

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT**  
**U.S. Department of Commerce**  
**U.S. Census Bureau**  
**2017- 2019 Report of Organization**  
**OMB Control No. 0607-0444**

B. Collection of Information Employing Statistical Methods

1. Universe and Respondent Selection

The mailing list for the Report of Organization (aka Company Organization Survey) is derived from the Business Register. The Report of Organization sample will be drawn from this list which consists of all known multi- and single-establishment companies.

2017 Report of Organization/Economic Census Collection

Estimated Universe and Sample		
	Universe	Sample Size
Multi-establishment enterprises		
Companies	165,000	165,000
Establishments	1,900,000	15,000 <sup>1</sup>
Single establishment enterprises	5,800,000	120,000
Nonemployer enterprises	24,000,000	0

2018 - 2019 Report of Organization Collection

Estimated Universe and Sample		
	Universe	Sample Size
Multi-establishment enterprises		
Companies	200,000	42,000
Establishments	1,600,000	1,460,000 <sup>2</sup>
Single establishment enterprises	5,800,000	5,000
Nonemployer enterprises	24,000,000	0

<sup>1</sup> The sample size of 15,000 is the total number of questionnaires for the 165,000 companies. Establishments are the number of locations that a company operates. However, not all establishments are selected to receive the Report of Organization questionnaire.

<sup>2</sup> The sample size of 1,460,000 is the total number of questionnaires for the 42,000 companies. Establishments are the number of locations that a company operates. However, not all establishments are selected to receive the Report of Organization questionnaire. Some companies receive the Annual Survey of Manufactures questionnaire in addition to the Report of Organization questionnaire.

2. Sampling Procedures

The mailing list for the Report of Organization in non-census years consists of a certainty component including large multi-establishment companies. In addition, a noncertainty sample of smaller multi-establishment companies with administrative data suggesting an organizational change is included. We expect these companies to have organizational changes such as new establishments, closed/sold establishments, change to industry classification, or changes to Federal Employer Identification Number. Finally, a sample of single-establishment companies with data suggesting it is part of a multi-establishment company is also included.

The Economic Census sample is used in place of the Report of Organization sample to determine the mailing list for census years.

3. Maximize response rate and non-response

There will be four mail follow-ups plus selected telephone calls to large companies. This has provided an adequate response rate for past surveys. The response rates for previous years were 79 percent in 2013, 82 percent in 2014, 81 percent in 2015 and 77 percent in 2016.

4. Testing Procedures

*Instrument Development and Design*

The combined 2017 Economic Census/Report of Organization will be collected completely online, using the Census Bureau's current corporate Web reporting software called Centurion. This required eliminating paper questionnaires and discontinuing the use of the legacy Census Surveyor software application that required being downloaded and installed on respondents' PCs. Re-engineering economic census data collection instruments for full implementation via the Web required a substantial multi-year, multi-method program of research, development, testing and evaluation.

Activities included task analyses, record-keeping studies, exploratory early stage scoping interviews, cognitive testing, usability testing, analyses of electronic paradata, respondent debriefings, and field tests, along with early implementation of designs within other Census Bureau establishment surveys, such as the annual Report of Organization and the Annual Survey of Manufactures (ASM). Different research components, in turn, focused

on different subpopulations, different instrument components, or different question(naire) content, and results and recommendations were used to aid design decisions.

Of particular note is the use of the annual Report of Organization/ASM as a testing and proving ground for many new techniques planned for the Economic Census, as these two surveys collect data at the establishment level like the Economic Census. This began by conducting debriefing interviews with 2014 Report of Organization/ASM MU respondents to identify strengths and weaknesses of the legacy Surveyor software used for electronic reporting to aid development of initial requirements for the online Centurion instrument.

The 2015 ASM provided a full-scale pilot of the new online Centurion collection instrument for SUs using the response-driven design being built for the 2017 Economic Census. Since paper questionnaires were not available, more than 95% of SU respondents reported online, while only a few reported their data by some other method, such as telephone. Additionally, respondent debriefings were conducted and Web paradata were analyzed to further evaluate the response-driven instrument and to recommend improvements.

The 2015 ASM also integrated research testing the value and effectiveness of targeted subsampling, to provide evidence for decisions about implementing an adaptive design approach in the 2017 Economic Census.

Finally, MUs in the 2016 Report of Organization/ASM are using the new online Centurion collection instrument, which features much of the functionality developed for the 2017 Economic Census, such as importing/exporting spreadsheets, the ability to toggle between “form” views and spreadsheet views of the questions, and questionnaire preview worksheets to aid data gathering. Respondent debriefings and Web paradata analysis will be conducted to further evaluate the instrument prior to conducting the 2017 Economic Census.

Results and recommendations from each component and testing activity were provided to subject matter specialists, managers and developers of data collection procedures, and software developers and programmers. Recommendations were prioritized, negotiated, and revised, as necessary, to facilitate implementation. Nevertheless, some recommendations were not fully adopted due to resource and technical limitations.

All studies are documented in internal Census Bureau reports; a few of the studies are also reported publicly in conference papers or presentations.

Components of the research and testing, along with selected highlights are summarized in Attachment F.

### *Testing of Contact Strategies*

To aid evidence-based decisions for data collection and response improvement contact strategies, several techniques were field-tested using statistical experimental designs embedded in the 2012 Economic Census and in several of the Census Bureau's annual or quarterly economic surveys during the past three years. Another strategy evaluating alternative due dates was applied to selected units during a production survey. Evaluation of the strategies considered the effect on response rates or check-in rates, improved timeliness of value of shipments/receipts/revenue/sales, and/or potential for cost savings.

All studies are documented in internal Census Bureau reports; a few of the studies are also reported publicly in conference papers or presentations, as noted.

These field-tests and/or experiments, their outcomes, and implementation decisions are summarized in Attachment G.

### 5. Contact for Statistical Aspects and Data Collection

Contact Carrie A. Hill by phone at (301) 763-2536 or by email at [Carrie.Anne.Hill@census.gov](mailto:Carrie.Anne.Hill@census.gov) for questions on both statistical aspects and data collection.

#### Attachments:

A--Form NC-99001

B--Form NC-99007

C--Form NC-99001 Information Sheet

D--Form NC-99007 Information Sheet

E--Cover Letter

F-- Contact Strategies Testing

G-- Instrument Development and Design Research and Testing Highlights

H-- Predominant Purpose Statement, Joint Census/BEA Research Project

I-- Progress Report, Joint Census/BEA Research Project

J-- December 1, 2017 Letter from Andrew Reamer

K-- Email response to Reamer Letter