

## SUPPORTING STATEMENT

### A. JUSTIFICATION

#### 1. Necessity of Information

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), sponsor of the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS; OMB No. 1121-0111), requests an extension of the generic clearance (OMB Number 1121-0325) to continue developmental activities as part of the redesign program, *Methodological Research to Support the Redesign of the National Crime Victimization Survey* (NCVS-RR).

The NCVS was initiated in 1973 in response to recommendations from the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice. The 1967 Commission Report emphasized the importance of having information on crime and its consequences that was independent of police recording practices and available on an on-going basis. The NCVS was developed to complement the information available in police records by including crimes not reported to the police and was designed to provide greater detail about the characteristics of criminal victimization, including victim-offender relationships, weapon use, the extent of injury, receipt of medical care and victim services, and police and criminal justice response.

Over the past three decades, the core methodology of the NCVS has been validated; however, the ability of the survey to meet goals for which it was designed has been threatened by increasing costs of data collection. In 2007, the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) sponsored an expert panel to develop an agenda for reconfiguring the survey and restoring its ability to effectively measure the extent and consequences of crime. The Committee on National Statistics (CNSTAT) of the National Research Council reviewed the survey's methodology and provided recommendations for redesigning the NCVS in 2008. The panel's initial recommendations are contained in *Surveying Victims: Options for Conducting the National Crime Victimization Survey* (National Research Council 2008), which is available online at [http://www.nap.edu/-catlog.php?record\\_id=12090](http://www.nap.edu/-catlog.php?record_id=12090).

To address these recommendations, BJS awarded six initial cooperative agreements to conduct research in the following areas: sub-national estimation, mixed-mode data collection, sample redesign and enhanced efficiencies, non-response bias analysis, and utilization of enhanced contextual priming on the NCVS crime screener instrument. Drawing upon the recommendations of the CNSTAT panel, BJS has structured the NCVS-RR program to reflect an emphasis on cost containment, survey utility, and data quality. Since 2009, BJS has completed substantial work on these initial NCVS-RR projects; however, some of these projects are still underway and some additional research activities are planned in the future.

BJS is seeking an extension of the 2009 generic clearance to complete the ongoing NCVS-RR projects that have already received clearance from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and are currently in the field- testing stage. BJS is also seeking the extension of the generic clearance to permit pretesting and developmental work related to

methods for collecting data from juveniles and other revisions to the NCVS instrumentation and protocol.

### Status of Ongoing NCVS-RR Projects

***Enhanced contextual priming (ECP)***. Crime is a relatively rare event, and as a result, substantial resources are invested in contacting households and administering NCVS screener questions to individuals that have not experienced a crime. One approach to maximizing returns on expended NCVS resources is to capitalize on these initial contacts by asking questions of all sample members.

BJS is testing the utility of enhanced contextual priming questions on the NCVS screener. Research conducted early in the history of the National Crime Survey (NCS), the predecessor to the NCVS, indicated that persons asked a set of attitudinal questions before the crime screening questions reported experiencing more crime. In addition to improved measurement, added behavioral and attitudinal questions may serve to increase the analytical value of the survey by providing data that may be used in analyses of the correlates of crime. Moreover, incorporating such contextual questions into the survey may increase the legitimacy of the survey for respondents by providing a personal connection to topic.

The field test for ECP research began the first week of April 2012. Data collection is expected to conclude in July 2012. BJS expects to complete this project by October 2012.

***Mixed mode data collection***. The inclusion of mixed mode data collection into a redesigned NCVS is of particular interest to BJS. Mixed mode data collection can support survey programs in several ways. First, alternative modes may reduce non-response by providing respondents with multiple ways to participate in the survey process. Additionally, these modes may provide respondents with greater discretion as to when and how they respond to the survey. Such discretion has the potential to provide improved measurement on sensitive items. During a face-to-face personal interview victims may be hesitant to respond to some items or fail to fully disclose their experiences due to their sensitive nature.

BJS is also exploring address based sampling (ABS) and the use of nominal incentives as components of the mixed mode projects. ABS is attractive as a less costly option because the sampling strategy relies upon the Delivery Sequence File (DSF), which is used by the USPS. In addition, nominal incentives may diminish the need for expensive interviewer-based follow-ups by enticing sample members to respond early. If proven feasible for the NCVS, these methodological changes could significantly reduce costs of data collection.

In support of the NCVS-RR activities, BJS funded two studies examining the viability of self-administered survey approaches:

- The first mixed mode project examines the use of Interactive Voice Response (IVR) as a means for collecting victimization data. The field test for this project began in February 2012, with data collection expected to conclude in the first

week of June 2012. BJS expects to complete this project by July 2012.

- The second mixed mode project tests inbound CATI and Web administration. The project involves two waves of data collection. The first wave began on March 2012, and will conclude in August 2012. The second wave will begin in October 2012 and will conclude in February 2013. BJS expects to complete this project by May 2013.

***Subnational companion survey.*** The NCVS was designed to provide national-level estimates of criminal victimization; however, there has been emerging interest in sub-national estimates. To some data users at the state, metropolitan and local level, national-level data are of limited value. In response, BJS has undertaken a Companion Survey (CS) that explores options for producing sub-national estimates and seeks to identify and test a cost-effective approach. Currently, two data collection approaches are under consideration, both using an ABS frame.

- One approach will screen by mail only those addresses for which we are unable to obtain a valid telephone number from directory services. The purpose of this mail screener is primarily to obtain a telephone number.
- The other approach will screen all selected addresses by mail with a goal of oversampling households that are likely to include a victim of a crime.

The two approaches are being pilot tested in spring 2012. The results will determine whether one or both of the approaches is a viable strategy for producing sub-national estimates. Based on the results of the pilot test, BJS expects to conduct a full-scale test in five MSAs.

BJS completed instrument development and cognitive interviewing for each of these approaches in 2011. Materials seeking OMB approval for the pilot test of these approaches are under review. Upon completion of the pilot test, BJS will submit a separate request for a full OMB review for the field test portion of the Companion Survey. BJS expects to complete this project by March 2014.

***Developing and testing optimum survey methods for collecting data on rape and sexual assault.*** BJS has initiated two projects to identify, develop, and test the best methods for collecting self-report data on rape and sexual assault.

- In June 2011, BJS charged an expert panel from the National Research Council's Committee on National Statistics to examine conceptual and methodological issues surrounding survey statistics on rape and sexual assault and to recommend to BJS the best methods for obtaining such statistics on an ongoing basis. The first public meeting of the CNSTAT panel was held on December 8, 2011. The expected completion date for the panel's work is May 2014.
- In September 2011, BJS also made a competitive award to Westat, Inc., to develop and test two different survey designs for collecting self-report data on

rape and sexual assault. One design is to be an optimal design identified in collaboration with the CNSTAT panel. The other will be similar to designs used in the public health field that collect data on rape and sexual assault (e.g., National Women's Study and the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Surveillance System). BJS will compare estimates from these two alternative designs with estimates from the current NCVS.

This project is in the early stages of development; however, cognitive interviewing is scheduled to begin in August 2012, and feasibility testing is expected to begin in May 2013.

Under the renewed generic clearance, BJS will submit requests for cognitive interviewing and feasibility testing. BJS will submit a full OMB clearance package for a pilot test in early 2014. BJS expects that all aspects of this project will be completed by March 2014.

#### Current Clearance Request

BJS is seeking approval to complete projects that have received clearance and are underway, including -

- Enhanced contextual priming (NORC) - field test
- Mixed mode IVR and CATI (Westat) - field test
- Mixed mode inbound/outbound CATI and Web (RTI) - field test

Data collection for the Westat mixed mode study will conclude before June 30, 2012; data collection for the NORC ECP and RTI mixed mode study will continue beyond June 30, 2012, but there will be no additional burden drawdown for these projects.

The clearance request for the pilot test of the sub-national companion study is currently under OMB review. There will be no further requests under the 2009 generic clearance for this project after June 30, 2012.

The project with Westat that examines optimal methods for collecting data on rape and sexual assault is also underway. This project will require burden drawdown under the renewed generic clearance to permit cognitive interviewing and feasibility testing. BJS will request OMB clearance to perform the following tasks under this generic information collection:

- Develop the data collection methodology for collecting data on rape and sexual assaults. (Two collection methods will be developed— one testing the optimal design and one testing a public health design that has been used in the past to measure rape and sexual assault.)
- Determine the sample design, geographic units, and sample sizes, including procedures for seeding the samples with individuals who have experienced rape

or other sexual victimizations.

- Perform up to 80 cognitive interviews per design, as needed.
- Conduct feasibility testing of the developed instruments. (The optimum design will utilize audio computer-assisted self-interviewing (ACASI), while the comparison design will remain true to previous public health approaches using RDD with both a landline frame and a cell-phone supplement.)

Additionally, BJS is seeking the generic clearance to permit pretesting and developmental work associated with two anticipated projects. BJS expects to initiate these projects during the 3 years covered by this generic clearance request. These projects include -

- ***Testing of revised procedures for juveniles.*** The objective of this project is to develop and test revised instruments for use in collecting data from juveniles (persons 10-17 years of age). Activities under the renewed generic clearance will include developing revised instruments for juveniles, performing cognitive interviewing for developed materials; and conducting feasibility testing of the revised screener and incident form.
- ***Feasibility test of other revisions to NCVS instruments and protocol .*** The objective of this project is to conduct a final feasibility test of revisions to the NCVS screener and incident forms, as needed. Activities expected under the renewed generic clearance will include testing revised crime screener and incident forms and performing additional cognitive interviews on revised instruments.

BJS will submit to OMB supporting materials for each project as materials are developed. BJS and its collection agents will obtain approvals from the appropriate Institutional Review Boards (IRB) prior to conducting any testing under this clearance. Results of each project will be made available as methodological reports and disseminated on the BJS Website

## 2. **Needs and Uses**

The purpose of this generic clearance request is to obtain approval to conduct developmental work necessary under the NCVS-RR. Data collected under this clearance will be used to refine and revise the survey questionnaires and procedural designs. The results from the pretests will have a minimal impact on the privacy of the respondents, as their participation is confidential and voluntary. Development and testing are needed in order to adequately assess methodological changes being considered for the redesign of the NCVS.

Data from ongoing projects will inform decisions regarding—

- the inclusion of enhanced contextual priming questions on the NCVS screener;
- the combination of modes for data collection in a redesigned NCVS;
- methodological improvements for collecting self-report data on rape and sexual assault; and
- the viability of producing sub-national estimates as part of the NCVS program.

Data from anticipated projects will also be used to inform improvements in the—

- collection of data from juveniles; and
- NCVS screener and crime incident reports.

Data from these projects will be included in methodological reports published by BJS and made available on the BJS website. BJS produced similar publications during the development of the early National Crime Survey (NCS) and subsequent to the NCVS redesign in 1992.

Users of these data include the following:

- U.S. Department of Justice – The Bureau of Justice Statistics is the sponsor of the NCVS data collection. BJS will use these data to make decisions about the future design of the NCVS.
- Office of Management and Budget (OMB) – OMB shall be given access to results of these studies and consulted as BJS makes decisions regarding future data collection efforts and related funding requirements.

### **3. Use of Technology**

An important goal of the NCVS-RR under this generic clearance is to reduce the cost incurred by screening for crime victimization, possibly adopting self-administered interview modes. Several of the research projects utilized new technologies, including IVR, inbound CATI, Web, and Audio Computer-Assisted Self-Interview (ACASI). All of these projects under the NCVS-RR program involve the application of new technologies to the current NCVS protocol.

### **4. Efforts to Identify Duplication**

The purpose of the research under this clearance is to study the impact of methodological changes for the NCVS. The NCVS is the only ongoing national program that collects data on the incidence, characteristics and consequences of reported and unreported nonfatal violent and property crime.

This research does not duplicate any other questionnaire design work being conducted by BJS. Moreover, for each of the methodological projects, BJS's data collection agents are required to review the existing survey literature to incorporate current knowledge of

survey methodology and to avoid any duplication of effort with other Federal agencies. All OMB clearance requests will include this literature review.

**5. Impact on Small Businesses**

This research does not involve small businesses or other small entities. The respondents are non-institutionalized persons living in households in the United States.

**6. Consequences of Less Frequent Collection**

This clearance involves developmental work for projects that measure the impact of methodological changes to the NCVS. The developmental work will be conducted only once for each project. If these studies are not conducted, it would not be possible to make informed decisions about the redesign of the NCVS.

**7. Special Circumstances Influencing Collection**

The NCVS currently faces escalating costs, declining precision, and circumstances that demand research into how to redesign the survey. Additionally, BJS recognizes the need to increase the utility of the NCVS for researchers, policy makers, and practitioners. Furthermore, the information must be collected in a manner that places minimal burden on each respondent. As such, all data will be collected in a manner consistent with the guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.6.

**8. Federal Register Publication and Outside Consultation**

The initial research projects under the NCVS-RR were informed by CNSTAT panel recommendations. BJS has identified further areas for research under the NCVS-RR designed to increase utility and data quality in the survey while maintaining affordable costs.

The research under this clearance is consistent with the guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.6. Comments on this data collection effort were solicited in the Federal Register, Vol. 77, No. 30, on Tuesday February 14, 2012. No comments were received in response to the information provided.

**9. Payment or Gift to Respondents**

Incentives are being tested as a component of the mixed mode studies under the NCVS-RR. BJS is considering the use of incentive payments in the research examining optimum methods for collecting data on rape and sexual assault due to the sensitive nature of survey topic. If BJS decides to pursue incentives as part of that design, the request and accompanying justification will be presented under the full clearance request for that project.

Compensation may be offered to cover travel and time for persons participating in focus groups or cognitive testing of questions. The stipends for this compensation will not

exceed \$75 for focus groups and \$40 for cognitive interviews. The clearance packages for specific projects will discuss the amount and rationale for such compensation.

**10. Assurance of Confidentiality**

BJS and all contractors will hold in confidence any information that could identify an individual according to Title 42, United States Code, sections 3735 and 3789g. All respondents who participate in pretest activities will be given written or oral assurance that the identity of all participants and respondents will be protected as required under Title 42.

Results from data collected as part of the cognitive and pretest interviews will not be linked to individual respondents, either directly or by inference. As required under Title 42 USC, section 3879g, BJS and its data collection agents will take all necessary steps to mask the identity of survey respondents, including suppression of demographic characteristics and other potentially identifying information.

Prior to beginning any pretesting activity under this clearance, BJS and its collection agents will obtain the requisite approvals from the appropriate Institutional Review Boards (IRB) to ensure that the data collection procedures are in compliance with human subjects protection protocols and confidentiality regulations.

**11. Justification for Sensitive Questions**

The NCVS asks about experiences that may be sensitive for some respondents (e.g. rape and sexual assault). Given the objective of the NCVS — to estimate the amount of victimization in the nation — this is inevitable. The importance of estimating crime levels, as well as the potential value of detailed information about victimization for designing crime prevention strategies, will be explained to any respondent who seems hesitant to answer. We have structured the questions and interviewer application of them to lessen their sensitivity. All respondents have the option of refusing to answer any question.

**12. Estimate of Hour Burden**

The total burden under this generic clearance is 12,900.

- The ongoing NCVS-RR accounts for approximately 11,100 burden hours. Although these projects have been approved by OMB and are in the field test stage, data collection will continue beyond June 30, 2012.
- The estimated respondent burden for anticipated NCVS-RR projects is 1,800 person-hours. The largest annual burden falls in the first year with an estimated 960 person hours. We estimate that cognitive interviews and pretesting instruments will take an average of 1 hour.



Burden hours reflect the relative rarity of crime and the need to screen a large number of people to obtain sufficient numbers of victims to enable comparisons across all conditions. The calculation of burden hours for the NCVS-RR current and future activities is provided in Figure 1.

<b>Figure 1. Burden Hour Calculation</b>							
<b>Contractor</b>	<b>Type of interview</b>	<b># of respondents</b>	<b>time (hrs)</b>	<b>Annualized burden</b>			<b>Total burden</b>
				<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	
<b>Ongoing NCVS-RR burden approved under 2009 generic</b>							
<i>Enhanced contextual priming</i>							
NORC	CATI	2,000	0.467	934	--	--	934
<i>Mixed mode research</i>							
RTI	CATI/IVR	3,600	0.717	2581	--	--	2,581
	inbound/outbound CATI, Web	6,125	0.550	3,369	--	--	3,369
<i>Companion study</i>							
Westat	pilot test	14,464	0.289	4,193			4,193
<b>Total approved burden for ongoing projects</b>							<b>11,077</b>
<b>Planned NCVS-RR burden request under 2012 Generic</b>							
<i>Methods for collecting data on rape/sexual assault</i>							
Westat	cognitive	160	1	160	--	--	160
	feasibility test ACASI and CATI	400	2	800	--	--	800
<i>Methods for collecting data on juveniles</i>							
TBD*	cognitive testing	160	1	--	160	--	160
	feasibility test screener	1,250	0.167	--	209	--	209
	feasibility test incident form	500	0.500	--	250	-	250
<i>Revised NCVS instrument</i>							
TBD*	cognitive testing	60	1.000	--	60	--	60
	feasibility test CAPI	1,000	0.167	--	--	167	167
<b>Total planned burden request under 2012 generic ICR</b>							<b>1,806</b>
*to be determined	<b>Total burden remaining NCVS-RR</b>						<b>12,883</b>

### 13. Estimate of Cost Burden

With the exception of their time, there is no actual cost to respondents to participate in NCVS-RR projects.

### 14. Estimated Cost to Federal Government

The total annual cost to the federal government for the projects that are underway is approximately \$7 million annually (based on the total estimated cost to complete divided by 3, for the period of the generic clearance). Costs of additional anticipated studies in FY13 and FY14 will be determined by the levels of funding available. BJS will provide OMB with updated cost information as plans for additional studies are developed.

In addition to contractor costs, BJS annual cost to manage these studies is approximately \$257,000. These costs were calculated using 2012 GS scale rates at step 5 levels and applied to each of the 3 years under this clearance.

<b>Figure 2. Estimated costs for NCVS-RR</b>				
Data collection			Expenditures to date	Estimated cost to complete
RTI-mode			\$1,041,466	\$1,407,761
Westat-mode			\$538,900	\$221,609
NORC-contextual priming			\$646,656	\$453,365
Westat-subnational companion study			\$585,407	\$8,728,300
Westat- testing optimal survey methods			\$104,352	\$9,967,510
			Contractor subtotal	\$2,916,780
				\$20,778,546
<b>BJS Staff Costs to Complete Projects</b>				
Staff salaries	Base salary (step 5)	Fringe	Salary estimates	
SL-0 - Senior Statistical Advisor (1 @ 10%)	\$159,000	\$44,520	\$20,352	
GS14 - Senior statistician for BJS (1 @ 20%)	\$119,238	\$33,387	\$30,525	
GS13 - Statistician for BJS (1 @ 60%)	\$100,904	\$28,253	\$77,494	
BJS Visiting Fellow (1 @ 70%)	\$106,232	\$29,745	\$95,184	
Subtotal: Salary & fringe			\$223,555	
Other administrative costs of salary & fringe (15%)			\$33,533	
Subtotal: BJS costs @ 3 years			\$771,265	
<b>Total: Estimated costs</b>			<b>\$21,549,811</b>	

**15. Reasons for Change in Burden**

There are no changes in burden since the NCVS-RR projects are either ongoing or new data collections.

**16. Plans for Publication**

In calendar years 2012 and 2013, BJS expects to perform data collection for the following contracts:

- Mixed mode data collection;
- Enhanced contextual priming;
- Pilot testing methods for subnational data collection;
- Developmental work for testing optimal methods for collecting data on rape and sexual assault.

Work to be determined is expected to begin in 2013 and conclude in 2015. All work under this clearance is expected to be completed by 2015.

At the conclusion of each research project, a final report based on each project will be released via the BJS website. Additional methodological research papers may be issued by BJS staff as resources permit. The types of statistics that will be available in these reports include response rates, measures of productivity such as offenses reported per respondent or household, and counts and rates for the purpose of evaluating changes in estimates due to methodology. Data collected under a generic clearance will not be used to calculate substantive results/estimates that will be released outside the agency.

**17. Expiration Date Approval**

The OMB control number and expiration date will be published on all forms given to respondents. In instances where information is collected electronically (e.g. Web, IVR, CAPI, and CATI), information will be displayed or read describing the nature of the survey and authority to collect the information.

**18. Exceptions to the Certification Statement**

There are no exceptions to the Certification Statement.