<u>Supporting Statement for Local Business Recovery Survey</u>

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.

The Department of Homeland Security's (DHS'), Private Sector Office (PSO), is charged with the following:

- Creating and fostering strategic communications with the private sector to enhance the primary mission of the Department to protect the American homeland.
- Advising the Secretary on the impact of the Department's policies, regulations, processes and actions on the private sector.
- Promoting existing, and developing new, public-private partnerships to provide for collaboration and mutual support to address homeland security challenges;
- Assisting in the development and promotion of private sector best practices to secure critical infrastructure.
- Coordinating industry efforts to identify private sector resources that could be effective in supplementing government efforts to prevent or respond to a terrorist attack.
- Working with the travel and tourism industry to make Departmental policies known, to improve the travel and tourism experience for our domestic and international travelers, to increase security and to lessen any unintended, negative policy impacts, economic or otherwise categorized.

In order to do this the PSO must be involved in the business community.

The primary purpose of this survey is to collect information regarding the specific needs of a business community following a disaster. Events such as natural disasters or terrorist acts have strong economical effects on an effected community. In order to help these communities with their economic recovery efforts, the PSO plans to host workshops so that we can communicate their options to speed their recovery. Immediately after a disaster, it is best to obtain baseline data that we can use to determine the needs of the community, to determine how well we are doing to speed recovery, to learn where we need to devote additional resources and to better plan for future events.

Shortly following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005, the Private Sector Office (PSO) of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) discovered a vacuum of information between the government emergency response effort and the rebuilding business communities of Orleans and surrounding parishes of Louisiana. The business community was largely either unaware of what recovery opportunities existed or what procedures were required to take advantage of them. Conversely, there was no method set up for the business community to inform government officials about what types of recovery opportunities were most needed. This survey was created to address the latter of these problems by providing a way for local business owners affected by a disaster to inform the government regarding what their largest obstacles to recovery are. Due to challenges and limitations in surveying a statistically valid sample population, the data sought is mostly qualitative. However, some quantitative questions are included for purposes of categorizing the results by business type, size, and level of distress.

2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used.

Information obtained from survey responses will be used by PSO to determine key business needs to be addressed following the disaster. PSO plans to tabulate frequently cited recovery obstacles and concerns by business type, size, and level of distress. The results will then be used to develop recommendations for facilitating federal, state, and/or local recovery efforts. Because PSO does not expect the administration of the survey to produce a probability sample of businesses from the affected community, it does not plan to use the results to derive generalized conclusions about the conditions of all businesses within that community.

The written survey contains 12 multi-part quantitative questions as well as two qualitative questions about primary obstacles faced and a space to leave additional comments. The data sought by PSO is expected to come from the final two qualitative questions (#13-14 on the survey) as well as the comments section. The 12 previous questions are intended to characterize the situation of the business completing the survey, for purposes of tabulating the results, as well as prompt respondents to consider several potential issues before they record which ones are of the most importance to them in the final question.

3. Describe any consideration of information technology to reduce burden, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.

Due to the survey being administered following a significant local disaster, the availability of computers or other electronic equipment should not be relied upon for the collection of survey responses. The survey is structured in a way to minimize the effort needed to transfer the information to an electronic format at a later time.

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

The survey is collecting time-sensitive information from businesses immediately following significant local disasters. Because these disasters have not yet occurred, there is no information already available. PSO is not aware of any other efforts underway to collect similar information from businesses following a significant local disaster.

5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities, describe the methods used to minimize burden.

The survey is designed to be brief so as to be completed in a matter of minutes. No materials or equipment is required to participate. The survey is purely voluntary because it is expected that small businesses will desire to participate in order to communicate the needs of their business to government officials.

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.

If this collection is not performed, very little information will be available to the Private Sector Office of DHS regarding the needs of businesses affected by a local disaster. Following a disaster of great magnitude, the ability of state or local agencies to perform a similar collection of information could be severely hampered due to limited resources.

7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with 5 CFR 1320.5(d)(2)

There are no special circumstances requiring collection of information to be inconsistent with 5 CFR 1320.5(d)(2). PSO has taken reasonable steps to ensure that the proposed collection of information is the least burdensome necessary to comply with legal requirements and achieve program objectives; is not duplicative of information otherwise accessible to the agency; and has practical utility.

8. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publication in the Federal Register of the agency's notice soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB.

On August 16, 2006 PSO published a notice in the Federal Register at 71FR47237, allowing for a 60-day comment period. PSO received the following comments for this collection:

a) The Office of Privacy of DHS noted that the Privacy Act requires that a pledge of confidentiality be included on the survey. PSO added a pledge of confidentiality statement to the top of the survey instrument.

b) The Office of Inspector General suggested that the pledge of confidentiality included on the survey be clarified to read that responses can and will be used for law enforcement purposes. PSO amended the pledge of confidentiality to include the language about law enforcement purposes.

c) The U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Office of Asset Management recommended that the purpose of the data collection as well as a statement of instructions for completing the survey be included directly on the written form. PSO has added both of these items to the survey instrument.

d) The ICE National Incident Response Unit recommended that the survey also address the possibility of a pandemic. While the survey was initially intended for use following a natural disaster or terrorist event, PSO feels that several of the questions are general enough to be useful in the event of a pandemic. PSO has therefore expanded the description of the survey to include instances of pandemic.

9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondent, other than remuneration to contractors or grantees.

PSO will not provide payments or gifts to respondents for this collection.

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

All information will be compiled for analysis and reported only at the aggregate level. PSO is complying with the Privacy Act which requires that the survey itself contain a Privacy Act Notification Statement pursuant to 5 USC 552a (e) (3). As stated in Item 1, this information will be used towards the purpose of creating and fostering strategic communications with the private sector to enhance the primary mission of the Department to protect the American homeland. . 6 U.S.C. §112(f) authorizes the collection of this information.

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private.

PSO does not seek sensitive information from respondents

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

Number of Respondents: Based on previous workshops conducted following the 2005 hurricane season, PSO expects up to 2,000 individuals to attend each future workshop. PSO also expects 40% of attendees (800; each representing a unique business) to complete a survey. If there are 2-3 major disasters each year, then PSO expects up to 2,000 respondents each year.

Frequency of Response: Participants will be asked to complete the written survey once. This survey should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. The total hour burden for the written survey is 500 hours.

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to respondents or record keepers resulting from the collection of information. (Do not include the cost of any hour burden shown in Items 12 and 14).

There are no capital or start up costs associated with this information collection.

14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government.

There are no additional costs to the Federal government.

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

Program changes are based on the federal government's need to assess the concerns of the private sector following a local disaster, as well as PSO initiatives. This is a new information collection.

16. For collection of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulation, and publication.

PSO will attempt to work in conjunction with the academic and research communities to analyze and disseminate the results of collected survey information. PSO has no intention of publishing collected information. The plans are to capture simple statistics, for example, the percentage of companies that have resumed operations, or how many companies plan to relocate.

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.

PSO will display the expiration date for this survey, once OMB approves the collection.

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

PSO is not seeking any exceptions to the certification statement.