

SUPPORTING STATEMENT PART B

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 government units, households, or persons) in the universe covered by the collection and in 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 universe consists of the approximately 14,500 manufacturing clients using the MEP centers each year. All clients will be surveyed. MEP has previously maintained a response rate for this collection between 70 and 75%; 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 of information including:

- **Statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection,**
- **Estimation procedure,**
- **Degree of accuracy needed for the purpose described in the justification,**
- **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. No sampling/statistical methods or estimation procedures will be used, with NIST MEP surveying any client served with a project. MEP is required to report metrics related to client counts, new sales, new investment and cost savings for its GPRA requirements.

3. Describe methods to maximize response rates and to deal with issues of non-response. The accuracy and reliability of information collected must be shown to be adequate for 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.

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. Testing is encouraged as an 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.

Not applicable.

5. Provide the name and telephone number of individuals consulted on 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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