

**National Institute on Aging (NIA)
Behavioral and Social Research Program**

Review of NIA-Funded Activities at the U.S. Census Bureau

Review Committee Report

May 2006

Review Committee Members

Eileen Crimmins (Chairperson)

Andrus Gerontology Center
University of Southern California
Los Angeles, CA

William P. Butz

Population Reference Bureau
Washington, DC

Barbara Boyle Torrey

Population Reference Bureau
Washington, DC

Joseph Chamie

Center for Migration Research
New York, NY

Robert Wallace

Department of Epidemiology
University of Iowa
Iowa City, IA

Arie Kapteyn

Labor and Population
RAND Corporation
Santa Monica, CA

Robert Willis

Institute for Social Research
University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, MI

**National Institute on Aging (NIA)
Behavioral and Social Research Program**

**Review of NIA-Funded Activities at the
U.S. Census Bureau**

I. Background and Charge to the Review Committee

National Institute on Aging (NIA)-funded activities at both the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) and the U.S. Census Bureau began when FY 1987 Senate appropriations language provided NIA with \$500,000 to launch the Federal Interagency Forum on Aging-Related Statistics (\$100,000) and to create “offices” on aging-related statistics at the Census Bureau (\$200,000) and the NCHS (\$200,000). The funds were used to support Forum activities and conduct special analyses for publications and reports on aging issues. In FY 2005, the NIA Behavioral and Social Research Program awarded \$1,070,000 in support of aging-related activities at the Census Bureau. These funds provide core support for the Aging Studies Branch and support for specialized projects including the National Longitudinal Mortality Study (NLMS) and the Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) study.

To place aging in the United States in context, NIA also provides support to the Census Bureau for the acquisition of and incorporation into reports of data on aging from a number of other countries. These Census Bureau activities provide valuable data, services, and products to NIA, benefiting NIA by:

- providing research resources to NIA’s behavioral and social research community;
- providing modest research and statistical data support to NIA, e.g., data needed for congressional questions, Director's presentations, and planning; and
- disseminating information about aging and the elderly in the United States and abroad to policymakers, researchers, and students.

NIA policy requires that proposed interagency agreements (IAGs) undergo concept peer review, which occurs once a year for new proposals. Individual Census projects undergo concept reviews prior to funding, however, the last comprehensive review of the productivity and operation of NIA-funded activities at the Census Bureau occurred in 1996. The 1996 review noted that: (i) the number of aging-related publications and data products had noticeably increased in the years preceding the review; (ii) the Census Bureau had made advances in technology to disseminate data using nonprint methods; and (iii) Census publications had changed to reflect the necessary distinctions within the older population by subdividing the older population so that the characteristics of the younger and older-old could be determined. The review also noted that, although the original IAG stipulated that an Office of Statistics on Aging be established at the Census Bureau, it was not clear to what extent such an office had become a major organizational unit.

Among the recommendations presented in the 1996 review were those listed below.

- Appoint to the Census Office of Statistics on Aging a Chief with professional qualifications in demography and aging.
- Establish an advisory group to review ongoing and proposed activities of the Office.
- Maintain the physical separation between national and international programs, but encourage collaboration of the two groups on specific projects.
- Address a variety of methodologic and substantive issues (e.g., data quality issues especially with reference to age and income measures, trend analyses, and Census 2000 issues as they relate to older persons).

As a result of the 1996 review, funding from NIA for Census aging-related activities increased to approximately \$9 million over 10 years.

The intention of the 2006 review was to revitalize and focus NIA-funded activities at the Census Bureau, to identify goals and objectives for the coming years and to examine the integration of Census Bureau activities relevant to understanding the aging population into both the operation of the Census Bureau and into the NIA programmatic emphases in order to recommend methods of improving productivity in the coming years.

Prior to this review, concerns had been raised about the value of NIA's funding to the Census Bureau. For instance, during the review of the 2005 concept clearance, reviewers suggested the need for a site visit to better assess whether Census core funds should be continued and, if so, at what level. Of particular concern to the reviewers and NIA staff were the long delays by the Census Bureau to release publications, the lack of clarity about the management and oversight of Census Bureau staff for aging related activities, the lack of collaboration within divisions of the Census Bureau and by the Census Bureau with outside scholars on aging research, the lack of evidence of use by the research community of Census Bureau data particularly the National Longitudinal Mortality Study (NLMS) and the Longitudinal Household Employment Dynamics (LEHD). NIA organized this review to obtain advice to inform decisions about ongoing and future aging-related activities at the Census Bureau.

The Review Committee was comprised of seven experts in population research: Eileen Crimmins (Chairperson), William Butz, Joseph Chamie, Arie Kapteyn, Barbara Boyle Torrey, Robert Wallace, and Robert Willis. Additionally, an independent contractor (Rose Li and Associates, Inc.) was retained by the NIA to provide review administration services by assisting in the management of the Review Committee and drafting the Committee Report, acting as a liaison between the NIA and the Review Committee, and ensuring the integrity of the review process.

Each Committee member signed a conflict of interest, bias, confidentiality, nondisclosure, and nonlobbying form prior to carrying out the review. No significant conflicts of interest or biases were articulated by Committee members.

The charge to the Review Committee in reviewing NIA-supported Census Bureau activities was to consider the following:

- Scope and nature of current interagency activities.
- Overall productivity and return on NIA's investment.

- Balance between data construction, dissemination, and publications.
- Balance between domestic and international activities.

Reviewers were asked to consider the importance of projects completed, underway, and planned and to pay particular attention to management, leadership, and future directions. In considering the latter, reviewers were asked to recommend how NIA could better leverage potential opportunities in the relationship with the Census Bureau, for instance by identifying publications needed, data gaps that could be addressed with Census resources, and potential linkages with administrative records or cross-agency collaborations that could be used to improve the data available to study aging.

II. Process Undertaken by the Review Committee

The Review Committee relied on three main sources of information in its deliberations: (1) background materials assembled by NIA staff, (2) discussions with NIA staff to better understand the activities and issues under consideration, and (3) presentations by and discussions with Census staff during a site visit held May 1, 2006. These and other components of the concept peer review process are described below.

A. Review of Background Materials

Prior to the site visit, Committee members received background materials providing an overview of interagency agreements as well as information pertaining to each of the three major activities under review: The International Program Center (IPC), the National Longitudinal Mortality Study (NLMS), and the Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics Program (LEHD). Committee members were also provided copies of *65+ in the United States: 2005* and *An Aging World: 2001*. A more detailed list of items provided to Committee members in preparation for this concept peer review is presented as Attachment 1.

B. Premeeting Planning Teleconference

The first meeting of the Review Committee was held by teleconference on April 26, 2006, from 9:15 to 10:15 a.m. EST. The purpose of the meeting was to allow reviewers to raise specific questions they would like addressed during the site visit. These questions were shared with Census staff in advance of the site visit so they could be better prepared to respond to reviewers' concerns. A complete list of the questions provided to Census staff is presented as Attachment 2. The teleconference also provided reviewers an opportunity to ask questions of NIA staff to gain a better understanding of the activities and issues under consideration.

C. Executive Session

The Review Committee convened for an Executive Session on April 30, 2006, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. in Bethesda, Maryland. The purpose of the Executive Session, which included representatives from NIA staff, was to further clarify the scope of NIA support to Census activities and the management structure underlying NIA–Census activities and interactions. Also

during the Executive Session, reviewers identified major themes for further discussion during the site visit and brainstormed about future products and collaborations.

D. U.S. Census Bureau Site Visit

A formal site visit was conducted on May 1, 2006, from 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Census Bureau in Suitland, Maryland. Attending the site visit were Review Committee members and staff representing the Census Bureau and the NIA. A complete list of attendees and the meeting agenda are presented as Attachments 3 and 4. During the site visit, Census staff discussed the status of key NIA-funded projects and shared their ideas for future collaborations. A question-and-answer period followed these presentations. Summaries of these presentations and the ensuing discussions appear in Section III of this report. The Review Committee and NIA staff concluded the site visit with a closed executive session with Census leadership. Participants for the closed session are designated with an asterisk in Attachment 4.

E. Review Committee Deliberations and Final Report

Review Committee deliberations took place at NIA offices in Bethesda, Maryland, the afternoon of May 1, 2006, and resulted in the observations and recommendations presented in this report.

NIA staff provided services and support for the review, including overall review management, reimbursement of Committee members for travel expenses associated with the review and honorariums, and providing Committee members with answers to their questions. NIA staff absented themselves from Committee deliberations during the drafting of recommendations.

III. Summary of Site Visit Presentations and Issues

In this section of the report, we provide information from the meeting at the Census Bureau. There has been notable change in Census Bureau staffing that is relevant to the management and organization of aging-related activities. New management within the Census Bureau includes the appointment of Howard Hogan, Associate Director for Demographic Programs, and Enrique Lamas, Chief of the Population Division, both of whom attended the Census site visit held May 1, 2006. They opened the discussion by stating that their offices were responsible for management and organization of NIA sponsored work. They underscored their intention to meet their current commitments by clarifying expectations about productivity both within the Census Bureau and with NIA and by examining the existing internal review process to address problems with late deliverables. Other changes in Census management, including the consolidation of NIA-supported activities within the International Programs Center and the appointment of new division chiefs within the demographic directorates, will further revitalize current projects and enhance collaboration and communication. Additional introductory comments were made by Richard Suzman, Director of NIA's Behavioral and Social Research Program, who stated the purpose of NIA's collaboration with the Census Bureau and the purpose of the concept peer review. Following these opening remarks, Census staff reported on three key projects. These presentations are summarized below.

A. International Programs Center

Work supported by NIA is now under the International Programs Center (IPC), which includes the Aging Studies Branch. This is preferable to the past when work was in two geographically separated divisions. Ninety percent of activities conducted within the International Programs Center (IPC) are reimbursable through contracts or other agreements with external sponsors, and all activities conducted within the Aging Studies Branch are funded by external sponsors. NIA core funds to IPC support a variety of activities including publications, participation in the Federal Interagency Forum on Aging-Related Statistics, travel to professional meetings, response to inquiries from NIA staff, and work to extend population projections to include individuals more than 80 years of age.

Current IPC projects relevant to aging include a report on the health status of the older population in China that includes data from a large survey fielded by the China Research Center on Aging, and a report that examines aging in sub-Saharan Africa. Future projects include the reissuing of *An Aging World: 2008* and a series of short reports using data collected by the World Health Organization in the Survey on Global Aging (SAGE) and the Survey of Health, Aging, and Retirement in Europe (SHARE). In addition, the IPC will make greater use of American Community Survey (ACS) data to generate a variety of documents related to aging in the United States, and is preparing a report on centenarians using 2000 Census data.

Based on preliminary discussions with NIA staff, the IPC has identified an additional project to be accomplished by Spring 2007 that would support NIA's strategy to raise the visibility of issues concerning global population aging. This project involves production of a 40- to 50-page report tentatively titled *Why Aging Matters: Ten Trends That Will Reshape Our World*. The report will highlight 10 areas in which important changes are anticipated in the coming decades—for instance, the speed of population aging, evolving family structures, and patterns of work and retirement. The report will be used to engage policymakers and funding agencies in a focused dialogue about research priorities.

B. National Longitudinal Mortality Study

This ongoing study is a set of 26 cohorts selected from Current Population Surveys (CPS) and a sample of the 1980 Census followed for mortality, all-cause and cause-specific, as determined by linkage with vital records through the National Death Index (NDI). More recently, the records have been linked with Medicare data from 1991 to 1995. Further linkages using both systems are being considered.

The overall goal of the National Longitudinal Mortality Study (NLMS) is to use the data from the CPS to determine the relationship of socioeconomic status to subsequent mortality. The end products of the study include publications in scholarly journals and a database for use by the research community as well as the funders of the data collection and development.

Public-use files are released only after extensive review for confidentiality issues and upon receiving approval from the Census Bureau and each organization that supplies data used in the file. Public-use files for data through 1991 are now available and a release of data through the

1998 cohort is expected soon (<http://www.census.gov/nlms/agreement.html>). In order to protect confidentiality, public-use data sets do not contain all variables. Research access to the entire NLMS database may be arranged through the principal investigators of the NLMS sponsoring agencies. Research topics of interest must be approved by the NLMS Steering Committee. Committee-approved projects are assigned to an NLMS statistician, who works directly with the researcher as a statistical consultant and as the interface to the NLMS database. Results are delivered to researchers either in electronic or hard copy format.¹

Project staff at Census believe that because of the high error rate the NDI+ is not exact enough in providing data on deaths. Over half of NLMS funding is directed toward the purchase of death certificates from States for manual review, which adds approximately 18 months to the processing of NLMS records.

Medicare records for 1991-1995 have only recently been merged with the data files, and they have not yet been prepared for analysis. Future plans for the NLMS include: encouraging research analysis, making research possible to the wider research community by providing in-house analyses, and matching NLMS records to the NDI through the March 2006 CPS and matching later Medicare records to the file.

C. Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics Program

The Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics Program (LEHD) is a nationally representative research database with integrated employer-employee data. For the research community on aging, it allows the incorporation of information about firms in which older workers are employed in examining their passage through the later stages of their work lifecycle.

One challenge to providing wider researcher access to LEHD data is that all projects must have Title 13 benefits. In addition, projects that use Title 26 must be reviewed by the Internal Revenue Service as well as the Census Bureau. The complexity of the LEHD data infrastructure presents further challenges.

Goals for the future are to enhance public-use data products to promote research on older workers, and enhance micro-analytic files for use by Census research data centers (RDCs). The latter includes a proposal to integrate Health and Retirement Study (HRS) and LEHD data infrastructure files.

D. Closed Executive Session with Census Leadership

The Review Committee and NIA staff met in closed session with representatives of Census leadership: Director, Deputy Director, Associate Director for Demographic Programs, and Chief, Population Division. Discussion centered on steps taken by the Census Bureau to improve timeliness of deliverables, facilitating researcher access to Census Bureau data products, and encouraging publications in scholarly journals by Census staff both as sole author and with members of the wider research community. Participants acknowledged that greater collaboration

¹ Additional information about data availability and access can be found on the NLMS Website: <http://www.census.gov/nlms/projectDescription.html#availability>

within the Census Bureau and between the Census Bureau and outside researchers is mutually beneficial and that analytic work conducted by Census staff, sometimes in conjunction with outside researchers, is crucial to Census operations.

IV. Review Committee Assessment

A. Overall Strengths and Weaknesses

Census data are invaluable and unrivaled in their ability to answer many population questions of national interest. Considerable change has occurred since the 1996 review of NIA-funded activities at the Census Bureau. Recent changes in management and organization within the Census Bureau will likely enhance both productivity and accountability. The greater consolidation of domestic and international aging-related activities within one office at Census headquarters is a particularly positive development. It is likely to facilitate greater interaction among Census staff working on NIA-funded activities as well as interaction between these individuals and others within the Census Bureau.

Since the last review, the Census Bureau also has made progress in disseminating products through the internet. Several products of notable quality have been produced. For instance, *65+ in the United States: 2005* was very well-done, received valuable publicity, and had high national impact. Such reports provide important mechanisms for raising awareness about the importance of aging populations.

In recent years, the Census Bureau has further developed its interaction with international bodies such as the United Nations, World Health Organization, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, European Union, and International Network for the Demographic Evaluation of Populations and Their Health. The acquisition of foreign data on complex demographic processes related to aging appears to be proceeding smoothly, and its inclusion in NIA-supported products has been a valuable addition to providing context for the American setting.

Of particular concern to the reviewers and NIA staff were the timeliness of products, the lack of clarity about the management and oversight of Census Bureau staff for aging related activities, the lack of adequate scientific input in some areas, the lack of collaboration within divisions of the Census Bureau and by the Census Bureau with outside scholars on aging research, and the lack of evidence of use by the research community of Census Bureau data, in particular the National Longitudinal Mortality Study (NLMS) and the Longitudinal Household Employment Dynamics (LEHD).

B. General Recommendations

Collaboration between NIA and the Census Bureau has been productive, however, it is critical that NIA-funded activities at the Census Bureau be strengthened through enhanced communication, cooperation, and collaboration between the two agencies. Clear agreements about expected activities, products, and deadlines must be executed. Project management needs to improve at both the Census Bureau and the NIA. Because population aging will impact—

directly or indirectly—all sectors of Government, it is vital that efficient and effective mechanisms for collaboration are solidly in place and operating smoothly.

The Review Committee offered a number of specific recommendations for consideration by the NIA to improve the productivity of NIA-funded activities at the Census Bureau and to bolster their effectiveness and potential. General recommendations are presented first, followed by specific recommendations pertaining to each of the three major activities under consideration.

- 1. Increase interagency cooperation.** As mentioned above, enhanced communication, cooperation, and collaboration between the Census Bureau and the NIA is essential. To this end, the Committee recommended that agency representatives meet at least two times each year to discuss projects of mutual interest, to monitor the status of ongoing projects, and to evaluate priorities.
- 2. Develop clear accountability and mutually agreeable timetables for delivery of products.** The Review Committee emphasized that clear and regular communication among all persons at the Census Bureau involved in NIA activities is critical, as is regular communication between Census and NIA staff. Written agreements describing end-products in terms of both content and style along with timetables for delivery are recommended.
- 3. Promote ongoing scientific input from the broader research community for all projects.** Census projects should be enhanced by greater scientific input from the broader research community. Census staff should develop more innovative publication ideas in the coming years.
- 4. Enhance outreach to scholars and the research community.** The Committee recommended that the Census Bureau staff promote use of Census data relevant to aging through activities such as workshops, seminars, and summer internships. These promotional activities should target, in particular, NIA grantees and graduate students and should include representatives from health disciplines as well as researchers in economics and demography. It is critical that use of data supported by NIA be used by the NIA research community.
- 5. Develop mechanisms within the RDCs and other mechanisms to encourage young researchers to use Census datasets and to facilitate exploratory research.** The two data sets discussed are not accessible enough to researchers. Mechanisms for increasing access might include, for example, special programs within Research Data Centers and predoctoral visiting programs within the Census Bureau. The Committee recommended that the Census Bureau look to other countries and other U.S. agencies for models of how to lower the threshold for use of data by researchers. For example, the Scandinavian countries have decades of experience with making administrative data available for research; there is an experimental program in The Netherlands that might serve as a good model. NCHS also makes available individual data linked to NDI and Medicare records in their RDC.
- 6. Take advantage of approaches that would permit access to data sets while maintaining confidentiality.** The Committee urged the Census Bureau to direct efforts toward applying

new statistical methods to NIA-supported data sets in order to enhance access without compromising confidentiality.

- 7. Convene experts to examine linkage studies and offer suggestions for improving efficiency of these activities.** The Census Bureau is encouraged to gather experts' input regarding linkages to Medicare records and National Death Index data in particular. The Review Committee also recommended that the Census Bureau post working papers on their Web site to provide more background on linking issues and data assessment, thereby facilitating transparency of data linkage activities.
- 8. Conduct self-evaluations.** The Committee recommended that the Census Bureau conduct regular internal evaluations of the value of their various NIA-funded activities. Such evaluations should lead to suggested products and activities aligned with NIA priorities building on the unique capabilities of the Census Bureau.
- 9. Continue to expand interaction with the media.** The Committee recommended that the Census Bureau enhance exposure of NIA-funded activities and products by more consistently reaching out to the news media. Media exposure can be further enhanced by collaborating with NIA. *65+ in the United States: 2005* was cited as an example of a particularly successful media outreach effort that involved both agencies
- 10. Seek new opportunities to collaborate with other Census Bureau offices and other Federal agencies in analysis of additional data sources.** As an example of such collaboration, the Review Committee cited the cross-branch collaboration within the Population Division to produce the centenarian estimates.

In addition, the Review Committee observed that too much time had passed between the 1996 review and the current review. The Committee therefore recommended that a concept peer review of NIA–Census agreements be conducted every 5 years, rather than every 10 years.

C. Specific Recommendations

1. International Programs Center

The Review Committee provided concept clearance approval for the Census report *Why Aging Matters: Ten Trends That Will Reshape Our World*. Support for this activity was unanimous, as it is considered timely and important for NIA purposes and could be accomplished by Census staff in the appropriate time frame. However, the Review Committee made a number of recommendations in terms of both the production and the content of the report that should be used to guide the discussion and agreement between NIA and the Census Bureau.

Production of *Ten Trends*:

- Clarify the purpose, message, and audience of the report and its relation to NIA research.
- Clearly and explicitly indicate why aging matters and for whom.
- Solicit input from the outside research community to ensure that no important trends are overlooked. This might include informally polling experts in the field of aging, such as

members of the Population Association of America, International Union for the Scientific Study of Populations, NIA centers and grantees, interested journalists, and other relevant parties. This would not only enhance the content of the report but also generate interest (or “buzz”) among the scientific community about upcoming release of the report. (Work on *Ten Trends* should begin without delay and proceed to incorporate outside input.)

- Determine the content, authors, and dates of delivery for specific sections immediately to ensure timely delivery of the final product. A clear agreement between the NIA and the Census Bureau needs to be in place as soon as possible.
- Design a dissemination and follow-up program for the report to increase its impact. This should include a press conference as well as other appropriate media-related activities and events to highlight the report.

Content of *Ten Trends*:

- Clarify the difference between population aging and individual aging. Much of the public considers aging an individual matter and has considerable difficulty thinking about the consequences and implications of changes in the age structure for society at large and for various groups such as youth, the working population, the elderly, employers, and governmental agencies.
- Indicate options available to policymakers to address issues related to population aging.
- Be prepared to answer the question: “Is this good or bad news?”
- Consider addressing where possible the general public health problems of elders and not merely characterizing the elderly population as a demographic and economic problem.

In addition to providing recommendations specific to the *Ten Trends* report, the Review Committee offered a number of recommendations pertaining to the IPC more generally:

- Enhance management, timeliness, relevance, and products.
- Continue to foster international relationships, as they are working well and providing useful information and productive cooperation with counterparts in these organization
- Think creatively about products other than *Ten Trends* and *Aging World* for future years.

2. National Longitudinal Mortality Study

The NLMS is a dataset with powerful potential uses. In the past 5 years, support for this project has been provided by NIA, the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, the National Cancer Institute, and the National Center for Health Statistics. The increasing sample size has bolstered the analytical attractiveness of the data. There are, however, notable limitations for the NIA research community.

One such limitation is the absence of critical variables that would inform mortality causes and health transitions—for example, medical history and disability variables. Other concerns are the lack of health and behavioral covariates important for assessing mortality outcomes and the limitations inherent in the use of death certificates to gather information. These limitations call into question the health value of the study relative to other sources now available.

Another notable limitation of the NLMS is that there has been a significant delay in receiving and creating analytical files. As a result, data tend to be outdated by the time they become available.

The scientific productivity has been limited to a relatively small cadre of investigators. While NLMS data have been used in 60 peer-reviewed journal articles, two-thirds of those articles were authored by one of four researchers connected to agencies supporting the development of the data, and use of the dataset by NIA grantees has been limited. The limited use of the NLMS could be due to the fact that researchers are accustomed to public use data files that allow them to perform all analysis. Census Bureau staff members must still perform analyses for researchers on the full NLMS database that includes restricted or linked data and this approach is not generally acceptable to the research community.

The Review Committee recommended that data be made more user-friendly and more accessible to researchers. Use of the dataset by extramural investigators should be enhanced by development of public use files and of facilities for usage in restricted data centers.

This study would benefit from more scientific oversight and greater collaboration with the research community. It appears that the NMLS is spending more resources than may be needed to link death records to the data. The use of the NDI+ for some of the files would provide material to make many of the links without the death certificates. Phase 2 of NLMS will add Medicare data linkages, which is clearly a valuable idea but presents two potential challenges: (1) The quality of the Medicare linkages is generally much poorer than the death linkages and (2) the raw Medicare files are very difficult to work with.

The Review Committee therefore recommended that Census staff work with other individuals and agencies involved in linkage activities to streamline the Census approach to linking. Approaches might include the following:

- Provide more background material assessing the quality of NDI and Medicare linkages on the Internet for potential users.
- Investigate programs such as those developed for the Health and Retirement Study by Mark McClellan and Tom McCurdy, and by John Skinner for the Dartmouth Health Group, that convert raw data into analytically useful variables with different levels of detail and that can be used while maintaining confidentiality.
- Interact with the linkage group at NCHS that is involved in linking both the NDI and the Medicare files to survey data.
- Investigate more efficient ways to perform the NDI match.

Last, although the Review Committee appreciated the need to demonstrate—for each project—the benefits for the Census Bureau, the requirement that NLMS staff be coauthors is not the only way to demonstrate such benefits. Hence, the Committee recommended discontinuing this as a necessary policy.

3. Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics Program

While the Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics Program (LEHD) offers unique opportunities for analysis, it is difficult for researchers to use. As a result, LEHD data have not generated many publications. Since the program's inception, only 19 articles have been either published or submitted to academic journals. Of those, 50 percent were authored by two researchers, indicating that the LEHD has not yet matured in terms of use by the research community. Further, virtually no NIA grantees have used the LEHD. Although the researchers working on LEHD are excellent scholars and publish their results widely, there is still need to increase the use of LEHD by the scientific community.

Of critical concern for the NIA is that only 1 of the 19 articles published or submitted focus on the aging worker. While this is consistent with NIA's contribution to LEHD funding (about 4 percent of total costs), it nevertheless raises questions about the appropriateness of this investment. Among recent promising developments are two new grant applications that have been submitted to NIA for funding—one proposing to investigate older workers, the other to examine nursing home staff. Also notable is that profiles of older workers in 12 States have been published, and 30 States now have linked data, with 6 additional States near completion.

Based on the above observations, the Review Committee made the following recommendations for increasing the reach, impact, and relevance of these data to issues of aging:

- Explore options for providing alternate (possibly remote) modes of access to LEHD data—for instance by creating files with some suppressed data to maintain confidentiality.
- Demonstrate that synthetic data are useful to researchers.
- Make available confidentiality-protected “test” datasets for researchers so they can investigate the feasibility of using the full data for their research.
- Determine the feasibility of linking LEHD and Health and Retirement Study (HRS) data.
- Investigate the possibility of funding “umbrella” contracts under which individual researchers (such as graduate students or postdoctoral fellows) could pursue separate projects without separate approval.

V. Conclusions

In conclusion, the Review Committee commended NIA for initiating the site visit review of Census Bureau activities, and recommended that NIA support to aging-related activities at the Census Bureau continue with modifications and enhancements as indicated in this report. The potential leverage from even small amounts of NIA funds at a large organization such as the Census Bureau was seen as enormously valuable. The Committee was confident that, with increased communication and collaboration between the two agencies, the products and services resulting from these IAGs would advance research on and interest in population aging.

Attachment 1: Documents Provided to the Review Panel

Attachment 2: Questions Provided to the U.S. Census Bureau

Attachment 3: Site Visit Agenda

Attachment 4: Participants in U.S. Census Bureau Site Visit

Attachment 1 Documents Provided to the Review Panel

The Review Committee was provided copies of *An Aging World: 2001* and *65+ in the United States: 2005* prior to the May 1, 2006, Census site visit. Also before the site visit, reviewers received a binder of materials that included the items listed below.

1. Interagency Agreement Overview

- Slides presenting the National Institute on Aging (NIA) contract budget since FY96 and current and recently ended interagency agreements (IAGs) grouped by category type and by Behavioral and Social Research Program (BSR) area of emphasis
- Overview of BSR's IAG program written by Richard Woodbury (2000)

2. Census Overview

- Overview of Census agreements and publication timelines provided by NIA
- Budget spreadsheet of Census funding from 1996 through 2006
- Report from the 1996 site visit
- Historical progress reports for agreements passed through the Census Bureau

3. International Program Center (IPC) Projects

- Progress report provided by Victoria Velkoff (Census Bureau)
- Press coverage from the recent release of *65+ in the United States*
- Historical NIA progress reports
- Concept review summary statements for IPC projects under consideration for FY06
- New Population Division work for the NIA: brief descriptions of *Why Aging Matters – Ten Trends That Will Reshape Our World* and *An Aging World 2008*.

4. National Longitudinal Mortality Study (NLMS)

- Progress report provided by Norman Johnson (Census Bureau)
- Bibliography of NLMS publications
- NLMS ongoing projects by sponsor agency
- Historical NIA progress reports

5. Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) Study

- Progress report provided by John Haltiwanger (University of Maryland)
- Historical NIA progress reports
- Concept review summary statements for LEHD project under consideration for FY06

6. Logistical Information

- Site visit agenda
- Review assignments for 2006 concept peer review
- Roster of reviewers
- Premeeting information

Attachment 2 Questions Provided to the U.S. Census Bureau

The following questions, generated by reviewers during the April 26, 2006, teleconference, were provided via e-mail to Census Bureau staff later that same day.

Overall Management:

- 1) Please describe the management structure and point of contact for aging-related activities at the Census Bureau.
- 2) How will timeliness of future products be ensured? For example, will resources and priorities be allocated differently to encourage timely production of products?
- 3) How will Census establish and maintain relationships with outside researchers so that complementary research can be incorporated in NIA reports?

Population Division:

- 1) Please provide more detail on the proposed report *Why Aging Matters—Ten Trends That Will Reshape Our World*.
- 2) Please explain why the fourth edition of *An Aging World* could not be updated by Spring 2007, assuming funds were available.

LEHD:

Please provide a list of users of the LEHD and ideas generated regarding how to make this valuable dataset more widely used.

The reviewers also suggested that Enrique Lamas be invited to attend with Howard Hogan during the Overview and Introductory Remarks (8:30 a.m. on the agenda) and also the Closed Executive Session with Census Leadership (11:50 p.m. on the agenda).

**Attachment 3
Site Visit Agenda for the Census Bureau**

**National Institute on Aging
Behavioral and Social Research Program
Review of NIA-Funded Activities at the
U.S. Census Bureau
May 1, 2006**

Final Agenda

May 1 (Monday)

Suitland Federal Center

Taueber Conference Room, Building 3

7:15 am Depart from Hyatt Regency Bethesda

8:00 am Coffee and Pastries

8:20 am **Statement of Purpose**
Richard Suzman, National Institute on Aging

8:30 am **Overview and Introductory Remarks**
Howard Hogan, Associate Director for Demographic Programs
Enrique Lamas, Chief, Population Division

The next three sessions will follow a format of brief presentations by Census staff to report on the status of key projects and ideas for future work, followed by an opportunity for reviewers to question presenters.

9:00 am **Session 1: International Programs Center (IPC)**
Enrique Lamas, Chief, Population Division
Peter Way, Chief, IPC
James C. Gibbs, Assistant Chief for Demographic and Economic Studies, IPC
Victoria Velkoff, Chief, Aging Studies Branch
Kevin Kinsella, Special Assistant, Demographic and Economic Studies, IPC

9:45 am **Discussion**

10:30 am **Session 2: National Longitudinal Mortality Study (NLMS)**
Norman J. Johnson, Census Bureau co-Principal Investigator
Patrick Flanagan, Assistant Division Chief, Longitudinal and Expenditure Design
and Special Projects

- 10:45 am** **Discussion**
- 11:10 am** **Session 3: Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD)**
Jeremy Wu, Project Director
John Abowd, Distinguished Senior Research Fellow
John Haltiwanger, Research Associate, Center for Economic Studies
- 11:25 am** **Discussion**
- 11:40 am** **Closed Executive Session**
NIA reviewers and staff
- 11:50 pm** **Closed Executive Session with Census Leadership**
Charles Louis Kincannon, Director
Hermann Habermann, Deputy Director
Howard Hogan
Enrique Lamas
NIA reviewers and staff
- 12:30 pm** **Depart Census Bureau**
- 1:15 pm** **Working Lunch – Executive Session**
Moongate Restaurant (301-657-3740)
4613 Willow Lane, Chevy Chase, Maryland
- 2:00 pm** **Executive Session (continued)**
NIA 5th Floor Conference Room
7201 Wisconsin Avenue, Bethesda, Maryland
- 5:00 pm** **Adjourn**

Attachment 4 Participants in U.S. Census Bureau Site Visit

* Present for Executive Session with Census Leadership

U.S. Census Bureau Staff

John Abowd, Ph.D.
Distinguished Senior Research Fellow
Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics

Patrick Flanagan, Ph.D.
Assistant Division Chief
Longitudinal and Expenditure Design and Special Projects

James C. Gibbs, M.A.
Assistant Chief for Demographic and Economic Studies
International Programs Center

*Hermann Habermann, Ph.D.
Deputy Director and Chief Operating Officer

John Haltiwanger, Ph.D.
Research Associate
Center for Economic Studies

*Howard Hogan, Ph.D.
Associate Director for Demographic Programs

Norman J. Johnson, Ph.D.
Co-Principal Investigator
Demographic Statistical Methods Division

*Charles Louis Kincannon
Director, U.S. Census Bureau

Kevin Kinsella, M.A.
Special Assistant
Demographic and Economic Studies
International Programs Center

*Enrique Lamas, Ph.D.
Chief, Population Division

Victoria Velkoff, Ph.D.
Chief, Aging Studies Branch
International Programs Center

Peter Way, Ph.D.
Chief, International Programs Center

Jeremy Wu, Ph.D.
Program Manager
Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics

Review Committee Members

*Eileen Crimmins, Ph.D., Chairperson
University of Southern California

*William P. Butz
Population Reference Bureau

*Joseph Chamie, Ph.D.
Center for Migration Research

*Arie Kapteyn, Ph.D.
RAND Corporation

*Barbara Boyle Torrey, M.A.
Population Reference Bureau

*Robert Wallace, M.D.
University of Iowa

*Robert Willis, Ph.D.
University of Michigan

National Institute on Aging Staff

*John Haaga, Ph.D.
Deputy Director
Behavioral and Social Research Program

*Elayne Heisler, Ph.D.
Health Scientist Administrator
Behavioral and Social Research Program

*Donald Gooding
Grants Technical Assistant, National Institutes of Health

*Amy Iadarola, M.A.
Technical Writer (Contractor)
Rose Li and Associates, Inc.

*Rose Maria Li, M.B.A., Ph.D.
Scientific Review Administrator (Contractor)
Rose Li and Associates, Inc.

*Georgeanne Patmios
Acting Chief, Population and Social Processes Branch
Behavioral and Social Research Program

*Richard Suzman, Ph.D.
Director
Behavioral and Social Research Program