



Managing Survey Quality through Performance Management: Building a Performance Management Capability

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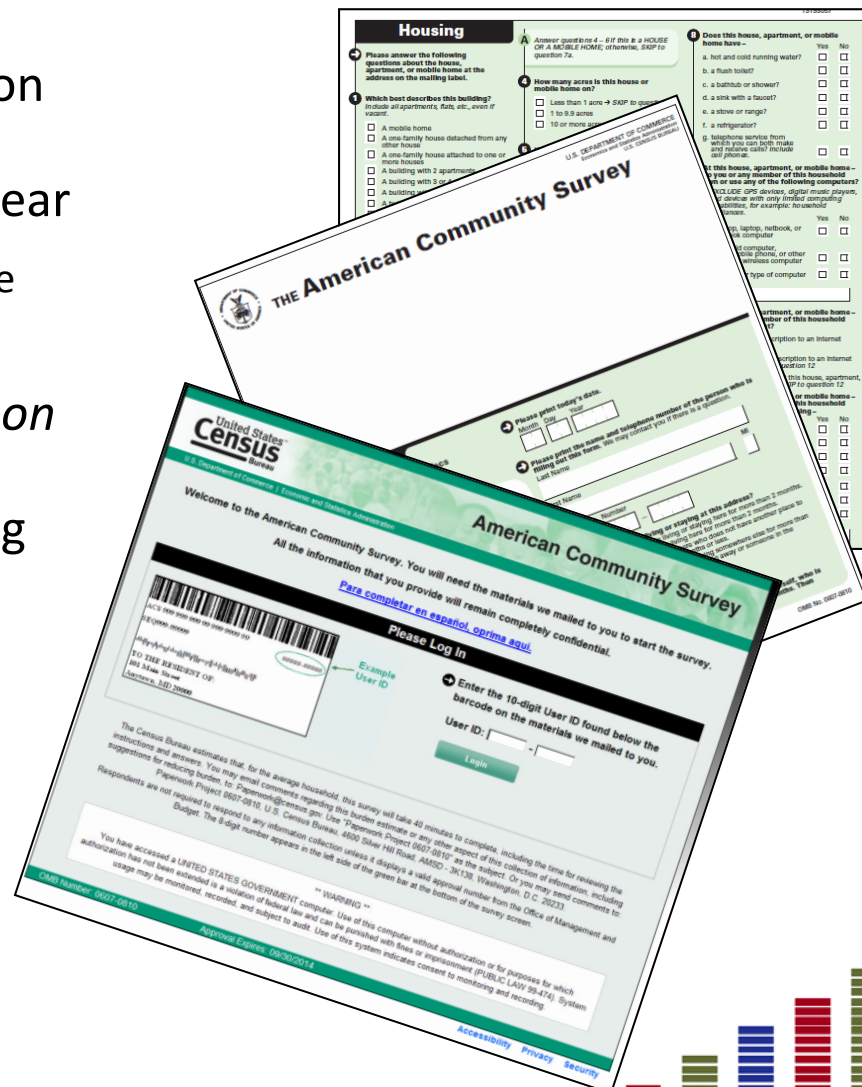
² *The MITRE Corporation, McLean, VA USA*



Madrid, May 31 - June 3

American Community Survey (ACS) Overview

- Ongoing monthly survey sent to 3.5 million addresses per year to produce detailed population and housing estimates each year
 - Visit 20,000 Group Quarter facilities and sample approximately 194,000 residents each year
- Designed to produce *critical information on small areas and small population groups* previously collected on the decennial long form
- Covers 35+ topics and supports over 300 known Federal Government uses
- Data collection modes – Internet, paper, telephone, personal visit (sub-sample)
- Data released twice annually



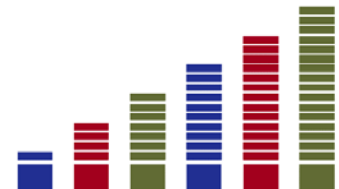
The image shows three overlapping forms from the American Community Survey. The top form is a 'Housing' questionnaire with sections for 'Please answer the following questions about the house, apartment, or mobile home at the address on the mailing label', 'Which best describes this building?', and 'Does this house, apartment, or mobile home have...'. The middle form is the title page 'American Community Survey' with the text 'Welcome to the American Community Survey. You will need the materials we mailed to you to start the survey.' and 'All the information that you provide will remain completely confidential.' The bottom form is a 'Please Log In' page with a barcode, 'Example User ID', and a field to 'Enter the 10-digit User ID found below the barcode on the materials we mailed to you.' It also includes a 'Login' button and a 'WARNING' section.



Factors that Affect Survey Quality

Internal vs. External

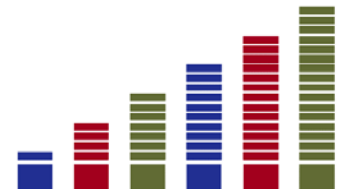
- Internal factors – mostly within the control of the survey
 - Statistical processes – sample design and imputation methods
 - How to ask the survey questions – question design
 - Resource allocation – funding and staff
 - Staff skill level – the amount and type of training
 - Business processes – determine As-Is, define priorities, and manage change
- External factors – usually levied onto the survey
 - Budget – amount of funding received
 - Scope – survey topics and population of interest
 - Schedule – timing of work, outputs, and deliverables
 - Respondent's willingness to respond – item and unit



Ways to Measure Survey Quality

The Usual Suspects

- Coverage Rates
- Non-response rates – item and unit
- Sampling Error
- Processing Error
- Measurement Error
 - Interviewer effects
 - Respondent errors
 - Questionnaire design
 - Mode of data collection

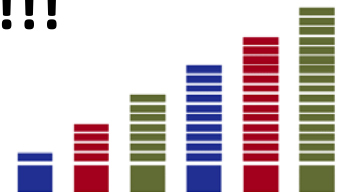


ACS Challenges Needing to Overcome

- Reliability of the small area and small population estimates
- Availability and timeliness of information
- Stakeholder visibility and awareness of products & services
- Respondent's trust in the survey
- Ease in accessing information
- Respondent burden
- Workforce satisfaction
- Preparedness to address issues
- Appropriate allocation of resources
- Where/What to innovate

The Usual Suspects are not sufficient –

Performance Management is the solution !!!



What is Performance Management?

- **Performance Management**

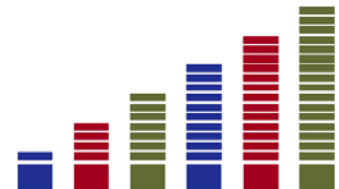
- The use of performance measures by managers and leaders to inform decisions about how best to achieve the program or organization's mission and strategic goals
- Provides an integrated method for monitoring, reporting and addressing **Survey Quality**

- **Performance Measurement vs. Performance Management**

- Measurement—a functioning speedometer showing speed
- Management—braking when you realize you're doing 15mph over the speed limit

- **Measure vs. Metric**

- Measure – what you care about (e.g., miles per hour)
- Metric – the specific value recorded (e.g., 70 mph)



Bottom Line

Performance measures have value when they're used to manage with the following in mind:

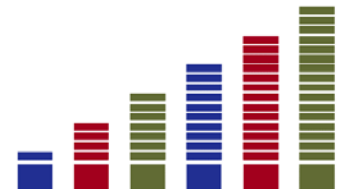
a specific audience

+

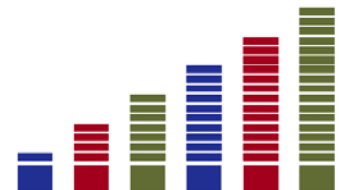
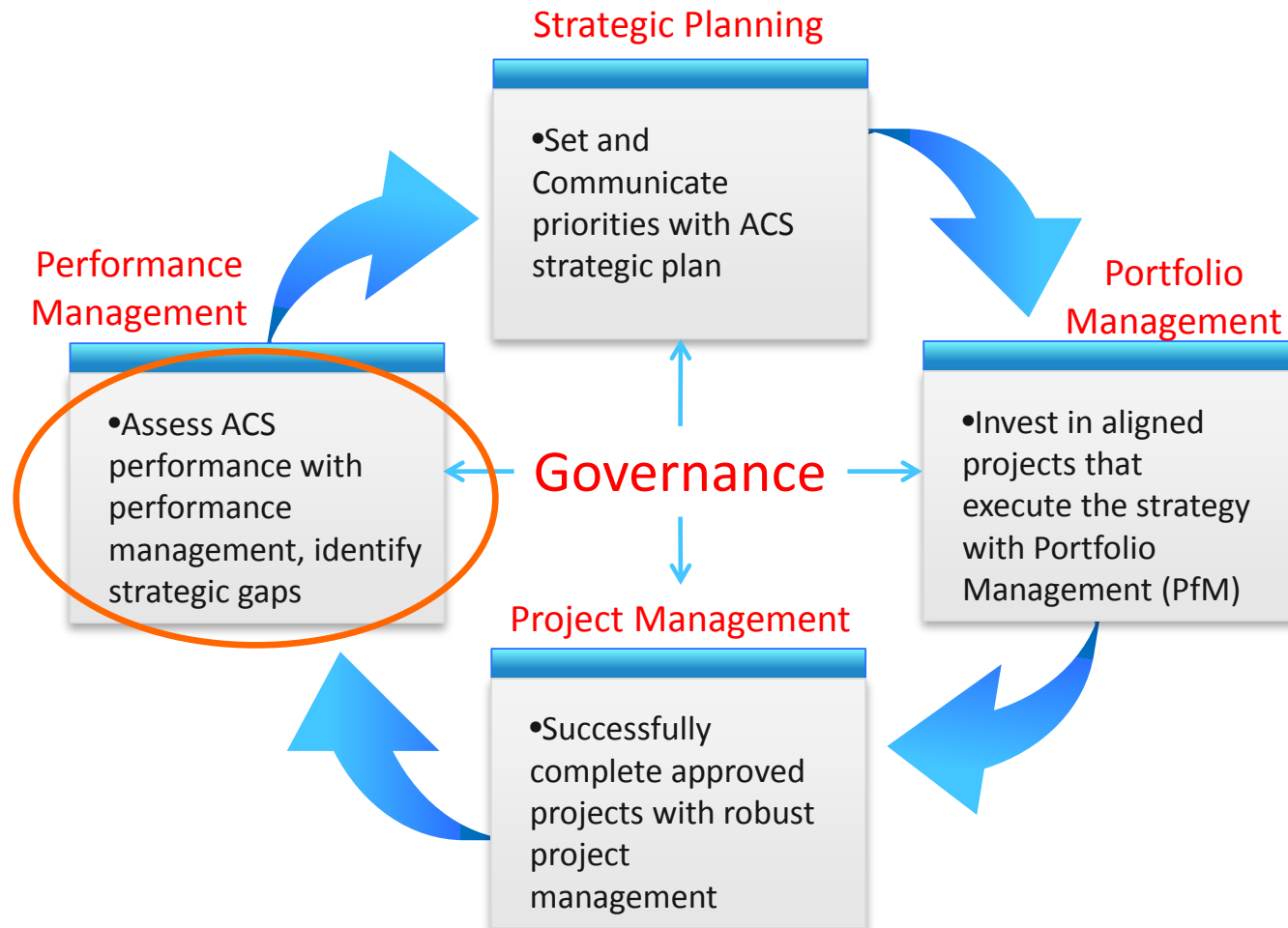
a context

+

a purpose/decision

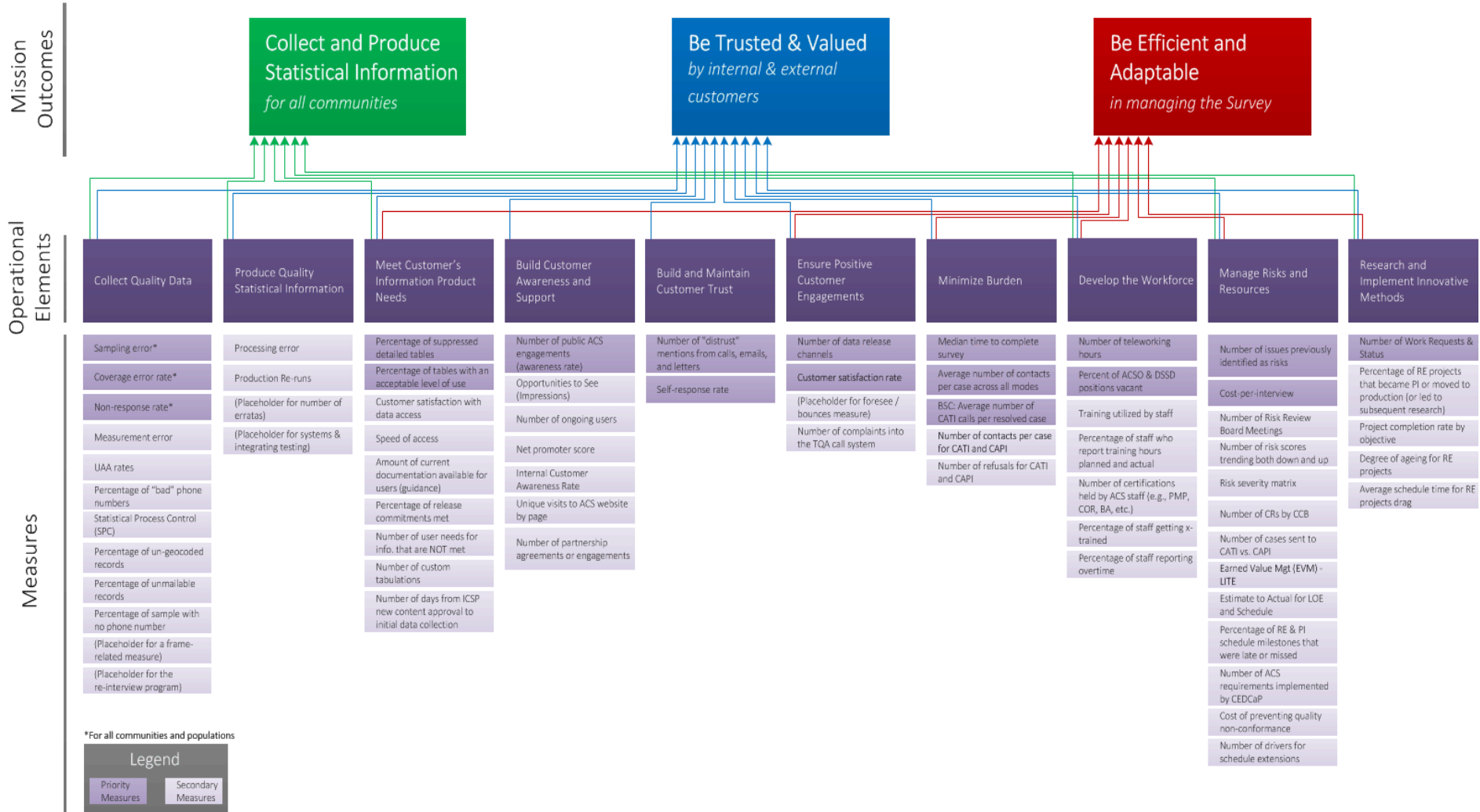


Performance Management – A Key Activity in Strategic Management



ACS Mission: "The American Community Survey is trusted and valued by the nation as the source for quality demographic, social, economic, and housing information on small areas and small populations."

ACS Performance Management Framework – V15



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Framework Content

Mission Outcomes (3)

- Collects and Produce Statistical Information for all communities
- Be Trusted & Valued by internal and external customers
- Be Efficient and Adaptable

Operational Elements (10)

- Collect Quality Data
- Produce Quality Statistical Information
- Meet Customer's Information Product Needs
- Build Customer Awareness and Support
- Build and Maintain Customer Trust
- Ensure Positive Customer Engagements
- Minimize Burden
- Develop the Workforce
- Manage Risks and Resources
- Research and Implement Innovative Methods

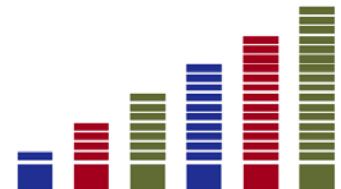


Example – Reduce Respondent Burden

- Approach: Implement a reduction in the number of telephone call attempts (from 25 to 15 call attempts)
- Expected changes of reducing the number of telephone call attempts:
 - Survey response rate decreases
 - Fewer interviews in the telephone operation
 - More cases shifted from telephone mode to the personal visit mode
 - Costs increase (personal visit more expensive than telephone)

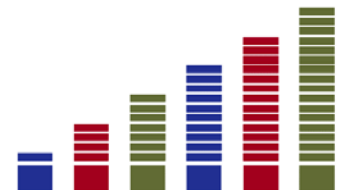
Performance Management provides the framework to assess the impact on **Survey Quality**

- Before and after changing the approach
- Across and within multiple dimensions – *operational elements and measures*
- Determine reasonable performance targets

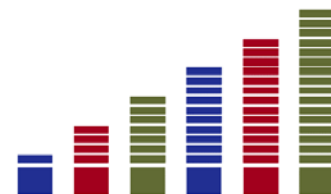


White Paper

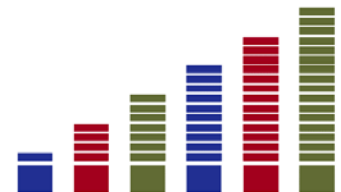
- More details about what, why, and how ACS implemented performance management can be found in the paper
- Paper highlights:
 - Roles and Responsibilities of the relevant stakeholders
 - Implementation Steps:
 - Developing the performance management framework
 - Defining and prioritizing the performance measures
 - Designing and approving sample reports
 - Establishing regular data-driven performance management reviews
 - Conducting an annual review
 - A picture of the ACS Performance Management Framework (version 15)



Questions?

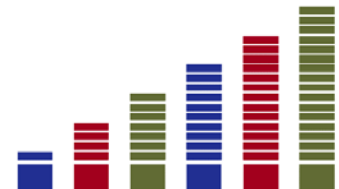


Backup Slides



Benefits of Performance Management for ACS

- Establishes and communicates a baseline view of organizational performance
- Provides an understanding of what the program is doing well
- Identifies potential areas to improve effectiveness and efficiency of current operations
- Improves the program's ability to communicate performance to stakeholders
- Collectively, all benefits above increase the transparency of the program's efforts
- Provides a structure for responding to changes in the environment



ACS Performance Management Approach

1 Develop Performance Framework



2 Define Performance Measures

Performance Management Implementation Plan

Percentage of tables with an acceptable level of use

Measure	Target	Actual	Notes
1. Percentage of tables with an acceptable level of use	75%	75%	Target of 75% achieved
2. Percentage of tables with an acceptable level of use	75%	75%	Target of 75% achieved
3. Percentage of tables with an acceptable level of use	75%	75%	Target of 75% achieved

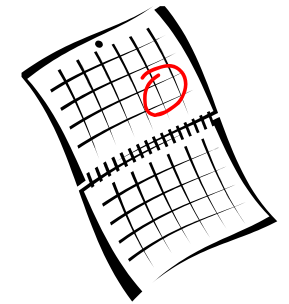
Each measure was assigned to a Measure Development Coordinator (MDC) and Measure Analyst who worked within a broader team to identify data sources, data reporting and collection frequency, report audience and potential decisions

3 Review Sample Reports

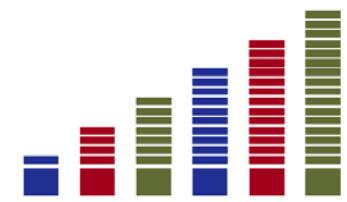


ACS Senior Staff reviewed and approved performance reports with sample data

4 Schedule Measure Reporting

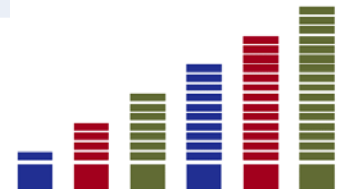


Measures were then scheduled for their report distribution and presentation dates, based on their defined frequency



ACS Performance Management Roles & Responsibilities

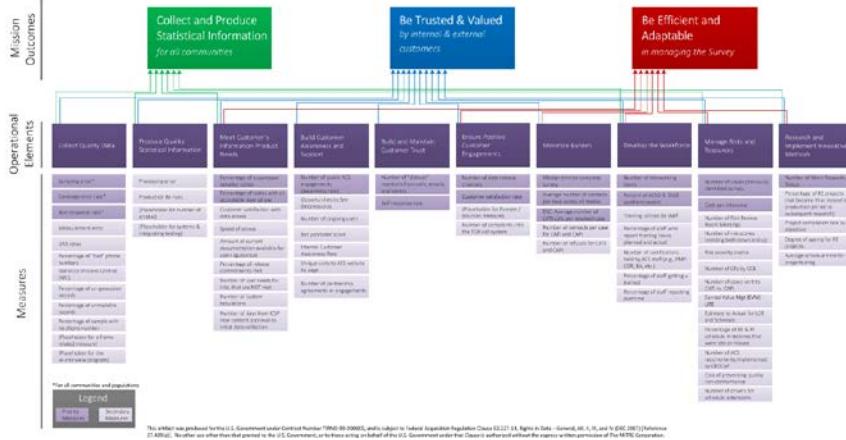
Role	Typical Owner	Responsibility
ACS Senior Staff	Division Chief, ADCs, Branch Chiefs	Holds the decision authority to develop the performance framework, identify measures, and prioritize measures for implementation. Continuously reviews performance data to make decisions about the appropriate response.
Measure Development Coordinator (MDC)	ADC	Leads the development of the detailed measure definition. Manages the activities of the measure analyst, validates performance data, and contributes to the measure analysis report.
Measure Analyst	Junior Staff	Supports the development of the detailed measure definition; identifies data sources, collection and reporting frequency and report distribution. Collects and analyzes the measure on a periodic basis and presents the measure report to Senior Staff.
PMO	PMO members	Supports the Performance Management process, coordinates regular Performance Management meetings, documents and shares actions and decisions from the meetings.



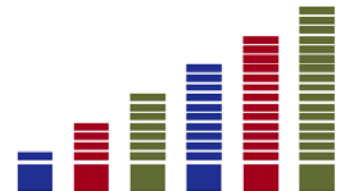
Developing a Framework to Understand ACS Performance

ACS Mission: "The American Community Survey is trusted and valued by the nation as the source for quality demographic, social, economic, and housing information on small areas and small populations."

ACS Performance Management Framework – V15

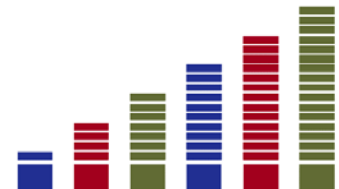


- To identify potential measures, ACS developed a Performance Framework
- The ACS Performance Framework decomposes the ACS mission into enduring outcomes and operational elements
- For each element, ACS identified potential performance measures



Attributes of a Performance Management Framework

- Timeless
 - Decomposes the organization's mission outcomes into a framework of inter-connected operational elements
 - Translates the mission so that it can be managed and acted upon
 - Maintains focus on what fundamentally matters to the organization, even if the measures change
- Transparent
 - Provides performance data that is self-evident and easily communicated to internal and external stakeholders
- Orienting
 - Enables everyone in the organization to see how they fit and contribute to the organization's mission success
 - Informs the strategic planning process and the priorities that emerge from it
 - Helps to set expectations for and assess the impact of strategic change initiatives, both corporate and programmatic

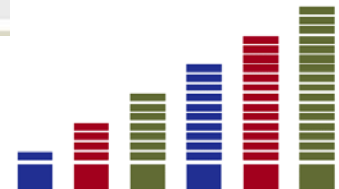
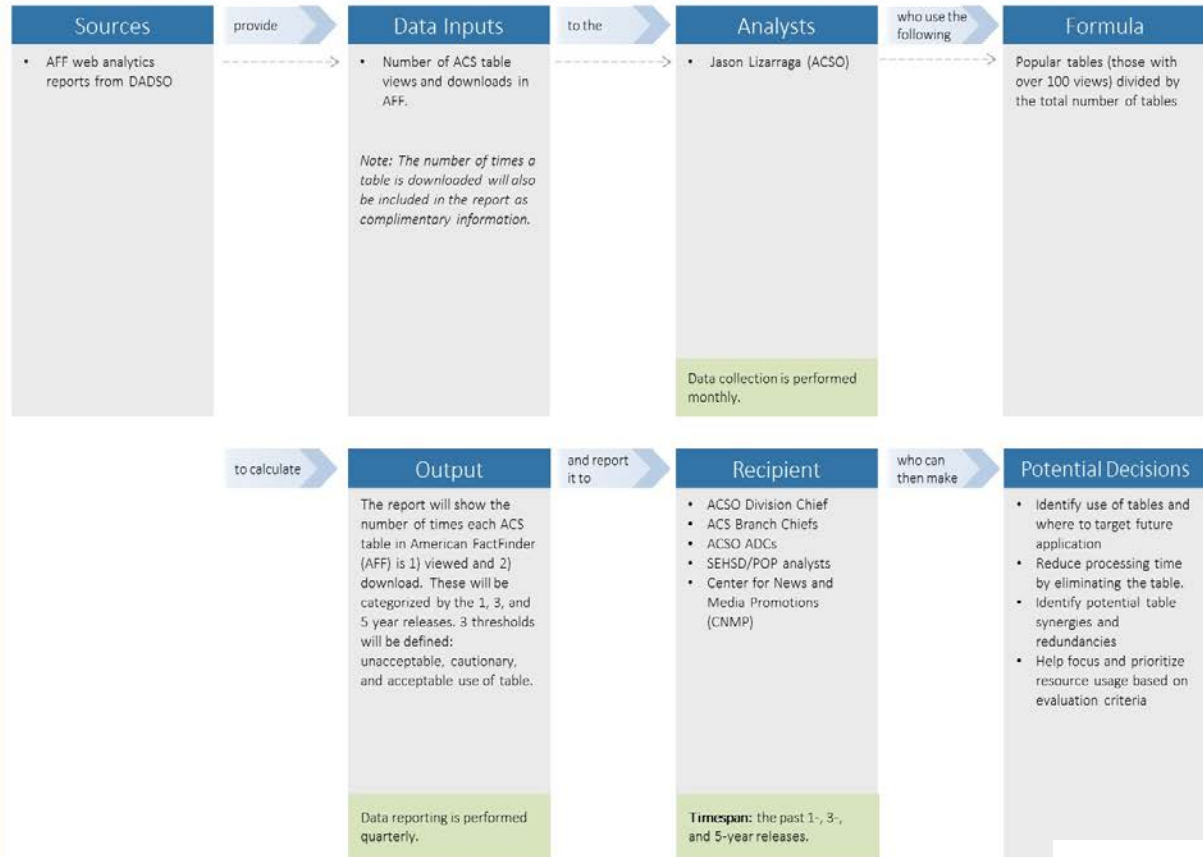


Sample Implementation Plan

Performance Management Implementation Plan

Measure Development Coordinator	Kai Wu (ACSO)
Measure Analyst	Jason Lizarraga (ACSO)
Measure Definition	The percentage of tables that receive an acceptable level of use. A table with an acceptable level of use is any table that is viewed more than 100 times in the past year.
Tells Us What	1. Popularity of tables. 2. Data users' needs. 3. Provides basis for calculating the ROI.
Affected Measures	[currently none]
Drivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data releases Positive or negative media awareness Budget changes Website redesigns
Generating Capabilities	MES: (3001) SL: (8001), (8003)
Leading/Lagging	Lagging

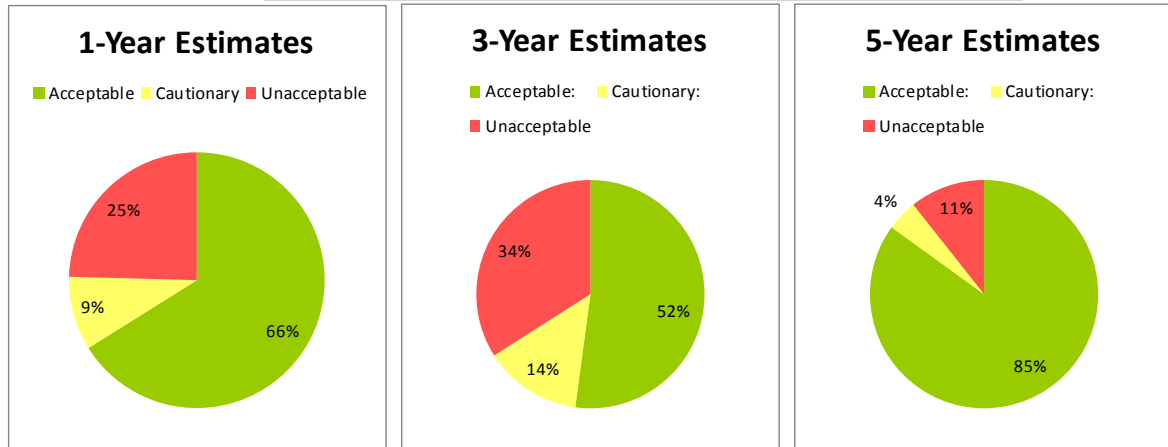
Percentage of tables with an acceptable level of use



Performance Measure - Percentage of tables with acceptable use - 2nd Quarter



Sample Report



Legend
Acceptable: 25 views or greater
Cautionary: 24 to 13 views
Unacceptable: 12 or fewer views

Analysts Interpretation

This measure is largely unchanged from previous quarters with more tables from the 5-year estimates falling into the acceptable level of use category than either 3-year or 1-year estimates. The significant number of 3-year tables in the unacceptable use category reflects the relative unpopularity of the 3-year estimates in general.

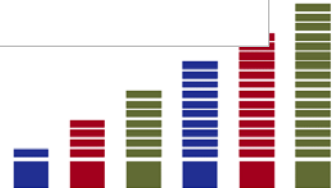
Measure Development Coordinator (MDC) Comments

Our definition for acceptable use is a table that receives 25 or more hits on AFF for a period of 3 months (Q2: April - June of 2014).
 Cautionary use is defined as a table that receives between 13 and 24 hits on AFF in Q2.
 Unacceptable use is a table that receives 12 or fewer hits on AFF during the quarter.

Items for management's attention

Other measures of user statistics, such as the relative popularity of data products or table topics, might be more useful to understand which kinds of tables are popular and which less so. The display of tables on AFF is also a contributing factor to use which should be examined. Tables which receive prominence on AFF, Data Profiles and Subject tables, receive far fewer more views on AFF than all other products combined.

With that said, 3-Year estimates are the least used dataset with the lowest acceptable rate and the highest unacceptable rate. Should it be considered to drop or remove?



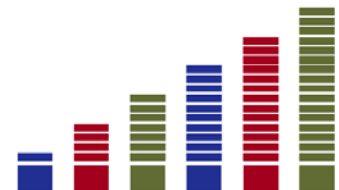
Cultural Observations about Implementation

Even seasoned managers experience trepidation about performance management

- More than any other decision process, performance management requires a significant level of trust between leadership and staff

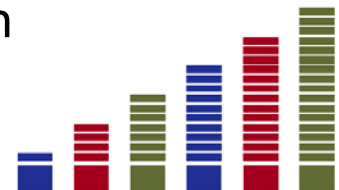
To address concerns, ACS focused on:

- Clarifying the purpose of the effort with ongoing communication by senior leadership (e.g., not personal performance but rather program performance)
- Gathering and incorporating feedback from staff and addressing their concerns as best as possible
- Engaging junior staff in measure definition phase
- Assigning specific action items to specific staff (i.e., direct accountability)
- Maintaining a flexible and iterative approach (learn as we go; if it doesn't work, try something else!)
- Providing an informal / relaxed environment and non-judgmental approach that helps improve the performance of the program while integrating staff in the decision-making process



Lessons Learned

- ACS took a proactive, rather than a reactive, approach to managing performance within the Program
- The use of “Pilot” terminology helped ease tensions within ACS and across the Bureau
- Senior Staff distributed much of the work out to staff
- Senior Staff created a support system to help staff through process
- Knocked down stove-pipes within ACS helped provide impetus for greater Program integration
- Actively sought useful data to manage the Program better
- Brought in and designated internal resources to support efforts
- Sought external resources to build this capability and knowledge within the Program
- These resources were provided direct access to executive ch



Next Steps for Performance Management at ACS

- Continue to refine and iterate ACS Performance Measures as appropriate
- Mature the Performance Management capability
- Document the Performance Management Process
- Initiate an annual Performance Management Framework and Process review (February 2015)
- Continue to engage stakeholders interested in ACS program performance
- Establish an annual review of work done in relationship to the program, drawing from both portfolio management and performance management

