

Bureau of Transportation Statistics

[Docket No. BTS-99-56961 - 1]

**Request for Reinstatement of an
Expired Information Collection:
American Travel Survey**

AGENCY: Bureau of Transportation
Statistics (BTS), DOT.

ACTION: Notice and request for
comments.

SUMMARY: The American Travel Survey (ATS) provides information on the travel patterns of the American public and how travel is changing over time. In accordance with the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, BTS intends to request clearance from the Office of Management Budget (OMB) for this information collection.

DATES: Comments must be submitted by July 20, 1999.

ADDRESSES: All signed, written comments should refer to the docket number that appears in the heading of this document and must be submitted to the Docket Clerk, U.S. DOT Dockets, Room PL-401, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590-0001. All comments received will be available for examination at the above address between 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., E.T., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. Those desiring notification of receipt of comments must include a self-addressed, stamped envelope or postcard.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Heather Contrino, MacroSys Research and Technology for the Bureau of Transportation Statistics, phone: (202) 366-6584, fax: (202) 366-3640, heather.contrino@bts.gov, Office of Statistical Programs and Services, Bureau of Transportation Statistics, 400 7th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590-0001.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: American Travel Survey (ATS).

OMB Number: 2 139-New.

Needs and Uses: Under 49 U.S.C. 111, 3TS is authorized to and responsible for collecting data related to the performance of the nation's transportation systems. The American Travel Survey provides data on the interregional flows of passenger travel.

Similar data is collected by the Travel Industry Association (TIA), however the information is proprietary, is focused on the travel and tourism industry, and excludes data on shorter distance trips. BTS and DOT will use the information to analyze the volumes and patterns of travel, the safety risks associated with travel, the role of travel in economic productivity, and the accessibility of transportation services. The data are also used in a number of ways by other Federal agencies, State and local governments, transportation-related associations, private businesses, and consumers to better understand the amount and nature of personal travel by the American public.

Because travel patterns change over time, BTS must update its information periodically. For instance, the aging of the baby boomers, changes in household composition, and changes in the roles of women will likely affect long-distance travel patterns. Therefore, BTS plans to conduct this survey every five years. The first was conducted in 1995 by the US Census Bureau under a contract with BTS and was approved under OMB number 0607-0792.

This survey will be coordinated with the Nationwide Personal Travel Survey (NPTS) conducted by DOT's Federal Highway Administration. The NPTS collects detailed data on all trips, but since it includes a one-day travel period its focus is on daily local travel. In contrast, the focus of the ATS is on longer distance travel with an expected travel period ranging from four to six weeks. Together, the surveys will provide a comprehensive picture of travel, allowing transportation professionals to make more informed decisions.

In conducting the survey, the interviewers would use computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) to reduce survey length and minimize recording errors. The information obtained from households will only be used for statistical purposes and will not be disclosed or used in identifiable form for any other purposes.

Respondents: Approximately 26,000 households, selected randomly by phone number, will complete the survey. Their participation is voluntary. On the first call, BTS will collect basic

information about the household. The household will be given a specific reporting period and household members will receive calendars and instructions. Each household member will be asked to record all trips over 50 miles taken during the reporting period. The day after the end of the reporting period, BTS will contact the household to collect information on their trips made over the past two to six weeks. For children, an adult household member will be asked to report their travel. In the pretest, 2,000 households will be interviewed and appropriate reporting periods and improved methods for reducing burden will be evaluated. A total of two interviews will take place in both the pretest and the full survey. In the first interview (household interview), information about the household will be obtained from one member of the household. In the second interview (trip retrieval interview), information on trips taken during the reporting period will be obtained from all household members.

Estimated Average Burden per Response: The estimated average time per person to complete the household interview is 9 minutes per household and it is estimated that the burden for the trip retrieval interview is 8 minutes per person. One member of each household will participate in both interviews for a total of 17 minutes. The remaining household members will participate in the trip retrieval interview of 8 minutes per person.

Estimated Total Annual Burden: Including screener attempts, partially completed interviews, and trip recording burden, the estimated total burden for the pretest is 2,516 hours, 32,712 hours for the full survey, and 1,640 hours for the non-response follow up survey. This assumes an average of 2.6 persons per household and equates to a total annual burden of 36,868 hours.

Public Comments Invited: BTS requests comments regarding any aspect of this information collection, including, but not limited to: (1) The necessity and utility of the information collection for the proper performance of the functions of the Bureau of Transportation Statistics; (2) the accuracy of the estimated burden; (3)

ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the collected information; and (4) ways to minimize the collection burden without reducing the quality of the collected information. Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for OMB's clearance of this information collection.

Electronic Availability: An electronic copy of this document may be downloaded using a modem and suitable communications software from the Federal Register electronic bulletin board service (telephone number: 202-512-1661). Internet users may reach the Federal Register's web site at http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs.

Susan Lapham,

Acting Associate Director for Statistical Programs and Services

[FR Doc. 99-12822 Filed 5-20-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-FE-P