

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
Part B
U.S. Department of Commerce
National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)
Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) Client Impact Survey
OMB Control No. 0693-0021

B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

1. Describe (including a numerical estimate) the potential respondent universe and any sampling or other respondent selection method to be used. Data on the number of entities (e.g. establishments, State and local governmental units, households, or persons) in the universe and the corresponding sample are to be provided in tabular form. The tabulation must also include expected response rates for the collection as a whole. If the collection has been conducted before, provide the actual response rate achieved.

The universe consists of the approximately 13,000 manufacturing clients using the MEP centers each year. All clients will be surveyed. MEP has previously maintained a response rate for this collection between 80 and 85%; this is the expected response rate for this collection. The data collected through the client impact survey is mission-critical for the MEP program, as the data points collected from the clients are used to tabulate MEPs GPRA results. The data is also used to evaluate MEP Center performance, as well as to evaluate the effectiveness of new MEP initiatives.

2. Describe the procedures for the collection, including: the statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection; the estimation procedure; the degree of accuracy needed for the purpose described in the justification; any unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures; and any use of periodic (less frequent than annual) data collection cycles to reduce burden.

This information will include quantified impacts on a client's sales, cost savings, employment, and investment. These figures will be used only to determine the effectiveness of the project work done by the Center, and to gauge the overall success of the NIST MEP program, including GPRA requirements. A web-based survey instrument will be used to collect the information. The respondents will be sent login information and a secure, password-accessible link to the survey via email or mailed letter. No sampling/statistical methods or estimation procedures will be used. MEP is required to report metrics related to client counts, new sales, new investment and cost savings for its GPRA requirements.

3. Describe the methods used to maximize response rates and to deal with nonresponse. The accuracy and reliability of the information collected must be shown to be adequate for the intended uses. For collections based on sampling, a special justification must be provided if they will not yield "reliable" data that can be generalized to the universe studied.

MEP Centers inform clients of the survey and familiarize respondents with the questions and concepts within the survey in the month prior to the survey. Respondent contact data is also updated and confirmed a month prior to survey to ensure accuracy. During the 4-week survey period, MEP centers actively track client response rates and contact clients that have not responded, encouraging them to respond. This method has proven to be successful in the past and the target survey response rate has always been achieved. After all survey results are received, outliers are verified with the respondent to ensure accuracy.

4. Describe any tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken. Tests are encouraged as effective means to refine collections, but if ten or more test respondents are involved OMB must give prior approval.

Not applicable.

5. Provide the name and telephone number of individuals consulted on the statistical aspects of the design, and the name of the agency unit, contractor(s), grantee(s), or other person(s) who will actually collect and/or analyze the information for the agency.

The contracted survey firm will conduct the data collection aspect of this process. MEP staff performs the data analysis and tabulate the responses for GPRA requirements and center evaluation. The MEP staff contact is:

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