

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
U.S. Department of Commerce
International Trade Administration
Market Research to Broaden and Deepen U.S. Exporter Base
OMB CONTROL NO. 0625-0264

SECTION B. Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods

1. Describe (including a numerical estimate) the potential respondent universe and any sampling or other respondent selection method to be used. Data on the number of entities (e.g. establishments, State and local governmental units, households, or persons) in the universe and the corresponding sample are to be provided in tabular form. The tabulation must also include expected response rates for the collection as a whole. If the collection has been conducted before, provide the actual response rate achieved.

The Commercial Service (CS) wants to collect a representative sample of U.S. companies for each of the four surveys to be conducted. A random sample of U.S. companies will be obtained through a commercial vendor with the following sub-populations included:

- New to Export (NTE) vs. New to Market (NTM) vs. Increase to Market (ITM) companies
- Large (greater than 1000 employees) vs. Medium-sized (500-999 employees) vs. Small (499 or fewer employees) businesses
- Urban vs. rural companies (and other geographic considerations)
- Service vs. manufacturing companies (and other industry considerations)

Given that the sub-populations vary considerably, the CS prefers to sample each subpopulation (stratum) independently using stratified random sampling. The CS will use proportionate allocation for sampling within each stratum by employing a [sampling fraction](#) in each of the strata that is proportional to that of the total population. However, if the CS determines that there is greater variability in some strata compared with others, a larger sample will be drawn from those strata with greater variability.

2. Describe the procedures for the collection, including: the statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection; the estimation procedure; the degree of accuracy needed for the purpose described in the justification; any unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures; and any use of periodic (less frequent than annual) data collection cycles to reduce burden.

The data collection methods chosen for the surveys are telephone (ITA-4158, ITA-4159, ITA-4160) and e-mail (ITA-4161). The telephone collection method will utilize a skip pattern. The e-mail message will deliver a hot link to a Web-enabled survey. Different methods were chosen in order to maximize response for each survey segment.

3. Describe the methods used to maximize response rates and to deal with nonresponse. The accuracy and reliability of the information collected must be shown to be adequate for the intended uses. For collections based on sampling, a special justification must be provided if they will not yield "reliable" data that can be generalized to the universe studied.

The data collection method chosen for many of the surveys is telephone, which will utilize a skip pattern. This method was chosen for the following reasons:

- Since no databases of current or potential exporters are available from a governmental agency, Pacific Consulting Group (PCG) will continue to purchase lists from Dunn & Bradstreet (D&B). The D&B list contains contact information including phone numbers but not email addresses.
- No private firm offers e-mail address databases. To obtain email addresses, the addresses must be manually extracted from a firm's Web site.
- While web surveys are easier to administer and provide a convenience option for the respondent, web surveys do not have as high a completion rate as phone surveys. This is especially true when there is no incentive for the respondent to complete the survey.
- The Web survey has more potential to be completed by a respondent other than the targeted respondent, i.e. there is no way to verify who completed the survey. For these surveys it is imperative that the right person answer the questions.

The other data collection method that will be used is an e-mail message delivering a hot link to a Web-enabled survey. If the client does not respond to the survey within two weeks, another e-mail reminder is sent to the client. In addition, returned e-mails are addressed systematically in order to increase response rates.

Ongoing review of the survey instruments and policies may result in further refinements and resubmission of instruments. If changes are deemed necessary to improve response rates or more accurately capture client perceptions, these changes may occur within six months of survey process.

4. Describe any tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken. Tests are encouraged as effective means to refine collections, but if ten or more test respondents are involved OMB must give prior approval.

Questionnaire construction is one of the most critical stages in the survey development process so a great deal of thought has gone into the design issues involved (e.g. development and pretesting) regarding the surveys. In order to prevent the resulting data from being seriously misleading, the CS has beta tested the surveys to ensure that the concepts are clearly defined and survey questions unambiguously phrased. Furthermore, designing a suitable questionnaire requires attention be given to its length and the order in which questions are asked – long questionnaires are apt to induce respondent fatigue and errors arising from inattention,

incomplete answers, and refusals. In addition to making sure that the questionnaire is the suitable length, all questions in the survey have been pretested to ensure that they are understood by the respondents and do not adversely affect survey cooperation. In addition, the CS researched numerous public and private sector best practices and consulted with several survey experts during the design of this survey instrument; including staff from the Pacific Consulting Group and The Research Associates.

5. Provide the name and telephone number of individuals consulted on the statistical aspects of the design, and the name of the agency unit, contractor(s), grantee(s), or other person(s) who will actually collect and/or analyze the information for the agency.

Individuals who will be or have been consulting on the statistical aspects of the design of the surveys, as well as those individuals who will actually collect and/or analyze the information, are:

- Joseph P. Carter
Office of Strategic Planning
U.S. Commercial Service
U.S. Department of Commerce
(303) 844-6623 x219
joseph.carter@trade.gov
- Michael Stone
Stone & Associates, Inc.
(207) 985-0136 fax: (207) 985-0137
Michael@stone-assoc.com
- Tom Cooper
Pacific Consulting Group
(650) 327-8108 fax: (650) 324-8638
tcooper@pcgfirm.com
- Andrea Ptaszek, PhD
Pacific Consulting Group
(617) 314-9397 fax: 617-314-9531
aptaszek@pcgfirm.com
- Sung Lee
The Research Associates
(212) 868-5178 fax: (212) 202-3669
swlee@TheResearch.com

LEGAL AUTHORITY: PUBLIC LAW 15 U.S.C. et seq; 15 U.S.C. 171 et seq;