

## **B. Collection of Information Employing Statistical Methods**

### **1. Universe and Respondent Selection**

The NPS covers the entire universe of state and federal prisons, as well as prisons in U.S. territories. A form is sent to the research section of each state department of corrections and the Federal BOP and is usually completed by a statistician or research analyst. NPS does not include questions on individual private prisons or local jails, but we do collect aggregate counts of any state or federal prisoners held in these facilities (NPS-1B questions 3-5).

### **2. Procedures for Information Collection**

Data collection mode is both a paper form sent directly to all state Departments of Correction and the Bureau of Prisons and a web option that resembles the form. Each jurisdiction has an individual password to enter the website and can view its own data, but no one else's. The website will be hosted by Abt Associates, our data collection agent, and is located on a secure server. In 2013, all jurisdictions except two chose to submit NPS data via the web. The remaining two jurisdictions FAXed their completed data forms.

The NPS-1B or NPS-1B(T) forms for collection of data in 2014, 2015, and 2016 will be sent out in mid-December of each year to the 56 jurisdictions, along with a cover letter from BJS explaining the importance of the survey (Appendices 2 and 3). Respondents will be asked to submit the data by the due date on the form (the last business day of February) via the secure online website, FAX, or mail. BJS' data collection agent (Abt Associates) will receive and check the submitted survey data. If data are not received by the due date, Abt Associates will send a reminder email asking jurisdictions to submit their data as soon as possible (Appendix 5).

Jurisdictions are contacted via email approximately 8 weeks prior to publication of the annual report with 5-10 BJS tabulations of the NPS data (Appendix 6). Jurisdictions are asked to verify only their own statistics, and never asked to provide additional information or make any calculations. The purpose of this verification is simply to allow jurisdictions to understand how their data will be presented to the public, and to communicate with BJS regarding any concerns they may have.

### **3. Methods to Maximize Response**

Reminder emails have proven sufficient in obtaining a 100% response rate from the jurisdictions in the universe in all years except 2013 (collection of data from calendar year 2012). In 2013, neither Nevada nor Illinois responded to repeated requests for data from the NPS data collection agent, the BJS program manager, or the acting director of

BJs. Since Nevada had submitted data for 2012 to NCRP, BJS was able to make estimates for jurisdiction counts from those data (NCRP measures custody, not jurisdiction). BJS is working with the Illinois Department of Corrections to re-engage the state in NPS data provision.

In 2013, five states (Alaska, Montana, New Hampshire, Ohio, and Oregon) were unable to provide counts of HIV positive inmates under their jurisdiction at yearend 2012. Montana, New Hampshire, and Oregon did provide responses to the questions on HIV testing policies.

#### 4. Test of Procedures or Methods

There are no changes to the NPS-1B or NPS-1B(T) forms or data collection methods at this time. However, in the future, any significant changes to the form would require that BJS obtains feedback from several state and local agencies as well as the federal system to ensure definitions and counting rules are clear and consistent across jurisdictions. In addition, OMB approval would need to be obtained, which includes an outside review of the survey.

BJs and its data collection agent will test the web instrument extensively prior to each data collection year to ensure ease of use.

#### 5. Consultation Information

The Correction Statistics Unit at BJS is responsible for the overall design and management of the activities described in this submission, including fielding of the survey, data cleaning, and data analysis. BJS contacts include:

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