

NATIONAL STATE DATA CENTER STEERING COMMITTEE

Bob Coats (NC), *Chair*
Dan Veroff (WI), *Vice Chair*
Suzan Reagan (NM), *Co-Secretary*
Charles Rynerson (OR), *Co-Secretary*

*Representing a Network of 1,800
SDC/BIDC Data Centers and Affiliates
Nationwide*

Allen Barnes (AZ)
Amy Bittner (WY)
Mary Craigle (MT)
Todd Graham (MN)
Pam Schenker (FL)

We Bring Value-Added Census Data and Education to the User

State Data Center (SDC) Steering Committee Conference Call Tuesday, June 9, 2015 2:00 pm EDT

Participants:

Steering Committee (SC) including:	Customer Liaison and Marketing Services Office (CLMSO):	Special Guests from Census Bureau:	Census Information Centers (CIC) Liason:
Allen Barnes Amy Bittner Bob Coats Charles Rynerson Dan Veroff Pam Schenker Suzan Reagan Todd Graham	Tom Edwards Barbara LaFleur		Melanie Poulter

The meeting started at 2:00 PM EDT

Miscellaneous Topics

- Discussion of technical problems at the Annual Meeting. Difficulties with streaming the webcast and with virtual attendees being able to ask questions. The Bureau must do a lot of these, so why don't they have it figured out? It doesn't present a good public face.
- One of the issues is that the technical staff who might have been able to fix problems were not in the room, they were in another part of the building.
- **Suzan:** Has anyone got the list of liaisons? I have been making contacts, but the sooner I get that list the easier my life will be.
- **Bob:** There are liaisons or state contacts for several programs: BAS, GOV, Pop Estimate program, LUCA, Redistricting etc. They will each have a contact within the state.
- We have been told that the Annual Meeting will be in person next year, but we have also been hearing about budget concerns.
- **Charles:** Even if the meeting is in person, it would be nice to have some kind of stream that would allow the rest of the network to be able to attend virtually.

Census Bureau staff joined the call at 2:15 pm.

Annual Meeting follow-up assessment

- **Bob:** Will CLMSO send out an exit survey to evaluate the Annual Meeting? This would provide continuity from past meeting assessments. Address technology and connectivity issues experienced.
- **Barb:** We can do that. Tom says we will send out an evaluation form.
- **Bob:** Next year's Annual Meeting will be in person but for any other virtual meetings in the future we should have a connectivity test a day or two before the actual meeting.
- **Barb:** We are not using live meeting ever again; we will be using WebEx, which doesn't require a download. So, in the future that will not be an issue.
- **Tom:** This year we reduced meetings from 3 hours to 2. We should get feedback about whether that was too much, should it be reduced from 2 hours to 1 1/2 hours? Take lessons home from this meeting for next year even as that will be in person. The evaluation form will be sent just to the leads.
- **Bob:** Regarding the in person meeting, there are funds for the leads to attend, but why not a hybrid for coordinating or affiliates who can't attend?
- **Amy:** It will not prevent leads from going but it would be nice for staff left behind to at least listen in.
- **Tom:** Perhaps presentations could be sent out ahead of meeting.
- **Bob:** You folks at CLMSO, what was your impression of the meeting?
- **Tom:** Our biggest issue was timing; getting questions and having enough time for them.
- **Amy:** There were operator issues. Not enough time to ask questions. Sending questions in is not as valuable as getting immediate feedback.
- **Barb:** calling and video time lag. Calling into a deadline and waiting.
- **Tom:** Was the presentation from Potok and Blumerman valuable?
- Yes, A lot of what we heard from them was the same as we had heard at the Steering Committee meeting, but it was good for others in the network to hear it.
- **Suzan:** Yes, because it's helpful to point others who are not as familiar to the presentations.
- **Tom:** Compared with Potok and Blumerman's presentation at the Steering Committee meeting, was their presentation more or less informative?
- Less, because there is more interaction with speakers when we are there in person.
- **Amy:** I would have liked to hear more detail about how things will work, like adaptive design and non-ID response.
- **Bob:** They don't always know how that's going to work when designing the program.

- **Barb:** Senior staff knows what's going on but at a higher level and may not be able to answer the details. We may have to drill down, and get the people who are involved in those activities to present the details.
- **Amy:** I'd like to hear more about partnerships.
- **Tom:** The partnership programs are being evaluated and there is not much information now. We will know more in the fall.
- **Bob:** That's legit answer.
- On a webcast it can sound like they are reading a script; they might be worried because they are being recorded, and they want to make sure they are sending a consistent message. These are differences of an in person Steering Committee versus the virtual Annual Meeting.
- **Amy:** Some of the presentations we have heard are boiler plate presentations made for everyone. The SDC group is really interested in what is going on.
- **Barb:** Staff needs to know the network & new network people need to get to know the staff.
- **Bob:** Agree. Recap that evaluation form to go out to leads *[note: the form was sent shortly after the meeting]*.

Annual Report

- **Bob:** The Annual Report deadline is next week. How many responses have we received?
- **Barb:** 13 out of 56. The deadline is Friday June 19th.

BIDC Network

- **Bob:** Has there been any movement on the BIDC program? Discussion has been that one network works best for communications.
- **Tom:** There has been a lot of interest at the Commerce Department in promoting business data. Having a BIDC network with a lead identified in each state would help. The 2017 Economic Census is coming; we should be ready.
- **Amy:** There needs to be some thought put into this.
- **Tom:** There is a perception that Statistics for Business not being focused on, not being used, often overlook and underutilized.
- **Charles:** In order to recruit someone to be designated as a lead there has to be some tangible benefit to them and their state.
- **Tom:** I agree, there is a need to lay out the case.

- **Amy:** How well thought out is this? It sounds like another partnership and are they doing this because they don't think SDC is not doing it already?
- **Tom:** There is a history of having separate networks.
- **Pam:** There is a limit on the number of affiliates. States used the BIDC to add affiliates. Does there need to be a limit now that the Census Bureau is not sending out products?
- **Bob:** There is a larger question of benefits of being an SDC.
- **Todd** [*suggestion to CLMSO*]: You should talk with the U.S. Economic Development Administration; they have partnerships with Bureaus of Business and Economic Research (BBERs) across the country.
- **Suzan:** My affiliates are made up of agencies that use business data.
- **Charles:** Mine too.
- **Tom:** We should invite a speaker to talk about this issue from the perspective of the Federal Government. This is an interesting discussion.

Survey of SDC Leads

- **Bob:** Should we send the second survey? Are there any comments on it?
- **Todd:** Marc Perry and I swapped e-mails about the survey the 3rd week of May.
- **Todd:** We'll wrap up the first and send out second. The first survey has a June 15th deadline.
- **Amy:** Suggestion to contact tree states regarding missing survey responses.
- **Bob:** I'll send a reminder e-mail on Monday about the survey and annual report.
- **Todd:** If there is no more input to second survey, it is ready to go out.

Miscellaneous Topics

- **Tom:** New Data Users Branch Chief Lakiva Pullins starts on Monday and comes from the NAICS office. Next month will be an opportunity for Lakiva to introduce herself, and for the Steering Committee to introduce themselves to her.
- **Bob:** The meeting is running long, so we'll have to table the discussion of a Communications Workgroup.
- **Mel:** I'll help cut the meeting short; I have no CIC report because I missed the last meeting.

Call ended 3:12 pm EDT