

Paperwork Reduction Act Submission

Supporting Statement—A

Agency: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)
Title: National Youth Gang Survey (NYGS)
Form: N/A
OMB No.: 1121-0224

A. JUSTIFICATION

1. Circumstances of Information Collection

The proliferation of gang problems over the last two decades led to the development of a comprehensive, coordinated response to America's gang problem by OJJDP, U.S. Department of Justice. The OJJDP response involves several major components, one of which is the National Gang Center, operated by the Institute for Intergovernmental Research (IIR). The mission of the center is to expand and maintain the body of critical knowledge about youth gangs and effective responses to them. A primary task assigned to NGC by OJJDP is to conduct an annual National Youth Gang Survey. This request for OMB approval is for extension of a currently approved collection (National Youth Gang Survey—OMB No. 1121-0224) (Attachment 1), for which approval expires on November 30, 2012.

Under the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 (JJDP Act) (Attachment 2), as amended, the administrator of OJJDP is authorized to:

(14) [R]outinely collect, analyze, compile, publish, and disseminate uniform national statistics concerning —

- (A) all aspects of juveniles as victims and offenders;*
- (B) the processing and treatment, in the juvenile justice system, of juveniles who are status offenders, delinquent, neglected, or abused; and*
- (C) the processing and treatment of such juveniles who are treated as adults for purposes of the criminal justice system.*

—Section 243(A)(14) of the JJDP Act

Applicable portions of the IIR Grant are attached (Attachment 3).

2. Purpose and Use of Information

Prior to 1996, surveys pertaining to youth gangs in the United States were conducted infrequently, and methodology and samples had been inconsistent. No single source of data pertaining to the nature, size, and scope of youth gangs existed. Since 1996, the National Gang Center (the name was changed from NYGC in October 2009) has standardized definitions and established a recurring system of data collection that provides this information.

The NYGS has collected data on youth gang activities each year since 1996. The principal sources are local law enforcement agencies. Once analyzed and published, the data is used by local, state, and federal policymakers to determine trends that affect allocation of resources and development of programs aimed at gangs. Data from the survey is also used by court systems and school planning personnel for developing strategies and making budget decisions. Researchers use the information to expand their knowledge of gang behavior and to assist in developing practical approaches to counter the problem.

3. Use of Information Technology

Every effort has been made to minimize the burden of responding to the survey. Survey forms are brief and use simple check-off responses. Completed forms are returned via a toll-free facsimile (fax) or an Internet form, or by mail. More than half of the surveys are returned via Internet and automatically entered into a database. Responses received by mail or electronically and responses elicited by follow-up telephone calls are entered into a relational database. After primary analysis by NGC, the data is made available to researchers for secondary analysis.

4. Efforts to Identify Duplication

There is no single source of this or similar information already available. The NYGS collects data from a sample of the universe of law enforcement agencies in the United States from which data can be extrapolated to determine the scope of youth gangs nationally. Using the same sample, the data is updated annually to produce consistent analyses and trends.

To reduce overlap with other governmental data collection efforts, OJJDP consulted with the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) in the original design and methodology of the NYGS. That consultation contributed to the formatting of core questions that are asked each year (particularly on gang presence, number of gangs and gang members, and the number of homicides).

NGC has been conducting the NYGS since 1996 and maintains a database containing the contact information from law enforcement representatives that have furnished information on gang activity in previous years. Over

time, the most appropriate respondents have been identified to provide gang-specific information. These respondents are often members of specialized units that work specifically with gang suppression. The level of detail about gang-specific information provided by these respondents could not be easily provided at a macro- or departmental- level by agency representatives for generalized data collection efforts.

Requiring agencies to provide gang-specific information using the appropriate respondents for more generalized law enforcement surveys would (1) significantly increase the hour burden placed on them as they would have to conduct additional research to answer gang specific questions, (2) likely increase nonresponse and/or missing data, and (3) compromise the high degree of validity and reliability that has been observed in the NYGS data.

5. **Involvement of Small Entities**

The survey will collect information from 652 government law enforcement jurisdictions with populations of less than 10,000. Since the overall burden for this information collection is small and there will be no significant economic impact, no special provisions have been made to minimize the burden for these jurisdictions.

6. **Consequences of Less Frequent Collection**

Numbers of gangs, gang members, and their activities change constantly. Conducting the survey on an annual basis provides information needed by OJJDP and other U.S. Department of Justice agencies to keep abreast of trends in youth gang growth and distribution. This information needs to be as current as possible to recognize emerging problems and develop appropriate responses. Conducting the survey on a less frequent schedule than proposed will result in dated information.

7. **Consistency With the Guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.5(d)(2)**

This information collection fully complies with 5 CFR 1320.5(d)(2).

- Respondents will not be required to report information to the agency more frequently than annually;
- Respondents will have at least 30 days to respond;
- Respondents will be requested to submit only one copy of the survey;
- Respondents are not required to maintain information solely for the purpose of the survey;
- Responses are voluntary. Agencies are apprised that their participation is requested and that their agency's "annual contribution to the National Youth Gang Survey continues to be important in identifying emerging gang trends across the nation."
- The survey is designed to produce valid and reliable results that can be generalized to the universe of study;

- The survey uses approved statistical data classification;
- The survey does not include a pledge of confidentiality;
- Agency-specific information (ID and password) is included on each survey and is provided as a secure location for respondents preferring to submit data online; and
- Respondents are not required to release proprietary, trade secret, or other confidential information.

8a. Federal Register

The data collection will be submitted to the *Federal Register* by the U.S. Department of Justice in accordance with 5 Code of Federal Regulation 1320.8(d) (Attachment 4).

b. Consultation

The high quality of the NYGS is in large part to the fact that its design and methodology was based on experiences and results from two prior multi-city gang surveys of law enforcement agencies (Curry et al., 1996; Miller, 2001). Those pioneering gang survey researchers were involved in the development and fielding of the initial NYGS that was pilot tested in 1995.

Currently, the following persons provide advice and guidance and design the questionnaires for the National Youth Gang Survey:

- Arlen Egley, Jr., Ph.D., National Gang Center
- G. David Curry, Ph.D., University of Missouri at St. Louis
- Cheryl L. Maxson, Ph.D., University of California at Irvine
- James C. Howell, Ph.D., National Gang Center
- Malcolm W. Klein, Ph.D., University of Southern California
- Dennis Mondoro, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
- Terrance J. Taylor, Ph.D., University of Missouri at St. Louis
- Charles M. Katz, Ph.D., Arizona State University

Each of the Survey Advisory Group members has extensive knowledge with gang and police surveys and research, making the NYGS an unparalleled resource nationally.

- c.** The contents of the survey have been discussed with appropriate officials within the U.S. Department of Justice, and the collection instrument has been reviewed internally.

9. Payment to Respondents

Respondents do not receive compensation, monetary or otherwise, for participation in the survey.

10. Assurance of Confidentiality

The data collected and published is obtained from specific responsible individuals within law enforcement agencies. No assurances are given respondents that the data or their names will be confidential, but as a matter of NGC policy, the names of the respondents are not published.

11. Questions of a Sensitive Nature

The information requested on the survey is not of a sensitive nature as described.

12. Estimates of Annualized Hour Burden

- a. A sample of 2,544 agencies will receive a questionnaire, which will take 10 minutes to complete. (This time was estimated by having five test respondents complete the survey.) Thus, the total estimated burden is 424 hours. The estimated burden is one hour less than previously approved because five participating agencies dissolved. Survey item 1 is a filter question—whether there was gang activity during that year. Approximately one-third of the sample report gang activity annually, the remaining two-thirds do not; the former takes around 15–20 minutes to complete, the latter less than 5 minutes. The average calculated survey time per agency is then approximately 10 minutes:

$$((2,500 \times .333 \times 20) + (2,500 \times .667 \times 5))/2,500 \cong 10 \text{ minutes}$$

$$10 \text{ minutes} \times 2,544 \text{ agencies} / 60 \text{ minutes} = 424 \text{ hours}$$

Overall estimated completion time of the survey is also based on NGC experience of administering the survey since 1996. Further precision is made possible through recurring items (in which the response time is more readily known based upon previous years' collection) and during the follow-up phone call phase where survey completion times via phone directly reflect the time needed.

- b. Annual cost to respondents is based on the amount of time involved in filling out the survey. No new data collection is required. Many agencies maintain individual databases or other records containing the information being requested. Those that do not are asked to provide **informed** estimates. Based on an average salary of \$20 per hour, we estimate the annual cost to each respondent to be \$4.

13. Estimate of Annual Cost Burden to Respondents

Other than the cost of completing the form as described in **12.a.** & **12.b.** above, there is no cost burden to respondents.

14. Estimate of Annualized Cost to the Federal Government

	Federal Employees	Contractual
Salary	*	90,100
Benefits	*	40,000
Forms	*	2,900
Postage	*	4,000
Computer Usage	*	1,000
Telephone	*	2,000
Total	*	140,000

*Data collection performed entirely by contractors.

15. Changes in Burden

Changes to the estimate of annualized cost to the federal government in include a \$300 increase in the “Forms” line item because of rising printing costs and a \$500 increase in the “Postage” line item because of postage rate increases.

16. Time Schedule, Publication, and Analysis Plans

The methodology for conducting the survey will be continued as described below. Data entry and tabulation will occur at the same time as the conduct of telephone follow-ups. Analysis is conducted by NGC staff and consultants. NGC will prepare a draft report for OJJDP, and it is expected that publication and distribution of the report will follow annually.

Proposed schedule for 2012–2013 will be followed in successive years.

July 2012 Submissions of agency notification for *Federal Register* and OMB Form 83-I (Attachment 7).

December 2012 Development of survey questions.
Testing and refinement of survey instrument.

January 2013 Preparation of correspondence.
Printing of forms.

February 2013 Mailing of survey.
Data entry and follow-up procedures to improve response rate.

July 2013 Data analysis.

September 2013 Draft report on survey findings.
OJJDP review.

December 2013 Publication and distribution of findings.

The proposed schedule above has been used in previous years. This schedule has allowed sufficient time for preparation of the survey instrument and mailing, data collection, and analysis.

OJJDP annually provides national estimates for specific survey questions such as the presence or absence of gang activity, the number of gangs and gang members, and the assessment of the gang problem from the previous year. Published Fact Sheets from the National Youth Gang Survey under the methodology section advise readers of the survey sample of the four area types used in data collection and analysis. Please see the most recent Fact Sheet titled *Highlights of the 2010 National Youth Gang Survey* (Attachment 5).

Descriptive analysis is conducted; specifically, percentages, frequencies, and cross-tabulations. Please see Section B2 to view examples of the type of analysis that is conducted. Additional analysis is available on our Web site at <http://www.nationalgangcenter.gov/Survey-Analysis> and is a Web resource for individuals.

17. Display of Expiration Date

The expiration date will be displayed along with the OMB approval number (Attachment 1).

18. Exceptions to Certification Statement

No exceptions to the certification statement are requested or required.