

Background:

It was requested that the current survey instrument be piloted with a small number of companies that would be eligible to complete the survey. This process was completed during the last two weeks of February, 2015. The following companies completed the pilot survey and provided feedback and comments:

- 1) PortVision/Global Data Solutions
- 2) Sonrdyne Inc
- 3) BMT Scientific Marine Services Inc

The survey was generally was, in general, very favorably accepted. However representatives from these companies did provide some valuable feedback and comments that have been incorporated into the latest version of the survey.

1. It was suggested that, as currently written the company size question could be confusing without a follow-up. The suggestion was for a follow-up question that asked about number of employees at the current location to follow the general company size question.
2. For Question 1, there was some confusion about whether instruments for navigation and positioning are included in the first tick box. As these are essential to all measurements they should be. To avoid this potential confusion the list should explicitly include this, ie (eg., platforms, instruments, sensors, navigation and positioning, data communications, IT infrastructure, etc.)
3. For Question 7: This question should be moved to follow question 4. This is a more logical order and helps remove any ambiguity in Question 5.
4. For Question 5: If the addressee represents a subsidiary company we need to be clear whether this question is seeking to determine the number of locations for the parent or the subsidiary. I would suggest that knowing the number of locations for the parent is more useful (since we know from the answer to the previous question, the old question 7, whether the parent is in the US or overseas). If we agree to this then the question should be changed to: How many discrete locations does your company or your parent company have?
5. For Question 8: Sonardyne raised the comment that some companies may be uncomfortable with completing this question as small to medium sized enterprises in the US do not publicly disclose their revenue (unlike in the UK where all registered companies must file annual returns which are a matter of public record). I don't think this is a problem – recipients of the survey will simply not answer this if they are uncomfortable with disclosure.
6. For Question 13: The subsidiary/parent issue also comes up with this question. If the recipient is a subsidiary company should they answer this question on behalf of the subsidiary or the parent? Since we are seeking to understand export activity by US companies I would suggest rewording this to make it unambiguous:

“From which of these market areas does your company, or your parent company (if it is US registered) receive significant ocean measurement or ocean forecasting business related revenue

7. For Question 14: Sonardyne suggest splitting the surveying box into two entries:

- Hydrographic surveying
- Construction survey

8. For Question 15: Add an additional box before platforms such as towed systems:

-Navigation and positioning sensors/instruments systems