

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT**  
**U.S. Department of Commerce**  
**U.S. Census Bureau**  
**Government Units Survey**  
**OMB Control Number 0607-0930**

**Part B – Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods**

**1. Universe and Respondent Selection**

The 2016 Government Units Survey (GUS) is a census of all municipalities, townships, counties, and special districts. The 2016 GUS is the directory component of the 2017 Census of Governments. There are an estimated 77,000 of these entities within the United States. The expected response rate for GUS is 75 percent. This expected response rate is based on the 2011 GUS and the 2012 Census of Governments response rates.

**2. Procedures for Collecting Information**

The GUS is a census of all municipalities, townships, counties, and special districts. Respondents have the option of responding by paper, over the Internet, by telephone, or by facsimile. The GUS contact with respondents will begin in February 2016. We will announce the upcoming survey with an email for all respondents, for whom we have email contact information, and an advance letter (Attachment C). The content of the email and advance letter will be identical. After the advance mailing, we will mail a letter informing and encouraging Internet reporting, followed by a mailed paper questionnaire, and for respondents who have yet to report, a reminder letter (Please see the next section for detailed mailing information).

**3. Methods to Maximize Response**

The Census Bureau seeks advice from various public and professional groups that use the data. These groups endorse survey efforts and encourage participation by their members. Survey publicity appears in state organization publications distributed to member governments. State Data Centers and Census Bureau regional offices will also encourage local governments to respond to the GUS by stressing the importance of the data collection.

Survey procedures will include an email, for respondents for whom we have email contact information, and an advance letter (Attachment C) and to respondents announcing the impending arrival of the upcoming 2016 GUS. The content for the email and the advance letter will be identical. Following this effort, all respondents will receive the initial mail package which will include the 2016 Director's letter (Attachment D) informing respondents how they can respond electronically via the Internet. The initial mail package will also include, for all respondents who have never reported electronically to the GUS, Census of Governments, or any other public sector survey, the Centurion electronic reporting flyer (Attachment B). Approximately eight weeks later, all respondents that have not reported electronically will receive the first follow-up mail package. The first follow-up mail package will include the 2016 GUS paper questionnaire (Attachment A), the 2016 Division Chief's reminder letter (Attachment E), and, for all respondents who have never reported electronically to the GUS, Census of Governments, or any public sector survey, the Centurion

electronic reporting flyer. A second follow-up mailing will occur four weeks after the first follow-up mailing and will only include the 2016 Division Chief's second reminder letter (Attachment F).

Staff will conduct telephone follow up to determine if respondents have received mail correspondence, to encourage response, and to obtain additional information about reported data.

Alternative ways for reporting are available for respondents. Respondents can report by paper forms, over the Internet, by telephone, or by facsimile.

#### **4. Test Procedures or Methods**

The 2016 GUS questionnaire is modeled after portions of the 2011 GUS and the last Census of Governments that were used successfully. The Census Bureau has used the basic definitions and reporting instructions since the 1957 Census of Governments. Ongoing contact with respondents indicates that present methods of data collection are effective. The Data Collection Methodology Staff within the Office of Economic Planning and Innovation of the Census Bureau conducted the expert review, and their summary report is attached (Attachment G). We implemented the recommendations from the expert review when designing the final questionnaire form (Attachment A) and the Centurion instrument (Attachment H) for the 2016 GUS. NOTE: Screenshots in Attachment H are still undergoing minor programming revisions to correct typos. The title displayed on the Questionnaire, Centurion instrument, and Mailing Letters will match once all of the corrections are completed.

#### **5. Contacts for Statistical Aspects and Data Collection**

Statistical procedures and Data collection and analysis:

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#### **List of Attachments**

- A. 2016 Government Units Survey
- B. 2016 Centurion Electronic Reporting Flyer
- C. 2016 Advance Letter
- D. 2016 Director's Letter
- E. 2016 Division Chief's Reminder Letter
- F. 2016 Division Chief's Second Reminder Letter
- G. Cognitive Expert Review
- H. 2016 Government Units Survey Centurion Log-in, Burden Statement, and FAQs Screenshots – the Centurion online instrument is still undergoing minor changes and the screenshots in Attachment H will be updated as they become available. The title displayed on the Questionnaire, Centurion instrument, and Mailing Letters will match once all of the corrections are completed.