

**Applicant Background Survey
RRB Form EEO-44**

B. COLLECTION OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

1. **Respondent Universe and Sampling Methods** - The total respondent universe is estimated at 800 job applicants annually (see item 12. above). The number of applicants for most individual vacancies is small, and the proportion of women and minorities of that number is frequently very small. There is no way to predict who will apply for individual vacancies, and thus no way to stratify the applicants. While the courts have recently started recognizing parametric statistics in comparisons of Agency occupations to relevant Civilian Labor Force occupations, both based on complete enumerations, the legal tradition surrounding the analysis of individual vacancies is non-parametric statistics from a census (complete enumeration) of applicants, such as percent.

2. **Procedures for the Collection of Information**

Statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection - The Applicant Background Survey is provided as part of the package of documents for external job applicants, through the electronic advertising in USAJOBS and a link to our web-site at RRB.gov. The survey is sent individually to those who do not return it as part of their application package.

The respondent data is the only source of the demographics that would be used for stratification. The purpose of the Applicant Background Survey is to gather that information. It is not possible to do stratification prior to receipt of the survey data.

Estimation procedures; Degree of accuracy needed for the purpose described in the justification; Unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures - We have achieved/received a sufficient number needed for a sample size (for a heterogeneous population) that supports a 95% confidence level \pm 3% sampling error. No unusual problems have been noted.

Any use of periodic (less frequent than annual) data collection cycles to reduce burden -The data is collected only once, at the time of job application.

3. **Methods to Maximize Response Rates and Deal With Nonresponse** - The form is provided electronically by USAJOBS via a link to the RRB's web-site, as well as, in hard copy from our Human Resources office, so that applicants receive the form as a normal part of the application package. As applications are submitted to us, they are checked to see if the Applicant Background Survey was included in the application package and, if not, a follow-up request is promptly sent.

The form has been designed to request less information, to provide a clear explanation of the need, to use larger type and better graphic layout, and to provide explicit assurances of confidentiality.

4. **Test of Procedures or Methods to be Undertaken** - We have examined the responses collected during the initial OMB-approved information collection period to ensure that the methods and determine that the form is producing valid feedback.

5. **Individuals Consulted on Statistical Aspects and Individuals Collecting and/or Analyzing Data** There is some established precedent for this form. Form EEO-44 closely resembles the current OMB-approved NARA form used to collect the same data. NARA's form was tailored after a similar form used by the Department of Interior. Dr. Gary Machlis, Chief Social Scientist of the National Park Service was consulted on the design of the DOI version of the form, the testing of the effectiveness of the form, and the statistical methods for reporting the results. The design and methods were found to be compliant with applicable/guidance requirements. The RRB's data is compiled and analyzed by our Office of Equal Opportunity staff (OEO). OEO-specific questions can be directed to Lynn Cousins, Director, Office of Equal Opportunity at (312)751-4942, and Pamela Martin, OEO specialist at (312) 751-7185.