Supporting Statement for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

OMB Control Number 1028-0068
Ferrous Metals Surveys
Expiration Date: January 31, 2008 (13 forms)

TERMS OF CLEARANCE: The current sample design for the Iron and Steel Scrap and Pig Iron canvass is not a probability sample, has not been updated or revised in the past 10 years, nor has USGS been able to measure estimation error. USGS has agreed to examine the feasibility for redesigning the sample for the Iron and Steel Scrap and Pig Iron or using high quality external data to provide a measure of estimation error in this collection. USGS will report back to OMB with these plans or a justification for not changing this collection when resubmitting this ICR.

NOTE: The Iron and Steel Scrap and Pig Iron canvass is now conducted as a complete census with data imputed for all nonresponses using a variety of techniques.

Specific Instructions

B. Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods

The agency should be prepared to justify its decision not to use statistical methods in any case where such methods might reduce burden or improve accuracy of results. When Item 17 on the OMB Form 83-I is checked "Yes", the following documentation should be included in the Supporting Statement to the extent that it applies to the methods proposed:

1. Describe (including a numerical estimate) the potential respondent universe and any sampling or other respondent selection method to be used. Data on the number of entities (e.g., establishments, State and local government units, households, or persons) in the universe covered by the collection and in the corresponding sample are to be provided in tabular form for the universe as a whole and for each of the strata in the proposed sample. Indicate expected response rates for the collection as a whole. If the collection had been conducted previously, include the actual response rate achieved during the last collection.

All the canvasses in this information collection are conducted as a complete census. The total frame for all the canvasses is 1,307 respondents. No sampling is performed. On average, 76% of establishments respond.

2. Describe the procedures for the collection of information including:
   * Statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection,
   * Estimation procedure,
   * Degree of accuracy needed for the purpose described in the justification,

* Unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures, and
* Any use of periodic (less frequent than annual) data collection cycles to reduce burden.

None of the canvasses employ sampling techniques. In some cases, individual establishments, by mutual agreement, have converted to reporting on an annual, rather than a monthly basis to reduce their burden. For those establishments, a monthly response is imputed from their annual response. Data are imputed for all non-responses. For the large majority of the published statistics, the high response rate and good imputation methodology used justify a maximum expected error of no more than plus or minus 5%. Industry acceptance of these canvasses and response to the USGS publication of the data continue to be extremely positive.

3. Describe methods to maximize response rates and to deal with issues of non-response. The accuracy and reliability of information collected must be shown to be adequate for intended uses. For collections based on sampling, a special justification must be provided for any collection that will not yield "reliable" data that can be generalized to the universe studied.

Two weeks after the initial request, establishments not responding receive a second request for information. Those establishments that still do not respond are contacted by telephone. For the larger establishments that do not reply, special efforts are made to elicit a response. Data are imputed for all non-responses by using a variety of techniques. For example, a non-responding establishment's prior reported data are used with industry trend figures and any available measure of establishment size, such as Mine Safety and Health Administration employee-hours data, to generate imputed values.

4. Describe any tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken. Testing is encouraged as an effective means of refining collections of information to minimize burden and improve utility. Tests must be approved if they call for answers to identical questions from 10 or more respondents. A proposed test or set of tests may be submitted for approval separately or in combination with the main collection of information.

Periodic investigations have been performed to determine if the published canvass data are meeting our customers' needs. Many of the USGS information customers are also businesses that supply our data. The USGS is in frequent contact with companies by way of industry associations and conferences. In addition, suggested changes to USGS data collection methods that might facilitate or ease the respondent's burden are sought as a part of non-response follow-up telephone contacts. At present, no formal tests are in progress that would require clearance.

5. Provide the name and telephone number of individuals consulted on statistical aspects of the design and the name of the agency unit, contractor(s), grantee(s), or other person(s) who will actually collect and/or analyze the information for the agency.

For further information concerning this information collection, please contact:
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