

**Petroleum Marketing and Supply Forms  
External Early-Stage Scoping Protocol (EIA-815)  
August 5, 2011**

*(This protocol is a guide – the questions presented here won't necessarily be asked exactly as worded in the protocol or in this order. It is important to note that not all questions will be asked in every interview.)*

**Population of Interest**

- Respondents for the EIA-815
- Estimated burden is 60 minutes.
- Participation is voluntary.

**Before the Interview**

- Debriefing with the Office of Petroleum and Biofuels Statistics regarding known issues with the respondent's data.
- Document any item-specific questions you may have about that respondent that are not on the protocol.

**Materials Needed**

- Paper
- Writing Utensil

**After the Interview**

- Fill out the answers to the questions at the end of the protocol
- Type up notes and place them on the shared drive: Z:\Survey Development Team\Projects\Petroleum OMB 2013\Early Stage Scoping - External\Notes
- Provide notes to OPBS for their review

## **Part A – Introduction**

### **1. Introduce yourself and others in the room**

### **2. Purpose of interview:**

Let me start by telling you a little about what we will be doing today. The staff for the EIA-815 is investigating redesigning their survey. As a part of this preparation, I'm helping the Petroleum Supply staff investigate potential changes to the EIA-815 form.

We are interested in learning about your experience with the form; how particular data items may be kept in your records; and what terminology your entity uses to describe certain concepts in the EIA-815.

Before we begin, I want you to know that this session confidential. Only the persons connected with this project will have access to any notes we jot down from our discussion.

## **Part B – Respondent Information**

### **1. Respondent Background**

- What is your role at your entity?
  - o (If needed) What is your title? \_\_\_\_\_
  - o (If needed) How long have you been at your entity? \_\_\_\_\_
  - o (If needed) What are your responsibilities? \_\_\_\_\_
  - o (If contractor) Describe to me your interaction with the entity as related to this form.
- When it's time for you to fill out the EIA-815, what do you do?
  - o (Generic probe) Can you tell me more about that?
  - o (If needed) In order to complete the form, do you have to consult with other people?
    - Are they in your entity?
    - Outside your entity?
    - If you receive a call from EIA with question, what do you do? Do you consult with others?
  - o In general, how long does it take you to complete the EIA-815?
  - o Why do you use (mode) to file your responses?
  - o How is completing the form now different from when you first started completing it?
    - (If needed) Are your systems automated? If so, how long did it take you to set up this automation?
- Have you completed other forms from EIA?

- o From other government agencies?
- o (If yes) Which ones?

## **Part C – Form EIA-815**

Now let's discuss the EIA-815. As I ask you questions related to the form, don't hesitate to tell me about any problems you've seen with the form in the past and/or problems /changes you think we should consider.

Generic Probes:

- *Can you tell me more about that?*
- *How did you arrive at your answer?*
- *Using your own words, can you tell me what this question is asking?*
- *What's your opinion about that?*
- *Can you give me some specific examples?*
- *If I understand you correctly, you're saying...*
- *(For items with problems) What would be your recommendation to resolve this issue you've identified?*

1. Process of Making Products (if possible, validate against last reported data; if R has misc. products, probe on them):

To start, I want to learn about your products and processes associated with your products.

- Normally, what types of inventories does your entity have at the beginning of the month (i.e., beginning stocks)?
  - o *(If R doesn't say beginning stocks)* Does your entity use the term beginning stocks? What term does your entity typically use to describe existing inventories?
  - o *(If R doesn't say beginning stocks)* What does the term beginning stocks mean to you?
- Normally, what types of fuels does your entity purchase during the month (i.e., receipts)?
  - o *(If R doesn't say receipts)* Does your entity use the term receipts? What term does your entity typically use to describe fuels purchased during the month?
  - o *(If R doesn't say receipts)* What does the term receipt mean to you?

Stocks in Transit (ONLY FOR TERMINAL OPERATORS)

- Do you know what, if anything, is in transit to your terminal?
  - o Does anyone at your facility have any insight into stocks in transit?
    - What is this person's job responsibility?
    - What is their title?

- At what point do stocks in transit become your facility's product versus the facility shipping the product to you?
  - o Is there a difference in the transition of ownership for different modes of transportation?
    - Trains
      - What if the train is unloaded over a several hour period?
      - When does the product become your facility's product?
    - Vessels
      - What if the vessel is unloaded over a several hour period?
    - When does the product become your facility's product?
      - Trucks
  
- What is the next step in the process? Do you make products from your beginning stocks and fuels purchased?
  - o What types of blending does your entity have?
    - *(If not mentioned)* Do you blend any motor gas? Do you have any issues with reporting motor gas to EIA?
  - o Does your entity use the term blends? What term does your entity typically use to describe the concept of blending fuels?
  - o Do you have blends at your facility that you believe should be excluded from EIA reporting?
    - *(If yes)* On what basis do you believe the blends should be excluded from EIA reporting?
  - o Is the blending exclusive for your entity?
    - *(If no)* Can you tell me more about this?
    - *(If no)* Do you blend for other companies?
    - *(If no)* Is there some other arrangement(s)?
  - o Does your entity reclassify any products that it produces?
    - *(If yes)* Can you tell us more about that?
    - *(If yes)* Why does this reclassification occur? (INTERVIEWERS NOTE: is it because of a transfer between tanks, through in-line blending or by splash blending in trucks or rail cars?)
  - o What do you call this step in the process?
    - *(If they don't use our terms, ask them)* What does the term input mean to you? What term does your entity typically use to describe this step?
    - *(If they don't use our terms, ask them)* What does the term production mean to you? What term does your entity typically use to describe this step?

So we talked about inventories your entity has at the beginning of the month; we discussed fuels your entity purchases during the month; and we just discussed products that your entity produces.

- Does your entity have shipments?
  - o *(If yes)* Can you tell me about those shipments?

- o (If yes) What do your shipments include? What do your shipments exclude?
  - What about intracompany shipments to other storage facilities?
  - What about refiners?
  - What about chemical plants
  - What about fractionating facilities?
- o Does your entity use the term shipments?
  - (If no) What term does your entity use?
- Do you have fuel use and losses during the month?
  - o (If yes) Can you tell me about those fuel uses and losses?
  - o (If R is terminal) Does this include petroleum products used as fuel at the terminal?
  - o (If R is terminal) Does this include fuel used at petrochemical facilities located at your site?
  - o (If yes) What does your fuel uses and losses include? What do your fuel uses and losses exclude?
  - o Does your entity use the term fuel uses and losses?
    - (If no) What term does your entity use?
- Do you have end stocks?
  - o (If yes) Can you tell me about your end stocks?
  - o (If yes) What does your end stocks include? What do your end stocks exclude?
  - o Does your entity use the term end stocks?
    - (If no) What term does your entity use?

## 2. Record Keeping:

- Do you have a difficult time matching your records to the data requests on the EIA-815? Has this always been the case? Can you tell me more about this?
  - o How do you match what's in your records to the data requests on the EIA-815?
  - o Which specific products are difficult to match?
  - o When reporting data to EIA, do you ever have to back into the data that you're reporting?
  - o How did you come up with the data for inputs or production for \_\_\_\_\_?
    - Was it difficult to provide this data to EIA?
  - o Do you have any different columns labels in your records than what are on the EIA-815 form? (i.e., something different from stocks beginning of month, receipts, inputs, production, shipments, fuel uses and losses, and stocks end of month) How well does out data requests match how you keep your records?
  - o What tools, if any, have you created to match what's in your records to the data requests on the EIA-815?

- o Is there particular software you use at your facility to keep track of your products?
  - *(If yes)* In your opinion, is this software widely used in your industry?
- Are you aware of any standard classification of product codes in your industry?
  - o *(If yes)* Can you tell me more about that?
  - o *(If yes)* Can you give me some specific examples?

### 3. Storage Capacity:

Next I'd like to discuss with you storage capacity:

- In your own words, what does the term storage capacity mean to you?
- What is the storage capacity of this facility?
  - o Is the storage for exclusive use of the entity?
  - o Does the facility have leased storage?
  - o Is there some other arrangement(s)?
- Do you have storage capacity at your facility that you believe should be excluded from EIA reporting?
  - o *(If yes)* On what basis do you believe the storage capacity should be excluded from EIA reporting (e.g., retail tanks that you believe are out of scope for primary distribution system reporting)?
- Do you have storage capacity at this facility that you are unable to report to EIA?
  - o *(If yes)* Can you tell me more about that?
    - *(If yes)* Is it because of a lease agreement or other operational or business arrangement in which another entity controls operations of the storage capacity and does not share inventory levels and other data necessary for reporting on EIA forms?
    - *(If yes to the above)* Do you know if this other entity reports to EIA?

### 4. Reportable and Non-reportable storage tanks (stationary storage):

- Does your facility have storage tanks or caverns?
- How do you classify your storage tanks or caverns?
  - o What about IRS classification assignment?
  - o What about Terminal Control Numbers?
- Are there any parts of the terminals that have owners who are not a part of your facility?
  - o *(If yes)* Can you tell me more about this?
  - o *(If needed)* What about retail storage?
- Are there any tanks or caverns at your terminal that are not reported to EIA?
  - o *(If yes)* How are tanks and caverns selected to be placed in reportable or non-reportable status?
  - o *(If yes)* Can you tell more about this?
  - o *(If yes)* How are reportable and non-reportable storage tanks identified in your records?

- Finally, what do you think about the storage capacity data requests in Part 4 of the form?
  - o *(If needed)* What can we do to make reporting easier for your entity?

5. Trans-shipments (transit storage):

Finally, I want to discuss with you the concept of trans-shipments:

- Do you have trans-shipment tanks?
  - o *(If yes)* What kinds of trans-shipment tanks do you have?
  - o *(If yes)* What do you use your trans-shipment tanks for?
  - o *(If yes)* How is trans-shipment tanks kept in your records?
  - o *(If yes)* Do your records differentiate between tanks used for bulk terminal storage versus pipeline storage?
    - Can you tell me more about this?

## **Part D – Wrap Up**

- Is there anything else you want to tell me about the EIA-815?
- Do you have any questions for me?
- Are there any other comments you'd like to make?

Thanks for meeting with us today!