The Census Bureau plans to conduct additional research under the generic clearance for questionnaire pretesting research (OMB number 0607-0725). We will be conducting usability testing of the Internet reporting application for the 2007 Survey of Business Owners and Self-Employed Persons (SBO), which is conducted every five years as part of the economic census program. The SBO provides the only comprehensive, regularly-collected source of information on selected economic and demographic characteristics for businesses and their individual owners by gender, Hispanic or Latino origin, and race. The electronic version of the SBO will be available to respondents in June, 2008.

Usability testing of the Internet application will focus on issues such as the layout of questions and screens, the navigation within and between screens, edits, and submission. The Internet system used to collect data electronically has been recently revised, and the redesigned screens and updated functionality will also be tested. Enclosed are example screens from the electronic version of the 2007 SBO.

From January, 2008, through March, 2008, we will conduct two rounds of usability testing. The first round, conducted in January and February, will include 24 visits in three major U.S. cities to be determined. The second round of testing in March will include 16 visits in two major U.S. cities to be determined. Businesses will vary in size, industry, number of owners, and combinations of gender, race, and ethnicity ownership. In addition, some companies will be single units and some will be part of multi-unit enterprises.

Interviews will be conducted at the business site by staff from the Establishment Survey Methods Staff within the Census Bureau's Office of Statistical Methods and Research for Economic Programs. Subject area specialists from the Census Bureau will accompany the usability researcher on most, if not all, of the interviews. They will assist with respondent debriefing, especially in cases where additional clarification of the subject matter is required. Interviews will be audio recorded with the participants' permission, to aid researchers in accurately reporting findings and recommendations.

After businesses are recruited, participants will receive follow-up reminders about their appointments. Participants will be informed that their response is voluntary and that the information they provide is confidential and will be seen only by Census Bureau special sworn employees involved in the research project.   We will not be providing monetary incentives to participants in this study.

We estimate that it will be necessary to interview only one respondent at each company. We estimate the length of the interviews will average 1 hour. Thus, the maximum estimated burden for this research is 40 hours.

The contact person for questions regarding data collection and statistical aspects of the design of this research is:

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Sincerely yours,

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Enclosure