

February 6, 2009

Memorandum for: Reviewer of 1220-0100

From: Dorinda Allard
Chief
Division of Labor Force Statistics

Subject: Note to Reviewer for the basic Current
Population Survey

The Current Population Survey (CPS) is the official source of monthly data on total employment and unemployment, with the monthly Employment Situation report designated by OMB as a Principal Federal Economic Indicator (PFEI). The CPS data are used monthly to analyze how various components of the American population are participating in the economic life of the Nation. The labor force data can be broken down by sex, age, race and ethnic origin, marital status, family composition, educational level, and various other characteristics. Through such breakdowns, the employment situation of specific population groups can be examined. However, it has not been possible to analyze the labor force characteristics of persons with a disability because disability status was not collected in the CPS until recently.

In June 2008, six new questions were added to the instrument to gather information on disability status. The new questions ask if anyone in the household is deaf or has a serious difficulty hearing; if anyone is blind or has serious difficulty seeing, even when wearing glasses; if anyone has serious difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition; if anyone has serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs; if anyone has difficulty dressing or bathing; and if anyone has difficulty doing errands alone such as visiting a doctor's office or shopping because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition. When an affirmative answer is received, a follow up question is asked to determine which of the household members is/are affected.

These six new questions were asked of all households in June 2008 to generate baseline data and have thereafter been asked only of households in months one and five of the interview cycle and of replacement households. These questions on disability were adopted from the American Community Survey (ACS).

Because of the timing of the introduction of the disability questions and the need to gather responses from all households in the first month to generate baseline data, burden hours in 2008 differed from what they will be in 2009 and subsequent years.

The total respondent burden for the CPS in 2008 was estimated at 99,595 hours. Of this total, the Census Bureau estimated 18,012 hours to obtain basic demographic data and 81,583 hours for the collection of the labor force information, the main product of the

survey. In June 2008, the disability questions were administered to all households to generate baseline data. This required 1,833 burden hours. Thereafter, the disability questions have been asked only of households in months in sample 1 and 5 and of replacement households. This required 2,750 burden hours for last 6 months of 2008, bringing the total 2008 burden hours from the disability questions to 4,583.

In 2009, when the disability questions are first asked for a full year, they will generate 5,500 hours of burden. Burden hours for the labor force section of the survey in 2009 forward will rise to 82,500, and burden for the complete CPS will rise to 100,512. These estimates are based on interviewing 55,000 households on a monthly basis.

This note to reviewer reflecting the increase in hours is being submitted in accordance with the plan mentioned in section 15, Changes in Respondent Burden, of the Supporting Statement.