

**U.S. Department of Commerce
U.S. Census Bureau
OMB Information Collection Request
Survey of Construction Questionnaire for the Building Permit Official (SOC-QBPO)
OMB Control No. 0607-0125**

B. Collection of Information Employing Statistical Methods

1. Universe and Respondent Selection

We obtain information from a sample of 1,000, or 5.0 percent, of the approximately 20,000 permit-issuing places. The Census Bureau field representatives (FR) visit permit offices to obtain the information. The response rate is 100 percent.

2. Procedures for Collecting Information

The Census Bureau last updated the sample design for SOC in January 2005. The design of the SOC sample is a stratified multi-staged cluster design. It is a sub-sample of the Current Population Survey (CPS) areas. The CPS strata are defined as counties and independent cities within each state that were grouped based on metropolitan status, labor force characteristics such as number of male and female unemployed, race-ethnic origins, population change, and family and housing characteristics. There are 820 of these strata. One area from each of these strata was selected with probability proportional to the number of persons 16 and older.

These 820 areas were further grouped into 169 strata, according to census division, metropolitan status, weighted building permit activity between 1999 and 2002, and 16+ populations (persons 16 and older). One area was selected (for SOC) from each of these 169 strata with probability proportional to the weighted measure of building permit activity and using a maximum overlap algorithm to maximize overlap with the old SOC sample areas.

Each of the permit-issuing places in the 169 selected areas was assigned to one of six classes based on activity. A systematic sample of these places was selected from each area. Places were selected at different sampling rates in each of the size classes so that larger proportions of the places were selected from the more active size classes. For example, all places in the most active size classes fell into the sample whereas only an expected one in 50 of the places in the least active size class fell into sample. Approximately 959 permit-issuing places were selected. Since the 2005 sample redesign, some permit-issuing places in the original sample have discontinued issuing permits, merged with other places, or

split into multiple places. As a result of these changes, we currently visit approximately 1,000 places each month.

3. **Methods to Maximize Response**

To maximize response rates, the FRs will explain what information is needed and how it will be used before conducting the interview.

4. **Tests of Procedures or Methods**

Field representatives provided informal feedback through correspondence at the time of the monthly data collection and at refresher training sessions regarding question clarification and survey questionnaire alignment. The most recent refresher training session was held in the fall of 2024.

5. **Contacts for Statistical Aspects and Data Collection**

The contact person for questions relating to the statistical aspects of the survey is Ms. Bonnie Kegan, Chief, Construction Surveys Statistical Methods Branch. She can be reached on (301) 763-7639.

The contact person for questions relating to the collection and analysis of the data is Mr. William M. Abriatis, Chief of the Residential Construction Branch. He can be reached on (301) 763-3686.

Attachments

- A. SOC-QBPO (a PDF copy of the questions asked in electronic questionnaire)
- B. SOC-QBPO(L) (letter to respondents)
- C. BEA Support Letter
- D. Coalition on Human Needs (CHN) comment on SOC QBPO Federal Register Notice
- E. Census Quality Reinforcement Task Force (CQR) comment on SOC QBPO Federal Register Notice