

Part B
Technical Evaluations Series:

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AND FORUMS

OMB Control Number 1029-0114

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.*

The respondent universe is composed of approximately 1053 customers. These represent the entire universe of customers who received significant technical assistance or technology transfer. Because this population was relatively small, the entire base of customers was given an opportunity to respond to the survey. The following table summarizes the technical assistance and technology transfer surveys sent, received and the response rate.

Summary of Tech Customer Surveys for FY 2006

Form Name	Number of Surveys Sent	Number of Responses	Response Rate
Technical Assistance	162	162	100%

Technical Transfer	562	336	60%
Forum Evaluation	115	72	63%
AVS Technical Assistance	214	146	68%
Total	1053	716	68%

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.*

OSM employed personal contact, electronic mail, fax and standard mail to distribute and receive the responses to the surveys, depending upon the situation and the customer preference. As the entire population was surveyed, no statistical methods were used to select a sample population. A survey of the entire population was necessary for a number of reasons. The variety in the types of technical assistance or technology transfer received by the customers is such that a selection of a statistically representative sample reflecting the quality of service in all of the types of assistance would be difficult if not impossible. Secondly, the overall population of customers receiving the assistance was small enough that sampling would have created more difficulty in determining results than a survey of the entire population. Thirdly, because the response rate for the surveys varies based upon how the surveys are distributed, the means of response chosen by the customer, and the type of technical assistance or technology transfer received, a statistically valid sample could not be guaranteed. In order to enhance response rate and to minimize burden, the surveys were provided to customers as close as possible to when the technical assistance or technology transfer was received, and a single customer was surveyed no more than once annually.

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.

OSM utilized various means in an attempt to minimize the burden on respondents and to maximize the response rate. The number and types of questions asked on the surveys were intended to allow for feedback in a simple form. In many cases, opportunities were provided for response in-person to the customer service surveys at the time the technical assistance or technology transfer was provided. In addition, by allowing respondents to use electronic mail, facsimile or standard mail, OSM attempted to maximize the opportunities for response.

Finally, in order to take advantage of new technology and the widespread availability of Internet access, OSM is in the final stages of making each survey form web-based. Once this capability exists, OSM anticipates that response rates may increase significantly.

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.*

OSM does not plan any tests to refine their collection activities at this time.

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.*

OSM's contact person for these forms is John Craynon, Chief, Division of Technical Support [(202) 208-2866]. Mr. Craynon analyzes the responses and provides performance measurement data to OSM's Office of Planning and Evaluation for reporting under the Government Performance and Results Act

(GPRA) .