

B. Collection of Information Employing Statistical Methods

1. Universe and Respondent Selection

The NPS covers the entire universe of State and Federal prisons. A form is sent to the research section of each state Department of Correction and the Bureau of Prisons and is usually completed by a statistician or research analyst. NPS does not include individual private prisons or local jails, but we do collect counts of any state or federal prisoners held in these facilities (NPS questions 3-5). Our response rate is 100%.

2. Procedures for Information Collection

Data collection mode is both a paper form sent directly to all state Departments of Correction and the Bureau of Prisons and a web option that resembles the form. Each jurisdiction has an individual password to enter the website and can view their data, but no one else's. The website is hosted by Census, our collection agent:

<http://harvester.census.gov/nps/index.asp?bhcp=1>.

Respondents will receive a letter notifying them of the temporary suspension of the NPS-1A by early June 2011 (see Attachment 4).

The NPS-1B for 2011, 2012, and 2013 will be sent out in mid-December of each respective year, along with a letter from BJS (see Attachment 5). Respondents are asked to submit the data by the due date on the form (the last business day of February) either by web, fax, or mail. Staff from the U.S. Census Bureau, our collection agent, receive survey, send email reminders, and make follow-up phone calls until the last 4-5 respondents remain; these are often the same jurisdictions from year to year due to data system issues or the state being short-staffed. By this time BJS is often already working with the data to produce a report, thus, it increases efficiency to have BJS staff handle the remainder of the data collection.

3. Methods to Maximize Response

Phone calls and reminder emails have proven sufficient in obtaining a 100% response rate from the jurisdictions in the universe.

4. Test of Procedures or Methods

Any significant changes to the form requires that BJS obtains feedback from several state and local agencies as well as the federal system to ensure definitions and counting rules are clear and consistent across jurisdictions. In addition, OMB approval must be obtained, which includes an outside review of the survey (see Section A, 8). BJS and Census Bureau test the web instrument extensively prior to each data collection year to ensure ease of use.

5. Consultation Information

The Correction Statistics Unit at BJS is responsible for the overall design and management of the activities described in this submission, including fielding of the survey, data cleaning, and data analysis. BJS contacts include:

Paul Guerino
Corrections Statistics Unit
Bureau of Justice Statistics
810 Seventh St, NW
Washington, DC 20531
(202) 307-0349

Paige Harrison
Corrections Statistics Unit
Bureau of Justice Statistics
810 Seventh St, NW
Washington, DC 20531
(202) 514-0809