



Department of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

April 22, 2014

Chad Whiteman
Department of Energy Desk Officer
Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs
Office of Management and Budget
Washington, DC 20503

SUBJECT: Use of Generic Clearance for U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA-882T (58), approved under OMB number 1905-0186) to conduct cognitive interviews for proposed asphalt production questions to be added to the EIA-846, "Manufacturing Energy Consumption Survey."

Dear Mr. Whiteman:

The EIA-846 form, or the Manufacturing Energy Consumption Survey (MECS), collects information on energy consumption and energy usage patterns of the manufacturing sector of the U.S. economy. The information from this survey is used to publish aggregate statistics on the consumption of energy for fuel and nonfuel purposes, as well as certain energy-related issues such as energy prices, on-site electricity generation, purchases of electricity from utilities and nonutilities, and occasionally the capability to switch fuels.

Background: For the 2014 MECS survey, EIA would like to add questions regarding asphalt production, consumption, and shipments. These questions will be answered by asphalt plants. In order to understand the potential measurement error in these proposed questions, EIA's survey methodologists would like to conduct cognitive interviews with asphalt plants that may be included in the 2014 sample. The purpose of these visits will be:

- To confirm if potential respondents at asphalt plants, both the person and the company, can complete the new questions that will be added to the MECS;
- To assess the cognitive burden required from potential respondents at asphalt plants to respond to these new questions.

Proposed Cognitive Interviews: EIA plans to conduct up to 20 cognitive interviews with asphalt plants that may be included in the 2014 sample. These interviews may occur in up to two rounds of testing. EIA plans to conduct the cognitive interviews in the June thru September of 2014 timeframe in metropolitan areas that are yet to be determined.

EIA may use the information collected from these cognitive interviews to revise the proposed asphalt production, consumption, and shipments questions. Specifically, the

information collected may be used to update the proposed wording for data requests and instructions in order to retrieve more accurate and uniform reporting of the data from respondents. The cognitive testing will also allow EIA to more accurately estimate the burden that these new questions will add to asphalt plants.

Burden: Each cognitive interview will be about an hour. Total burden across all interviews is estimated to be up to 20 hours.

Costs for respondents is estimated to be \$1386.60 ($\$69.33 * 20 \text{ hours} * \text{one respondent}$). Costs for EIA is estimated to be \$4159.80 ($\$69.33 * 20 \text{ hours} * \text{three persons from EIA}$). Total costs are estimated to be \$5546.40.

EIA will provide OMB with the results of these tests in the annual summary of generic clearances. Attached is the draft protocol for the asphalt questions, which will be used during the cognitive interviews, and the draft questions in Microsoft word format.

For questions on the cognitive interviews, please contact Debra Coaxum (202) 586-0957.

Sincerely,

Stephen Harvey
Assistant Administrator of Energy Statistics
U.S. Energy Information Administration