

Supporting Statement – Part B
U.S. Department of Commerce
U.S. Census Bureau
Survey of Construction Questionnaire for the Building Permit Official (SOC-QBPO)
OMB Control No. 0607-0125

B. Collection of Information Employing Statistical Methods

1. Description of Universe and Respondent Selection

There are about 20,000 permit offices. We obtain information from a sample of 900 officials, or about 4.5 percent. The response rate is 100 percent.

2. Statistical Methodology - Estimation Procedures

The Census Bureau updated the sample design for SOC in January 2005. The design of the SOC sample is a stratified multistaged 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, 2000 labor forces, 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+ population. 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 900 permit-issuing places were selected.

3. Efforts to Maximize Responses

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 Methods

We conducted extensive testing of the electronic questionnaire including internal testing and a dress rehearsal with field representatives.

5. Contacts

The contact person for questions relating to the statistical aspects of the survey is Mr. Paul L. Hsen, Assistant Chief for Research and Methodology. He can be reached on (301) 763-4586.

The contact person for questions relating to the collection and analysis of the data is Mr. G. Daniel Sansbury, Assistant Chief for Economic Indicator Programs. He can be reached on (301) 763-7642.

Attachments

- A. SOC-QBPO (facsimile of questions asked in electronic questionnaire)
- B. SOC-QBPO(L) (letter to respondents)
- C. Comments from respondents