

July 27, 2017

MEMORANDUM FOR: REVIEWER of 1220-0189

FROM: Jennifer Coleman  
Division Chief, National Compensation Survey  
Office of Compensation and Working Conditions  
Bureau of Labor Statistics

SUBJECT: Non-substantive Change Request for the  
Occupational Requirements Survey (ORS)

Clearance is being sought for the Bureau of Labor Statistics' (BLS) Occupational Requirements Survey (ORS) program to test revised ORS cognitive questions. Information on ORS data collection was included in Part A, Section 12 of the most recent Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Clearance for ORS (1220-0189) which was approved on August 26, 2016. This clearance package covers the first three years of ORS collection which started in 2015 and ends in 2018.

Earlier cognitive data collection questions did not yield expected data and were discontinued in August 2017 after OMB approval was received on 4/28/2017. New questions were designed and tested on a limited basis through the BLS Office of Survey Methods Research (OSMR) generic Clearance 1220-0141 in the first half of 2017. Further field testing will provide the opportunity to refine collection methods and question wording on a diverse set of occupations and industries. It also allows BLS to assess the effectiveness of the revised cognitive questions to produce objectively measurable data for Social Security.

The first round of field results will be compared to the OSMR initial testing results to verify question and response clarity. The second round of field results will incorporate needed changes. Previously collected data for similar questions will be compared to the test results from both rounds. This analysis will confirm that changes in response patterns match expectations and correspond more closely to the needs of Social Security. In addition, standard statistical tests for consistency, reliability, and validity will be performed. Findings will be discussed with Social Security to ensure final questions, response answers, and resultant data will meet their adjudication needs.

Most ORS data are collected by conversational interviews. When asking questions, field economists do not rely on a scripted interview, instead, they ask probing questions to obtain the information. For this test an introductory script will be provided to the field economists to guide them in securing the respondents' cooperation (Attachment D).

BLS expects that the respondent burden for testing these revised cognitive questions will be 108 hours. The test sample consists of 431 establishments to be contacted during the remainder of FY2017 and early FY2018. This test will not add any additional respondent burden hours beyond the currently authorized ORS Clearance (1220-0189) testing of 350 establishments and

350 respondent burden hours for both FY2017 and FY2018. The revised cognitive questions have changed some of the response options. BLS field economists complete the forms as note taking devices during the data collection interviews. The collection forms are not questionnaires that respondents complete. Attachment A documents the questions to be tested.

Approval is sought for revising forms ORS\_Form\_4\_COG-1G and ORS\_Form\_4\_COG-1P. (Attachments B and C)

If you have any questions about this non-substantive change request, please contact Steve Hill at 202-691-6194 or e-mail at [Hill.Wesley@bls.gov](mailto:Hill.Wesley@bls.gov), or Jennifer Coleman at 202-691-7128 or e-mail at [Coleman.Jennifer@bls.gov](mailto:Coleman.Jennifer@bls.gov).

Attachment A: Revised cognitive questions for testing

Work Review		“job_title_1	“job_title_2
<b>How frequently is work checked in the occupation?</b>			
A. More than once per day	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
B. Once per day	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
C. At least once per week, but less than daily	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
D. Less than weekly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are supervisors generally present in the same work area as	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Control of Work Pace, Workflow & Pause Control		“job_title_1	“job_title_2
<b>Which of the following <u>most</u> determines the pace of work? (Select one)</b>			
A. Machinery, equipment, or software controls pace	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
B. Numerical performance targets or quotas enforced by	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
C. Other persons determine pace (e.g., co-workers, supervisors, customers, members of public)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
D. Other external source (specify) _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
E. Self-paced by worker within general performance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>How would you describe the work flow for this job? Would you say that it ...</b>			
A. Has few (if any) slack periods	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
B. Has few (if any) rush periods (or large build-ups of work)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
C. Varies, with fluctuations or rush periods (or large build-ups of work) and slow periods <u>on a daily or weekly basis</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Can workers step away from their work area easily outside of scheduled breaks? (e.g., short bathroom breaks)?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Problem Solving		“job_title_1	“job_title_2
<b>The next question is about “problem solving” tasks that the worker does in his/her job. Think of “problem solving” as what happens when workers are faced with a new or difficult situation which requires them to think for a while about what to do next. How often is the worker responsible for solving problems that take more than 5 minutes to find a good solution?</b>			
A. More than once per day	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
B. Once per day	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
C. At least once per week, but not every day	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

D. Less than weekly, but at least once per month	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E. Less than monthly, including never	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Personal Contacts</b>		
	<b>“job_title_1</b>	<b>“job_title_2</b>
<b>How often does this occupation require verbal, work-related interactions?</b>		
A. Constantly, every few minutes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B. More than once per hour, but not constantly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C. More than once per day, but not more than once per	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
D. No more than once per day, including never	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>What level of “people skills” does this job require?</b>		
A. Minimal/basic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B. More than basic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Checklist</b>		
	<b>“job_title_1</b>	<b>“job_title_2</b>
<b>Are workers in this occupation...</b>		
1. Required to <u>work with the general public</u> ?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
2. Required to <u>work around crowds</u> ?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
3. Required to <u>supervise others as part of job</u> ?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
4. Permitted to <u>work from home or telework</u> ?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5. Required to <u>work outside</u> ?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>