

April 2007

# **Accumulation of Wealth and Social Capital among Low-Income Renters (AWSC-R) Round 3 and Soft Refusal Sample**

## **Final Report**

Prepared for

**The University of North Carolina Chapel Hill**  
The Center for Community Capitalism within the  
Frank Hawkins Kenan Institute of Private Enterprise  
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# 1. INTRODUCTION

The Accumulation of Wealth and Social Capital among Low-Income Renters (AWSC-R—hereafter referred to as the Renters Study) is a longitudinal panel study that follows renters for 5 years. The study sample is designed to be a comparison group for a subset of the Community Advantage Panel Survey (CAPS—hereafter referred to as the Owners Study), an ongoing study of the accumulation of wealth and social capital among low- to moderate-income new homeowners that follows selected new owners for 6 years, to include six telephone interviews and two in-home interviews. RTI International will conduct both in-home interviews and the three telephone interviews for the Renters Study. The Survey Research Unit at University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill conducted the first 4 years of telephone interviews for the Owners Study (through 2006) and RTI International will conduct the two in-home interviews and the last 2 years of telephone data collection for the Owners Study (Waves 5 and 6).

This report describes results from the third year (Round 3) for the renters and the completion of work on the Soft Refusal Sample consisting of both renters and owners. The Soft Refusal Sample was an attempt to convert baseline respondents who did not participate in Round 2 of the Renters Study and Wave 3 of the Owners Study and were not hard refusals. The idea was to obtain interview data in 2006 from these 2005 nonrespondents and to ensure their continued participation in future rounds and waves of data collection. The purpose of the Renters Study is to assess how being a renter affects families socially and economically and to determine how renters differ from owners who live in the same areas. To this end, the Center for Community Capitalism at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-CCC) contracted with RTI International to conduct all of the data collection (telephone and in-home interviews) for the Renters Study and the in-home data collection for the Owners Study plus the last 2 years of telephone data collection on the Owners Study.

In 2006, which represented Round 3 of the Renters Study and all data collection related to the Soft Refusal Sample, RTI conducted telephone data collection for all of the renters and a subset of prior renter and owner respondents via the purposefully constructed Soft Refusal Sample. The data were collected via computer-assisted telephone interview (CATI) instruments based on prior year instruments modified as needed with new modules to collect desired data.

This report details the design, instrumentation, tracing plan, data collection methods, case management system, and project management for the CATI surveys conducted for the Round 3 Renters Study and the Soft Refusal Sample.

## **1.1 Sample Design**

Round 2 of the Renters Study ended with 1,158 completed interviews. UNC-CCC staff completed a review of these cases before the start of Round 3, and all 1,158 cases were loaded into the data collection telephone queue.

The Soft Refusal Sample consisted of two subsamples—Round 2 Renters Study nonrespondents who were not hard refusals and Wave 3 Owners Study nonrespondents who were not hard refusals. The original plan was to follow up all previous Round/Wave nonrespondents to attempt to get them back into the appropriate panel for future data collection efforts. After discussions, it was decided to not include previous hard refusal cases. RTI received from UNC's Survey Research Unit (UNC-SRU) a preload sample of 1,237 out-of-panel owners respondents who had completed CATI interviews for one or more data collection cycle(s) of Waves 1, 2, and/or 3. RTI also loaded a sample of 330 renters who had completed Round 1 but not Round 2 of the Renters data collection cycle. The total Soft Refusal Sample was 1,567 cases composed of 1,237 owners and 330 renters.

## **1.2 Instrumentation**

In November 2005, UNC-CCC sent new topics to administer in a Round 3 Renters instrument. They were pretested with English and Spanish speakers, edited for comprehensibility, and combined into a single new module, Energy-Finance-Community. The Round 3 instrument also included an expanded Universal Core (to include household roster), Buy a Home, and Locator modules. Spanish translations were done in December 2005, and initial programming was done in January. However, UNC-CCC identified key questions about income and revised wording in the Universal Core needed to standardize RTI's instrument with UNC-SRU's instrument.

Beginning in July 2006, RTI and UNC-CCC collaborated in developing the data collection design for the Soft Refusal Sample. Key to that discussion was deciding which modules were appropriate for whom. A respondent might answer modules that were unique to the in-home interview, and/or modules unique to the Round 3 interview, as well as modules shared by RTI Round 3 and SRU Wave 4 interviews. Question routing depended on former and current homeownership status. Program specification and Spanish revisions began in June 2006, and module testing began 1 month later. During English language training, staff realized that several text fills were missing from CATI screens. A revised instrument was released several days later, and English language data collection began on August 28. Bilingual data collection began on September 5, 2006.

## **1.3 Tracing**

RTI followed the procedures outlined in the Locating and Tracing Plan submitted in 2004 and implemented in 2004 and 2005 for associated work throughout all of 2006 for Round 3 of the Renters Study, the Soft Refusal Sample, and for Wave 4 of the Owners Study. In total, RTI traced 425 renters and obtained location information on 371 of them for a locate rate of

87.3 percent. RTI completed tracing work on 690 renters or owners belonging to the Soft Refusal Sample and obtained location information on 585 of them for a locate rate of 84.8 percent. Lastly, RTI completed tracing work on 375 UNC-SRU CATI respondent owners and obtained location information on 346 of them for a locate rate of 92.3 percent. The tracing work covered in this report started in late 2005 with a holiday mailing to maintain (verify and update) current contact information for the panel of renters. Tracing activities continued through December 2006, when the last UNC-SRU owners' cases were returned with the associated tracing results.

## **1.4 Data Collection**

During April 2006, data collection materials were finalized and UNC-CCC and RTI Institutional Review Board (IRB) approvals were obtained for the study. RTI trained the interviewers and began data collection in the middle of May 2006 for the Renters Study. Data collection concluded on December 22, 2006 with a total of 970 completed interviews.

In June 2006, UNC-CCC decided to revisit nonrespondents for the Owners and Renters Panels. Both of these panels have been shrinking at a faster than anticipated rate across time. The implementation of this Soft Refusal Sample data collection effort was an attempt to increase the panels' retained size in the last 2 years of data collection. UNC-SRU identified 1,237 owners and RTI identified 330 renters for a total of 1,567 respondents in the Soft Refusal Sample. During August 2006, data collection materials were finalized and IRB approvals were obtained for the study. At the end of August 2006, RTI trained the interviewers and data collection began. Data collection concluded on December 22, 2006 with a total of 338 completed interviews, including 262 owners and 76 renters who will be added back into the panel for the next round of data collection that will begin in 2007.

## **1.5 Case Management and Reporting System**

The CATI Case Management System (CMS) is the technological infrastructure that connects the various components of the CATI system, including the questionnaire, utility screens, databases, call scheduler, report modules, links to outside systems, and other system components. The automated RTI call scheduler was used to assign cases to interviewers in a predefined priority order. It was also programmed to keep track of all the callbacks to potential sample members. After the interviewer selected the call result that best described the outcome of the call, CMS assigned an appropriate event code that described what happened on a particular call to the roster line. Additionally, RTI interviewers completed electronic problem sheets throughout the course of data collection.

## **1.6 Project Management**

On August 25, 2005, project staff from UNC-CCC, UNC-SRU, and RTI attended an annual review meeting that covered results from the prior year and plans for the upcoming year (calendar year 2006). This was the first of many in-person and telephone meetings among

UNC-CCC, UNC-SRU, and RTI. RTI understood that clear lines of authority and communication were critical to ensure rapid response, efficient operation, maintenance of high-quality standards, and an overall successful project.

This report is organized according to various project tasks and components, which will be explained in detail in the corresponding sections of this report.

## **2. SAMPLE DESIGN**

Originally, UNC-CCC selected a panel of low- and moderate-income owners throughout the United States whose loans were held by Self Help. UNC-CCC selected these owners to conduct a series of interviews over a span of 6 years. RTI selected and developed a matching panel of low- and moderate-income renters to be interviewed over a 5-year period. Wave 4 study activities for the owners coincided with Round 3 study activities for the renters.

### **2.1 Round 3 Renters Study—Telephone Interviews**

Round 2 of the Renters Study produced 1,158 completed in-home interviews. According to the eligibility requirements of the study, in order for respondents to be eligible for Round 3, they must have completed an in-home interview during Round 2. As a result the 1,158 completed in-home interviews from Round 2 became the starting sample for Round 3 of the Renters Study. Table 2-1 shows the geographic distribution of respondents.

### **2.2 Soft Refusal Sample**

In order to maintain the panel size, UNC-CCC decided to conduct a nonresponse follow-up for both owners and renters during the course of Wave 4/Round 3 data collection, which we called the Soft Refusal Sample. Eligible individuals were owners who did not complete the Wave 3 telephone interview (UNC-SRU-only cases), in-home owners who did not complete Wave 3 telephone and/or the in-home interview (UNC-SRU or RTI cases), and renters who did not complete the Round 2 in-home interview (RTI-only cases). The few exceptions were those respondents found to be ineligible during the prior wave/round and those coded as hard refusals and excluded from consideration. As a result, 1,518 respondents were identified for the Soft Refusal Sample: 820 owners, 368 in-home owners, and 330 renters. In November UNC-CCC asked RTI to interview a small group of Spanish-speaking owners. This need arose because SRU had difficulties SRU in maintaining bilingual staff. RTI agreed to conduct the interviews, and SRU provided the information on 49 Spanish-speaking respondents. Because RTI did not have access to the owners' questionnaire, these interviews in Spanish were completed using the Soft Refusal Sample questionnaire. At the end of November and beginning of December, data from 49 Spanish-speaking owners was loaded into the Soft Refusal Sample. As a result the end sample for the Soft Refusal Sample was 1,567 respondents consisting of 869 owners, 368 in-home owners, and 330 renters. Since data collection ended on December 22, 2006, RTI was able to complete only four of the Spanish-speaking owners' interviews.

Data collection began for the Soft Refusal Sample at the end of August 2006. RTI attempted to administer a hybrid interview to these respondents. The interview differed depending on

**Table 2-1. Distribution by MSA Renters Panel—Overall**

Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)	MSA No.	Renters	Renter-Spanish
Albuquerque, NM	01	15	0
Atlanta, GA	03	29	6
Bloomington-Normal, IL	04	7	0
Charlotte-Gastonia-Rock Hill, NC-SC	06	91	12
Chicago-Gary-Kenosha, IL-IN-WI	07	41	4
Columbia, SC	10	18	1
Dallas-Fort Worth, TX	12	16	2
Dayton-Springfield, OH	13	11	0
Detroit-Ann Arbor-Flint, MI	14	17	0
Enid, OK	15	22	0
Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers, AR	16	35	9
Greensboro-Winston-Salem-High Point, NC	18	83	6
Greenville, NC	19	17	0
Greenville-Spartanburg-Anderson, SC	20	27	1
Hickory-Morganton-Lenoir, NC	21	26	4
Houston-Galveston-Brazoria, TX	22	20	4
Las Vegas, NV-AZ	25	15	0
Lima, OH	26	11	0
Los Angeles-Riverside-Orange County, CA	27	28	16
Miami-Fort Lauderdale, FL	29	12	1
Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN-WI	30	24	0
Oklahoma City, OK	33	107	4
Phoenix-Mesa, AZ	36	43	10
Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill, NC	38	149	22
Rocky Mount, NC	41	29	0
Toledo, OH	44	42	0
Tucson, AZ	45	32	8
Tulsa, OK	46	134	10
Washington-Baltimore, DC-MD-VA-WV	47	50	2
West Palm Beach-Boca Raton, FL	48	3	0
Youngstown-Warren, OH	50	4	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,158</b>	<b>122</b>

what respondents had completed during the prior wave/round (for more details see Section 3.1.2). Table 2-2 shows the geographic distribution of respondents.

**Table 2-2. Distribution by MSA Soft Refusal Sample—Overall**

Metropolitan Statistical Area	MSA	Total	Total Owners	Total Renters	Total Spanish
Albuquerque, NM	01	17	13	5	2
Ashville, NC	02	8	8	0	0
Atlanta, GA	03	34	26	8	7
Bloomington-Normal, IL	04	21	21	0	0
Boston-Worcester-Lawrence, MA	05	4	4	0	0
Charlotte-Gastonia-Rock Hill, NC-SC	06	98	71	29	7
Chicago-Gary-Kenosha, IL-IN-WI	07	74	58	18	10
Cincinnati-Hamilton, OH	08	22	22	0	0
Cleveland, OH	09	14	14	0	1
Columbia, SC	10	22	18	4	0
Columbus, OH	11	12	12	0	0
Dallas-Fort Worth, TX	12	22	21	5	8
Dayton-Springfield, OH	13	11	10	1	1
Detroit-Ann Arbor-Flint, MI	14	33	27	7	1
Enid, OK	15	15	12	3	1
Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers, AR	16	57	40	21	36
Geen Bay, WI	17	6	6	0	0
Greensboro-Winston-Salem-High Point, NC	18	57	45	12	5
Greenville, NC	19	26	23	3	1
Greenville-Spartanburg-Anderson, SC	20	26	24	2	0
Hickory-Morganton-Lenoir, NC	21	37	32	6	5
Houston-Galveston-Brazoria, TX	22	31	27	7	20
Jackson, MS	23	38	38	0	0
Kansas City, MS	24	12	12	0	1
Las Vegas, NV-AZ	25	22	16	7	7
Lima, OH	26	21	20	1	0
Los Angeles-Riverside-Orange County, CA	27	63	62	11	45
Memphis, TN	28	15	15	0	1
Miami-Fort Lauderdale, FL	29	23	18	5	8
Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN-WI	30	27	22	7	9

(continued)

**Table 2-2 Distribution by MSA Soft Refusal Sample—Overall (continued)**

<b>METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREA</b>	<b>MSA</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total Owners</b>	<b>Total Renters</b>	<b>Total Spanish</b>
New York City-Northern New Jersey-Long Island, NY	31	3	3	0	0
Norfolk- Virginia Beach-Newport News, VA	32	4	4	0	0
Oklahoma City, OK	33	60	34	27	13
Peoria-Perkins, IL	34	10	10	0	1
Philadelphia, PA-Wilmington, DE-Atlantic City, NJ	35	10	10	0	0
Phoenix-Mesa, AZ	36	51	42	18	42
Pittsburgh, PA	37	4	4	0	0
Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill, NC	38	107	69	38	13
Richmond-Petersburg, VA	39	4	4	0	0
Roanoke, VA	40	6	6	0	0
Rocky Mount, NC	41	39	35	5	2
San Francisco-Oakland-San Jose CA	42	22	22	0	8
Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater, FL	43	6	6	0	2
Toledo, OH	44	78	61	17	1
Tucson, AZ	45	25	24	4	18
Tulsa, OK	46	95	63	32	6
Washington-Baltimore, DC-MD-VA-WV	47	73	52	23	15
West Palm Beach-Boca Raton, FL	48	17	14	4	9
Wilmington, NC	49	21	21	0	0
Youngstown-Warren, OH	50	15	16	0	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,518</b>	<b>1,237</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>307</b>

### **3. INSTRUMENTATION**

Drafting, testing, and revising the survey instrument for the Renters and Owners Studies were collaborative efforts that relied on the substantive knowledge of UNC-CCC staff and the methodological and technical expertise of RTI staff. This collaboration informed the instrumentation process, which was iterative, incremental, and involved successive modifications to survey questions and computer specifications. The various process steps and their approximate completion times are described in the following sections.

#### **3.1 Questionnaire Development**

##### ***3.1.1 Round 3 Renters Study***

Work on the Round 3 Renters instrument began in November 2005, when UNC-CCC delivered new survey questions to RTI that asked about household energy costs associated with driving and home heating/cooling, financial literacy, and sense of community. Those items were eventually combined in data collection into a single Energy-Finance-Community module.

Universal Core, Buy a Home, and Locator modules were identified for annual administration to panel members along with the expanded Universal Core. The Universal Core was expanded to include the household roster. Roster questions had been administered in a standalone module during the 2005 in-person interview, but were easily subsumed by the Universal Core.

In mid-November, RTI conducted cognitive interviews to test the new energy, finance, and community questions. The final energy questions were sent to RTI in mid-December. It was expected that delivery would finalize the Round 3 instrument. Spanish translation of all modules for programmers was completed by the end of December. English language testing on the Round 3 instrument began in January; Spanish language testing began 2 months later.

However, RTI received content revisions in March when UNC-CCC identified income and asset questions from other modules in the in-home interview that were needed in Round 3 data collection. Those items were also subsumed into the Universal Core, along with baseline core questions administered in 2002 to the renter sample.

The net effect on Round 3 was that data collection was delayed to allow for sufficient testing of the CATI instrument. Even more changes were made in April to adopt wording used by UNC-SRU. English language data collection began on May 17 for English speakers and on May 28 for Spanish speakers. Even after data collection began, two questions had to be revised, as described below.

### **3.1.2 Soft Refusal Sample**

In June and July 2006, RTI and UNC-CCC collaborated in developing the data collection design, including which modules were appropriate for which sample members. Depending on which interviews a sample member missed, he or she might respond to modules that were unique to the 2005 in-home interview (Mortgages, Wealth and Assets, Savings), modules unique to RTI's Round 3 interview (Buy a Home), or modules shared by RTI's Round 3 and SRU's Wave 4 interviews (Universal Core, Energy-Finance-Community, Locator). Question routing was complicated insofar as it depended on the original sample assignment (renter or Community Advantage Panel [CAP] homeowner), status of renting or owning or living rent-free (e.g., with family), and continued ownership of a previously reported home or recent purchase of a new home.

The Soft Refusal Sample instrument eliminated a problem identified late in Round 3 data collection (described later) in which a question about proportion of welfare income was administered to the wrong subgroup of respondents.

Program specification and revisions to Spanish translations began in June. In July 2006, module testing took place. During the late August English training, it was determined that several text fills were missing from the CATI screens. RTI released a corrected CATI instrument during the last weekend of August so that trainees could practice and achieve certification. English language data collection began August 28. Bilingual training was conducted several days later. Several translation errors were identified at that time. Revisions to that instrument postponed actual Spanish data collection until September 5.

## **3.2 Spanish Translation**

Round 3 translations lasted from February to mid-May 2006. Soft Refusal Sample translation lasted from June through early September 2006. For both instruments, a language methodologist from RTI's survey methodology program completed the initial translation. A second language methodologist reviewed it independently. They collaborated to resolve any differences between the two reviews about translation approach and (if needed) clarification from the Instrumentation Task Leader. The primary translator was responsible for testing the Spanish CAPI instrument, which was programmed only after cognitive testing.

## **3.3 Cognitive Testing**

For the Round 3 instrument, RTI tested the comprehension of draft survey questions among English and Spanish speakers by conducting cognitive interviews with renters recruited from the general population in the Triangle region of North Carolina. The questions that UNC-CCC asked RTI to administer in this pretest discussed rising energy costs associated with driving and home heating/cooling, financial literacy, and sense of community.

Ten interviews were completed in November 2005 at RTI's offices in Research Triangle Park, NC. All but one of the participants was a renter. Three interviews were administered with Spanish translations. Prospective volunteers were recruited through local advertisements in a newspaper. They were instructed to call a dedicated study telephone number to be screened in English or Spanish. Eligibility criteria included age (between 25 and 60 years old) and household income (\$50,000 or below).

Cognitive interviews lasted 30 to 45 minutes and were administered using a paper-and-pencil questionnaire. Each participant was paid \$30 cash as a thank-you gift. Each was asked to sign informed consent and receipt forms that interviewers retained for their records. A separate signature was collected for consent to audiotape the interview, but recording was not required for participation.

The assigned survey methodologists (English and Spanish speakers) met individually with volunteers in a private office on RTI's main campus in Research Triangle Park, NC. The methodologist read survey questions and response options aloud, recorded responses, and asked scripted and *ad hoc* follow-up questions, or probes. They encouraged participants to ask for clarification if they had difficulty understanding any question or response option. Each methodologist recorded notes on a hardcopy protocol containing the questions and probes. A summary report was provided to UNC-CCC with observations and recommended wording changes.

No pretesting was administered for the Soft Refusal Sample. That instrument had no new questions, just items used in former waves of data collection.

### **3.4 Instrument Finalization**

Based on the feedback collected from the cognitive interviews, RTI and UNC collaborated on revised wording to improve comprehension of survey questions. The modules were programmed and tested on a flow basis by UNC-CCC and RTI staff between December and April. Unexpected changes to questions caused training to be postponed until May 17, 2006 for English and May 29 for Spanish. Shortly after data collection began, a response option was added to an energy question to allow respondents to report that they did not drive or own a car.

In August, when data collection was almost complete, the instrument was corrected once more to ask a question about household income from nonwage sources such as welfare, unemployment, alimony, etc. of the appropriate persons. It had been incorrectly restricted to respondents who reported nonwage income sources such as interest, stock dividends, or bonuses.

## **3.5 Programming and System Development**

### ***3.5.1 Blaise Instrument Development and Testing***

After the questionnaire content was approved by UNC-CCC, a survey methodologist wrote the specifications for a computer program to implement the questionnaire as a CAPI instrument, to be programmed using the Blaise computer language. RTI uses Blaise as the platform for telephone and personal interviews. The software has a number of attractive features including its ability to allow interviewers to resume a partially completed interview at a later time. Blaise removes inappropriate responses that occur when the wrong path in the questionnaire is followed and the interviewer finds it necessary to back up to a gateway question and revise the response. RTI uses a batch system that efficiently imports, exports, and recodes data, allowing up-to-date reports that are accessible by clients who have been provided a username and password.

#### *Development and Testing the Instrument*

The development and maintenance of accurate programming specifications is critical to the computer-assisted interviewing (CAI) development process. As with other such surveys, RTI's Instrumentation Task Leader prepared specifications to guide both the programming and testing operations. Programmers, instrumentation team members, and other testers used the specifications throughout the development process to gauge the accuracy of the interview program on an item-by-item basis. Changes were made to content that required revised documentation, programming changes, and retesting.

RTI staff referred to several sets of documentation, including CAI specifications and mock interview scenarios and scripts to test program functionality. Programmers and testers conducted a thorough test of each question to verify that the program conformed to the questionnaire specifications. Testing involved checking numeric ranges or allowable response options for questions and confirming the resulting path. As part of this testing, the question-and-answer choice wording, consistency and range checks, and other features of each question were verified. Detected errors were documented and provided to the programmers. After the errors were corrected, the test was repeated.

### ***3.5.2 The Survey Control System***

RTI implemented a Survey Control System (SCS) to monitor the respondents for the two studies. The SCS operates as the hub of the project, monitoring events for each case. This event-driven system guides a case (i.e., status of each study participant) from the time it enters the system, through the various subsystems (e.g., mail-outs, tracing, de-duplication), to the point of completion at the time of data delivery. All events are defined and lead from one process to another. All events for a case are logged to trace the history, allowing the flow of data—from the start of data collection through the creation of data files suitable for analysis and delivery—to be monitored. As a case moves through the system,

events are assigned to that case to indicate its status and availability for subsequent processing by other steps in the system.

The SCS was initialized with respondent contact information from former waves of data collection. The SCS generated mail merge files for lead letter mail-out and kept track of cases that were released to CATI. Lead letters were mailed prior to the start of interviewing. These lead letters alerted the respondents that an interviewer would be contacting them. The return of lead letters alerted project staff that the respondent had relocated. Addresses in the SCS were updated to maintain the most current respondent information available. For each respondent, the SCS also monitored all tracing operations and maintained final status codes once interviewing was completed.



## 4. TRACING REPORT FOR THE RENTERS, OWNERS, AND THE SOFT REFUSAL COHORTS

### 4.1 Tracing Activities for the Renters Cohort

Tracing and panel maintenance activities were completed across various components of the renters, owners, and the Soft Refusal Sample. Tracing is the locating of respondents either before or during data collection. Various methods were employed to trace different cohorts. First, RTI completed batch, interactive, and field tracing of the Renters Wave 3 Study and for the Soft Refusal Sample as part of its contract with UNC-CCC. Then, RTI completed interactive and field tracing of the Owners Study as part of its contract with UNC-SRU. The results of these tracing activities will be presented in the following section.

#### 4.1.1 Batch Tracing

Batch tracing is considered a least-cost tracing method to update locating information of respondents or to generate additional information that will be used in the more traditional interactive tracing. RTI uses several vendors for batch tracing; the selection of a certain vendor is based on the information researchers are seeking. For instance, in batch tracing Transunion is often chosen specifically to generate new Social Security numbers (SSNs) or to confirm existing ones. Other batch vendors such as Fast Data, Accurint, Telematch, and Lexis Nexis are used to report new address and telephone information or to confirm the existing data.

RTI used Transunion and Fast Data as the batch vendors in Round 3 of the renters data collection; in the Soft Refusal Sample, we used Transunion, NCOA, and Accurint. The following section examines tracing results for the renters and owners samples and then presents tracing outcomes for the Soft Refusal Sample.

#### *Transunion*

A file containing 1,158 records was prepared and submitted to Transunion for batch tracing. Approximately one-third of the records submitted to Transunion had SSNs while the remaining two-thirds of the records did not. Transunion returns several results that range between an error file to a file containing complete/best matches and partial matches. Between these two extremes are records categorized as no-hits.

Table 4-1 summarizes the results of Transunion's batch tracing task. When files are processed, cases in which there are no matches in the database result in a no-hit. Of the 1,158 records submitted to Transunion, 359 records were contained in the no-hit file while 799 records were in the hit file. Cases in the hit file translate to cases where matches occurred and new information was provided for the subject. RTI conducted manual reviews of the 799 records categorized as matches to confirm that the information presented

**Table 4-1. UNC Renters Wave 3: Batch Tracing Results—Transunion**

Category of Match will appreciate	Number of Records	Percent (%)
First name last name, and SSN match	386	48.3
First name, last name, and address match, no input SSN	112	14.0
Address and name matches but no SSN found in TU database	238	29.8
Both first and last name match but address does not	35	4.4
First name and last name match only	22	2.8
First name, last name, and address match but SSN does not	6	0.8
<b>Total matched</b>	<b>799</b>	<b>69.0</b>
No-hits returned by Transunion	359	31.0
<b>Total in sample</b>	<b>1,158</b>	

belonged to the Renters cohort members. The review resulted in 386 records that were classified as best matches because all the data elements including the SSNs submitted to the vendor matched what was contained in the Transunion database. Further review indicated that Transunion returned 112 new SSNs for records that originally did not have SSNs. Transunion returned another 35 records with new SSNs but it was not possible to conclude they belonged to the cohort members because the address information in the Transunion database did not match what was submitted. Twenty-two records reported a match by name only but did not return SSNs. Another six records matched by first and last name and address but reported different SSNs from what had been submitted. For these six records, the correct SSN could not be determined for the cohort member. However, one SSN clearly belonged to the subject; hence, both were retained and one was later eliminated via interactive tracing.

#### *Fast Data*

After incorporating results from Transunion into the project’s data file, a new file was generated and submitted to Fast Data batch tracing to confirm or locate new address and telephone information. Because Fast Data batch search is not SSN-driven, a valid address/phone can be rejected because there is no way of knowing the information belongs to the subject. The Transunion search resulted in 377 confirmations, 18 possible new addresses, and another 148 records that could not be matched to respondents. The search also returned 515 records that did not match any data elements from the project file (see Table 4-2).

**Table 4-2. UNC Renters Wave 3: Batch Tracing Results—Fast Data**

Category of Match will appreciate	Number of Records	Percent (%)	Decision
First name, last name, city, and state match only	148	27.3	Unable to determine new address belongs to subject
Name and address 1 or 2 matches	377	69.4	Address belongs to the subject
Name and zip code match	18	3.3	Address may belong to subject, especially for records with uncommon names
<b>Total hits</b>	<b>543</b>	<b>46.9</b>	
No-hits returned by Fast Data	615	53.1	Not a locate
<b>Total in sample</b>	<b>1,158</b>		

#### 4.1.2 Lead Letter Mailing

Address and name updates from batch tracing were incorporated in the master file to make it ready for use in the holiday mailing of December 2005 (see Table 4-3). RTI sent out 1,158 lead letters informing respondents about Renters Wave 3 and asking them to update their records in case of intended or planned moves that would result with change of address. In response, RTI received 212 address update cards and 201 undelivered letters. The remaining 745 respondents either responded via telephone or did not respond at all. For nonrespondents, RTI assumed that the address information in the file was correct. The 201 lead letters that were returned undelivered, together with any of the 745 records without a phone number, constituted the first bunch of cases that were submitted to RTI’s Tracing Operations unit (TOPS) for in-house tracing.

**Table 4-3. UNC Renters Wave 3: Results of December 2005 Mailing**

Category of Mail	Number
Undelivered (lead letter) mail	201
Cards with information update	212
No action mail <sup>a</sup>	745
<b>Total in the sample</b>	<b>1,158</b>

<sup>a</sup>No action mail implies that the letter was not returned undelivered nor was an address update card received.

#### 4.1.3 Interactive Tracing

Three categories of cases were submitted to TOPS for in-house tracing: (1) cases in which the lead letter was returned to RTI undelivered (n = 201), (2) cases with suspected

inaccurate contact information, and (3) some of the 745 cases without a current telephone number. Tracing was conducted continuously throughout the data collection period for cohort members whose contact information was determined to be inaccurate. Because this is the Round 3 of tracing in the Renters cohort, much information on the cohort members has already been assembled from tracing in Rounds 1 and 2 and through batch tracing conducted in November 2005. The initial submission to TOPS comprised the 201 cases whose lead letter was returned undelivered plus those cases that did not return a phone number from batch tracing.

Throughout data collection, TOPS received cases in which locating information was determined to be incorrect. During Wave 3 of data collection, TOPS traced cases for 2 hours per case. At the end of data collection in November, TOPS had traced a total of 425 cases with unique IDs. However some cases were traced multiple times in TOPS bringing the total number of cases imported and exported from TOPS to 499. Table 4-4 summarizes tracing results for the 425 Renters Wave 3 cases. The table shows that tracing resulted in a locate rate of 87.29 percent which is slightly exaggerated because of the cases that were traced and located within 5 minutes level of effort. A locate rate of more than 65 percent is considered excellent for a highly mobile population. Most of the located cases returned a phone number and were forwarded to TIO for calling and interviewing. A total of 43 other cases were assigned codes 7010, 7046, and 7505, were located by address only, and were subsequently forwarded to field tracing.

Not-located codes were comprised of three different options. Not Located-Level of Effort Expired means that tracers were unable to locate the subject in the budgeted amount of time; two cases were coded as Not Located-Level of Effort Expired. Not Located-Leads Exhausted means that all possible leads were pursued, but no new contact information was generated through the leads; 50 cases were coded as Not Located—Leads Exhausted. Not Located-Refusal designates that a respondent returns a call from a message left with a contact, but indicates that he or she does not want to participate in the survey. The tracer only uses this code when there are no other leads to indicate the correct locating information. However, all cases that were finalized as Not Located were submitted to field tracing.

#### ***4.1.4 Field Tracing: Renters Cohort***

UNC-CCC contracted RTI to field trace any renters they were unable to reach by phone (i.e., unlocatable renters). The goal of this tracing work was to locate and complete as many interviews with unlocatable renters as possible. This was the first year that field tracing had been conducted on the Renters Study. The success of any longitudinal study depends on interviewing as many panel members as possible for each year of the study. To achieve this goal, RTI hired field interviewers to visit the homes of unlocatable renters in an attempt to persuade them to call RTI's Call Center to complete a 45-minute telephone interview. RTI

**Table 4-4. UNC Renters Wave 3: TOPS Tracing Results**

<b>TOPS CODE</b>	<b>Description of Code</b>	<b>Number of Cases</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
7010	Located address only	13	3.50
7020	Located phone only	11	2.96
7030	Located address and phone	1	0.27
7046	Located unconfirmed no phone	16	4.31
7047	Located unconfirmed phone obtained	34	9.16
7060	Located out of the country	4	1.08
7070	Located but deceased	7	1.89
7085	Located incarcerated	2	0.54
7090	Located but refused to participate	3	0.81
7092	Located confirmed phone only	26	7.01
7100	Located and transferred to TIO for interview	12	3.23
7115	Located Respondent Assisted Leads	1	0.27
7501	Located confirmed preloaded address and preloaded phone	30	8.09
7502	Located confirmed preloaded address and new phone	87	23.45
7503	Located confirmed new address and preloaded phone	8	2.16
7504	Located confirmed new address and new phone	100	26.95
7505	Located confirmed preloaded address only	14	3.77
7506	Located confirmed preloaded phone only	2	0.54
	<b>Total located cases</b>	<b>371</b>	<b>87.29</b>
8010	Not located level of effort expired	2	3.70
8020	Not located leads exhausted	50	92.59
8030	Not located – Refusal	2	3.70
	<b>Total not located cases</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>12.71</b>
	<b>Total traced by TOPS</b>	<b>425</b>	

field traced a total of 161 renters. RTI field interviewers successfully traced 57 renter interviews. Field interviewers paid a \$40 cash incentive to those household members completing the telephone interview when they visited the home.

Unlocatable renters were field traced between September 1, 2006 and December 21, 2000. Prior to field tracing, RTI generated and mailed lead letters on UNC-CCC's letterhead to all sampled addresses. The purpose of the lead letter was to notify renters that a field interviewer might visit their home because RTI had been unable to reach them by phone.

The lead letter provided RTI's toll-free number and hours of operation if renters wanted to call before a field interviewer traveled to their home.

## **4.2 Tracing Activities Associated with the Owners Panel-SRU**

Owners Study Wave 4 interactive and field tracing were conducted by TOPS while telephone interviews were conducted by UNC-SRU. UNC-SRU was also responsible for panel maintenance activities including mailing of lead letters.

### ***4.2.1 Interactive Tracing of the Owners Cohort***

Tracing of the Owners Sample was conducted throughout the data collection period. RTI received cases that SRU was unable to contact through the telephone information in the file. RTI received and traced a total of 375 cases with unique case ID numbers. TOPS forwarded to UNC-SRU address and telephone information generated through all the tracing activities. Some cases were located with telephone numbers, and they were placed in the calling queue for a possible interview. Address information from cases that were located without a telephone number was updated in the master file to await field tracing activity. Such cases were also resubmitted to RTI for review and determination if additional in-house tracing was necessary.

Table 4-5 summarizes the results of interactive tracing for the Owners Sample. Out of the 375 cases that were traced, 346 or 92.27 percent were finalized located while only 29 (7.73 percent) were finalized as not located. Located cases included sample members who were out of the country, deceased, incarcerated, ineligible, and those who refused to participate due to one reason or other. A total of 26 cases (6.93 percent) fell into these categories, equivalent to of the traced sample. A total of 87 cases (23.2 percent) were located without a telephone number. Although the address information may not be useful during Wave 4 because it was designed as the telephone survey, it will prove invaluable during the in-person phase.

### ***4.2.2 Field Tracing: Owners Cohort***

UNC-CCC contracted RTI to field trace owners they were unable to reach by phone (i.e., unlocatable owners). In these cases (unlocatable owners), TOPS was unable to locate a new phone or address for the owner. For the UNC-CCC Owners Field Tracing Project, the goal was to locate and complete as many interviews as possible with unlocatable owners. RTI hired field interviewers to visit the homes of unlocatable owners in an attempt to persuade them to call UNC-SRU to complete a 30-minute telephone interview. Field interviewers were able to complete 85 owner interviews through their field tracing efforts.

**Table 4-5. UNC Owners TOPS Tracing Results**

<b>TOPS Code</b>	<b>Description of Code</b>	<b>Number of Cases</b>	<b>Percent of Total (%)</b>
7010	Located address only	3	0.87
7015	Located address and unpublished number	1	0.29
7020	Located telephone only	4	1.16
7030	Located address and phone	6	1.73
7039	Located but ineligible	11	3.18
7046	Located unconfirmed—no phone	50	14.45
7047	Located unconfirmed phone obtained	45	13.01
7060	Located out of country	3	0.87
7070	Located deceased	2	0.58
7085	Located incarcerated	2	0.58
7090	Located but refused	8	2.31
7092	Located confirmed phone only	9	2.60
7093	Located confirmed address only	17	4.91
7501	Located confirmed preloaded address and number	22	6.36
7502	Located confirmed preloaded address new phone	83	23.99
7504	Located confirmed new address new number	64	18.50
7505	Located confirmed preloaded address	16	4.62
	<b>Total located</b>	<b>346</b>	<b>92.27</b>
8010	Not located level of effort expired	22	75.86
8020	Not located leads exhausted	7	24.14
	<b>Total not located</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>7.73</b>
	<b>Total traced in TOPS</b>	<b>375</b>	

### 4.3 Tracing Activities Associated with the Soft Refusal Sample

The Soft Refusal Sample constitutes sample members from both the renters and the owners samples who were not interviewed in Round 2 of the renters data collection and Rounds 2 and /or 3 of the owners data collection either because they were not located or because at the time they did not wish to participate. RTI was asked to trace and locate these sample members and, where possible, persuade them to participate in the interview. Because some people had not been contacted for the previous 2 years, RTI decided to employ a tracing approach that combined batch tracing with in-house and field tracing. The procedure was to submit records to batch tracing for address and telephone updates and, if batch tracing did

not return new information or returned an address only, to submit the records to TOPS for in-house tracing and subsequently to field tracing.

### **4.3.1 Batch Tracing**

RTI used three batch vendors: Transunion to search for SSNs, National Change of Address (NCOA) to report a change of address, and Accurint to update address and telephone information. The process was to send records to Transunion first, then to NCOA, and finally to incorporate all the necessary data updates before submitting to Accurint. RTI decided to use Accurint because of their capability to return multiple addresses and phone numbers associated with the respondent including other critical information (like deaths), which is useful for interactive tracing. Table 4-6 provides batch tracing results from the three batch vendors.

**Table 4-6. Batch Tracing Results**

<b>Name of Vendor</b>	<b>Transunion</b>	<b>NCOA</b>	<b>Accurint</b>
New SSN	327		
New address		392	75
New phone			59
Valid phone			626
Valid address			609
Deceased			18
Other	254		
No-hit records <sup>a</sup>	432	1,148	
<b>Total submitted to vendor</b>	<b>1,013</b>	<b>1,540</b>	<b>1,540</b>

<sup>a</sup>No-hit records refers to those records that were not matched by the vendor's database.

These results may be summarized as follows:

- a. RTI submitted a file containing 1,013 records to Transunion. Transunion returned 327 new SSNs plus 254 other hits that included address and telephone numbers.
- b. RTI submitted 1,540 records to NCOA, and they reported 392 new addresses.<sup>1</sup> This implies that 392 sample members had moved from their preloaded/baseline addresses and had recorded their new addresses with the U.S. Postal Service. This vendor's no-hit records included sample members who may have moved but have not reported the move to the U.S. Postal Service and/or those that are still at the baseline/preloaded address.
- c. Accurint reported several items including deaths, new addresses, new phone numbers, and validity of a preloaded address or phone. Accurint's batch results are as follows:

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<sup>1</sup>The file containing 1,540 records that was submitted to NCOA and Accurint had duplicates.

- 18 sample members reported deceased,
- 75 new addresses,
- 609 valid preloaded/baseline addresses,
- 59 new telephone numbers, and
- 626 valid preloaded/baseline telephone numbers.

#### **4.3.2 Interactive Tracing of Soft Refusal Sample**

Once batch tracing was completed and all records with a phone number were loaded into the CATI for calling, cases without phone numbers were submitted to TOPS for interactive tracing. Initially, only 18 cases were identified without a phone number. All other sample cases either had a preloaded/baseline phone number or one generated through batch tracing. The 18 cases that did not have a phone number, together with 516 (206 renters and 316 owners) that needed a directory assistance (DA) check, were submitted to TOPS in mid-September 2006. These 516 cases were initially traced for a 5-minute level of effort, which entailed calling DA and obtaining a phone number for the subject. Cases in which a phone number was obtained were sent to CATI for calling while those that did not return a phone number were retained in TOPS and recommended for an additional 2 hours tracing. In total, TOPS received 690 cases with unique case IDs that were traced in TOPS. Tracing results are summarized in Table 4-7.

Of the 690 cases traced in TOPS, 585 (84.8 percent) were finalized as located while only 105 (15.2 percent) were finalized as not located. However, this locate rate may be misleading because it includes those cases that were traced for only 5 minutes. Because TOPS was not confirming located cases traced for 5 minutes, telephone information on many of them was incorrect or listed as disconnected; hence, the cases were resubmitted to TOPS for additional tracing. Another group of 121 cases was resubmitted to TOPS for an additional 30 minutes tracing; they had been finalized as not located during the first 2 hours of tracing. Only 16 of these cases were converted to locates as a result of this additional tracing effort. Cases that were located without a telephone number were submitted to field tracing.

#### **4.3.3 Field Tracing the Soft Refusal Sample**

Since renter and homeowner field tracing efforts were underway, UNC-CCC requested that unlocatable members of the Soft Refusal Sample be released to the field for field tracing. Only cases that were located in or around an area where a field interviewer lived were released to the field. A total of 74 Soft Refusal cases were released for field tracing. RTI completed three interviews through field tracing efforts for the Soft Refusal Sample.

**Table 4-7. Soft Refusal Sample Tracing Results**

<b>Final Code</b>	<b>Description of Code</b>	<b>Number of Records</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
7020	Located phone only	7	1.2
7030	Address and phone	37	6.3
7039	Ineligible	4	0.7
7046	Unconfirmed no phone	75	12.8
7047	Unconfirmed phone obtained	56	9.6
7060	Out of the country	2	0.3
7062	Located out of the country—no proxy identified	5	0.9
7070	Deceased	10	1.7
7072	Deceased no proxy identified	3	0.5
7080	Located-other	1	0.2
7085	Incarcerated	1	0.2
7087	Incarcerated no proxy identified	2	0.3
7090	Refused	44	7.5
7092	Located confirmed phone only	26	4.4
7093	Located confirmed address only	7	1.2
7100	Located and transferred to TIO	4	0.7
7110	Incapacitated	1	0.2
7401	Located and completed interview in the field	2	0.3
7501	Located confirmed preloaded address and preloaded phone	28	4.8
7502	Located confirmed preloaded address and new phone	122	20.9
7503	Located confirmed new address and preloaded phone	5	0.9
7504	Located confirmed new address and new phone	126	21.5
7505	Located confirmed preloaded address only	16	2.7
7506	Located confirmed preloaded phone only	1	0.2
	<b>Total located</b>	<b>585</b>	<b>84.8</b>
8010	Not located level of effort expired	103	98.1
8020	Not located leads exhausted	2	1.9
	<b>Total not located</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>15.2</b>
	<b>Total traced</b>	<b>690</b>	

#### 4.4 Tracing

RTI followed the procedures outlined in the Locating and Tracing Plan submitted on October 28, 2004, to UNC-CCC for Round 3 of the Renters Study and for Wave 4 of the Owners Study. In total, RTI traced 425 renters and obtained location information on 371 for a locate rate of 87.29 percent. RTI completed tracing work on 375 UNC-SRU records and obtained locating information on 346 sample members for a locate rate of 92.27 percent. Lastly, RTI completed tracing work on 690 Soft Refusal Sample members and obtained locating information on 558 of them for a locate rate of 81.18 percent.<sup>2</sup> The tracing work documented in this report started in late 2005 with a holiday mailing to maintain (verify and update) current contact information for the renter's panel. Tracing activities continued until January 2007, when the last field cases were returned with the associated tracing results.

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<sup>2</sup>Soft Refusal Sample comprised of sample members from the Renters cohort and the Homeowners cohort.



## **5. DATA COLLECTION METHODS**

Data collection for the Round 3 Renters Study and the Soft Refusal Sample consisted of three essential steps: locating (carrying out the necessary steps to locate the household), contacting (identifying the correct panel member), and interviewing (persuading the panel member to cooperate and take part in the study). This section describes the results of data collection efforts and evaluates the effectiveness of the data collection procedures used in locating, contacting, and interviewing panel members.

### **5.1 Telephone Interviewer Training**

Training for the telephone interviewers for the Round 3 Renters Study took place in Raleigh, NC, on May 16, 2006. A total of eight interviewers were trained in a period of 5 hours. The trainers used a combination of lecture, role-play exercises, question-and-answer sessions, demonstration and practice interviews, and a discussion of how to avoid refusals. The demonstration and practice interviews were designed to focus on procedures involving particular situations that the interviewers were expected to encounter. At the end of training, all telephone interviewers were required to be certified for data collection by successfully completing a certification interview. This evaluation was conducted with interviewers in pairs and consisted of a full-length interview with project staff observing. In addition, interviewers were required to respond verbally to the five most frequently asked questions.

In addition to the 5-hour training, all bilingual interviewers had to complete a 2-hour training session with a language specialist. The bilingual training session consisted of covering translation issues and completing practice interviews in Spanish. All bilingual interviewers who were trained during this initial session conducted English interviews as well.

### **5.2 Interviewing**

The CATI interview for Round 3 of the Renters Study lasted approximately 45 minutes. During the interview, renters were asked basic questions about their household, their involvement in their neighborhood, and issues related to renting or buying a home. Data collection for the renters panel began on May 17, 2006 and ended on December 21, 2006.

The average number of hours per completed interview was 2.26. The study produced completed interviews with 970 respondents. Of the 970 respondents, 88 interviews were conducted in Spanish. Once production began, the summary status reports were made available for RTI project staff and UNC-CCC. The reports were categorized by renters and owners and displayed case results based on Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), and English or Spanish interviews.

### **5.3 Monitoring and Quality Circle Meetings**

RTI project staff implemented quality circle (QC) procedures during the telephone data collection period to ensure that data of the highest quality would be collected. The first QC measure was implemented during the interviewer training sessions. The trainers and telephone supervisor observed each interviewer's performance during the session and made sure that extra attention and help were given to those interviewers who had a problem with a procedure or question specification. Interviewers were not allowed to begin work on the project unless they had performed satisfactorily during the training. Before beginning work on the project, each interviewer was certified by project staff. Certification included successfully completing the training session, correctly answering (verbally) the five most frequently asked questions, participating in paired mock interviews, and individual practice with the questionnaire and front-end procedures.

The second QC measure—silent audio and visual monitoring of each interviewer's work—was implemented during the telephone data collection period. Telephone supervisors and other project staff used RTI's computerized silent audio and visual monitoring system to unobtrusively listen and view a sample of calls made by all telephone interviewers. Monitoring was conducted throughout data collection.

Finally, RTI project staff actively monitored production levels and the distribution of cases across the event and status codes. QC meetings were also held to discuss data collection issues. These sessions built rapport among interviewers and technical staff and assisted in refining the instrument; they also provided ongoing refusal conversion training for the staff.

### **5.4 Refusal Conversion**

Refusal conversion procedures were used to gain cooperation from individuals who initially refused to participate in the study. Each case coded as a refusal by the interviewer was carefully reviewed to ensure that all refusals were coded correctly. After the review process, the case was coded and referred to refusal-conversion specialists who were selected from among those interviewers most skilled at obtaining cooperation. These specialists were trained in refusal-conversion techniques tailored to the study; the training emphasized how to gain cooperation, overcome objections, address the concerns of gatekeepers, and encourage participation. RTI refusal converters were able to convert 44 initial refusals into completed interviews.

#### ***5.4.1 Soft Refusal Sample***

In June 2006, the Ford Foundation and UNC-CCC decided it would be beneficial to revisit some of the nonresponse owner and renter cases from previous rounds and waves. In order to maintain sample sizes between each wave of the study, UNC-CCC asked RTI to conduct interviews with renters and owners who failed to participate in previous rounds or waves of the study. For a longitudinal study to succeed, it is critical to maintain the panel between each wave of the study. The renters and owners were selected for the Soft Refusal Sample

because they either declined to participate during the last wave, RTI was unable to locate the owner or renter during the last wave, or UNC-SRU was unable to reach the owner during the last wave.

#### ***5.4.2 Telephone Interviewer Training for the Soft Refusal Sample***

Training for the telephone interviewers for the Soft Refusal Sample took place on August 24, 2006. The training lasted for 6 hours, and eight interviewers were trained. Most interviewers trained for the Soft Refusal Sample also worked on the Renters Round 3 Study. The interviewers from the Renters Round 3 Study were selected because the Renters Round 3 instrument and the Soft Refusal instrument were very similar. Interviewers who trained for the Soft Refusal Sample were already familiar with many of the questions they would be administering. Many modules in the Soft Refusal Study were also in the Renters Round 3 Study.

The trainers used a combination of lecture, role-play exercises, question-and-answer sessions, demonstration and practice interviews, and a discussion on how to avoid refusals. At the end of training, all telephone interviewers were required to be certified for data collection by successfully completing a certification interview. In addition, interviewers were required to respond verbally to the five most frequently asked questions.

### **5.5 Data Collection Results**

#### ***5.5.1 Renters Study***

There were 1,147 cases deemed eligible for the Renters Round 3 data collection. Of the 1,147 eligible renter cases, the study produced 970 completed renter interviews for a renter data collection response rate of 85 percent. Of the 970 completed renter interviews, 88 (9 percent) were conducted in Spanish. See Table 5-1 for a more detailed summary of the renter data collection effort, including Round 1 and Round 2 results.

Cases deemed unable to contact consisted of those in which renters moved out of the interviewing area or country. RTI was unable to find a new phone number or find the renter during field tracing. A total of 104 cases were designated as unable to contact.

RTI coded 11 cases as ineligible for the Renters Round 3 interview. Ineligible cases for renters consisted of deceased cases. Telephone interviewers were able to confirm deceased cases through spouses and relatives.

For the renter sample, RTI finalized 43 refusals. Reasons for refusals ranged from disinterest in the study or no longer wanting to participate in the panel.

**Table 5-1. Renters Study Data Collection**

Data Collection	Number
<b>Round 1 telephone survey (Oct 2003–April 2004)</b>	
Beginning panel	15,935
Out of scope (business numbers, not a rental, too much income, etc.)	7,035
Final noncontact (no contact, no answering machine reached)	2,104
Final noninterview (out of country, incapable, final refusals, etc.)	5,145
Completed interviews	1,651
Completed Spanish interviews	192 (11.6% of the completed cases)
<b>Round 2 in-home survey (March 2005–October 2005)</b>	
Beginning panel (118 cases removed from sample due to age and income requirements)	1,533
Unable to contact (renter moved out of interviewing area, no one home after repeated attempts, renter moved out of country)	268
Ineligible (deceased)	12
Refusals	81
Noninterviews (incarcerated, institutionalized, incapable, access denied, etc.)	14
Total eligible cases	1,521
Total completed interviews	1,158
Spanish cases loaded	192
Completed Spanish interviews	108 (9% of the completed cases)
Response rate for Round 2	76%
<b>Round 3 telephone survey (May 2006–December 2006)</b>	
Beginning panel	1,158
Unable to contact	104
Ineligible (deceased)	11
Refusals	43
Noninterviews (incarcerated, institutionalized, incapable, etc.)	30
Total eligible cases	1,147
Total completed interviews	970
Total Spanish interviews	88
Response rate for Round 3	85% (of completed cases)

A total of 30 cases were coded as noninterviews, in which interviewers learned that the respondent was incarcerated, institutionalized, or incapable of completing the interview.

#### *Distribution by MSA*

Table 5-2 presents the number of completed renter interviews in each MSA. West Palm Beach-Boca Raton, Florida, and Youngstown–Warren, Ohio, had the highest completion rates—100 percent of the interviews in those MSAs were completed. Las Vegas, Nevada, had the lowest completion rate—only 60 percent of the renter cases were completed.

#### **5.5.2 Soft Refusal Sample Results**

Table 5-3 summarizes the data collection for the Soft Refusal Sample. A total of 1,567 cases were loaded into the Soft Refusal Sample for telephone interviewing, including 1,237 homeowner cases and 330 renter cases. An additional 49 Spanish cases were loaded into the Soft Refusal Sample in the middle of data collection. UNC-SRU was unable to conduct Spanish interviews because of the loss of bilingual interviewers. RTI loaded these Spanish cases into the CATI system and completed four Spanish interviews. Of the 1,567 cases, the study produced 338 completed owner interviews and 76 renter interviews. RTI achieved a 23 percent response rate for the Soft Refusal Sample.

Refusals accounted for 352 cases. A majority of the refusals resulted because of the way the panel was selected. Some cases selected for this panel were soft refusals from previous waves.

There were 157 cases final coded as noninterviews—cases where the respondent was not in the country at the time of contact, or the respondent was incapable or institutionalized.

#### *Distribution by Metropolitan Statistical Area*

Tables 5-4, 5-5, and 5-6 present the number of completed interviews for the Soft Refusal Sample in each MSA. Richmond, VA had the highest completion rate for owners—75 percent of the eligible owner cases were interviewed. Detroit, MI, had the highest completion rate for renters—57 percent of the renter cases were interviewed.

**Table 5-2. Completed Interviews by Metropolitan Statistical Area—Renters Study**

Metropolitan Statistical Area	MSA	Renters	Completed Renters	Percentage of Renters Completed
Albuquerque, NM	01	15	12	80%
Atlanta, GA	03	29	24	83%
Bloomington–Normal, IL	04	7	6	100%
Charlotte–Gastonia–Rock Hill, NC–SC	06	91	80	88%
Chicago–Gary–Kenosha, IL–IN–WI	07	41	32	78%
Columbia, SC	10	18	14	78%
Dallas–Fort Worth, TX	12	16	12	75%
Dayton–Springfield, OH	13	11	9	82%
Detroit–Ann Arbor–Flint, MI	14	17	15	88%
Enid, OK	15	22	16	73%
Fayetteville–Springdale–Rogers, AR	16	35	28	80%
Greensboro–Winston-Salem–High Point, NC	18	83	69	83%
Greenville, NC	19	17	16	94%
Greenville–Spartanburg–Anderson, SC	20	27	23	85%
Hickory–Morganton–Lenoir, NC	21	26	24	92%
Houston–Galveston–Brazoria, TX	22	20	16	80%
Las Vegas, NV–AZ	25	15	9	60%
Lima, OH	26	11	8	73%
Los Angeles–Riverside–Orange County, CA	27	28	22	79%
Miami–Fort Lauderdale, FL	29	12	11	92%
Minneapolis–St. Paul, MN–WI	30	24	22	92%
Oklahoma City, OK	33	107	91	85%
Phoenix–Mesa, AZ	36	43	36	84%
Raleigh–Durham–Chapel Hill, NC	38	149	134	90%
Rocky Mount, NC	41	29	25	86%
Toledo, OH	44	42	37	88%
Tucson, AZ	45	32	22	69%
Tulsa, OK	46	134	112	84%
Washington–Baltimore, DC–MD–VA–WV	47	50	38	76%
West Palm Beach–Boca Raton, FL	48	3	3	100%
Youngstown–Warren, OH	50	4	4	100%
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,158</b>	<b>970</b>	<b>85%</b>

**Table 5-3. Soft Refusal Sample Data Collection**

Data Collection	Number
Beginning panel	1,567
Owners Sample	1237
Renters Sample	330
Unable to Contact	104
Final refusals	352
Final noninterview (language barrier)	157
Eligible for interviewing	1,477
Completed interviews	338
Completed Owner Interviews	262
Completed Renter Interviews	76
Response rate	23%

**Table 5-4. Completed Interviews by MSA—Soft Refusal Sample**

Metropolitan Statistical Area	MSA	Total	Total Completed	Percentage Completed
Albuquerque, NM	01	17	3	18%
Asheville, NC	02	8	4	50%
Atlanta, GA	03	34	8	24%
Bloomington-Normal, IL	04	21	3	14%
Boston-Worcester-Lawrence, MA	05	4	1	25%
Charlotte-Gastonia, NC-SC	06	98	28	29%
Chicago-Gary-Kenosha, IL-IN-WI	07	74	9	12%
Cincinnati-Hamilton, OH	08	22	5	23%
Cleveland, OH	09	14	2	14%
Columbia, SC	10	22	4	18%
Columbus, OH	11	12	5	42%
Dallas-Fort Worth, TX	12	22	5	23%
Dayton-Springfield, OH	13	11	1	9%
Detroit-Ann Arbor-Flint, MI	14	33	10	30%
Enid, OK	15	15	6	40%
Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers, AR	16	57	15	26%
Green Bay, WI	17	6	1	17%
Greensboro-Winston-Salem-High Point, NC	18	57	10	18%

(continued)

**Table 5-4. Completed Interviews by MSA—Soft Refusal Sample (continued)**

Metropolitan Statistical Area	MSA	Total	Total Completed	Percentage Completed
Greenville, NC	19	26	7	27%
Greenville-Spartanburg-Anderson, SC	20	26	7	27%
Hickory-Morganton-Lenoir, NC	21	37	10	27%
Houston-Galveston-Brazoria, TX	22	31	2	6%
Jackson, MS	23	38	1	3%
Kansas City, MO	24	12	1	8%
Las Vegas, NV-AZ	25	22	4	18%
Lima, OH	26	21	9	43%
Los Angeles-Riverside-Orange County, CA	27	63	12	19%
Memphis, TN	28	15	0	0%
Miami-Fort Lauderdale, FL	29	23	7	30%
Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN-WI	30	27	6	22%
New York City-Northern New Jersey-Long Island, NY-NJ	31	3	2	67%
Norfolk-Virginia Beach-Newport News, VA	32	4	0	0%
Oklahoma City, OK	33	60	17	28%
Peoria-Pekin, IL	34	10	1	10%
Philadelphia, PA-Wilmington, DE-Atlantic City, NJ	35	10	0	0%
Phoenix-Mesa, AZ	36	51	7	14%
Pittsburgh, PA	37	4	0	0%
Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill, NC	38	107	24	22%
Richmond-Petersburg, VA	39	4	3	75%
Roanoke, VA	40	6	1	17%
Rocky Mount, NC	41	39	11	28%
San Francisco-Oakland-San Jose, CA	42	22	4	18%
Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater, FL	43	6	2	33%
Toledo, OH	44	78	26	33%
Tucson, AZ	45	25	4	16%
Tulsa, OK	46	95	26	27%
Washington-Baltimore, DC-MD-VA-WV	47	73	15	21%
West Palm Beach-Boca Raton, FL	48	17	4	24%

(continued)

**Table 5-4. Completed Interviews by MSA—Soft Refusal Sample (continued)**

Metropolitan Statistical Area	MSA	Total	Total Completed	Percentage Completed
Wilmington, NC	49	21	2	10%
Youngstown-Warren, OH	50	15	3	20%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1,518</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>22%</b>

**Table 5-5. Completed Interviews by MSA—Soft Refusal Sample Owners**

Metropolitan Statistical Area	MSA	Total	Total Completed	Percentage Completed
Albuquerque, NM	01	13	1	8%
Asheville, NC	02	8	4	50%
Atlanta, GA	03	26	5	19%
Bloomington-Normal, IL	04	21	3	14%
Boston-Worcester-Lawrence, MA	05	4	1	25%
Charlotte-Gastonia, NC-SC	06	71	19	27%
Chicago-Gary-Kenosha, IL-IN-WI	07	58	7	12%
Cincinnati-Hamilton, OH	08	22	5	23%
Cleveland, OH	09	14	2	14%
Columbia, SC	10	18	4	22%
Columbus, OH	11	12	5	42%
Dallas-Fort Worth, TX	12	21	4	19%
Dayton-Springfield, OH	13	10	1	10%
Detroit-Ann Arbor-Flint, MI	14	27	6	22%
Enid, OK	15	12	5	42%
Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers, AR	16	40	12	30%
Green Bay, WI	17	6	1	17%
Greensboro-Winston-Salem-High Point, NC	18	45	8	18%
Greenville, NC	19	23	6	26%
Greenville-Spartanburg-Anderson, SC	20	24	6	25%
Hickory-Morganton-Lenoir, NC	21	32	9	28%
Houston-Galveston-Brazoria, TX	22	27	1	4%
Jackson, MS	23	38	1	3%
Kansas City, MO	24	12	1	8%
Las Vegas, NV-AZ	25	16	3	19%
Lima, OH	26	20	9	45%

(continued)

**Table 5-5. Completed Interviews by MSA—Soft Refusal Sample Owners (continued)**

Metropolitan Statistical Area	MSA	Total	Total Completed	Percentage Completed
Los Angeles-Riverside-Orange County, CA	27	62	9	15%
Memphis, TN	28	15	0	0%
Miami-Fort Lauderdale, FL	29	18	6	33%
Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN-WI	30	22	3	14%
New York City-Northern New Jersey-Long Island, NY-NJ	31	3	2	67%
Norfolk-Virginia Beach-Newport News, VA	32	4	0	0%
Oklahoma City, OK	33	34	14	41%
Peoria-Pekin, IL	34	10	1	10%
Philadelphia, PA-Wilmington, DE-Atlantic City, NJ	35	10	0	0%
Phoenix-Mesa, AZ	36	42	4	10%
Pittsburgh, PA	37	4	0	0%
Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill, NC	38	69	14	20%
Richmond-Petersburg, VA	39	4	3	75%
Roanoke, VA	40	6	1	17%
Rocky Mount, NC	41	35	10	29%
San Francisco-Oakland-San Jose, CA	42	22	4	18%
Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater, FL	43	6	2	33%
Toledo, OH	44	61	19	31%
Tucson, AZ	45	24	3	13%
Tulsa, OK	46	63	19	30%
Washington-Baltimore, DC-MD-VA-WV	47	52	10	19%
West Palm Beach-Boca Raton, FL	48	14	4	29%
Wilmington, NC	49	21	2	10%
Youngstown-Warren, OH	50	16	3	19%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1,237</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>23%</b>

**Table 5-6. Completed Interviews by MSA—Soft Refusal Sample Renters**

Metropolitan Statistical Area	MSA	Total Renters	Total Completed Renters	Percentage of Renters Completed
Albuquerque, NM	01	5	2	40%
Asheville, NC	02	0	0	100%
Atlanta, GA	03	8	3	38%
Bloomington-Normal, IL	04	0	0	100%
Boston-Worcester-Lawrence, MA	05	0	0	100%
Charlotte-Gastonia, NC-SC	06	29	9	31%
Chicago-Gary-Kenosha, IL-IN-WI	07	18	2	11%
Cincinnati-Hamilton, OH	08	0	0	100%
Cleveland, OH	09	0	0	100%
Columbia, SC	10	4	0	0%
Columbus, OH	11	0	0	100%
Dallas-Fort Worth, TX	12	5	1	20%
Dayton-Springfield, OH	13	1	0	0%
Detroit-Ann Arbor-Flint, MI	14	7	4	57%
Enid, OK	15	3	1	33%
Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers, AR	16	21	3	14%
Green Bay, WI	17	0	0	100%
Greensboro-Winston-Salem-High Point, NC	18	12	2	17%
Greenville, NC	19	3	1	33%
Greenville-Spartanburg-Anderson, SC	20	2	1	50%
Hickory-Morganton-Lenoir, NC	21	6	1	17%
Houston-Galveston-Brazoria, TX	22	7	1	14%
Jackson, MS	23	0	0	100%
Kansas City, MO	24	0	0	100%
Las Vegas, NV-AZ	25	7	1	14%
Lima, OH	26	1	0	0%
Los Angeles-Riverside-Orange County, CA	27	11	3	27%
Memphis, TN	28	0	0	100%
Miami-Fort Lauderdale, FL	29	5	1	20%
Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN-WI	30	7	3	43%
New York City-Northern New Jersey-Long Island, NY-NJ	31	0	0	100%

(continued)

**Table 5-6. Completed Interviews by MSA—Soft Refusal Sample Renters (continued)**

Metropolitan Statistical Area	MSA	Total Renters	Total Completed Renters	Percentage of Renters Completed
Norfolk-Virginia Beach-Newport News, VA	32	0	0	100%
Oklahoma City, OK	33	27	3	11%
Peoria-Pekin, IL	34	0	0	100%
Philadelphia, PA-Wilmington, DE-Atlantic City, NJ	35	0	0	100%
Phoenix-Mesa, AZ	36	18	3	17%
Pittsburgh, PA	37	0	0	100%
Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill, NC	38	38	10	26%
Richmond-Petersburg, VA	39	0	0	100%
Roanoke, VA	40	0	0	100%
Rocky Mount, NC	41	5	1	20%
San Francisco-Oakland-San Jose, CA	42	0	0	100%
Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater, FL	43	0	0	100%
Toledo, OH	44	17	7	41%
Tucson, AZ	45	4	1	25%
Tulsa, OK	46	32	7	22%
Washington-Baltimore, DC-MD-VA-WV	47	23	5	22%
West Palm Beach-Boca Raton, FL	48	4	0	0%
Wilmington, NC	49	0	0	100%
Youngstown-Warren, OH	50	0	0	100%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>330</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>23%</b>

## 5.6 Renters Round 3 and Soft Refusal Renters

Table 5-7 shows the total number of completed renter interviews. This accounts for completed interviews from the Renters Round 3 data collection and the additional interviews that were completed during the Soft Refusal Study. Renters Round 3 and the Soft Refusal study produced a total of 1,046 renter interviews.

All of the renter nonrespondents will be added back into the sample for Renters Round 4 scheduled to start in summer 2007. Hard refusals and ineligible cases (i.e., deceased cases) from both the Renters Round 3 and Soft Refusal Study will be excluded from the Round 4 sample. The Renters Round 4 beginning sample will consist of 1,448 renter cases.

**Table 5-7. Renters Round 3 and Soft Refusal Panel Data**

Renters Round 3 and Soft Refusal Panel	Number
Completed interviews	1,046
Completed interviews from Renters Round 3	970
Completed interviews from Soft Refusal Renters	76

## 5.7 Plans for Future Waves

RTI will conduct Round 4 CATI interviews for the Renters Study. RTI will attempt to interview those respondents who completed the Round 3 telephone interview in 2006. Data collection is scheduled to begin in June 2007. RTI will also be conducting Wave 5 of the Homeowners Study beginning in June 2007. This wave of data collection will be conducted by phone.



## **6. PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

During this project, RTI understood that effective project management and technical excellence were equally crucial to providing high-quality products that fulfilled contractual obligations within the established budget and schedule. To this end, RTI followed policies and procedures put in place to ensure that project performance was at the level expected by UNC-CCC. Continuous communications allowed UNC-CCC to provide feedback on RTI's technical accomplishments and modify work plans and/or budgets as necessary.

On August 25, 2005, project staff from UNC-CCC, UNC-SRU, and RTI attended an annual review meeting that covered results from the prior year and plans for the upcoming year, calendar year 2006. During this meeting, the pending deliverables and project schedule were also reviewed. This was the first of many in-person and telephone meetings among UNC-CCC, UNC-SRU, and RTI. RTI understood that clear lines of authority and communication were critical to ensure rapid response, efficient operation, maintenance of high-quality standards, and an overall successful project.

During the Round 3 Renters Study (and the latter Soft Refusal Sample data collection effort), RTI submitted monthly progress reports with the corresponding invoices to keep UNC-CCC apprised of the project's status regarding both work accomplished and financial status.

RTI worked closely with UNC-CCC and UNC-SRU through weekly conference calls and onsite meetings as needed. These opportunities for communication were critical to facilitate resolution to project barriers. Two examples of the efforts to facilitate these resolutions follow.

### **6.1 Implementation of the Soft Refusal Sample Work Efforts**

Panel retention through 2005 on both the UNC-SRU's Owners CATI Panel and RTI's Renters CATI Panel were both lower than anticipated and there were concerns that both panels would be at levels less than desired heading into the final 2 years of data collection. After detailed discussions and planning involving UNC-CCC, UNC-SRU, the Ford Foundation, and RTI, it was decided in June 2006 to implement a Soft Refusal Sample data collection effort. This effort consisted of following up prior year nonrespondents (excluding hard refusals) to both the Owners and Renters Studies. This sample consisted of 1,237 owners cases and 330 renters cases. Interviews were obtained from 262 owners (22.4 percent conversion rate) and 76 renters (25.0 percent conversion rate). This effort allowed us to retain 338 respondents who otherwise would have been lost from the panels.

### **6.2 RTI Field Tracing efforts for UNC-SRU Owners Study**

The UNC-SRU telephone panel had a large number of owners who could not be located or for whom the phone contact information was inadequate. UNC-CCC, UNC-SRU, the Ford

Foundation, and RTI decided to continue the usual TOPS tracing and the new (in 2005) field tracing component. After RTI implemented the joint UNC-CCC/UNC-SRU/RTI plan to locate the unlocatable owners through expanded TOPS tracing and field tracing, RTI TOPS staff produced locating leads on 346 out of the 375 total traced. These leads resulted in the completion of CATI interviews with 121 owners. RTI field tracing staff also followed up on leads that resulted in the completion of 85 field-traced interviews. These efforts accounted for 206 additional owners completions in 2006.

This collaborative approach to project management led to the successful completion of data collection by both UNC-SRU and RTI and maintained both the renters and owners panels at the desired level heading towards the 2007 data collection efforts (Round 4 Renters and Wave 5 Owners).

## 7. DATA FILES AND DOCUMENTATION

The data files for the Round 3 Renters Study and the data from the RTI Soft Refusal data collection effort were both collected with a follow-up CATI. The data were collected into a Soft Refusal dataset and a Renters dataset, and corresponding codebooks were developed for each dataset.

Data files and documentation consisted of four primary activities:

- interim data delivery—delivery of preliminary datasets to UNC-CCC for review and comments;
- codebook work—preparation and delivery of a preliminary and ultimately a final codebook for the Renters Study dataset and the Soft Refusal dataset to UNC-CCC for review and comments;
- final data delivery; and
- user manual production—creation of a manual containing the full text of the interview instrument, with skip pattern and path specifications; the name and description of the corresponding variables in the SAS dataset; and descriptions of the calculations of derived variables.

This section provides a detailed description of all of the previously mentioned data files and documentation work in the Round 3 Renters Study and the Soft Refusal data collection efforts.

### 7.1 Data Extraction

The instrument for the CATI portion of the study was programmed using Blaise, a survey processing system. Data collected by the CATI program was stored in the proprietary Blaise database. Blaise tools were used to extract the data from the Blaise database to a flat text file. Additional Blaise tools were used to create the SAS code necessary to read the flat text file and produce SAS datasets. The final data delivery files were created using a system of files and programs—Access databases, SAS code, and the SAS datasets. Variables were renamed, labeled, and manipulated to produce a code book to accompany each dataset. Each codebook includes either a frequency count of the valid variable values (discrete variables) or a mean and standard deviation (continuous variables). Derived variables were generated per client specifications.

### 7.2 Interim Data Delivery

Preliminary datasets and codebooks were delivered to UNC-CCC for review and comments. These datasets included

- Data collected for the Soft Refusal Sample. This effort included several Spanish cases collected during this effort due to a lack of available bilingual interviewers at UNC-SRU. The Soft Refusal dataset contained 338 cases and was first delivered January 24, 2007.

- Data from renters who completed an interview for the Renters Survey. The Renters Study dataset at preliminary delivery contained 964 cases. The Renters Study dataset was first delivered December 4, 2006.

Preliminary codebooks for the Renters and Soft Refusal Sample datasets were also delivered to UNC-CCC for review and comments. These codebooks showed the name of each variable and a brief description of the variable. For discrete variables (e.g., gender), the codebooks showed the frequency of each response. For continuous variables (e.g., monthly rent), the codebooks showed the mean and standard deviation of each response. The codebooks also showed the unweighted frequency of “don’t know” and “refused” responses for all variables.

Each variable was given a label (brief description) that will appear in listings generated by SAS procedures (e.g., proc contents and proc freq). Variables whose values are codes were linked with SAS formats to interpret the codes. For example, if the possible codes and responses and codes were “Male = 1” and “Female = 2,” the SAS format will cause the “Male” and “Female” to be printed instead of “1” and “2.” Frequencies of categorical items are included in the codebook for the final dataset of completed Renters Study and Soft Refusal interviews.

### **7.3 Final Data Delivery**

The final Renters Study dataset and the Soft Refusal Sample dataset of those who completed an interview were delivered to UNC-CCC on January 24, 2007. The SAS Round 3 Renters dataset contained 970 observations and 1,093 variables. The Soft Refusal dataset contained 338 observations and 1,695 variables. The total number of variables for the two datasets differs due the differences in the sets of questions asked of each group.

### **7.4 User Manual**

In addition to the codebook for the final dataset, RTI prepared a user manual that contains

- the full text of the interview instrument, with skip pattern and path specifications, and the name of the corresponding variable in the SAS dataset;
- a list of variables renamed to create consistency between the data collected during different interview waves; and
- a description of the calculation of the derived variables.

## **8. CONCLUSION**

This report covers Round 3 of a planned five-round Renters Study data collection effort. Additionally, it covers field tracing and in-home interviews for Wave 4 of a planned six-wave Owners Study data collection effort. Additionally, RTI will be assuming the data collection responsibilities from UNC-SRU for Waves 5 and 6 of the Owners Study. Lastly, it covers the Soft Refusal Sample, a sample of former respondents to the Renters and Owners Panels who did not participate in the respective studies in 2005.

RTI produced and delivered to UNC-CCC in September 2004 a Renters Study Round 2 and Owners Study Wave 3 Final Report. The current plan is to produce an annual Final Report for each of five rounds of the Renters Study and Waves 5 and 6 of the Owners Study and a final cumulative Project Summary Report covering all five rounds of the Renters Study and the all RTI completed work on the Owners Study.

In summary, RTI's data collection efforts for the Round 3 Renters Study began in May 2006, and the Soft Refusal Sample data collection effort began in August 2006. Both data collection efforts ended on December 22, 2006. A total of 970 Round 3 Renters Study interviews and 338 Soft Refusal Sample interviews (262 owners and 76 renters) were completed.

### **8.1 Round 3 Renters Study Data Collection**

Round 2 of the Renters Study produced 1,158 completed in-person interviews. At the beginning of Round 3, UNC-CCC and RTI decided to include all of the Round 2 completed interviews in the CATI sample frame for Round 3. The starting renter panel for the Round 3 telephone interview consisted of 1,158 cases. The original plan for Round 3 Renters Study data collection called for starting Round 3 with 1,427 cases and achieving an 80 percent response rate resulting in 1,142 completes. The actual outcome was a starting workload of 1,158 cases and an 84 percent response rate. This response rate, although better than anticipated, still resulted in 172 fewer completed interviews than anticipated. The inclusion of the 76 renter completes from Soft Refusal Sample (see discussion in Section 8.3) brings the total renter cases interviewed for Round 3 to 1,046 (970 + 76), which represents 92 percent of the originally targeted volume of interviews.

As previously mentioned, the planned ending point for the Round 3 Renters Study was 1,142 completed interviews, and we fell 96 interviews short of that goal. The difference was primarily attributable to the continuing high unable-to-locate rate. Renters are a highly mobile group, and we have continued intensive tracing efforts via telephone, Internet search engines and databases, and finally through field tracing.

### **8.2 Future Rounds of Renters Study Data Collection**

Round 4 is scheduled for CATI administration starting in mid-June 2007. RTI staff will continue to implement the tracing protocol outlined in our Locating and Tracing Plan, which

was submitted to UNC-CCC on October 28, 2004. After in-depth discussions, we decided to increase the level of effort for interactive tracing from 1 to 2 hours, as needed, for each to-be-traced case. This increase in level of effort was implemented successfully for Round 3 and will be continued for Round 4 of the Renters Study data collection.

In order to complete Round 5 with the desired 1,000 respondents at study completion, we would have to achieve a 97.75 percent response rate for the remaining two rounds of the study. This goal is not realistic given the highly mobile population, combined with the lack of SSNs for a substantial portion of the current panel. This decision point was revisited at the end of Round 3 Renters Study data collection, and we have acknowledged that we will achieve a lower than desired number of completed interviews at the end of Round 5. Nevertheless, we will continue to use our extensive retention efforts to maximize the number of completed interviews at the end of Round 5.

### **8.3 Soft Refusal Sample Data Collection**

Data collection for the Round 2 Renters (data collected by RTI) and the Wave 3 Owners (data collected by UNC-SRU) both fell short of initially targeted goals for completions. These shortfalls occurred primarily because of a move rate/unable-to-locate rate that was higher than anticipated and a refusal rate for this round/wave that was also higher than expected.

In August 2006, the Ford Foundation and UNC-CCC decided to revisit some of the nonresponse renter and owner cases from previous rounds and waves. To maintain sample sizes between each wave of the study, UNC-CCC asked RTI to conduct interviews with renters and owners who failed to participate in previous rounds or waves of the study. For a longitudinal study to be successful, the panel between each round/wave of the study must be maintained. The renters and owners selected for the Soft Refusal Sample were a part of this panel for one of the following reasons: (1) they declined to participate during the last wave, (2) RTI was unable to locate the owner or renter during the last wave, or (3) UNC-SRU was unable to reach the owner during the last wave.

This effort consisted of loading 1,567 total nonresponse cases from previous rounds/waves of which 90 were determined to be ineligible. A total of 338 interviews were completed consisting of 76 renters and 262 owner interviews.

### **8.4 Incorporation of the Soft Refusal Sample Competes into Future Rounds of Renters and Owners Study Data Collection**

RTI will conduct Round 4 CATI interviews for the Renters Study and Wave 5 CATI interviews for the Owners Study in 2007. RTI will attempt to interview those respondents who completed the Round 3 or Soft Refusal Sample telephone interview in 2006. These 262 completed owners cases and 76 completed renters cases will be loaded back into the master sample frame that is set to begin data collection in June 2007.

## **8.5 Wave 4 Owners Study Data Collection**

UNC-SRU completed this data collection effort except for the previously mentioned 262 completed Owners cases from the Soft Refusal Sample. These 262 completes will be appended to the Wave 4 Owners dataset (from UNC-SRU) and will also be part of the Wave 5 Owners sample to be fielded in June 2007.

## **8.6 Future Waves of Owners Study Data Collection**

Wave 5 is scheduled for CATI administration starting in mid-June 2007. In June 2006, UNC-CCC/Ford Foundation requested that RTI provide an estimate of costs to complete Waves 5 and 6 of the Owners Study (UNC-SRU had completed Wave 4). It was later decided that this data collection work would be transferred to RTI for the last 2 years of the study.

RTI staff will begin work on the cases UNC-SRU sent to us upon the completion of their Wave 4 telephone interview work in late 2006 and early 2007; we will add into this sample the Soft Refusal Sample completions previously mentioned in Sections 8.3 and 8.4.

## **8.7 Round 4 Renters, Soft Refusal Sample, and Wave 4 Owners Study—RTI Tracing/Panel Retention Efforts**

RTI completed both batch and interactive tracing and field tracing for Round 3 Renters Study telephone data collections efforts. For the interactive tracing, RTI traced a total of 425 cases and achieved a locate rate of 87.3 percent. These located cases were crucial to achieving the 84 percent response rate for the Renters Study in Round 3. For the field tracing, RTI traced a total of 161 cases and located/interviewed 57 of them for a locate rate of 35.4 percent.

RTI completed both batch and interactive tracing and field tracing for the Soft Refusal Sample telephone data collection efforts. For the interactive tracing, RTI traced a total of 690 cases and achieved a locate rate of 84.8 percent. These located cases were crucial to achieving the 338 completed interviews for the Soft Refusal Sample. For the field tracing, RTI traced a total of 74 cases and located/interviewed 3 of them; the interview was low mainly because these cases were both previous refusals and previous respondents who didn't refuse but avoided our telephone interviewers.

RTI completed both batch and interactive tracing and field tracing for UNC-SRU's Wave 4 Owners Study telephone data collection efforts. For the interactive tracing, RTI traced a total of 375 cases for UNC-SRU and achieved a locate rate of 92.3 percent. UNC-SRU completed interviews with 121 of these located owners. For the field tracing, RTI had field staff trace cases sent by UNC-SRU; as a result they completed interviews with 85 of these field-located owners.

Overall, the RTI tracing/panel retention efforts significantly increased the number of completed interviews for the Round 3 Renters Study, the Soft Refusal Sample, and the Wave 4 Owners Study.

## **8.8 Summary**

The Round 3 Renters Study, the Soft Refusal Sample, and the Owners Study panel retention successes in 2006 can be attributed in large part to changes and enhancements that RTI made in conjunction with UNC-CCC (and UNC-SRU) to the original data collection procedures to overcome barriers as they were encountered. These changes and enhancements were defined earlier in this report and led to the previously documented successes. Panel retention was the most significant continuing data collection barrier encountered on the Renters and Owners Panels. The extensive tracing efforts and the concept of the Soft Refusal Sample were devised and implemented in order to maximize the number of completed interviews for each of the respective panels.

Additionally, RTI kept in close communication with UNC-CCC and responded to their need to ensure that project tasks were executed in a timely and cost-effective manner. RTI also worked closely throughout 2006 with UNC-SRU on batch and interactive tracing and field tracing of their Wave 4 Owners Study telephone data collection cases.

Overall, the lessons learned and problems encountered and overcome in previous rounds of the Renters Study and previous waves of the Owners Study increased our success in the data collection efforts in Round 3 of the Renters Study and the Soft Refusal Sample. The newly learned lessons from 2006 data collection efforts continued to add to our solid foundation for future successful data collection efforts in Rounds 4 and 5 of the Renters Study and Waves 5 and 6 of the Owners Study.