

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU**

**2012 Economic Census of Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam,
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and American
Samoa—
Collectively Referred to as Island Areas¹
OMB: 0607-0937**

Part B. Collections of Information Using Statistical Methods

1. Description of Universe

The 2012 Economic Census of Island Areas is a complete enumeration of active establishments with payroll in 2012 in Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and American Samoa.

The universe of establishments is given by the U.S. Census Bureau's Business Register. To be included in the Island Areas census, an establishment will be required to satisfy the following conditions: (1) it must be classified in the industry structure; (2) it must be an active establishment with payroll in 2012; and (3) it must be located in Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands or American Samoa.

We estimate for 2012, the size of the universe of establishments for the Island Areas will be approximately 59,100. This estimate is based on the counts for 2007 and estimates of subsequent change. The 2007 Economic Census of Island Areas received responses from 77 percent of the establishments. We expect a similar response rate for the 2012 Economic Census.

2. Estimation Procedures

Census tabulations are simple summations of data from a complete enumeration of the establishment universe for the Island Areas. They do not entail estimates from a sample; hence, accuracy of tabulations from the census is not affected by sampling error.

¹ The term used to collectively refer to Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and American Samoa in the Federal Register on June 7, 2011 was Island Areas. Island Areas is common terminology across the Census Bureau.

The accuracy of all census data is influenced by nonsampling errors, such as those affecting coverage, administrative records, questionnaire design, reporting, processing, and tabulation. Although we make no direct measurement of nonsampling errors, we take precautionary steps in all phases of planning, report form development, data collection, processing, and tabulation to minimize their influence.

Information quality is an integral part of the pre-dissemination review of the information disseminated by the Census Bureau (fully described in the Census Bureau's Information Quality Guidelines). Information quality is also integral to the information collections conducted by the Census Bureau and is incorporated into the clearance process required by the Paperwork Reduction Act.

The census uses periodic (5-year) data collection, as required by Title 13 U.S.C., Section 131.

3. Methods to Maximize Response

This information collection will maximize response through the following means:

(1) public awareness campaign to assist businesses and the public in understanding the importance of the 2012 Economic Census by providing news stories through trade and professional associations, chambers of commerce, and business and general media; (2) assignment of account managers to large businesses to provide personalized assistance; (3) redesigned census questionnaires and information sheets with standard formats and terminology that try to simplify reporting and minimize response burden; (4) the use of electronic reporting capabilities that will allow all businesses, including those located in Puerto Rico, who receive Spanish versions of the report form to report over the Internet; (5) mailing materials that emphasize the mandatory and confidential nature of census reports, as provided by Title 13 U.S.C.; (6) toll-free assistance and/or a web-based help desk for any business that has questions about completing its census report; and (7) systematic mail follow-up for nonresponse, supplemented by telephone follow-up for selected firms. Through these and other response improvement strategies, we expect to maintain or improve the 77 percent response rate obtained by the 2007 Economic Census of Island Areas. This level of response when combined with data review and corrections will yield accuracy and reliability that are adequate for intended uses of economic census data.

4. Testing of Procedures

This information collection will use procedures that are based on a considerable body of experience with the economic census and surveys. Previous economic censuses also have been the subject of evaluation studies that have examined methodology, conceptual issues, and related statistical questions. Cognitive testing was conducted for the 2012 forms intended for use in Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and Puerto Rico. Approximately 50 companies were interviewed, and the information gleaned from the testing influenced the questions asked on the forms. Additionally, substantial testing of form content has been done by the stateside economic census. As a result, the procedures used by the 2012 Economic Census are very well tested.

5. Contacts for Statistical Aspects and Data Collection

The 2012 Economic Census of Island Areas is conducted under the direction of Lee R. Wentela, Chief, Economic Census Branch, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC 20233 (telephone 301-763-7270). Data collection and analysis are managed by Geoffrey Hill, Survey Statistician, Economic Census Branch, Company Statistics Division, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC 20233 (telephone 301-763-6554) and Lillyana Najafzadeh, Survey Statistician, Economic Census Branch, Company Statistics Division, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC 20233 (telephone 301-763-6544).