

Supporting Statement Part B
“Generic Clearance for Generic Program Progress Performance Reports”
U.S. Department of Commerce - Office of the Secretary
OMB Control No. 0690-NEW

B. STATISTICAL METHODS

Data collection methods and procedures will vary; however, Information gathered is meant primarily for program improvement and accountability.

1. Describe the potential respondent universe and any sampling or other respondent selection method to be used.

The activities under this clearance may involve samples of self-selected customers, as well as convenience samples, and quota samples, with respondents selected either to cover a broad range of customers or to include specific characteristics related to certain products or services. Results will not be used to make statements representative of the universe of study, to produce statistical descriptions (careful, repeatable measurements), or to generalize the data beyond the scope of the sample. The specific sample planned for each individual collection and the method for soliciting participation will be described fully in each collection request.

Program offices gather uniform program performance data from each grantee, allowing aggregation at the program level to calculate outputs and outcomes providing a snapshot and allowing for longitudinal analysis, including comparative analyses across grantees and/or regions.

Qualitative data collections are used by program managers to change or improve programs, products, or services. The accuracy, reliability, and applicability of the results of these collections are adequate for their purpose. The samples associated with this collection are not subjected to the same scrutiny as scientifically drawn samples where estimates are published or otherwise released to the public.

2. Describe the procedures for the collecting of information.

Data collection methods and procedures will vary and the specifics of these will be provided with each collection request. The Agency expects to use a variety of methodologies for these collections. For example, the Agency or its contractors may use commercial progress reporting-specific software to automate its collection and analysis of feedback. In addition to physical copies, information collection instruments may be electronically disseminated and/or posted on target pages of the Agency's web site. Telephone scripts, personal interviews, and focus groups with professional guidance and moderation may also be used.

3. Describe methods to maximize response rates. 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.

Information collected under this generic clearance will not yield generalizable quantitative findings; it can provide useful customer input, but it does not yield data about customer opinions that can be generalized.

4. Describe any tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken.

Pretesting may be done with internal staff, a limited number of external colleagues, and/or customers who are familiar with the programs and products. If the number of pretest respondents exceeds nine members of the public, the Agency will submit the pretest instruments for review under this generic clearance.

5. Contacts for Statistical Aspects and Data Collection.

Each program will obtain information from statisticians in the development, design, conduct, and analysis of customer/partner data collections, when appropriate. This statistical expertise will be available from

agency statisticians or from contractors and the Agency will include the names and contact information of persons consulted in the specific information collection requests submitted under this generic clearance.