

- Evaluate whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility;
- Evaluate the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;
- Enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be

collected; and minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses.

Type of Review: Revision of a currently approved collection
Agency: Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

Title: Labor Market Information (LMI) Cooperative Agreement.

OMB Number: 1220-0079.

Affected Public: State, Local, or Tribal Government.

Frequency: Monthly, Quarterly and Annually.

Number of Respondents: 55.

Number of Annual Responses: 832.

Estimated Time Per Response and Total Burden Hours:

Form	Total respondents	Frequency	Total responses	Average minutes	Estimated total burden (in hours)
Work Statements	55	1	55	1-2 hrs.	55-110
BIF (LMI 1A, 1B)	55	1	55	1-6 hrs.	55-330
Quarterly Automated Financial Reports	48	4	192	10-50 min.	32-160
Monthly Automated Financial Reports	48	*8	384	5-25 min.	32-160
BLS Cooperative Statistics Financial Report (LMI 2A)	7	12	84	1-5 hrs.	84-420
Quarterly Status Report (LMI 2B)	1-30	4	4-120	1 hr.	4-120
Total	1-55	774-890	264-1300
Average Totals	55	832	781

* Reports are not received for end-of-quarter months, i.e., December, March, June, and September.

Total Annualized Capital/Startup Costs: \$0.

Total Annual Costs (operating/maintaining systems or purchasing services): \$0.

Description: The LMI Cooperative Agreement (CA) includes all information needed by the State Employment Security Agencies (SESAs) to apply for funds to assist them to operate one or more of the five LMI programs operated by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and, once awarded, report on the status of obligation and expenditure of funds as well as close out the Cooperative Agreement. Information collected under the CA is used by Federal regional and national office staffs to carry out their fiduciary responsibilities to negotiate the CA funding levels with the SESAs, monitor their financial and programmatic performance, and monitor their adherence to administrative requirements imposed by 29 CFR part 97.

Ira L. Mills,
DOL Clearance Officer.
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DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Bureau of Labor Statistics

Proposed Collection; Comment Request

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Labor, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, conducts a pre-clearance consultation program to provide the general public and Federal agencies with an opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing collections of information in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA95) (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)). This program helps to ensure that requested data can be provided in the desired format, reporting burden (time and financial resources) is minimized, collection instruments are clearly understood, and the impact of collection requirements on respondents can be properly assessed. Currently, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) is soliciting comments concerning the proposed revision of the "Mass Layoff Statistics (MLS) Program Survey." A copy of the proposed information collection request (ICR) can be obtained by contacting the individual listed below in the addresses section of this notice.

DATES: Written comments must be submitted to the office listed in the addresses section below on or before September 3, 2002.

ADDRESSES: Send comments to Amy A. Hobby, BLS Clearance Officer, Division of Management Systems, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Room 4080, 2 Massachusetts Avenue NE., Washington, DC 20212. Ms. Hobby can be reached on 202-691-7628 (this is not a toll free number).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Amy A. Hobby, BLS Clearance Officer, telephone number 202-691-7628. (See **ADDRESSES** section.)

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

Section 309 (2) (a) (1) (A) (iii) of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) states that the Secretary of Labor shall oversee development, maintenance, and continuous improvements of the program to measure the incidence of, industrial and geographical location of, and number of workers displaced by, permanent layoffs and plant closings. Prior to the WIA, Section 462(e) of PL 97-300, the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), provided that the Secretary of Labor develop and maintain statistical data relating to permanent mass layoffs and plant closings and issue an annual report. The report includes, at a minimum, the number of plant closings and mass layoffs, and the number of workers affected. The data are summarized by geographic area and industry.

The Mass Layoff Statistics (MLS) program uses a standardized, automated approach to identify, describe, and track the impact of major job cutbacks. The

program utilizes, to the greatest degree possible, existing Unemployment Insurance (UI) records and computerized data files, supplemented by direct employer contact. Its major features include:

- The identification of major layoffs and closings through initial UI claims filed against the identified employer;
- The use of existing files on claimants to obtain basic demographic and economic characteristics on the individual;
- The telephone contact of those employers meeting mass layoff criteria to obtain specific information on the nature of the layoff and characteristics of the establishment;
- The identification of the continuing impact of the mass layoff on individuals by matching affected initial claimants with persons in claims status; and,
- The measurement of the incidence of the exhaustion of regular state UI benefits by affected workers.

In the program, State Employment Security Agencies (SESAs) submit seven comprehensive reports each quarter, and a preliminary, summary report each month. These computerized reports contain information from State administrative files and information obtained from those employers meeting the program criteria of a mass layoff.

Congress has provided for the implementation of the MLS program by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) through the Fiscal Years 1984–1992 appropriations for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and related agencies. The program was not operational in Fiscal Years 1993 and 1994. Program operation resumed in Fiscal Year 1995 with funds provided by the Employment and Training Administration (ETA).

At the present time, all states (including the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands) are participating in the program.

II. Desired Focus of Comments

The Bureau of Labor Statistics is particularly interested in comments that:

- Evaluate whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility;
- Evaluate the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;
- Enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and

- Minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submissions of responses.

III. Current Actions

Office of Management and Budget clearance is being sought for the Mass Layoff Statistics (MLS) Program.

In addition to the BLS uses of MLS data, such data are used by Congress, the Executive Branch, the business, labor, and academic communities, SESAs, and the U.S. Department of Labor for both macro- and microeconomic analysis, including specific labor market studies geared towards manpower assistance and development. Congress used these data in conjunction with the findings from a supplemental study of layoff actions in the development of the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act, which was enacted in August 1988. Furthermore, the ETA uses MLS microdata in the evaluation of dislocated worker programs to assess the effectiveness of those activities and services.

A Congressionally mandated use of mass layoff data includes the WIA, which replaces Title III of the JTPA. Section 133 of the WIA encourages the use of MLS data in substate allocations relating to dislocated worker employment and training activities.

State agencies use the MLS data in various ways, including the identification of geographic areas in need of special manpower services; ailing or troubled industries; specific employers needing assistance; outreach activities for the unemployed; and workers in need of temporary health care services.

There is no other comprehensive source of statistics on either establishments or workers affected by mass layoffs and plant closings; therefore, none of the aforementioned data requirements could be fulfilled if this data collection did not occur.

Type of Review: Revision of a currently approved collection.

Agency: Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Title: Mass Layoff Statistics Program.

OMB Number: 1220–0090.

Affected Public: Business or other for profit; not-for-profit institutions; farms; Federal Government; State, Local or Tribal Government.

Total Respondents: 23,053.

Frequency: SESAs report quarterly and monthly. Affected employers report on occasion.

Total Responses: 23,848.

Average Time Per Response: 60 minutes for SESAs and 20 minutes for employers.

Estimated Total Burden Hours: 81,547 hours.

Total Burden Cost (capital/startup): \$0.

Total Burden Cost (operating/maintenance): \$0.

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

Signed at Washington, DC, this 17th day of June, 2002.

Jesús Salinas,

Acting Chief, Division of Management Systems, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

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DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Bureau of Labor Statistics

Proposed Collection; Comment Request

ACTION: Notice.

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DATES: Written comments must be submitted to the office listed in the **ADDRESSES** section below on or before September 3, 2002.