

OMB Passback and Response

1. The cover letter is too long. It should be one side of one page. It's fine to include a back side or separate paper of "FAQs" such as the information currently labeled "Paperwork Reduction Act Statement" but they should be written as essentially stand alone documents.

BJS Response: The cover letter has been trimmed to a single page. An additional attachment has been added for the FAQ regarding the burden statement. It will be separate document from the cover letter.

2. To encourage web response, it is a best practice not to offer a mail or fax response option in the first round, unless you are customizing based on prior indication of response preferences. Offering both in the same letter tends to depress overall response rates. Please provide a literature based response to why BJS proposes to offer both in the same letter.

BJS Response: Overall response rate to this survey has not been an issue in the past. However, we have revised the cover letter providing the web information as the only method of response at this time. The roll out of the data collection will be via email and include the Word version of the survey which respondents may choose to fill out and email or fax back. When the survey was last conducted in 2008, 8 respondents elected to fill out the form manually and fax it back.

3. Why does SS A 12 say that the average burden is 6.3 hours but the screenshot of the questionnaire says the average burden is 3 hours?

BJS Response: The screenshot is a mock up of what the web instrument looked like when the data collection was conducted for yearend 2008. It was an oversight that the burden statement was not updated to reflect the current burden of 6.3 hours. It has been updated accordingly.

4. Where are the other supplemental materials, such as telephone scripts for nonresponse follow up, nonresponse follow up letters, etc? ALL communications materials with respondents should be included, and all planned communications, such as nonresponse follow-up phone calls, require such material. Otherwise, there is no central quality control over what individual data collection agents are doing, leading to poor survey management.

BJS Response: Overall the response rate has not been an issue with this data collection. The respondent universe is made up mostly of state repository directors which, in many instances, are also SEARCH members. SEARCH has a very close working relationship with respondents, as does BJS. Examples of email and telephone follow-up scripts are attached to this email..