

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
U.S. Department of Commerce
U.S. Census Bureau
2012 Economic Census Covering the Wholesale Trade Sector
OMB Control Number 0607-0929

Part B. Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods

1. Description of Universe

The 2012 Economic Census covering Wholesale Trade is a complete enumeration of establishments with payroll located in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Census data for 2007 recorded 435,000 wholesale establishments; by 2012 this number should be approximately 450,000. Further information on the establishment universe and estimated mail counts for the Wholesale Trade sector of the 2012 Economic Census are given in Attachment B.

2. Mail Selection and Estimation Procedures

a. Mail Selection Procedures

Establishments in the Wholesale Trade sector of the economic census will be selected from the Census Bureau's Business Register for a mail canvass. To be eligible for selection, an establishment will be required to satisfy the following conditions: (i) it must be classified in the Wholesale Trade sector; (ii) it must be an active operating establishment of a multi-establishment firm (i.e., a firm that operates at more than one physical location), or it must be a single-establishment firm with payroll (i.e., a firm operating at only one physical location); and (iii) it must be located in one of the 50 states or the District of Columbia. Mail selection procedures will distinguish the following groups of establishments:

(1) Establishments of Multi-Establishment Firms

All active operating establishments of multi-establishment firms will be included in the mail component of the potential respondent universe. We estimate that the 2012 Economic Census mail canvass for the Wholesale Trade sector will include approximately 134,000 establishments of multi-establishment firms.

(2) Single-Establishment Firms with Payroll

All single-establishment firms having annualized payroll (from Federal administrative records) will be included in the mail component of the potential respondent universe. We estimate that the 2012 Economic Census mail canvass for the Wholesale Trade sector will include approximately 316,000 establishments of single-establishment firms.

b. Estimation Procedures

(1) Basic Statistics

Census tabulations for basic statistics are simple summations of data from a complete enumeration. They do not entail estimates from a sample.

(2) Subject Statistics

Census tabulations for subject statistics, such as product line sales and industry-specific special inquiries, are simple summations of data from a complete enumeration. They do not entail estimates from a sample. These statistics are derived by summing data, with adjustments made to account for nonresponse, mailout misclassification, and other coverage errors.

c. Required Accuracy

(1) Sampling Error

(a) Basic Statistics

The accuracy of basic statistics from the census is not affected by sampling error, since these measures are based on a complete enumeration of the establishment universe. A high degree of accuracy and statistical reliability is required, because the census basic statistics provide benchmarks for the national accounts; the U.S. Census Bureau's current economic surveys; and other surveys conducted by trade groups, businesses, and researchers.

(b) Subject Statistics

The accuracy of subject statistics from the census is not affected by sampling error, since these measures are based on a complete enumeration of the establishment universe.

(2) Nonsampling Error

The accuracy of all census data is influenced by nonsampling errors, such as those affecting coverage, administrative records, report form design, reporting, processing, and tabulation. Although we make no direct measurement of nonsampling errors, we take precautionary steps in all phases of planning, report form development, data collection, processing, and tabulation to minimize their influence.

d. Problems Requiring Specialized Sampling Procedures

There are no known problems that will require specialized sampling procedures for the 2012 Economic Census.

e. Use of Periodic Data Collection to Reduce Burden

The census uses periodic (5-year) data collection, as required by Title 13 USC, Section 131.

3. Efforts to Maximize Response

This information collection will maximize response through the following means: (i) public awareness

campaign to assist businesses and the public in understanding the importance of the 2012 Economic Census by providing news stories through trade and professional associations, chambers of commerce, and business and general media; (ii) assignment of account managers to very large businesses to provide personalized assistance; (iii) redesigned census report form and information sheets with standard formats and terminology that try to simplify reporting and minimize response burden; (iv) extensive electronic reporting capabilities that will allow every business to report using electronic report forms or the Internet; (v) mailing materials that emphasize the mandatory and confidential nature of census reports, as provided by Title 13 USC; (vi) toll-free assistance and a web-based help desk for any business that has questions about completing its census report; and (vii) systematic mail follow-up for nonresponse, supplemented by telephone follow-up for selected firms.

Through these and other response improvement strategies, we expect to maintain or improve the 86 percent response rate (calculated by the number of reports forms returned as a percent of the report forms mailed) obtained by the 2007 Economic Census. This level of response will yield accuracy and reliability that are adequate for intended uses of economic census data.

4. Tests of Procedures or Methods

This information collection will use procedures that are based on a considerable body of experience with the economic census and surveys. Previous economic censuses also have been the subject of evaluation studies that have examined methodology, conceptual issues, and related statistical questions. As a result, the procedures used by the 2012 Economic Census are very well tested.

5. Contacts for Statistical Aspects and Data Collection

Statistical methodology is developed under the direction of William C. Davie, Jr., Assistant Division Chief for Research and Methodology, Service Sector Statistics Division, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC 20233 (telephone 301-763-7182). The 2012 Economic Census covering the Wholesale Trade sector is conducted under the direction of Jack Moody, Assistant Division Chief for Census Programs, Service Sector Statistics Division, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC 20233 (telephone 301-763-2724).

Attachments

- A. Report Form Numbers, Titles, and Associated Burden Estimates for FY 2013
- B. Composition of the Establishment Universe and Estimated Mail Counts for the 2012 Economic Census
- C. Form Content
 - Attachment C-1. Prototype Form
 - Attachment C-2. Variable Content for Item 5—Sales, Shipments, Receipts, or Revenue
 - Attachment C-3. Variable Content for Item 16—Selected Expenses
 - Attachment C-4. Variable Content for Item 19A—Kind of Business
 - Attachment C-5. Variable Content for Item 19B—Type of Operation
 - Attachment C-6. Variable Content for Item 22—Detail of Sales, Shipments, Receipts, or Revenue
 - Attachment C-7. Variable Content for Item 26—Special Inquiries
 - Attachment C-8. Ownership or Control Flier (NC-99542)
- D. Information Sheets
 - Attachment D-1. Information Sheet for Single-Establishment Firms
 - Attachment D-2. Information Sheet for Multi-Establishment Firms
- E. Consultations with Federal Agencies, Trade Groups, and Trade Publications: Selected Correspondence
- F. Summary of Changes to Report Forms