

MEMORANDUM FOR: Reviewer of 1220-0042

FROM: Jeff Holt
Bureau of Labor Statistics
Office of Occupational Statistics and Employment Projections
Division of Occupational Employment Statistics

SUBJECT: Booklet Test (Wave 2)

On October 30, 2013, the Office of management and Budget approved the information collection request for the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) program. As noted in Supporting Statement Part B, Item No. 4 from that approval, the OES program maintains ongoing efforts to reduce respondent burden including periodic evaluations of the effectiveness of the materials mailed to each sampled unit.

The OES program is evaluating a new type of survey instrument. Normally, the OES program mails a packet to small establishments which contains an individual letter, an individual fact sheet, a survey form, and a business reply envelope. Currently, the OES program is testing the use of a 4-page booklet instead which contains similar information, but is presented differently. Additionally, this form would ask for point data wage rates, instead of the wage ranges we collect currently.

This test will be a 750 unit test spread across 3 waves (250 each wave). The first wave of the testing was approved by OMB and conducted during the May 2015 panel using 5 test States. The objective of the first wave was to refine the survey instrument, and sought 250 responses. The second wave will be conducted beginning in August 2015 using the same booklet. The objective of the second wave is to further refine the survey instrument and ensure respondents are filling it out correctly. The second wave again seeks 250 responses to further refine the collection process. The third and final wave would again seek 250 responses and will be conducted later this year. Waves 1 and 2 will be new units with no overlap, while wave 3 would be previous OES responders from the May 2014 panel.

The primary purpose of the test will be for instrument refinement. We will be looking at general information, such as:

- 1) Can the respondent fill out the survey?
- 2) Have they provided the correct information?
- 3) Are there sections of the form that have been left blank?
- 4) Do the respondents appear confused by the wording?

We are hoping this will lead to refining the survey instrument. Later we hope to field test on a larger scale using a split sample test using the regular OES sample (so no additional burden hours will be needed).