

**ASM Robotics Questions  
Respondent Debriefings  
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**General Research Questions:**

- Do respondents understand what information they are being asked to provide with these questions?
- Do respondents understand the terminology used in the questions?
- Are respondents able to answer the questions that are being asked?
- Is the requested information available in respondent's records?
- Are the instructions helpful to respondents?

**Expected Length of Interview:** 20-30 minutes

**Materials Needed:**

- Copy of questionnaire
- Information on Respondent's answers (these can be screen shots or some other form of record of the participants' responses)

**General probes that may be used throughout the interview:**

- Reflect back on respondent's answer: "you said..."
- In your own words, what is this question asking?
- How did you arrive at this number/answer this question?
- What records (if any) did you look at? What line or lines were of interest?
- Specifically, what did you include in this number? What did you exclude?
- Did you consult other people to obtain this answer?

**INTRODUCTION**

- Explain purpose of meeting: get feedback on new questions that were added to the Annual Survey of Manufactures on a new topic.
- Thank respondent for completing the survey
- Tell respondent why we asked to speak with them
  - Understand how they developed their answers
  - Refine questions and make them easier to answer

## ABOUT THE RESPONDENT

First, I would like to learn a bit about you, and your role here at the company.

- What is your job title?
- What is your role in completing government surveys?
- How much experience do you have completing the Annual Survey of Manufactures?
- Do you work with anyone else in your company to get the data for the ASM?
  - How are those other people involved?
  - How many people are involved?

Now I'd like to learn a little about your company.

- Can you give us a brief description of what your company does?
- What kind of products do you manufacture?
- How many domestic manufacturing locations do you have?
- Does your company have any international manufacturing locations?
- What sort of manufacturing equipment do you have?

## SURVEY BACKGROUND

Thank you for that background information, it is very helpful. I would like to ask you some questions about your process for filling out the ASM.

- Can you tell me about your process for filling out the Annual Survey of Manufactures?
  - *Additional probes (if necessary):*
    - Was this your first time filling out this survey?
    - What was your role completing the Economic Census? Were others involved in helping gather the data? If so, how many and what were their responsibilities?
    - How do you typically gather the data?
    - Did someone else have to review the data before you submitted it?
    - How long did it take you to complete the survey?

## SURVEY QUESTIONS

Now I would like to ask you about your responses to some specific questions. Please open the attachment that I sent you via email. The document is in PDF form and each page is numbered. As I ask you questions, I will indicate which page you should be looking at.

## Capital Expenditures (Q28A)

On page one of the PDF, I would like you to look at item A.

- Does your business have a definition of industrial robotic equipment that it uses? (If yes) Please describe that definition. (If no) How would you define industrial robotic equipment?
- How did you go about answering this question?
- Where did you get the data in order to answer this question?
- Did you need to consult with any records or anyone else while answering this question?
- *(If the respondent reported a dollar amount):* I see that you provided \_\_\_ dollar amount for this response. Can you provide me with examples of the specific industrial robotic equipment you were thinking of in your response?
  - What types of equipment were you including?
  - Excluding?
- What did you include in “capital expenditures”?
  - Is there anything discretionary about what’s included in capital expenditures, or does this follow strict accounting guidelines?
  - Was there anything difficult about retrieving this data?
- Did you review the introductory text before answering the question?
- Does this match the definition you provided earlier? If not, how is it different?
  - Does your company have any machinery that you would not personally consider to be a “robot” or “robotic equipment,” but you included because of the definition? What?
  - Are there any types of “robots” or “robotic equipment” that your company has, according to how you defined it earlier, that you believe this definition told you to exclude? What?
- How long did it take for you to complete this question?

## Robots in Operation (Q28B)

Next let’s look at item B.

- How did you go about answering this question?
- Where did you get the data in order to answer this question?
- Did you need to consult with any records or anyone else while answering this question?
- *(If the respondent reported a number):* I see that you provided \_\_\_ number for this response. Can you provide me with examples of industrial robots in operation you were thinking of in your response?
  - What types of equipment were you including?
  - Any types you excluded due to “In Operation”?
- *If respondent had write in:* tell me more about why you were unable to provide a number of industrial robots in operation?

- Was there anything difficult about retrieving this data?
- How long did it take for you to complete this question?

### **Robots Purchased (Q28C)**

*Now item C.*

- How did you go about answering this question?
- Where did you get the data in order to answer this question?
- Did you need to consult with any records or anyone else while answering this question?
- *(If the respondent reported a number):* I see that you provided \_\_\_ number for this response. Can you provide me with examples of industrial robots you included in your response?
- *If respondent had write in:* tell me more about why you were unable to provide a number of industrial robots purchased?
- Was there anything difficult about retrieving this data?
- How long did it take for you to complete this question?

### **Capital Expenditures (Q13)**

*On page two of the PDF, I would like you to look at item 13*

The capital expenditures question on the ASM currently has three sections: automobiles, computing equipment, and other.

- How did you go about answering this question?
- In which of these three sections have you been reporting expenditures related to your robotics equipment?

### **WRAP-UP**

We are almost done, and I just have a few wrap-up questions

- These questions asked only about capitalized expenditures. Do you have any robotic equipment that was not capitalized? How do you determine when equipment is capitalized or expensed? What is the capitalization threshold and does it vary by type (e.g., maintenance/repairs v. new equipment)?
- Is there anything else we haven't touched on today, that you think is relevant?
- Do you have any other recommendations for improving the survey that we didn't get a chance to talk about?
- Do you have any questions for us?

Thank you very much for your time today!