What is the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW)?

- The QCEW is drawn from 9.2 million employer reports filed quarterly by law as part of the unemployment insurance (UI) program.
- These reports cover 97% of total nonfarm employment and expand with the economy.
- Each report includes industry, location, monthly employment, and quarterly wages.
- This timely, virtual census makes possible multiple uses and products.
- QCEW is the foundation of much of the federal statistical system.
QCEW: Business universe list with many products and uses

- Gross Domestic Product (BEA)
- Personal Income (BEA)
- State Revenue Projections
- Economic Forecasting

General Economic Uses

Analytical Uses

Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW)

Programmatic Uses

- UI Tax Rate & Actuarial Analysis
- UI-Covered Employment
- Local Area Unemployment
- Social Security Administration
- Federal Funds Allocation $321 Billion (HUD, USDA, HCFA/CHIP)

Benchmarking (Employment Base)

Sampling

- Current Employment Statistics
- Occupational Employment Statistics
- Occupational Safety and Health Statistics
- Jobs Openings & Labor Turnover Survey

Local Economic Development Indicators
- Cluster Analysis
- Shift Share
- Industry Diversity Indexes
- Location Quotients

Minimum Wage Studies

Quarterly Press Releases, Annual Employment and Wages

Job Creation/Destruction
- Size Class Dynamics
- Business Survival Rates

Geocoded Establishments

Interagency Data Uses
- Improve CPS After 2010 Census
- LEHD
- Industry Code Sharing

Local Government Services Planning

Local Economic Impact Response Planning

Local Transportation Planning

Industrial Price Program

National Compensation Survey

Current Employment Statistics

Occupational Employment Statistics

Occupational Safety and Health Statistics

Job Openings & Labor Turnover Survey

Federal Funds Allocation $321 Billion (HUD, USDA, HCFA/CHIP)
Measures employment and wages in disaster areas

- Created for 9/11 Manhattan and for Hurricane Katrina
- QCEW geocoded employer data was matched to FEMA maps of affected area.
- Possible on an ad-hoc basis.
Measures employment and wages in disaster areas

- Hurricane flood zone maps and tables for all Gulf and Atlantic counties.
- Available before event, based on Corps of Engineers mapping files.
Big Data matching possibilities

- QCEW is a near census of US employers. This makes sample selection less of an issue for new products.
- QCEW includes fields such as the Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN) and latitude/longitude that support matching to other files.
- Lessons learned from the hurricane map project are being applied to a new QCEW product measuring the non-profit sector.
QCEW confidentiality protection: current

- BLS pledges to protect confidentiality to encourage high response rates across all BLS employer surveys.

- QCEW uses p% rule to identify sensitive cells.

- Complementary suppression provides protection against discovery by subtracting from totals.
QCEW confidentiality protection: research

- There is high interest in many new QCEW products. This is unsupportable by a cell-based approach to protection.
- Perturbation can protect large QCEW records.
- Small establishments need another solution. Half of QCEW establishments have 3 or fewer employees.
- QCEW protection needs to be simple, affordable, and to result in usable data.