

**A WORKSHOP**  
**Sample Representativeness:**  
**Implications for Administering and Testing Stated Preference Surveys**

**Alan Krupnick and David A. Evans, RFF**

Stated preference surveys are frequently being used in regulatory contexts to inform policy. Conducting a high quality stated preference survey may present a variety of methodological challenges. Assuring representative responses is one of these challenges. For stated preference surveys, the NOAA Panel on Contingent Valuation, formed in response to questions raised about projects to estimate nonuse values associated with the Exxon Valdez oil spill, suggested that in-person surveys with a high response rate were needed to help assure credibility of stated preference surveys. However, as the Panel acknowledges, many of its recommendations were made absent evidence from high quality surveys. The purpose of this EPA-funded workshop is to identify and discuss appropriate means of measuring sample representativeness and reducing sample biases in stated preference surveys.

Many surveys have experienced declining response rates in recent years, and researchers have devoted increasing attention to assessing the effects of declining response rates on data quality. Although surveys sponsored by Federal agencies have traditionally achieved higher response rates than those sponsored by commercial or academic organizations, many Federal surveys have also experienced declines in response rates and attendant increases in resources required to maintain high response rates. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB), which must approve all government sponsored surveys, has recently issued standards and guidance related to statistical surveys. One component that has received attention and interest concerns response rates and potential non-response bias. The OMB guidance requires Federal agencies to conduct extensive non-response analyses when expected response rates are below 80%, which the OMB uses as an indicator of sample representativeness.

The use of panel-based internet surveys (which has been growing in popularity) poses particular challenges to achieving high response rates due to the multiple stages of recruitment and participation to become a panel member. However, achieving representative samples and, further, samples that do not significantly bias outcomes of interest is not necessarily tied to response rates.

To address issues of sample representativeness in stated preference surveys, we are inviting 30 of the top experts in survey methodology, statisticians and stated preference surveys practitioners to share their knowledge, insights and experiences regarding this issue. In addition, we will be asking authors of recently performed stated preference surveys or other germane research to write a two-page summary describing their studies and results, how they tested for and addressed any biases in sample representativeness. The focus will lean towards administrations via internet with samples drawn from a probability-based panel. However, experience with more traditional modes that can also accommodate extensive information treatments, such as mail and in-person, will also be considered. These summaries from practitioners will be distributed to the authors of commissioned papers well in advance of the due date for such papers, so that they may be referenced or incorporated as appropriate. The workshop deliberations are designed to be informative for Federal agencies conducting stated preference surveys for regulatory purposes as well as for OMB in providing guidance to agencies in these areas.

## AGENDA

### **Sample Representativeness: Implications for Administering and Testing Stated Preference Surveys**

**October 2, 2006  
Resources For the Future Conference Center  
1616 P Street NW, Washington, DC**

- 8:00-8:30**      **Registration and Coffee**
- 8:30-8:50**      **Opening Remarks:** Philip Sharp, President of Resources for the Future  
**Purpose, Regulatory Context and Plan of the Day:** Alan Krupnick
- 8:50-9:30**      **Session I:      Agency Perspectives**  
Brian Harris-Kojetin  
Office of Management and Budget:  
*OMB Guidance and Standards for Statistical Surveys*  
Nathalie Simon  
Associate Director, National Center of Environmental Economics  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Bob Leeworthy  
Leader, Coastal and Ocean Resource Economics Program  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
Linda Langner  
Economics Program Leader, Resource Valuation & Use Research  
U.S. Forest Service
- 9:30-11:00**      **Session II:      Evidence on the Relation of Response Rates to Sample  
Representativeness**  
Robert Groves, University of Michigan :  
*Response Rates and Nonresponse Bias - What We Know and What We  
Don't Know*  
Jon Krosnick, Stanford University :  
*The Causes and Consequences of Survey Response Rates*
- 11:00-11:15**      **Break**
- 11:15-12:00**      **Session III:      Meta-analysis of Response Rates to Contingent-Valuation Studies  
Conducted by Mail**  
Kevin Boyle, Virginia Tech
- 12:00-1:00**      **Lunch (provided)**
- 1:00-2:00**      **Session IV:      Summarizing Analyses of Sample Representativeness in Recent  
Stated Preference Surveys-Practitioner Perspectives**  
Alan Krupnick and David A. Evans, Resources for the Future  
Discussant: Joel Huber, Duke University

- 2:00-3:30**      **Session V:**      **Research Advances/Agenda**  
Trudy Cameron, University of Oregon  
*Scavenging for Covariates to Use in Selectivity Assessment  
and Correction Strategies*  
Dan Hellerstein, Economic Research Service, USDA  
*Correcting for Non-response Bias in Discrete Choice Models: A Two-  
Stage Mixed Logit Model*  
Erika Edwards, Boston University  
*Internet vs. Phone Survey: An Application to Alcohol Research*
- 3:30-3:45**      **Break**
- 3:45-5:00**      **Session VI:**      **Implications for Agency Guidance Panel Discussion**  
Alan Krupnick, Moderator  
Resources for the Future  
Brian Harris-Kojetin  
Office of Management and Budget  
Kerry Smith  
Arizona State University  
Norman Meade  
Office of Response and Restoration, NOAA  
Mike Brick  
University of Maryland and Westat