

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

A. Justification

1. Necessity of Information Collection

The 2007 Census of Law Enforcement Aviation Units will be the first systematic, national-level data collection providing information about law enforcement aviation assets and functions. In general, these units provide valuable airborne support for traditional ground-based police operations. An additional role following the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks is the provision of essential homeland security functions, such as providing critical facility checks of buildings, ports and harbors, public utilities, inland waterways, oil refineries, bridges and spans, water storage/reservoirs, National and/or State monuments, water treatment plants, irrigation facilities, airports, and natural resources. Aviation units are able to accomplish these critical facility checks with far greater efficiency than ground-based personnel, and can routinely incorporate such checks into their regular patrol and support operations. However, little is presently known about the location, available assets and range, personnel, operations, expenditures, and safety records of these units on a National level. It is important to know the location and nature of available assets that could be mobilized in the event of large-scale regional or National emergencies. This information is also critical to law enforcement policy development, planning, and budgeting at all levels of government.

Based on data from the 2003 BJS Law enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics (LEMAS) survey, it is estimated that about 250 law enforcement aviation units are in operation among State and local agencies in the United States. These units operate an estimated 1,000 aircraft, including about 600 helicopters and 450 fixed-wing aircraft. The 2007 Census of Law Enforcement Aviation Units will use this list of aviation units as a starting point, augmented with lists from other available sources, including professional associations such as the Airborne Law Enforcement Association (ALEA) and the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP). The data collection will include detailed items on the functions, personnel, equipment, record keeping, expenditures, and safety records of these units.

The statutory authority to collect these data is derived from Title 42 U.S.C. Section 3732 (Attachment 1), in which the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) is directed to collect and analyze statistical information regarding the operation of the criminal justice system at the Federal, state, and local levels.

2. Uses of Information

The data collected will provide a detailed, national snapshot of State and local law enforcement aviation units and their operations. Statistics generated will be used by police chiefs, sheriffs, legislators, planners, researchers, and others to identify resource needs and priorities in law enforcement aviation. This data collection will inform policy making, planning, and budgeting at all levels of government.

3. Efforts to Minimize Burden

BJS has attempted to minimize the complexity of questions and ensured that terminology conforms to current standard practices in law enforcement aviation. The majority of the items on the questionnaire require dichotomous 'yes/no' type responses. Where detail or continuous numerical items are requested, BJS has attempted to conform with required record keeping by other Federal agencies. For example, aviation units are required by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to maintain records on the flight hours accumulated by existing aircraft. BJS has phrased questions pertaining to the aircraft operated by aviation units in such a way that no additional burden is created, other than entering the numbers already on record per the FAA record keeping requirement.

It is estimated that data collection will take one hour per respondent. The data collection agent will provide for the respondent to submit data through the mail or by fax. Personal telephone interviews will be conducted for nonrespondents.

4. Efforts to Identify Duplication

There will be no duplication of effort based on the nature and scope of this census. The information sought is not attainable from any other data source.

5. Minimizing Burden on Small Businesses

Not applicable. No information will be gathered from small businesses.

6. Consequences of Not Conducting Collection

This data collection will be the only source of national data on law enforcement aviation units. There are no other sources for these data.

7. Special circumstances that would increase respondent burden

There are no special circumstances that would require a respondent to report more than once, report in less than 30 days, retain records over three years, or in any other foreseeable way increase the respondents burden to provide the requested information.

8. Public Comments and Consultations

BJS has consulted with the Airborne Law Enforcement Association (ALEA), the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) Aviation Committee, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) Office of Science and Technology, as well as various members of the criminal justice and law enforcement community, regarding the content, data availability, and the clarity of instructions. Consultants included the following points-of-contact as well as others within their organizations and within their memberships, if applicable (this list is not intended to be exhaustive):

- (1) Stephen J. Ingley
Executive Director
Airborne Law Enforcement Association
411 Aviation Way Ste 200
Frederick, MD 21701
- (2) Michael K. O'Shea
Program Manager
National Institute of Justice Office of Science and Technology
810 Seventh St., NW
Washington, DC 20531
- (3) David Tollett
International Association of Chiefs of Police
Aviation Committee
515 North Washington Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
- (4) Jim DiGiovanna
ALEA Education Program Manager
c/o Airborne Law Enforcement Association
411 Aviation Way Ste 200
Frederick, MD 21701
- (5) Chief Donald L. Shinnamon, Sr.
Director, City of Holly Hill Public Safety
1065 Ridgewood Ave.
Holly Hill, FL 32117

9. Provision of Payments or Gifts to Respondents

Not applicable. The data collection agent will not provide any payment or gift of any type to respondents. Respondents participate in the survey on a voluntary basis.

10. Assurance of Confidentiality

Respondents will be informed that survey participation is voluntary. The data collected are in the public domain and not subject to confidentiality guarantees. All data, except names of individual respondents, will be made available for public use.

11. Justification for Sensitive Questions

There are no questions of a sensitive nature included in the data collection.

12. Estimate of Respondent Burden

The average time required for each agency is one hour. This estimate is based on experience garnered from previous law enforcement surveys, and pre-testing conducted with three aviation units. The total respondent burden is estimated at 250 hours. Respondents will be asked to respond once.

The survey form, in most cases, will be filled out by one person per respondent, equivalent to the GS-15 / 01 level (\$110,363 per year). The cost to the respondent would be about \$53.06 per form. For all respondents combined, the approximate cost would be \$13,265.

13. Estimate of Respondents' Cost Burden

This information collection will require only information that is already generated and maintained by the respondents. There is no additional cost to respondents other than the cost of filling out the survey form.

14. Cost to Federal Government

The total cost to the Federal government for this data collection from among the approximately 250 respondents is estimated at \$250,000 including an estimate of \$230,000 for the data collection agent to carry out the project. Additional costs include Bureau of Justice Statistics staff time (10% of GS-14 salary, \$93822) benefits (33% of salary), and indirect agency costs (20% of salary). .

Office Costs (BJS)

Salaries	\$9,382
Benefits (33%)	3,096
Travel	2,000
Equipment and supplies	1,500
Consultants and contracts	0
Indirect costs (20%)	1876
<i>Subtotal</i>	17,854
Collection costs (grantee)	230,000
Total cost to government	\$247,854

15. Reasons for Change in Burden

The change in burden estimate of 250 hours is entirely due to the fact that this is a new collection.

16. Publication Plans and Schedule

Information collected from law enforcement aviation units will be reported in a Bureau of Justice Statistics bulletin. The data will then be made available to the public through the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data (NACJD), operated by the Inter-university Consortium for

Political and Social Research (ICPSR).

The projected schedule for data collection, publication and data release is as follows:

Preparation and pretesting	Months 1 - 3
Data collection	Months 3 - 8
Data processing/analysis	Months 8 - 12
Publication release	Month 13
Data release to public	Month 13

17. Display of Expiration Date

The expiration date will be shown on the survey form.

18. Exceptions to the Certification Statement

There are no exceptions identified in Item 19, "Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions," of OMB Form 83-I.