

November 19, 2009

MEMORANDUM FOR : Reviewer of 1220-0163

FROM : W. John Layng, Assistant Commissioner
Division of Consumer Prices and Price Indexes

SUBJECT : Modification of Pre-Screening Forms for the
Housing Survey

On November 9, 2009, the CPI Housing Survey (CADC) was approved by OMB with clearance lasting through November 30, 2012. Pre-screening forms are used as an efficient way to determine tenure status for housing units. Our survey uses only renter data. Determining the renter status by mail is much less challenging and more economical than sending Economic Assistants to ask respondents if they rent or own their residence.

The pre-screening forms have been modified. The Office of Survey Methods Research was consulted on the design of the new letter and mail survey. It was agreed by consensus that the new pre-screening forms will yield higher response rates. The revised letter will be dated and three lines are bold text giving clearer explanation for the text written below.

- There is a confidentiality statement in the text which lets the reader know it is a prime concern.
- The survey was simplified. There is a clearer understanding of what information is being asked of the respondent.
- The postcard now has three lines of bold text. It includes the web address for online responses.

We intend to launch the new letters, survey and postcard into the field in January 2010.

We do not expect the modifications will have any significant effect on respondent burden.

If you have any questions about this request, please contact W. John Layng at 202-691-6955 or e-mail at Layng.John@bls.gov or Charles Mason at 202-691-6958 or e-mail at Mason.Charles@bls.gov.