

**Request for Emergency Economic Information Collection (EEIC)
Under the EEIC Generic Clearance (0607-1019)**

**U.S. Census Bureau Request to Add EEIC Questions Regarding Severe Weather Events to
Principal Federal Economic Indicator Surveys**

1. Necessity and Description of the Collection

Recently, a number of areas have been impacted by severe weather events, to the effect that President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. declared that major disasters existed, and ordered Federal aid to supplement local recovery efforts in the areas affected by: severe storms, flooding, landslides, mudslides, tornados, wildfires, straight-line winds, mudflows, debris flows, etc. For example, some of the most recently impacted areas of such disasters were: Florida (September 2022), North Carolina (September 2022), South Carolina (September 2022), Alaska (September 2022), Puerto Rico (September 2022), Mississippi (August 2022), Virginia (July 2022), and the Commonwealth of Kentucky (July 2022). The Census Bureau believes measuring the economic impact of these disasters is relevant and in scope in order to propose a request for Emergency Economic Information Collection.

In order to collect this information, the Census Bureau is requesting to add the included questions listed below from the EEIC Question Bank, through current collection methods, targeting all current respondents of the following Principal Federal Economic Indicator surveys: Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey (MARTS), Monthly Retail Trade Survey (MRTS), Monthly Wholesale Trade Survey (MWTS), Quarterly Services Survey (QSS), Quarterly Financial Reports (QFR), Manufactures' Shipments, Inventories, and Orders Survey (M3), Construction Progress Reporting Survey (CPRS), and the Building Permits Survey (BPS C-404).

Questions requested by survey are indicated below in **Table 1**, and we have also included more detailed information from the EEIC Question Bank in *Attachment 1 – Requested Additional Questions by Survey – Severe Weather* for your reference. Please note, we will not be updating the associated letters for each survey, as the questions will be added at the conclusion of the survey. Questions will be displayed in the survey instrument in the same format utilized in the remainder of the electronic questionnaire, with new questions displayed along with the response options which will primarily be formatted as radio buttons, except where listed as text boxes. Questions will refer to the same reference period that is being collected, for that given survey, at the time of collection. In addition, we will ask about the relevant severe weather event, as determined by program area(s), for that collection period. For example: Hurricane Ian for September 2022 (and forward) collection.

The affected public will be the same respondents that are already responding to these surveys. This will address companies within the Retail, Wholesale, Services, Manufacturing, Construction, and Mining sectors of the economy, with NAICS sectors indicated below, by survey, found in **Table 2**.

Table 1 - EEIC Question Bank Question by Survey

Survey(s)	Question Bank Number	Question	Response Options
BPS	29	<Reference period>, how much did demand for this <business/agency/etc.>'s goods or services change compared to what was normal before <event>?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased a lot - Increased a moderate amount - Did not change - Decreased a moderate amount - Decreased a lot
BPS	187	<Reference period>, was this office unable to issue permits, even for one day, as a result of the <event> (for example, due to office closures, lack of staffing, etc.)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes - No
BPS	188	<Reference period>, did <event> cause a permit backlog (for example, due to office closures, lack of staffing, etc.)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes - No - Don't know
BPS	189	As a result of <event>, was permit issuance for any applications received in <reference period> delayed to <reference period>?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes - No
CPRS	29	<Reference period>, how much did demand for this <business/agency/etc.>'s goods or services change compared to what was normal before <event>?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased a lot - Increased a moderate amount - Did not change - Decreased a moderate amount - Decreased a lot
CPRS	72	<Reference period>, as a result of <event>, did this <business/agency/etc.> experience disruptions in receiving materials used in production?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes - No
CPRS	193	<Reference period>, as a result of <event>, for how many days did this <business/agency/etc.> cease production? Enter 0 if production did not cease for at least 1 day.	[Open-ended text box]
QFR	33	<Reference period>, how did this <business/agency/etc.>'s net profits change compared to what was normal before <event>? If this <business/agency/etc.> did not make a profit during this time period, select "Not applicable."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased a lot - Increased a moderate amount - Did not change - Decreased a moderate amount - Decreased a lot - Not applicable
Survey(s)	Question	Question	Response Options

	Bank Number		
M3	70	How long do you think it will take for this <business/agency/etc.>'s production of goods to return to what was normal before <event>?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Less than 1 week - 1 week to less than 1 month - 1 month to less than 3 months - 3 months to less than 6 months - Longer than 6 months - Not applicable
QSS, MARTS, MRTS, MWTS	36	<Reference period>, did the following factors limit this <business/agency/etc.>'s <revenues/sales/receipts>? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weak demand • Staffing shortages (such as, missed work related to the natural disaster, absenteeism, difficulty hiring, etc.) • Limited operating capacity due to state/local restrictions • Supplier disruptions • Clients' or customers' inability to pay • Other, please describe: [text box] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes - No - Not applicable
QSS, MARTS, MRTS, MWTS	112	<Reference period>, as a result of <event>, how many physical locations did this <business/agency/etc.> close? Please enter 0 if none.	Locations permanently closed: [text box] Locations temporarily closed for at least one day (Temporary closures can include times when a small number of employees monitor and maintain any of a company's locations while it is otherwise shut down): [text box]
MRTS, MWTS	87	<Reference period>, as a result of <event>, did the following cause damage to any of this <business/agency/etc.>'s inventory (that is, inventories of raw materials, work-in-process, or finished goods)? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire • Wind • Water damage • Debris (such as broken tree branches, remains of nearby buildings, etc.) • Loss of power/utilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes - No

Table 2 - NAICS by Industry and Survey	
Industry	NAICS (Survey)
Mining	211-213 (QFR)
Manufacturing	311-316, 321-327, 331-337, 339 (M3 and QFR)
Wholesale Trade	423-424 (MWTS and QFR) and 425 (QFR)
Retail Trade	441-448, 451-454 (MRTS, MARTS, and QFR) and 722 (MRTS and MARTS)
Service Industries	51, 622, 623, 54, 56, 484, 492, 493, 532, 621, 624, 71, 81, 52, 22, 481, 483, 485, 486, 487, 488, 533, 61, 531, 721 (QSS)
Selected Service Industries	511-512, 515, 517-519, 541 (except 5411 Legal Services) (QFR)
Construction	The construction surveys do not utilize NAICS (BPS and CPRS)

The collection being conducted will include only questions added to existing collections. If approved, we will ensure the existing surveys will display the current OMB number for the survey, along with the OMB number for this EEIC Generic Clearance (0607-1019). Please see OMB numbers that will also be displayed for each underlying survey in the table in Item 11 below.

Given current collection timeframes, the Census Bureau intends to collect the data at the same frequency that the current Principal Federal Economic Indicators are collected. Current collection frequencies for the indicator surveys are listed below.

- **Monthly:** MARTS, MRTS, MWTS, BPS, CPRS, and M3
- **Quarterly:** QFR and QSS

We request a duration of inclusion of these questions on current surveys, for up to nine months from the first collection. This will include nine cycles for the monthly collections, and three full cycles for the quarterly collections.

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) National Disaster Recovery Framework, it can take weeks to months to implement immediate recovery efforts, and months to years to implement long term recovery efforts. We believe that nine months is enough time to gauge immediate and intermediate recovery efforts without significant long-term burden to the companies being surveyed. Additionally, we anticipate collecting information on subsequent severe weather events throughout the duration of the period when weather events most impact our data. Our intent is to let data drive the length of time for the question(s) on the questionnaire. If or when a question is no longer needed, we would cease asking the question - unless or until another disaster event comes within the nine-month duration. Nine months is the maximum we would request information collection under this emergency collection. If the need arises to revise the

EEIC collection, or to extend the collection past this timeframe, a new request for EEIC will be submitted for review and approval to OMB.

At the end of the nine months, Census will submit an addendum to this collection to indicate which specific events were asked about, in which months/quarters, by survey, and will include which questions were asked/dropped by month. This addendum will also include final estimates of the number of respondents and burden estimates by survey.

The Census Bureau is therefore requesting OMB approval by 10 business days after OMB's receipt of this request.

2. Needs and uses

The purpose of the collections will be to gauge and monitor the economic impact of current severe weather events on U.S. businesses or organizations, and state or local governments. These currently declared disasters impact: the open/close status, as well as ability of workers to commute to and from establishments or construction sites in the direct area of the declared disaster; the health and well-being of impacted staff, possibly resulting in staff shortages immediately following the event; supply chains in surrounding areas; manufacturing and building capacity due to shutdowns; and similar other related impacts. The collection of this information will help us understand how each event is having an effect on the sectors impacted by the severe weather event, its subsequent impact on the economy as a whole, and the subsequent economic recovery.

We will be processing the data internally, and the information will be utilized to inform data analysis and ensure the accuracy of existing economic indicator publications in the context of a severe weather event. In the event that there is something extensive and relevant that we find in the source data and that we believe the public would find informative, we would then inform OMB of our intent to share that information with the public via a blog post or research paper.

3. Use of Information Technology

The data is intended to be collected solely utilizing electronic collection, through our Centurion instrument. All the surveys to which the EEIC questions will be appended currently utilize Centurion as the primary collection mode. We intend to present these questions as we would any new content appearing on the survey, as individual questions at the conclusion of the survey, with response options listed that allow primarily for radio button responses, or text box responses, where indicated.

4. Efforts to Identify Duplication

The Census Bureau is not aware of any other similar collection efforts by the U.S. Government at this time. We are currently working to ensure that in the event a company is a respondent to our Business Trends and Outlook Survey (BTOS), that we are not duplicating collection information from them for these added questions, which primarily impacts in-sample single-unit entities. Given that BTOS currently only collects information on single-unit entities, the overlap of companies on the surveys we are requesting to add these questions to, and BTOS, is small. The collection of this information is intended to supplement the BTOS data, to include additional

single-unit and multi-unit entities, for companies within the sector of the economy addressed on the surveys listed above. For overlapping companies, we will refrain from asking these questions on BTOS.

5. Impact on Small Businesses or Other Small Entities

We intend for businesses of all sizes, as sampled as part of the original sample selection for the survey, to be covered by the additional questions. Following a disaster or severe weather event, we anticipate those impacted by such events will respond appropriately to the additional questions. Please note the additional efforts to reduce duplication, for all entities, as outlined in Item 4 above.

6. Efforts to Consult outside the Agency

The surveys we are using to collect the requested additional data items are already well-established collection activities.

During our research phase for the implementation of the plan for the EEIC collections, we consulted with a number of agencies regarding the need for the questions, as previously developed and indicated in the question bank. We indicated that, at a time in which we believed a significant economic shock or weather event occurred, we would invoke relevant content for collection on the Economic Indicator Surveys.

At this time, we have not consulted any external agency or stakeholders in our development of this request, however, we will be informing our relevant stakeholders, including, but not limited to, the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), the Energy Information Agency (EIA), the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and the Federal Reserve.

7. Assurance of Confidentiality and Reporting Requirement

The Title 13 authority for the collections are listed below by survey.

- **MARTS, MRTS, MWTS, QSS, BPS (C-404), and CPRS:** The MARTS, MRTS, MWTS, QSS, BPS (C-404) and CPRS voluntary surveys are authorized under the authority of Title 13, United States Code, Sections 131 and 182.
- **M3:** The M3 survey is authorized by Title 13, United States Code, Sections 131, 182, and 193.
- **QFR:** The QFR survey is authorized by Title 13, United States Code, Section 91.

Collection will be mandatory or voluntary as indicated below by survey.

- **MARTS, MRTS, MWTS, QSS, M3, BPS (C-404), and CPRS:** Voluntary, as is true with the general survey collections.
- **QFR:** Mandatory, as is true with the general QFR collection.

The Census Bureau is required by Section 9 of Title 13 United States Code to keep respondents' information confidential and can use the information only to produce statistics. The Census Bureau is not permitted to publicly release a respondent's information in a way that could identify a business, organization, or institution. Per the Federal Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2015,

submitted data are protected from cybersecurity risks through screening of the systems that transmit data.

All of the information listed above regarding confidentiality and reporting requirements is provided on the applicable survey form as part of the electronic collection instrument for that survey; this information is considered a standard part of the collection of these routine recurring surveys.

8. Estimates of Annualized Burden Hours and Costs

We intend to present these questions as individual questions at the conclusion of the survey, with the response options listed in Table 1 above. Instrument response options are presented primarily with radio buttons, or text boxes, where indicated. We expect most text responses to be qualitative in nature, and therefore anticipate short responses requiring no research.

Given the similar nature of these questions to those asked on BTOS, which underwent cognitive testing resulting in a burden estimate of six-minutes per response for 26 questions, we utilized the average response time per question from BTOS to derive a 0.92 minute response time for four questions. Note that four questions is the maximum number of questions we are requesting to ask on any survey through this request.

Below is a table showing a calculation of the hour burden of the collection.

Table 3 – Burden Estimates by Survey					
Survey	Number of Respondents	Frequency of Response	Average time to answer ALL NEWLY ADDED questions	Total Burden Hours per reporting period	Total Burden Hours for the 9 months requested
MRS (MARTS and MRTS)	13,000	Monthly	1 min	217 hours	1,950 hours
MWTS	4,200	Monthly	1 min	70 hours	630 hours
QSS	22,500	Quarterly	1 min	375 hours	1,125 hours
QFR	8,787	Quarterly	1 min	146 hours	439 hours
M3	5,000	Monthly	1 min	83 hours	750 hours
CPRS	22,000	Monthly	1 min	367 hours	3,300 hours
BPS (C-404)	8,613	Monthly	1 min	144 hours	1,292 hours
TOTAL	84,100			1,402 hours	9,486 hours

The estimated cost for all respondents to respond is \$368,311.

This cost is calculated by multiplying the 8,194 burden hours for the nine-month collection reporting period for the non-BPS surveys, by the per hour mean wage estimate of \$40.37 for an accountant or auditor as found in the *Occupational Employment and Wages - Bureau of Labor Statistics May 2021 National Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates*. \$40.37 represents

the mean hourly wage of the full-time wage and salary earnings of accountants and auditors, SOC code 13-2011, which is found here: [Accountants and Auditors \(bls.gov\)](#). This gives a total estimated cost of \$330,806 for non-BPS surveys for the nine month collection.

We then calculate the cost for the monthly BPS (C-404) by multiplying the 1,292 burden hours for the nine-month collection reporting period, by the per hour mean wage estimate of \$29.03 for a Local Government (excluding schools and hospitals) employee as found in the *Occupational Employment and Wages - Bureau of Labor Statistics May 2021 National Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates*. \$29.03 is the mean hourly wage of a local government employee, under NAICS Code: 999300, which can be found here: https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/naics4_999300.htm#00-0000. This gives a total estimated cost of \$37,505 for the nine month collection of the monthly BPS (C-404).

9. Annualized Cost to the Federal Government

The incremental cost of adding these EEIC questions to our existing collection through this request is \$35,000.

10. Plans for Tabulation and Publication and Project Time Schedule

We will be processing the data internally, monthly or quarterly, as relevant, and the information will be utilized to inform the routine data analysis, within the normal processing schedules of each indicator.

This information will be used to support the accuracy of already published economic measures. This information is important for our collection, editing, outlier review, timeseries implementation, and interpretation of the data, and will be used to ensure complete and accurate Economic Indicator estimates. Additionally, using the information from this collection will reduce labor-intensive follow-up activities and ensure correct reporting, especially when reported data is irregular or unusual from previously reported information, as a result of a severe weather event.

We are working with other federal agencies, including FEMA, to understand how the data can best serve the American public. In the event that there is something extensive and relevant that we find in the source data and that we believe the public would find informative, we would then inform OMB of our intent to share that information with the public via a blog post, research paper, or experimental data product.

11. Statistical Aspects of the Collection

The Census Bureau intends to add EEIC approved questions to existing Census Bureau surveys. We will not be making any changes or supplements to the existing statistical methods utilized to conduct these routine surveys.

Please find below the most recently approved OMB Control Numbers, by survey.

Table 4 – OMB Control Number by Survey	
Survey	OMB Control Number

MRS (MARTS and MRTS)	0607-0717
MWTS	0607-0190
QSS	0607-0907
QFR	0607-0432
M3	0607-0008
BPS (C-404)	0607-0094
CPRS	0607-0153

12. Questionnaire Pre-Testing and Evaluation

All the questions to be included on Census Bureau surveys have been pulled from the EEIC Question Bank of pre-tested questions.

The Census Bureau will have the cognitive testing group and mathematical statisticians within the Economic Statistical Methods Division (ESMD) review the quality of the responses, and formulate a report evaluating the results of the collection, within the six months of the conclusion of the nine-month collection period.

13. Contacts

Please submit comments in writing to Stephanie Studds (stephanie.lee.studds@census.gov), Nick Orsini (nick.orsini@census.gov), and Thomas Smith (thomas.j.smith@census.gov).