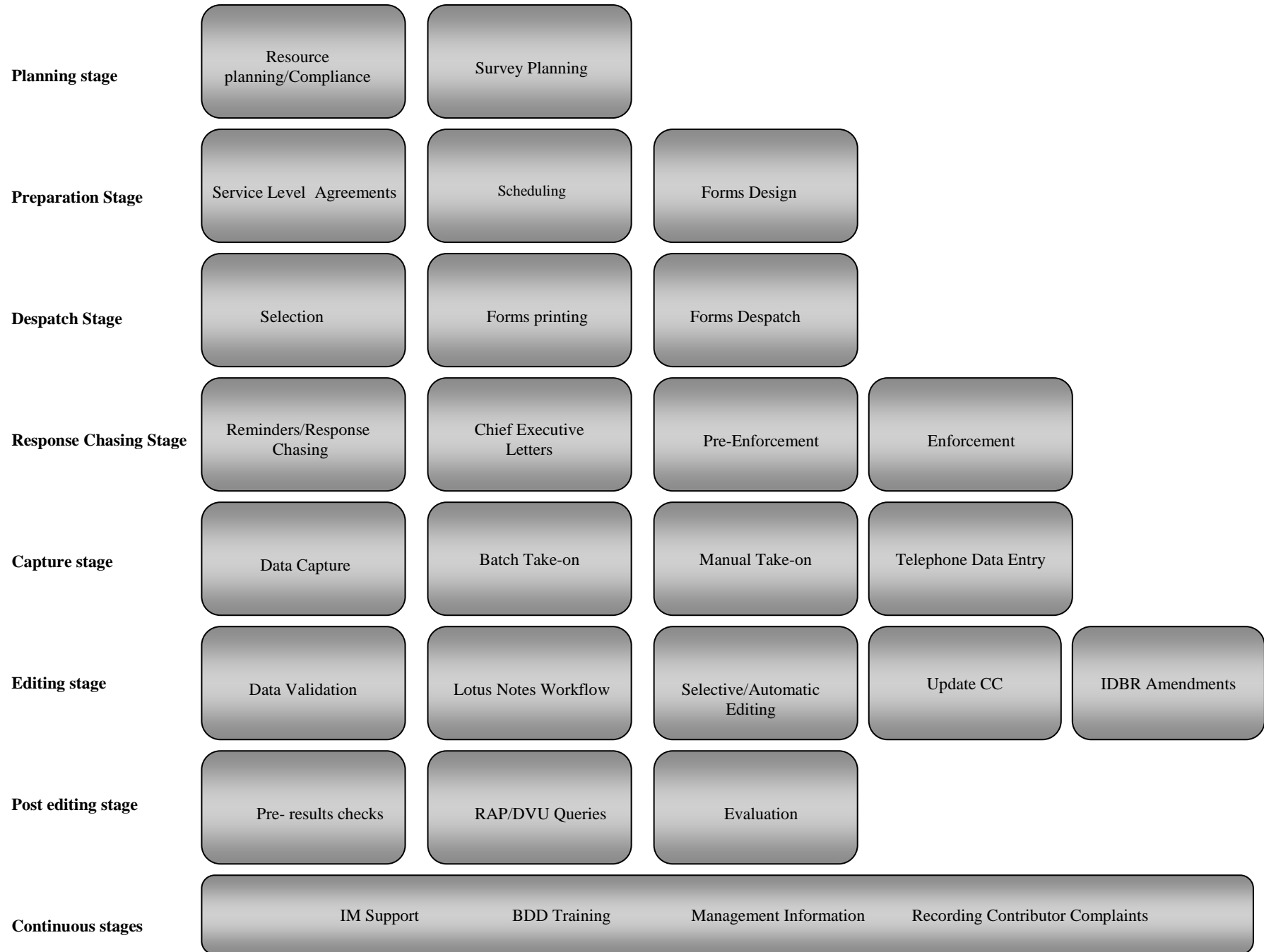
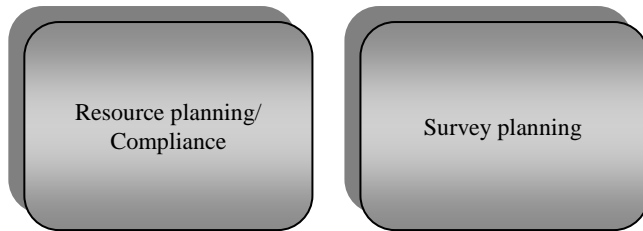


Business Data Division

Generic Process Map



Planning stage



Survey Planning;

Each BDD survey is thoroughly planned incorporating full budgetary agreement with Methodology, Business Register Unit and BDD's customers, taking into account the specific requirements for each of their end users. At this stage, any relevant changes in legislation or requirements by Eurostat, or adjustments arising from triennial or quinquennial reviews are also considered.

Some of BDD's large annual surveys are planned and managed as complete projects. The smaller, quarterly or monthly survey plans are reviewed at the end of their full cycles and updated as necessary.

These processes are carried out in conjunction with areas such as Methodology, Business Register Unit

Compliance;

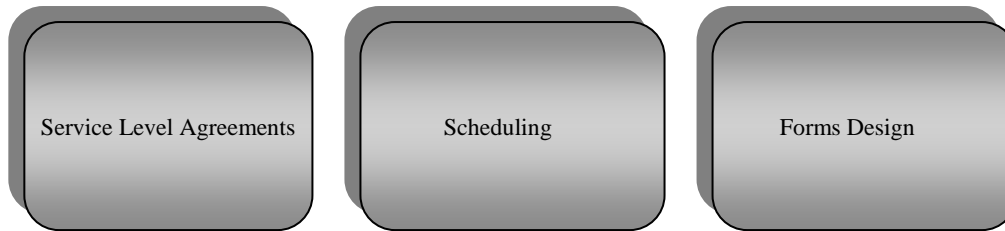
Compliance planning forms an integral part of the Business Planning process in ONS.

The overall compliance costs to businesses are controlled within limits agreed by the Economic Secretary to the Treasury for each calendar year.

ONS produces its own compliance plan to help monitor and control the burden posed on businesses by our requests to supply statistical information.

Compliance costs are measured by estimating the time employers spend completing survey questionnaires.

Preparation stage



Service Level Agreements;

Service Level Agreements are set up with each of BDD's customers and reviewed annually.

The Service Level Agreements cover all aspects of data collection and validation as required by both the RAP customers and the Data Validation Branch (DVB). The agreement also covers areas such as performance targets, processes and quality assurance measures.

With approximately 80 surveys running throughout a year, the timetable and scheduling of printing and despatch of the various forms are controlled via the Lotus Notes Scheduling database.

Survey profiles are prepared detailing their requirements well in advance which are then agreed with the Survey Managers, the Business Register Unit for selection and the Forms Processing Centre for printing and despatch of all the various forms.

Scheduling;

When all parties are in agreement, each profile and process is then scheduled into the Lotus Notes Scheduling database which forms the timetable for printing and despatch of the survey forms.

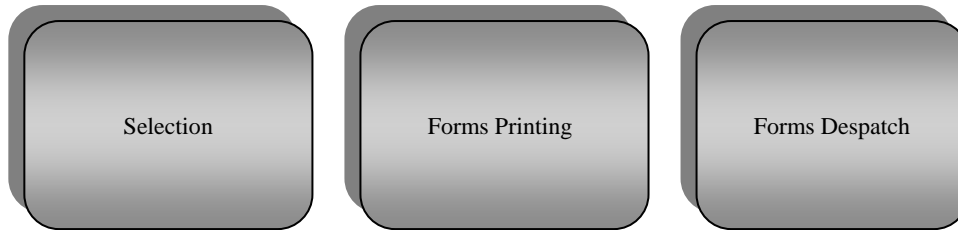
Forms Design;

The majority of ONS' Business survey forms are designed and set up by the Forms Processing Centre's (FPC) Forms Design team using PageMaker and Microsoft Excel software packages. These packages allow for a variety of fonts and type-setting to combine text with logos, icons and signatures.

The Forms Design team maintain a total of 3,500 form pages (overlays) which are combined to create over 1,500 different form types used by all the surveys.

Forms design is handled in association with Methodology Group (MG) and incorporates amendments to existing survey questionnaires. However, all amendments to new and existing questionnaires are discussed in full with the Questionnaire Design Steering Group, whose membership consists of Divisional Directors and members from all areas.

Despatch Stage



Selection;

The majority of respondent selection takes place from the Inter Departmental Business Register before the relevant survey begins its cycle.

Selection criteria such as: employment size band, Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) and Key Respondents are decided by the Results and Publication (RAP) customers in conjunction with Methodology Group. Selection Parameters are then decided, taking into account the constraints of compliance and resources and are fixed by the Inquiry Support team.

Forms Printing;

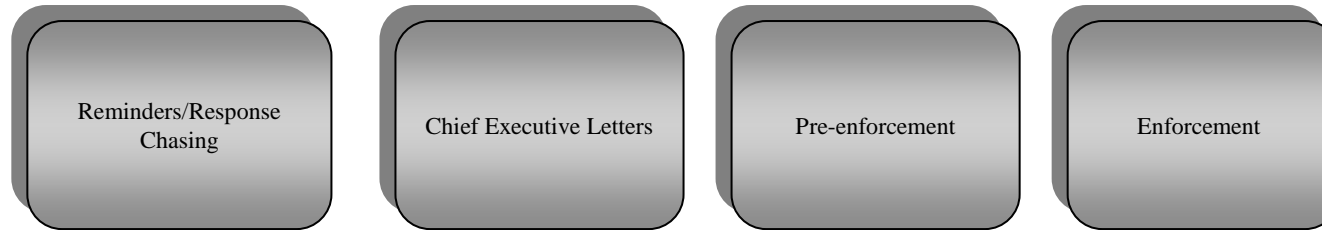
3,500 form overlays are stored on the central Xerox laser printers. The Forms and Print programming team in FPC develop programs and scripts to merge variable data into the reserved spaces on a survey form's overlay to produce the complete survey form in one print pass. The variable data comes from Business data (IDBR), ONS contact details from the PBG People database and selection details from the Lotus Notes Scheduling database. The team merges this data together to produce print files which are interpreted by the central printers.

FPC's printing team currently produce 2.5 million survey forms and letters in a calendar year.

Form's Despatch;

The Output Handling team is responsible for enveloping and despatching the majority of our 2.5 million forms. These forms are enveloped by machine, crated and labelled ready for collection by the Royal mail.

Response Chasing Stage



Reminders / Response Chasing;

Reminder letters are generated, printed and despatched from the Forms Processing Centre (FPC). During selection and printing of the reminder letters, FPC run an automatic extraction file to extract any questionnaires that have been received during the days between reminder selection and reminder print, to avoid any respondents receiving an unnecessary reminder letter.

The DVU staff carry out response chasing by telephone and fax to ensure data is collected according to deadlines and targets set by their RAP customers.

Chief Executive Letters;

Chief Executive Letter (CEL) exercises, urging businesses to complete their survey forms, are regularly carried out with significantly sized responders to ensure the best quality of data possible.

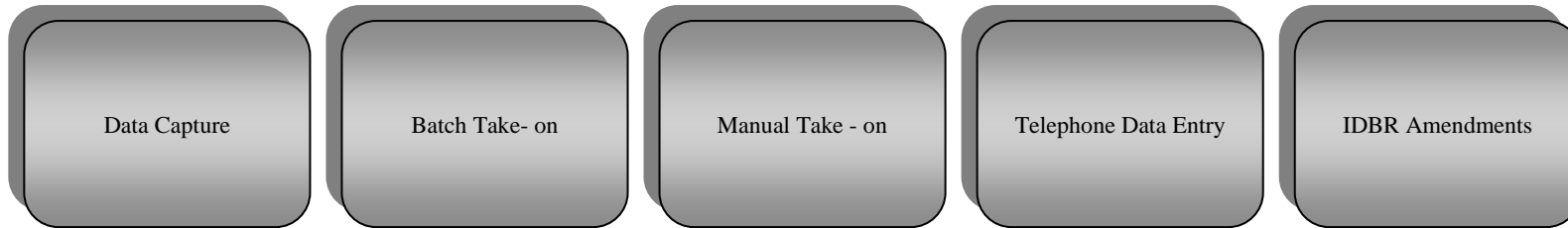
Pre-enforcement;

The Pre-enforcement team supplement the work of the DVU and carry out checks by employment size band at scheduled times throughout the cycle targeting specific surveys. The team then makes any necessary pre-enforcement telephone calls to any non-responders.

Enforcement;

Responders who fail to comply with our requests for data are faced with legal action by the Enforcement team. Any Telephone Data Entry or Special Arrangement (supplying vast amounts of data on disk) responders reaching this stage need to revert back to the paper survey form for any enforcement procedure.

Capture Stage



Data Capture:

Batch take-on;

The majority of questionnaires are grouped together by survey and scanned. Each batch of questionnaires are allocated a unique number which is used to track data around the system. Data is extracted using 'Intelligent Character Recognition' software which recognises hand written text, and 'Optical Character Recognition' which recognises machine printed text. Each evening the file of imaged data is transferred to the Unix systems for 'Batch take-on'. These images are then transferred overnight for the data validation team to view thus removing the need to handle paper forms.

Manual take -on;

Manual take on, whereby questionnaires are received at the desk or figures are taken over the telephone and manually inserted by the data validation team.

Telephone Data Entry (TDE);

Telephone Data Entry, where the respondent keys in their own data directly over the telephone.

IDBR Amendments;

Survey forms returned with amendments on the front page are automatically brought to the attention of the Business Register Unit for updating the IDBR.

A fax indexing system is also available to process ONS questionnaires returned by fax to a main server, then routed via a database directly to the data validation teams.

Editing Stage



Data Validation;

Validation takes place in the Data Validation Unit (DVU) when the data has been receipted and processed.

When loaded onto the Lotus Notes supported data systems, data files are produced which hold failures and suspect data, which are then presented to the DVU staff for further manual validation.

Lotus Notes Workflow;

These systems are supported by Lotus Notes which holds data needing validation and allows the data analyst to use several databases in conjunction with their systems to retrieve and record data validation information.

Automatic Editing;

Automatic editing is the automatic correction of systematic errors in data and can be applied to survey forms taken on via batch, to eliminate part of the need for further validation. The system identifies non-critical errors (such as incorrect addition) and clears or corrects the data accordingly.

Selective Editing;

Selective editing can be applied after validation to some surveys which identifies errors in data and highlights those critically needed for validation.

Update CC;

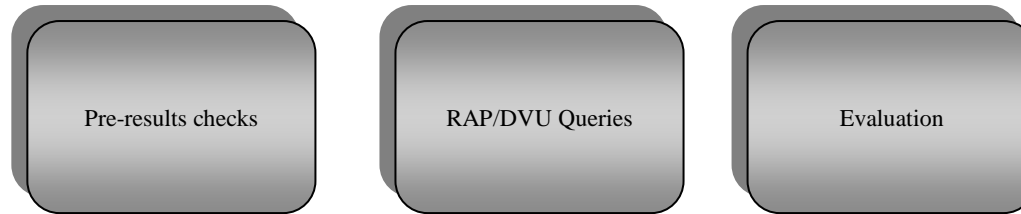
Salient notes are added to the Contributor Comments (CC) database which holds respondent information for all surveys. The CC database also acts as a link to a variety of other Lotus Notes databases, such as recording contributor complaints and register amendments which feed through to the IDBR.

IDBR Amendments;

As part of validation, the DVU staff edit and confirm possible errors directly with respondents. They generate queries with other survey sections and with their RAP customers and also make amendments to the IDBR if necessary. When all errors have been cleared or confirmed, clean data files are passed to the RAP customers for results processing and publication according to the timetables set up in the Schedule.

Congruence with other surveys is also checked, interacting with other systems and investigated if necessary.

Post Editing Stage



Pre-results checks;

Quality prints are produced in order to monitor the quality of the data processed at dis-aggregate level before passing onto the RAP customers.

RAP/DVU Queries;

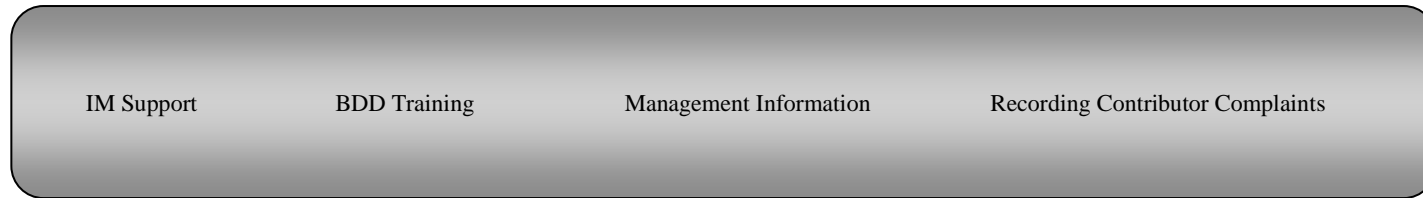
RAP/DVU queries are raised via a Lotus Notes database to confirm any data anomalies.

Evaluation;

Regular pause and review meetings are held to monitor how each survey is performing.

To evaluate BDD's surveys, an End of Survey (EOS) report is produced at the end of each Survey's cycle, which is agreed by the DVU staff and the RAP customers. A Summary of these reports is produced annually to broadcast BDD's achievements throughout the year, identify areas for improvements and publish measures being taken to enhance performance.

Continuous stages throughout a survey cycle



IM Support;

ONS' Information Management team support all the current software systems and packages currently in use.

BDD Training;

The BDD training team runs a Staff Development Program (SDP) for each area which covers all data analyst work. We also maintain a Standards and Guidance database (STaG) which holds guidelines for all BDD processes.

Management Information;

Management Information is collected for all BDD's major surveys on a monthly basis and reported to the Executive and other business areas within ONS. Information is recorded on response rates, clearance targets and quality of data via the number of queries produced.

Recording Contributor Complaints;

Any complaints or correspondence from contributors are documented in the Recording Contributor Complaints (RCC) database and responses issued by the correspondence team.