

1The Census Bureau plans to conduct additional research under the generic clearance for questionnaire pretesting research (OMB number 0607-0725). We plan to conduct cognitive testing to proposed new questions on the Commodity Flow Survey (CFS). The CFS is a quarterly panel survey conducted during the Economic Census year and sponsored by the Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS). Respondents to the survey provide information on select shipments that occur within the designated quarter. The CFS provides information on the movement of goods throughout the U.S.

For the 2017 survey, the survey sponsors would like to add new questions to the survey, in addition to revising some of the existing questions. The new items will help the sponsors with their data editing procedures and provide information to response process. The revised items will eliminate questions and revise the response options to better meet data needs.

The revisions to the questions and the addition to questions are as follows:

ITEM A: This question was revised to allow respondent the opportunity to verify and correct shipping information, rather than making changes within the mailing label.

ITEM G: This is a new question and replaces a question on Rush Deliveries. Respondent will verify their NAICS classification. This item is intended to help with the classification of companies in Census Bureau databases.

ITEM H: The response option on this question was changed from multiple-choice to open-ended to better capture the data.

ITEM I: This questions was added to assess the burden associated with filling out this questionnaire.

In order to assess how these questions will perform, we will conduct two rounds of cognitive interview to evaluate the wording of the questions, their clarity, and the availability of the information in respondents' records.

Round 1: In October 2015, staff from the Data Collection and Methodology Research Branch (DCRMB) will conduct 30 cognitive interviews with respondents to test the proposed questions. These interviews will take place in two separate locations yet to be determined. After the initial round of testing, we will work with the subject-matter experts to incorporate the findings from this initial round of testing and revise the questions.

Round 2: In February 2016, staff from DCMRB will conduct 15 interviews to test the revised questions. The interviews will take place in a location yet to be determined. At the completion of this final round of testing, the finding will be incorporated into the final questionnaire content for the 2017 CFS.

Researchers from the DCRMB will conduct these interviews at respondents' workplaces as funding for travel permits. Staff from other areas in the Economic Directorate will help identify

locations for testing, assemble recruiting lists, and may participate as observers in the interviews as they are able. DCMRB will recruit companies that participated in the 2012 CFS. We want to meet with participants who filled out the 2012 CFS and will be most likely to fill out the 2017 CFS. After we recruit them, we will give participants a follow-up reminder (phone, email, or fax) of their appointments.

Before beginning the interviews, we will inform participants that their response is voluntary and that any information they provide is confidential. We also will ask for permission to audio-record the interviews. We will not be providing respondents with monetary incentives to participate in this study.

The length of the interviews is expected to average 1 hour. We expect to make up to five recruiting calls for every interview scheduled, and each recruiting call will last an average of five minutes. Thus, the total estimated burden for this set of interviews is approximately 64 hours ((45 companies X 1 hour) + (225 companies X 5 minutes)).

A copy of the proposed questionnaire, which notes the revised questions and the new questions, and the interview protocol are enclosed.

The contact person for questions regarding this research is:

Jennifer Beck
Data Collection and Methodology Research Branch
U.S. Census Bureau
Washington, D.C. 20233
(301) 763-1736
jennifer.l.beck@census.gov

Amy Anderson Riemer (ESMD)
Diane Willimack (ESMD)
Carma Hogue (ESMD)
Carol Caldwell (ESMD)
James Hinckley (ERD)
Jennifer Whitaker (ERD)
Kimberly Moore (ERD)
William Davie Jr. (ESMD)
Scott Dahl (ESMD)
Nick Orsini (ADEP)
William Bostic Jr. (ADEP)
Jennifer Hunter Childs (ADRM)
Mary Davis (ADRM)
Danielle Norman (PCO)
Jeannette Greene-Bess (PCO)