

June 22, 2009

NOTE TO THE REVIEWER OF: OMB No. 1220-0141  
Cognitive and Psychological Research

FROM: Christine H. Rho  
Research Psychologist  
Office of Survey Methods Research

SUBJECT: Submission of Materials for Cognitive Tests of Veteran's  
Supplement Questions

Please accept the enclosed materials for approval under the OMB clearance package #1220-0141, "Cognitive and Psychological Research." In accordance with our agreement with OMB, we are submitting a brief description of the research, and the materials to be used in the research at least two weeks prior to the beginning of the study.

We will be conducting the test with respondents recruited from the Veterans Employment and Training Services (VET) and other Veteran's groups in the Metro DC area, as well as the general public. Special effort will be made to recruit participants who have served in the Armed Forces during the Gulf War era or have a household member who served. The maximum number of burden hours is estimated to be 18.

If there are any questions regarding this project, please contact Christine Rho at (202) 691-7399.

Attachments

## Cognitive Tests of Veterans Supplement Questions

### I. Purpose

The Current Population Survey (CPS) is a nationally-representative monthly sample survey of households that provides information on labor force activity in the United States. The CPS is the source of the monthly national unemployment rate, as well as other rich demographic details, including age, sex, race, Hispanic origin, educational attainment, marital status and family attributes, foreign-born status, veteran status, and other demographic characteristics.

The Veterans Supplement is conducted very two years and is asked at the end of the CPS. This supplement is sponsored by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the Veterans Employment and Training Services (VETS) at the Department of Labor.

In response to recent legislation, the July 2010 Veteran’s Supplement to the CPS will identify veterans who have served in Afghanistan and Iraq. Currently CPS only collects information about when a veteran served and not where. Two questions could be added to the July 2010 supplement in order to capture this information.

Before these new questions can be fielded, they will need to undergo cognitive testing by the Office of Survey Methods Research (OSMR). The primary goal of cognitive testing is to evaluate how well the new questions capture the information that is sought. Are the questions clear? Does it use any terminology that is unfamiliar or confusing to the respondents (who are veterans as well as civilians who respond as a proxy)? We will test the new questions for clarity, comprehension, length, and any sensitivity among questions.

### II. Methodology

The OSMR will conduct 18 cognitive interviews: 6 interviews with veterans who served in Iraq, 6 interviews with veterans who served in Afghanistan, and 6 interviews with spouses or other household members of Gulf War veterans. In addition, there will be two versions of the interviews to test for two different wording options for the new questions. The first version will contain the language “active duty in Afghanistan/Iraq” and the second version will contain the language “serve in Afghanistan/Iraq.” The second version is thought to be clearer for troops who were called up from the Reserve or National Guard. Each participant will be administered only one version of the interview in the following counterbalanced design:

	AFGHANISTAN VETERAN (N=6)	IRAQ VETERAN (N=6)	NON-VETERAN (N=6)
Active Duty Version	3	3	3
Serve Version	3	3	3

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Interviews will be conducted either in-person at the cognitive lab or onsite at a veteran's organization, such as the DC VFW club, DVOP, etc. The interviews will be administered by OSMR staff. Each session will follow the cognitive interview protocol as outlined in Attachment B. We will audio tape these sessions with the consent of the participant.

### **III. Participants and Burden Hours**

Participants will be recruited from the general population, with special care to recruit those who served in the Armed Forces. The estimated time to complete the session is 60 minutes (range 30-60 minutes). Approximately 18 hours will be used. Participants will be reimbursed \$40 for their participation in the cognitive interviews.

### **IV. Confidentiality**

Participants will read and sign a Consent Form. Participants will be reminded that their participation is voluntary, that the session will be audio taped, and that the information is protected under the Privacy Act in accordance with the Privacy Act statement on the back of the Consent Form) and asked to give verbal consent. (See Attachment A: Consent Form).

### **V. Attachments**

- A. Consent Form
- B. Cognitive Interview Protocol
- C. Retrospective Probes – Active Duty Version
- D. Retrospective Probes – Serve Version
- E. CPS Labor Force Questions
- F. Veteran's Supplement Questions

**Attachment A****Consent Form**

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) is conducting research to increase the quality of BLS surveys. This study is intended to suggest ways to improve the procedures the BLS uses to collect survey data.

The BLS, its employees, agents, and partner statistical agencies, will use the information you provide for statistical purposes only and will hold the information in confidence to the full extent permitted by law. In accordance with the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act of 2002 (Title 5 of Public Law 107-347) and other applicable Federal laws, your responses will not be disclosed in identifiable form without your informed consent. The Privacy Act notice on the back of this form describes the conditions under which information related to this study will be used by BLS employees and agents.

During this research you may be audio and/or videotaped, or you may be observed. If you do not wish to be taped, you still may participate in this research.

We estimate it will take you approximately 60 minutes to participate in this research (ranging from 30 minutes to 60 minutes).

Your participation in this research project is voluntary, and you have the right to stop at any time. If you agree to participate, please sign below.

Persons are not required to respond to the collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. OMB control number is 1220-0141 and expires February 29, 2012.

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I have read and understand the statements above. I consent to participate in this study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant's signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant's printed name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Researcher's signature

OMB Control Number: 1220-0141  
Expiration Date: [02/29/12]

### PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT

In accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended (5 U.S.C. 552a), you are hereby notified that this study is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), under authority of 29 U.S.C. 2. Your voluntary participation is important to the success of this study and will enable the BLS to better understand the behavioral and psychological processes of individuals, as they reflect on the accuracy of BLS information collections. The BLS, its employees, agents, and partner statistical agencies, will use the information you provide for statistical purposes only and will hold the information in confidence to the full extent permitted by law. In accordance with the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act of 2002 (Title 5 of Public Law 107-347) and other applicable Federal laws, your responses will not be disclosed in identifiable form without your informed consent.

## Attachment B

### Cognitive Interview Protocol

#### I. INTRODUCTION

Administer Consent Form. Read the following to the participant:

*Hello. My name is Christine, and I work at the Bureau of Labor Statistics. (Name of Recruiter) may have told you that we will be testing one of our forms that is used to collect demographic information for the Current Population Survey. This survey is carried out over the telephone or in-person with people all across the country.*

*We want to add some new questions to the survey and we are asking for your help to see how well these new questions work. There are two parts to the survey. The first part of the survey asks about general demographic information. The second part of the survey is for Veterans. Please answer the questions as you would if you were being interviewed for this survey.*

*Toward the end of the survey, I will also ask you questions about the new questions themselves. We are primarily interested in the ways that you arrived at your answers, and any problems you encounter with the questions. Do you have any questions before we start?*

#### II. ADMINISTER LABOR FORCE CLASSIFICATION ITEMS FROM CPS QUESTIONNAIRE.

- See Attachment E for CPS Labor Force Questions
- Remind participants that they can interject any comments or questions if they want, but that they should answer the questions as if they were being interviewed for this survey.

#### III. ADMINISTER VETERANS SUPPLEMENT QUESTIONS (Active Duty Version or Serve Version)

See Attachment F for Veterans Supplement Questions

#### IV. ADMINISTER RETROSPECTIVE PROBES

- See Attachment C for Active Duty Version
- See Attachment D for Serve Version

#### V. THANK AND PAY PARTICIPANT

## Attachment C: Retrospective Probes (Active Duty Version)

### DEBRIEFING PROBES:

1. Overall, what is your impression of the survey? Did you think it was worded clearly for someone like you to answer?
2. What did you think about the flow of the survey?
3. Were there any questions in this survey that you think some people might find sensitive?
4. Were there any questions in this survey that you think some people might find difficult?
5. Is there anything you would like to see changed or improved in the survey?

### SPECIFIC PROBES ABOUT THE NEW VETERAN'S SUPPLEMENT QUESTION

*Let's talk about some of the Armed Forces Questions. I'd like to review some of these questions and get your thoughts on them. Earlier I asked you the following question:*

[For Afghanistan Veterans]

**S1ai. [(Were you)/(Was he/she)] on active duty in Afghanistan; or (did you)/(did he/she) fly missions over Afghanistan at anytime since October 2001?**

<1> YES

<2> NO

<D> Don't know

<R> Refused

*Probes S1ai:*

- *Can you repeat the question I just asked in your own words?*
- *What does "active duty" mean to you in this question?*
- *Can you think of other examples of being on active duty in Afghanistan that is not covered by this question?*
- *I'm going to read you a slightly different wording of this question. Let me know if this version is better. [(Did you/ (Did he/she)] serve in Afghanistan; or (did you)/(did he/she) fly missions over Afghanistan at anytime since October 2001?*

[For Iraq Veterans]

**S1aii. [(Were you)/(Was he/she)] on active duty in Iraq; off the coast of Iraq; or (did you)/(did he/she) fly missions over Iraq at anytime since March 2003?**



- <1> YES
- <2> NO
- <D> Don't know
- <R> Refused

*Probes S1aii:*

- *Can you repeat the question I just asked in your own words?*
- *What does “active duty” mean to you in this question?*
- *Can you think of other examples of being on active duty in Iraq that is not covered by this question?*
- *I'm going to read you a slightly different wording of this question. Let me know if this version works better for you. **[(Did you)/(Did he/she)] serve in Iraq; off the coast of Iraq; or (did you)/(did he/she) fly missions over Iraq at anytime since March 2003?***

END OF TESTING.

1. Thank the participant for their time.
2. Pay participant and have them sign the voucher.

## Attachment D: Retrospective Probes (Serve Version)

### DEBRIEFING PROBES:

6. Overall, what is your impression of the survey? Did you think it was worded clearly for someone like you to answer?
7. What did you think about the flow of the survey?
8. Were there any questions in this survey that you think some people might find sensitive?
9. Were there any questions in this survey that you think some people might find difficult?
10. Is there anything you would like to see changed or improved in the survey?

### SPECIFIC PROBES ABOUT THE NEW VETERAN'S SUPPLEMENT QUESTION

*Let's talk about some of the Armed Forces Questions. I'd like to review some of these questions and get your thoughts on them. Earlier I asked you the following question:*

[For Afghanistan Veterans]

**S1ai. [(Did you/ (Did he/she)] serve in Afghanistan; or (did you)/(did he/she) fly missions over Afghanistan at anytime since October 2001?**

<1> YES

<2> NO

<D> Don't know

<R> Refused

*Probes S1ai:*

- *Can you repeat the question I just asked in your own words?*
- *What does "serve in Afghanistan" mean to you in this question?*
- *Can you think of other examples of serving in Afghanistan that is not covered by this question?*
- *I'm going to read you a slightly different wording of this question. Let me know if this version works better for you. [(Were you)/(Was he/she)] on active duty in Afghanistan; or (did you)/(did he/she) fly missions over Afghanistan at anytime since October 2001?*

[For Iraq Veterans]

**S1aii. [(Did you/ (Did he/she)] serve in Iraq; off the coast of Iraq; or (did you)/(did he/she) fly missions over Iraq at anytime since March 2003?**

- <1> YES
- <2> NO
- <D> Don't know
- <R> Refused

*Probes S1aii:*

- *Can you repeat the question I just asked in your own words?*
- *What does “serve in Iraq” mean to you in this question? What does it encompass*
- *Can you think of other examples of being on active duty in Iraq that is not covered by this question?*
- *I'm going to read you a slightly different wording of this question. Let me know if this version works better for you.*  
**[(Were you)/(Was he/she)] on active duty in Iraq; off the coast of Iraq; or (did you)/(did he/she) fly missions over Iraq at anytime since March 2003?**

END OF TESTING.

3. Thank the participant for their time.
4. Pay participant and have them sign the voucher.

**Attachment E: CPS Labor Force Questions****1. Does anyone in this household have a business or a farm?**

If yes, use parentheses in 2 and 5. Everyone is asked 2.

**2. LAST WEEK, did you do ANY work for (either) pay (or profit)?**

If yes, person is EMPLOYED. If no, ask 3 (if there is a business in the family) or 5 (if there is not a business in the family).

**3. LAST WEEK, did you do any unpaid work in the family business or farm?**

If yes, ask 4. If no, ask 5.

**4. Do you receive any payments or profits from the business?**

If yes, person is EMPLOYED. If no, person proceeds to questions on hours worked. People who worked at least 15 hours in family business are EMPLOYED.

**5. LAST WEEK, (in addition to the business,) did you have a job either full or part time? Include any job from which you were temporarily absent.**

If yes, ask 6. If no, ask 7.

**6. What was the main reason you were absent from work LAST WEEK?**

If “on layoff” or “slack work/business conditions” ask 8. If “waiting for new job to begin” or “does not work in the business” ask 12. If another reason, person is EMPLOYED.

**7. LAST WEEK, were you on layoff from a job?**

If yes, ask 8. If no, ask 12.

**8. Has your employer given you a date to return to work?**

If yes, ask 10. If no, ask 9.

**9. Have you been given any indication that you will be recalled to work within the next 6 months?**

If yes, ask 10. If no, ask 12.

**10. Could you have returned to work LAST WEEK if you had been recalled?**

If yes, person is UNEMPLOYED. If no, ask 11.

**11. Why is that?**

If reason is "Own temporary illness," person is UNEMPLOYED. If another reason, person is NOT IN LABOR FORCE.

**12. Have you been doing anything to find work during the last 4 weeks?**

If yes, ask 13. If no, person is NOT IN LABOR FORCE.

**13. What are all of the things you have done to find work during the last 4 weeks?**

**ACTIVE**

**Contacted:**

**Employer directly/interview**

**Public employment agency**

**Private employment agency**

**Friends or relatives**

**School/university employment center**

**PASSIVE**

**Looked at ads**

**Attended job training  
programs/courses**

**Other passive (specify)**

**Nothing**

**Sent out resumes/**

**Filled out applications**

**Check union/professional registers**

**Place or answered ads**

**Other active (specify)**

Prompt with “Anything else?” until respondent says no. If at least one active method is given, ask 14. If no active method is given, person is NOT IN LABOR FORCE.

**14. LAST WEEK, could you have started a job if one had been offered?**

If yes, person is UNEMPLOYED. If no, ask 15.

**15. Why is that?**

If reason is “Own temporary illness,” person is UNEMPLOYED. If another reason, person is NOT IN LABOR FORCE.

**Attachment F: Veterans Supplement Questions**

6/01/09

**CPS DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS FROM "BASIC" QUESTIONNAIRE**

If person is 17 years or older, ask AF1.

**AF1\_N** Did (you/veteran's name) ever serve on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces?

- <1> Yes (Skip to AF2\_N)
- <2> No (Skip to EDUCA1\_N)
- <D> Don't know (Skip to AF3\_N)
- <R> Refused (Skip to AF3\_N)

**AF2\_N** IF NECESSARY: Previously I was told that (you/veteran's name) served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces.

When did (you/he/she) serve on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces?

MARK ALL THAT APPLY.

- <1> Gulf War era 2 (Sept '01-- present) (Skip to AF3\_N)
- <2> Gulf War era 1 (Aug '90--Aug '01) (Skip to AF3\_N)
- <3> May '75--July '90 (Skip depends on age)
- <4> Vietnam Era (Aug. '64 – Apr. '75) (Skip depends on age)
- <5> Feb '55--July '64 (Skip depends on age)
- <6> Korean War (July '50--Jan. '55) (Skip depends on age)
- <7> Jan. '47--June '50
- <8> World War II (Dec '41--Dec '46)
- <9> November '41 or earlier
- <D> Don't know
- <R> Refused

**AF3\_N** [(Are you) (Is he/she)] (still/now) in the Armed Forces?

- <1> Yes (Skip to EDUCA1\_N)
- <2> No (Skip to EDUCA1\_N)
- <D> Don't know (Skip to EDUCA1\_N)
- <R> Refused (Skip to EDUCA1\_N)





**VETERANS SUPPLEMENT QUESTIONS – Abbreviated**

- SCK1**
- If person is 17 years of age or older: *Go to SCK2.*
  - All others: *END QUESTIONS.*

- SCK2** Note: Logic being added for multiple periods of service.
- <1> Gulf War era 2 (Sept '01-- present) (Skip to S1ai) (Skip to S1b)
  - <2> Gulf War era 1 (Aug '90--Aug '01) (Skip to CK-S1a) (Skip to S1)
  - <3> May '75--July '90 (Skip to S1a)
  - <4> Vietnam Era (Aug '64 – Apr '75) (Skip to S4) (Skip to S4)
  - <5> Feb '55--July '64 (Skip to S4)
  - <6> Korean War (July '50--Jan '55) (Skip to S4)
  - <7> Jan '47--June '50
  - <8> World War II (Dec '41--Dec '46)
  - <9> November '41 or earlier
  - <D> Don't know
  - <R> Refused

**Lead In** “This month we are asking some additional questions concerning service in the Armed Forces.”

- S1** (Were you) (Was he/she) on active duty in Vietnam, Laos, or Cambodia; in the waters in or around these countries; or did you fly missions over these areas at any time between August 5, 1964 and May 7, 1975?

- <1> Yes (Skip to S4)
- <2> No (Skip to S4)
- <D> Don't know (Skip to S4)
- <R> Refused (Skip to S4)

- CK—S1a**
- If person is-62 years of age or older: *Ask S1a..*
  - All others: *Go to S4.*

- S1a** (Were you) (Was he/she) on active duty in Vietnam, Cambodia, or Laos; in the waters in or around these countries; or did you fly missions over these areas at any time between February 28, 1961 and August 4, 1964?

- <1> Yes (Skip to S4)
- <2> No (Skip to S4)
- <D> Don't know (Skip to S4)
- <R> Refused (Skip to S4)

**S1ai** [(Did you/ (Did he/she)) serve in Afghanistan; or (did you)/(did he/she)

**fly missions over Afghanistan at anytime since October 2001?**

<1> Yes (Skip to S1aii)

<2> No (Skip to S1aii)

<D> Don't know (Skip to S1aii)

<R> Refused (Skip to S1aii)

**S1aii. [(Did you/ (Did he/she)] serve in Iraq; off the coast of Iraq; or (did you)/(did he/she) fly missions over Iraq at anytime since March 2003?**

<1> YES (Skip to S1b)

<2> NO (Skip to S1b)

<D> Don't know (Skip to S1b)

<R> Refused (Skip to S1b)

**S1b** Earlier it was reported that you served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces. Was any of your active service the result of a call-up from the Reserve or National Guard?

<1> YES (Ask S1d)

<2> NO (Ask S1c)

<D> Don't know

<R> Refused

- S1c** Have/has (you/name) ever been a member of the Reserve or National Guard?
- <1> YES (Ask S1d)  
 <2> NO (Ask S4)  
 <D> Don't know
- S1d** Are you currently a member of the Reserve or National Guard?
- <1> YES  
 <2> NO  
 <D> Don't know  
 <R> Refused
- S4** Has the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) or Department of Defense determined that [(you have) (veteran's name has)] a service-connected disability; that is, a health condition or impairment caused or made worse by any of your military service?
- <1> YES (Skip to S5)  
 <2> NO (Skip to S10)  
 <D> Don't know (Skip to S10)  
 <R> Refused (Skip to S10)
- S5** What is (your/her/his) current service-connected disability rating?
- <0> 0 percent (Skip to S6)  
 <1> 10 percent (Skip to S6)  
 <2> 20 percent (Skip to S6)  
 <3> 30 percent (Skip to S6)  
 <4> 40 percent (Skip to S6)  
 <5> 50 percent (Skip to S6)  
 <6> 60 percent (Skip to S6)  
 <7> 70 percent (Skip to S6)  
 <8> 80 percent (Skip to S6)  
 <9> 90 percent (Skip to S6)  
 <10> 100 percent (Skip to S6)  
 <D> Don't know (Skip to S6)  
 <R> Refused

**S6** Do you currently receive a monthly check for a service-connected disability from either the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) or a branch of the military service?

- <1> YES
- <2> NO
- <D> Don't know
- <R> Refused

**S7** Did (your/his/her) service-connected disability ever prevent (you/him/her) from getting or holding a job in the past?

- <1> YES (Skip to CK—S8)
- <2> NO (Skip to CK—S8)
- <D> Don't know (Skip to CK—S8)
- <R> Refused (Skip to CK—S8)

- CK—S8**
- If PUMLR = 1 or 2 (employed): *Skip to S10.*
  - All others: *Ask S8.*

**S8** Does this disability currently keep (you/him/her) from getting or holding a job?

- <1> YES (Skip to S9)
- <2> NO (Skip to S10)
- <D> Don't know (Skip to S9)
- <R> Refused (Skip to S9)

**S9** What is the last year during which (you/he/she) worked at a job or business?

- ENTER YEAR → \_ \_ \_ \_  
 [ENTER 'X' for 'NEVER  
 WORKED']  
 <D> Don't know  
 <R> Refused

**S10** In what year [(were you) (was he/she)] LAST separated from active duty?  
 (FILL: IF S1b or S1c is YES, add "DO NOT INCLUDE TIME SPENT  
 TRAINING IN THE RESERVE OR NATIONAL GUARD.")

- ENTER YEAR → \_ \_ \_ \_  
 <D> Don't know  
 <R> Refused

**S10a** From which branch of the Armed Forces was/were (you/name) last released from active duty? {FILL: IF S1b or S1c is YES, add “DO NOT INCLUDE SERVICE IN THE RESERVE OR NATIONAL GUARD UNLESS YOU WERE ON ACTIVE DUTY.”

- <1> AIR FORCE
- <2> ARMY
- <3> COAST GUARD
- <4> MARINE
- <5> NAVY
- <6> OTHER (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- <D> Don't know
- <R> Refused

- CK-10**
- If S1b = 2 (NO): *Skip to S11.*
  - All others: *Ask S10b.*

**S10b** Was your LAST period on active duty a result of a call-up from the Reserve or National Guard?

- <1> YES (Continue to S10c)
- <2> NO (Skip to S11)
- <D> Don't know (Skip to S11)
- <R> Refused (Skip to S11)

**S10c** Was that the Reserve or National Guard?

- <1> Reserve
- <2> National Guard
- <D> Don't know

**S11** ALTOGETHER, how long did (you/he/she) serve on active duty in the Armed Forces?

(FILL: IF S1b or S1c is YES, add “DO NOT INCLUDE TIME SPENT IN THE RESERVE OR NATIONAL GUARD UNLESS YOU WERE ON ACTIVE DUTY.”

- <1> 6 months or less
- <2> More than 6 months,
- less than 2 years (All go to S11a)
- <3> 2 to 3 years
- <4> 4 to 5 years
- <5> 6 to 9 years
- <6> 10 to 14 years
- <7> 15 to 19 years
- <8> 20 years and over
- <D> Don't know

<R> Refused

S11a Did (you/NAME) EVER serve in a combat or war zone? Persons serving in a combat or war zone often receive combat zone tax exclusion, Imminent Danger Pay, or Hostile Fire Pay.

<1> YES

<2> NO

<D> Don't know

<R> Refused