



2. ADMINISTRATIVE BACKGROUND

2.1 LEGAL MANDATE AND HISTORY

In August 2018, the Cayman Islands government approved the planning, preparation, and implementation of the 2020 Population and Housing Census. A Census Plan was completed, and the Census Advisory Committee (CAC) was launched in October 2018.

The “Census Day” was initially approved as Sunday, 11th October 2020. Despite steady progress of the CAC with census preparations, in light of the onset of the global pandemic in January 2020, the Cayman Islands government granted approval in July 2020 for the postponement of the Population and Housing Census 2020 by one year to October 2021. Some of the reasons cited for the postponement included:

- ✚ The current pandemic and residual health fears are likely to culminate in a low response rate to the Census as households may be reluctant to welcome enumerators to conduct interviews;
- ✚ The labour market indicators and population count were expected to be unstable as the year 2020 would be considered an ‘unusual year;’
- ✚ It would be challenging Logistically to train approximately 600 enumerators, field supervisors and area coordinators, given the COVID-19 protocols and the usage of personal protective equipment (PPE);
- ✚ Recruitment of field staff could be challenging as persons are less likely to work amidst the COVID-19 health risk and vulnerabilities, in particular, the aged community leaders and field workers;
- ✚ It was deemed that postponing Census 2020 would not negatively hamper the time series analysis of the data as the time interval between censuses in 1999, 2010, and now 2021 would maintain the 11 years gap. N.B: *The 2010 Census was delayed from 2009 due to fiscal austerity measures precipitated by the 2008 financial crisis;*
- ✚ Due to the current multiyear budget approval, the postponement of the 2020 Census was unaffected financially as the approved budget would carry over to 2021; and
- ✚ Other countries with scheduled 2020 censuses delayed census enumeration because of the global pandemic.

The census preparation culminated in the approval by the Cabinet in Council for the drafting of the Census Order and Census Regulations. The Census Order mandated the Economics and Statistics Office (ESO) to conduct the 2021 Census, which shall be taken on “Census Day.” The Census Day, or the reference day for counting the population, is 10th October, 2021. The Census Regulations comprised a list of particulars or questions in the Census questionnaire.

The 2021 Census is the latest in the census history of the Cayman Islands, which started in 1802. Since then, censuses were done in 1891, 1911, 1921, 1934, 1943, 1960, 1970, 1979, 1989, 1999 and 2010.



The 2021 Census also complies with the United Nations recommendation that all countries should carry out a population and housing census every tenth year and that the 2020 round of censuses should be carried out during the period 2015-2024.

2.2 CENSUS OBJECTIVES

The main objective of conducting the 2021 Census is to provide statistics on the population's demographic, social and economic characteristics and household and housing characteristics. The need for such information can never be overemphasised, given the dynamism of the country's population. This is a primary consideration in planning and providing public services during the ensuing decade.

In addition, the 2021 Census also has the following main objectives:

- a) The population and housing census in the Cayman Islands in October 2021 shall provide statistics on the population, including demographic, social, and economic characteristics and housing information. Given the dynamism of the country's population, the need for such information can never be overemphasised, which is a primary consideration in the efficient planning and running of public services during the ensuing decade.

It should be stressed that even though the Census is critical, it shall be regarded as part of a national statistical system that includes household surveys and statistics from administrative registers. This means that not all statistical information about the population needs to be collected in the Census, as other data sources are available. Hence, prioritisation criteria were established, in consultation with the Census Advisory Committee, to determine the critical set of data that will be collected through the Census.

- b) In addition to estimating the total count of residents in the Cayman Islands and their demographic, social, economic and housing characteristics, the Census will also involve building a registry of households of good quality. This will enable the ESO to improve its sample surveys after the Census, such as the Labour Force Survey conducted at least twice a year or the Household Budget Survey, undertaken every 3 to 5 years.

The Census will also, in other ways, contribute to the capacity building of the ESO, such as IT infrastructure and staff training. Thus, a census is also a capacity-building exercise.

- c) The population census is a unique opportunity to raise awareness of the importance of official statistics among the residents of the Cayman Islands. Official statistics are critical in providing helpful information for decision-making within the public and business sectors and knowledge-based debates as part of the democratic process.