

The Census Bureau plans to conduct additional research under the generic clearance for questionnaire pretesting research (OMB number 0607-0725). We will be conducting respondent debriefings for the 2015 Annual Survey of Manufactures and 2015 Report of Organization (ASM and RO, respectively). The ASM and RO are related and similar programs: They both collect establishment-level data (as opposed to strictly enterprise-level) and use the same electronic collection system. The ASM collects data for industry classification, employment, measures of output, assets, expenditures, inventories, expenses, and other industry-specific inquiries from single- and multi-unit companies. The RO collects basic classification, employment, and sales information in service of frame maintenance between economic censuses only from multi-unit companies across all sectors. The ASM and RO are both collected electronically, using the downloadable Surveyor application (for multi-unit companies) and via the Census Bureau's Centurion online collection system (for single-unit companies). The Census Bureau no longer mails paper ASM or RO forms, although we provide worksheets to assist respondents in preparing their responses for entry into the electronic collection systems.

The purpose of these respondent debriefings is to investigate respondents' perceived usefulness of the current worksheets and to evaluate prototype worksheets, to develop requirements for the content and formatting of future worksheets that will be accessible in the new electronic collection system that is currently in development for the 2016 ASM/RO and the 2017 Economic Census.

In order to evaluate respondents' needs, we plan to conduct cognitive interviews with respondents from up to 40 single- and multi-unit companies that responded to the 2015 ASM/RO. We will attempt to complete interviews with approximately equal numbers of single- and multi-unit companies.

Interviews will be conducted February through April 2016. Respondents will be contacted shortly after completing the survey. Interviews will be conducted by staff from the Data Collection Methodology & Research Branch within the Census Bureau's Economic Statistical Methods Division. Specialists from the subject area staff may participate as observers of the phone interviews as they are able. Interviews will be audio recorded with respondents' permission, if possible (i.e., depending on conference room availability, to permit use of a speakerphone which can be recorded). Some respondents may agree to conduct the interviews immediately as they are contacted, while others may want to schedule the interviews for later, in which case they will receive confirmation emails about their appointments upon request. Participants will be informed that their responses are voluntary and that the information they provide is confidential and will be seen only by Census Bureau or special sworn employees involved in the research project. We will not be providing monetary incentives to participants in this study.

We estimate that it will be necessary to interview one respondent at each business. We estimate the interviews will take up to 30 minutes (40 cases X 30 minutes per case = 20 hours). Additionally, to recruit respondents we expect to make up to 5 phone contacts per completed case. The recruiting calls are expected to last on average two minutes per call (5 phone calls per completed case X 40 cases X 2 minutes = 6.7 hours). Thus, the estimated burden for this project is 26.7 hours (6.7 hours for recruiting + 20 hours for interviews).

Enclosed are a copy of the current worksheet for ASM, a prototype worksheet, and a draft of the interview protocol. Please note that the current worksheet's title does not mention the Report of Organization, but it does contain the questions that appear on the RO.

The contact person for questions regarding data collection and statistical aspects of the design of this research is:

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Enclosures

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