

Supporting Statement
U.S. Department of Commerce
Bureau of Economic Analysis
Quarterly Survey of Financial Services Transactions between
U.S. Financial Services Providers and Foreign Persons (Form BE-185)
OMB Control Number: 0608-0065

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 for the universe as a whole and for each of the strata in the proposed sample. Indicate expected response rates for the collection as a whole. If the collection had been conducted previously, include the actual response rate achieved during the last collection.

The potential respondent universe for the BE-185 quarterly survey is all U.S. persons that engaged in covered financial services transactions with foreign persons. A U.S. person must report if it had combined sales to foreign persons of covered financial services that exceeded \$20 million for the previous fiscal year or if it expects to have such transactions in excess of that amount during the current fiscal year, or if had combined purchases from foreign persons of covered financial services that exceeded \$15 million for the previous fiscal year or if it expects to have such transactions in excess of that amount during the current fiscal year.

BE-185 Universe, Sample, and Response Rate

| | Number of U.S. persons engaging in covered transactions | Percent of U.S. persons engaging in covered transactions |
|--|---|--|
| Universe | 4,900 | 100% |
| Sample | 580 | 12% |
| Nonsample | 4,185 | 85% |
| Report exemption claim or voluntary data | 135 | 3% |
| Response rate | 95% | 94% |

BEA intends to mail a notification letter to approximately 715 U.S. companies each quarter informing the companies of the requirement to file the survey and providing links to eFile, BEA's electronic filing system. To ensure a high response rate to the survey, two rounds of delinquency notices will also be mailed, approximately a month apart, after the due date for the previous letter has passed, for companies who have failed to report. BEA staff will also call

required U.S. companies to remind them of the requirement to comply with the survey and offer filing assistance to those who may need it.

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.

The BE-185 survey will be administered to U.S. companies that have transactions in financial services with foreign persons, who meet the reporting thresholds for sales and purchases, as mentioned in B.1. above. BEA expects most of the potential respondents to file the survey on a timely basis. BEA will estimate data for respondents that do not report their data in a timely manner, including those U.S. persons that fall below the reporting threshold for the quarterly survey but reported on a previous benchmark survey. Estimates will be based on prior reports and growth in the value of transactions from a matched sample of respondents. BEA will allocate the estimated data by country and by type of transaction based on the distribution of reported transactions for inclusion in the published totals. Thus, estimates will cover the entire universe of transactions. No unusual problems have been identified that would require the use of specialized sampling procedures.

The list of respondents will be derived from public and private sources, including business directories and establishment lists.

3. Describe the methods used to maximize response rates and to deal with issues of non-response. 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 for any collection that will not yield "reliable" data that can be generalized to the universe studied.

Any company specifically contacted by BEA must respond by filing a completed form BE-185 or a valid exemption claim. Non-respondents will be contacted by BEA staff through delinquency notices and phone calls and, in the event of continued nonresponse, will be referred to the Office of General Counsel for further action. BEA expects that at the time of the final revised estimates, reports will be received from nearly all companies required to report. To facilitate response, a notice will be sent to each company on a quarterly basis notifying the company of the requirement to file the survey and providing links to eFile, BEA's electronic filing system, and an Excel version of the survey.

The data collected on the BE-185 survey are needed to measure U.S. trade in financial services and to analyze the impact of U.S. trade on the U.S. and foreign economies. The data are used to support U.S. trade policy initiatives, including trade negotiations, and to compile the U.S. international transactions and the national income and product accounts. The response rates described in B.1., together with the estimation procedures described in B.2., provide information of sufficient accuracy and reliability for the intended purpose.

4. Describe any tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken. Tests are encouraged as effective means of refining collections of information to minimize burden and improve utility. Tests must be approved if they call for answers to identical questions from 10 or more respondents. A proposed test or set of tests may be submitted for approval separately or in combination with the main collection of information.

No tests were conducted. Recent efforts to seek feedback from data users and survey respondents are described in A.8.

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 survey is designed and conducted within BEA by the Balance of Payments Division. For further information, contact Christopher Stein via email at *christopher.stein@bea.gov* or by phone at 301-278-9189. The survey proposal was reviewed and approved by BEA's Source Data Improvement and Evaluation Program (SDIEP). The SDIEP coordinator is Tiffany Burrell, *tiffany.burrell@bea.gov*, 301-278-9618.