



FROM THE U.S. CENSUS BUREAU  
AND THE RESEARCH AND INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY ADMINISTRATION,  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Dear Company Official:

Your establishment has been selected to participate in the 2007 Commodity Flow Survey. This survey is conducted every 5 years as a part of the Census Bureau's Economic Census.

Transportation is one of the most important issues in the United States today. Policymakers and analysts need reliable information to guide improvements to our highways, railroads, and other transportation systems. The Commodity Flow Survey is critical to expanding our understanding of the economic, energy, safety, and security impacts of transportation.

**Your response to the enclosed survey form is mandatory** (required by Title 13, United States code, sections 131,193, and 224). This same law also ensures that the information you provide is kept confidential and is seen only by individuals sworn to protect the confidentiality of your information. Additionally, your information is only used to develop summary statistics that do not reveal the name or individual activities of your company.

You will receive one questionnaire during each calendar quarter of 2007. You will be asked to complete basic information on a *sample* of your outbound shipments during a designated one-week period for each quarter.

Instructions to complete the survey and a commodity code booklet are included in this packet. Additional information is provided on the back of this letter and on the Census Bureau Internet site at [www.census.gov/cfs](http://www.census.gov/cfs). If you have any questions, please call 1-800-772-7851 between 8:30 am and 5:00 pm, Eastern Time to speak with a Census Bureau representative.

The Commodity Flow Survey is conducted through a partnership between the Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce, and the Bureau of Transportation Statistics, Research and Innovative Technology Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation.

Thank you for your participation in this survey. We realize that your time is valuable and greatly appreciate your time and effort.

Sincerely,

Charles L. Kinnannon  
Director  
U.S. Census Bureau

John A. Bobo, Jr.  
Acting Administrator  
Research and Innovative Technology  
Administration

Enclosures



**U.S. DEPARTMENT  
OF TRANSPORTATION**  
Research and  
Innovative Technology  
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## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **What is the purpose of this survey?**

The Commodity Flow Survey (CFS) provides crucial statistics not available elsewhere, including commodities shipped, their weight and value, all modes of transportation used, origin and destination of shipments, and average miles per shipment.

### **Who uses this information?**

The information is used by the U.S. Department of Transportation, other Federal and state government agencies, and transportation policy planners to make informed decisions about our transportation system and our highway infrastructure. This information is also used to allocate the billions of dollars needed to maintain and improve highways, railroads, and other transportation systems.

### **Do my shipments really matter?**

Yes. All shipments, regardless of size or type, have an impact on our transportation system. Thus, in order to get an accurate measure of shipment practices, we need information about all shipments.

### **Will my data be kept confidential?**

Yes. Title 13, USC, also guarantees that your data are kept confidential and cannot be used for any legal process, including taxation, regulation, or investigation. No other governmental agency has access to your data. In addition, the data you provide are used solely for statistical purposes and will be published only in summary form that does not reveal the identity or operations of your company.

### **Is the survey mandatory?**

Yes. Responding to CFS is mandatory under the authority of Title 13, United States Code (USC) and there are penalties for your failure to report.

### **Where can I find out more about this survey?**

Additional information about the Commodity Flow Survey is found at <http://www.census.gov/cfs>. You can also contact the Census Bureau with further questions. Phone: 1-800-772-7851 between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Eastern Time.