



3510-07-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Bureau of the Census

Docket Number 151216999-5999-01

Annual Wholesale Trade Survey

AGENCY: Bureau of the Census, Department of Commerce

ACTION: Notice of Determination

SUMMARY: The United States Department of Commerce's Bureau of the Census (Census Bureau) publishes this notice to announce that the Director of the Census Bureau has determined the need to conduct the 2015 Annual Wholesale Trade Survey (AWTS). The AWTS covers employer firms with establishments located in the United States and classified in the Wholesale Trade sector as defined by the 2007 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Through this survey, the Census Bureau will collect data covering annual sales, e-commerce sales, purchases, total operating expenses, year-end inventories held both inside and outside the United States, commissions, total operating revenue, and gross selling value, for three components of wholesale activity: wholesale distributors; manufacturers' sales branches and offices; and agents, brokers, and electronic markets. These data are collected to provide a sound statistical basis for the formation of policy by various government agencies. Results will be available for use for a variety of public and business needs such as economic and market analysis, company performance, and forecasting future demand. The Census Bureau conducts the AWTS to provide continuing and timely national statistical data on wholesale trade annually.

ADDRESSES: The Census Bureau will provide electronic worksheets to businesses included in the survey. Additional copies are available upon written request to the Director, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC 20233-0101.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Susan Pozzanghera, Economy Wide Statistics Division, at (301) 763-7169 or by e-mail at <susan.k.pozzanghera@census.gov>.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Sections 131 and 182 of Title 13 of the United States Code (U.S.C.) authorize the Census Bureau to take surveys that are necessary to produce current data on the subjects covered by the Economic Census. Sections 224 and 225 of Title 13 make response to the AWTS mandatory. As part of this authorization, the Census Bureau conducts the AWTS to provide continuing and timely national statistical data on wholesale trade activity every year for the period between economic censuses. The AWTS covers employer firms with establishments located in the United States and classified in the Wholesale Trade sector as defined by the 2007 NAICS. The 2015 AWTS will collect data for three components of wholesale activity: wholesale distributors; manufacturers' sales branches and offices; and agents, brokers, and electronic markets. For wholesale distributors, the Census Bureau will collect data covering sales, e-commerce sales, year-end inventories held inside and outside the United States, purchases, and total operating expenses. For manufacturers' sales branches and offices, the Census Bureau will collect data covering annual sales, e-commerce sales, year-end inventories held inside and outside the United States and total operating expenses. For agents, brokers, and electronic markets, the Census Bureau will collect data covering commissions, total operating

revenue, gross selling value, and total operating expenses. The Census Bureau has determined that this survey is necessary, as these data are not available publicly on a timely basis from non-governmental or other government sources. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 29 minutes per response.

Firms were selected for the AWTS survey using a stratified random sample based on industry groupings and annual sales size. In an effort to streamline operations and conserve taxpayer time and money, the 2015 AWTS will be a paperless-based collection. We will provide electronic reporting instructions to the firms covered by this survey in March 2016 and will require their response by April 27, 2016. We will continue to provide guidance and instructions on reporting without forms using the secure Centurion system and secure e-mail. Firms' responses to the AWTS are required by law (13 U.S.C. Sections 224 and 225), and the responses are confidential (13 U.S.C. Section 9). The sample of firms selected will provide, with measurable reliability, statistics on annual sales, e-commerce sales, purchases, total operating expenses, year-end inventories held both inside and outside the United States, commissions, total operating revenue, and gross selling value, for 2015.

The data collected in this survey will be similar to that collected in the past and within the general scope and nature of those inquiries covered in the quinquennial economic census, which was most recently conducted in 2012. These data are collected to provide a sound statistical basis for the formation of policy by various government agencies. Results will be available for

use for a variety of public and business needs such as economic and market analysis, company performance, and forecasting future demand.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall a person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) unless that collection of information displays a current valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number. In accordance with the PRA, 44 U.S.C. §§ 3501-3521, OMB approved the AWTS under OMB control number 0607-0195.

Based upon the foregoing, I have directed that the annual survey be conducted for the purpose of collecting these data.

Dated: January 5, 2016. John H. Thompson
Director
Bureau of the Census

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