



BRIEFING

Action sought Deadline	1087
Action sought Deadline	
Hon Jain Lees-Galloway Direct officials to develop an 20 Decem)
Minister of Immigration implementation plan for removal of the departure card, and report back in early 2018	ber 2017
Forward a copy of this paper to the Minister for Primary Industries, the Ministers of Tourism and Customs, and the Associate Minister of Immigration, for their information	
Hon James Shaw Minister of Statistics Direct officials to develop an implementation plan for removal of the departure card, and report back in early 2018	ber 2017
Contact for telephone discussion (if required)	
Name Position Telephone	1st contact
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Christine Hyndman Principal Policy Advisor, Immigration Policy	
The following departments/agencies have been consulted	
New Zealand Customs Service, Ministry of Primary Industries	
Town Leaderna Casterna Convice, Immary and Immary industries	
Minister's office to complete:	
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Comments





BRIEFING

Update on the feasibility of removing departure cards

Date:	15 December 2017	Priority:	Medium
Security classification:	Unclassified	Tracking number:	1533 17-18

Purpose

This note provides an update on the outcomes of a recent examination into the feasibility of removing passenger departure cards, and asks Ministers to direct officials to develop an implementation plan for their removal, and report back in February 2018. If Ministers agree, Cabinet would then be asked to agree to the removal of departure cards. The paper notes that the progress of this project, including the proposed timeframe for removal if confirmed, could be announced by the Prime Minister at the Australia New Zealand Leadership Forum on 2 March 2018.

Executive summary

When the New Zealand and Australian Prime Ministers met in Queenstown in February 2017 for the Australia New Zealand Leadership Forum (ANZLF), they announced that both countries were exploring options to get rid of paper-based departure cards. Australia was already in progress and has since (July 2017) ceased the use of departure cards.

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) contracted Stats NZ to undertake a feasibility study into the removal of departure cards, focused on replicating the statistical information currently collected by them, but also examining the other uses made of passenger movement cards.

This paper reports back on the outcomes of that study, and recommends that Ministers direct officials to develop an implementation plan and timeframes for the abolition of paper-based departure cards based on the preferred option, and setting out costs and a timeframe, for broader Ministerial consideration in early 2018. It notes that the outcomes-based '12/16 month rule', recently released by Stats NZ, makes use of more integrated administrative data and will be a key part of a card-less measure of migration.

Information on short-term departures (and therefore tourism) will not be greatly affected, but some data may be less timely. Stakeholders are comfortable with the proposed change, as the data produced will still be timely enough for most purposes.

The paper also recommends that the progress of the review be announced at the upcoming ANZLF meeting on 2 March 2018. Annex 1 to this paper has a copy of the departure card, while Appex 2 describes the preferred option for its replacement in detail, and Annex 3 summarises all options considered into a table.

Recommended action

Stats NZ and the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment recommend that you:

a **Note** that Stats NZ has completed a feasibility study into the removal of departure cards, which focused on replicating the statistical information currently collected by the cards, but also examined the other uses made by of the cards by stakeholders

Noted

b Note that Australia removed departure cards in July 2017 5 6(b)(i)

Noted

- c Note that
 - the outcomes-based '12/16 month rule' recently released by Stats NZ makes use of more integrated administrative data, and will be a key part of a card-less measure of migration, and
 - ii. while some data would be less timely, it would be more accurate, and stakeholders are comfortable with the proposed change

Noted

- d **Direct** officials to develop an implementation plan and timeframes for the abolition of paper-based departure cards for Ministerial consideration in early 2018, which is:
 - i. based on the preferred option, and
 - ii. sets out the identified costs and savings and the recommended time rame

Agree / Disagree

e **Note** that interested Ministers will be asked to consider the plan in early 2018, and that it is proposed that Cabinet make the final decision on the future of departure cards

Noted

f Agree that, if appropriate, the progress of the review be announced at the upcoming meeting of the Australian and New Zealand Prime Ministers on 2 March 2018, and that it not be publicised prior

Agree / Disagree

[Minister of Immigration]

g **Agree** that a copy of this briefing be forwarded to the Ministers of Primary Industries, Tourism and Customs, and the Associate Minister of Immigration, for their information.

Agree / Disagree

David Paterson

Manager, Migration Trends

Research Evaluation and Analytics, MBIE

14 / 12 / 2017

Teresa Dickinson

Deputy Chief Frequency

Deputy Chief Executive

Stats NZ

.14 / 12 / 2017

Hon lain Lees-Galloway **Minister of Immigration**

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Hon James Shaw

Minister of Statistics

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Background

- When the New Zealand and Australian Prime Ministers met in Queenstown in February 2017 for the Australia New Zealand Leadership Forum (ANZLF), they announced that both countries were exploring options to get rid of paper-based departure cards. Australia subsequently removed its departure cards, in July 2017.
- 2. The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment contracted Stats NZ in April 2017 to undertake a feasibility study into the removal of New Zealand's departure cards. The review focused on replicating the statistical information currently collected by the cards, but also examined the other uses made of passenger movement cards, within the wider context of the eventual removal of paper-based arrival cards.
- 3. This paper reports back on the outcomes of that study, and recommends that Ministers direct officials to develop an implementation plan and timeframes for the abolition of paper-based departure cards in the first instance. It also recommends that the progress of the review be announced at the upcoming ANZLF meeting, on 2 March 2018 in Sydney

Why do we have passenger movement cards?

- 4. Every year around thirteen million paper-based passenger movement cards are completed this is essentially evenly split between arrival and departure cards. The cards are important sources of information for official measures of migration, tourism, and estimates of population. The data they collect feed into central and local government social and economic policy making and planning (including for infrastructure and health funding allocation) and tourism industry strategies and marketing. The cards also help New Zealand meet its international obligations around the prevention of money laundering (through providing reminders to passengers that they must declare large amounts of currency). Passenger movement cards are official forms, established under the Immigration Act 2009.
- 5. The arrival card performs a number of functions. It is an application for a visa for visa-waiver visitors, and for entry permission for all but New Zealand citizens, and a declaration for Customs and Biosecurity purposes. Failure to fill out the arrival card correctly is therefore an offence, and potentially a serious offence, under a number of Acts.
- 6. The departure card, on the other hand, primarily collects statistical information. Departing passengers are required, under s.119(1)(c) of the Immigration Act 2009, to "provide such information and complete such documentation as may be prescribed" and under Regulation 31 of the Immigration (Visa, Entry Permission, and Related Matters) Regulations 2010, if not exempt, to complete the approved form and provide it to an immigration officer.

Why are we aiming to remove departure cards now?

- 7. Tourism industry stakeholder groups, including airline representatives and airport companies, have long argued for the removal of passenger movement cards, claiming that they place an unnecessary burden on travellers and harm New Zealand's image. Border agencies (especially the New Zealand Customs Service, which manages the distribution and collection of the cards, and MBIE's Immigration New Zealand, which stores them) also incur significant costs in their administration.
- 8. Representatives of the tourism industry are involved in representing business at the annual ANZLF meetings, which are focused on enhancing the trans-Tasman Seamless Economic Border. This has focused attention in recent years on the potential to reduce or remove passenger movement cards in both Australia and New Zealand. Australia removed departure cards in July 2017 s 6(b)(i)

9. New information sources, the development of new methods of integrating statistics, and system improvements mean that we now have the opportunity to measure migration and outgoing tourism travel in a different way, decreasing the need to capture departure information using paper. Between the high level of public sector and private sector interest in removing the cards, and the development of new statistical methodologies and sources, this is a good time to investigate the removal of departure cards, while aiming to ensure that we maintain the high quality statistical information they have historically provided.

What did the review find?

- 10. The review confirmed that the departure card is an important source of statistical information on departing passengers. In particular, it is a key component in measures of migration tourism, and population estimation, through the collection of data which classifies departing travellers as visitors; New Zealand residents; or Permanent and Long Term migrants, through capturing the stated intentions of departing passengers.
- 11. The review found that New Zealand can remove departure cards to improve the experience of travellers leaving New Zealand. Although there will be a cost to removing the departure card, and some data may be less timely than at present, it is anticipated that the impact on key users will be minimal. A stakeholder workshop in November 2017, which outlined the options explored and the proposal, gained agreement that the general statistical approach proposed is feasible, and would address the needs of those user agencies.

What is proposed?

- 12. The preferred option would remove the requirement for departing passengers to fill in a card. It would also mean that migration statistics are published quarterly, rather than monthly as at present, and estimate Permanent and Long Term migration figures based on statistical models, accurately confirmed over time, rather than on passengers' stated intentions.
- 13. A key element of the preferred option is the introduction of a new set of migration measures that do not rely on the departure card information, building on the Australian experience. In particular, Stats NZ recently introduced an outcomes-based measure of migration using the '12/16 month rule'¹, which tracks the actual departures and arrivals using passport data, and creates a travel history for passengers, which is then used to classify migrant movements. This provides a more accurate measure of the number of migrants departing and arriving in New Zealand than their stated intentions on the departure (or arrival) card. However, this measure has a 17 month lag.
- 14. To mitigate this, Stats NZ is developing a statistical model to provide a provisional estimate of migration three months after the reference period. In addition, Stats NZ is increasing its use of integrated data, and plans to use a wider range of administrative data sources to provide the necessary attribute information about departing travellers. As part of the integrating of data, Stats NZ is increasing the use of information already captured upon arrival, when residents return from short trips overseas, by linking travellers' departure and arrival records. Stats NZ is confident that together these methods will deliver an acceptable alternative measure to the current departure statistics, independently of the departure card.
- 15. On this basis, officials consider that removing the departure card, along with the collection of information from the departure card, is a feasible option. This would remove 6.5 million transactions between government and customers. At this point it is not possible to identify

This contrasts with the current situation, where travellers are counted as a "permanent and long term arrival/resident" on arrival, if they state they intend to be in New Zealand for a year or more.

¹ A traveller is counted as a "permanent and long term arrival/resident" if they are in New Zealand for 12 out of a total of 16 months, or conversely as a "permanent and long term departure" if they are previously resident then out of New Zealand for 12 out of a total of 16 months.

exactly when the cards would be able to be removed. Officials propose to identify the costs (and savings) and timeframes involved with implementation of the chosen option, and report this back to a wider group of Ministers in early 2018. Following Ministers' consideration, if they agree to go forward, a Cabinet paper will be prepared seeking a final decision on the future of departure cards. Stats NZ will further develop, refine and assess the new methods during the implementation stage, should the project advance.

Next steps

- 16. If Ministers agree to the preferred option for removal of paper-based departure cards, it is recommended that officials be directed to develop an implementation plan, including indicative timeframes and costs and savings. It is proposed that this be presented to the Ministers of Immigration, Primary Industries, Customs and Tourism early in 2018 and that, if they agree, a Cabinet paper be prepared seeking formal agreement to a removal project.
- 17. It is recommended that the progress of this project, including the proposed timeframe for removal if confirmed, be announced at the upcoming ANZLF meeting (in Sydney, on 2 March 2018). On that basis, it is proposed that no media announcements be made prior to the meeting, and that defensive talking points be prepared to address potential media interest.
- 18. Officials recommend that this paper be copied to the Minister of Primary Industries and the Ministers of Tourism and Customs, and the Associate Minister of Immigration, for their information.

Annexes

Annex One: The current departure card

Annex Two: Further detail on removing departure cards

Annex Three: Full list of options considered for replacing departure cards

Annex One: The current departure card

			•	<u> </u>
	New Zealand Passenger Departure Card Please read the instructions and legal information	_	June 2013	_
	on the other side of this card.		Completing this departure card is a legal requirement for passengers leaving New Zealand.	
	1 Flight number or name of ship		False or misleading declarations may lead to penalties.	
	2 Departure date day month year		How to fill in this card	
	_		a departure card must be completed for all passengers, including children	
	3 Nationality as shown on passport		– please answer in English	
	4 Passport number		- use a blue or black pen - print in capital letters, like this: N E W Z E A L A N D	
	5 Date of birth day month year		- print in capital letters, like this: N E W Z E A L A N D - mark answers like this: ✓	
			Cash reporting	
	Are you, or until today were you, living, working, or studying in New Zealand for 12 months or more?		If you are carrying, on your person or in your baggage, NZ\$10,000	
	yes → go to 7		or more in cash, or foreign equivalent, you must report this to a Customs officer when you are completing passport formalities on	
	no → go to 13		departure from New Zealand Cash means physical currency, bearer negotiable instruments	
	7 How long will you be away from New Zealand?		(BNI), or both. BNI means any of – bills of exchange, cheques, promissory notes, hearer bonds, traveller's cheques, money	
	years months days or permanently		orders, postar orders, or similar orders, or any other instrument prescribed by regulations under the Anti-Money Laundering and	
⊕	8 Which country will you spend the most time in while overseas?	• •	Countering Financing of Terrorism Act 2009.	(1)
		Ψ	If anyone you are responsible for, who is travelling with you, has cash to that value, you must report this to the Customs officer	\$
	9 What is the main purpose of your trip?		also: It is an offence to fail to report as instructed here.	
	visiting friends/relatives business		✓ Information statement	
	holiday/vacation conference/convention		Information collected on this form and during the departure process is required to administer border security laws of New	
	education other	.210	Zealand. Its collection is authorised by legislation.	
	10 What is your occupation?		The information will be disclosed to agencies administering these areas and those agencies authorised to receive it under New	
) `	Zealand law for data matching, enforcement, and compliance purposes. Once collected, the Statistics Act 1975 allows for the	
	11 What country were you born in?		information to be used for statistical purposes by Statistics New Zealand.	
	12 Please give your residential or contact address in New Zealand.		The Privacy Act 1993 and the Official Information Act 1982 apply to this information. If you have any questions please contact:	
	12 Flease give your residential of contact address if New Zealand.		NZ Customs Service Immigration NZ	
			① 0800 428 786 ① 0508 558 855	
	13 Tick here to declare that you have:		☐ feedback@customs.govt.nz ☐ INZdepartures@mbie.govt.nz	
	- read and understood the statements on the back of this card			
	- given information that is true, correct, and complete.		Give this completed card to a Customs officer before boarding.	
<u> </u>	End of questions – no signature needed.			
	⊕		⊕	
W1290018_I	Departure card - Final June 2013 indd 1 4/06/2013 10:	:24:59 AM W1290018	8_Departure card - Final June 2013.indd 2 4/06/2013 10:24:	59 AM

Annex Two: Further detail on removing departure cards

Sources of departure information

Departure information comes from two sources of raw data:

- 1. Departure cards that passengers fill in before boarding an international departure
- 2. Electronic passport records of passengers crossing the border out of New Zealand

The two sources are linked using passport numbers, names, and birth date of travellers to create the dataset of departing journeys. This is then used to classify the departures as departing visitors, New Zealand resident (NZR) travellers, or permanent and long term (Permanent and Long Term or PLT) migrants.

The departure cards ask departing passengers, "Are you, or until today were you, living, working, or studying in New Zealand for 12 months or more?" – If they answer "No", they are classified as an overseas visitor departing New Zealand. If they answer "Yes", they are then asked "How long will you be away from New Zealand?"

- If they indicate a permanent departure, or report a length of absence ≥ 12 months, they
 are classified as a PLT migrant departure
- If not, they are classified as a (short term) NZR departure

Figure 1: Flow diagram of current classification process of journeys, based on the responses to questions on the departure card.



The departure card is currently the source of this information, and forms the basis for timely measures of migration, including migrant departures of citizens of New Zealand and other countries resident in New Zealand. These measures are then used in the production of population and economic statistics that are vital to New Zealand: they inform policy decisions, infrastructure planning, health funding allocations, and a wide variety of decisions that are made at the central and local government level.

The cards also provide additional information ('variables') about both short term New Zealand resident travellers and migrant departures. These are summarised in Table 1 below, along with other variables available from electronic passport records.

Table 1: Departure information and its current method of capture

Information about traveller	Source of information	
Country of next residence	Passenger card	
Country of main destination	Passenger card	2
Main purpose of travel	Passenger card	1/90
Occupation	Passenger card	DC)
Country of birth	Passenger card	7,
Residential area in New Zealand	Passenger card	
Length of intended absence	Passenger card	
Age	Electronic record(s)	
Citizenship	Electronic record(s)	
Sex	Electronic record(s)	
Travel period	Electronic record(s)	
Travel mode	Electronic record(s)	
Ports (NZ and closest overseas)	Electronic record(s)	

This demonstrates that the information from the departure cards forms only a part of the picture of a traveller leaving New Zealand. The electronic records would not be affected by a change or loss of departure cards.

How best to capture departing traveller information has been widely considered over the past two decades. Changes during this time, such as the development of alternative data sources, and in particular the integration of administrative data (e.g. linking traveller data to create travel histories, the Integrated Data Infrastructure (IDI), and others), have decreased the need to rely on the information available on the departure card.

As a result, Stats NZ considers that that the statistical needs served by departure card – a method of information capture for statistical purposes – can be met without these cards.

An outcomes-based measure combined with modelling is the preferred approach

Many options were explored during the Stats NZ investigation into departure information. The full range, along with a summary of the pros and cons of each, is attached in Annex 3. Of all the options, the most feasible was the use of an outcomes-based migration measure,

combined with modelling and the use of alternate data sources. This builds on the approach taken in Australia.

The option can be outlined as follows:

- Use the outcomes based migration measure which is:
 - Based on actual events
 - o Independent of passenger cards, but results in a 17 month lag
- Use a modelling approach to obtain a predictive provisional estimate of migration in order to mitigate the lag introduced by the outcomes based measure
- Increase reliance on information already collected by the arrival card, without increasing the burden on travellers (noting that short term resident traveller details can be captured on arrival)
- Utilise existing alternate data sources (the IDI is the most likely source)
- Acknowledge the loss of some variables.

A key aspect of this approach is the need for a model that allows for timely estimates of migrant departures. The model must predict the number of journeys that the outcomes based measure will class as migrant journeys for a given reporting period (e.g. Q1 2017).

Based on this option, we believe that it is feasible to remove not only the physical departure card, but also the direct collection of data from passengers. However, the implementation of this will require wide consultation, and a dedicated project.

Some changes to arrival data and information are required

While this project is focused on departure cards, and departure information, some of the key components required for successful removal of the cards require modification to how arrivals, particularly migrant arrivals are measured.

To obtain meaningful net migration estimates, all flows (arrivals and departures) must use the same measure. Because we are proposing to change the measure of migration to the outcomes-based measure, both migrant departures and arrivals must be changed. Otherwise an imbalance will occur because:

- The intentions-based measure, and the outcomes-based measure are estimating different things
- There is a numerical difference in the flows between the intentions-based and outcomes-based measures

This means that the arrival flows must also be modelled. While the current development of the departure model informs our approach to the arrival model significantly, we have not yet developed a prototype model for arrival flows.

Because migrant numbers are very small compared with the short term travellers, the modelling will have very little impact on the short term traveller numbers.

There will be Impacts on departure attribute data

The changes to the attribute data are summarised below in Table 2. While most of the variables remain unchanged, some improve in quality, some have a loss of quality, and some are lost.

Table 2: Changes in departure information with the removal of departure card

Information about traveller	Source of information	Alternate source of information
Country of next residence	Passenger card	Possible data exchange with key partners
Country of main destination	Passenger card	Captured on arrival
Main purpose of travel	Passenger card	Captured on arrival with potential loss of category
Occupation	Passenger card	Loss of existing source, alternative possible with use of Integrated Data
Country of birth	Passenger card	Electronic records(s)
Residential area in New Zealand	Passenger card	Integrated Data
Length of intended absence	Passenger card	Calculated on arrival (for short term travel)
Age	Electronic record(s)	No change
Citizenship	Electronic record(s)	No change
Sex	Electronic record(s)	No change
Travel period	Electronic record(s)	No change
Travel mode	Electronic record(s)	No change
Ports (NZ and closest overseas)	Electronic record(s)	No change

Some data will increase in quality

- <u>Country of birth</u> will likely be captured from passport data, which is more reliable than
 machine based reading of passenger responses. This will allow for full capture of the
 variable for all departures (rather than just migrant departures)
- <u>Length of absence</u>—a calculation based on the departure and arrival dates is an exact measure of absence, rather than self-reported intended absence.

Some data will lose quality initially

 Residential area in New Zealand – Presently, the linking rates to the IDI datasets are limited. However, this will improve with time, and the data source will be more reliable than the cards.

There will be some loss of information

- Main purpose of travel the Arrival card has fewer purpose options than the departure card for returning resident travelers
- <u>Country of next residence</u> while there is no present source of information for this
 other than the passenger card, work is underway to establish potential options to
 mitigate this loss
- Occupation currently there is no other source for this information, but the current
 measure is of dubious quality due to high numbers of un-codeable entries (e.g.
 'manager' is not specific enough to match to an ANZSCO code). An integrated data
 approach to measuring labour is being explored, and will address the information
 requirement with much better accuracy and quality.

Annex Three: Full list of options considered for replacing departure cards

The table below summarises the key options identified, and the pros and cons of each.

Option	Pros	Cons
Do nothing	 No loss of variables. Maintains consistency. Current systems don't need to be modified. NZ currently has good processes for dealing with departure cards. 	Departure cards still remain Manual handling. Does not improve customer experience.
Electronic collection in the form of an app that travellers use to fill out departure information.	 Increased quality and better data flow. All variables remain. Reduced printing and processing costs. Maintains consistency. Can have multiple languages. Complete data, no sampling. More timely than current process. 	 Implementation costs (Development of infrastructure, changes to current ITM system, ongoing IT costs/maintenance at Stats NZ as well as airports). May not improve customer experience. Requires more assistance for certain passengers.
Electronic collection of specific variables (Not standalone option, will be combined with modelling).	 Assist/improve the accuracy of modelling (below option). Travellers spend less time filling out questions. May improve gate-to-gate time. 	Will lose some variables. Travellers still have to fill something out. Implementation cost (smaller than electronic collection as an app but still costly).
Modelling of departure card variables using alternative data sources.	 No need for departure cards. More admin data, more reliable than sampling. Less processing required Transparent reporting of uncertainties 	 May not get timely data. Revisions required after 17 months. Current time series becomes provisional. Currently do not know what the model is.
Indirect collection using APIs/PNRs as existing data source	 Timely data. May assist in modelling. Uses an already existing data source. Technology for retrieving data already exists (elsewhere) 	 Legal challenges around obtaining and using data. Quality is inconsistent and airline dependent. PNRs especially are low quality data sources Regular acquisition of data requires automated process to ingest non-uniform data

Option	Pros	Cons
Indirect collection of selected variables by airlines through airline partnership.	 Data quality will be good, and Stats NZ can specify which questions to ask. Timely data. Maintains consistency with current variables. Complete data (no sampling required). Easily extendable to arrival cards. 	 Costly to set up and maintain. Have to get multiple airlines to cooperate / collaborate, which may be difficult. Airlines have to send commercial data. Airlines have to store and process data. Inconsistency between airlines in question asking and collection.
Indirect collection of selected variables at booking stage by airlines, data is passed directly to Stats NZ.	 Technology already exists to do this (POLI). Quality of data will be good (as we specify the questions). Timely data. Maintains consistency with current variables. Complete data (no sampling required). Less costly for airlines than above option. More consistent relationships with airlines. Easily extendable to arrival cards. 	 Needs redirects from and back to booking process, which breaks the flow of the booking process for customers. Airlines do not like to have their processes interrupted Requires application development and networking knowledge Stats NZ may not have. Costs around development. Cost of increased relationship management between Stats NZ and airlines.
Survey where residents are included in the IVS (International Visitors Survey) or on arrivals.	 Coverage for existing variables on departure card. Easy to extend or add questions. Ability to add temporary questions for other uses (eg questions around world events). Can be used to assist modelling. 	 Timeliness. Large lag time between answering survey and receiving data (IVS is quarterly whereas ITM is monthly). migrants may be missed due to small numbers. Responder burden and responder bias of IVS. Increased reliance on IVS, which has quality issues.
Randomly sampled survey for all departures.	- Same pros as above option.	- Same cons as above but doesn't rely on IVS.
Deterministic rule that uses travel histories to assign migrant status at departure.	 Timeliness gains. Can use existing processes. Classifies residents and visitors more accurately than current methods. 	 Cannot deal with PLT departures. Loss of all variables from departure card. Can already classify residents and visitors using existing methods, therefore doesn't add anything new.
Add questions to the Census	 Allows for coverage of all NZ residents. Covers all existing variables from departure card. 	 Very long (five year) lag time between Censuses. Isn't able to deal with PLTs or visitors. Respondents might not recall past travel - eg, asking about travel that occurred three - five years ago.