

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
U.S. Department of Commerce
U.S. Census Bureau
Quarterly Summary of State and Local Tax Revenues
(Forms F-71, F-72, F-73)
OMB Control Number 0607-0112

Part B – Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods

1. Universe and Respondent Selection

Form F-72 is sent to all 50 state governments and the District of Columbia. Since universe coverage is achieved, no sampling or estimation is employed. The complete canvass methodology is the best way to achieve national totals for state government tax collections.

The current estimates for local government property tax data (using form F-71) come from a stratified sample of 592 county-areas selected from 3,136 county areas in the 1992 universe and using data from the 1992 Census of Government Finance. For the first quarter of 2009, a stratified sample of 609 county areas was selected from the universe of 3,126 county-areas using data from the 2002 Census of Government Finance. All county-areas with a population greater than 200,000 were included in the sample with a probability of 1.0. For four quarters, both samples will be used in order to conduct a bridge study between the two samples.

The sample includes all local tax collectors in each of the county areas designated for the property tax sample (using form F-71), all states (using form F-72), and 111 large cities and counties that levy significant non-property taxes (general sales and/or individual income taxes using form F-73).

<u>Form</u>	<u>Sample</u>	<u>Universe</u>	<u>Unit</u>
<u>Response Rate</u>			
F-71 Local government tax collectors			
Old Sample	5,379	35,000*	67%
New Sample	5,569	35,000*	67%
Overlap of Samples	4,002	N/A	N/A
F-72 State governments	51	51	95%
F-73 Major local governments	111	N/A	81%

* The F-71 universe count is an approximate number of local property tax collecting agencies. We are able to come up with an exact amount for the sample through extensive research of those county-areas selected into the sample.

Response rates are based upon receipts during the initial quarter mail-out period and are subject to increase over subsequent quarter collections.

2. Procedures for Collecting Information

The survey collects data using three forms:

The Quarterly Survey of Property Tax Collections (Form F-71) is sent to 5,379 local government tax collecting agencies in 592 county areas. While some counties are served by a single county level tax collection agency, others have county, city, township, and even school district collectors. Each agency is asked to report the total property tax collections during the past quarter. In addition to the current sample, we are implementing a new sample, which will increase the overall collection size to 6,946 local government tax-collecting agencies in 609 county areas (with 4,002 local governments overlapping on both samples). This sample revision will ensure that this portion of the survey meets OMB's statistical standards. We will continue to collect the concurrent samples for four quarters, at which time a bridge study will be published and the old sample will be discontinued. Units in the universe of county areas were stratified by population and a cost indicator prior to allocating using Neyman allocation. At this point a simple weighted estimate will be used until we research the usefulness of a benchmarking procedure. The sample was designed to yield a coefficient of variation of less than 3-percent on a national estimate of property tax. Coefficients of variation will be calculated and disseminated with the new sample.

The Quarterly Survey of State Tax Collections (Form F-72) is sent to a state level revenue, finance, or budget agency in each state to report tax collection data during the past quarter. This is a census of state tax collections so there is no sampling error associated with this part of the survey.

The Quarterly Survey – Selected Local Taxes (Form F-73) is sent to a panel of 111 local tax-collecting agencies known to have substantial collections of local general sales and/or local individual income taxes. The methodology for acquiring the data on non-property taxes is being redesigned. A revision to this package will be sent at a later date as we move from a non-probability sample of tax collecting agencies to a probability sample of tax-imposing agencies. Currently, no inferences beyond the 111 agencies in the panel can be made.

3. Methods to Maximize Response

Telephone and email follow-up is conducted throughout the collection period to maximize response. For the F-72 and F-73 forms, email follow-up is conducted approximately 30 days after initial mailing and telephone follow-up approximately 45-60 days. For the F-71 form, telephone follow-up is conducted approximately 45 days after initial mailing. Census Bureau staff update contact information for chronic non-respondent units and obtain new contacts when necessary. In addition, staff has completed refusal avoidance training. New imputation methods using prior quarter data with appropriate growth rates are currently being researched.

Respondents can and do submit late data for prior quarters that were imputed as well as revisions to prior quarter data (for up to seven prior quarters). They are also encouraged to submit reasonably estimated data for the current collection when actual data are not available by the time the current collection period is closed. These data are then revised when actual data is available.

4. Test of Procedures or Methods

The Census Bureau has not previously conducted selective tests for the tax collection surveys and improvements have been based upon respondent feedback. The current F-71, F-72, and F-73 forms have been used for several years. As part of a survey redesign, we are currently in the process of conducting cognitive testing for the F-73 survey as we redesign the form to conform to statistical standards required by the Census Bureau and OMB.

5. Contacts for Statistical Aspects and Data Collection

Statistical Aspects

Carma R. Hogue
Chief, Statistical Support & Consulting Staff
Office of Statistical Methods & Research for Economic Programs
(301) 763-4882

Data Collection

Paul Villena
Section Chief, Public Finance Analysis Branch - B
Governments Division
(301) 763-7286

Attachments

1. Form F-71 with cover letter on the form
2. Form F-72 with cover letter on the form
3. Form F-73 with cover letter on the form