

Code. After the Census Bureau performs data keying and consistency editing, the data set will be provided to sworn Census agents representing the survey sponsors.

High participation rates for both the telephone survey of employers and the employee survey are crucial for statistically reliable data in the NES 2000. We have limited participation to 500 employers in order to keep the respondent burden and the costs of the survey, as low as possible. However, we expect that the responses from the employees of the 500 participating companies will be sufficient to provide useful and representative information. The Census Bureau has discussed survey participation with selected respondents from the NES-3. Nearly all of the business establishments we contacted stated that they would strongly consider participating in the survey. The businesses indicated that their decision to participate in a survey was primarily based on their perception of the usefulness of the requested information. The businesses are very interested in the issues of the survey. One business respondent said, "After all, these are our concerns, too." Also, more 1997 respondents (employers) than in the previous two NES surveys told the interviewers that they wanted the results of the survey. Based on these factors (and especially the employer concerns about these workplace issues), we expect a sufficiently high rate of the employers from the NES-3 to participate in the NES 2000.

We plan to rely on the employers to select the sample of their employees and distribute the questionnaires to them. We will be talking to a few more respondents to help design an effective and comfortable operational design for selecting employees and distributing the materials. The Census Bureau is confident in the ability of the volunteering businesses to draw a reliable, random sample of employees, based on payroll records containing the Social Security number (which we may instruct them to use as the selection criterion).

The survey sponsors considered two designs for this survey. One was to measure only newly hired employees and address a set of issues that relate to that segment of the work force. Another was to survey employees across the board. When we asked about limiting the selection to "new hires," several of the businesses thought that would pose a problem and recommended that we survey all their employees. We will work with a few of the potential respondents to determine how to impart

our statistical requirements in written instructions.

Another concern we discussed was anonymity. Those businesses we consulted feel that employees are more likely to return the questionnaires with accurate responses if we can assure them that the employer would not see any of the responses and would not know if the employee had responded or not. Employees are very sensitive to access of their personal information, and we feel that good response will require that we provide assurance of confidentiality.

Anonymity, sampling of employees, and operational considerations will be considered during the 60-day comment period and we would particularly welcome any ideas or concerns on these issues.

### III. Data

*OMB Number:* Not available.

*Form Number:* NES 2000.

*Type of Review:* Regular.

*Affected Public:* Employers in business establishments with 20 or more employees and employees of these establishments.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 3,000 employers and 15,000 employees.

*Estimated Time Per Response:* Employers 30 minutes, Employees 20 minutes.

*Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours:* 6,500 hours.

*Estimated Total Annual Cost:* There is no cost to the respondent other than the time required to complete the telephone interview. Employers that volunteer for the employee survey will incur a small cost in selecting the sample of employees and distributing the questionnaires to these employees.

*Respondent's Obligation:* Voluntary.

*Legal Authority:* Title 13 United States Code, Sections 8 and 9.

### IV. Request for Comments

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden (including hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or

included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection; they also will become a matter of public record.

Dated: February 8, 2000.

**Linda Engelmeier,**

*Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Office of the Chief Information Officer.*

[FR Doc. 00-3561 Filed 2-14-00; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### Census Bureau

#### Survey of Housing Starts, Sales, and Completions

**ACTION:** Proposed collection; comment request.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Commerce, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13 (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)).

**DATE:** Written comments must be submitted on or before April 17, 2000.

**ADDRESSES:** Direct all written comments to Linda Engelmeier, Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 5033, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20230 (or via the Internet at LEngelme@doc.gov).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument(s) and instructions should be directed to G. Daniel Sansbury, Census Bureau, Room 2105, FOB 4, Washington, DC 20233-6900, (301) 457-1321.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### I. Abstract

The Census Bureau conducts the Survey of Housing Starts, Sales, and Completions, also known as the Survey of Construction (SOC), to collect monthly data on new residential construction from a sample of owners or builders. The Census Bureau uses the Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) electronic questionnaires SOC-QI/SF.1 and SOC-QI/MF.1 to collect data on starts and completions dates of construction, physical characteristics of the structure (floor area, number of bathrooms, type of heating system, etc.), and if

applicable, date of sale, sales price, and type of financing. The SOC program provides widely used measures of construction activity, including the economic indicators Housing Starts, Housing Completions, and New Home Sales. We plan to request a three year extension of the expiration date with no changes to forms SOC-QI/SF.1 and SOC-QI/MF.1.

## II. Method of Collection

The Census Bureau uses its field representatives to collect the data. The field representatives conduct interviews to obtain data.

## III. Data

*OMB Number:* 0607-0110.

*Form Number:* SOC-QI/SF.1 and SOC-QI/MF.1.

*Type of Review:* Regular Review.

*Affected Public:* Individuals or households, business or other for-profit institutions.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 8,667.

*Estimated Time Per Response:* 1.08.

*Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours:* 9,395.

*Estimated Total Annual Cost:* The estimated cost to the respondent is \$222,560 based on the average hourly pay for respondent to be \$23.69.\*

*Respondent's Obligation:* Voluntary.

*Legal Authority:* Title 13, United States Code, Section 182.

## IV. Request for Comments

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden (including hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection; they also will become a matter of public record.

Dated: February 8, 2000.

**Linda Engelmeier,**

*Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Office of the Chief Information Officer.*

[FR Doc. 00-3562 Filed 2-14-00; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### Economics and Statistics Administration

#### Customer Satisfaction Survey

**ACTION:** Proposed collection; comments request.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Commerce, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on a proposed information collection, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13, 4 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A).

**DATES:** Written comments must be submitted on or before April 17, 2000.

**ADDRESSES:** Direct all written comments to Linda Engelmeier, Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Office of the Chief Information Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 5027, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20230. (or via e-mail at LEngelme@doc.gov).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument(s) and instructions should be directed to Bob Wendling, STAT-USA, Department of Commerce, 14th & Constitution Avenue, NW, Room 4886, Washington, DC 20230.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### I. Abstract

This information collection is necessary to help STAT-USA fulfill its mission of disseminating economic and statistical information to the business community and individual users. STAT-USA plans to survey its current customer base annually with a 25-question Customer Satisfaction Survey. STAT-USA plans to use a number of survey formats including mail, fax, on-line, and paper in order to ensure a high response rate. STAT-USA believes that regular communication with its customers, specifically feedback from the survey, will enable it to deliver its goods and services in the most user-friendly, economical and efficient manner. Only by knowing its customer base and its needs can STAT-USA continue to deliver the highest quality

of collected economic and statistical information.

## II. Method of Collection

Primarily through the mail. Other vehicles may include fax and on-line through the Internet. Respondents would mail or fax surveys back to STAT-USA. An on-line survey could be in place on the World Wide Web allowing respondents to complete the survey and "submit" it to the STAT-USA server.

## III. Data

*OMB Number:* None.

*Form Number:* None.

*Type of Review:* Initial collection.

*Affected Public:* Businesses and individual data users.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 4,000.

*Estimated Time Per Response:* 12 minutes.

*Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours:* 800.

*Estimated Total Annual Cost:* \$10,000.

## IV. Request for Comments

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden including hours and cost of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology. The Department particularly welcomes comments on the burden estimates to comply with the requirements, as well as the costs associated with it. Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection; they will also become a matter of public record.

Dated: February 8, 2000.

**Linda Engelmeier,**

*Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Office of the Chief Information Officer.*

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\* Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics Survey for 1997.