

Data and Statistics (Census) Amendment Bill

Government Bill

As reported from the Justice Committee

Commentary

Recommendation

The Justice Committee has examined the Data and Statistics (Census) Amendment Bill and recommends by majority that it be passed. We recommend all amendments unanimously.

Introduction

The bill would amend the Data and Statistics Act 2022 and other legislation to support a change in the way the census is conducted. Instead of the current 5-yearly census based on a large-scale survey of the total population, the approach would change to an annual census primarily using administrative data.

Background to the changes

The census is an official count of people and dwellings in New Zealand. It provides information on how households and families are structured, changes in cultural diversity, how people live and travel, and the qualifications that they hold.

The Data and Statistics Act requires the Government Statistician to take a census of the population and dwellings in every fifth year. The last census was taken in 2023. The current full field enumeration (survey-first) model requires everyone to complete a census survey.

Work to modernise the census has been under way for more than a decade. Statistics New Zealand has been exploring how to provide the census more effectively by relying more on administrative data—that is, information already collected by government agencies. Cabinet first considered this direction in 2012, and in 2015 directed further exploration and development of an admin-data-first approach.

The new approach is considered necessary to respond to a decline in data quality, affordability, efficiency, and timeliness under the traditional model. Over the last

three censuses, Stats NZ has faced difficulties with the survey-first model, exacerbated by interruptions due to natural disasters. In May 2025, Cabinet endorsed the Government Statistician's preferred approach to modernise the census by using an admin-data-first model.

Under the new approach, future censuses will be taken using admin data supported by survey data. Data collection will be ongoing and will involve:

- admin data on key census variables using more of the information already collected by government agencies
- a new annual census survey beginning in 2027 building over time to achieve a sample size of 60,000 randomly selected households
- tailored solutions to meet the needs of Māori and harder-to-measure communities.

From 2030, statistics produced under the new census model would be published and available annually, rather than five-yearly.

About the bill as introduced

The Data and Statistics (Census) Amendment Bill is an omnibus bill as it amends more than one Act. Its amendments can be regarded as implementing a single broad policy, namely that there will be an annual census from 2030.

Although the Government Statistician has discretion to decide how they will take the census, changes to the Data and Statistics Act are necessary to support an orderly move to an admin-data-first census model. The bill would amend the Act to:

- require the Statistician to publish, in each financial year, statistics from the census of population and dwellings based on a specified reference date in the previous financial year so that census data is published annually
- move the next census from 2028 to 2030 to allow time to prepare for the change in census approach
- update requirements regarding Māori engagement, public consultation, and post-census review to align with an annual census
- remove the census-specific enforcement and infringement provisions that support compulsory participation in the five-yearly census survey because these will not be required under an admin-data-first census.

The bill would also amend legislation that relies on census or population data. It would update references to census concepts and population data so the following legislation would continue to operate under an annual census model:

- Local Electoral Act 2001
- Waste Minimisation Act 2008
- Bay of Plenty Regional Council (Maori Constituency Empowering) Act 2001
- Wellington Regional Water Board Act 1972.

Electoral boundaries

We considered the bill alongside the Electoral (District Boundaries) Amendment Bill (on which we are reporting separately). Census data is used by the Statistician to determine the number of general and Māori electorates (including the electoral population in each district), and by the Representation Commission to review and adjust electoral boundaries. At present, each five-yearly census triggers a boundary division. Without legislative change, shifting to an annual census would trigger an annual boundary division process, which would be impractical and unworkable. The Electoral (District Boundaries) Amendment Bill would amend the Electoral Act 1993 to decouple future boundary divisions from the census. That bill provides that electoral boundary divisions would instead be triggered every second electoral cycle.

Proposed amendment

Below we discuss the main amendment we recommend to the bill as introduced. We do not discuss minor or technical amendments.

Local electoral boundary reviews

Local electoral boundaries are reviewed every six years. Some councils will next review their boundaries in 2027 and others will in 2030. For historical reasons relating to the availability of census data, the reviews are often conducted based on the Statistician's population estimates rather than census data. The Local Electoral Act enables either population estimates or census data to be used.

Clause 19 would amend the definition of "assessment date" in section 5 of the Local Electoral Act. As introduced, it provides that an assessment date could only be used that was after both:

- the date on which the Statistician provided the most recent electoral population figures to the Representation Commission for national electoral purposes; and
- the reference date of the most recently released census.

We understand that this definition is intended to ensure that local electoral boundary reviews are based on up-to-date population data. However, we consider that the date the electoral population figures were provided to the Representation Commission for national electoral purposes adds nothing, and the definition could be simplified by removing it. We recommend amending clause 19 to this effect.

We note that population estimates are often assessed as of 30 June in any given year. The bill would also set 30 June as the default reference date for the census. If the assessment date was defined as being after the reference date, it would effectively prevent the use of population estimates for local electoral boundary reviews. Instead, only census counts could be used. This would effectively remove the discretion to use either population estimates or census data, which was not intended. We therefore recommend amending clause 19 to provide that the assessment date would be the date on or after the reference date of the most recently published census.

Other matters that we wish to highlight

Many submitters sought a review of the admin-data-first approach before the bill proceeds. Some submitters also suggested that the bill should be amended to strengthen independent oversight of the use of administrative data. We acknowledge the volume and strength of submitters' concerns that the new model has not received sufficient external scrutiny. Although we have not recommended any related amendments to the bill, we wish to highlight our consideration of the matter, and Stats NZ's plans to address these concerns.

Requests for an independent review of the new approach

Submitters generally framed the request for a review as a need for an independent assessment to test whether the preconditions for high-quality statistical outputs are in place. "Independence" was variously described as being independent from Stats NZ or the Government Statistician, or politically independent. Submitters considered that a review would test whether New Zealand was ready to transition, and would check the main assumptions underpinning the proposed model. It could also provide more transparency and assurance to data users and the public about methodologies and data quality. Suggested criteria for the review included Māori representation and expertise on Māori data governance and sovereignty, and consideration of alternative census approaches. An example of an alternative was adopting a 10-yearly field census with continuous population data from administrative sources.

Other views expressed about a review included:

- concerns about the process leading up to the Statistician recommending a shift to the new model
- disappointment about the amount and quality of Stats NZ's engagement with the public, Māori, and data users and suppliers, which should be remedied through a review
- a request for the Justice Committee to commission an independent study of the feasibility and consequences of undertaking an admin-data-first census.

Independent oversight of the use of administrative data

Some submitters considered that independent oversight could help maintain public confidence and enhance transparency. Their suggestions included establishing an independent board to oversee administrative data use, and requiring regular public reporting on a range of data-related matters. One submitter proposed that the bill should be amended to require regular independent reporting to Parliament about the quality, completeness, and fitness for purpose of the administrative data tabled annually.

Our response regarding independent reviews and oversight

We acknowledge submitters' requests for an independent review of the new approach and independent oversight of the use of administrative data. We are concerned about some submitters' lack of trust in the shift to an annual census based on admin data.

We discussed how to build trust in the new approach, as well as provide oversight and assurance. We considered possible amendments including requiring a statutory review in the legislation or an external review committee.

We were advised that Stats NZ was considering options for a potential independent external review, and we sought more information as to what this would entail.

Stats NZ gave examples of several established assurance processes, which assess data quality and census operation after the census has been delivered. The processes for the 2018 and 2023 censuses included an independent advisory panel of external experts who reviewed the output data quality of selected variables after the census. Section 37 of the Act also currently requires the Statistician to conduct a review of the operation of each census and present a report on that review to the Minister of Statistics.

In addition to the existing design and assurance processes, the Government Statistician intends to establish an external technical assurance body. This External Methodology Advisory Panel will undertake an external, formal assessment of:

- the quality of integrated admin data
- the readiness of the data to meet the population and dwelling measurement requirements of the census
- the elements of the methodology that underpin the new census model.

The panel's first report will be provided within six months of establishment, which will allow enough time to inform the planning and design of the new census. The panel will add a forward-looking focus, and aims to provide timely, practical input to improve the development of the next census.

Under the Data and Statistics Act, the Statistician is responsible for determining how official statistics are produced, including the choice of census methods. This responsibility is intended to support trust in statistics by keeping decisions independent from political and other undue influence. The advisory panel will therefore not revisit the Statistician's decision to move to a new census model.

Stats NZ intends the panel to continue beyond the initial formal assessment, advising the Statistician as needed after its first report. It will be independent from Stats NZ and provide advice to the Statistician. The panel will include local and international experts and be transparent, with membership, terms of reference, and findings all made public. Stats NZ has tested the concept with an international statistical expert who concluded that the panel is fit for purpose. We believe that it is absolutely essential that this panel comprise people independent of Stats NZ who can provide expert advice and oversight on this process to ensure that this change is delivered with confidence and within the projected time frames and cost forecast.

Stats NZ also highlighted a range of existing processes and channels that incorporate diverse perspectives and provide additional assurance and transparency. They include data advisory groups, a community design forum, gateway reviews, privacy impact assessments, and publication of methods papers.

We note that the bill would maintain the requirement for the Statistician to periodically review the operation of the census and to present a report about the review to the Minister of Statistics. The bill would initially provide for more frequent reviews, with reviews required after the 2030 and 2033 Censuses, and then at least every five years. Stats NZ also remains accountable to Parliament through annual reviews, Estimates examinations, and corporate reporting, including annual reports and statements of strategic intentions.

We acknowledge Stats NZ's existing assurance processes and accountabilities to Parliament. However, to help address submitters' accountability concerns, we urge the External Methodology Advisory Panel to report directly to the select committee that is responsible for census-related matters in the next Parliament. We would expect this reporting to occur quarterly. For the avoidance of doubt, we note that this would not confer decision-making powers about the census to the committee.

Green Party of Aotearoa New Zealand differing view

The Green Party opposes this bill, as the changes will result in poorer quality data for harder-to-measure groups, including homeless people, ethnic communities, Pasifika, Māori, rainbow/Takatāpui, disabled people, and those who rarely engage with Government services. Data is not neutral; there are biases and blind spots. For example, non-physical survey data cannot pick up the detail of sub-standard, overcrowded homes with black mould. Data-driven analysis cannot pick up information from people who do not engage with government agencies.

The Integrated Data Infrastructure does not align with data sovereignty aspirations. Moving from home visits to data collection prioritises individuals over families and households. Data has an important role to play and should supplement a physical census. Geospatial analysis that combines population data with physical determinants of health is more useful for developing policy, not just counting heads.

The failings of the last two censuses could be corrected by a more community-led approach.

Submissions in April 2026 pointed out that more would be lost than gained by the administrative data-first model

- Loss of small area (meshblock) statistics
- Loss of family, household and housing statistics
- Loss of information about occupation, and workplace connection with residence
- Major discontinuity between information from past censuses, and those of administrative data-first model so trends are difficult to ascertain.

This has required the Government Statistician to construct unvalidated new metrics for the Electoral Act. The Electoral Commission has not received any independent statistical advice on measures which could be subject to a challenge by judicial review.

“Engagement” with Māori every three years is not true partnership, as defined in the principles of te Tiriti o Waitangi. Additionally, the bill does nothing to afford data sovereignty to Māori, or give Māori tino rangatiratanga over their data, which is a taonga predominantly held by the Crown.

Te Mana Raraunga (The Māori Data Sovereignty Network) brings together over 800 Māori researchers, practitioners, and entrepreneurs. Their submission acknowledges potential benefits but they are not ready to throw away the in-person census “We have serious concerns about whether this approach will be effective, and there are still large gaps in the census plan. In our view this Bill is premature – much more work and assurances are needed – and could create long lasting harm to our data and statistics system, electoral system, and to Māori.”

Retail NZ’s submission states “We are concerned that administrative data will be insufficient to produce quality iwi affiliation data following the delay in release of the 2018 Census iwi data. This data is vital for understanding New Zealand’s unique demographic landscape.”

We also agree with the submissions made by academics across the country that the rich data the physical census gives would be lost in an abstracted administrative census. We also note that countries that have abandoned a physical census such as Israel, Sweden, and Netherlands, have compulsory registration systems that provide the administrative records underpinning population statistics.

Finally, it remains to be seen as to whether democratic systems can rely on agencies to produce reliable data, given the failure of MBIE’s biometric border security project. The data-driven census requires coordination in combining data from NZTA, MBIE, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and several more into the Integrated Data Infrastructure. New Zealanders need to be confident of sufficient protection of personal data, particularly in light of recent data privacy breaches.

The Green Party recommends that at least one more 2028 physical census be undertaken to ground-truth data provided by different government agencies.

New Zealand Labour Party differing view

The New Zealand Labour Party opposes both the Data and Statistics (Census) Amendment Bill and the Electoral (District Boundaries) Amendment Bill.

We are not opposed in principle to modernising the census. Our opposition to these bills rests on a straightforward concern: we are not satisfied that there is sufficient certainty that the proposed administrative data-first model would be accurate or reliable enough to justify a step as significant and as permanent as ending New Zealand’s long-standing Census of Population and Dwellings.

The census is one of the foundations of our national statistics and electoral system, and the changes proposed by these bills will have consequences that extend beyond statistics alone, affecting the integrity of electoral boundary reviews, democratic representation, public trust, and the quality of evidence available to inform government decision-making. A reform of this significance should not proceed while so many

important questions remain unanswered. Labour holds a number of concerns about the pace and design of this proposed census overhaul. In our view, departmental officials have not, largely because of the time constraints they were working under, carried out sufficient public consultation with the communities most affected.

For these reasons, Labour does not support these bills proceeding in their current form. We consider they should not proceed until an independent review of the proposed census model, including an independently assured costing of the options available, has been completed and made available to the House.

Public Consultation

Submitters consistently told the committee that the public was given too little opportunity to engage with a reform of this scale. Mr Len Cook, a former Government Statistician, noted that recent census reviews were conducted largely within the public sector, and that this select committee process has been one of the few real opportunities for experts and the wider public to test the proposals. Research Association New Zealand made a similar point on behalf of the research and insights sector. Labour shares the view that the consultation undertaken by departmental officials, constrained by the timeframes they were given, has not been adequate for a decision of this importance. The same concern applies to the Electoral (District Boundaries) Amendment Bill, where the consequences for the timing and work of the Representation Commission have not been sufficiently explained or consulted on. We are sympathetic to the proposal of an independent review of the proposed changes, and that review being made available for further public scrutiny.

Data Quality

The central question is whether the enactment of an administrative data-first model as proposed by this bill can produce statistics that are accurate and reliable enough to replace the census. Submitters were not confident that it can. Numerous submitters cautioned that administrative records collected by different agencies are not held to consistent standards and can be out of date. They warned that the quality of information for small areas and for smaller population groups is likely to suffer, and that the continuity of statistics New Zealand has relied on for generations could be broken.

We are particularly concerned about the effect this could have on Māori, Pasifika, rainbow communities, disabled people and hard-to-reach rural communities. We concur with the submission from Te Kāhui Raraunga that Statistics New Zealand's proposed tailored solutions to address these issues rely on trust, and that they are not a sufficiently certain basis for a decision of this importance. We also note that officials have themselves acknowledged that accuracy and coverage would reduce in the early years of the new model. Until there is far greater certainty on these points, we do not accept that the case for ending the census has been made.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Māori Data Sovereignty

A recurring theme across submissions was the disproportionate impact these changes may have on Māori. The census is a key source of the data that supports Māori devel-

opment and the fair allocation of resources, and it underpins the calculation of the Māori electoral population. Submitters, including Māori organisations, were concerned that a model that is less accurate for communities that are less easily reached risks undercounting Māori in a way that is harder to see and therefore harder to challenge. They also emphasised that a change of this nature should be developed in genuine partnership with Māori, consistent with Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the principles of Māori data sovereignty, rather than through limited consultation. Labour considers these concerns have not been adequately addressed.

Appendix

Committee process

The Data and Statistics (Census) Amendment Bill was referred to this committee on 5 March 2026. The House instructed us to report the bill back no later than 17 July 2026.

We called for submissions on the bill with a closing date of 15 April 2026. We received and considered submissions from 177 interested groups and individuals. We heard oral evidence from 35 submitters at hearings by videoconference and in Wellington.

As part of our consideration of the bill, we examined its consistency with principles of legislative quality. We have no issues regarding the legislation's design to bring to the attention of the House.

Advice on the bill was provided by Statistics New Zealand and the Ministry of Justice. The Office of the Clerk provided advice on the bill's legislative quality. The Parliamentary Counsel Office assisted with legal drafting.

Committee membership

Tom Rutherford (Chairperson from 2 July 2026)

Hon Andrew Bayly (Chairperson and member until 1 July 2026)

Hon Ginny Andersen (until 25 March 2026)

Jamie Arbuckle

Carl Bates

Camilla Belich (from 25 March 2026)

Tākuta Ferris

Paulo Garcia (from 1 July 2026)

Rima Nakhle

Dan Rosewarne (from 25 March 2026)

Todd Stephenson

Vanushi Walters (until 25 March 2026)

Hon Dr Duncan Webb

Dr Lawrence Xu-Nan

Related resources

The documents we received as advice and evidence are available on the Parliament website.

Key to symbols used in reprinted bill

As reported from a select committee

text inserted unanimously

~~text deleted unanimously~~

Hon Scott Simpson

Data and Statistics (Census) Amendment Bill

Government Bill

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Data and Statistics (2023 Census) Order 2022 revoked

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Schedule 1 9**New Part 2 inserted into Schedule 1 of Data and Statistics Act
2022****Schedule 2** 10**New Part 2 inserted into Schedule 1 of Waste Minimisation Act
2008****The Parliament of New Zealand enacts as follows:****1 Title**

This Act is the Data and Statistics (Census) Amendment Act **2026**.

2 Commencement

- (1) This Act comes into force on the day after Royal assent, with some exceptions. 5
- (2) **Sections 8 and 9** come into force on **1 July 2030**.
- (3) **Sections 15 to 21** come into force on **1 January 2030**.

Part 1

Amendments to Data and Statistics Act 2022

3 Principal Act

This **Part** amends the Data and Statistics Act 2022.

4 Section 4 amended (Te Tiriti o Waitangi/Treaty of Waitangi) 5

Replace section 4(e) with:

- (e) in section 35, requires the Statistician to engage with Māori regarding the manner of collecting data for, and the data to be collected in, censuses of population and dwellings:

5 Section 5 amended (Overview) 10

Replace section 5(3)(d) with:

- (d) specific requirements regarding the census of population and dwellings (**sections 34** to 37):

6 Section 6 amended (Interpretation) 15

In section 6, insert in its appropriate alphabetical order:

financial year means a period of 12 months starting on 1 July and ending on 30 June

7 Section 34 replaced (Census of population and dwellings)

Replace section 34 with:

34 Census of population and dwellings 20

- (1) In each financial year, the Statistician must publish statistics from a census of population and dwellings of New Zealand in relation to the reference date for the previous financial year.
- (2) **Subsection (1)** does not prevent the Statistician from publishing additional statistics from a census in relation to that reference date in a later financial year. 25
- (3) For the purpose of publishing statistics under this section, the Statistician may collect data by any means described in section 22.
- (4) The Statistician may, by notice in the *Gazette*, specify the reference date for any financial year. 30
- (5) If the reference date for a financial year is not specified, the reference date is 30 June.

8 Section 35 replaced (Engagement with Māori on census)

Replace section 35 with:

35 Engagement with Māori on census

- (1) At least every 3 years, the Statistician must engage with Māori regarding the manner of collecting data for, and the data to be collected in, censuses of population and dwellings.
- (2) The engagement must—
 - (a) occur in ways that the Statistician is satisfied will promote the fulfilment of the Statistician's duty in section 14(a); and
 - (b) be used to inform decision-making about future censuses.

5

9 Section 36 replaced (Consultation on census)

Replace section 36 with:

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36 Consultation on census

- (1) At least every 3 years, the Statistician must consult the following persons regarding the manner of collecting data for, and the data to be collected in, censuses of population and dwellings:
 - (a) the public sector agencies and the Offices of Parliament that, in the opinion of the Statistician, have a particular interest in the census:
 - (b) the public generally:
 - (c) the individuals and organisations that, in the opinion of the Statistician, have a particular interest in the census.
- (2) The consultation—
 - (a) may occur in the manner that the Statistician thinks appropriate; and
 - (b) must be used to inform decision-making about future censuses.

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10 Section 37 amended (Review after each census)

- (1) In the heading to section 37, replace “**after**” with “**of**”.
- (2) Replace section 37(1) with:
 - (1) In at least every fifth financial year, the Statistician must—
 - (a) conduct a review of the operation of the censuses of population and dwellings that have been carried out since the last review; and
 - (b) present a report on the review to the Minister.

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11 Section 38 repealed (Duty to obtain details regarding request for data in census)

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Repeal section 38.

12 Section 76 amended (Failing or refusing to provide data)

Repeal section 76(2).

13 Section 89 repealed (Infringement offence for failing to obtain request for data in census)

Repeal section 89.

14 Schedule 1 amended

In Schedule 1,—

5

(a) insert the Part set out in **Schedule 1** of this Act as the last Part; and

(b) make all necessary consequential amendments.

Part 2

Related amendments to other legislation

Amendments to Bay of Plenty Regional Council (Maori Constituency Empowering) Act 2001

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15 Principal Act

Sections 16 and 17 amend the Bay of Plenty Regional Council (Maori Constituency Empowering) Act 2001.

16 Section 3 amended (Interpretation)

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(1) In section 3, repeal the definition of **census**.

(2) In section 3, definition of **general electoral population**, replace “section 3(1) of the Electoral Act 1993” with “section 5(1) of the Local Electoral Act 2001”.

17 Section 9 amended (Population figures)

Repeal section 9(2).

20

Amendments to Local Electoral Act 2001

18 Principal Act

Sections 19 to 21 amend the Local Electoral Act 2001.

19 Section 5 amended (Interpretation)

(1) In section 5(1), replace the definition of **assessment date** with:

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~~**assessment date** means a date after both of the following dates on which the Government Statistician assessed the number of persons:~~

~~(a) the date on which the Government Statistician most recently made a report under **section 35(6) of the Electoral Act 1993**;~~

~~(b) the reference date of the most recently published census~~

30

(1) In section 5(1), definition of **assessment date**, replace “after the last periodic census” with “on or after the reference date of the most recently published census”.

- (2) In section 5(1), definition of **estimated general electoral population**, replace “date with the exception of the estimated Māori electoral population” with “date, excluding the estimated Māori electoral population”.
- (3) In section 5(1), replace the definition of **general electoral population** with:
- general electoral population** means—
- (a) the figure for the General electoral population that was most recently reported by the Government Statistician under **section 35(6)(b) of the Electoral Act 1993**; or
 - (b) if 1 or more censuses have been published since that report, the total ordinarily resident population as shown by the most recently published census, excluding the Māori electoral population
- (3) In section 5(1), replace the definition of **general electoral population** with:
- general electoral population** means the total ordinarily resident population as shown by the most recently published census, excluding the Māori electoral population
- (4) In section 5(1), replace the definition of **Māori electoral population** with:
- Māori electoral population** means—
- (a) the figure for the Māori electoral population as derived from the most recent report made by the Government Statistician under **section 35(6)(a) of the Electoral Act 1993**; or
 - (b) if 1 or more censuses have been published since that report, a figure representing both the persons registered as electors of the Māori electoral districts and a proportion of Māori persons who are not registered as electors of any electoral district and a proportion of Māori persons under the age of 18 years, which figure must be fixed—
 - (i) by ascertaining a proportion determined by dividing—
 - (A) the total number of persons, as at the reference date of the most recently published census, either registered as electors of Māori electoral districts or named on the dormant rolls for Māori electoral districts; by
 - (B) the total number of Māori persons, as at the reference date of the most recently published census, either registered as electors of Māori electoral districts or General electoral districts or named on the dormant rolls for Māori electoral districts or General electoral districts; and
 - (ii) by applying the proportion ascertained under **subparagraph (i)** to the total number of ordinarily resident Māori persons as shown by the most recently published census

- (4) In section 5(1), definition of **Māori electoral population**, paragraph (a), replace “on census day” with “as at the reference date of the most recently published census” in each place.
- (4A) In section 5(1), definition of **Māori electoral population**, paragraph (b), replace “on census day” with “as shown by the most recently published census”. 5
- (5) In section 5(1), repeal the definition of **on census day**.

20 Section 19X replaced (Certificate of Government Statistician)

Replace section 19X with:

- 19X Certificate of Government Statistician** 10
- (1) This section applies for the purposes of sections 19H to 19W.
- (2) A certificate issued by the Government Statistician as to the population of any region, district, local board area, constituency, ward, community, or subdivision or any proposed constituency, ward, community, or subdivision must specify— 15
- (a) the ordinarily resident population of that area as shown by the most recently published census; or
- (b) the ordinarily resident population of that area as otherwise assessed by the Government Statistician.
- (3) A certificate issued under this section may be used for the purposes for which it is issued, even if, after the certificate is issued, the Government Statistician publishes an updated figure of the ordinarily resident population of the area to which the certificate relates. 20
- (4) A territorial authority or a regional council must provide the Government Statistician with any information that the Government Statistician requires concerning the definition of an area to which a certificate is to relate. 25

21 Schedule 1A amended

- (1) In Schedule 1A, repeal clause 7(2).
- (2) In Schedule 1A, repeal clause 7(2A).

Amendment to Waste Minimisation Act 2008

22 Principal Act 30

Section 23 amends the Waste Minimisation Act 2008.

23 Schedule 1 amended

In Schedule 1,—

- (a) insert the Part set out in **Schedule 2** of this Act as the last Part; and
- (b) make all necessary consequential amendments. 35

*Amendment to Wellington Regional Water Board Act 1972***24 Principal Act**

Section 25 amends the Wellington Regional Water Board Act 1972.

25 Section 6 amended (Members of Board)

In section 6(9), replace “certified by the Government Statistician after the census taken in 1976 and after each successive quinquennial census” with “shown by the most recently published census of population”. 5

*Data and Statistics (2023 Census) Order 2022 revoked***26 Data and Statistics (2023 Census) Order 2022 revoked**

The Data and Statistics (2023 Census) Order 2022 (SL 2022/259) is revoked. 10

Schedule 1

New Part 2 inserted into Schedule 1 of Data and Statistics Act 2022

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Part 2

Provisions relating to Data and Statistics (Census) Amendment Act 2026 5

8 Interpretation

In this Part, **2026 amendment Act** means the Data and Statistics (Census) Amendment Act **2026**.

9 Statistician not required to publish statistics from census until 2030/31 financial year 10

Despite **section 34(1)** (as replaced by the **2026** amendment Act), the Statistician is not required to publish statistics from a census of population and dwellings until the financial year that starts on 1 July 2030 and ends on 30 June 2031. 15

10 Statistician must review census in certain financial years

(1) Despite **section 37(1)** (as replaced by the **2026** amendment Act), the Statistician must conduct a review under that section and present a report on the review to the Minister—

(a) in the financial year that starts on 1 July 2031 and ends on 30 June 2032; and 20

(b) in the financial year that starts on 1 July 2034 and ends on 30 June 2035.

(2) For the purposes of the reference in **section 37(1)** to every fifth financial year, the financial year referred to in **subclause (1)(b)** is counted as the first financial year. 25

Schedule 2

New Part 2 inserted into Schedule 1 of Waste Minimisation Act 2008

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Part 2	
Provision relating to Data and Statistics (Census) Amendment Act 2026	
3	Definition of district’s population for certain financial years
(1)	This clause applies in respect of the following financial years:
(a)	the financial year that starts on 1 July 2029 and ends on 30 June 2030:
(b)	the financial year that starts on 1 July 2030 and ends on 30 June 2031.
(2)	Despite the definition of district’s population in section 31(2), the district’s population is—
(a)	the population of the district of the territorial authority as assessed by the Government Statistician most recently before the start of the financial year; or
(b)	if the district was constituted, or its boundaries were altered, after that assessment was made, the population of the district assessed by the Government Statistician as at the date of the district’s constitution or boundary alteration.

Legislative history

2 March 2026	Introduction (Bill 253–1)
5 March 2026	First reading and referral to Justice Committee