however not all of them answered ALL the questions.

APPENDIX B: CATI NON-RESPONSE DEBRIEFING QUESTIONNAIRE (ACS-611)

FORM **ACS-611**
(1-18-2008)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Economics and Statistics Administration
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

DEBRIEFING QUESTIONNAIRE (CATI NR/TQA)

The American Community Survey
2008

A. Date

B. Telephone Center

☐ Hagerstown
☐ Jeffersonville
☐ Tucson

INSTRUCTIONS

This debriefing questionnaire will be used to clarify question concepts in monthly CATI Nonresponse Follow-up (CATI NR) memos, Telephone Questionnaire Assistance (TQA) memos, modify initial trainings, and/or clarify/update instrument Help Screens. Please note that this debriefing questionnaire will not be used to identify potential changes to survey questions.

Your answers and comments are confidential. You are authorized to charge up to 1 hour to complete this questionnaire. Seal your questionnaire in the envelope provided with this form and return it to your telephone center contact by February 11, 2008. Charge your time to Project Number 5385810 and Task Code 886.

Thank you for taking the time to provide us with your feedback.

1. What is you job title?

☐ Interviewer
☐ Monitor
☐ Supervisor

2. How long have you worked . . .

	Years	Months
on ACS TQA?		

	Years	Months
on ACS CATI NR? . . .		

3. Since January 1, 2008, how many completed occupied interviews and temporarily occupied interviews have you conducted . . .

for ACS TQA?

☐ 0–10
☐ 11–20
☐ 21–40
☐ 41–60
☐ 61–80
☐ 81 or more

for ACS CATI NR?

☐ 0–10
☐ 11–20
☐ 21–40
☐ 41–60
☐ 61–80
☐ 81 or more

CONTINUE WITH QUESTION 4 ON PAGE 2

U S C E N S U S B U R E A U

A-12

4. Below is a list of questions and topics that were modified in the 2008 ACS instrument. **Mark an (X) in the column** if you have experienced problems or issues with questions in each series. If you mark an (X) and want to provide more details, use the "Comments" column.

Survey question(s)	Respondents ask you to repeat or explain the question(s). (a)	Questions contain terms or concepts that your respondents find confusing or difficult to understand. (b)	Respondents give answers other than the response categories, causing you to probe further to mark an appropriate answer category. (c)	Respondents show discomfort or reluctance to answer the questions. (d)	You are uncomfortable asking the questions as worded. (e)	Comments (Use page 4 for additional space. Reference comments by line number and column) (f)
Basic Person						
1. Relationship	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
2. Sex	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
3. Date of Birth	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
4. Hispanic Origin	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
5. Race	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Housing						
6. Year Built	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
7. Number of Rooms	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
8. Number of Bedrooms	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
9. Plumbing, Kitchen and Telephone Service	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
10. Food Stamps	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
11. Value of Property	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
12. Tenure (Rented or Owned)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Detailed Person						
13. Citizenship	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
14. Education	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
15. Migration	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
16. Health Insurance Coverage	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
17. Disability	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
18. Marriage and Marital History	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
19. Service-connected Disability	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
20. Work Last Week (Employment status)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
21. Weeks Worked	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	

5. **When a respondent shows discomfort or reluctance to answer a survey question, what have you found to be successful in helping the respondent overcome the discomfort or reluctance?**

_____

_____

_____

6. **Using a scale of 1–5, where 1 is "Not beneficial at all" and 5 is "Very beneficial", how beneficial are the "Uses of Data" on the Help Screens when addressing respondent questions or concerns?** _Circle response_

   1   2   3   4   5

7. _Only answer the following question if you started working the ACS/PRCS before December 2007._

   In the 2008 instrument, the Basic Person Data section of the instrument is topic-based. This means that you ask a particular question and obtain answers to that question for all household members before proceeding to the next applicable question. Prior to 2008, this same section of the instrument used a person-based approach. This means that you asked an entire series of questions for one household member before proceeding to the next household member. Which approach do you prefer, topic-based or person-based?

   ☐ Topic-based   ☐ Person-based   ☐ No preference

8. **Using the scale 1–5 where 1 is "Poorly prepared" and 5 is "Very well prepared", how well did the refresher training you attended in November or December 2007 prepare you to conduct interviews using the 2008 instrument?** _Circle response_

   1   2   3   4   5

9. **Generally speaking, is there anything you would like to add to, take from, or change in the manual?**

   ☐ Yes – _Please describe_   ☐ No

_____

_____

_____

10. **Starting with the January 2008 CATI NR instrument, you are now required to re-verify the sample address on callbacks to a case. Has this been easy to do? Has it been beneficial?** _Please explain_

_____

_____

_____

11. Additional comments:

_____
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A-15

APPENDIX C: CAPI LSFR DEBRIEFING QUESTIONNAIRE (ACS-612)

FORM **ACS-612**
(3-14-2008)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Economics and Statistics Administration
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

DEBRIEFING QUESTIONNAIRE
(ACS/PRCS CAPI HU)
American Community Survey/Puerto Rico Community Survey
Housing Unit
2008

A. Date

B. Regional Office
- ☐ Atlanta
- ☐ Boston
- ☐ Charlotte
- ☐ Chicago
- ☐ Dallas
- ☐ Denver
- ☐ Detroit
- ☐ Kansas City
- ☐ Los Angeles
- ☐ New York
- ☐ Philadelphia
- ☐ Seattle
- ☐ Boston - PRCS

INSTRUCTIONS

This debriefing questionnaire will be used to identify clarifications of question concepts in monthly CAPI memos, modify initial trainings, and/or clarify/update instrument Help Screens. Please note that this debriefing questionnaire will not be used to identify potential changes to survey questions.

This debriefing questionnaire is only for ACS/PRCS HU Survey and does not include the ACS/PRCS GQ Survey. Therefore, please only include your experiences on the ACS/PRCS HU Survey as you complete this questionnaire. Your answers are confidential.

Seal your questionnaire in the pre-addressed envelope provided with this questionnaire and return it to your RO no later than April 15, 2008.

You are authorized to charge up to 1 hour to complete this questionnaire. Charge your time to Project Number 5385820 and Task Code 528.

Thank you for taking the time to provide us with your feedback.

1. What is your job title?

☐ Field Representative
☐ Lead Field Representative
☐ Supervisory Field Representative

2. How long have you worked on the ACS/PRCS HU Survey?

Years ____ Months ____

3. Since January 1, 2008, about how many completed occupied interviews (201) and temporarily occupied interviews (501) have you conducted?

☐ 0–10
☐ 11–20
☐ 21–40
☐ 41–60
☐ 61–80
☐ 81 or more

CONTINUE WITH QUESTION 4 ON PAGE 2

USCENSUSBUREAU

A-16

4. Below is a list of questions and topics that were modified in the 2008 ACS/PRCS HU instrument. **Mark an (X) in the column** if you have experienced problems or issues with questions in each series. If you mark an (X), please explain in the "Comments" column.

Survey question(s)	Respondents ask you to repeat or explain the question(s). (a)	Questions contain terms or concepts that your respondents find confusing or difficult to understand. (b)	Respondents give answers other than the response categories, causing you to probe further to mark an appropriate answer category. (c)	Respondents show discomfort or reluctance to answer the questions. (d)	You are uncomfortable asking the questions as worded. (e)	Comments (Use page 6 for additional space. Reference comments by line number and column) (f)
Basic Person						
1. Relationship	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
2. Sex	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
3. Date of Birth	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
4. Hispanic Origin	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
5. Race	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Housing						
6. Year Built	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
7. Number of Rooms	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
8. Number of Bedrooms	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
9. Plumbing, Kitchen and Telephone Service	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
10. Food Stamps	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
11. Value of Property	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
12. Tenure (Rented or Owned)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Detailed Person						
13. Citizenship	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
14. Education	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
15. Migration	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
16. Health Insurance Coverage	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
17. Disability	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
18. Marriage and Marital History	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
19. Service-connected Disability	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
20. Work Last Week (Employment status)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
21. Weeks Worked	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	

5. When a respondent shows discomfort or reluctance to answer a survey question, what have you found to be successful in helping the respondent overcome the discomfort or reluctance?

_____

_____

6. Using a scale of 1–5, where 1 is "Not beneficial at all" and 5 is "Very beneficial", how beneficial are the "Uses of Data" on the Help Screens when addressing respondent questions or concerns? *Circle response*

1   2   3   4   5

If not beneficial, which one(s) need modification?

_____

_____

7. *Only answer the following question if you started working the ACS/PRCS HU survey before December 2007.*

In the 2008 instrument, the Basic Person Data section of the instrument is topic-based. This means that you ask a particular question and obtain answers to that question for all household members before proceeding to the next applicable question. Prior to 2008, this same section of the instrument used a person-based approach. This means that you asked an entire series of questions for one household member before proceeding to the next household member. Which approach do you prefer, topic-based or person-based?

☐ Topic-based   ☐ Person-based   ☐ No preference

8. Using the scale 1–5, where 1 is "Poorly prepared" and 5 is "Very well prepared", how well did the refresher training you attended in November or December 2007 prepare you to conduct interviews using the 2008 instrument? *Circle response*

1   2   3   4   5   *Please explain*

_____

_____

9. Generally speaking, is there anything you would like to add to, delete from, or change in the ACS or PRCS HU FR manual?

☐ Yes – *Please describe*   ☐ No

_____

_____

_____

FLASHCARD BOOKLET: When answering these questions, think about your flashcard book ACS-228(1-2008) or ACS-228PR(1-2008).

10. Cards A (Relationship) and E (Highest Degree/Level Completed) do not have numbers (precodes) to match to the CAPI instrument. Did you have any difficulty entering in the CAPI instrument the precodes not listed on the cards?

☐ Yes – *Please describe*   ☐ No

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

11. Card B (Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish Origin) is used for two questions (HISA and HISB). Did you have any difficulty entering the correct response on the correct screens using this card?

☐ Yes – *Please describe*   ☐ No

_____
_____
_____
_____

12. On Card/Tarjeta C (Race), the categories displayed are combinations of the answer categories used for the entire race series of questions, which include RAC, RCW1, RCWAG, RCW3, RCWPG, RCW4, and RCW2. Did you have any difficulty entering the correct response on the correct screens?

☐ Yes – *Please describe*   ☐ No

_____
_____
_____
_____

13. Generally speaking, is there anything you would like to add to, delete from, or change in the flashcard book?

☐ Yes – *Please describe*   ☐ No

_____
_____
_____
_____

CASE MANAGEMENT: When answering these questions, think about Case Management.

14. Do you think it is easier to access ALMI using the Shift+F6 than using the ALMI standalone mode functionality?

☐ Yes – *Please describe*   ☐ No – *Please describe*

_____

_____

_____

15. Starting with your February 2008 assignment, did you encounter any difficulty using the Shift+F6 functionality?

☐ Yes – *Please describe*   ☐ No

_____

_____

16. Do you think that the Shift+F6 ALMI functionality has improved your ability to locate your sample unit assignments, and verify, correct, and assign geocodes for your assignments?

☐ Yes – *Please describe*   ☐ No

_____

_____

17. On the Assignment tab, has the CATI Language and the Geocoding information been helpful?

☐ Yes – *Please describe*   ☐ No

_____

_____

18. Generally speaking, is there anything you would like to add to, delete from, or change in Case Management?

☐ Yes – *Please describe*   ☐ No

_____

_____

USE PAGE 6 FOR ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

19. Additional Comments

APPENDIX D: GUIDELINES FOR CATI FOCUS GROUPS

ACS CATI NR/TQA Debriefing-Focus Group Sessions

Group Size: Approximately 7-10 participants
Time: 120 minutes max
Materials needed: Flipchart, audio-recorder, 2-3 copies of the ACS-611 (CATI NR/TQA
Debriefing Questionnaire)

<u>Welcome</u>

- Provide background information on the 2008 changes to the CATI/TQA questionnaire.
  (Purpose/History)

<u>Rules</u>

- Everything said in the room remains confidential. Even though the session will be taped, it
  will be only for transcription purposes.

- Turn off your cell phones or put them to vibrate.

- During our discussion, no name-calling or derogatory terms will be allowed.

- The purpose of this debriefing is to hear your opinions and experiences related to the new
  ACS questions in the CATI instruments, as well as some of the procedures in place. Even
  though we will discuss some of the wording and sequence of questions, we want you to be
  aware that implementing changes to text won't happen overnight or might not happen at all.
  We want you to report your experiences as CATI/TQA interviewers, as well as looking for
  new ways to improve future training and procedures. You are welcome to tell stories and
  points of view, as long as they are related to the question asked.

- Please answer each question honestly while also keeping in mind that this session is not
  about working conditions or supervisor/employee relations.

<u>Introductions</u> *(Max time 5 minutes)*

- Please tell us your name, how many years have you been working on ACS CATI/TQA, and
  if you have worked with any other Census surveys.

<u>Questions</u>

The following categories of questions address items that were new or modified in the 2008
instrument. We know that there are other questions that you might want to discuss, but we want

to focus on the ones that are new or were modified in 2008. *(Note to facilitator: The first three sections should be restricted to 90 minutes max).*

Question, Wording, and Content Issues

This first set of questions is about question wording and content. This category includes items frequently reported as having the following challenges: (1) respondents ask you to explain or repeat the question, (2) question(s) contain terms or concepts that your respondents find confusing or difficult to understand, and (3) respondents give answers other than the response categories, causing you to probe further to mark an appropriate answer category. Please keep in mind the following discussion questions (show them on the flipchart):

- What specific terms or concepts are misunderstood?
- What kinds of questions do the respondents ask you?
- How do you generally respond to these questions?
- Do you have sufficient information in your manuals or on the helpscreens to answer those questions?

The top six items identified as the most problematic: *(Note to the facilitator: Please ensure not to spend too much time of the discussion focused on race and Hispanic origin)*

- Race
- Hispanic Origin
- Number of Rooms
- Health Insurance Coverage
- Work Last Week (Employment Status)
- Weeks Worked

Let's talk about the issues respondents have with these items.

Issues with Respondent Reluctance/Discomfort

Please keep in mind the following discussion questions (show them on the flipchart):

- What specific items cause respondents discomfort or reluctance?
- What strategies have you found to be effective in responding to their concerns?

The top seven questions (two questions were tied on the top six) that interviewers identified as most problematic regarding respondent's discomfort/reluctance to answer the questions were: (discuss each one)

- Date of Birth
- Value of Property
- Marriage and Marital History
- Race
- Hispanic Origin
- Health Insurance Coverage
- Citizenship

Issues with Interviewer Discomfort
Please keep in mind the following discussion questions (show them on the flipchart):
- What specifically causes the discomfort regarding this question?
- What have you found to be effective in overcoming your discomfort with this question?

The top six questions in which interviewers felt uncomfortable asking the questions as worded were: (discuss each one)

- Marriage and Marital History
- Race
- Education
- Sex
- Health Insurance Coverage
- Number of Rooms

Any other items not on the top 6 you might want to discuss?

"Uses of Data" Help Screens
It seems that the majority of the interviewers find the help screens beneficial. How often do you have to refer to them?

Discomfort/Reluctance Strategies
Most of you have expressed using some techniques to get an answer from respondents (explain community benefits, statistical importance of the question, reassure privacy/confidentiality, etc), do you think you need more guidance on how to handle difficult cases?

Person-based vs. Topic-Based questions
For reference only: (Preference of Topic-Based)
HTC: 68%
TTC: 80%
JTC: 64%

- It seems that a majority of the interviewers prefer the topic-based approach in the Basic Person Data. What do you like about it?
- Not all sections of the instrument have that approach. Do you like the instrument as is or would you like to have all the person questions asked topic-based?

CATI/TQA Manuals
For reference only: (Changes to the manual?)
HTC: 38% (Yes)/62% (No)
TTC: 62% (Yes)/38% (No)
JTC: 50% (Yes)/50% (No)

- What changes need to be done in the manual? (Please be specific if CATI or TQA issue). How often do you refer to it?

Address Verification Screen
- What are your thoughts about the sample address re-verification on callbacks? Some interviewers think that this is impersonal, time-consuming, and confusing, do you agree with this assessment?

- Do you feel comfortable with the procedures to use when you determine the address is incorrect?

Other issues
- In terms of the length of the interview, how do you compare it to the 2007 instrument? Do you think it affects the quality of responses?

- Anything else you think we need to discuss?

Thank you for your cooperation in this session. Your input is highly valued. Your feedback will benefit all interviewers with potential updates to training and manuals. Have a nice day/evening!

APPENDIX E: GUIDELINES FOR CAPI FOCUS GROUPS

CAPI ACS/PRCS HU Debriefing-Focus Group Sessions

Group Size: Approximately 7-10 participants
Time: 3 hours max with 15 min break
Materials needed: Flipchart, audio-recorder, 2-3 copies of the ACS-612 (ACS/PRCS CAPI HU Debriefing Questionnaire)

Welcome

- Provide background information on the 2008 changes to the CAPI ACS/PRCS questionnaire. (Purpose/History)

Rules

- Everything said in the room remains confidential. Even though the session will be taped, it will be only for transcription purposes.

- Turn off your cell phones or put them to vibrate.

- During our discussion, no name-calling or derogatory terms will be allowed.

- The purpose of this debriefing is to hear your opinions and experiences related to the new ACS questions in the CATI instruments, as well as some of the procedures in place. Even though we will discuss some of the wording and sequence of questions, we want you to be aware that implementing changes to text won't happen overnight or might not happen at all. We want you to report your experiences as CAPI interviewers, as well as looking for new ways to improve future training and procedures. You are welcome to tell stories and points of view, as long as they are related to the question asked.

- Please answer each question honestly while also keeping in mind that this session is not about working conditions or supervisor/employee relations.

Introductions *(Max time 5 minutes)*

- Please tell us your name, how many years have you been working on CAPI ACS/PRCS, and if you have worked with any other Census surveys.

Questions

The following categories of questions address items that were new or modified in the 2008 instrument. We know that there are other questions that you might want to discuss, but we want

to focus on the ones that are new or were modified in 2008. *(Note to facilitator: The first three sections should be restricted to 90 minutes max)*

Question, Wording, and Content Issues
This first set of questions is about question wording and content. This category includes items frequently reported as having the following challenges: (1) respondents ask you to explain or repeat the question, (2) question(s) contain terms or concepts that your respondents find confusing or difficult to understand, and (3) respondents give answers other than the response categories, causing you to probe further to mark an appropriate answer category. Please keep in mind the following discussion questions (show them on the flipchart):

- What specific terms or concepts are misunderstood?
- What kinds of questions do the respondents ask you?
- How do you generally respond to these questions?
- Do you have sufficient information in your manuals or on the helpscreens to answer those questions?

The top seven items identified as the most problematic: *(Note to the facilitator: Please ensure not to spend too much time of the discussion focused on race and Hispanic origin)*

- Race
- Hispanic Origin
- Number of Rooms
- Health Insurance Coverage
- Marriage and Marital History
- Work Last Week (Employment Status)
- Weeks Worked

Let's talk about the issues respondents have with these items.

Issues with Respondent Reluctance/Discomfort
Please keep in mind the following discussion questions (show them on the flipchart):
- What specific items cause respondents discomfort or reluctance?
- What strategies have you found to be effective in responding to their concerns?

The top five questions that interviewers identified as most problematic regarding respondent's discomfort/reluctance to answer the questions were: (discuss each one)

- Date of Birth
- Value of Property
- Marriage and Marital History
- Race
- Citizenship

Issues with Interviewer Discomfort
Please keep in mind the following discussion questions (show them on the flipchart):
- What specifically causes the discomfort regarding this question?
- What have you found to be effective in overcoming your discomfort with this question?

The top four questions in which interviewers felt uncomfortable asking the questions as worded were: (discuss each one)

- Marriage and Marital History
- Race
- Plumbing, Kitchen and Telephone Service
- Health Insurance Coverage

Any other items not on the list you might want to discuss?

"Uses of Data" Help Screens
It seems that the majority of the interviewers find the help screens beneficial. How often do you have to refer to them?

Discomfort/Reluctance Strategies
Most of you have expressed using some techniques to get an answer from respondents (explain community benefits, statistical importance of the question, reassure privacy/confidentiality, etc), do you think you need more guidance on how to handle difficult cases?

Person-based vs. Topic-Based questions
For reference only: (Preference of Topic-Based)
65% of the interviewers preferred the Topic-based method of obtaining information.
17% of the interviewers preferred the Person-based method of obtaining information.
18% of the interviewers did not have a preference either way

- It seems that a majority of the interviewers prefer the topic-based approach in the Basic Person Data. What do you like about it?
- Not all sections of the instrument have that approach. Do you like the instrument as is or would you like to have all the person questions asked topic-based?

ACS/PRCS Manuals
For reference only: (Changes to the manual?)
22% of the interviewers said they would like to see some changes to the manual.
78% of the interviewers said they would not like to see any changes to the manual.

- What changes need to be done in the manual? How often do you refer to it?

Flashcards A&E, B, and C
For reference only: (Changes to the Flashcard Book?)

93% of the interviewers did not have any difficulty entering the correct response on the screens using each of the various Flashcards.
7% of the interviewers did have some difficulty.

- Is there anything you would like to add to, delete from, or change in the flashcard book?

ALMI/Shift+F6 Functionality
69% of the interviewers feels it is easier to access the ALMI using the Shift+F6 and that the functionality has improved their ability to locate SU assignment and verify, correct and assign geocodes.
31% of the interviewers do not agree with the above statement.

- Is there anything you would like to add about the functionality of the ALMI using the Shift+F6?

Assignment Tab/CATI Language and Geocoding
For reference only: (Changes to the Case Management?)
57% of the interviewers indicated that the CATI Language and Geocoding Information has **not** been helpful.
43% of the interviewers indicated that the CATI Language and Geocoding Information has been helpful.

- Is there anything you would like to add to, delete from, or change in the Case Management?

Other issues
- In terms of the length of the interview, how do you compare it to the 2007 instrument? Do you think it affects the quality of responses?

- Anything else you think we need to discuss?

Thank you for your cooperation in this session. Your input is highly valued. Your feedback will benefit all interviewers with potential updates to training and manuals. Have a nice day/evening!