

The U.S. Census Bureau plans to conduct additional research under the generic clearance for questionnaire pretesting research (OMB number 0607-0725). We will conduct usability testing of the Internet reporting application for the 2012 Economic Census. The Census Bureau conducts the Economic Census every five years to provide a benchmark for measuring the economy and businesses in the United States. For the 2012 Economic Census, single-unit establishments will have the opportunity to report their data using the Census Bureau's Internet data collection application. Unlike multi-unit establishments, prior to the 2012 Economic Census, single-unit establishments were unable to report their data online directly.

We plan to conduct usability testing on the electronic versions of the 2012 Economic Census for single-unit establishments. Our testing will focus on respondents' reactions to and interactions with the layout, navigation, and overall functionality of the data collection interface. Although we do not intend to focus on question wording, we will explore any difficulties the respondent might have with any of the questions. Attached are screen shots of a sample questionnaire that will be a part of the Economic Census. Although the Economic Census is comprised of multiple forms that vary based on the industry to which they apply, many of the questions are the same across the different business sectors. The screen shots include those common questions.

In June and July 2012, staff from the Response Improvement Research staff within the Census Bureau's Economic Directorate will conduct the usability interviews with respondents from up to 20 single-unit companies of varying sizes in the Rochester, NY; Virginia Beach, VA; and Washington, DC areas. The businesses will include single-unit companies in the manufacturing, construction, and services industries. Subject area specialists from the construction, manufacturing, or services project teams involved in designing these surveys will accompany the usability tester on most, if not all, of the interviews. These specialists will assist with cases in which the respondent asks for clarification on the subject matter. We will audio record the interviews, with the respondents' permission, to aid in the accurate reporting of our findings and recommendations.

After recruiting businesses, we will fax respondents follow-up reminders about their appointments. We will inform respondents that their response is voluntary, that the information they provide is confidential, and that only Census Bureau or special sworn employees involved in the research project will see any information we discuss. We will not provide monetary incentives to participants in this study.

We estimate that it will be necessary to interview only one respondent at each company, and the length of the interviews will average one and one-half hours. Thus, the maximum estimated burden for this research is 30 hours (20 respondents x 1.5 hours).

If you have any questions regarding data collection and statistical aspects of the design of this research, please contact the following individual:

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