

EIA-886: Annual Survey of Alternative Fueled Vehicles

Cognitive Testing Protocol: Vehicle Type and Response Burden

January 2017

(This protocol is a guide – the questions presented here won't necessarily be asked exactly as worded in the protocol or in this order. It is important to note that not all questions will be asked in every interview.)

Research Goals:

- To determine whether respondents are able to provide more detailed “Vehicle Type” information on the EIA-886;
- To determine whether respondents are able to provide more detailed information on their fuel use;
- To estimate any changes in reporting burden associated with collecting this information

Part A – Introduction

- Introduce self and observers

Purpose of phone call:

Let me start by telling you a little about what we will be doing today:

- We are asking you some questions about potential changes to the EIA-886 survey on Alternative Fueled Vehicles.
- We are to add some new questions as well as clear up some data problems we have been having and we want to get feedback from people that fill out the form before we finalize these changes. There are no right or wrong answers, and if something doesn't make sense to you or you have any questions, please ask.
- Before we get started, I'd like to audio record this interview so I don't have to later rely on my memory. This session is confidential, which means only persons directly related to this project can listen to your tapes, and the recordings are erased once our report is written. The report combines information from all of our interviews and contains no information that personally identifies you or the company at which you work. Is it okay if I record this interview?
- Do you have any questions?

Part B – Background Information

- Let's begin by talking about your company:
 - o What is the primary function of your company?

Users Only

- Does your company have a fleet of AFVs?
 - How many vehicles do you have in your fleet?
- How does your company use AFVs?

[Code responses into four categories: passenger transport, freight transport, maintenance vehicle, other if no other uses fit in the first three categories]

- Is your AFV fleet located in one state or more than one state?
 - Does your AFV fleet include one alternative fuel type vehicle with similar engine configurations or does it include multiple fuel type vehicles or different engine configurations?
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What is your role at this company?

- Are you responsible for reporting information to the federal government?
- How much time does it take you to gather the information for this survey form?
- Are you able to directly access the data needed from company records to report on this form, or do you work with others to gather this data? How much time does it take you to gather this information?
- Once you have gathered the information needed, How much time does it take you to complete the survey form and report this information to EIA?
- Adding the time it takes you to gather the information and the time it takes for you to report, what is the total amount of time it take you to file your report for this survey?
[NOTE: Burden for this form is 4 hours, if respondents provides an answer < 2 hours or > 6 hours ask how they are able to report so quickly or why it takes so long.]
- How long have you been filling out the EIA-886?
- In the past, is this the usual time that it takes your company to report this information?

Part C – Truck and Van Classifications

EIA is considering adding additional vehicle categories to the EIA-886, in order to learn more about alternative-fuel trucks and vans. The next few questions are about more specific information on different kinds of trucks and vans.

TRUCKS AND VANS SIZE

EIA currently defines AFV by weight with Light Duty being vehicles that weight 8,500 lbs. or less. Medium Duty vehicles weight between 8,501 and 26,000 lbs., and Heavy Duty is classified as any vehicle that weighs 26,001 lbs. or more.

- Which of these weight categories does your company currently report on?
- What types of characteristics about the AFVs do you keep in your records?
 - What about weight of the vehicle, number of tires, and fuel consumption, is that information kept in your records?
 - Would you say that any of this vehicle information is an exact number or an estimate?

EIA is considering dividing the Gross Vehicle Weight Range categories into more detailed weight ranges; please look over this sheet to see the new categories that EIA is thinking about. [This table will be emailed to respondent at or prior to the interview.]

Class	2a	2b	3	4	5	6	7	8
GVWR (lb)	<8,501	8,501-10,000	10,001-14,000	14,001-16,000	16,001-19,500	19,501-26,000	26,001-33,000	>33,000

- How easy or difficult would it be for you to classify your vans and trucks according to this new “vehicle weight range” scheme?
- In comparison to the current version of the EIA-886, would you say that it would take more, less, or the same amount of time to classify vans and trucks using the new “vehicle weight range” scheme?
- (If needed) About how much more time would you say it would take to report for these categories?
- What changes, if any, would you have to make to your record-keeping activities to report the number of trucks and vans using the new “vehicle weight range categories”?

If the categories I just showed you are difficult to report, EIA might divide the mid-size category differently. Please look over this sheet to see the ranges EIA is thinking about.

Class	2B	3	4
GVRW (lb)	8,501-10,000	10,001-14,000	14,001-26,000

- Does your organization report on any medium duty alternative-fuel trucks or vans?
- Could you classify medium duty vans and trucks according to this scheme?
- How easy or difficult would this be?
- Compared to the categories I just showed you, would this breakdown be more, less, or equally difficult to use?

LIGHT-DUTY TRUCKS (pick-up trucks and vans)

- Does your organization report on any light-duty alternative fuel trucks or vans?
- What types of characteristics about the light duty AFVs do you keep in your records?
 - *If needed*, do you track the number of tires that these vehicles have in your records?
- If EIA were to ask you to classify your light duty AFVs based on the number of tires, how easy or difficult would it be for you to report?
- Can you identify which light-duty trucks have six tires or more?
- What changes, if any, would you have to make to your records in order to report this information?

HEAVY-DUTY TRUCKS

- Does your organization report on any heavy duty trucks on the EIA-886?
- Can you tell me in your own words what the term “straight truck” means to you?
- What about the term “single unit truck,” what does that mean to you?
- Do you report data on this kind of truck?
- Can you tell me in your own words what the term “tractor truck” means to you?
- What about the term “tractor trailer combination?”
- Do you report the number of vehicles for this kind of truck?
- Do you distinguish between single unit trucks and tractor trucks in your records?
- How easy or difficult would it for you to report this information to EIA?
- What changes, if any, would you have to make to your records in order to report this information?

Part D – Flexible Fuel Vehicles (Users Only)

- What does the term “flexible fuel vehicle” mean to you?
- Does your organization currently report on any flexible fuel vehicles?
- What does the term “conventional fuel” mean to you?
- How do you track conventional fuel use in your records?
- What does the term “alternative fuel” mean to you?
- How do you track alternative fuel use in your records?
- If EIA were to ask for you to report your alternative fuel use and your conventional fuel use separately, how easy or difficult would it be for you to report that information?
- What changes, if any, would you have to make to your records in order to report this information?

Part E – Consumption (Users Only)

- How do you track the fuel consumption of your AFVs?
 - o What characteristics about the fuel consumption do you track in your records?
 - o Do you track miles traveled?
 - o If you have bi-fueled and/or flexible fueled vehicles, could you easily report gasoline or diesel consumption as well as the alternative transportation fuel consumption?
 - o If you have bi-fueled and/or flexible fueled vehicles, can you estimate the percentage of time the vehicle is used for each type of fuel (i.e., gas/diesel/alternative fuel)?
 - o Do you track electricity consumed? In Kwh or GGE?
- What types of information about the battery do you track in your records?
 - o Do you track how often the battery is charged? For how long?
 - o Do you track the charge rate of the battery? Discharge rate?
 - o Do you know how much electricity is consumed by your company charging the batteries?
- Do you know the capacity of the batteries in your vehicles?
 - o What information about the life of the battery do you track in your records?
 - o Have you ever had to replace a battery in one of your AFVs?
 - *If yes, how often do you have to replace the batteries in your AFVs?*
- Does your fleet include plug-in hybrids?
 - o *If yes, do you track whether the plug-in hybrid uses gasoline or electricity?*
 - o Do you track the percentage of time the vehicle uses either gasoline or electricity?

- How easy or difficult would it be for you to provide the consumption information that we discussed to EIA?
 - If needed:
 - What are the causes that make reporting this information more difficult?
 - In the alternative, why would be very easy for your to report this information?
- Are there any additional costs that your company incur to provide the consumption information to EIA?
- In the beginning of this interview you said that it takes approximately x hours to file your report, if you needed to report the additional information on more detailed vehicle weight categories, how much more time would it take you to file your report?

Part F – Wrapping Up

- Compared to the current version of the form, if EIA made the survey changes that we discussed today, would you say it would take you more, less, or about the same amount of time to complete this form?
- About how many hours would that be?
- More generally, what difficulties do you have when completing the EIA-886?
- Do you have any suggestions on how to improve this survey?

Thank you for your time!