

The Census Bureau requests permission to make non-substantive changes to the questionnaire under the clearance for the Federal Statistical System Public Opinion Survey (OMB number 0607-0969). The objective of this research is to gather data on public understanding of and trust in Federal Statistical Agencies and federal statistics. These public opinion data will enable the Census Bureau to better understand public perceptions, which will provide guidance for communicating with the public and for future planning of data collection that reflects a good understanding of public perceptions and concerns.

As a reminder, from February 2012 through September 2013, the Census Bureau will add 25 questions nightly onto an ongoing data collection by the Gallup Daily Tracking Survey. Approximately nineteen of the 25 questions are core questions and approximately 6 are available for rotation. Core questions focus on awareness of and attitudes towards federal statistics and federal statistical agencies. The topic of this change request is the rotating questions. Up to 20 times during the data collection, up to 6 questions may be rotated in the survey. OMB and Census have agreed that these rotating questions constitute non-substantive changes to this submission. Attached to this letter is the request to make these changes through a single tracking document. This tracking document contains a complete history of all questions asked and the date that each question was or is planned to be asked.

The next rotation is aimed at better understanding alternate contact strategies for contacting respondents. The U.S. Census Bureau is continually identifying and testing methods to improve efficiency while cutting costs and must make fundamental changes to the design, implementation, and management of the decennial Census if it is to meet the strategic goals and objectives for the 2020 Census. The Census Bureau is seeking ways to make census data gathering operations more efficient and cost effective but also understands that concerns exist within the population about privacy, confidentiality, contact information and contact modes. The proposed questions seek to understand more about how demographics and factors of trust may play a role in respondents' receptiveness to being contacted via alternate contact methods, like cell phone calls, text messages and emails.

We believe that lessons learned within the context of the Census Bureau questions will also provide strategic information to the other participating agencies on potential cost-saving ways of contacting the public. We are requesting to field these questions beginning September 23, 2012 for four weeks or until a new request is made.

The contact person for questions regarding data collection and study design is:

Jennifer Hunter Childs
Center for Survey Measurement
U.S. Census Bureau
Washington, D.C. 20233
(301) 763- 4927
jennifer.hunter.childs@census.gov

