

the public of the availability of its FY 2021 Service Contracts Inventory and Inventory Supplement.

**ADDRESSES:** <https://www.justice.gov/jmd/service-contract-inventory>.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Tara M. Jamison, Office of Acquisition Management, Justice Management Division, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC 20530; Phone: 202-616-3754; Email: [Tara.Jamison@usdoj.gov](mailto:Tara.Jamison@usdoj.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The inventory includes service contract actions over \$25,000 that were awarded in fiscal year (FY) 2020. Additionally, the inventory supplement includes information collected from contractors on the amount invoiced and direct labor hours expended for covered service contracts. The Department of Justice analyzes this data for the purpose of determining whether its contract labor is being used in an effective and appropriate manner and if the mix of federal employees and contractors in the agency is effectively balanced. The inventory and supplement do not include contractor proprietary or sensitive information.

*Authority:* Section 743 of Division C of the FY 2010 Consolidated Appropriations Act, Pub. L. 111-117.

Dated: October 27, 2023.

**Darwin Arceo,**

*Department Clearance Officer for PRA, U.S. Department of Justice.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

### Bureau of Labor Statistics

#### Information Collection Activities; Comment Request

**AGENCY:** Bureau of Labor Statistics, Department of Labor.

**ACTION:** Notice of information collection; request for comment.

**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. 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. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) is soliciting comments concerning the proposed extension without change of a currently approved collection for the “Producer Price Index” 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 of this notice on or before January 2, 2024.

**ADDRESSES:** Send comments to Nora Kincaid, BLS Clearance Officer, Division of Management Systems, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Room G225, 2 Massachusetts Avenue NE, Washington, DC 20212. Written comments also may be transmitted by email to [BLS\\_PRA\\_Public@bls.gov](mailto:BLS_PRA_Public@bls.gov).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Nora Kincaid, BLS Clearance Officer, at 202-691-7628 (this is not a toll-free number). (See **ADDRESSES** section.)

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

#### **I. Background**

The Producer Price Index (PPI) is a Principal Federal Economic Indicator consisting of a family of indexes that measures the average change over time in the selling prices received by domestic producers of goods and services. PPIs measure price change from the perspective of the seller. This contrasts with other measures, such as the Consumer Price Index (CPI), that measure price change from the purchaser’s perspective. About 10,000 PPIs for individual products and groups of products are released each month. The PPI data are widely used by the business community as well as by government and academia. In particular, the data are used as an economic indicator playing a crucial role in market analysis, as a deflator of other economic series, the basis for the calculation of price adjustments for contracts and purchase agreements, and as an input to economic research. These uses highlight the necessity of the PPI in order to understand the economy.

PPI data meets a wide range of government needs by providing a description of the magnitude and composition of price changes within the economy. Government agencies view these indexes as sensitive indicators of the economic environment and closely follow each monthly release of statistics. PPI data are vital in helping the President and Congress set fiscal spending targets. The Federal Reserve

Board Open Market Committee monitors producer prices to help determine monetary policy. Federal policy makers at the Department of the Treasury and the Council of Economic Advisors utilize these statistics to help interpret the economic environment and make decisions based upon these interpretations. Many dollar-denominated measurements of economic performance, such as the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), require accurate price data for the conversion of nominal dollars into real dollars. National income accounting figures must also be inflation free in order to remain relevant to fiscal and monetary policy makers setting objectives. Price adjustment clauses in government purchasing contracts commonly use one or more PPIs. According to a conservative estimate, hundreds-of-billions of dollars’ worth of contracts and purchase agreements employ PPIs as part of price adjustment clauses. Failure to calculate these price data would prolong the time frame needed for accurate recognition of and appropriate adaptation to economic events.

The private sector also makes extensive use of PPI data. Researchers commonly use producer prices to probe and measure the interaction of market forces. Private firms use PPIs for contract escalation and price adjustment. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) recommends using PPI data for certain kinds of tax related inventory accounting, such as Last-In-First-Out (LIFO). Private businesses extensively use PPIs for planning and operations. Firms often compare the prices they pay and receive with changes in appropriate PPIs.

Economic researchers and forecasters also put PPIs to regular use. They use PPI data to better understand market forces. Research topics requiring producer price data include studying elasticities, potential lead and lag structures within price changes, and the identification of prices that cause major influence throughout the economy. Policy-makers, businesses, and researchers all require complete descriptions of price change trends if they are to perform effectively.

The expansive coverage of PPIs makes them very valuable to the users described above as well as many others.

#### **II. Current Action**

Office of Management and Budget clearance is being sought for the extension of the PPI survey.

The PPI collection is not a one-time project with an end date. The purpose of the PPI collection is to accumulate

data for the ongoing, monthly publication of the PPI family of indexes. The Bureau of Labor Statistics must continue collecting data for the PPI since both policy and business planning benefit from accurate, timely, and relevant description of price trends. Legislators and government agencies use the PPI to assist them with developing policy and evaluating the markets. Dollar-denominated measures of economic performance, such as Gross Domestic Product, require accurate price data in order to convert nominal to constant-dollar values. Inflation-free national income accounting figures are vital to fiscal and monetary policy-makers when setting objectives and targets. The price adjustment clauses of purchase agreements use monthly PPIs. It is conservatively estimated that hundreds-of-billions of dollars' worth of

contracts and purchase agreements employ PPIs as part of price-adjustment clauses. Failure to provide current accurate monthly statistics would necessitate more complex clauses in contracts and prolong the time required to determine price changes for purposes of contract adjustments.

**III. 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.
- 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.

*Title of Collection:* Producer Price Index Survey.

*OMB Number:* 1220-0008.

*Type of Review:* Extension without change of a currently approved collection.

*Affected Public:* Private Sector.

Data collection	Number of respondents	Frequency	Number of responses (per year)	Average time per response (minutes)	Estimated total burden (hours)
Initiation BLS Forms 1810A, C, C1, and E.	4,305	Once	4,305	120	8,610
Data Quality Verification Calls	Subset of 4,305 initiation respondents (Approximately 8%).	Once	340	15	85
BLS IDCF	11,107	Monthly	660,537	5	55,045
Totals	15,412		665,182		63,740

\* For monthly repricing, PPI requests repricing of 55,045 items each month.

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 30th day of October 2023.

**Eric Molina,**

*Chief, Division of Management Systems, Branch of Policy Analysis.*

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**DEPARTMENT OF LABOR**

**Mine Safety and Health Administration**

**Fee Adjustment for Testing, Evaluation, and Approval of Mining Products**

**AGENCY:** Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA), Labor.

**ACTION:** Notice of fee adjustment.

**SUMMARY:** The Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) is announcing a revised hourly rate for the fees charged to applicants and approval holders for testing, evaluating, and approving products for use in mines. MSHA

charges a fee to cover the costs (direct and indirect) of its services associated with the approval program. The new hourly rate will be \$166.

**DATES:** MSHA will charge the new hourly rate for new approval services starting January 1, 2024.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Juliette E. Hill, Chief, Approval and Certification Center (A&CC), 304-547-2029 or 304-547-0400 (these are not toll-free numbers).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**I. Background**

The Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977 (Mine Act), as amended, authorizes MSHA to approve equipment, materials, and explosives for use in mines to ensure that the products are designed, constructed, and maintained so as not to cause a fire, explosion, or other accident. Under 30 CFR part 5—Fees for Testing, Evaluation, and Approval of Mining Products, MSHA establishes the method the Agency uses to calculate the fees needed to recover costs for approval services. Under 30 U.S.C. 966, MSHA may collect and retain up to \$2,499,000 of fees collected for the approval and

certification of equipment, materials, and explosives for use in mines.

On December 21, 2018, MSHA published a notice of fee adjustment in the **Federal Register** (83 FR 65747) that adjusted the Agency's fees for testing, evaluation, and approval of products manufactured for use in mines. Since January 1, 2019, MSHA has charged an hourly rate of \$137.

**II. Applicable Fee**

Under 30 CFR 5.50, a new hourly rate must remain in effect for at least 1 year and the rate will be subject to revision at least once every 3 years. MSHA determines a new hourly rate by dividing the total of approval program costs (direct and indirect costs) for a previous fiscal year by the number of total direct hours spent on approval program activities for that fiscal year.

For this update, MSHA calculated the FY 2024 hourly rate using FY 2021 costs. MSHA has determined that as of January 1, 2024, the hourly rate will be \$166 per hour for services on new applications and post-approval activities (changes to approvals and post-approval product audits). This rate increase is consistent with cumulative inflation between January 2019, when