

## SUPPORTING STATEMENT

### Census of Federal, State, and Local Law Enforcement Agencies, 2014

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) requests clearance to conduct the 2014 Census of Federal, State, and Local Law Enforcement Agencies (Census). Historically, the Census generates an enumeration of all publically funded state and local law enforcement agencies operating in the United States and provides complete personnel counts for the approximately 18,000 law enforcement agencies operating nationally. For the purposes of the Census, a “law enforcement agency” is a publically-funded government entity responsible for enforcing laws, maintaining public order, and promoting public safety. To be within scope of the Census, a law enforcement agency must employ the equivalent of at least one full-time sworn personnel. BJS has conducted the Census regularly since 1992, making the 2014 administration the sixth wave of data in the statistical series.

However, the previous rounds of the Census was limited to local police departments, sheriffs’ offices, state law enforcement agencies, and special jurisdiction agencies (referred to as the CSLLEA <http://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=dcdetail&iid=249>). In the current 2014 request for clearance, BJS will expand the scope of the program to include law enforcement agencies with federal jurisdiction. A federal law enforcement agency is an organizational unit, or subunit, of the federal government with the principal functions of prevention, detection, and investigation of crime and the apprehension of alleged offenders. Examples of federal law enforcement agencies include the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Secret Service, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF). Prior to the proposed 2014 Census administration, information about federal law enforcement agencies was collected under a separate data collection program, the Census of Federal Law Enforcement Officers (FLEO) (<http://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=pbdetail&iid=4372>).

FLEO was conducted roughly every two-years from 1993 through 2008, generating a statistical series inclusive of 7 waves of data. The 2008 FLEO administration included data from agencies that employed full-time officers with federal arrest authority who were also authorized (but not necessarily required) to carry firearms while on duty. Data collected through FLEO provide information on personnel counts, including supervisory and nonsupervisory personnel, and primary job functions. The personnel counts exclude officers in the U.S. Armed Forces (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, and Coast Guard), the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and the Transportation Security Administration’s Federal Air Marshals. BJS estimates the inclusion of federal agencies in the 2013 Census will expand the universe by 75 agencies.

With the expansion of the federal component this year, the new Census will be referred to as the *Census of Federal, State, and Local Law Enforcement Agencies* (Census) with two data collection components: (1) state and local (CSLLEA) (see Attachment 1), and (2) federal (FLEO) (see Attachment 2).<sup>1</sup> The primary goals of the Census are to (1) develop a national roster of active publically-funded law enforcement agencies that employ the equivalent of one full-time sworn personnel to be used as a sampling frame for other collections, and (2) generate national statistics describing the size, characteristics, and functions of these agencies.

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<sup>1</sup> Given the wide recognition of the previous CSLLEA collections with law enforcement agencies BJS opted to retain the title.

## **A. Justification**

### **1. Necessity of Information Collection**

Under Title 42, United States Code, Section 3732 (see Attachment 3), the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) is directed to collect and analyze statistical information concerning the operation of the criminal justice system at the federal, state, and local levels. It disseminates high quality information and statistics to inform policy makers, researchers, criminal justice practitioners, and the general public. The Criminal Justice Statistics Program encompasses a wide range of criminal justice topics, including victimization, law enforcement, prosecution, courts and sentencing, and corrections. Law enforcement agencies are the primary point of entry into the criminal justice system and play a crucial gate keeping function in receiving reports of offenses, investigating crimes, making arrests, and detaining suspects. Subsequently, these agencies are a major provider of statistical data on crime.

The size, purposes, efficiency, fairness, and impact of law enforcement in the United States are ongoing national policy issues. Law enforcement agencies in the United States are numerous, diverse, and highly fragmented industry with substantial differences in the size, role, and activities. Data collected during the 2008 Census administration indicate there were 17,985 agencies operated by state or local governments and other public entities and employed more than 1.1 million full-time personnel. About half (49%) of these agencies employ fewer than 10 full-time sworn personnel, while the largest 7% of state and local law enforcement agencies employed nearly two-thirds (64%) of all sworn personnel. Agencies serve a variety of functions from patrol and response, criminal investigation, traffic and vehicle-related functions, detention-related functions, court-related functions, special public safety functions (e.g., animal control), task force participation, and specialized functions (e.g., search and rescue). In 2010, approximately \$124 billion was spent by federal, state and local governments on police-related activities.<sup>2</sup> These sizeable investments by local governments have led to new debates about the appropriate size, function, and control over these activities in the current economic and social climate.

Some central questions underlying these debates about law enforcement are 1) What is the appropriate size of the law enforcement agency to properly control and respond to crime?, 2) What type of law enforcement training, education and experience is necessary to field a responsive, fair, and effective agency force?, and 3) What functions and activities should law enforcement conduct to ensure the proper use of discretion and citizen engagement in an effort to control crime, increase safety, and maintain equality and fairness? Key questions include:

- What is the relationship between agency size and crime? What is the impact of hiring more police officers on the crime rate, citizen safety, and other measures of community well-being?
- What type of officer is most effective at preventing and controlling crime? How does officer education, experience, and training effective their performance?

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<sup>2</sup> Justice Expenditure and Employment Extracts 2010 - Preliminary, NCJ 242544

- How do agencies utilize part-time and full-time positions, outsourcing, private security, and partnerships with other organizations? How do these activities impact crime rates, expenditures, performance?
- What types of functions do law enforcement agencies perform? Do these functions vary by agency type and location?

Given this significant scope, diversity, function, and expenditures, collecting data on issues related to law enforcement personnel and functions are of critical concern to BJS – since its mission to collect, analyze, publish, and disseminate information on the operation of justice systems at all levels of government. Developing and maintaining an accurate picture of the nation’s law enforcement workforce is paramount to understanding the current state of policing in the United States. BJS has conducted establishment surveys of law enforcement agencies regularly since 1987. The core of BJS’ law enforcement statistics program is the *Census of Federal, State, and Local Law Enforcement Agencies* (Census) with the state and local component (CSLLEA) and the expansion this year of the federal component (FLEO). From this census a number of specialized collections are developed to address specific data needs including the core Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics (LEMAS) survey of agency administrators.

The proposed 2014 Census is the only systematic, national-level data collection providing a complete enumeration of the Nation’s federal, state, and local publically-funded law enforcement agencies and counts of their personnel. It allows BJS to track change over time and to better understand the needs and uses of police resources. In addition, the Census provides the basis for distinguishing among various types of law enforcement agencies by asking respondents to indicate the types of functions performed by the agency (e.g., law enforcement, investigative, jail management, court security, and process serving). Unlike other sources of law enforcement information, BJS’ Census provides additional data to supplement basic personnel counts, including breakdown of agency functions, and how sworn personnel are allocated to functions such as duties related to law enforcement, jail operations, and courts.

Information collected through the Census can provide local area estimates of personnel counts and functions; statistics that are essential for better understanding the landscape of the American policing. These important statistics can be used to examine the correlates of crime and estimate the effect of police practices on crime rates. Agency-level data are needed to better understand police performance in terms of crime and victimization rates. In addition, an understanding of the number and functions of law enforcement personnel will assist in planning for public welfare response to national emergencies. During a disaster, law enforcement officers play a critical role in operations such as search and rescue, evacuations, door-to-door checks, and maintaining overall public safety. Information about the number of law enforcement personnel employed by agency and the functions these officers perform will aid in evaluating needs for national emergency preparedness. No other national data collection can provide comprehensive data on the organizational structure of local law enforcement agencies and the services they perform.

A recent review of BJS programs by the National Research Council (NRC) recommended that BJS law enforcement surveys should “collect more information about law enforcement agency behavior and performance and enhance the use of agency identifiers to encourage the linkage of

agency-specific organizational characteristics with agency specific-crime statistics and with the demographic characteristics of the jurisdictions served by each agency.” BJS will build upon these recommendations in the proposed Census.

In addition, the proposed instrument has been designed to include an enhanced set of core items to bridge gaps in national-level information on law enforcement, such as items on agency behavior and agency identifiers. The augmented Census core includes items that are essential screener questions for the foundation future thematic surveys conducted by BJS and other Department of Justice offices (e.g., NIJ, OVC, COPS).

Accurate counts of law enforcement personnel, as well as the type of agencies employing personnel are necessary for implementing the majority of BJS’ law enforcement statistics program. Without these statistics BJS could not produce national estimates on the organization and administration of police and sheriffs’ departments, including agency responsibilities, operating expenditures, job functions of sworn and civilian employees, demographic characteristics of sworn personnel, officer salaries, education and training requirements, equipment use, and polices.

## **2. Needs and Uses**

### *BJS Needs and Uses*

BJS has conducted establishment surveys of law enforcement agencies regularly since 1987. The core of BJS’ law enforcement statistics program is the *Census of Federal, State, and Local Law Enforcement Agencies* (Census) with the state and local component (CSLLEA) and the expansion this year of the federal component (FLEO). The primary goals of the Census are to (1) develop a national roster of active publically-funded law enforcement agencies that employ the equivalent of one full-time sworn personnel, and (2) generate accurate and reliable national statistics describing the characteristics and functions of these agencies.

The primary use of the national law enforcement roster is to ensure an accurate universe of agencies for all BJS law enforcement programs, including the Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics (LEMAS) survey, the survey of Campus Law Enforcement Agencies (CLEA), the Census of Tribal Justice Agencies in Indian County, and the Arrest-Related Deaths (ARD) component of the Deaths in Custody Reporting Program (DCRP). In addition, the roster generated from the 2013 Census will be used to update information in BJS’s Law Enforcement Agency Identifiers Crosswalk (Crosswalk). The Crosswalk is designed to link other data resources by providing information on or about each law enforcement agency included in either the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program or the Census.

Since 1987, BJS has successfully implemented 8 waves of the LEMAS (OMB 1121-0240) survey. This survey samples roughly 3,000 state and local agencies and provides national estimates about the characteristics of the 12,500 state and local general purpose law enforcement agencies; the functions they perform; the resources available to them; the number, type, and working conditions of their employees; the automation of agency functions and their information systems; the extent to which weapons are authorized and used; the formal policies that guide and

restrict the behavior of sworn personnel; and the organizational responses utilized by these agencies to address contemporary law enforcement challenges. Data collected through the Census (i.e., type of law enforcement agency, number of personnel) are needed to draw a generalizable sample of agencies for the LEMAS survey. BJS publications derived from LEMAS surveys provided information on current issues and trends in law enforcement from nationally representative samples in the U.S.

In addition to the general purpose agencies captured in the LEMAS survey, the Census roster provides a means for identifying a variety of special purposes agencies. Special jurisdiction law enforcement agencies are responsible for providing police services in areas within another jurisdiction. These types of agencies are usually full-service departments granted law enforcement authority in parks, transportation assets (e.g., airports, subways), housing authorities, schools, hospitals, and government buildings. The single largest type of special purpose law enforcement agencies are campus police, which BJS surveyed in 1995, 2005, and 2012. The 2012 Survey of Campus Law Enforcement Agencies (OMB 1121-0334) included a sample of police departments run by private colleges and universities as well as departments operated by state and local governments. In 2015, BJS anticipates it will initiate a census of criminal justice agencies serving tribal lands, including law enforcement agencies. The 2015 Census of criminal justice agencies serving tribal lands will provide the information needed to construct a roster of such agencies with these specialized functions.

The universe generated from the Census will also be used to update information in BJS' Law Enforcement Agency Identifiers Crosswalk (Crosswalk). The Crosswalk is designed to link other data resources to BJS law enforcement data and used to associate local governments to law enforcement agencies in order to allocate BJA's JAG funding. In addition, the universe of state, local, and special purpose law enforcement agencies is used by other DOJ offices to generate sampling frames for data collections, such as OJJDP's National Youth Gang survey

In addition to providing a universe of agencies to ensure an accurate sampling frame, the Census is itself a valuable source of descriptive information on the characteristics and trends in law enforcement employment in the United States. The administration of the 2014 Census will produce national statistics about the number of publically funded law enforcement agencies, the number of sworn and non-sworn personnel, and the range of functions performed by those agencies during reference year 2014. These data will be used to produce multi-year trends regarding characteristics of federal, state, local, and special purpose law enforcement agencies.

Without the Census data, BJS will be unable to describe the number of officers in federal, state, local, and special purpose law enforcement agencies and to report the functions performed by agencies to the nation. For example, the Census provides concrete measures of the extent to which publically funded law enforcement agencies are capable of providing specialized services, such as explosives disposal, underwater recovery, and search and rescue operations. In addition, the Census provides a measurement of the number of full-time sworn personnel assigned to work as community policing officers and school resource officers, indicating the extent to which law enforcement agencies are using various components of the community policing model recommend by various agencies in the U.S. Department of Justice. The Census is also able to

capture changing patterns of law enforcement personnel and functions that are then used to develop more detail collections or investigations through other vehicles.

BJS will use the data gathered through the administration of the 2014 Census to disseminate information about law enforcement in the United States to the public. Past reports using the Census and Federal Collections include (<http://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=dcdetail&iid=249>):

[Hiring and Retention of State and Local Law Enforcement Officers, 2008](#)

[Census of State and Local Law Enforcement Agencies, 2008](#)

[Census of State and Local Law Enforcement Agencies, 2004](#)

[Census of State and Local Law Enforcement Agencies, 2000](#)

[Census of State and Local Law Enforcement Agencies, 1996](#)

[Census of State and Local Law Enforcement Agencies, 1992](#)

The content of the proposed Census instrument was developed in consultation with law enforcement experts in order to ensure it contains information that is of high priority to the law enforcement community. In order to reduce burden, BJS worked with experts to determine which topics would require response from the full universe of law enforcement agencies (Census) and which topics were well suited to be administered to a sample of law enforcement agencies (LEMAS). As a result of these meetings, the core items in the 2014 Census captures limited basic descriptive information about the agency's name, location, NCIC-ORI number, and the type of government operating the agency. The proposed CSLLEA component instrument (CJ-38) focuses on a 4 general sections:

- 1) Functions Performed (Q1-Q4), Outsourcing Functions and Partnerships (Q5-Q8)
- 2) Operations/budgets (Q9-Q10), Personnel (Q11-Q15), Specialized Services (Q16-17)
- 3) Victim Assistance (Q18-Q19)
- 4) Specialized Task Forces (Q20), International/Foreign Partner (Q21)

**Topic: Type and Functions Performed (Q1-Q4), Outsourcing Functions and Partnerships (Q5-Q8)**

The proposed 2014 CSLLEA component instrument will indicate the type of functions performed including patrol and response, criminal investigation, detention-related, and court-related services. Detailed sub-functions in each of these sections will provide a descriptive overview of the various services and roles law enforcement agencies provide to the community and general criminal justice system. In addition, as a result of budget cuts and a movement towards more efficient practices, law enforcement agencies are searching for viable alternatives to replace sworn personnel. Agencies may be hiring civilians to take the place of uniformed officers in desk jobs, merging with neighboring law enforcement agencies, or contracting with other publicly funded law enforcement agencies or with private security firms for certain law enforcement functions. The proposed 2014 CSLLEA component instrument will measure functions performed by agencies, as well as the percent of agencies that have contracted outsourcing agreements with other publically funded law enforcement agencies and agencies with partnerships with private security firms. In addition, agency-specific changes in the number of stations operated and changes in operating budgets can be measured directly.

**Topic: Operations/budgets (Q9-Q10), Personnel (Q11-Q15)**

The proposed 2014 CSLLEA component instrument will indicate the number of authorized full-time sworn positions and collect detailed information on the number of full-time and part-time, sworn and non-sworn paid personnel in state, local, and special purposes agencies. These counts provide a general description of agency size and are used to identify changes in the number and type of personnel employed nationally. For example, data collected through the CSLLEA since 1992 indicates the percentage of full-time law enforcement employees that are civilians is increasing. Specifically, from 1992 to 2008, state and local law enforcement agencies added more than 287,000 full-time employees (a 34% increase), including a 55 percent increase in civilian employees (130,000) and a 26 percent increase in sworn employees (157,000) (Reaves, 2011).

In addition to providing a national enumeration of full-time sworn personnel employed by law enforcement agencies, the instrument will collect data on the sex and race of officers. This information is used to determine the extent to which law enforcement personnel are representative of the population served by the agency as well as changes in the demographic characteristics of the agency and policing over time.

**Topic: Specialized Services (Q16) and Firearm Background Checks (Q17)**

The CSLLEA will collect data on the number of full-time sworn officers who returned from recent military service, work as uniformed officers with regularly assigned duties that include responding to citizen calls for service, work as a community policing officer, and school resource officers. The above mention positions are related to the Community Oriented Policing (COPS) initiative supported by the DOJ. Information will be collected about the number and type of functions performed by agencies that include duties related to law enforcement, criminal investigation, traffic/vehicle related, special public safety, detention-related, court-related, and specialized services. The CSLLEA will provide counts of full-time sworn personnel working in major operational areas. The CSLLEA is the only national-level source of information that provides counts of personnel disaggregated in this manner.

The CSLLEA will collect information on agency service services related to firearm background checks and permits issuance. These items will provide a description of law enforcement's role in facilitating firearm background checks for purchase and issuing firearm purchase and carry permits.

**Topic: Victim Assistance (Q18-Q19)**

BJS is working to build a research and statistical infrastructure on the services provided to victims of crime and deficits in the provision of these services. The multifaceted approach involves the continued collection of data on victims from the National Crime Victimization Survey; a new establishment survey, the National Survey of Victim Services Organizations (NSVSO), that will ultimately collect data from victim service providers on the characteristics of these organizations, the victims served, and the type of services provided; and the inclusion of questions pertaining to the provision of services for victims on other BJS data collections, such as LEMAS, the National Survey of Prosecutors, and the Census of Correctional Facilities.

While the NSVSO sampling frame will include law enforcement agencies with dedicated victim service personnel, the inclusion of these questions on the Census will provide a more complete picture of the nature of direct victim assistance provided by law enforcement. In addition, the inclusion of items 18 and 19 will allow for triangulation of findings in the NSVSO and will be used to maintain and update the NSVSO sampling frame. The data provided by these questions on the number of law enforcement agencies with dedicated personnel to provide victim assistance will also be used by other government entities, such as the Office for Victims of Crime and the Office for Violence Against Women, to better understand the unmet needs of victims and how to allocate resources and funding for the provision of services to address this need.

**Topic: Specialized Task Forces (Q20), International/Foreign Partner (Q21)**

The inclusion of items on agency participation in specialized task forces and partnership with international or foreign agencies for criminal investigative support on the Census will provide a more complete picture of the nature of law enforcement planning, resource needs, and scope of operation.

The proposed FLEO component (CJ-38F) is more limited in scope and focuses on a core set of questions organized into 2 major sections:

- 1) Personnel and Functions Performed (Q1-Q7): The FLEO component instrument will measure the number and characteristics of authorized full-time sworn positions and collect detailed information on the number of full-time and part-time, sworn and non-sworn paid personnel in federal agencies by functions performed, as well as educational and training requirements.
- 2) Outsourcing Functions and Partnerships (Q8-Q11): The FLEO instrument will collect information about the percent of federal agencies that have contracted outsourcing agreements with private security firms and the use of these private security officers.

*Uses of the Census by Others*

The information generated from the Census is widely used and cited by the law enforcement professional and research communities. The statistics generated by the Census are requested and used by police chiefs, sheriffs, legislators, planners, researchers, and others to identify personnel and budgetary needs, trends, and priorities in law enforcement. The Census has been used to track employment trends in State and local law enforcement in the U.S. since 1992, and will continue to inform policy making, planning, and budgeting at all levels of government.

Below is a list of organizations that have requested BJS law enforcement data over the last several years. The many unaffiliated individuals who also request information are not included. Uses of information include policy decisions, budget hearings, research and planning, market research, benchmark comparisons, grant applications, and journalistic purposes. BJS tracks the types of information requested that can be provided through its law enforcement data collections, as well as those requests that is data can't fulfill. Data that are frequently requested solidify their position to remain in the instrument or as candidates to be added. Other requests that have merit



and can be met with relatively simple modifications to the instrument will be seriously considered. Information requestors play an important role in helping BJS determine the content of the Census and other law enforcement data collections. Examples of entities that have used Census data in the past include:

#### Federal Uses of Census Data

- The Federal Bureau of Investigation requested CSLLEA data on tribal law enforcement officers by state for use in its risk management initiative.
- The National Drug Intelligence Center in Johnstown, PA requested CSLLEA data for use in developing a sampling frame to be used for a sample survey on drug seizures.
- The Federal Emergency Management Agency requested CSLLEA data on officer job functions for use in its training programs.
- The Department of Homeland Security, Office of Diversity and Inclusion, requested data on race and ethnicity reported by federal agencies.
- The Department of Justice COPS Office requested the CSLLEA data for use as a sampling frame as part of its survey research activities.

#### Non-Federal Uses of Census Data

- Louisiana State Police requested CSLLEA data for use in a benchmarking study of sworn and civilian staff.
- The New Jersey State Police, Office of Law Enforcement Professional Standards (which is responsible for administering the investigative and disciplinary processes), requested CSLLEA data on state law enforcement agencies for use in its annual report.
- Bexar County (TX) Sheriff's Office requested CSLLEA data on the ranking of sheriffs' offices by size for inclusion in their annual report.
- The Suffolk County (MA) Sheriff's Office requested CSLLEA in support of its research project on agency staffing levels.
- The Tucson Police Department requested CSLLEA data to identify state and local law enforcement agencies with SWAT teams.
- The Las Vegas Police Department requested CSLLEA data to rank law enforcement agencies by size.
- The Elkhart County Sheriff's Department requested CSLLEA data for the total number of law enforcement officers nationwide and to obtain demographic information on officers.

#### Professional Organizations Uses of Census Data

- The IACP requested CSLLEA data on the size of local police departments to assist a member department with a research project.

#### Academic Institutions Uses of Census Data

- A professor at Boise State University requested CSLLEA data for use in conjunction with research on police misconduct.
- A professor at Wayne State University requested CSLLEA data for a research study of job loss and retention in law enforcement agencies.
- A professor at Sam Houston University requested CSLLEA data to study on the life-course perspective of police organizations.

- A professor at the Australian School of Business requested CSLLEA data for a study on homicide in the U.S. south.
- A professor at the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee requested CSLLEA data to study the structure of informal communications between police agencies.
- A professor at Florida State University requested CSLLEA data for a research study evaluating the empirical validity of the “minority threat” perspective by examining racial context and police force size.
- A student at University of North Carolina at Charlotte requested CSLLEA data for a dissertation on the impact of police agency size on crime clearance rates.
- A student at Indiana University of Pennsylvania requested CSLLEA data for a dissertation on arrests of sworn law enforcement officers.

#### Media Uses of Census Data

- The publication Newsday requested CSLLEA data for the development of agency-level comparisons of staffing levels.
- The publication Bloomberg View requested CSLLEA summary data for use in a year-end report.

#### Private Companies

- The Assistance and Compliance Division of the company T-Mobile requested CSLLEA data to use in its creation of a secure online tool for submission and fulfillment of legal demands.
- The company MobiLaps LLC requested a listing of state and local law enforcement agencies with staffing levels as part its market research on emergency operations centers.

### **3. Use of Information Technology**

The 2014 Census instruments (CSLLEA and FLEO) have been designed for online data collection using commercially available specialized survey software. This software will allow the data collection agent, NORC, to send an email to respondents that explain the Census program and contains a hyperlink to the questionnaire. NORC uses SPSS’ mrInterview commercial questionnaire authoring software to develop user-friendly Web-based questionnaires (see Attachments 4 and 5). Among its many features, mrInterview allows for single and multiple page question design such that format can be tailored to the particulars of the query. SPSS’ mrInterview also provides the ability to develop a variety of administration modes, thereby improving cost efficiency and data quality. For instance, mrInterview is built to allow for easy conversion of questionnaires from one mode to another when multi-mode surveys are desired; therefore, the web instrument may also be used to administer a telephone interview with non-respondents. This ability allows significant reductions in development effort and costs when moving from one mode to another.

The 2014 Census will utilize a multi-mode design. Data collection will involve a series of mailings and non-response follow-up activities, emphasizing questionnaire completion via a secure web-based reporting system. As the data collection agent for the previous two Census administrations, NORC noted an increase in web respondents between the 2004 Census and 2008

Census. In 2008, 42 percent of respondents completed the questionnaire over the web, which was up from 30 percent in 2004. Completion of the survey via the web offers several key benefits, including increased data quality by reducing problems associated with three types of survey error: enforced skip patterns and range checks that minimize (if not eliminate) missing and inconsistent items; reduced data processing costs due to the elimination for additional editing and data entry (processing error); and reduced data retrieval due to the significant reduction in missing and inconsistent items (non-response error).

Because electronic submission is the preferred method of response, close attention will be paid to the visual design and formatting of the web instrument. A user-friendly web interface with a familiar, straightforward format will be used in order to provide a more pleasant experience for the respondent and to help the respondent navigate the page and enter data without difficulty. Expert formatting of the web questionnaire, based on recommendations made by Dillman and colleagues (2009), will allow respondents to enter data without difficulty ensuring more accurate responses, reducing breakoffs, and minimizing missing and inconsistent items.

NORC's web interviewing capabilities are designed to assist respondents in completing their questionnaires by providing a high-quality user experience and by providing features that reduce respondent burden and ensure complete and accurate data. One of the key components of the web instrument is the ability to program the questionnaire with automated error checks and automatic prompts to ensure inter-item consistency and reduce the likelihood of "don't know" or "refused" responses. Additionally, the following value-added features will be available for the 2013 Census web instrument, (1) all web survey transactions will be secured through the use of SSL encryption; (2) each law enforcement agency will be assigned a unique Personal Identification Number (PIN) and password; (3) the capability to resume work, allowing respondents to stop the questionnaire and return to the point of break-off at a later time without losing previously entered data; (4) a progress bar to illustrate the amount of the questionnaire completed and the amount left; (5) embedded links within the web instrument that make it easy for respondents to submit requests for support using email; and (6) the ability to print a copy of responses to keep on file once the web survey is complete.

Although the web will be emphasized as the preferred mode of survey completion, some law enforcement organizations will not have the ability (or willingness) to complete the survey online. For these agencies, a hardcopy questionnaire that promotes ease of administration will be provided. These data will be entered into the automatic data file as they are received, noting the date and method of submission.

The use of technology for data collection purposes will allow for real-time online tracking of respondents. NORC uses NORCSuite3, a proprietary Case Management System (CMS) composed of a collection of software applications and databases designed to address multi-mode data collection projects. At the core of the system is the CMS database, which contains the universe of respondents, contact persons, addresses, phone numbers, dispositions, and other tracking information. Additionally, information about questionnaire status, mailings, contacts, records of calls, and other items are stored in the CMS database. NORC data collection specialists will use the CMS during telephone prompting to follow up with Census non-responders. BJS will have access to the tracking system through the data collection period.

NORC will provide a secure, password protected access point so that authorized BJS users may enter the CMS database to view the most up-to-date case information as well as the raw data. At the completion of the project, NORC will deliver the paradata from this tracking system to BJS in electronic format.

To ensure consistent and cost-effective development of high-quality data files for the 2014 Census, NORC will employ a standard, integrated set of software tools that encompasses the entire data processing and delivery process, including receipt control, editing and data retrieval, data entry, data quality review, and data delivery.

As NORC receives completed web or hardcopy questionnaires from law enforcement agencies, each questionnaire will be receipted in NORCSuite's Receipt Control system via a unique identification number. Once the database registers the questionnaire, project staff can generate production reports detailing the status of the returned questionnaires, both at the individual case-level and at various levels of aggregation. This will allow NORC to confirm the successful receipt of all items, manage follow-up efforts, and track the post-processing workflow.

NORC will also develop a computer assisted data entry (CADE) system using the same mrInterview software that will be used to create the Web and retrieval instruments. In doing this, it will allow NORC to reuse many lines of programming code and significantly reduce project costs. NORC will conduct an independent verification of data entry in order to monitor the quality of the CADE effort. This process will help to identify any systematic problems that can be corrected with software changes or additional staff training.

At the conclusion of data collection NORC will deliver a final dataset. The dataset, and supporting documentation, will be made available for download without charge at the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data at the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) and at Data.gov. Access to these data permits analysts to identify the specific responses of individual agencies and to conduct statistical analyses about federal, state, local, and special purpose law enforcement agencies. These data will have agency and jurisdiction specific identifiers that will permit the public use of these data in combination with other data files with similar agency or location identifiers. The BJS produced findings from the 2014 Census will be provided to the public in electronic format. These reports will be available on the BJS website as PDF files. BJS will also produce a web-based, data analysis tool for the 2014 Census to increase the ease with which the public can assess information about specific agencies or types of agencies.

#### **4. Efforts to Identify Duplication**

BJS has determined that the 2014 Census includes measures of the number of law enforcement personnel included in three ongoing surveys by other Federal agencies. However, due to the nature and scope of the Census, the information sought is not obtainable from any other data source and the Census will provide the most complete and comprehensive information on the largest roster of agencies. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) annually collects information from law enforcement agencies about the number and sex of sworn personnel as part of the "Number of Full-Time Law Enforcement Employees" (OMB No. 1110-0004). The Bureau

of Labor Statistics' (BLS) "Occupational Employment Survey (OMB No. 1220-0042) samples employers annually about the number of employees in three Protective Service Occupation subcategories: (1) police and sheriff patrol officers, (2) detectives and criminal investigators, and (3) first line supervisors of police and detectives. The Census Bureau's "Census of Governments" (COG) (OMB No. 0607-0452) collects data on how governments are organized, how many people they employ (by full-time and part-time status) and payroll amounts, and the finances of governments.

The annual counts of sworn personnel in the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) and in the Census and BJS' Justice and Expenditure and Employment (E & E) series generated from the COG, like those from the Census, focus primarily on full-time employees with arrest powers. The Census includes all officers with arrest powers regardless of function.

In the five years (1992, 1996, 2000, 2004, and 2008) for which both the FBI survey and BJS Census were conducted, the FBI collected data from 3,600 to 5,200 fewer agencies (24.9%) and reported about 100,000 fewer total personnel (10%). These differences are due in part to the different criteria for inclusion of agencies and personnel in these two collections. The FBI survey is limited to personnel paid "with law enforcement funds" while the Census includes all personnel regardless of what funds pay their salaries. In addition, the BJS Census captures all agencies that employ the equivalent of at least one full-time sworn personnel; the FBI survey is limited to agencies that report to the UCR program during that particular year. A similar exclusion is found in the sample data from the E & E data, which categorizes justice systems employees by function: police protection, judicial and legal, or corrections.

Another reason the FBI's UCR counts are lower than those from the Census is that the UCR excludes some agencies that do not have an Originating Agency Identification (ORI) number assigned by the FBI. Some agencies without an ORI are still included in the UCR employee counts (but not in the agency counts), because they report their data to another agency which in turn reports it to the FBI. The UCR data cover 95% of the U.S. population.

BJS and the FBI collect and report personnel numbers at the agency level. But, the data collections use slightly different definitions of "law enforcement" personnel and capture different proportions of the total population of law enforcement agencies and personnel. The few data items about personnel in the FBI survey are collected in conjunction with annual data collections of hundreds of items about reported offenses and about assault on law enforcement officers and are needed to report offense, arrest and assault rates per sworn personnel. Items about personnel in BJS' Census are used to produce national estimates of personnel and to provide the basis for computing the percentages of sworn personnel by sex, by race and ethnicity, by law enforcement function, and by current and newly hired personnel.

Both BJS and BLS' Occupational Employment Survey (OES) report information about the number of law enforcement employees. The BLS survey emphasizes comparisons of the number of positions and their compensation among many occupation types across geographical areas of the country. The Census and the OES also use different definitions of law enforcement personnel. In law enforcement surveys, the distinction between sworn and non-sworn personnel is crucial, but this distinction can only be assumed in the BLS occupational sub codes. Moreover,

many law enforcement employees, such as forensic scientists or crime analysts, are unlikely to fit into any BLS occupational codes for protection service occupations.

As with the FBI survey, the number of duplicate items in the BJS Census and BLS survey is small and the items are needed for internal purposes of the survey. The BJS data are collected and reported at the agency-level and at the national-level separately for different types of law enforcement agencies (e.g., Federal agencies, local police departments, sheriffs' offices). The BLS data are collected at the employer-level and three year averages are reported at the SMSA-level and national-level, with no distinction among Federal, state, or local law enforcement agencies.

The annual counts of sworn personnel in the UCR and COG (as well as in the Expenditures and Employment [E & E] sample survey based on the COG) include only full-time employees with arrest powers, while the Census also includes counts of part-time sworn and civilian personnel. The Census includes counts of all officers with arrest powers regardless of function, while the UCR data excludes personnel that are not paid out of police funds. This generally excludes employees working for jails or courts. A similar exclusion is found in the sample data from the Census Bureau's Annual Survey of Public Employment published by BJS in the E & E series. The E & E data categorize justice system employees by function: police protection, corrections, or judicial and legal. As such, employment totals reported by the UCR, COG, and E & E have been consistently lower than those generated by the Census.

By providing personnel counts by functions performed, the Census serves as the universe of publically funded law enforcement agencies for sample selection for BJS' Law Enforcement Program. A complete list of federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies, as well as the total enumeration of personnel, is needed to develop the sampling frame for BJS' LEMAS survey and for other law enforcement collections. Neither the UCR nor the COG are suitable programs to serve as the sampling frame for LEMAS. For example, the UCR excludes some "within scope" agencies that do not have an Originating Agency Identification (ORI) number assigned by the FBI and do not report their crime states to the UCR program.

A major limitation of the COG for use as a sampling frame for LEMAS is that it is a government-based survey, whereas the Census and LEMAS are agency-based. The government offices surveyed in the COG would not be an appropriate contact list for the broader data sought from the state police, local police, sheriffs' offices, and other special purpose law enforcement agencies responding to the Census. A sampling procedure based on the COG would be inappropriate for this purpose due to the existence of multiple agencies within a single government's budget. For example, a state government's employment totals for police protection might include the State Highway Patrol, State Park Police, and numerous state university and college police. This complicates the development of an agency-level sample. Furthermore, the converse is also true where a single agency serves across jurisdictional boundaries such as transit or airport authority police department. Although BJS produces summary tables at the national and state-levels, the data are disseminated at the agency level through the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data for use at the agency-level by other entities. Collection of data at the agency-level enables criminal justice professionals and

researchers the ability to look at organizational changes over time, for example to consider consolidation or outsourcing functions.

A final difference between these law enforcement data collections with the proposed 2014 Census is the inclusion of the federal component (FLEO). Data collected from federal law enforcement agencies are unavailable through other means, since neither the UCR nor the COG collects this information. The Census is the only data collection that captures information relevant to the law enforcement community from all of the nation's federal, state, local, and special purpose agencies.

In addition to ensuring information gathered through the Census is not duplicative of data collected through currently funded efforts, BJS worked with other DOJ offices to avoid overlap in future surveys. BJS staff coordinated with staff at the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) office, and the Office of Victims of Crime (OVC) in an effort to consolidate the number of surveys required to obtain necessary information. Prior to the development of the Census questionnaire, BJS reached out to other offices to see if they had information requests for law enforcement agencies at the national-level. BJS worked with staff from other offices to develop questions relevant to the needs of these offices and included the items on the BJS Census. By including national-level questions from other offices on the Census, a duplicative effort of soliciting and surveying roughly 18,000 law enforcement is avoided.

## **5. Minimizing Burden**

The proposed 2014 Census instrument was designed to reduce the respondents' burden in two ways. First, based on feedback received from the law enforcement and research communities, the new instrument features questions that have been refined to increase clarity and improve response options where needed. The content of the instruments have remained focused on collecting the necessary content for generating the proper sampling frames for the BJS law enforcement data collection program, acknowledging the use of the LEMAS collection for very detailed agency level information and specialized collections that focus on particular areas of interest (e.g., campus law enforcement, law enforcement training academies).

Second, the 2014 instrument was designed specifically for web-based data collection, with built in assistance modules and edit checks. It is expected that most respondents will make use of the online survey software to complete the questionnaire. A number of web-based system functions will be in place to ease the burden of survey completion. NORC will utilize the NORCSuite software for data collection, which will store agency information and responses, allowing for multi-session, non-sequential completion of the questionnaire. Since many agencies, particularly larger ones, will need to seek out multiple information sources within their organizations to answer different sections of the questionnaire, this will reduce the burden on there by facilitating data entry from different sources. It will also reduce the burden by allowing them to stop response entry pending confirmation of information from others in the agency. Help icons located next to each survey question will link respondents to item-specific information, additional guidance, and helpdesk contact information to facilitate requests for assistance.

The online system will provide instructions and a glossary of terms for respondent reference. Respondents who lack the capability to utilize the web-based survey instrument will receive a paper-based questionnaire by mail or fax with paper-based instructions and a glossary of terms identical to those provided in the web version. NORC will also create a helpdesk that will provide assistance by phone and email to all respondents. The helpdesk will be staffed during normal business hours (Eastern Time) and will be available to all respondents through a toll-free number. A data collection manager will oversee the helpdesk. When the manager is not available, calls will automatically be routed to another team member for immediate response. Voicemail will be available during off hours and a dedicated Census help email will be provided with the introductory letter and questionnaire packet. Phone numbers and e-mail addresses for the project principal investigator will be provided to respondents to ensure timely communications.

In June 2013, BJS tested a draft of the instrument (see Attachments 6 and 7) with 9 law enforcement agencies to review both revisions to items administered in 2008 and new items developed for the current administration. NORC conducted follow-up cognitive interviews with these agencies which resulted in changes in the number, type and wording of questions from the draft instrument for incorporation into the revised version. The comments and results of this process are provided in Attachment A8.

## **6. Consequences of Less Frequent Collection**

The routine collection of national law enforcement statistics enable law enforcement officials and policy makers the ability to assess needs and better plan resource allocations. In light of changes in the economic climate, failing to collect national data on systematic basis poses serious challenges to law enforcement officials trying to develop proactive methods of combating current and emerging problems – namely issues related to staffing levels and maintaining operational functions.

There is a reasonable expectation of significant change in key statistics between Census data collections. For example, information gathered in previous administrations of the Census indicates change in the number and type of personnel employed by the nation's law enforcement agencies. With respect to full-time sworn employees, the percentage growth in the number of sworn officers from 2004 to 2008 (4.6%) exceed growth from 2000 to 2004 (3.4%), but was about half the 9.1% peak growth rate recorded from 1992 to 1996. Most law enforcement professionals believe the recent economic recession (since the 2008 administration) reduced the budgets of local law enforcement agencies. One outcome of budget reductions could be a decline in the number of full-time sworn personnel employed at the local, state, and/or national-levels. Another outcome of declining budgets may be a reduction in the number and type of functions performed by agencies.

It is likely that recent changes in law enforcement staffing and functions went unmeasured in the 6-years since the last BJS Census was conducted in 2008. Without regular data collections BJS may not be successful in measuring significant shifts in policing. A less frequent collection is not ideal for the type of analyses needed for identifying important trends in law enforcement as they emerge. Law enforcement professionals have indicated the Census data would be more



useful if it were collected in a shorter, more frequent timeframes.

In addition, reduced frequency would have an adverse impact in agency programs. The 2014 Census serves as the sampling frame for BJS' other law enforcement survey collections. Collecting this information on a less routine basis would result in less reliable, outdated information for these sampling frames. Ultimately this will result in an increase costs, time, and resources having to correct inaccurate agency information. Without the needed resources to correct inaccuracies to a sampling frame, this may lead to lower response rates and increases in out-of-scope sample cases resulting in less precise and biased estimates for surveys that rely on the Census information.

## **7. Special Circumstances**

No special circumstances have been identified for this project.

## **8. Federal Register Publication and Outside Consultation**

This research under this clearance is consistent with the guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.8(d). Comments on this data collection effort were solicited in the Federal Register, Vol. 78, No. 207, pages 64012-64013 on October 25, 2013 (see Attachment 10) and in Vol. 79, No. 37, pages 10556-10557 on February 25, 2014 (see Attachment 11). No comments were received in response to the information provided.

In renewing the data collection procedures, the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) consulted with police organizations such as the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), National Sheriffs' Association, and the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) to discuss their information needs. Information needs from other agencies within the Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Community-Oriented Policing Services (COPS) and the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), were also considered. Members of the BJS law enforcement unit and their supervisors (Dr. William Sabol, Andrea Burch, Dr. Michael Planty, Dr. Howard Snyder, and Dr. Brian Reaves) met with Dr. Debra McCoullough, John Marovic, Robert Chapman, Jessica Mansourian, and Karl Bickle from COPS and Dr. Nancy Merritt, Joel Hunt, and Joseph Heaps from NIJ so these DOJ agencies could provide input about BJS' proposed instrument items and to suggest new items.

## **9. Paying Respondents**

Payment or gifts to respondents is not provided in return for participation in this collection. Respondents will participate on a voluntary basis.

## **10. Assurances of Confidentiality**

According to 42 U.S.C. 3735 Section 304, the information gathered in this data collection shall be used only for statistical or research purposes, and shall be gathered in a manner that precludes their use for law enforcement or any purpose relating to a particular individual other than statistical or research purposes. The data collected through the Census represent institutional

characteristics of publically-administered federal, state, local, and special purpose law enforcement agencies. The information about these organizations is in the public domain. The fact that participation in this survey is voluntary and that information about individual agency responses will be available to the public is included on the first page of the questionnaire. However, BJS will not release the names, phone numbers, or email of the persons responsible for completing the Census questionnaire.

### **11. Justification for Sensitive Questions**

N/A. There are no questions of a sensitive nature in the proposed 2014 Census survey.

### **12. Estimate Respondent Burden**

BJS has estimated the respondent burden for the proposed 2013 Census at 18,075 hours. The 2014 burden estimate was calculated using an estimate of 1 hour per respondent for the completion of the 4-page, 21-question CJ-38 questionnaire being completed by 18,000 state, local, and special purpose law enforcement agencies and 1 hour per respondent for the completion of the 4-page, 11-question CJ-38F questionnaire being completed by 75 federal law enforcement agencies. The 18,075 hour estimate is based on feedback received during the administration of the 2008 Census instrument and the pilot testing of the 2014 Census instrument, taking into account the differences between the two data collection instruments. More specifically, a paper-based version of the draft 2014 Census instrument was reviewed by eight representatives from law enforcement agencies. Respondents were asked to complete the questionnaire, consider the clarity of the survey questions, consider the appropriateness of response categories, and provide time burden estimates for completion of the questionnaire. Respondents were also interviewed by phone with specific questions about each section of the questionnaire. Following the completion of the pilot test, BJS removed 13 items from the draft questionnaire and consolidated 2 questions. Items related to the type of government operating the agency, services regarding firearms, and partnerships with international or foreign agencies were added following the pilot test.

### **13. Estimate of Respondent's Cost Burden**

There are no anticipated costs to respondents beyond the employee time expended during completion of the questionnaire and addressed in the above section. The costs to respondents incurred as a result of participating in this data collection are costs that would be incurred in the normal course of daily operations. This expectation was further reinforced through the pre-testing results where none of the eight responding agencies reported additional costs incurred by survey participation.

### **14. Costs to Federal Government**

The total cost to the Federal government for this data collection is \$746,503, to be borne entirely by the BJS. This work consists of planning, developing the questionnaire, preparation of materials, collecting the data, evaluating the results, and generating the PDF and web-based query reports. A BJS GS-Level 12 statistician will be responsible for overseeing NORC's work

on this project. The budget for this project is shown below:

<b>Bureau of Justice Statistics</b>	
<b>Staff salaries</b>	
<b>2013 Fiscal Year</b>	
GS-12 Statistician (20%)	\$15,124
GS-13 Editor (10%)	\$8,550
Other Editorial Staff	\$5,000
Senior BJS Management	\$3,000
Subtotal salaries	\$31,674
Fringe benefits (28% of salaries)	\$8,869
Subtotal: Salary and fringe	\$40,543
Other administrative costs of salary and fringe (15%)	\$6,081
<b>Subtotal: BJS costs</b>	<b>\$46,624</b>
<b>Data Collection Agent (NORC)</b>	<b>\$699,879</b>
<b>Total Estimated Costs</b>	<b>\$746,503</b>

### 15. Reason for Change in Burden

The total estimated time burden has increased by 5,350 hours from the estimated burden for the 2008 Census. The change in burden is due, in part, to the elimination of the short version of the Census questionnaire and the inclusion of the federal law enforcement component (FLEO).

### 16. Project Schedule

Pending OMB approval, the 2014 Census data collection is scheduled to begin in July 2014. The data collection period is scheduled to end no later than March 2015, but a six-month collection period through January is the target period. The design of the 2014 Census program calls for the initiation of preliminary data analysis including the assessment of nonresponse biases when the response rate hits 50%, with the final response rate expected to be 99%.

Once the response rate reaches 80%, and the data are cleaned and verified, BJS can publish a preliminary data brief. This data brief is planned for late 2014 and will contain limited findings related to agency type and functions. Once all the data are collected, and cleaning and verification are completed, final analytical work will begin with plans to issue two BJS full

summary reports, “Census of State and Local Law Enforcement Agencies, 2014” and “Federal Law Enforcement Agencies, 2014,” no later than July 2015.

While the program anticipates a response rate of 99%, BJS is prepared to conduct and report national estimates based on the response rates as low as 95%, if that is necessary to meet the deadline for the release of the published findings by July 2015. Both the preliminary data brief and the final summary report will be provided to the public on the BJS website.

The dataset, and supporting documentation, will be made available for download without charge at the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data at the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) and at Data.gov. It is expected the data will be available to the public for download in August 2015. Access to these data permits analysts to identify the specific responses of individual law enforcement agencies and to conduct statistical analyses. These data will have agency and jurisdiction specific identifiers that will permit the public use of these data in combination with other data files with similar agency or location identifiers.

#### **17. Display of Expiration Date**

N/A. The expiration data will be shown on the data collection instrument.

#### **18. Exception to the Certificate Statement**

N/A. BJS is not requesting an exception to the certification of this information collection.