

July 24, 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR:                   Reviewer of 1220-0032

FROM:                                RICHARD L. CLAYTON, Chief  
  Division of Administrative Statistics and Labor Turnover  
  Bureau of Labor Statistics

SUBJECT:                            Emphasizing ARSweb Data Collection for the Annual Refiling  
  Survey (ARS)

On December 20, 2013, the Annual Refiling Survey (ARS) was approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) with clearance expiring on December 31, 2016. The purpose of the ARS is to review private sector employers' North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes and geographic codes.

The ARS remains largely a mail survey, although steps have been taken to reduce the amount of United States Postal Service (USPS) mail. OMB had approved a reporting option for the BLS 3023-NVS form mailed to employers that have a single worksite within a State. Respondents can provide their information via a secure website, ARSweb. More than 350,000 respondents have used ARSweb to respond to the ARS (through the end of June 2104) since its inception in 2012.

This memorandum details two new approaches to the ARS that are designed to emphasize cost-effective online data collection.

#### **ARSweb Email to Respondents**

First, the ARS has been conducted on a three-year cycle, covering about one-third of eligible establishments each year. ARSweb began in 2012. This new approach allowed respondents to provide their ARS responses online and the system allowed respondents to provide their email addresses also. For the FY 2015 ARS cycle, many of the same group of respondents who used ARSweb during FY 2012 will again be asked to respond. We anticipate that these respondents will use ARSweb in large numbers once more when offered the online reporting option a second time.

For the FY 2015 ARS, QCEW proposes to send an automated email prompt to these respondents, alerting them of the online option rather than sending an NVS form in the mail. We hope that many respondents will provide their data via ARSweb, thus obviating the need for mailing a paper form. This will save paper, postage and their associated costs and burden. Respondents who do not report online will receive a traditional ARS form in the mail.

The respondents' email addresses that they provided previously will be used. The body of the email message would not contain Personally Identifiable Information (PII) or Respondent Identifiable Information (RII), nor would data be collected via email. The email would simply prompt respondents to log into the secure Integrated Data Capture System (IDCF) to complete the ARS. In keeping with established BLS security practices, the web ID and password will be sent via two separate emails to the respondent. The BLS has a policy on emailing respondents outlined in Commissioner's Order No. 1-13.

This proposal meets all of the guidelines for the BLS policy on emailing respondents. Please see Attachments 1 and 2 for copies of the proposed emails.

**ARSWeb-Only Letter**

Second, respondents who did not reply via ARSweb in prior years and respondents who did not provide their email addresses to the email prompt described above will be mailed a letter. QCEW proposes to promote web collection by sending these respondents modified ARSweb letters. The letters would not include a form or return envelope. The letters would contain information about the ARS along with a web ID and password allowing respondents to report online rather than by return mail. This type of web-only letter approach is currently in use at the Census Bureau for their Survey of Business Owners. Please see Attachment 3 for a sample of the proposed BLS ARSweb letter.

If there were no responses to the email prompt or to the web-only letter, respondents would be mailed a paper NVS form. Respondents are asked to furnish the same information as they have in the past. We are simply emphasizing the cost-effective online response option. Ultimately, respondents are given the choice of reporting information via the website or by paper form, whichever they find most convenient.

If you have any questions about this request, please contact Richard L. Clayton at 202-691-6515 or e-mail at [Clayton.Rick@bls.gov](mailto:Clayton.Rick@bls.gov) or Emily Thomas at 202-691-6441 or e-mail at [Thomas.Emily@bls.gov](mailto:Thomas.Emily@bls.gov).

ATTACHMENT 1: ARS Web Email with Web ID

From: IndustryVerification@bls.gov  
To: responsent@email.com  
Subject: Industry Verification Form Notice

Dear [Contact Name],

Every three years, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics requests that you verify the address and main business activity for your firm. To reduce costs and save tax dollars, you filed this report online in 2012. Rather than mailing you a form this year, we are asking that you log into our secure website and report online again.

Please log on to our secure website to complete your report: <https://idcfars.bls.gov/>

**WEB ID: 320012345000**

**PASSWORD:** Your 10-digit password has been sent in a separate email.

If you are having difficulty accessing the system, please email us at [ars.helpdesk@bls.gov](mailto:ars.helpdesk@bls.gov)

This survey is **mandatory** in accordance with [State Law and Number] and authorized by 29 U.S. Code, Section 2. Please complete within **14 days**. Your cooperation is needed to make the results of this survey complete, accurate, and timely. The Industry Verification Form, BLS-3023 is approved with O.M.B No. 1220-0032, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor. The information collected will be used for statistical and Unemployment Insurance program purposes and other purposes in accordance with law. Additional information regarding this survey can be found at: [www.bls.gov/qcew/ivf/](http://www.bls.gov/qcew/ivf/)

Questions about this survey? Contact information for your State office is available here:  
<http://www.bls.gov/cew/ivf/cewars00.htm>

Thank you,  
U.S. Department of Labor  
Bureau of Labor Statistics

*The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) is committed to the responsible treatment of confidential information and takes rigorous security measures to protect confidential information in its possession. This email contains confidential information. If you believe you are not the intended recipient of this message, please notify the sender and delete this email without disclosing, copying, or further disseminating its contents.*

ATTACHMENT 2: ARS Web Email with Password

From: IndustryVerification@bls.gov  
To: responsent@email.com  
Subject: Industry Verification Form Notice - PASSWORD

Dear [Contact Name],

To complete your Industry Verification Form online, please use the Web ID from the email you received one minute ago along with your password below to log on to our secure website to complete your report:  
<https://idcfars.bls.gov/>

**PASSWORD: Aa12345678**

Thank you,  
U.S. Department of Labor  
Bureau of Labor Statistics

*The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) is committed to the responsible treatment of confidential information and takes rigorous security measures to protect confidential information in its possession. This email contains confidential information. If you believe you are not the intended recipient of this message, please notify the sender and delete this email without disclosing, copying, or further disseminating its contents.*



ATTACHMENT 3: ARS Web-Only Letter

Utana Department of Labor  
Labor Market Information  
456 Front Street, Room 1234  
Somecity, UA 12345-6789  
Phone: 888-123-4567

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR  
U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics  
Employment and Unemployment Statistics  
Washington, DC 20212-0001

JOHN SMITH - PAYROLL  
ABC CORPORATION  
123 INC  
123 MAIN STREET #4  
SOMECITY, UA 12345-6789



U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS  
October 2014

Dear Employer,

Every three years, your State agency and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics request that you verify general business information about your firm to help us maintain accurate records. Your cooperation is essential so that we are able to produce data that are complete, accurate, and timely.

To reduce costs and save tax dollars, this survey can be completed online in about five minutes. Please use the Web ID and Password provided below to log into our secure website:  
**<https://idcfars.bls.gov/>**

Web ID: 320012345000

PASSWORD: Ab123456

This survey is **mandatory** in accordance with **UTANA STATE LAW, UTA 123.456** and authorized by 29 U.S. Code, Section 2. Please provide your response within **14 days**.

The Industry Verification Form, BLS-3023 is approved with O.M.B No. 1220-0032, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor. The information collected will be used for statistical and Unemployment Insurance program purposes and other purposes in accordance with law. Additional information regarding this survey can be found at: [www.bls.gov/qcew/ivf](http://www.bls.gov/qcew/ivf)

If you do not log into the website and respond, a paper form will be mailed to you.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Emily L. Thomas".

Emily L. Thomas  
US Bureau of Labor Statistics