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Written advice for Government Statistician regarding the potential risks to Māori Data Sovereignty and Governance if basing the census primarily on administrative datasets.

The risk posed by the administrative dataset are aspects of cultural identity including iwi, descent, whānau structures may not be included in the administrative data, meaning Stats NZ cannot accurately measure Māori population. This does not adhere to Whanaungatanga, being accountable for where the data has been derived from. Instead of prioritizing Māori needs and aspirations, data is collected for admin purposes, which is not adhering to whakapapa.

The impact could be the collection and use of the data does not uphold dignity of Māori people, violating Manaakitanga. Bias within administrative data may stigmatize or blame Māori when the fault is systemic failure. Minorities are underrepresented in government systems due again to systemic failure. Māori could be swamped by the majority, becoming more marginalized and missing out on the benefit of the census.

A solution to the issues outlined would be one that follows all Māori Data Sovereignty principles. All aspects of cultural identity would need to be recorded so that the Māori population can be accurately represented. Bias in the data would need to be accounted for, or eliminated, so Māori do not experience unfair stigmatism, which could lead to further marginalization.