

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

A. Justification

- 1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. Identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection. Attach a copy of the appropriate section of each statute and regulation mandating or authorizing the collection of information.**

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) awards funds to agencies in 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and Guam to assist them in operating at least one of the two Occupational Safety and Health Statistics (OSHS) cooperative statistical programs, which have been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) separately, as follows:

| <u>Program</u> | <u>OMB Number</u> | <u>Expiration</u> |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|
| Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses (SOII) | 1220-0045 | 8/31/2007 |
| Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI) | 1220-0133 | 2/29/2008 |

The OSHS Cooperative Agreement (CA) is the vehicle through which State Grant Agencies (SGAs) are awarded funds. The CA package includes application instructions and materials, as well as financial reporting, closeout and other administrative requirements, as spelled out in OMB Circular A-102, *Grants and Cooperative Agreements with State and Local Governments*, and its implementing common rule in 2 CFR 215, and as published by the Department of Labor at 29 CFR Part 97. Federal Assistance is encouraged by Public Law 91-596, The Occupational Safety and Health Act. The OSHS CA application package attached here for approval is representative of the package sent every year to State agencies.

The BLS is seeking OMB approval of a generic OSHS CA package. Under this generic package, the BLS will submit any changes to the program work statements to OMB along with an OMB 83-C form and cover memorandum describing the changes annually. If OMB determines that the changes are substantive, the BLS will publish a 30-day notice in the *Federal Register*, describing the changes and allowing the public an opportunity to comment. At the end of the 30-day period, OMB will act on the 83-C.

- 2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used. Except for a new collection, indicate the actual use the agency has made of the information received from the current collection.**

Information collected under the CA is used by Federal, regional, and national office staffs to determine if the SGAs agree to the deliverables, program performance requirements, and quality assurance requirements spelled out in the program work statements, and to carry out their fiduciary responsibilities to negotiate the CA funding

levels with the SGAs, monitor their financial and programmatic performance, and monitor their adherence to administrative requirements imposed by 29 CFR Part 97 and other grants-management-related regulations. Information collected is also used for planning and budgeting at the Federal level and in meeting Federal-reporting requirements (e.g., those of the Federal Assistance Awards Data System and the Federal Aid to States Report).

- 3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses, and the basis for the decision for adopting this means of collection. Also describe any consideration of using the information technology to reduce burden.**

Although the OSHS CA and related forms are sent to the SGAs in electronic format, the SGAs do not submit their completed applications to the BLS in electronic format. Currently, the BLS requires an original hard copy of the OSHS CA and related forms with the appropriate State Administrator's and Regional Commissioner's signature, but we are working with Department of Labor and Grants.gov staffs to move to an electronic application.

- 4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purpose described in Item 2 above.**

The BLS conducts periodic administrative reviews in order to identify areas of duplication and to determine ways in which administrative requirements can be simplified or streamlined. During these reviews, the BLS regional staffs provide comments that they have received from the States in their regions, if any, as well as their own suggestions for improving grants management systems. Together, with comments and recommendations from national office personnel, areas of change are identified, and policies and procedures are adjusted, where and when appropriate. Administrative changes that are related to the information collected from the grantees may be made, as needed, each fiscal year, and will be provided to the OMB upon request. Information that is collected is directly related to the award of Federal financial assistance to the States each fiscal year and, as such, is specific to the grantee, program requirements delineated in the work statements, and level and fiscal year of funding. Thus, no similar information exists.

- 5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities (Item 5 of OMB Form 83-I), describe any methods used to minimize burden.**

As stated previously, the collection of information involves only SGAs, the designated eligible applicants/recipients of Federal financial assistance for BLS OSHS cooperative statistical programs. No small businesses or other small entities are involved.

6. Describe the consequence to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.

Funds that are appropriated for the cooperative statistical programs as part of the Department of Labor's appropriation are generally one-year funds. Consequently, CAs must be negotiated and awarded every fiscal year. In turn, SGAs must submit their applications annually for the funds available.

If the BLS simply provided funds to the SGAs as grants, our primary concern would be to assure that their cash management was appropriate. In that case, the Federal Cash Transactions Report, Standard Form (SF) 272 (or its equivalent as administered by the Department of Health and Human Services Payment Management System [HHS-PMS]), would provide the needed information. The BLS, however, provides funds to the SGAs by using CAs to assist them in producing State and local area OSHA information and sample data for use in national estimates. Our goal is to obtain the best data we can with the funds that are available. The SF-272 (or PMS-272) provides the aggregate, total amount that was spent by the grantee on the major programs during the reporting period, but no detailed information. To fulfill our fiduciary duty, the BLS must have specific information on the costs for which funds are being spent in order to monitor costs, to have as a guide in negotiating subsequent fiscal years' agreements, and to assess the States' proposed budgets (broken down by cost category in the SF-424A) during the following year.

The demand for data changes; programs are not static. The information in the requested financial reports is vital if we are to make a reasonable estimate of what changes in program content or procedures will cost so that we can make informed judgments on how much of the demand for data we can meet with the available funds. Not collecting financial information, or collecting it less frequently, would jeopardize the financial position of the BLS, as well as its ability to produce the occupational injury and illness information that is needed by other Federal agencies, and by economists, program planners, academicians and others, both inside and outside of the government.

7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner:

- **requiring respondents to report information to the agency more often than quarterly;**
- **requiring respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it;**
- **requiring respondents to submit more than an original and two copies of any document;**
- **requiring respondents to retain records, other than health, medical, government contract, grant-in –aid, or tax records, for more than three years;**

- **in connection with a statistical survey, that is not designed to produce valid and reliable results that can be generalized to the universe of study;**
- **requiring the use of a statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by OMB;**
- **that includes a pledge of confidentiality that is not supported by authority established in statute or regulation, that is not supported by disclosure and data security policies that are consistent with the pledge, or which unnecessarily impedes sharing of data with other agencies for compatible confidential use; or**
- **requiring respondents to submit proprietary trade secrets, or other confidential information unless the agency can demonstrate that it has instituted procedures to protect the information's confidentiality to the extent permitted by law.**

These data will be collected in a manner that is consistent with the guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.5. The application for benefits is collected annually and financial reports are collected quarterly. The respondents are not required to prepare a written response to a collection of information. One original and two copies of the application are required. Respondents are not required to maintain records for more than three years. The collection does not involve a statistical survey and does not involve the use of a statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by the OMB. No pledge of confidentiality is required of the respondent. No proprietary trade secret or other confidential information is required by the grantor agency in connection with this submission.

- 8. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the data and page number of publication in the Federal Register of the agency's notice, required by 5 CFR 1320.8(d), soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB. Summarize public comments received in response to that notice and describe actions taken by the agency in response to these comments. Specifically address comments received on cost and hour burden.**

Describe efforts to consult with persons outside the agency to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instructions and recordkeeping, disclosure, or reporting format (if any), and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported.

Consultation with representatives of those from whom information is to be obtained or those who must compile records should occur at least once every 3 years – even if the collection of information activity is the same as in prior periods. There may be circumstances that may preclude consultation in a specific situation. These circumstances should be explained.

No comments were received as a result of the Federal Register notice published in Volume 71, No. 85 on May 3, 2006.

The BLS consults annually with its six regional offices to improve the data requirements. Instructions are refined and clarified annually, mainly based on suggestions received from representatives of participating State agencies. BLS intends to continue this process annually.

9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than reenumeration of contractor or grantees.

Not applicable; no gifts or payments are involved.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.

Not applicable; no assurance of confidentiality is provided to respondents, because no confidential data are being collected under this information collection.

11. Provide additional justification for any question of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private. This justification should include the reasons why the agency considers the questions necessary, the specific uses to be made of the information, the explanation to be given to persons from whom the information is requested, and any steps to be taken to obtain their consent.

Not applicable; no questions of a sensitive nature are involved.

12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information. The statement should:

- **Indicate the number of respondents, frequency of responses, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated. Unless directed to do so, agencies should not conduct special surveys to obtain information on which to base hour burden estimates. Consultation with a sample (fewer than 10) of potential respondents is desirable. If the hour burden on respondents is expected to vary widely because of differences in activity, size, or complexity, show the range of estimated hour burden, and explain the reasons for the variances. Generally, estimates should not include burden hours for customary and usual business practices.**
- **If this request for approval covers more than one form, provide separate hour burden estimates for each form and aggregate the hour burdens in item 13 of OMB Form 83-I.**

Number of respondents – 56

Frequency of response – annually/quarterly

Annual burden – 336 burden hours

The estimate is based on experience. The burden may vary depending on participation in both the SOII and CFOI. Not all States participate in both programs. This estimate is based on a maximum of all jurisdictions that participate in both programs. Therefore the information collection burden is likely to be less. On average, the burden hours expended on the various parts of the application package are distributed as follows:

ANNUAL BURDEN (PER RESPONDENT) BY FORM NUMBER

| Forms | Total Respondents | Frequency | Average Burden | | Estimated Total Burden |
|--------------------------|-------------------|-----------|----------------|----------|------------------------|
| | | | Per Response | Annually | |
| BLS-OSHS Work Statements | 56 | 1 | 2 hours | 2 hours | 112 hours |
| BLS-OSHS2 | 56 | 4 | 1 hour | 4 hours | 224 hours |
| Total | 56 | 5 | 3 hours | 6 hours | 336 hours |

(6 hrs. average burden per respondent) / (5 responses) = 1.2 hrs. average.

- 13. Provide an estimate for the total annual cost burden to respondents or recordkeepers resulting from the collection of information. (Do not include the cost of any hour burden shown in Items 12 and 14).**
- **The cost estimate should be split into two components: (a) a total capital and start-up cost component (annualized over its expected useful life) and (b) a total operation and maintenance and purchase of services component. The estimates should take into account costs associated with generating, maintaining, and disclosing or providing the information. Include descriptions of methods used to estimate major cost factors including system and technology acquisition, expected useful life of capital equipment, the discount rate(s), and the time period over which costs will be incurred. Capital and start-up costs include, among other items, preparations for collecting information such as purchasing computers and software; monitoring, sampling, drilling and testing equipment; and record storage facilities.**
 - **If cost estimates are expected to vary widely, agencies should present ranges of cost burdens and explain the reasons for the variance. The cost of purchasing or contracting out information collections services should be a part of this cost burden estimate. In developing cost burden estimates, agencies may consult with a sample of respondents (fewer than 10), utilize the 60-day pre-OMB submission public comment process and use existing economic or regulatory impact analyses associated with the rulemaking containing the information collection, as appropriate.**

- **Generally, estimates should not include purchases of equipment or services, or portions thereof, made: (1) prior to October 1, 1995, (2) to achieve regulatory compliance with requirements not associated with the information collection, (3) for reasons other than to provide information or keep records for the government, or (4) as part of customary and usual business or private practices.**

Not applicable; this collection necessitates no capital and start-up costs. State Agencies provide budget information and financial reporting information by using data from existing accounting and management information systems at the State level. All operation and maintenance costs of such accounting and management information systems are "part of customary and usual business or private practices." In previous submissions, we mistakenly included an estimate of the total annual cost burden hours.

- 14. Provide estimates of annualized costs to the Federal government. Also, provide a description of the method used to estimate cost, which should include quantification of hours, operational expenses (such as equipment, overhead, printing, and support staff), and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information. Agencies may also aggregate cost estimates from Items 12, 13, and 14 in a single table.**

Federal costs are approximately \$179,208, broken down as follows:

- A. \$76,148 - Regional costs that cover 2 months salaries, fringes and transportation costs in 6 regions.
- B. \$94,795 - National costs that cover 2 months salaries, fringes, printing, word processing, supervision, etc.
- C. \$8,265 - 50 percent of the Federal share of the cooperative agreement that is used for preparing the applications by 56 State Agencies.

- 15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in Items 13 or 14 of the OMB Form 83-I.**

There is no change to the annual reporting and record keeping burden hours.

- 16. For collections of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication. Address any complex analytical techniques that will be used. Provide the time schedule for the entire project, including beginning and ending dates of the collection of information, completion of report, publication dates, and other actions.**

Not applicable; the results of this collection will not be published for statistical use.

17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.

Not applicable; we are not seeking approval "to not display" the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in Item 19, "Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions," of OMB Form 83-I.

Not applicable. Information collection does not affect small entities. No statistical methods are employed in this collection.

B. Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods

Not applicable; no statistical methods are employed in this collection.