

Generic Information Collection Request

Request: The Census Bureau plans to conduct additional research under the generic clearance for questionnaire pretesting research (OMB number 0607-0725). The Census Bureau plans to conduct cognitive pretest interviews on a proposed redesign of the Quarterly Survey of Public Pensions (QSPP) which is an email out/electronic reporting survey conducted by the Census Bureau on a quarterly basis. The QSPP is a quarterly survey that provides national summary data on the revenues, expenditures, and composition of assets of the largest defined benefit public employee pension systems for state and local governments. This survey is collected under the authority of Title 13, United States Code (U.S.C.), Section 161 and 182. Further information regarding QSPP can be found at this website:

<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/qspp.html>.

Purpose: The redesign of the QSPP proposes to eliminate the collection of duplicate items between the Annual Survey of Public Pensions (ASPP) and the QSPP, by removing data items that are better collection on an annual basis from the QSPP. By removing these items, covering benefit payments and system revenue, QSPP will be able to direct more resources towards asset details. This focus on asset details was requested by the Federal Reserve Board.

The proposed collection instrument modernizes asset categories to match current industry practices, aligning the instrument with existing record keeping practices. This redesign should allow systems to respond more efficiently while also producing a more meaningful data product for end users.

Some areas of focus are how systems classify the federal government holdings and how they treat mutual funds.

Population of Interest: The new questions will replace the current questions in all QSPP forms, the population of which is the largest defined benefit public employee pension systems for state and local governments.

Timeline: Testing will be conducted from November through December 2018.

Language: Testing will be conducted in English only.

Method: We plan to conduct cognitive interviews with respondents from state and local government entities in person (within a short travel distance from Washington, DC) as well as over the phone.

Sample: We plan to conduct a total of 10-15 cognitive interviews. The sample size necessary for this test was determined by experience. We plan to conduct interviews with a variety of sizes and types of state and local governments.

Recruitment: Participants will be recruited using a list of potential government entities provided by the Pension Statistics Branch in ITMD. Respondents will be informed that their participation is voluntary. The interviews will be audio recorded, to facilitate summarization.

Protocol: Participants will first briefly review the current QSPP questionnaire. Then participants will be asked to complete the redesigned questionnaire using a think-aloud protocol. After completing the questions, each participant will be asked debriefing questions.

Use of Incentive: Monetary incentives for participation will not be offered.

Below is a list of materials to be used in the current study:

1. Draft questions (Enclosure 1)
2. Protocol used for the study (Enclosure 2) including possible debriefing probes

Length of interview: We expect that each interview will last no more than 60 minutes (15 cases x 60 minutes per case = 15 hours). Additionally, to recruit respondents we expect to make up to 5 phone contacts per completed case. The recruiting calls are expected to last on average 3 minutes per call (5 attempted phone calls per completed case x 15 cases x 3 minute per case = 3.75 hours). Thus, the estimated burden for this project is 18.75 hours (15 hours for interviews + 3.75 hours for recruiting).

The contact person for questions regarding data collection and statistical aspects of the design of this research is listed below:

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