

## Decision on 2011 Census

Embargoed until 10:00am – 25 February 2011

Government Statistician Geoff Bascand and Statistics Minister Maurice Williamson today announced the 8 March 2011 Census will not be held.

Mr Williamson said Mr Bascand has advised him the census could not be successfully completed because of the recent Canterbury earthquake.

The decision has been made after extensive consultation.

“This is not the time to go door to door asking New Zealanders for information when they’re dealing with the aftermath of the earthquake,” Mr Williamson said.

“It’s unthinkable that we would ask this of people. It would be an unfair burden and distraction at a time when they are grieving.”

There has been extensive damage to Statistics New Zealand buildings with significant impacts on census staff.

Mr Bascand said he acknowledges the decision will have consequences for people who use the census data for their work.

“We will now investigate the feasibility of alternative options,” Mr Bascand said.

Geoff Bascand

**25 February 2011**

**Government Statistician**

**END**

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