

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

A. JUSTIFICATION

1. Necessity of the Information Collected

The purpose of this request for review is for the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) to obtain clearance for the Volunteer Supplement to the Current Population Survey (CPS), scheduled to be conducted in September 2007. The proposed supplement questions concerning volunteers are shown in Attachment A. As part of the CPS, the supplement will survey individuals ages 15 and over from a nationally representative sample of approximately 60,000 U.S. households. The BLS is continuing this project at the request of the Corporation for National and Community Service.

The September 2007 instrument includes some revisions made since the September 2006 instrument. A probe on volunteering through religious organizations, that was added in September 2006, was removed. A question asking whether a volunteer had done any volunteer work more than 120 miles from home but within the United States was added; for those responding "yes," follow up questions were added to determine what share of their volunteering it comprised and in what state or states it took place. Finally, the response categories to the question about time spent volunteering abroad were changed to reflect a share of the person's volunteer activity rather than a number of weeks. These changes were made at the request of Corporation for National and Community Service.

The CPS has been the principal source of the official Government statistics on employment and unemployment for over 60 years. Collection of labor force data through the CPS helps BLS meet its mandate as set forth in Title 29, United States Code, Sections 1 through 9 (Attachment B).

2. Needs and Uses

The Volunteer Supplement provides information on the total number of individuals in the U.S. involved in unpaid volunteer activities, measures of the frequency or intensity with which individuals volunteer, types of organizations that facilitate volunteerism, activities in which volunteers participate, and the prevalence of volunteering more than 120 miles from home or abroad.

Because the Volunteer Supplement is part of the CPS, the same detailed demographic information collected in the CPS is available about respondents to the Supplement. Thus, comparisons of volunteer activities are possible across respondent characteristics including sex, race, age, and educational. It is intended

that the Supplement will be conducted annually, if resources permit, in order to gauge changes in volunteerism.

In his January 2002 State of the Union address to the nation, President Bush called for all Americans to devote 4,000 hours of volunteer service during their lifetimes. To gauge the effectiveness of its efforts to promote and facilitate volunteer activities, the USA Freedom Corps asked BLS to design supplementary questions on volunteering to be attached to the CPS on an annual basis. The CPS Volunteer Supplement provides estimates of the volunteer population in the U.S. and the types of volunteer activities and organizations in which these individuals are participating. The BLS has found wide interest in volunteer data among economists, sociologists, journalists, government policy makers, nonprofit organizations, and the general public.

BLS published a summary of the findings from the initial September 2002 data collection in a news release issued in December 2002, and in a *Monthly Labor Review* article published in August 2003. The news release for the September 2006 Supplement (the most recent) was published in January 2007. (See attachment C.)

3. Use of Information Technology

The Census Bureau, which conducts the actual collection of the CPS data—designs the sample, conducts the interviews, trains and monitors the interviewers, and conducts a continuing quality control program—uses methods designed to keep respondent burden as low as possible. These interviewing methods, which include the use of computer-assisted interviewing, were improved as part of a complete redesign of the CPS implemented in January 1994. The redesign was preceded by years of wide-ranging discussions, research, and large-scale field tests aimed at long-range improvements in the survey. The CPS and all of its supplements, including the Volunteer Supplement, are collected 100% electronically by using Computer Assisted Telephone Interviews and Computer Assisted Personal Interviews (CATI/CAPI). With the collection of Basic CPS data for January 2007, an updated computer-assisted interviewing software, called Blaise, was introduced for running the data collection instrument. Blaise is a Windows-based survey processing system developed by Statistics Netherlands and licensed by Westat in the United States. This software replaced the CASES software used in the survey since January 1999. We designed the questions in the Volunteer Supplement to obtain the required information with minimal respondent burden.

4. Efforts to Identify Duplication

Other than the CPS Volunteer Supplement, there is currently no other comprehensive Federal data source on volunteer activities in the U.S. The American Time Use Survey (ATUS) provides some information on

volunteer activities done “yesterday” (the day before the interview); however, it is not a substitute for the CPS. The CPS supplement on volunteering has the clear advantages of a larger sample size, a longer reference period, and more timely release of data than the ATUS.

From 1988 to 2001, Independent Sector--a private, nonprofit group--conducted a periodic survey of about 4,000 adults in the U.S. The survey was titled, “Giving and Volunteering in the United States.” Survey questions focused on the level of giving and volunteering of individuals, and the organizations that benefited from those activities. Public attitudes and motivations for volunteering were also explored in the survey.

5. Minimizing Burden

The data are collected from households; their collection does not involve any small businesses or other small entities.

6. Consequences of Less Frequent Collection

As the only current, comprehensive, Federal data collection on volunteers, the CPS Volunteer Supplement is needed to measure the number of volunteers and identify the types of organizations in which they are involved. The Corporation for National and Community Service needs these data to gauge the success of current and future efforts.

7. Special Circumstances

There are no special circumstances. The CPS data are collected in a manner that is consistent with the guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.5.

8. Consultation Outside the Agency/Federal Register notice

No comments were received as a result of the Federal Register notice published in Volume 72, No. 37 on February 26, 2007.

The following person has been in continuous consultation with BLS concerning the development of the survey:

Census Bureau

Maria Reed
Demographic Surveys Division
Census Bureau
Department of Commerce
(301) 763-3806

In addition to the above, a statement soliciting comments for improving CPS data is prominently placed in all Census Bureau publications that cite CPS data. A similar statement is included in the technical documentation that accompanies the microdata files. Finally, the advance letter (Attachment D) provides respondents with an address at the Census Bureau to which they can submit general comments on the survey, specifically those regarding respondent burden.

9. Paying Respondents

The Census Bureau does not make any payments or provide any gifts to individuals participating in the CPS.

10. Assurance of Confidentiality

The Census Bureau will collect the supplemental data in compliance with the Privacy Act of 1974 and OMB Circular A-130. Each sample household will receive an advance letter (Attachment D) approximately one week before the start of the initial CPS interview. The letter includes the information required by the Privacy Act of 1974, explains the voluntary nature of the survey, and states the estimated time required for participating in the survey. Field representatives must ask each respondent if he/she received the advance letter and, if not, must provide a copy of the letter to each respondent and allow sufficient time for him/her to read the contents. Also, interviewers provide households with the pamphlet "How the Census Bureau Keeps Your Information Confidential," which further states the confidentiality assurances associated with this data collection effort and the Census Bureau's past performance in assuring confidentiality (Attachment E). All information given by respondents to Census Bureau employees is held in strict confidence under Title 13, United States Code, Section 9 (Attachment F). Each Census Bureau employee has taken an oath to that effect and is subject to a jail penalty and/or substantial fine if he/she discloses any information given to him/her.

11. Justification for Sensitive Questions

No sensitive questions are asked in this supplement.

12. Estimate of Respondent Burden

The estimated respondent burden for the September 2007 Volunteer Supplement is 5,300 hours. This is based on an average respondent burden of approximately 3 minutes for each of the approximately 106,000 individuals about whom data is collected in the supplement. The estimated number of respondents assumes the same number that were interviewed in the 2006 supplement. The burden estimate is based on the time required to answer the supplement questions in prior years, as well as the time required to answer the additional questions added in 2007. The actual respondent burden is dependent upon the size of the approximately 55,000

households that complete CPS interviews and the characteristics of their occupants. The overall annualized dollar cost to the respondents for collection of the supplement data is \$62,328. This estimate assumes a wage rate for all respondents of \$11.76 an hour, the median hourly earnings for workers paid by the hour in 2006.

13. Estimate of Cost Burden

- a. Capital start-up costs: \$0
- b. Total operation and maintenance and purchase of services: \$0

There are no costs to survey respondents other than the time it takes to respond to the questionnaire. Respondents answer questions based on personal experience, which requires no record-keeping or other expenses.

14. Cost to the Federal Government

The total estimated cost of the September 2007 supplement is \$629,000. This cost is to be borne by the Corporation for National and Community Service and represents the charge by the Census Bureau (\$609,000) and the Bureau of Labor Statistics (\$20,000) for conducting the Volunteer Supplement. It includes question testing, programming the questionnaire, developing interviewer training materials, collecting data, processing survey microdata, and developing public use files.

15. Changes in Respondent Burden

The September 2007 Volunteer Supplement is a revision of a currently approved collection. In prior years, respondent burden estimates were based on initial testing of the survey and on 2004 data collection. The estimates for the September 2007 supplement are based on September 2006 data collection and the estimated time necessary to complete the new questions. Volunteers are predicted to need about 8 minutes to complete the supplement, while non-volunteers will only need about 1 minute. If 29 percent of respondents are volunteers and 71 percent are non-volunteers, we estimate burden to be about 5,300 hours.

16. Time Schedule for Information Collection and Publication

The September 2007 CPS, of which this supplement is a part, will be conducted during the week of September 16-22, 2007. Processing of this supplement will begin in October 2007. The results of the survey will appear first as a press release in late 2007.

17. Request to Not Display Expiration Date

The Census Bureau does not wish to display the assigned expiration date of the information collection because the instrument is automated and the respondent, therefore, would never see the date. The advance letter sent to households by the Census Bureau contains Census's OMB clearance number for the CPS and Census's version of the failure to comply notice. (See attachment D) Copies of this advance letter are stockpiled by the Census Bureau for use as needed; changes to the letter would make the current inventory of letters unusable.

18. Exceptions to the Certification

There are no exceptions to the certification.