

Floor Discussion

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Andrew Bullivant from Statistics New Zealand (SNZ) presented the first paper which discussed the use of administrative data in the Census of Manufacturing by SNZ. In an effort to reduce respondent burden, SNZ has reached an agreement with New Zealand's tax agency which allows SNZ to use administrative data for a portion of their survey universe and thereby reduce the burden on respondents.

Jean Ritzen from Statistics Netherlands presented the second paper which discussed the current situation in the Netherlands to reduce respondent burden. The Dutch government has legally required Statistics Netherlands to reduce respondent burden by 12% before the end of 1998. Mr. Ritzen discussed what is being done to measure respondent burden and how it is being reduced.

Charles A. Woods of the Census Bureau presented the final paper which outlined the new Automated Export System (AES) which is being used to reduce respondent burden for exporters, their forwarding agents, and carriers. The system creates a centralized exports data bank which will be used by any agency that requires export data.

After the final presentation the floor was opened for questions.

Questions for Mr. Green:

How did SNZ get the tax agency to agree to collect data for SNZ? Mr. Green responded that the data items were already being collected by the tax agency for their own purposes, and that it was just coincidental that it was the same data that SNZ needed.

Does the SNZ Census of Manufacturing collect any commodity data? To which Mr. Green responded that no commodity data was collected on this survey. They have another method for collecting and providing commodity statistics.

Questions for Mr. Ritzen:

When measuring respondent burden, do you include the burden of responding to your survey on respondent burden and the burden of customer satisfaction surveys? Mr. Ritzen responded that yes these were included and that they realized that they were adding slightly to respondent burden in attempting to gain an accurate measure of it.

Questions for Mr. Woods:

What type of safety precautions are being taken to ensure that when respondents send in their data electronically that no one else has access to that data. Mr. woods stated that there are a couple of steps being taken. The first is that participants must register and be certified ahead of time in order to participate. The second is that participants are given encrypted passwords which allow them to enter the system.

Your presentation indicated that you currently only have one exporter, six forwarders, and one carrier involved. Can these establishments only do business with each other, or are they free to conduct business with anyone. Mr. Woods answer was that establishments are free to do business with anyone whether they are currently using the AES system or not.