

INTERAGENCY HOUSEHOLD SURVEY NONRESPONSE GROUP

Final Report of Subgroup #3

Initial vs. Subsequent Nonresponse in Panel Surveys

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INTRODUCTION

Subgroup #3 of the Interagency Household Nonresponse Group (IHSNG) was formed in May 1999 to evaluate the relationship between the initial and the annual rates of nonresponse in three panel surveys - the Current Population Survey (CPS), the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), and the Consumer Expenditure Interview Survey (CEQ). The study was recommended by the IHSNG in response to an initial review of Household Survey Nonresponse (Atrostic and Burt, 1998). This report presents the findings of Subgroup #3. The group developed and calculated "panel-based" nonresponse rates in order to compare the nonresponse at each panel interview. The group also gathered and interpreted various survey procedures that might explain the different patterns. The report compares the various nonresponse rates, describes some of the factors that contribute to the different patterns, and provides recommendations for further research.

The source data used to develop the rates and the procedural notes are included in the Appendices.

PANEL NONRESPONSE

Panel surveys are surveys with repeated interviews to the sample unit. The households residing at the panel addresses are contacted in the first and subsequent interviews, or waves, according to the specific design. In all three surveys under consideration, new panels are introduced every month on a continuing basis. The panel initiation is staggered in such a way that all waves are represented at any given time. This is done to counteract the potentially negative effects of attrition, conditioning, and changes in sample composition, so that balanced estimates can be produced.

The frequency of contact, the number of contacts, the mode of contact, and the amount of information asked all contribute to nonresponse. They vary among the three surveys. There are eight contacts in CPS - a monthly contact every month for the first four months, then, after eight months, a second set of four monthly contacts. The first and fifth contacts are usually conducted by personal visit, the others by telephone. The questionnaire is very short and the response rate was 93% in 1998. There are five personal visit interviews for CEQ, each one three months apart.

The questionnaire is very long and the response rate was 81% in 1998. There are seven contacts six months apart in NCVS. The first interview is in person and the others are by telephone. The questionnaire is long and the response rate was 94% in 1998. The burden hours to the respondent,

as stated in the OMB clearance package, are 15 minutes for CPS, 90 minutes for CEQ, and 25 minutes for NCVS.

There are several types of nonresponse, the most prominent being refusals. The majority of refusals are encountered at the first interview, but additional refusals are encountered at subsequent contacts. Although some households that refuse the initial interview cooperate in subsequent interviews, the net effect is one of increasing rates of refusal. Panel attrition refers to the rate to which respondents refuse to participate after a given interview, and it is attributed to the increasing burden of repeated interviews (B. Bailar, 1989). There are other sources of nonresponse, and these are usually grouped into three major types: "no one at home" cases, "temporarily absent" cases, and "other" cases.

Substantive statistics from panel surveys are most often assembled on a cross-sectional basis, i.e., for a given time period (month, qtr, year). Nonresponse statistics are usually given on a cross-sectional basis as well. Rates may be given by specific type of nonresponse or overall. Either way, the rates refer to all eligible cases that were not interviewed by the designated closing date. Table 1 shows refusal rates for the first interview (Initial Rates) and for all interviews combined (Annual Rates) for the year 1998. Table 2 shows overall nonresponse rates (initial and annual) for the same year.

As expected, the initial **refusal** rates are lower than the refusal rates for all interviews combined. A different pattern is derived when the initial **nonresponse** rates are compared to the nonresponse rates for all interviews. The initial rate is again lower than the annual rate for CEQ, but for CPS and NCVS the initial rate is higher than the annual rate. This different pattern is exhibited in all the years since 1990, except in 1996 for NCVS. While these differences are small, the IHSNG decided to evaluate the possible reasons behind them. Four factors that affect the comparisons of the three surveys are discussed:

- 1) **Changes in the number of eligible units**
- 2) **Changes among the types of nonresponse**
- 3) **Initial eligible vs. in-mover households**
- 4) **Procedural and mode differences**

In order to make comparisons across the various interviews, the IHSNG-Subgroup#3 developed "panel-based" nonresponse rates. These rates are computed by examining the nonresponse of specific **panels** from the first to the last wave, and dividing the number of nonresponding units in a given wave by the number of eligible units at the same wave. In all three surveys the selected addresses remain in the panel even if households that reside there move out. The eligible units in the panels are the households occupying the selected addresses at the time of the interviewing cycle. The panels were compared as a whole, not distinguishing whether the same households still reside at the sample addresses.

Nine panels were used for CPS - initiated from January to September 1997, ending in December 1998. Twelve panels were used in NCVS - initiated from January through December 1994, ending in December 1997. Twelve panels were used for CEQ - initiated from June 1993 through May 1994, ending in June 1995. The analysis of more recent panels for NCVS and CEQ was precluded due to the introduction of new sample areas with the 1990 design in the middle of the interviewing cycle. Although nonresponse levels have increased, the patterns across the interviews have been consistent throughout the past years.

Table 3 shows panel-based rates by type of nonresponse for the first interview of each survey. Chart 1 shows, for each survey, the trends by panel interview for the overall nonresponse rates and the various types of nonresponse. (The overall nonresponse rate is referred to simply as the nonresponse rate.) The panel interviewing cycle is referred to as "month in sample" (MIS) in CPS, "time in sample" (TIS) in NCVS, and "interview" in CEQ. Table 4 gives the panel rates used for the charts. Detailed tabulations providing the source data of the panel-based rates can be found in Appendix B.

Charts depicting the nonresponse trends across the various interviews were also developed from cross-sectional rates, using 1998 data. These charts portray very similar trends and characteristics to the panel-based charts. This is due to the continuous introduction of new panels and the gradual changes in nonresponse through time.

FACTORS IN NONRESPONSE COMPARISONS

1) Changes in the number of eligible units

The denominator of the nonresponse rates is the number of eligible units. Therefore, any change to the eligibility of a sample unit from one interview to the next will change the rates.

The surveys considered have similar field guidelines to identify the units' eligibility. For instance, in each survey a number of addresses are eliminated from the sample if the lot contains only a demolished house. On the other hand, an address that has a vacant house or one that is under construction is ineligible for a given panel interview, but may become eligible at the next one if occupied. A reversal from eligible to ineligible can occur as well, as when an interviewed household is later occupied by persons with usual residence elsewhere or becomes ineligible for other reasons. The eligibility status is verified at each subsequent interview.

In addition to real changes, eligibility may change if interviewers are not able to make an assessment during the first interviewing cycle but are successful in doing so at the next one. Even though a great effort is made to locate sample addresses and their eligibility, in some cases interviewers are given a short time by which to do it. For instance, in CPS there is only one week to complete the monthly assignment. For all three surveys, cases whose eligibility could not be determined are still considered eligible and, therefore, counted in the denominator. They

are also counted in the numerator as "no one home" or as "other nonresponse", depending on the survey. In a subsequent panel wave, it may be determined that the unit is ineligible. This factor would tend to change the rates from the initial to subsequent contacts, but since the units in question are few and appear in both numerator and denominator its effect is small.

2) **Changes among the types of nonresponse**

For eligible units, changes to the response status (or outcome code) at each interview affect the numerator of the overall nonresponse rates. The following discussion addresses some of the changes that may occur among the eligible cases from the first interview to subsequent ones: (a) conversions from refusals to respondents, and (b) conversions from noncontacts to contacted units.

(a) **Conversions from refusals to respondents**

It was noted earlier that in all three surveys refusal rates are lower for the first interview compared to rates for all interviews. However, more detailed data by wave show that refusal rates do not always increase after the first interview, since some of the initial refusals are converted to response in subsequent interviews. In a study of CPS households that were eligible in all eight interviews, Harris-Kojetin and Tucker (1997) found that 2% refused all eight interviews, but 2.8% refused the first interview and participated for the other seven. (Note that the majority, 82%, of cases was interviewed all eight times.)

The trends for CPS show a **net** decline in refusal rates from the first to the second interview, which has the lowest refusal rate among all the interviews. After the second interview the refusal rates tend to increase, with a peak at interview 5 followed by a slight decline in interviews 6 to 8. For NCVS, there is a steady increase up to interview six, and a slight decline at the last interview. In CEQ, refusal rates tend to increase - with the greatest increase from interview 1 to interview 2. There is a slight decline in the last interview.

The proportion of refusals to the overall rate varies across the three surveys. In CEQ, refusals represent around 80% of the first wave nonresponse rate and around 90% at subsequent interviews. Therefore, the refusal rate trend dominates the overall trend. In CPS and NCVS, refusals on the first wave represent 50% or less and around 60% at subsequent interviews.

(b) **Conversions from noncontacts to contacted**

In all surveys there are units that could not be contacted by the closing date, either because no one was home, the respondent was temporarily absent, or for other reasons that make

the respondent unavailable. In CPS, there is only one week (the week of the 19th) in order to find the sample address and contact the household. In NCVS the monthly assignment must be completed within the first two weeks of the month. CEQ interviewers have the entire month to contact the sample cases, although field procedures recommend that they make the visits during the first half of the month in order to facilitate the recall of expenditures for the prior three months.

As a result of repeated interviews in panel surveys, there is an increasing chance to locate the addresses and the potential respondents. Even with a short time by which to make the contact, it becomes easier after the first interviewing cycle. In CPS and NCVS, the no one home rates are relatively high at the first interview, comprising 31% of the nonresponse. In CPS, these rates decline considerably after the first interview, but they are high again at the fifth interview, which occurs eight months after the last contact in the fourth interview. In NCVS, instead, the no one home rates continue to decline across the other interviews. Similar trends are found for temporarily absent rates, as can be seen from the charts.

In CEQ, less than five percent of the overall nonresponse at the first interview is due to no one home cases in the panels considered. There is a decline in this rate across the five interviews, but it has little or no impact on the comparisons across interviews. It should be noted that in more recent years there has been an increase in the no-one-home rates in CEQ.

3) Initial eligible vs. in-mover households

In all three surveys households are not followed to a new address. If a household moves out, the household that moves into the selected address is eligible to participate in the panel survey.

This is a **new** household in the panel. Another way for a new household to join the panel is by moving into a house that was not ready to be occupied at a previous interview. Throughout the life of a panel, an increasing number of new households participate. These households are interviewed at the wave of the other households in the panel, and, therefore, their potential participation is shorter than that of households that were eligible at the first interview.

The inclusion of new units is an important aspect of panel surveys since it keeps the sample from deteriorating through time. Data developed from CEQ show that at the fifth interview (which occurs a year after the first one) as much as 20 percent of the eligible cases at that time joined the panel after the first interview. (See Appendix B, Detailed data from CEQ - page 2.)

The nonresponse rate from the 12 panels considered (averaging the rates for all five interviews) was 17.3% for units eligible at the first interview, compared to lower rates for units that joined the panel at subsequent interviews: 14.1%, 13.6%, 10.4%, and 9.5%, respectively for second through fifth interview. There is an increasing trend from the initial to subsequent interviews of

the new units, but, with a shorter participation time, the average rates are lower than the ones exhibited by the group eligible at the first interview.

4) Procedural and mode differences

The chances of obtaining a response vary from one interview to the next, due to many factors. Changes may occur in the prevailing circumstances in the field. The individual in the household who is responding/not responding and/or the interviewer may be different. Survey managers have an impact on response rates and field procedures may change somewhat in the course of the panel. For instance, more effort to obtain interviews may be placed if a panel initially experiences a lower than usual response, thus making the second interview more successful.

In panel surveys interviewers establish a rapport with the respondent, and, therefore, it becomes easier to gain further cooperation after the first interview. Most respondents get used to the interview routine, especially when the same interviewer makes the various contacts. Usual procedures may be followed for these respondents, but for respondents that are reluctant to participate again, additional follow-up procedures may be instituted. An annotated list of possible differences from initial to subsequent interviews is shown in Appendix A.

In addition to field procedural changes, there are mode changes in two of the three surveys examined. Telephone interviewing is used in CPS for the second to the fourth interview, and from the sixth through the eighth interview. In NCVS, after the first personal visit interview, all subsequent interviews are conducted by telephone. The nonresponse literature is unclear on the effects of interviewing mode. On one hand, some respondents prefer the telephone for fear of crime at the door or having strangers in their house (Groves and Couper, 1998). On the other hand, telephone interviews are sometimes associated with higher nonresponse compared to personal visits, probably because the rapport with respondents is diminished (Tucker and Kojetin, 1994).

The mode change is not accompanied by an interviewer change when interviews are conducted from the interviewers' home. With this procedure, the rapport established during the first interview continues and this positive effect may be added to the benefits of the less intrusive telephone interview. In CPS, most of the telephone interviews are conducted from the interviewers' home, although between 10 and 15 percent are also conducted from a centralized facility. Similarly, in NCVS the telephone interviews are conducted either from a centralized facility or from the interviewer's home, although a larger percentage of NCVS telephone interviews are conducted at a centralized telephone facility.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report is an initial exploration of nonresponse patterns in three panel surveys, CPS, CEQ, and NCVS. Several aspects that may contribute to the different panel trends are described. Due to

respondent burden in panel surveys, nonresponse is expected to increase as time in sample progresses. In CPS and NCVS, however, nonresponse rates tend to decline, rather than increase, at the second interview. Possible reasons are examined to explain this pattern. It appears that all the components of nonresponse contribute to it, but especially the increased opportunity to locate potential respondents after the first interview period. After the second interview, refusals tend to rise in both surveys but the rates for no one home and other types of nonresponse continue to decline up to the fourth interview, as more and more contacts can be successfully made. By contrast, in CEQ refusals are the major source of nonresponse, and, since this component tends to increase from one interview to the next, so does the nonresponse rate. The other components represent a small portion of the nonresponse rates in CEQ.

Three topics are identified for further and more detailed research: detailed patterns of nonresponse in panel surveys, the rise in nonresponse in the 5th interview of CPS, and the effect on the response rates of in-movers to the panel sample.

Additional studies are recommended to gain a better understanding of the various patterns of response/nonresponse across waves and attrition. These studies may include an analysis of procedural aspects, i.e., tracking changes in the interviewer and/or the respondent in the household, and the type of nonresponse follow-up made.

Another aspect that should be investigated further is the high nonresponse in the fifth interview of CPS. This may be attributed in part to the long time interval between fourth and fifth interviews (eight months), which lowers the importance of patterns favorable to panel surveys, i.e., knowing the location and continuing the rapport with respondents. The fifth interview, which has a personal interview, seems to mark the beginning of a new round of monthly interviews in CPS with similar difficulties as the first interview. In NCVS there is also a long time between interviews, six months every time, and there used to be a personal visit at the fifth interview as well, but the nonresponse trend is not affected dramatically.

The third aspect for further research deals with the sample composition of panel surveys across the interviews. There are changes due to out/in-moving households. The three surveys do not follow respondents if they move out. New households that move in are potential respondents and they are interviewed at the same panel interview as the out-moving households. Their participation refers only to the remaining interviews for that panel. A preliminary analysis of data from CEQ shows in-moving households have lower nonresponse than the overall panel units, and this is due to the shorter time in sample. The IHSNG - Subgroup #3 developed panel-based nonresponse rates to compare the three surveys considered. Additional nonresponse rates can be developed for separate groups of households, depending on when they become eligible to participate. These rates would provide further information on the patterns of nonresponse and portray longitudinal aspects of panel surveys. They will also be more appropriately comparable to longitudinal surveys such as the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), especially to the non-mover segment of the sample.

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TABLE 1
REFUSAL RATES: INITIAL VS. ANNUAL (1998)

	Initial Refusal Rate	Annual Refusal Rate	Difference Annual - Initial
CPS	3.8	4.1	0.3
CEQ	12.8	16.4	3.6
NCVS	2.6	3.2	0.6

TABLE 2
NONRESPONSE RATES: INITIAL VS. ANNUAL (1998)

	Initial Nonresponse Rate	Annual Nonresponse Rate	Difference Annual - Initial
CPS	8.8	6.8	-2.0
CEQ	16.9	19.3	2.4
NCVS	6.1	5.7	-0.4

TABLE 3
PANEL-BASED INITIAL NONRESPONSE RATES BY TYPE OF NONRESPONSE
FIRST INTERVIEW OF SELECTED PANELS

	Nonresponse Rate	Refusal Rate	No-One-Home Rate	Temporarily Absent Rate	Other Nonresponse Rate
CPS	8.4	3.7	2.6	1.7	0.4
CEQ	15.0	12.8	0.7	0.8	0.8
NCVS	5.5	2.9	1.7	0.8	0.1

CHART 1: PANEL NONRESPONSE TRENDS

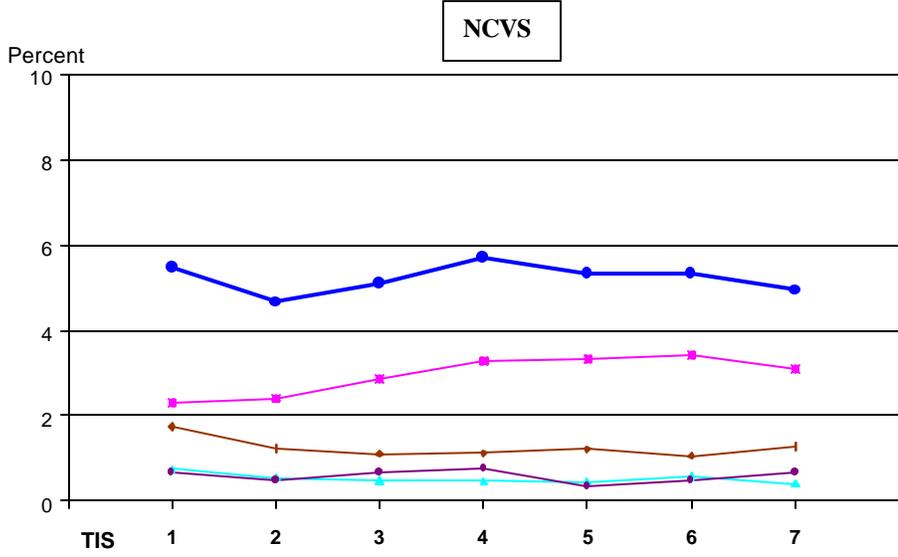
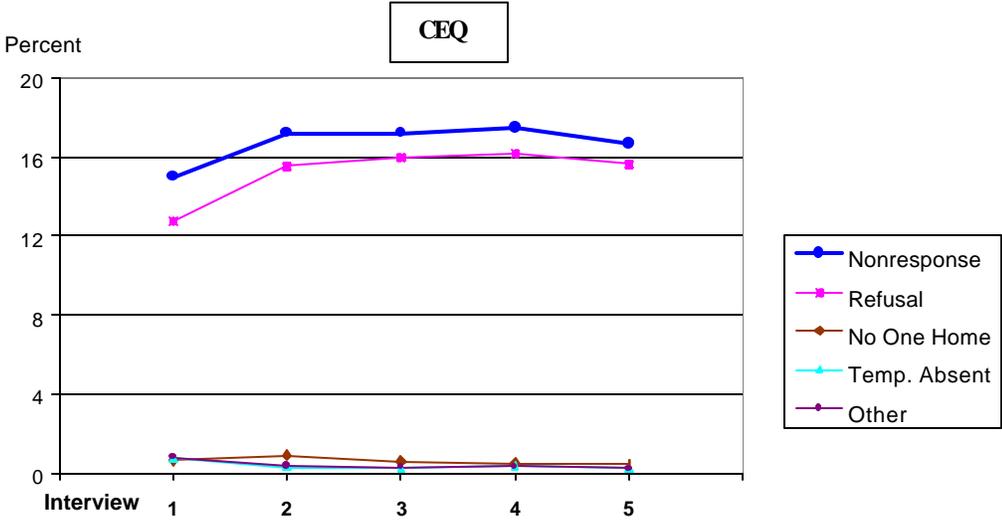
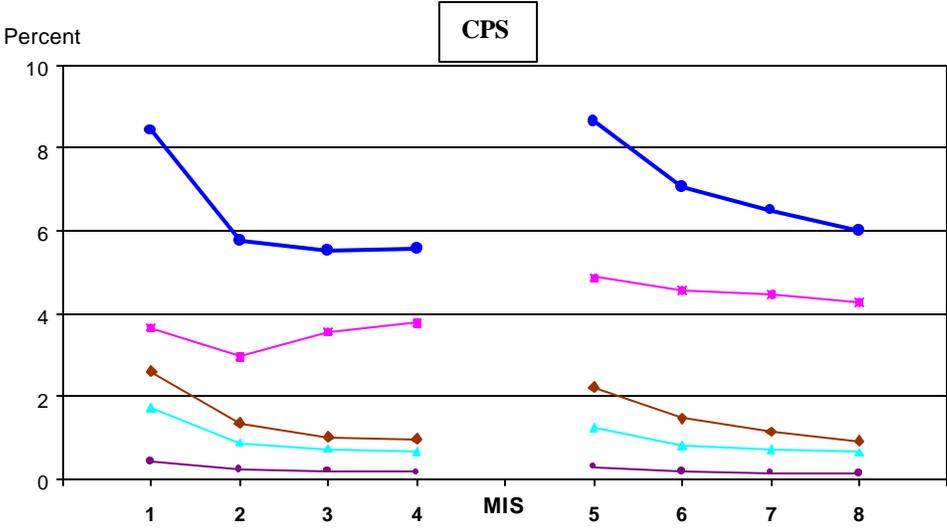


Table 4: PANEL NONRESPONSE

CPS	Month In Sample (MIS)								Avg	Diff
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	2-8	
NONRESPONSE RATE 8.4	5.8	5.5	5.6	8.7	7.1	6.5	6.0	6.4	-2.0	
Refusal Rate	3.7	3.0	3.6	3.8	4.9	4.6	4.5	4.3	4.1	0.4
No One Home Rate	2.6	1.4	1.0	1.0	2.2	1.5	1.1	0.9	1.3	-1.3
Temporarily Absent Rate	1.7	0.9	0.7	0.7	1.2	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.8	-0.9
Other Noninterview Rate 0.4	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.2	-0.2	

CEQ	Interview					Avg	Diff
	1	2	3	4	5	2-5	
NONRESPONSE RATE 15.0		17.2	17.2	17.4	16.7	17.1	2.1
Refusal Rate		12.8	15.5	16.0	16.2	15.6	3.0
No One Home Rate		0.7	0.9	0.6	0.5	0.5	-0.1
Temporarily Absent Rate		0.8	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.3	-0.5
Other Noninterview Rate	0.8	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.3	-0.4

NCVS	Time In Sample (TIS)							Avg	Diff
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	2-7	
NONRESPONSE RATE	5.5	4.7	5.1	5.8	5.3	5.5	5.0	5.2	-0.3
Refusal Rate	2.3	2.4	2.9	3.3	3.3	3.4	3.1	3.3	1.0
No One Home Rate	1.7	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.2	1.1	0.9	1.1	-0.6
Temporarily Absent Rate	0.8	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.4	0.5	-0.3
Other Noninterview Rate	0.7	0.5	0.7	0.8	0.4	0.5	0.7	0.6	-0.1

NOTES

In each survey, the rates for individual panels were combined. For CEQ the nonrespondent units were first added and then rates were computed over all panels. For CPS and NCVS, separate rates were first computed and then averaged. Due to rounding, the rates by type of nonresponse may not add exactly to the overall rates. The average of the second through the last interview is shown in the next to the last column of the tables. The last column shows the difference between this average and the rate for the first interview.

Number of eligible units at the first interview

Average per panel	
CPS	6352
CEQ	518
NCVS	1410

Survey Procedures

How they differ from case initiation to subsequent interviews

CPS

NCVS

CEQ

Charlotte Census Regional Office

Questions	CPS
1. Is the mode of interview different between the initial contact and subsequent contacts? If so, how?	<p>Table 15 of the CPS Summary reports provides the percent of personal visit cases actually conducted in person, at the national and RO levels. For example, 79.9% of the MIS 1 PV cases were actually conducted in person in May'99, and similarly, 63.9% for MIS 5 cases.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤All initial interviews with a household should be conducted in person. (However, if it is nearing close-out, and no appointment for a visit could be made, and there really isn't time to drive, a phone interview will suffice.) ➤All subsequent interviews should be conducted by telephone unless a telephone interview is not acceptable.
2. Are FRs asked to contact first cases that were not found in the initial interview?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤Households that were Type A noninterviews during the initial interview or during any subsequent must be contacted by personal visit in the next interview.
3. What follow-up procedures are used to persuade noninterview households to participate?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤The regional office will send a letter to the household requesting their cooperation and stating that an interviewer will call on them again. ➤If the supervisor is in the area on other business, he/she may also visit the refusal household to try to obtain their cooperation
4. What other techniques are used to reduce noninterviews?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤<i>Type A followup letter</i> that is unique for each RO and targeted to a certain demographic group (e.g., single parent families, the elderly,...) It may be used for refusals, weren't home, thank you,... ➤(The <i>Telephone Hold Procedure</i> works only for paper surveys...it is not relevant for CAPI surveys like CPS.) ➤ <i>Noninterview Telephone Procedure</i> - Type A noninterviews are not accepted by telephone. Follow-up personal visits must be made by either the original FR, another FR, or an SFR. ➤ "<i>Introductory</i>" Letters - Before each enumeration, an introductory letter is mailed to the address informing the household that an interviewer will contact them. If a first period household was not mailed the letter or did not receive the letter, the interviewers are instructed to hand a copy of the letter to the respondent when he/she visits the household to conduct the initial interview. ➤ "<i>Thank You</i>" Letters for all MIS 4 and MIS 8 cases.
5. If introductory letters are used to inform households that they will be contacted for an interview, do first period households have a higher rate of never being mailed or receiving the letter?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤Of the area sample, most addresses are descriptive...no specific mailing address. So for these cases CPS would not have an address to mail to before MIS1. By MIS 5, the FR should/would have the address for mailings.
6. Are respondents told how long they will be in sample?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤CPS is upfront. At the close of the interview, it is mentioned that they will be contacted the next month (or in 8 months for MIS 4 to 5). This is important since the FR then asks for good days and times to come back.
7. Is the length of the interview period the same for the initial interview as it is for subsequent interviews?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤Always the week of the 19th. Each FR has approximately 35-49 cases; each month is split among 8 rotations, so 1/8 MIS 1 cases. These MIS 1 cases are the most different from the rest since they are the most difficult, and no phone number so have to visit them.

Questions	NCVS
1. Is the mode of interview different between the initial contact and subsequent contacts? If so, how?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤All initial interviews with a household are conducted in person. ➤All subsequent interviews are conducted by telephone unless a telephone interview is not acceptable.
2. Are field representative (FRs) asked to contact first cases that were not found in the initial interview?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤Households that were Type A noninterviews during the initial interview or during any subsequent must be contacted by personal visit in the next interview.
3. What follow-up procedures are used to persuade noninterview households to participate?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤The regional office will send a refusal letter to the household requesting their cooperation and stating that an interviewer will call on them again. ➤If the supervisor is in the area on other business, he/she may also visit the refusal household to try to obtain their cooperation ➤The household will be given a copy of various reports that highlight information about the survey and the survey results. ➤ The case may also be assigned to a different interviewer the next enumeration.
4. What other techniques are used to reduce noninterviews?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Telephone Hold Procedure</i> - allows interviewers to meet their interview closeout date and at the same time provides them with a little additional time to follow-up on potential Type A noninterviews. ➤ <i>Noninterview Telephone Procedure</i> - Type A noninterviews are not accepted by telephone. Interviewers must make a follow-up personal visit. ➤ <i>"Introductory" Letters</i> - Before each enumeration, an introductory letter is mailed to the address informing the household that an interviewer will contact them. If a first period household was not mailed the letter or did not receive the letter, the interviewers are instructed to hand a copy of the letter to the respondent when he/she visits the household to conduct the initial interview. ➤ <i>"Thank You" Letters</i> - Interviewers are instructed to send a thank you letter to those households which show signs of refusing. The purpose for sending the letter is to leave a positive impression with the respondent and to help the interviewer obtain an interview the next time. ➤For <i>temporarily absent households</i>, the regional office will try to determine when the respondent is scheduled to return by asking a neighbor, the post office, etc. Also, the regional office will try to obtain the telephone number of where the household is vacationing. ➤For <i>no one home</i>, the regional office will try to contact the household by phone, if a number is available, otherwise they will conduct a personal visit. Letters may be sent from the regional office, if requested by the interviewer, the regional office will try to locate the household's telephone number using Phone DISC and Fast Data, or they may assign the case to a different interviewer.
5. If introductory letters are used to inform households that they will be contacted for an interview, do first period households have a higher rate of never being mailed or receiving the letter?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤Don't know.

Questions	NCVS
6. Are respondents told how long they will be in sample?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤Interviewers are instructed not to tell respondents definitely when they can expect to be interviewed again or for how long their household is in sample. After each interview, the interviewer can tell respondents that they will probably be contacted again in a few months
7. Is the length of the interview period the same for the initial interview as it is for subsequent interviews?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤The interview period is always in the first part of the month. In general, interviewers who have segments with units to be interviewed for the first time are instructed to visited early in the month, so that any unexpected problems encountered can be referred to the office.
8. What is the procedure, if any, for making a Type A noninterview household a confirmed refusal?	<p>The procedure varies among regional offices but most cited the following situations for making a Type A noninterview household a confirmed refusal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤If the household is threatening or hostile over several enumeration periods or if the safety of the interviewer is in jeopardy if he/she returns to the household. ➤The household complains/writes to his/her congressperson. ➤The household calls or writes to the regional office/director asking/requesting/demanding to be taken off the survey. ➤After the regional office sends their best Senior Field Representative (SFR) or FR out into the field to convert Type A cases but is not successful. ➤Household members are physically/mentally unable to respond and there is no acceptable proxy.
9. Are the number of attempts to obtain an interview from first time in sample households, which are personal visit interviews, different from subsequent interviews that are telephone interviews due to cost and time constraints?	<p>The procedure varies among regional offices. Below are responses from some of the regional offices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤The interviewers will make as many attempts as possible during each enumeration as long as the Type A is within the interviewer's area before accepting the case as a Type A. ➤There is no set amount on the number of attempts to contact a household. It depends on distance, circumstances, how much time the regional offices has left in the interview period, and whether or not the household has a phone, whether the interviewer believes there is hope in obtaining an interview. For TAs, the regional office will attempt to contact the household up to closeout day. ➤Refusals generally require 2-3 personal visits. ➤In urban areas, there is no set limit. In some rural areas, the regional office cannot make many visits, but they will always make more than one if they are not getting a response by phone. ➤In addition to restraints imposed by costs, the appearance of harassment sets limits on the number of visits/telephone calls made to a household. <p>➤The number of attempts made to contact a household depends on the reason for the inability to contact the respondent. Generally, 3-5 attempts should be made by the interviewer. By the third attempt, the interviewer should contact the SFR for assistance.</p>

Questions	CEQ
1. Is the mode of interview different between the initial contact and subsequent contacts? If so, how?	<p>No, no difference.</p> <p>All interviews are conducted in person.</p>
2. Are FRs asked to contact first cases that were not found in the initial interview?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤FRs are asked to contact and attempt to interview all Type A noninterviews at subsequent interviews. Exception: FRs are usually not asked to interview Type A refusals at subsequent interviews (although they can); instead, they confirm that the same household continues to reside at the address. If so, the case remains a Type A. If a new household has moved in, the FR is asked to interview the household. ➤FRs are asked to interview CUs found during interviewing at initial or subsequent interviews. ➤FRs are asked to interview replacement households.
3. What follow-up procedures are used to persuade noninterview households to participate?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤The regional office may send a letter to the household requesting their cooperation and stating that a FR will call on them again. ➤An SFR may conduct follow-up. ➤If the survey supervisor is in the area on other business, he/she may also visit the refusal household to try to obtain their cooperation
4. What other techniques are used to reduce noninterviews?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤"<i>Introductory</i>" Letters - Before each enumeration, an introductory letter is mailed to the address, informing the household that an FR will contact them. There are 3 different versions: the L1 letter is used before the initial contact, the L2 letter is used before the second through fourth contacts, and the L5 letter is used for the fifth and final contact. If a CU was not mailed the letter or did not receive the letter, the FR is instructed to hand a copy of the letter to the respondent when he/she visits the household to conduct the interview. ➤<i>CE-303A Brochures</i> - The CE-303A brochure is mailed with the CE-303-L1 letter before the initial contact with the sample address. This brochure provides respondents with information (in addition to that contained in the CE-303-L1 letter) on their participation in the survey. ➤<i>Home files</i> - Each CU is provided with a "home file" (a divided file folder) to use in organizing receipts. Afterwards, these home files are theirs to keep. ➤"<i>Thank You</i>" Letters - FRs are instructed to present a thank you letter to each CU that participates. The purpose of the letter is to leave a positive impression with the respondent and to help the FR obtain an interview the next time.
5. If introductory letters are used to inform households that they will be contacted for an interview, do first period households have a higher rate of never being mailed or receiving the letter?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤We don't have information that allows us to quantify the rate of receipt. ➤The following information may help. The letters are sent to the address of record. For the initial contact, this is the address on the UCF, which is taken from the last decennial census. The FR corrects the addresses at the initial contact, and the regional office staff enters the corrected addresses into the database. We believe, therefore, that letters sent before the second through fifth interviews have a higher chance of being received.

Questions	CEQ
6. Are respondents told how long they will be in sample?	➤Yes, in the CE-303A brochure.
7. Is the length of the interview the same for the initial interview as it is for subsequent interviews?	<p>➤The first interview collects demographic information for the household; the respondent is also asked about expenditures during the past month.</p> <p>➤For subsequent interviews, respondents are asked about expenditures for the past three months, so the interview is ordinarily longer. If a new CU or replacement household is interviewed at a subsequent interview, demographic information is also collected at that time.</p>
8. What is the procedure, if any, for making a Type A noninterview household a confirmed refusal?	<p>➤Confirmed refusals must be approved by the RO.</p> <p>➤Usually, follow-up is conducted by an SFR or other office staff member before a refusal is confirmed.</p> <p>➤Occasionally, a case will be categorized as a confirmed refusal because it is a result of a Congressional letter, or because of overlap with another survey (that is, one case is selected for two household surveys).</p>
9. Are the number of attempts to obtain an interview from first time in sample households, which are personal visit interviews, different from subsequent interviews that are telephone interviews due to cost and time constraints?	Not applicable. CE is not conducted by telephone interview.

CENSUS BUREAU - Charlotte Regional Office

Regional Office Nonresponse Follow Up Procedures

When surveys encounter noninterviews the first month in sample, supervisors take one or more of the following steps. Most first month noninterviews are assigned for personal visits during the second month; the exception is the rare household that is a confirmed refusal the first month and we have a phone number available to verify occupancy.

Refusals

Routinely, we send a letter explaining the survey purpose, data uses, and confidentiality of the data collected. When possible, we include examples of data collected for that survey such as articles or brochures using the information. We ask the Field Representative (FR) to suggest which of several form letters best fit the circumstances of the refusal. Depending on the circumstances, we ask the original FR to try again or reassign it to either a Senior Field Representative (SFR) or another FR. If the household is not converted the first month, we return each sample period to verify occupancy. The survey supervisor reviews notes (on control card or in CAPI case notes) each time the household is in sample and decides whether to assign it to the original FR or someone else. Most times, we assign to another FR/SFR the second month in sample.

No One Home (NOH)/Unable to Contact (UTC)

If the FR is unable to make contact with someone in a household, (no one is at home or no one answers the door), we send letters requesting a call to tell us when it would be best to reach them. The letter also states that someone will be calling again and includes an S/FRs name. If practical, we will send a different person. Sometimes this is effective because it lets respondents know why we're coming and helps legitimize the FR. In a few cases, written responses come too late for interviewing that first month, but we are successful in future periods. This approach naturally has more effect on first month NCVS cases than CPS because of the length of the interview period.

On CPS, we also give each NOH household for which we have been able to get a householder name/number a "final" call from the regional office on closeout day.

If the FR cannot locate the address, we submit a census address search request to the National Processing Center. If the problem is reported early in the interview period, we usually resolve it during the first month. There are some (I don't know the magnitude) that get carried over to subsequent months. The cases are submitted as Type A's the first month and converted to the more appropriate code after resolution (e.g., Type B, C). These situations probably account for some of the pattern of type A rates declining vs. following the expected trend. I doubt that it is a major factor for our purposes.

I have described what we do in Charlotte. I believe they are standard procedures.

*Appendix B***Detailed Data - Panel Based Tabulations****CPS****NCVS****CEQ**

CPS - PANEL NONRESPONSE
Panels Initiated in January 1997 through September 1997

	MIS 1	MIS 2	MIS 3	MIS 4	MIS 5	MIS 6	MIS 7	MIS 8	2-8 Avg	Diff Avg - MIS1
OVERALL NONRESPONSE RATES										
1997 Initiations										
Month of Initiation										
January	8.1	5.9	5.5	5.4	8.3	7.3	7.1	6.6	6.6	-1.5
February	9.5	6.4	6.1	6.2	10.2	8.6	7.6	6.9	7.4	-2.1
March	8.3	6.2	6.2	6.3	9.8	7.8	6.7	6.6	7.1	-1.3
April	8.0	5.2	5.3	5.7	7.9	6.7	6.5	6.0	6.2	-1.8
May	7.9	5.5	5.5	5.0	7.8	6.8	6.6	6.4	6.2	-1.7
June	8.0	6.0	5.5	5.4	8.5	6.8	6.3	5.7	6.3	-1.7
July	9.5	6.0	5.0	5.2	8.0	6.3	5.6	4.9	5.8	-3.6
August	8.2	5.4	5.5	5.1	9.1	7.0	6.4	5.6	6.3	-1.9
September	8.1	5.3	5.0	5.8	8.2	6.2	5.7	5.2	5.9	-2.2
Average	8.4	5.8	5.5	5.6	8.7	7.1	6.5	6.0	6.4	-2.0

	MIS 1	MIS 2	MIS 3	MIS 4	MIS 5	MIS 6	MIS 7	MIS 8	2-8 Avg	Diff Avg - MIS1
REFUSAL RATES										
1997 Initiations										
Month of Initiation										
January	3.5	3.3	3.7	3.8	5.0	5.2	5.3	5.0	4.5	0.9
February	4.5	4.2	4.0	4.3	6.1	6.1	6.0	5.3	5.1	0.6
March	3.8	2.0	4.2	4.3	6.2	5.7	4.3	4.9	4.5	0.7
April	3.6	2.7	3.3	3.6	5.0	4.3	4.6	4.0	3.9	0.4
May	3.5	3.1	3.4	3.3	4.1	4.3	4.2	4.4	3.8	0.3
June	3.3	2.0	3.5	3.9	4.3	4.0	4.0	3.8	3.6	0.4
July	3.5	3.1	3.2	3.4	4.0	3.5	3.6	3.2	3.4	-0.1
August	3.8	3.1	3.5	3.6	4.5	4.2	4.2	4.2	3.9	0.1
September	3.5	3.0	3.3	3.6	4.5	3.8	4.0	3.7	3.7	0.2
Average	3.7	3.0	3.6	3.8	4.9	4.6	4.5	4.3	4.1	0.4

	MIS 1	MIS 2	MIS 3	MIS 4	MIS 5	MIS 6	MIS 7	MIS 8	2-8 Avg	Diff Avg - MIS1
NO ONE HOME RATES										
1997 Initiations										
Month of Initiation										
January	2.7	1.2	0.8	0.9	2.1	1.3	1.1	1.0	1.2	-1.5
February	2.9	1.1	1.1	1.0	2.5	1.5	1.0	0.9	1.3	-1.6
March	2.4	1.1	1.0	0.9	2.2	1.3	1.5	0.9	1.3	-1.2
April	2.2	1.3	0.9	1.1	1.8	1.4	1.2	1.1	1.3	-0.9
May	2.5	1.4	1.1	0.9	2.3	1.6	1.4	1.0	1.4	-1.1
June	2.8	1.5	1.1	0.9	2.6	1.7	1.2	1.1	1.5	-1.3
July	3.3	1.7	0.9	1.0	2.0	1.4	1.0	0.9	1.3	-2.0
August	2.2	1.6	1.2	0.8	2.4	1.6	1.3	0.8	1.4	-0.9
September	2.5	1.3	1.0	1.3	2.1	1.5	0.9	0.7	1.2	-1.2
Average	2.6	1.4	1.0	1.0	2.2	1.5	1.1	0.9	1.3	-1.3

CPS - PANEL DATA - p.2

	MIS 1	MIS 2	MIS 3	MIS 4	MIS 5	MIS 6	MIS 7	MIS 8	2-8 Avg	Diff Avg - MIS1
TEMPORARILY ABSENT RATES										
1997 Initiations										
Month of Initiation										
January	1.3	1.0	0.7	0.5	0.9	0.7	0.6	0.4	0.7	-0.6
February	1.7	0.9	0.7	0.7	1.2	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.8	-0.9
March	1.9	0.9	0.7	0.9	1.1	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.8	-1.0
April	1.7	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.8	-0.9
May	1.5	0.8	0.9	0.6	1.1	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.8	-0.6
June	1.6	1.1	0.7	0.5	1.4	0.9	1.0	0.5	0.9	-0.7
July	2.4	1.0	0.7	0.6	1.8	1.2	0.9	0.7	1.0	-1.4
August	1.7	0.5	0.6	0.6	1.8	1.0	0.7	0.5	0.8	-0.9
September	1.8	0.8	0.5	0.7	1.2	0.5	0.5	0.7	0.7	-1.1
Average	1.7	0.9	0.7	0.7	1.2	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.8	-0.9

	MIS 1	MIS 2	MIS 3	MIS 4	MIS 5	MIS 6	MIS 7	MIS 8	2-8 Avg	Diff Avg - MIS1
OTHER TYPE A Rates										
1997 Initiations										
Month of Initiation										
January	0.6	0.4	0.4	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.3	-0.4
February	0.4	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.2	-0.2
March	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.2	-0.1
April	0.6	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	-0.4
May	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	-0.3
June	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	-0.2
July	0.4	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	-0.2
August	0.5	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.2	-0.3
September	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.1	0.2	-0.1
Average	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.2	-0.2

NCVS - PANEL NONRESPONSE
Panels Initiated in January 1994 through December 1994 (Sample 17)

NCVS - OVERALL NONRESPONSE RATES

Panel/Rotation	TIS							2-7 Avg	Diff Avg-TIS1	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7			
11	6.3	3.8	4.6	5.6	5.5	5.5	5.4	5.1	-1.2	<i>Jul '96</i>
21	5.8	5.4	5.6	5.5	6.4	5.9	5.4	5.7	-0.1	<i>Aug '96</i>
31	4.7	4.2	5.3	6.5	5.6	5.4	4.5	5.3	0.6	
41	4.7	4.1	4.5	3.6	5.5	5.0	3.9	4.4	-0.3	
51	4.7	5.1	4.3	5.3	5.1	4.6	4.6	4.8	0.1	
61	4.6	4.1	5.3	7.9	5.4	6.0	4.9	5.6	1.0	
12	5.4	4.5	4.5	5.0	5.5	6.3	6.2	4.6	-0.8	<i>Jan '96</i>
22	5.4	5.4	5.8	7.9	5.9	5.4	5.0	5.9	0.5	
32	4.3	3.6	3.5	5.1	4.1	5.8	4.8	4.5	0.2	
42	5.7	5.6	5.5	4.7	4.3	4.7	3.8	4.8	-0.9	
52	7.9	4.3	4.5	5.4	4.2	5.9	4.9	4.9	-3.0	
62	6.0	5.8	8.0	7.2	6.3	5.2	6.2	6.5	0.5	<i>Jun '96</i>
AVERAGE	5.5	4.7	5.1	5.8	5.3	5.5	5.0	5.2	-0.3	

NCVS - REFUSAL RATES

Panel/Rotation	TIS							2-7 Avg	Diff Avg-TIS1	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7			
11	2.9	1.9	2.7	3.1	3.2	3.8	3.5	3.0	0.1	
21	2.7	2.6	3.5	3.2	4.0	3.3	3.2	3.3	0.6	
31	1.4	2.0	3.0	3.8	3.5	3.2	3.0	3.1	1.7	
41	1.2	1.9	2.4	2.2	3.3	3.1	2.5	3.1	1.9	
51	2.0	2.1	2.9	3.4	3.4	2.8	3.1	2.6	0.6	
61	2.2	2.1	2.6	3.1	3.5	3.8	3.2	3.0	0.8	
12	2.3	2.8	2.8	3.0	2.7	4.2	3.3	3.1	0.8	
22	2.6	3.1	3.3	4.5	3.8	3.9	2.5	3.1	0.5	
32	1.9	2.1	2.5	3.3	3.0	3.3	3.0	3.5	1.6	
42	2.8	3.0	2.9	3.4	2.6	2.7	2.3	2.9	0.1	
52	3.1	2.3	2.3	3.6	2.9	3.6	3.9	2.8	-0.3	
62	2.6	3.0	3.4	2.8	3.9	3.2	3.7	3.1	0.5	
AVERAGE	2.3	2.4	2.9	3.3	3.3	3.4	3.1	3.3	1.0	

NCVS - NO ONE HOME RATES

Panel/Rotation	TIS							2-7 Avg	Diff Avg-TIS1	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7			
11	1.8	0.9	1.2	0.6	1.5	1.0	0.7	1.0	-0.8	
21	2.1	1.5	1.2	1.5	1.1	1.6	0.9	1.3	-0.8	
31	1.9	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.1	1.0	0.8	1.2	-0.7	
41	2.1	1.0	1.2	1.0	1.7	1.4	1.1	1.2	-0.9	
51	1.2	1.9	0.7	1.0	0.9	1.0	0.7	1.0	-0.2	
61	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.9	1.4	1.4	0.6	1.3	0.1	
12	1.1	0.9	0.9	1.4	1.6	1.2	1.2	1.2	0.1	
22	1.5	1.5	0.9	1.2	0.9	0.8	0.9	1.0	-0.5	
32	1.2	0.6	0.6	0.9	0.6	1.2	0.7	0.8	-0.4	
42	1.7	1.3	1.3	1.0	1.2	0.7	0.7	1.0	-0.7	
52	2.9	1.2	1.1	0.9	0.9	0.7	0.7	0.9	-2.0	
62	2.1	1.3	1.6	0.5	1.5	0.7	1.2	1.1	-1.0	
AVERAGE	1.7	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.2	1.1	0.9	1.1	-0.6	

NCVS - PANEL DATA p.2**NCVS - TEMPORARILY ABSENT RATES**

Panel/Rotation	TIS							2-7 Avg	Diff Avg-TIS1
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
11	0.6	0.7	0.4	1.0	0.6	0.7	0.5	0.7	0.1
21	0.4	0.8	0.3	0.5	0.5	0.2	0.6	0.5	0.1
31	0.8	0.4	0.7	0.7	0.4	0.8	0.3	0.6	-0.3
41	0.8	0.8	0.1	0.1	0.4	0.3	0.1	0.3	-0.5
51	0.9	0.7	0.3	0.6	0.3	0.5	0.1	0.4	-0.5
61	0.7	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.5	-0.2
12	1.5	0.4	0.7	0.1	0.8	0.4	0.8	0.5	-1.0
22	0.8	0.4	1.0	0.6	1.0	0.4	0.5	0.7	-0.2
32	0.7	0.3	0.1	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.3	-0.4
42	0.5	0.5	0.8	0.3	0.2	1.1	0.6	0.6	0.1
52	0.9	0.3	0.7	0.4	0.2	0.7	0.1	0.4	-0.5
62	0.4	0.9	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.8	0.4	0.5	0.1
AVERAGE	0.8	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.4	0.5	-0.3

Note: The highlighted overall nonresponse rates in panels 21, 31, 12, and 62 were adjusted to be more in line with the trends. They are the average of the two adjacent rates. The actual nonresponse rates, which are shown in Appendix B, were atypically high due unusual circumstances (Government shutdown and Budget constraints).

CEQ - p.1

CEQ - PANEL RESPONSE AND NONRESPONSE
Sample 16: Panels Initiated in June 1993 Through May 1994

	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Interview 4	Interview 5
ELIGIBLE Units (1)	6223	6187	6180	6141	6078
Number of Interviewed Cases	5289	5122	5116	5070	5066
RESPONSE RATE	85.0	82.8	82.8	82.6	83.3
Overall Number of Noninterview Units	934	1065	1064	1071	1012
NONRESPONSE RATE	15.0	17.2	17.2	17.4	16.7
Number of Refusals	794	961	987	993	950
REFUSAL RATES	12.8	15.5	16.0	16.2	15.6
Number of No One Home	41	57	39	32	30
NO ONE HOME RATE	0.7	0.9	0.6	0.5	0.5
Number of Temporarily Absent Units	52	26	21	22	16
TEMPORARILY ABSENT RATE	0.8	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.3
Number of Other Noninterview Units	47	21	17	24	16
OTHER NONINTERVIEW RATE	0.8	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.3

Note: The numbers for the 12 panels
were combined

(1) Eligibles units include originally assigned
and in-mover units

*

CEQ - p.2

**CEQ - PANEL NONRESPONSE BY ELIGIBILITY STATUS
SAMPLE 16: Panels Initiated in June 1993 through May 1994**

Interview	All Sample Units Eligible at Given Interview	Units Eligible at the First Interview	Units Eligible After the First Interview Added At Interview:			
			2	3	4	5
Number of Eligible Units						
1	6223	6223				
2	6187	5746	441			
3	6180	5418	368	394		
4	6141	5128	315	311	387	
5	6078	4895	253	263	330	337
NONRESPONSE RATES						
1	15.0	15.0				
2	17.2	17.5	12.9			
3	17.2	18.0	12.0	11.4		
4	17.4	18.3	15.9	14.2	10.1	
5	16.6	17.7	15.4	15.2	10.6	9.5