

**Department of Commerce
U.S. Census Bureau
OMB Information Collection Request
Construction Progress Reporting Surveys
OMB Control Number 0607-0153**

Part A. - Justification

1. Necessity of the Information Collection

The U.S. Census Bureau is requesting an extension of a currently approved collection for forms: C-700, for Private Construction Projects; C-700(R), for Multifamily Residential Projects; C-700(SL), for State and Local Governments Projects; and C-700(F), for Federal Government Projects (see Attachments A - D).

These forms are used to conduct the Construction Progress Reporting Surveys (CPRS) which collect information on the dollar value of construction put in place on non-residential building projects under construction by private companies or individuals, private multifamily residential buildings, and building projects under construction by federal and state and local governments. The CPRS are authorized under Title 13, United States Code, Sections 131 and 182.

The Census Bureau uses the information collected on these forms to publish estimates of the monthly dollar value of construction put in place. Statistics from the CPRS become part of the monthly “Value of Construction Put in Place” or “Construction Spending” series, a Principal Economic Indicator that is used extensively by the federal government in making policy decisions, and is used by the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) to estimate the gross domestic product (GDP). The private sector uses the statistics for market analysis and other research. Construction now accounts for over 6 percent of GDP.

There are currently no planned content changes to the questionnaires. However, beginning with the September 2018 statistical period, we mailed redesigned forms, which were previously printed on a single legal page, and are now in booklet form. Additionally, the contact information is now requested on the front page of the booklet rather than on the back page, and the numbering scheme reflects this rearrangement of questions.

2. Needs and Uses

Form C-700 is used to collect data on the construction of privately-owned nonresidential buildings and structures. Form C-700(R) is used to collect data on privately-owned residential building projects with two or more housing units. Form C-700(SL) is used to collect data on state and local government construction projects. Form C-700(F) is used

to collect data on federal government construction projects.

Published estimates are used by a variety of private business and trade associations to estimate the demand for building materials and to schedule production, distribution, and sales efforts. They also provide various government agencies with a tool to evaluate economic policy. For example, Bureau of Economic Analysis staff use data to develop the construction components of gross private domestic investment in the gross domestic product. The Federal Reserve Board and the Department of the Treasury use the value put in place data to predict the gross domestic product, which is presented to the Board of Governors and has an impact on monetary policy.

Information quality is an integral part of the pre-dissemination review of information disseminated by the Census Bureau (fully described in the Census Bureau's Information Quality Guidelines). Information quality is also integral to information collections conducted by the Census Bureau and is incorporated into the clearance process required by the Paperwork Reduction Act.

3. Use of Information Technology

In addition to mail and fax, respondents are offered the option to report data online via Centurion. Centurion is the Census Bureau's secure online reporting system for respondents. Approximately 37 percent of the total responses come from Centurion. Respondents who choose to respond via Centurion receive email notifications rather than paper forms or letters.

We use a computer-assisted interview process referred to as the Call Scheduler to collect data over the telephone for approximately 20 percent of the total responses. This is part of a database system that not only alerts the Census interviewer to call a respondent at a predetermined date and time, but also allows them to enter responses via the database at which time the data are electronically edited for accuracy and consistency.

A print on-demand system referred to as DocuPrint is used to prepare all questionnaires. The benefit of this system is its ability to print forms and overlay variable data in predetermined locations throughout a given form. This process reduces the time and cost of preparing mailout packages.

Beginning with the September 2018 statistical period, we began utilizing smart barcode technology. This technology allows completed returned forms to be imaged and indexed automatically, which replaced the previous manual process.

Also beginning with the September 2018 statistical period, for single unit construction projects, we are now utilizing an automated printing and assembly methodology. Of the total mailout, approximately 70% of the cases will now be assembled and mailed using this mechanism. This process was previously done manually, and the change significantly reduced the time and resources required for assembly and mailout.

4. Efforts to Identify Duplication

The C-700, C-700(R), C-700(SL) and C-700(F) have existed since 1961, 1975, 1976 and 2002, respectively. Frequent discussions with people in and out of government who use these statistics and are knowledgeable about the construction statistical sources indicate that the monthly value put in place series for private nonresidential construction, private multifamily residential construction, and state and local government construction are unavailable elsewhere. Federal construction projects are public information and some data can be obtained from other sources (i.e. usaspending.gov); however, such data is incomplete and not sufficient to determine the value put in place each month.

5. Minimizing Burden

Data for these surveys are collected on a sample basis from owners of private nonresidential projects, owners of private multifamily residential building projects, state and local agency officials, and federal government officials. Total projected cost estimates are requested the first month and monthly progress reports are requested until the project is completed. Respondents are told that if actual values are not readily available from records, estimates are acceptable. Information on projects valued under \$75,000 is not collected for federal, state and local, or private nonresidential building projects.

Preprinted forms are mailed monthly to respondents to fill in current month data and any revisions to previous months. Respondents also have the option to report online. Nonrespondents are later called by a Census interviewer and are asked to report data over the phone. Interviews are scheduled utilizing our Call Scheduler, which allows interviews to be scheduled at the convenience of the respondent, which further reduces their burden. Respondents having their information available from an internal database at the time of the interview greatly helps reduce the time spent on the phone. After the preliminary mailing, if a respondent consistently reports electronically, they receive e-mail notifications and reminders to complete the online survey, and we cease mailing them paper forms.

We continually review our processes to identify any data items that are no longer necessary.

6. Consequences of Less Frequent Collection

Many policies, decisions, and analyses are formulated and updated monthly using information collected from the CPRS. Month-to-month changes in construction activities are erratic due to unusual weather conditions, material shortages, labor shortages, changes in the availability of funds and interest rates, and shifts in government grant programs. Less frequent collection of these data would miss these short-term changes.

7. Special Circumstances

This collection requests respondents report information to the agency more often than quarterly. This monthly survey provides data used to produce the monthly Principal Economic Indicator, Monthly Construction Spending. Additionally, respondents are requested to prepare written responses to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days. Responses are requested within ten days after receipt of the request. We ask respondents to report within ten days of receiving the form in order to ensure the timely release of the Construction Spending data on the first workday of each month. Additionally, the response is requested within ten days for the purpose of scheduling nonresponse follow-up caseloads.

8. Consultations Outside the Agency

Comments are received on a continuing basis from data users and from representatives of federal, state and local agencies, private nonresidential projects, and private multifamily residential projects who are asked to review the report forms for clarity and ease of reporting. These consultations are informal, and comments were not solicited for purposes of reaching a consensus opinion.

We published a notice in the Federal Register on August 28, 2018 (Vol. 83, No. 167, Pages 43846-43847) inviting public comments on our plans to submit this request. We received one letter from the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA). The BEA strongly supports this data collection, because these data are critical in preparing estimates for key components of BEA's economic statistics (see Attachment E).

9. Paying Respondents

Respondents are not paid or provided gifts for their participation.

10. Assurance of Confidentiality

The following statement of confidentiality is printed on the report forms C-700 and C-700(R) (see Attachments A and B): "Title 13 United States Code (U.S.C.), Sections 131 and 182, authorizes the Census Bureau to conduct this collection. The U.S. Census Bureau is required by Section 9 of the same law to keep your information confidential and can use your responses only to produce statistics. The Census Bureau is not permitted to publicly release your responses in a way that could identify your business, organization, or institution." This information also appears in the letter to respondents (see Attachment F) and on the login screen for the online reporting instrument (see Attachment J).

The C-700(SL) and C-700(F) are also voluntary. However, the data provided come from government agencies and are public in nature and are exempted from confidentiality under Title 13. The following statement is printed on the report forms (see Attachments

C and D): “Title 13 United States Code (U.S.C.), Sections 131 and 182, authorizes the Census Bureau to conduct this collection. These data are subject to provisions of Title 13, U.S.C., Section 9(b) exempting data that are customarily provided in public records from rules of confidentiality.” This information also appears in the letter to respondents (see Attachment G) and on the login screen for the online reporting instrument (see Attachment J).

11. Justification for Sensitive Questions

The survey forms contain no sensitive questions.

12. Estimate of Hour Burden

Form	Respondents	Minutes for Month 1 (per respondent)	Minutes for Months 2-12 (per respondent)	Total Min Month 1	Total Min Months 2-12	Total Min ALL 12 months	Total hours
C-700	8,500	30	110	255,000	935,000	1,190,000	19,833
C-700(R)	3,900	30	110	117,000	429,000	546,000	9,100
C-700(SL)	11,000	30	110	330,000	1,210,000	1,540,000	25,667
C-700(F)	1,600	30	110	48,000	176,000	224,000	3,733
TOTAL	25,000	30	110	750,000	2,750,000	3,500,000	58,333

We estimate responses from approximately 11,000 state and local government projects, 8,500 private nonresidential projects, 1,600 federal projects, and 3,900 multifamily residential projects annually. The respondents will each complete 12 monthly reports on average. The total number of annual responses is 300,000. We estimate it will take 30 minutes to complete the survey the first month and 10 minutes each remaining month that the project is under construction, regardless of reporting format (see Attachment K). These estimates are based upon previous experiences and conversations with respondents. The total annual burden is 58,333 hours. The estimated annual cost to the respondents is \$2,096,888. We calculated this annual cost by multiplying the total burden hours by the average hourly wage of the associated occupation type. Calculations are shown below. The hourly wages are based on mean hourly wages of the full-time wage and salary earnings of accountants and auditors (Standard Occupational Classification 13-2011), in the respective industries. <http://stats.bls.gov/oes/current/oes132011.htm>

C-700 Sector	Hourly Mean	Annual Burden	Annual Cost	Accountants and Auditors (Standard Occupational Classification 13-2011)
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	Wage	Hours	(Wage x Burden Hours)	by Industry
State/Local	\$32.19	25,667	\$826,221	Local Government, excluding schools and hospitals (OES Designation)
Federal	\$47.26	3,733	\$176,422	Federal Executive Branch (OES Designation)
Private	\$37.82	28,933	\$1,094,246	Management of Companies and Enterprises
TOTAL		58,333	\$2,096,888	

13. Estimating Cost Burden

We do not expect respondents to incur any cost other than their time to respond. The information requested is of the type and scope normally carried in company records. No special hardware, accounting software, or system is necessary to provide this information. Respondents are not expected to incur any increase in capital, startup, or systems maintenance cost in responding.

14. Cost to Federal Government

The total cost to the Federal Government for this program is expected to be relatively fixed over the upcoming three years at approximately \$6,187,418, all paid from Census Bureau appropriations. This estimate includes the cost for such things as data collection, processing, review of tabulated data, publication, equipment, overhead, printing, support staff, etc.

15. Reason for Change in Burden

The annual burden estimate has been adjusted upward due to an increase of activity in the construction sector.

16. Project Schedule

The monthly value in place data are collected during the first three weeks of the month following the survey month. Data are edited and keyed on a flow basis during this period. A tabulation follows during the early days of the fourth week. Statistics are published on the first workday of the following month in the monthly “Construction Spending” press release. Data are published showing the dollar amount of construction work done during the month in the United States by type of ownership and type of construction. Detailed data are available online at www.census.gov/constructionspending. Data are shown in actual and seasonally

adjusted dollars.

17. Request to Not Display Expiration Date

The expiration date is displayed on the data collection forms.

18. Exceptions to Certification

There are no exceptions.

19. NAICS Codes Affected

The data for this survey are not collected using the NAICS categories, however, the industries being measured fall within NAICS 236 (Construction of Buildings), NAICS 2371 (Utility System Construction), 2373 (Highway, Street, and Bridge Construction), and 2379 (Other Heavy and Civil Engineering Construction).