

Group 1 (Producers of fuel ethanol) Current EIA-819 Respondents

Cognitive Testing Protocol

May 2018

(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 assess respondents' ability to complete the new Form EIA-819
- To estimate any changes in reporting burden associated with collecting this information and obtain feedback on the appropriateness of current reporting burden

Purpose of Interview:

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

- Introduce self and observers
- EIA is merging two survey forms into one survey. The two surveys are Form EIA-22 and EIA-819. EIA is also proposed to collect more information on the new form. Your feedback will help EIA design the new form to minimize any increase in your current reporting burden.

Section I - Introduction

- Before we start, could you please share with us a little more about yourself and your company?
- Do you currently fill out Form EIA-819?
- How long have you been completing this form?
- Do you complete any other EIA surveys for your company?
- Are you familiar with the current instructions for Form EIA-819 or other EIA surveys?
 - Are the instructions helpful/useful?
- Did you review any prior reports to prepare for this interview? How much time did you spend reviewing old reports?

Section II - Current Burden (Current burden is 1.6 hours for EIA-819)

Now let's talk about how much time and effort it takes you to currently complete this form.

- How long does it take you to fill out the form?
- Does filling out this form require data or input from anyone else?
- How much time does it take you to gather the information for this report?
 - Briefly describe your process for gathering the data needed to fill out the current form?
- Once you have gathered the information needed, how long does it take you to fill out the report and submit your data to EIA?
- Adding the time it takes you to gather the information and the time it takes for you to complete the report and submit your data, what is the total amount of time it takes you to file your

report? [NOTE: Burden for this form is 1.6 if the respondent indicates that it takes < .5 hours or > 5 hours ask how they are able to report so quickly or why it takes so long.]

- (If the sums do not equal total burden) What other aspects of gathering and filling out this form do you factor into your burden figure?
- In the past, is this the usual time that it takes your company to report this information?
- Do you have any problems or think there are any confusing questions on Form EIA-819?

Section III Part 3- Capacity

EIA is interested in ensuring that the language and terminology we use is understood and reflective of the industry

- What is your definition of the term “production capacity”?
- What is your definition of the term “design capacity”?
- What is your definition of the term “nameplate capacity”?
 - (If needed) Does your facility have multiple nameplate capacities?
- Do capacities change over time or are they static figures? (nameplate?)
 - (If needed) What event or events would cause the change? For example, would a new capacity result from a change to plant equipment? Do process changes affect capacity?
 - (If needed) If your capacity does change, do you report the adjusted figure to EIA or do you continue to report the original nameplate capacity? (nameplate too?)
- If EIA asked you report your fuel ethanol production capacity on the first day of the report month, in gallons per year, how would you answer that question?
 - How much time would it take for you to gather and report that figure to EIA monthly?
- Is that the same number you currently report on Form EIA-819?
 - (If no) What have you been reporting under Nameplate Production Capacity question?
 - (If needed) How should EIA phrase that question so respondents understand what we are asking for? Should EIA ask for a “capacity” or is there another term?
- What is your definition of the term “utilization rate”?
- Does your organization track the utilization rate of your plant?
 - (If needed) How does your company calculate this figure? What information (production and capacity) does the company use for this calculation?
 - (If needed) What is the current utilization rate of your facility?
 - (If needed) Does your utilization rate ever exceed 100%?

Burden for Section

- Can you please describe the process you would go through to fill out these sections?
- How much time would it take to fill out these sections of the form?
- Can you access the information requested for these sections?
- Do these units of measurements differ than what are kept in your records?
- Would you have to work with others inside or outside of your company?
- How long will it take to set up your systems to fill out these sections?
- Is the data that we are requesting easily accessible in your systems?
 - (Follow up) How easy or difficult would it be to provide the data in this structure?

- Do you believe there should be any additional instructions for filling out these sections of the form?
 - (Follow up) What additional instructions should be included?
- Can you provide this data to EIA on a monthly basis?

Inventory Section

Let's discuss your company's stocks and inventory records

- What kinds of information on your company's inventories and stocks are in your records?
 - Beginning stocks?
 - Ending stocks?
 - Stocks in transit?
- How does your company measure its inventories?
 - Physical measurement?
 - (If needed) Can you explain how your company measures inventories using this method?
 - Meters/gauges?
 - Stick?
 - Other?
 - Accounting measurement?
 - (If needed) Can you explain how your company measures inventories using this method? (Measured stock level plus receipts minus shipments? Another method?)
- What are the frequencies of the different measurements?
 - (If needed) How frequently does your facility physically measure its stocks?
 - (If needed) How frequently does your facility measure its stocks via accounting? For example, do you have a weekly stock level measurement that is adjusted daily based on receipts and shipments?
- How does your company adjust for a discrepancy between the physical inventory measurement and the accounting inventory measurement?
 - (If needed) How frequently do these adjustments occur?
- (If needed) Does your company keep records on its stocks in transit? (What will be delivered to the company)
- What kinds of information does your company keep on its stocks in transit?
- Do your company's records have information on the method of transportation for the stocks coming in transit? (Boat, truck, rail, other)
- Do you know when the stocks in transit leave the origin facility?
 - (If needed) How do you know when they have left the facility?
- Do you know when the stocks in transit will arrive at your facility?
 - (If needed) How do you know when they will arrive at your facility?
- If EIA asked you to report your stocks in transit (inventories/stocks currently on their way to your facility), can you explain to me the process of gathering and reporting that information?
 - (If needed) Are you able to separate the stocks in transit for the rest of your inventories/stocks?

- EIA considers stocks that have arrived at a facility after transportation to be part of the facility's inventories and no longer be "in transit", is that how your facility/records also sees it?
- How much time do you estimate it would take to gather and report your stocks in transit to EIA on a monthly basis?

Section IV Part 4- Usability Testing

[Show participant new Form EIA-819] Please review this survey.

- Based on the descriptions of the types of operations, how would you classify your organization?
 - Group 1 (Producers of fuel ethanol) Current EIA-819 Respondents
 - Group 2 (Producers of biodiesel) Current EIA-22 M Respondents
 - Group 3 (Producers of renewable diesel fuel, heating oil, jet fuel, naphtha, gasoline, and other renewable fuels not listed elsewhere) Possible EIA-810 Respondents
 - Group 4 (Producers of Motor Gasoline Blending Components and oxygenates for fuel use) EIA-819 respondents
- Which parts of the survey are your company required to complete monthly?
- (Follow up) What about yearly?
- Where would you report your production?
- What are you reviewing on this page?
- Are you looking for familiar labels?

[Walk the participant through each column on the survey form. Ask the participant their ability to report each item. Ask participant if there are any confusing product descriptions]

[Probe, if there are any confusing column or row titles, describe below]

Row

- Conventional fuel ethanol
- Cellulosic fuel ethanol
- Natural Gasoline
- Motor Gasoline blend components
- Reformulated blendstock for oxygenate blending (RBOB)
- Conventional blendstock for oxygenate blending (CBOB) and gasoline not blended with ethanol (EO)
- Gasoline blended with ethanol up to 10%
- Midblend gasoline blended with >10% ethanol to 50% ethanol
- Flex fuel (E85) blended with 51% to 83% ethanol

Column

- Stocks beginning of the month (equal to stocks on-site at end of the prior month)
- Receipts
- Production from renewable feedstocks (also report feedstocks in part 9)
- The input to denaturant and product blending
- Production from denaturant and product blending
- Shipment
- Plant use and loss

- Stocks on-site end of current report month
 - Row balance item (equals zero when the row is balanced)
 - Stocks in transit by water and rail end of current report month
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- Can you please describe the process you would go through to complete this survey form?
 - Is this the same process you take on the form you currently fill out?
 - Compared to the form you currently fill out, do you believe that the new form will take less time, more time, or the same amount of time?
 - How easy or difficult would using this form be?
 - What section did you look to first?
 - (Follow up) why?
 - Were there any specific places you were confused by when trying to complete this form?
 - Can you please describe what aspect confused you?
 - Does the layout of this form make it easier or more difficult than the form you currently fill out?
 - Do you think the line balance column is a useful check of data reported on the survey?
 - Do you use similar balance items to check internal volume accounting for the plant?
 - On the row balance item column what would be a reasonable imbalance to expect? For example, would it be reasonable to expect imbalances within 5% of the largest quantity reported on a line of the survey form?
 - If you see a line imbalance on the EIA-819 survey, then what steps would you take to investigate the reported data and how would you resolve the imbalance?
 - In designing the new Form EIA-819, we assumed that total input to denaturant and product blending will equal total production from denaturant and product blending within some reasonable tolerance. Is it reasonable to assume total blending input will equal total blending production? If yes, would +/- 5% (volume) be a reasonable tolerance? Do you have similar balance checks in your internal records?

Burden for Section

- When you fill out the current Form EIA-819 do you use the same formula as broken down in the new form?
- Can you please describe the process you would go through to fill out these sections?
- How much time would it take to fill out these sections of the form?
- Can you access the information requested for these sections?
- Do these units of measurements differ than what are kept in your records?
- Would you have to work with others inside or outside of your company?
- How long will it take to set up your systems to fill out these sections?
- After your systems are set up how long will it take to complete these sections?
- Is the data that we are requesting easily accessible in your systems?
 - (Follow up) How easy or difficult would it be to provide the data in this structure?
- Do you believe there should be any additional instructions for filling out these sections of the form?
 - (Follow up) What additional instructions should be included?
- Can you provide this data to EIA on a monthly basis?

Part D- Usability Testing

- Can you please describe the process you would go through to filling out this survey form?

- Is this the same process you take to fill out the EIA-819 currently?
- Compared to the EIA-819 do you believe that the new form will take less time, more time or the same amount of time?
 - How easy or difficult would using this form be?
- What section did you look to first?
 - (Follow up) why?
- Were there any specific places you were confused by when trying to complete this form?
 - Can you please describe what aspect confused you?
- Does the layout of this form make it easier or more difficult than the form you currently fill out?

Section V Part 9

Usability Testing

[Walk the participant through each column on the survey form. Ask the participant their ability to report each item. EIA does not currently collect any information on production from renewable feedstocks on Form EIA-819. Ask participant if there are any confusing product descriptions]

Column

- Agriculture and forestry products
- Corn
- Sorghum
- Agricultural and forestry residues
- Other - lignocellulosic
- Other - not lignocellulosic and not elsewhere specified
- Algae
- Animal Fats
- Poultry
- Tallow
- White Grease
- Other Animal Fats
- Recycled feed and waste
- Municipal Solid Waste
- Sewage
- Yard and food waste
- Yellow Grease
- Other Recycled feed and waste
- Vegetable oils
- Canola Oil
- Corn Oil
- Palm oil
- Soybean Oil
- Sunflower oil
- Other vegetable oil

Burden for Section

- Can you please describe the process you would go through to fill out these sections?
- How much time would it take to fill out these sections of the form?
- Can you access the information requested for these sections?
- Do these units of measurements on the form differ than what are kept in your records?
- Would you have to contact others inside or outside of your company to obtain these quantities?
- How long will it take to set up your systems to fill out these sections?
- After your systems are set up how long will it take to complete these sections?
- Is the data that we are requesting easily accessible in your systems?
 - (Follow up) How easy or difficult would it be to provide the data in this structure?
- Do you believe there should be any additional instructions for filling out these sections of the form?
 - (Follow up) What additional instructions should be included?
- Can you provide this data to EIA on a monthly basis?

Section VI Part 11

Usability Testing

Do you understand what we mean when we ask for the Quantity of Products consumed as fuel?

[Ask the participant to review the list of fuel products. Probe for any confusing terms]

- Natural gas (all fuel including use in CHP) in scf
 - Coal in short tons
 - Liquefied Petroleum Gases (Propane, normal butane, and isobutane) in gallons
 - Purchased electricity in kWh
 - Purchased steam in pounds
 - Other fuels including renewable (e.g. corn stover, crop residue) in pounds
 - How about the quantity of products consumed as feedstock?
 - Natural gas for use as hydrogen feedstock in scf
 - Purchased hydrogen in scf
- Is this terminology you are familiar with?
 - (if not) What terminology is used in the industry?

Burden for Section

- Can you please describe the process you would go through to fill out this section?
- Can you access the information requested for this section?
- Do these units of measurements differ than what are kept in your records?
- Would you have to work with others inside or outside of your company?
- How long will it take to set up your systems to fill out this form?
- After your systems are set up how long will it take to complete this section?
- Is the data that we are requesting easily accessible in your systems?
- (Follow up) How easy or difficult would it be to provide the data in this structure?

- Do you believe there should be any additional instructions for filling out this form?
- (Follow up) What additional instructions should be included?
- Can you provide this data to EIA on a yearly basis?

Section VII - Wrapping Up

- Do you have any problems when completing Form EIA-819?
- Do you have any suggestions on how to improve this survey?

Thank you for your time!