

September 8, 2011

MEMORANDUM FOR: REVIEWER of 1220-0164

FROM: Hilery Simpson  
Chief, Division of Compensation Data Analysis and Planning  
Office of Compensation and Working Conditions  
Bureau of Labor Statistics

SUBJECT: Nonsubstantive Change Request for the  
National Compensation Survey (NCS)

Clearance is being sought for the Bureau of Labor Statistics' (BLS) National Compensation Survey (NCS) program to test and add a new set of web pages (E-Update) for our data collection system. No new or additional data are being collected. Implementation of the new pages will follow successful testing both in the laboratory and in the field. Respondent access to these new web pages will be through BLS's existing IDCF system that allows respondents, using Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) encryption and establishment numbers for security. OMB was informed of this upcoming additional way for respondent to send in data during the most recent OMB Clearance which was approved on April 7, 2011.

The E-Update application is another way for NCS respondents to update the survey data they have previously provided. This system will not be used for initial establishment data collection (initiations). The wage and benefits E-Update process should be more efficient and better meet respondents' needs by clearly showing what data are to be updated and providing greater security for electronic users.

The actual field test (pilot program) of the E-Update system will be done with existing NCS survey establishments. The E-Update test is another way to receive respondent information and is expected to cause no increase in existing respondent burden hours. The NCS will select 210 units from its current sample, allocating 35 units to each of the six BLS regional offices.

The NCS establishments selected for this test will be those most likely to participate in electronic data collection. NCS is gathering feedback from the test establishments on whether they liked and would use the enhanced E-Update system, and whether they have any suggestions for enhancements. The E-Update system may be updated based on the user feedback before the system is fully deployed. The December 2011 and March 2012 NCS quarterly collection cycles will be used for testing; there could be one or more quarters of testing if problems develop.

Once the E-Update system is working and respondents are using the system without difficulty, NCS will ease into full deployment of the E-Update system for all firms that want to use this method of data transmission. This full deployment would likely start with the NCS quarterly collection cycle after the last testing cycle. It is our hope that the E-Update system usage will at least go up to the approximately 2000 sample establishments' level that use the existing IDCF system every quarter.

NCS policy is to collect the data in whichever form is easiest for the respondents to provide and then reformat those data for our use. Ongoing collection training and quality assurance programs are in place to lessen any non-sampling error that may occur during data collection.

If you have any questions about this request, please contact Paul Carney at 202-691-5180 or e-mail at [Carney\\_P@bls.gov](mailto:Carney_P@bls.gov) or Hilery Simpson at 202-691-5184 or e-mail at [Simpson\\_H@bls.gov](mailto:Simpson_H@bls.gov).