

Supporting Statement
U.S. Department of Commerce
Bureau of Economic Analysis
Quarterly Survey of Foreign Airline Operators'
Revenues and Expenses in the United States (Form BE-9)
OMB Control Number: 0608-0068

B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

1. Describe (including a 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 governmental units, households, or persons) in the universe and the corresponding sample are to be provided in tabular form. The tabulation must also include expected response rates for the collection as a whole. If the collection has been conducted before, provide the actual response rate achieved.

The “potential” respondent universe for the BE-9 survey is all U.S. agents of foreign air carriers operating in the United States. The information is collected on a quarterly basis from U.S. agents of foreign air carriers whose total annual covered revenues or total annual covered expenses incurred in the United States are \$5 million or more. Foreign air carriers whose total annual covered revenues and total annual covered expenses are below \$5 million are exempt from reporting. For foreign air carriers that are exempt from reporting, BEA generates an estimate based upon data previously reported or estimated.

For the most recent collection period, the response rate for the BE-9 survey was approximately 90 percent. In addition, the reported data have accounted for approximately 90 percent of the estimated universe value of foreign air carriers’ total annual revenues and total annual expenses in the United States.

2. Describe the procedures for the collection, including: the statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection; the estimation procedure; the degree of accuracy needed for the purpose described in the justification; any unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures; and any use of periodic (less frequent than annual) data collection cycles to reduce burden.

The Section 515 Information Quality Guidelines apply to this information. The information is collected according to documented procedures in a manner that reflects standard practices accepted by the relevant economic/statistical communities. BEA conducts a thorough review of the survey input data using sound statistical techniques to ensure the quality of the data before any estimates are released. The data are collected and reviewed according to documented procedures including the use of check lists, procedures manuals and on-going review by the appropriate supervisor or team leader. The quality of the data are validated using computerized edit checks to detect potential errors and to otherwise ensure that the data are accurate, reliable, and relevant for the estimates being made. Data are routinely revised as more complete source data become available. The collection and use of this information complies with all applicable

information quality guidelines, i.e., those of the Department of Commerce, OMB, and the Bureau of Economic Analysis.

The sample frame consists of approximately 70 foreign air carriers with operations in the United States. The list of potential respondents, which was originally derived from transportation directories and various airline publications, is revised annually to include new entrants and delete inactive respondents.

The information is collected on a quarterly basis from U.S. agents of foreign air carriers with total annual covered revenues or total annual covered expenses incurred in the United States of \$5 million or more. Foreign air carriers with total annual covered revenues and total annual covered expenses below \$5 million are exempt from reporting.

Estimates are based on tabulations of reports received. To the extent that reports are not filed, or are filed too late to be used for the current estimate, BEA generates an estimate based upon data previously reported or estimated for nonrespondents.

A high degree of accuracy is needed for the purposes stated in the justification.

No unusual problems have been encountered that would require the use of specialized sampling procedures.

As discussed under items A. 2. and A.6. of the supporting statement, the objective of the survey could not be achieved if the collection were conducted less frequently. BEA publishes data on exports and imports of transportation services quarterly, and BEA publishes monthly transportation estimates in a joint BEA-Census Bureau news release. Therefore, the accuracy of the estimates would be seriously impaired if the data were collected less frequently.

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

Respondents are mailed copies of the BE-9 survey in January of each year. In addition, the form is available on BEA's website. Any person specifically contacted by BEA must respond in writing or electronically using BEA's *eFile* reporting system, by filing either a completed form or a valid claim for exemption. Non-respondents are sent follow-up notices and, in the event of continued non-response, will be referred to the Office of General Counsel for further action. In most cases, nonresponse consists of late reporting--filing after the due date. As stated in B.1. above, data representing approximately 90 percent of foreign air operators' total annual covered revenues or total annual covered expenses usually are filed in time for the final estimate.

4. Describe any tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken. Tests are encouraged as effective means to refine collections, but if ten or more test respondents are involved OMB must give prior approval.

No tests were conducted.

5. Provide the name and telephone number of individuals consulted on the 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.

The survey is designed and conducted within BEA by the Balance of Payments Division (BPD). No substantive changes are being proposed on statistical aspects of the survey design. For further information, contact Edward Dozier via email at edward.dozier@bea.gov or by phone at 202-606-9559.