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**GUAM HOMELESS
POINT-IN-TIME COUNT, 2009**

Submitted to Guam Housing and Urban Renewal Authority

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***Prepared by SMS Research & Marketing Services, Inc.
April, 2009***



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April 16, 2009

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Nora K. Camacho
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Dear Ms. Camacho:

We are pleased to present this report of the results of the Guam Homeless Point-In-Time Count for 2009. We believe the results are an accurate estimate of the number of homeless persons on Guam in January of 2009. We have worked diligently to assure that the data collection and analysis methods we applied are consistent with the definitions and guidelines set forth by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

We have enjoyed working on the project. We found it rewarding to work with your staff, GHURA, and the many volunteers who made the project possible. We look forward to serving Guam in the future.

Sincerely,

James E. Dannemiller
Executive Vice President

SMS Affiliations and Associations:

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our sincere appreciation goes out to the many people who contributed to the 2009 Homeless Point-In-Time Count, giving generously of their time, advice, gifts for the homeless, and other resources to make this study possible. Funding for the 2009 Homeless Point-In-Time Count was provided by the Guam Housing and Urban Renewal Authority. The Guam Homeless Coalition (GHC) provided crucial assistance by recruiting teams, selecting count locations, reviewing and suggesting changes to the survey instrument design, and interpreting the results. Their assistance helped guide SMS Research & Marketing Services, Inc. (SMS) and PCR Environmental, Inc. (PCR) to design and implement a successful Point-In-Time Count.

SMS would like to recognize and thank the following persons, public and private agencies, and organizations for their participation in various stages of the project. They kindly contributed their expertise in dealing with homeless persons, their experience with past point-in-time counts, and their sensitivity to the dignity and conditions of Guam's homeless population. Without their knowledge and guidance, this project would not have been possible.

DONATIONS

Many persons and organizations donated gifts for homeless persons that were distributed on the night of the Point-In-Time Count:

- Triple J. Enterprises, Inc.
- McDonald's Restaurant of Guam
- Calvo's Select Care
- PAY-LESS Supermarkets
- Market Wholesale Distributors
- Pepsi Cola
- Cost U Less
- Continental Airlines
- The Salvation Army Food Bank
- Family Finance Company

COORDINATORS, SURVEYORS AND VOLUNTEERS

A large group of workers contributed their time and expertise to serve as the field staff of the count.

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(continued)

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- James Ursua of *LRC*
- Irma Abwe of *The Salvation Army*
- Liz Guerrero of *The Salvation Army*
- CJ Urquico
- Jesse Catahay of *Catholic Social Service*
- Ruth leon Guerrero of *Department of Labor*

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

Guam Housing and Urban Renewal Authority (GHURA) commissioned the 2009 Point-In-Time (PIT) Count to determine the number of sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons on Guam. The project team was lead by GHURA and the Guam Homeless Coalition (GHC). Contractors engaged to provide design and technical assistance were SMS Research & Marketing Services, Inc. (SMS), a Hawaii firm, and local partner PCR Environmental, Inc. (PCR). GHURA and GHC were responsible for recruiting and assembling count teams, project logistics, conducting the sheltered and unsheltered counts, reviewing and assembling fielding documents, and delivering them to SMS/PCR for analysis. SMS/PCR were responsible for project design, design and formatting of all data collection instruments, training for team leaders and team members, data analysis and estimation, and report preparation.

The Guam Homeless PIT Count was designed to meet the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) requirements for its Continuum of Care (CoC) Homeless Assistance Programs application. SMS/PCR developed project processes and data collection instruments to be consistent with HUD guidelines and definitions.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study were to provide GHURA with the following information related to Guam's sheltered and unsheltered homeless population:

- A count of sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons on Guam;
- An estimate of the number of homeless individuals who live alone and in groups, and
- An estimate of the number of chronic homeless persons according to the HUD definition¹.

¹ HUD's *Guide to Counting Unsheltered Homeless People Revised* (January 2008), p. 19. HUD defines chronic homelessness as an unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition who has either been continuously homeless for a year or more or has had at least four (4) episodes of homelessness in the past three (3) years. A disabling condition is defined as "a diagnosable substance use disorder, serious mental illness, developmental disability, or chronic physical illness or disability, including the co-occurrence of two (2) or more of these conditions." In defining the chronically homeless, the term "homeless" means "a person sleeping in a place not meant for human habitation (e.g., living on the streets) or in an emergency homeless shelter."

METHOD

The Guam Homeless Point-In-Time Count for 2009 was conducted in two parts: a complete enumeration of sheltered homeless persons, and a systematic survey of unsheltered homeless persons located in places where homeless people are known to congregate. The procedures that were used for the two parts are described below. Those sections describe planning and preparation for the counts, recruiting count teams, training the count personnel, survey instrument development, count procedures, and data analysis.

PLANNING AND PREPARATION

An initial meeting was held with GHURA, GHC, and SMS/PCR project principles to discuss the project, refine scope, make initial short-range plans, and assign responsibilities. The group agreed to develop methods and tools that were comparable to previous PIT Guam counts in order to maintain comparability across the years.

The first task was to identify a comprehensive list of sites where Guam's unsheltered homeless persons were known to congregate. The site list was important because it formed the sampling frame for the project. For sheltered homeless persons, the list consisted of all shelters on Guam where homeless persons might be housed, whether or not the shelter was officially designated as a homeless shelter. The list included all of Guam's emergency shelters and transitional housing facilities (see Table 1). For unsheltered homeless counts, the process of identifying sites where homeless people congregate began from list of regions used for the Guam Homeless Point-In-Time Count for 2007. That list defined the four districts for the counts (North, East, South and West), the villages within those four regions, and many individual sites within each district.

Table 1. Regions and Villages for Unsheltered Homeless Counts, 2009

Region	Villages
North	Dededo and Yigo
East	Tamuning, Tumon, Harmon, Mongmong-Toto-Maite, Agana, Agana Heights, Sinajana, Piti, Asan, and Maina
South	Agat, Santa Rita, Umatac, Merizo, and Inarajan
West	Yona, Chalan Pago, Ordot, Barrigada, and Mangilao

The initial list of regions was updated by GHURA and GHC. Their suggestions were based on advice from agencies providing outreach and services to Guam's homeless people. GHC's list was then presented to team leaders at the initial training for their review and comment. A revised list that incorporated the team leaders' suggestions was produced for presentation at the team member training the following day. Feedback was solicited, which resulted in

delivering a revised list. A few minor changes were made to the list of count sites during the assembly of teams and generation of team assignments by GHURA and GHC. By the night of the PIT Count, a total of 113 sites had been identified. The final list of regions, villages, and sites is presented as Appendix C.

ASSEMBLING PIT COUNT TEAMS

PIT staff was recruited by GHURA and GHC. Initially, 31 team leaders and 108 surveyors and volunteers were recruited. Over the course of the month preceding counts day, team leaders had many responsibilities such as attending planning meetings, organizing staff, consulting on sample design, recommending sites to be covered in their region, designing the within-region fielding process, attending a training session, assuring that staff members from their sites were trained and informed of fielding schedules, and taking an active role in the PIT Count data collection. GHURA organized teams with the assistance of team leaders. Each team was made up of three to five people, depending on the nature of the terrain and sites to be covered. Teams consisted of one team leader and a varying number of surveyors and volunteers. During the actual counts process, the duties of each team member were as follows:

- **Team Leader:** A team leader was expected to keep the team informed and to make sure they had the proper training and materials on counts day. On site, the team leader's primary duty was to count the people at each site and then start the survey process. In addition, team leaders were responsible for the movement of each team from site to site, maintaining the schedule for the night, completing counts sheets for each site covered, and delivering the team's counts materials back to GHURA.
- **Surveyors:** A surveyor's duty was to conduct surveys with people at each site.
- **Volunteers:** Volunteers dispersed gifts to homeless persons at each site.

TRAINING

Training schedules were developed by GHURA and GHC. Training content, materials, and presentation were developed by SMS/PCR. The first training session for team leaders was conducted on January 12, 2009. It was attended by 31 of 33 team leaders². During the four-hour session, team leaders were introduced to the purpose and overall design of the project, received and discussed the Counts Sheets used to record what happened at each site, and reviewed the survey instrument question-by-question. Some changes were made to project materials as a result of feedback obtained from team leaders at that session.

The first training for team members and volunteers was conducted by SMS/PCR on January 13, 2009 at Salvation Army Guam Corps. A total of 101 team members and one team leader were trained at that session. During the four-hour training session, team members were given an overview of the purpose of the project, introduced to the overall design and procedures, trained on safety, received a question-by-question training on the survey instrument, reviewed the materials list, and practiced the use of the survey instrument. Minor changes were made to the survey instrument to incorporate feedback from team members.

² The other team leaders were trained at subsequent training sessions or by GHC staff as needed.

On January 27, 2009, a third training session was offered for new members of the project team, both team leaders/members and anyone who wanted refresher training. The content of that training was identical to the second training session.

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

The survey instrument was prepared by SMS/PCR. The initial content was designed after the instrument used in 2007. It was shortened to some extent to include only the items required for HUD counts data. The content of the survey was revised several times during the pre-counts period. Changes occurred as a result of critical reviews by GHURA and GHC staff. These consisted of suggestions from team leaders/members during training sessions and facilitation of fielding requirements during scheduling process. The final survey instrument and training instructions are presented in Appendices A and B.

COUNTS PROCEDURES

When project design, team assembly, instrument development, and training were completed, the project was ready for counts day. In the weeks preceding counts day, GHURA and GHC assembled the materials and completed the logistical planning for the event. They were also responsible for developing the counts schedule and volunteer assignments for the sheltered and unsheltered counts. This was no small task. Putting together 33 teams of three to five people to cover 113 counts sites required a comprehensive understanding of the project purpose, the ability to assign personnel who were available for specific hours and locations, and the patience to accommodate changes in staffing and scheduling that were standard parts of the counts scheduling.

On counts day, teams assembled at least an hour before start time. They received their materials, reviewed the schedule for the day, and prepared to set out. Each team was assigned a set of sites to cover. At each site, a head count was performed that included every person within the designated boundaries of the site. All individuals present were eligible to be interviewed. Team members were not required to make any subjective decisions as to whether an individual was homeless or non-homeless. The survey instrument gathered data necessary to separate homeless from non-homeless persons according to HUD definitions.

When the site counts were completed, surveyors began interviewing persons present at the site using the survey instrument. If the person was incoherent or otherwise unable to complete an interview, or if the person refused to be interviewed, the interview sheet was marked accordingly and the interviewer moved on. Each interviewer recorded the number of persons approached who did not complete the survey and the reason it was not completed.

One person was interviewed from each family or group of persons encountered. Persons who were usually a part of the family or group interviewed, but who were not present at the time of the interview, were not included in the group size reported on the form. This was done to guard against duplication of persons who might be interviewed at another location. Team members were instructed to note absent group members in the comments section of the survey form. Respondents 13 years or older were surveyed unless they were unaccompanied minors.

In addition to the counts teams, one person known as "Central" served as the reporting and control base for the entire counts process. Team leaders checked in with Central prior to starting the counts and reported the team size and composition, weather and other environmental concerns, and the start time. Throughout the day, Central was notified of any delays in progress or miscellaneous problems. Several teams completed their work early and were routed by Central to areas where progress was slower.

ANALYSIS PROCEDURES

This section of the report describes the procedures used to analyze the survey data for the Guam Homeless Point-In-Time Count data for 2009. Results of the count are presented in the following section of the report.

For this count a total of 1,071 persons were encountered at 113 sites on January 30, 2009³, and a total of 280 surveys were completed. The first step in the analysis was to eliminate persons who were not part of Guam's unsheltered homeless population as defined by HUD. Those included: (a) persons identified in the survey as not being homeless (those who reported that they would sleep at home or in another place intended for human habitation on counts night), and (b) sheltered homeless persons (those who intended to sleep in a public shelter that night). The process was accomplished by reviewing survey data and eliminating cases as in (a) or (b) above. That process identified 906 unsheltered homeless persons found in places where homeless people congregate on January 30, 2009.

The second step in the analysis identified homeless persons as either: (a) members of family groups with children under 18 years of age; (b) as unaccompanied individuals, or (c) persons in families without children. This process was applied to both the sheltered and unsheltered homeless survey data.

The third step in the analysis plan expanded the survey data to the entire population of persons present at the sites. That is, the characteristics of homeless groups and individuals were applied to the total number of groups and persons interviewed, plus those who were not interviewed because they were either unwilling or unable to be interviewed on counts day.

The fourth step determined the number of chronic homeless persons as defined by HUD. That was done using survey data to identify persons who were either: (a) homeless for more than one year in their current homeless episode; (2) had been homeless more than four times in the past three years, or (c) indicated that they had experienced at least one of the chronic health conditions⁴ covered in the survey form. Some survey forms had missing data for one or more of these items. Counts for chronic homelessness were reported to match the total number of sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons on Guam on January 30, 2009.

³ No count sheets were submitted for three sites, and no persons were encountered at 42 sites.

⁴ Including severe conditions such as diabetes or hypertension; physical disability; chronic alcohol abuse; chronic drug abuse; schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, major depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, or other severe mental illness; chronic illnesses such as HIV, AIDS, or Hepatitis, or being a victim of domestic abuse.

Procedures for Unsheltered Homeless Counts

Methods used to conduct the unsheltered homeless point-in-time counts were similar to those used for the sheltered counts. The study design was prepared by the SMS/PCR team according to methods suggest by HUD. The survey instrument was developed by SMS/PCR. The relatively small number of shelters to be covered in the counts procedure did not require teams, so data collection was conducted by staff from the Salvation Army Guam Corps. The list of shelters covered in 2009 is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Emergency Shelters and Transitional Housing

Emergency Shelters	Transitional Housing
Catholic Social Service, Alee Family Violence Shelter for Children	Catholic Social Service, The Liheng Program
Catholic Social Service, Alee Family Violence Shelter	Dept. of Mental Health & Substance Abuse, Guma Ifil
Catholic Social Service, Guma San Jose	Elim Pacific Ministries, The Oasis
Sanctuary, Inc., COED Emergency Shelter	The Salvation Army, Lighthouse Recovery Center
	Sanctuary, Inc., Transitional Living Program

This list was shorter than in previous Guam Sheltered Homeless Point-In-Time Counts. In 2008, the Mary Claire Home and the Independent Group Home, formerly operated by Guma Mami, Inc. changed hands. These two shelters are still in operation under a new contract, but no longer offer homeless shelter services.

The sheltered homeless counts were conducted during five days immediately following counts day. The counts were collected for the night of January 30, 2009. They were comparable to the unsheltered counts and do not duplicate the counts. GHC delivered the survey materials to the shelter administrators who gathered the required data and delivered them to GHC at Salvation Army Guam Corps. Salvation Army staff tallied the results and delivered them in tabular format to SMS/PCR for analysis.

Analysis was somewhat simpler than for the sheltered homeless counts. All homeless persons assigned to emergency and transitional shelters were homeless according to HUD definitions. Tallies were summarized by the number of homeless persons by type, the number of children involved, the number of veterans, and the number of chronic homeless persons.

GUAM UNSHELTERED HOMELESS POPULATION

UNSHELTERED HOMELESS COUNT

Results of the Guam Homeless Point-In-Time Count 2009 are shown in Table 3. The total number of unsheltered homeless persons encountered was 906. The analysis found that 567 of those were persons residing in 136 families with children. The remaining 339 were either unaccompanied individuals, members of families, or groups with no children.

Table 3. Unsheltered Homeless Individuals and Families

Region	Families with Children	Persons in Families with Children	Unaccompanied Individuals and Persons in Families with no Children	Total
North	81	306	231	537
East	23	138	13	151
South	8	31	15	46
West	24	92	80	172
Total	136	567	339	906

The largest concentration of unsheltered homeless persons was found in the North Region of Guam (537). Its rural areas also had the largest percentages of families and relatively low percentages of unaccompanied individuals and persons in groups with no children. The East (151) and West (172) regions had similar distributions of homeless persons. The West region had fewer persons in families with children and more unaccompanied persons or persons in groups without children (80). The South regions had 46 persons classified as unsheltered homeless on counts day in 2009. We note that there were no unaccompanied minors encountered and surveyed during this PIT count.

HOMELESS VETERANS COUNT

Table 4 shows the survey results for the number of veterans found among the unsheltered homeless population of Guam in 2009. Only two percent of the 906 unsheltered homeless persons counted were identified as veterans. It is important to note that, because the question used to determine veteran status was asked of only one member of each group, the veteran status of additional members was not determined. It is likely that the number of unsheltered homeless veterans may be as high as 4.6 percent of Guam's unsheltered homeless population⁵.

⁵ Based on extrapolation of interviewee characteristics to the entire population of homeless adults.

Table 4. Homeless Veterans on Guam, 2009

Region	Unsheltered Homeless Persons	Homeless Veterans	Percent Homeless Veterans
North	537	9	2%
East	151	5	3%
South	46	0	0%
West	172	2	1%
Total	906	16	2%

HOMELESS CHILDREN

Overall, 37 percent of the unsheltered homeless persons on Guam were children under the age of 18. Further, 216 of these 337 homeless children are aged five or younger. The highest concentration of homeless children was found in Northern Guam (231), with nearly three-quarters of this group being five years old or younger (170). The Western region followed with the second highest number of homeless children (79). This is consistent with findings from the previous PIT Counts.

Table 5. Homeless Children on Guam, 2009

	Unsheltered Homeless Persons	Total Homeless Children (17 or younger)	Percent Homeless Children (17 or younger)	Homeless Children Age 5 or Younger	Percent Homeless Children Age 5 or Younger
North	537	231	43%	170	32%
East	151	12	8%	7	5%
South	46	15	33%	5	11%
West	172	79	46%	34	20%
Total	906	337		216	

CHRONIC HOMELESS COUNT

Based on HUD's definition, a chronically homeless person is an unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition, who has either been continuously homeless for at least a year or has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years. A disabling condition is defined as "a diagnosable substance use disorder, serious mental illness, developmental disability, or chronic physical illness or disability, including the co-occurrence of two or more of these conditions." In defining the chronically homeless, the term "homeless" means "a person sleeping in a place not meant for human habitation (e.g., living on the streets)

or in an emergency homeless shelter." Using survey data to identify persons with those characteristics, the number of chronically homeless individuals on Guam was calculated and is presented here in Table 6.

Table 6. Chronic Homeless Persons on Guam, 2009

	Unsheltered Homeless Persons	Chronic Homeless Persons	Percent Chronic Homeless
North	537	36	7%
East	151	15	10%
South	46	5	11%
West	172	12	7%
Total	906	68	

About eight percent of all unsheltered homeless persons in the 2009 Guam PIT Count were identified as chronically homeless. The highest number of individuals (36) was located in Northern Guam. The Southern region accounted for the smallest number of chronically homeless persons (5).

The definition of chronic homelessness and the method by which it was measured present certain limitations on these data that merit comment.

- First, the HUD definition of the term "chronic homeless person" excludes all persons who appeared in groups (family or unrelated) on the night of the PIT Count. Those persons were not asked the questions used to identify chronic homelessness. It is likely that at least some persons who appeared in groups were chronically homeless. In this sense, the figures reported here will under-represent the incidence of chronic homelessness in Guam in 2009.
- Second, the process of identifying the chronically homeless requires that survey respondents identify themselves as affected by one or more of the following conditions: "severe conditions such as diabetes or hypertension; physical disability; chronic alcohol abuse; chronic drug abuse; schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, major depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, or other severe mental illness; chronic illnesses such as HIV, AIDS, or Hepatitis, or being a victim of domestic abuse." These are clearly very sensitive issues, and some respondents may have under-reported them in the survey.
- Third, the survey question used in 2009 used the "READ LIST" format, meaning that the entire list was read through one time. Then the respondent was asked if they had experienced any of those conditions in the last three years, without specifying which condition or conditions had been experienced. The Guam Homeless Coalition elected to use the "READ LIST" format in order to protect the privacy of persons being surveyed. The alternative would be to ask each item separately. Most survey research practitioners agree that more detailed question formats result in more accurate reporting. The method we chose this year tends to underestimate chronic homelessness to some extent.

GUAM SHELTERED HOMELESS POPULATION

SHELTERED HOMELESS PERSONS ON GUAM

Results of the Guam Sheltered Homeless Point-In-Time Count 2009 are shown in Table 7. Similar to the situation for the unsheltered homeless population, Guam's sheltered homeless population includes large numbers of families and children. The total number of sheltered homeless persons enumerated was 182. The analysis found that 130 of those were persons residing in families with children (72 percent). Less than one percent of the sheltered homeless population (7 persons) lived in groups without children. The remaining 45 sheltered homeless persons (25 percent) were unaccompanied individuals.

Table 7. Sheltered Homeless

	Emergency Shelters	Transitional Housing	Total
1. Number of groups with dependent children	13	19	32
2. Number of persons in groups with dependent children	43	87	130
3. Number of groups without dependent children	1	2	3
4. Number of persons in groups without children	2	5	7
5. Number of single persons in shelters	22	23	45
Total (lines 2, 4 and 5)	67	115	182

Guma San Jose had the largest concentration of emergency shelter homeless persons and accounted for 67 percent of all emergency sheltered homeless persons on Guam. Among the transitional housing facilities, Catholic Social Service's Liheng Program had the largest population (92 persons) and accounted for 80 percent of all transitional housing homeless.

CHANGE IN SHELTERED AND UNSHELTERED HOMELESS 2007 AND 2009

Table 8 presents results of the Guam PIT Counts of sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons conducted in 2007 and 2009. Based upon the counts below, overall homelessness has decreased by 14 percent since 2007. The number of homeless persons in shelters was down six percent, and unsheltered homelessness decreased by 15 percent during the same two-year period.

Table 8. Total Homeless

	2007 Count	2009 Count	Count Change	Percent Change
Unsheltered Homeless	1,067	906	-161	-15%
Sheltered Homeless	194	182	-12	-6%
Total Homeless	1,261	1,088	-175	-14%

The eight percent decrease in the sheltered homeless population was the result of a decrease in the shelter inventory. Two small shelters changed operators in 2008 and no longer offered services to homeless persons. The drop in the sheltered population is almost exactly accounted for by that decrease in inventory.

Table 9 presents unsheltered homeless counts for Guam and each of the four regions in January of 2007 and January of 2009.

Table 9. Regional Changes of Unsheltered Homeless

	2007 PIT Count		2009 PIT Count		Percentage Point Change: 2007 to 2009
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	
North	476	45%	537	59%	+14
East	266	25%	151	17%	-8
South	49	5%	46	5%	0
West	276	26%	172	19%	-7
Total	1,067		906		161

There were 161 fewer unsheltered homeless persons on Guam in 2009 than were identified two years earlier. Counts for the North Region were 14 points higher than in 2007. Counts for all other regions were down from 2007. The East and West Regions accounted for most of the decline, down seven or eight points between 2007 and 2009. The South Region, down just three persons between 2007 and 2009, accounted for about five percent of Guam's unsheltered homeless population in both years.

The question remains whether the change in Guam's unsheltered homeless population over the last two years is an accurate measure of the condition of the population, or if it might be due to differences in counts methods.

An overview of housing and economic conditions on Guam would lead one to expect a slight rise in the unsheltered population. The number of homeless shelter spaces on Guam did not increase in the last two years, so any change in homelessness would be registered entirely among the unsheltered homeless group. While the economy showed no major downturn before late 2008, housing prices on Guam have been rapidly increasing since 2004. The pre-2007 years showed much greater increases in housing prices than have been evidenced during the last two years. That would suggest that the increase in homelessness between 2004 and 2007 would be many times greater than the increase between 2007 and 2009. Thus, we would have expected the unsheltered homeless population on Guam would be about the same as or a few points higher in 2009.

Table 8 indicates that the unsheltered population did not remain the same or increase slightly, but rather that it decreased by 15 percent. That prompted an in-depth evaluation of count project methods. There are two explanations for the discrepancy. First, it is possible that the 2007 PIT Count overestimated homelessness on Guam. Without detailed analysis of the fielding results and survey data available, we cannot make any definitive statement on that proposition. We were able to gather anecdotal information from team leaders and team members who participated in the 2007 PIT Count. That information suggests: (1) that some overcount may have occurred⁶; and (2) that there may have been some undercounting in the northern villages⁷. We did not hear any comments that suggested otherwise. Nevertheless, that information provides anecdotal evidence only.

The other possibility is that the 2009 Counts produced an undercount of the unsheltered population. Here we have somewhat better information. The 2009 count shows a substantial number of cases in which homeless persons surveyed indicated that members of their group were not present during the interviews conducted on counts day. Additionally, several of the sites found to be vacant on the day of the count were visited in the morning, when homeless persons generally become more mobile. Had those sites been covered in the evening, additional homeless persons might have been identified. We were not able to make accurate estimates of the impact of that problem because staff members differed in the extent to which they reported the issue⁸. Even without exact figures, the anecdotal evidence suggests that, if any inaccuracy exists in the 2009 counts, it would be an undercount rather than an overcount.

⁶ Former PIT Count workers reported during training sessions that they included persons who had lost their homes as were currently doubled-up with family members and friends (hidden homeless). Others reported that they included persons who were residing in substandard housing without what was meant by "substandard". One reported estimating the number of homeless persons in an encampment without actually counting them. Personal assessment of homeless status was permitted in the 2007 methodology. As a result, overcounting is a possibility for that year.

⁷ The Northern villages of Guam have particularly difficult terrain with respect to homelessness, and contain the lion's share of Guam's homeless people. Anecdotal comment from former PIT Count workers suggested that they could have missed some homeless persons in the jungle. More relevant, the North Region team did not complete its list of sites in 2007. It is possible then that the region was undercounted.

⁸ Some teams reported many such incidents; many reported none. We cannot rule out the possibility that some team members were less diligent in reporting missing members. That issue should be addressed in the future.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE PIT COUNTS

Overall, we believe the Guam Homeless Point-In-Time Count, 2009 project worked well, and included the majority of sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons on Guam on the evening of January 30, 2009. We are grateful and honored to have had the opportunity to work with GHURA and the Guam Homeless Coalition in developing this challenging and important project, and it was a special privilege to work with the dedicated, compassionate, and skilled personnel who served as team leaders and volunteers on counts day.

The project plan and procedures were sound and consistent with HUD requirements for successful homeless PIT counts. The unsheltered count procedures seem to have worked particularly well, and sheltered counts procedures, while less thoroughly documented, seem to have been equally successful.

Nevertheless, every project offers new insights into the process of continuous improvement of PIT Count procedures. We know that GHURA and GHC conduct debriefings among PIT count staff to identify things that worked well and procedures that can be improved. It is in that spirit that SMS/PCR has developed a set of recommendations for future PIT count projects.

1. Monitor Utility

The 2009 Guam Homeless PIT Count was slightly different from those of the past. Those differences occurred largely at the recommendation of SMS/PCR. Regardless of the result to this point, the Count process can best be evaluated by its utility to GHURA, the GHC, and other members of the homeless services community on Guam. We hope that GHURA will pass on the SMS/PCR comments and criticisms of the 2009 PIT count and this report. We will assemble those and attempt to develop better programs in the future.

2. Improve the Survey Instruments

We have noted several issues with the survey data throughout this report. The three sections below summarize those points and offer recommendations for improvement.

2a. Develop a Method to Account for Persons Not Present

HUD regulations specify the Point-in-Time counts should record only those persons who are present at the time the counts are conducted. Persons who are usually part of the homeless group or family being interviewed, and who will be joining the group to sleep in the same unsheltered place on counts night, are excluded from the count. The rationale for the rule is that the missing homeless persons may be counted at another location.

The comments recorded on site control sheets and unsheltered homeless survey forms suggest that this is a significant issue on Guam. A number of the interview forms for 2009 had some indication that other members of the family or group were missing at the time of the interview, especially if the interviews were conducted early in the day (see item 4, below). Comments of this type were not required of the counts staff, and therefore we have not attempted any estimate of the extent of undercounting this may have caused. Nevertheless, it seems clear that the issue requires some attention.

We recommend that a set of items be added to the survey instrument to gather accurate data on the number of missing family or group members (and their location) in all interviews. Separate analyses of these data can be used to estimate the number of missed homeless persons without contaminating the counts procedures required by HUD.

2b. Develop a Method to Improve Chronic Homeless Estimates

We have noted earlier that HUD's definition of chronic homeless persons, while providing comparable data across all U.S. CoCs, may not be the most useful measure from a policy perspective. The procedure for measuring chronic homelessness combines health and duration measures, excludes all persons in families or groups, and involves asking sensitive health condition questions.

We recommend that the survey instrument be changed to ask chronic homelessness questions of persons in groups, and that analysis procedures be altered to allow estimation of homeless persons based on duration of current homeless episode and frequency of episodes only. Again, analysis techniques can be applied separately to the data to produce both the required HUD measure and a measure of chronic homelessness that will be more useful in developing homeless services policy.

2c. Improve Veterans Counts

The 2009 Guam Homeless Point-In-Time survey instrument included a question that asked respondents if they were veterans. It did not measure veteran status among other adults in the family or group being interviewed. The results, even as adjusted in this report, are not the most useful for those who must plan for homeless veteran services.

We recommend that the questions be changed to gather veteran status from all family or group members.

3. Reduce Paperwork

Considerable effort went into designing forms and survey instruments that would be easy to use and not place unwarranted burden on the team leaders/members. During data analysis, SMS noticed that many forms were incorrectly completed, and that the problem could be addressed by further simplifying and combining forms. We recommend that forms be reviewed and revised to reduce confusion and paper work.

4. Consider Evening-Only Counts

The unsheltered homeless counts were conducted between 7:00 am and 9:00 pm on January 30, 2009. It was generally agreed at planning and training sessions that it was best to conduct the counts during the evening hours when homeless persons would most likely be present at the sites. Sites were selected because homeless persons were known to congregate there and to sleep. In practice, some team members were not available during evening hours, others felt strongly that interviewing during morning or other daytime hours would be most effective. In some cases, areas where homeless persons congregate were thought to be unsafe after dark. Some area schedules were assigned to daytime hours to accommodate the needs of those team members. Our review of comments on site control sheets and interviewing forms suggested that counts conducted during daytime hours were more likely to include group members who were usually at that location, but were currently away from the site to work, shop,

or gather resources. In this manner, daytime counts seem to be less accurate than evening counts.

We recommend that, in the future, GHURA and GHC consider scheduling counts during evening hours only. This may require additional time and effort to recruit team members who are willing to serve during the evening hours, and/or providing for extra security for some teams.

5. Tighten Up Fielding Procedures

We have noted earlier in this report that some surveys contained missing data, that some teams did not complete site control forms, and that those forms also included missing data. A substantial effort was required to clean data and prepare it for analysis. We do not believe that the condition of the data seriously affect homeless counts this year. But we do have some recommendations for improving counts procedures.

5a. Improve Training Procedures

Good data begins with good training. The counts were conducted by volunteers; people with the willingness and ability to do a job for which they have not been trained. Whenever we observe counts procedures that were not properly observed, relatively large amounts of missing data on forms, and inconsistencies in the data, we need to first review the training procedures. Additional evidence that training may not have been as effective as GHURA and GHC had expected was available in Guam newspaper interviews with staff during the counts. Their comments suggested that at least some of them had an inaccurate grasp of the purpose and intent of the PIT Counts, and were unsure about specific procedures.

We recommend that the management team (GHURA, GHC and the consulting contractor) review the 2009 training procedures and develop more effective training methods. It may be necessary to add another training session or to lengthen the duration of trainings. More important, the training should concentrate more heavily on hands-on experience with the process, role playing, and exercises in which they actually complete survey and site control forms.

5b. Improve Scheduling Procedures

The intent here is not to level any criticism against the 2009 scheduling team. They did an excellent job in a short time with few resources. The evidence suggests that they did a notably better job than in the past. Schedules were more effective in the field. Fewer in-field adjustments were required, and most important, the 2009 Guam Homeless Point-in-Time Counts teams completed their scheduled task for the first time in six years.

But they reported some instances of reassignments due to no-shows, and we have noted the problem that may result from scheduling work according to the needs and interest of the team members.

We recommend that the scheduling process be improved by starting earlier and over-recruiting at the beginning. The extra time and larger number of volunteers will make scheduling easier and place greater emphasis on scheduling for effective coverage of each site rather than for the convenience of the volunteers.

5c. Improve Monitoring Techniques

In pursuit of more accurate reporting in the field, we also suggest some in-field monitoring. Our original proposal included providing SMS/PCR services in the field on counts day. The primary purpose of that service was on-site review to avoid some of the minor issues we see in the data. Missing forms, missing data and the inability to match site control forms and number of completed interviews exactly suggests tighter control on paper work may improve counts.

In the future, we recommend that contractor services be retained to monitor counts procedures in the field.

5d. Closer Attention to Sheltered Homeless Counts

The sheltered homeless counts were conducted three days after the counts day. While this is a serious problem in terms of following procedures, we do not feel that it seriously affected the 2009 counts on Guam. Nevertheless, counts procedures will be more consistent with HUD regulations if we make sure they are carried out on the same day as the unsheltered counts.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A: SURVEY INSTRUMENT

GUAM HOMELESS POINT-IN-TIME COUNT, 2009

Interviewer: _____

Region: _____

Time: _____

Site: _____

Hello, my name is _____ and I am a volunteer. We are doing a short survey for the annual homeless count, and your responses will help fund homeless services throughout Guam. All of your answers will be confidential. May I ask you a few questions?

1. Have you or anyone with you been interviewed tonight?

☐ Yes $\Rightarrow$ THANK & END ☐ No

2. Including yourself, how many people are in the group you are living with?

--	--

[If person is not alone, ask question 3]

3. How many people in your group are under 18 years old?

--	--

[If anyone is under 18, ask question 4]

4. And how many of those are age 5 or younger?

--	--

5. [Ask if necessary] Are you 18 years or older?

☐ Yes ☐ No

6. Where did you sleep last night? Did you sleep...

- ☐ Outdoors ☐ Other indoor shelter
☐ In a hotel/motel ☐ In a public shelter
☐ In a home

7. Where will you sleep tonight? Will you sleep...

- ☐ Outdoors ☐ Other indoor shelter
☐ In a hotel/motel ☐ In a public shelter
☐ In a home

[If Question 7 is Home or Public Shelter, THANK & END]

Notes: _____

8. Are you a veteran?

☐ Yes ☐ No

9. How many times have you been homeless in the past three years? Is this your...

- ☐ 1st time ☐ 4th
☐ 2nd ☐ 5th or more
☐ 3rd

10. How long have you been homeless this time?

- ☐ Less than 1 month ☐ 1 to 2 years
☐ 1 to 3 months ☐ 3 to 4 years
☐ 4 to 6 months ☐ 5 to 10 years
☐ 7 to 12 months ☐ 11 years or more

11. Have you been diagnosed with or received treatment for any of the following conditions in the last 3 years? In order to protect your privacy on medical conditions, please listen to the whole list before you answer with a Yes or No. Have you had...

- Severe conditions such as diabetes or hypertension
- Physical disability
- Chronic alcohol abuse
- Chronic drug abuse
- Schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, major depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, or other severe mental illness
- Chronic illnesses such as HIV, AIDS, or Hepatitis
- Victim of domestic abuse

... in the last 3 years?

☐ Yes ☐ No

¹ Outdoors includes any place not under a roof: beaches, parks, anyplace open to the elements, temporary shelters such as tents, lean-to's, etc. and those in natural shelters including caves.

² Includes all other indoor shelters not meant for human habitation: sleeping in abandoned buildings, in public buildings other than shelters, or other buildings not intended for human habitation, including churches, schools, etc.

³ In a hotel/motel includes hotels, motels, and any other temporary residence of short-term rent.

⁴ In a public shelter is for homeless persons, whether in a group or single. It does not include staying in a private residence either one's own or one that belongs to someone else, or staying in a building that is not meant for residence.

⁵ In a home includes one's own home, that of a friend or family member, or a rented room. It does not include staying in a hotel, hostel, or other temporary residence of short-term rent.

⁶ Veteran is anyone who has ever served 6 months or more on active duty in the armed forces

[BACK OF SURVEY]

APPENDIX B: SURVEY INSTRUMENT TRAINING INSTRUCTIONS

The survey instrument was designed primarily to parallel HUD's definition for chronic homelessness, provide data on the sample of the persons at each site, and eliminate duplication within groups of homeless living together. The surveyors were trained with the following instructions:

- The instrument allows for a standardized set of questions to be asked to ensure reliability in measurement.
 - Questions are not to be reworded or condensed during administration. The questions are to be read verbatim in order to limit misinterpretations for respondents.
- The number of surveys conducted is determined by the number of individuals counted within the boundaries of each site.
- The surveying process will be initiated with a random starting point, and every fifth person will be interviewed.
 - If the person asks to be interviewed outside of the sequence, surveyors must kindly turn down the request.
 - If the fifth person is not lucid, the sixth person will be asked to do the survey.
- If someone else from the respondent's group participated in a survey, terminate and save the current respondent's survey.
- Persons under 18 do not answer questions relating to chronic homelessness.
- Only persons sleeping outdoors or in another indoor shelter not fit for human habitation answer questions relevant to chronic homelessness⁹, which includes the length of homelessness, episodes of homelessness, and disabling conditions.

⁹ During analysis, only unaccompanied adults were included in calculations of chronic homelessness (adults living in groups were excluded).

APPENDIX C: REGIONS, VILLAGES, AND SITE NAMES

This list presents 113 sites visited for counts and surveys in which individuals and groups where homeless people were known to congregate.

East Guam	Tamuning	St. Anthony's Church
		Marks
		Ben Franklin
		Tamuning Community Center
		Cost-U-Less
		Hafa Adai Theatres
		Kim Chee Store
		Hong Kong Restaurant
	Tumon	Tin Shack between Fujita Rd. and Sandcastle
		Old Royal Palm Parking Garage
		Matapang Beach
		Ypao Beach
		Abandoned two-story across Proa
	Harmon	Tumon Village Apartments
		Harmon Industrial Blvd.
		San Agustin Funeral Home
		Flea Market
		Harmon Cliff Line
	MongMong/Toto/Maite	J Camacho Street
		Video Corner
		Kwong Hwa Store
		Rich Hotel/James G
		Sirena Park
	Agana	Agana Pool
		Skinner Plaza
		Moylan's Store
		Guam Legislature
		Kamalen Karidat
		Latte Stone Park
		Cathedral Church
		Plaza de Espana
		DOA
		Guma San Francisco
		Agana Post Office
		Public Guardian
		Triangle Park
		Agana Shopping Center
		Payless Agana
		McDonald's
		Winchel's
		West Agana Beach
		Padre Palomo
		Pasero Loop

East Guam cont.	Agana Heights/Sinajana	Fonte River
		Payless Supermarket
		Chaot Bridge
	Piti/Asan/Maina	Port Authority Beach
		Seaman's Club
		Across Church of Christ
		Deadman's Curve
	Anigua	Governor's Office Pavilion
		Ambros Agana-Club Texas
		Beach Area
		Old Martinez Ice Plant
		Pigo Cemetery
		Back Side of Corn Bldg.
North Guam	Dededo	Hamilton Hotel
		Ysengsong-Swamp Road
		Payless Market
		Santa Barbara Church- surrounding areas
		Liguan Terrace Park
		Micronesia Mall
		Ysengsong-Neveermind Road
		Ysengsong-Stampa Road
	Ylgo	Ysengsong-So. Gladiola
		Ukudo
		Taitano Area
		La Chance Area
		Isengsong Mayot Sub.
		Lupog Area – Dongo St.
		Lupog Area – Kayen Tan Rosan Kotes
		Lupog Area – Chalan Fatima
		Gil Breeze
		Joseph Felix Gallo Sub.
		Gil Baza area
		W. Gayinero
		Marine Drive
		Mataguac
West Guam	Yona	Pacific Latte Estates
		0 Down
		Manengon
		Talofofo Staff Housing
		Ipan Talofofo
		Tagachang
		Turtle Cove
		Togcha Cemetery
		As Andie Rd.
		Aguero's Rd.

West Guam cont.	Chalan Pago/Ordot	Pago Bay
		Community Center
		Before Shell Gas Station
	Barrigada	Oasis Apts./Kina Court
		Tiyan
	Mangilao	Pagat
		Sister Mary's
		Fine Store
South Guam	Agat/Santa Rita	Agat Marina
		Pagachao
		Umang Road
		Nimitz Beach/Park
		Santa Ana
		Rizal Beach
		Old Agat Beach
		Yellow Beach/New Agat Beach
		Sgt. E. Cruz
	Umatac/Merizo/Inarajan	Finile
		Torres Street
		Fort Soledad
		Umatac Bay Park
		Inarajan Bay
		Salagula Pool Park/Inarajan Pool
		Umatac Water Reservoir
		Merizo Pier