

August 22, 2008

MEMORANDUM TO: Lynn Bryant
Deputy Program Manager, PRA
Information Management and Security Staff
Justice Management Division

FROM: Jeffrey Sedgwick
BJS Director, Acting AAG

SUBJECT: Submission of changes to the National Inmate Survey
for approval by the Office of Management and Budget

Attached please find the OMB Form 83-c requesting changes to the National Inmate Survey (NIS) in preparation for the 2008 data collection. These changes reflect revisions made to the questionnaire as a result of analyzing and reporting findings from the 2007 NIS data. Questions have been added or modified to better measure some variables describing or correlated with sexual assault. Some questions have also been deleted or streamlined to simplify the administration of one challenging section of the instrument. As a result, the changes proposed result in no change in the existing burden associated with the survey. We estimate that the average interview will remain 26-27 minutes, as in Year 1. Each change is briefly described below, with additional text to further explain or justify the change when necessary. We have also included the instruments with the relevant changes highlighted.

Changes

1. A9 and A10 have been added to determine where an inmate slept the previous night. These items will provide information on the types of inmate housing available at the facility, and may be useful in correlating facility layout to likelihood of victimization.
2. Part of Section A (A14a and A15b) and all of Section B (B1-B27) have been revised to shorten and simplify the module and make it suitable for audio computer-assisted self-interview (ACASI) administration. These sections were previously conducted by the interviewer.
3. To obtain more detailed information on the number of times an inmate has been victimized, we have added follow-up questions in Sections E (E36a, E36b) and G (G3a, G3b). Inmates who report being victimized 3 – 10 times will be routed to a question to get the exact number of times. Inmates who report being victimized 11 times or more will be routed to an open-ended item where they can record the exact number of victimizations.

4. To gain a better understanding of risk factors for victimization, we propose to add questions to ask how soon after arriving at the facility the inmate was *first* victimized by other inmates (E40) and by staff (G8) as well as items to find out how long it has been since the inmate was *last* victimized by other inmates (F16) and by staff (G27).
5. To gain a better understanding of staff-on-inmate victimization we propose to add four questions to determine whether the inmate was victimized by correctional officers (G28) or other facility staff (G29), whether the officers and staff were male, female, or both (G28a and G29a). These questions replace a single item that was included in the 2007 NIS that captured only gender of the staff person/people who victimized the inmate.
6. As a result of discussions with facility administrators we determined that it was necessary to identify victimizations that occurred during the conduct of a strip search or pat down. A total of six items (L22, L22a, L23 – L26) have been added to address this issue.
7. The paper-and-pencil-instrument (PAPI) has been modified from Year 1 to add six questions (5, 8-12) which were important correlates to sexual assault in the ACASI and to streamline Section B to capture type of force or pressure used in reported incidents. Options in questions 21 and 32 were expanded to reflect the available options on the ACASI.
8. One additional change we would like to make involves the use of incentives. In 2007, the NIS response rate was 72% in prisons and 67% in jails. We believe a token incentive will maintain (and possibly boost) response rates. Two questions (I3, MINC1) would be added to determine if there is any effect of the incentive on the rate of participation.

If there are questions related to this request, please contact Paige Harrison, Statistician, at (202) 514-0809 or by email at paige.harrison@usdoj.gov. You may also contact Paul Guerino, Statistician, at (202) 307-0349 or at paul.guerino@usdoj.gov.

Attachments: 83 Memo for NIS.doc; Additional information.doc; 83-cfill.pdf; Year 2 Specs with Revisions.doc; Year1SectionB.doc; PAPIrevisions.pdf; Year1PAPI.pdf