

B. Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods.

When Item 17 on the Form OMB 83-I is checked “Yes”, the following documentation should be included in the Supporting Statement to the extent it applies to the methods proposed:

1. Describe (including numerical estimate) the potential respondent universe and any sampling or other respondent selection method to be used. Data on the number of entities (e.g., establishments, State and local government units, households, or persons) in the universe covered by the collection and in the corresponding sample are to be provided in tabular form for the universe as a whole and for each of the strata in the proposed sample. Indicate expected response rates for the collection as a whole. If the collection has been conducted previously, include the actual response rate achieved during the last collection.

The universe for this data collection consists of approximately 30,000 fire departments in the United States. All fire departments in the country are eligible to participate and can do so at any time by submitting their data through the online census Web page. Currently, over 26,000 fire departments in the U.S. have registered with this census, thus indicating an 87% response rate. The expected response rate for this collection is, therefore, above what is generally considered high (80%) as we had an 87% response rate last time. These high response rates will remain above 80 percent with future collections of this data. It is expected that these measures will help to maintain sufficiently high response rates suitable to analysis, and that a non-response analysis will not be necessary to be performed on any group(s).

2. Describe the procedures for the collection of information including:

- Statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection,
No statistical methodology is used for stratification and sample selection.
All fire departments are eligible to participate as it is a voluntary system.
- Estimation procedure,
There are no weighting estimation procedures used for this data collection effort.
- Degree of accuracy needed for the purpose described in the justification,
USFA does not use the National Fire Department Census database to compute national estimates of fire departments, numbers of firefighters, or any other national estimates. The census is primarily used as USFA’s mailing list to provide information to fire departments across the country.
- Unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures, and
There are no unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures involved with this data collection effort.
- Any use of periodic (less frequent than annual) data collection cycles to reduce burden.

Twenty percent of fire departments voluntarily registered with the census are contacted each year (once every five years on a rotating basis) to provide updated follow-up's.

3. Describe methods to maximize response rates and to deal with issues of non-response. The accuracy and reliability of information collected must be shown to be adequate for intended uses. For collections based on sampling, a special justification must be provided for any collection that will not yield "reliable" data that can be generalized to the universe studied.

Form/Questionnaire: To maximize response rates, we will do the following:

We will contact fire departments not already registered with the census to encourage them to participate in the program. Fire departments not registered with the census are identified by comparing lists of fire departments maintained by State Fire Marshal's Offices and comparing them to the census database.

4. Describe any tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken. Testing is encouraged as an effective means of refining collections of information to minimize burden and improve utility. Tests must be approved if they call for answers to identical questions from 10 or more respondents. A proposed test or set of tests may be submitted for approval separately or in combination with the main collection of information.

Pilot Test

At the beginning of each survey collection period, a pilot test is conducted on no more than 10 persons to discover any potential problems with the survey instrument or process. For quality assurance purposes, data from the pilot is reviewed by us and improvements are made to the survey process as deemed necessary.

5. Provide the name and telephone number of individuals consulted on statistical aspects of the design and the name of the agency unit, contractor(s), grantee(s), or other person(s) who will actually collect and/or analyze the information for the agency.

Person 1: Gayle Kelch
National Fire Data Center
U.S. Fire Administration
G-111
16825 S Seton Ave
Emmitsburg, MD 21727
(301) 447-1154
gayle.kelch@dhs.gov

Person 2: Nicole Bouchet
Records Management Division
Office of Management
Federal Emergency Management Agency
Attention: OM-RM
500 C Street, SW
Washington, DC 20472
Office: (202) 646-2814
Fax: (202) 646-3347