



ADMINISTRATOR  
OFFICE OF  
INFORMATION AND  
REGULATORY AFFAIRS

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

April 20, 2010

MEMORANDUM FOR CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICERS

FROM:

Cass R. Sunstein  
Administrator

SUBJECT:

Data Call for the 2010 Information Collection Budget

This memorandum provides instructions to the Chief Information Officers (CIOs) on the preparation and submission, to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA), of information that will be included in the 2010 Information Collection Budget (ICB) of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

This annual report describes (1) the information collection burden imposed by the Federal government on the public and (2) the progress of the agencies toward achieving the burden reduction goals set forth in the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA). We ask agencies to develop one or more new initiatives, using modern technologies, to reduce burdens on the American public; details are provided below.

1. **When are responses to this memorandum due?** Submissions are due to OIRA no later than **Friday, May 7, 2010**.
2. **Who must respond to this memorandum?** The Chief Information Officers from the following agencies must comply with the requirements of this memorandum:

Department of Agriculture  
Department of Commerce  
Department of Defense  
Department of Education  
Department of Energy  
Department of Health and Human Services  
Department of Homeland Security  
Department of Housing and Urban Development  
Department of the Interior  
Department of Justice  
Department of Labor  
Department of State  
Department of Transportation  
Department of the Treasury

Department of Veterans Affairs  
Environmental Protection Agency  
Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR Secretariat)  
Federal Communications Commission  
Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation  
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission  
Federal Trade Commission  
National Aeronautics and Space Administration  
National Science Foundation  
Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Securities and Exchange Commission  
Small Business Administration  
Social Security Administration

If your agency is not listed here, you do not need to comply with this memorandum. However, agencies that sponsor information collections under the auspices of the E-Gov series (i.e., collections beginning with the OMB prefix “4040”) must also comply with this memorandum.

3. **What changes has OMB made to this data call?** In this year’s data call, we are asking agencies to provide OMB with one or more new initiatives that focus on the burden reduction areas listed in the Appendix.
4. **How does the ICB fit into OMB’s initiatives under the E-Government Act?** The E-Government Act has implications for information collections covered by the PRA. While information is collected on this statute through other reporting mechanisms (i.e., the annual E-Gov Act Report), agencies should be aware of the E-Gov Act when preparing their ICB submission and work to coordinate agency efforts under the PRA and the E-Gov Act.
5. **What must my agency’s submission include?** The CIO’s office is required to submit a detailed description of one or more new agency initiatives to improve information collection, focusing on targeted burden reduction areas, in accordance with the instructions in the Appendix. All submissions should be consistent with OMB fiscal and policy guidance.
6. **In what format should the CIO provide this information to OMB?** The information required under this memorandum should be sent electronically to Shagufta Ahmed (shagufta\_ahmed@omb.eop.gov).
7. **Will OMB conduct hearings on my agency’s submission?** OMB will schedule, as needed, hearings with an agency on its progress toward burden reductions goals and agency compliance with the PRA.

8. **Who should I contact for further information about specific issues relating to my agency?** Questions about specific agency matters should be directed to your agency's desk officer within OMB's Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs.
9. **Who should I contact for further information about this memorandum?** Questions about this memorandum should be directed to Shagufta Ahmed (Phone: 202-395-7873. Email: shagufta\_ahmed@omb.eop.gov).

Attachment

## **BURDEN REDUCTION INITIATIVE**

### **1. What is the purpose of this Appendix?**

Although Federal agencies seek to reduce paperwork burdens, evidence shows significant recent increases in the number of hours that the public spends responding to information collections. In FY 2000, the public spent an estimated 7.36 billion hours responding to Federal information collections; in FY 2008, that number grew to an estimated 9.71 billion, an increase of more than 30 percent.

To address this increase in burden, OMB asks agencies to provide new burden reduction initiatives that focus on one or more of the areas listed below. Of course agencies are not limited to these burden reduction areas, but we ask that they consider these areas in particular. Agencies are encouraged to consult with OIRA desk officers as needed regarding their burden reduction plans.

- **Electronic communication: “fillable fileable” forms (or data systems):** Electronic communication can substantially reduce burden on respondents and simultaneously increase efficiency in data collection. In particular, OMB seeks initiatives that implement “fillable fileable” approaches where feasible, appropriate, and consistent with law. Reducing or even eliminating the use of paper, such initiatives allow entirely electronic communication between agencies and the private sector. They may include the pre-population of particularly high-burden forms. OMB encourages agencies to use “fillable fileable” forms, in place of paper-based forms, and to modify existing electronic forms that are not in “fillable fileable” format.
- **E-Signature:** E-signatures can reduce burden and costs for respondents (and have been successfully implemented by Treasury as a part of its larger E-Filing initiative for tax forms by 2010). In line with the principles of the Government Paperwork Elimination Act, OMB seeks initiatives that adopt electronic signatures where appropriate. For more information please see: [Memorandum M-00-10, “OMB Procedures and Guidance on Implementing the Government Paperwork Elimination Act.”](#)
- **Frequency of information collection:** In some instances, monthly or daily information collections can be far more burdensome to the public than collections on a quarterly, bi-annual, or annual basis. OMB seeks initiatives that reexamine the frequency of routine reporting requirements to determine whether less frequent reporting would meet program needs.
- **Administrative simplification:** OMB encourages agencies to improve administrative efficiency for their stakeholders, e.g., health care providers or financial service providers. We recommend consideration of initiatives that standardize inconsistent processes and requirements, eliminate duplicative reporting requirements, eliminate unnecessary

complexity, and improve coordination among multiple offices that gather information from a common group of stakeholders.

- **Small business burden:** OMB is aware that information collections may impose significant burdens on small businesses. Because of economies of scale, a collection may be more burdensome for a small entity than for a large one. We encourage agencies to identify ways to achieve significant reductions in burden upon small entities. (Initiatives of this kind may involve simplification; see above.) To achieve this goal, it may be useful for agencies to work with their Small Business Paperwork Relief liaison. See list of agency contacts at: <http://www.business.gov/business-law/contacts/federal/>

All initiative submissions should include a listing of the overall burden reduction associated with each initiative, the OMB numbers of affected collections, and an estimate of the amount of the total burden reduction associated with each collection. Your submission will not be considered complete without this information.

## **2. What is an appropriate initiative in response to this bulletin?**

We ask you to identify one or more initiatives, in the areas sketched above, to improve program performance by enhancing the efficiency of information collections and by significantly reducing paperwork burden on the public. We seek initiatives that:

- a. Improve program performance by enhancing the efficiency of agency information collections (both within the agency and, in the case of related information collection activities, among agency components or across agencies);
- b. Significantly reduce the burden per response or overall on the public; or
- c. Lead to a comprehensive review of an entire program (both within the agency and, in the case of related information collection activities, among agency components or across agencies), including regulations and procedures.

**Please note:** Initiatives **MUST NOT** consist of methodological changes in the manner by which agencies estimate burden.

## **3. What information about these initiatives must we submit?**

We ask that your submission include:

- a. A concise description of the program or programs that are affected, including statutory and regulatory citations, a description of the affected public, and a description of the agency structure that implements the program (both within the agency and, in the case of related information collection activities, among agency components or across agencies).
- b. Measurable objectives you expect to achieve through this initiative, which must include estimates of expected burden reduction linked to specific collections that will

be affected (the total estimated burden reduction for each initiative must be broken out by information collection, with OMB control numbers noted).

- c. Proposed timeline for actions that you will take.
- d. Perceived difficulties in accomplishing this initiative, including statutory or policy barriers.