

Appendix C.

Methodology

SOURCES OF THE DATA

The mining sector includes approximately 25,000 establishments. This number includes those industries in the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) definition of mining. The amount of information requested from mining establishments was dependent upon a number of factors. The more important consideration was the size of the company.

Establishments in the 2002 Economic Census are divided into those sent report forms and those not sent report forms. The coverage of and the method of obtaining census information from each are described below:

1. Establishments sent a report form:
 - a. Large and medium size establishments. Approximately 48 percent of all mining establishments were included in this group. A variable cutoff, based on administrative-record payroll data and determined on an industry-by-industry basis, was used to select those establishments that were to receive 1 of the 15 economic census — mining regular forms. The first seven pages, requesting establishment data for items, such as employment and payroll, costs, assets, and capital expenditures, were fairly standard although some variation occurred depending on the industries collected on the form. The remaining pages of the form contained product, supply, fuel, and special inquiries. The diversity of the mining activities necessitated the use of several forms to canvass the 29 mining industries.
 - b. Small single-establishment companies. This group included approximately 12 percent of all mining establishments. For those industries where application of the variable cutoff for administrative-record cases resulted in a large number of small establishments being included in the mail canvass, an abbreviated or short form was used. Establishments in the crushed stone, sand and gravel, and crude petroleum and natural gas industries with 5 to 19 employees received 1 of 2 versions of the short form. The form requested summary product and material data and totals, but no details on payrolls, cost of supplies and fuels, assets, and capital expenditures.

Use of the short form has no adverse effect on published totals for the industry statistics, because the same data were collected on the short form as on the long form. However, detailed information on products, supplies, and fuels was not collected on the short form; thus, its use would increase the value of the “not specified by kind” (nsk) categories.

2. Establishments not sent a report form:
 - a. Small single-establishment companies not sent a report form. Approximately 40 percent of the mining establishments were small single-establishment companies that were excused from filing a census report. Selection of these establishments was based on two factors: annual payroll and the Census Bureau’s ability to assign the correct six-digit NAICS industry classification to the establishment. For each six-digit NAICS industry code, an annual payroll cutoff was determined. These cutoffs were derived so that the establishments with payroll less than the cutoff were expected to account for no more than 3 percent of the value of shipments and receipts for the industry. Generally, all single-establishment companies with less than 5 employees were excused, while all establishments with more than 20 employees were mailed forms. Establishments below the cutoff that could not be directly assigned a six-digit NAICS code were mailed a classification report that requested information for assigning NAICS industry codes. Establishments below the cutoff that could be

directly assigned a six-digit NAICS code were excused from filing any report. For below cut-off establishments, information on the physical location, payroll, and receipts was obtained from the administrative records of other federal agencies under special arrangements that safeguarded their confidentiality.

Estimates of data for these small establishments were developed using industry averages in conjunction with the administrative information. The value of shipments and receipts, cost of supplies, etc., and cost of fuels were not distributed among specific products, supplies, and fuels for these establishments but were included in the product, supplies, and fuels “not specified by kind” (nsk) categories.

The industry classification codes included in the administrative-record files were assigned on the basis of brief descriptions of the general activity of the establishment. As a result, an indeterminate number of establishments were erroneously coded to a six-digit NAICS industry. This was especially true whenever there was a relatively fine line of demarcation between industries or between mining and nonmining activity.

Sometimes the administrative-record cases had only two- or three-digit NAICS group classification codes available in the files. For mining, these establishments were sent a separate classification form, which requested information on the products and services of the establishment. This form was used to code many of these establishments to the appropriate six-digit NAICS level. Establishments that did not return the classification form were coded later to those six-digit NAICS industries identified as “All other,” a default within the given subsector.

As a result of these situations, a number of small establishments may have been misclassified by industry. However, such possible misclassification has no significant effect on the statistics other than on the number of companies and establishments.

The total establishment count for individual industries should be viewed as an approximation rather than a precise measurement. The counts for establishments with 20 employees or more are far more reliable than the count of total number of establishments.

- b. All nonemployers, i.e., all firms subject to federal income tax, with no paid employees, during 2002 are excluded as in previous censuses. Data for nonemployers are not included in this report, but are released in the annual *Nonemployer Statistics* series.

The report forms used to collect information for establishments in this sector are available at help.econ.census.gov/econhelp/resources/.

A more detailed examination of census methodology is presented in the *History of the Economic Census* at www.census.gov/econ/www/history.html.

INDUSTRY CLASSIFICATION OF ESTABLISHMENTS

The classifications for all establishments covered in the 2002 Economic Census — Mining are classified in 1 of 29 industries in accordance with the industry definitions in the *North American Industry Classification System, (NAICS), United States, 2002* manual. Changes between 1997 and 2002 affecting this sector are discussed in the text at the beginning of this report. Tables at www.census.gov/epcd/naics02/ identify those industries that changed between the 1997 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) and 2002 NAICS. When applicable, Appendix F of this report shows the product class and product comparability between the two systems for data in this report.

In the NAICS system, an industry is generally defined as a group of establishments that have similar processes used to produce the mineral products. To the extent practical, the system uses supply-based or production-oriented concepts in defining industries. The resulting group of establishments must be significant in terms of its number, value added by mining, value of shipments and receipts, number of employees, and payroll.

The coding system works in such a way that the definitions progressively become narrower with successive additions of numerical digits. In the mining sector for 2002, there are 3 subsectors (three-digit NAICS), 5 industry groups (four-digit NAICS), 10 NAICS industries (five-digit NAICS) that are comparable with Canadian and Mexican classification, and 29 U.S. industries (six-digit NAICS). Product classes and products of the mining industries have been assigned codes based on the industry from which they originate. There are 63 product classes (seven-digit codes) and 136 ten-digit product codes. The ten-digit products are considered the primary products of the industry with the same first six digits.

For the 2002 Economic Census — Mining, all establishments were classified in particular industries based on the products they produced. If an establishment made products of more than one industry, it was classified in the industry with the largest product value.

Establishments frequently make products classified both in their industry (primary products) and other industries (secondary products). Industry statistics (employment, payroll, value added by mining, value of shipments and receipts, etc.) reflect the activities of the establishments that may make both primary and secondary products. Product statistics, however, represent the output of all establishments without regard for the classification of the producing establishment. For this reason, when relating the industry statistics, especially the value of shipments and receipts, to the product statistics, the composition of the industry's output should be considered.

ESTABLISHMENT BASIS OF REPORTING

The 2002 Economic Census — Mining covers each mining establishment of firms with one or more paid employees operating in the United States. A company operating at more than one establishment is required to file a separate report for each location. A mining establishment is defined as a single physical location where mineral operations are conducted. However, a company engaged in distinctly different lines of activity at one location is required to submit a separate report for each activity, if the plant records permit such a separation and, if the activities are substantial in size.

For oil and gas field operations and for contract services, the basis for reporting is different from the “establishment” basis used for other types of mining. Firms operating oil and gas wells, drilling wells, or exploring for oil and gas for their own account were required to submit a separate report for each state or offshore area adjacent to a state in which it conducted such activities. Firms that performed contract services for oil and gas field operations or for mining establishments were required to submit one report covering all such activities in the United States and to include information on receipts for services, production-worker wages, and hours, by state. These consolidated reports were then allocated to state establishments based on the data reported at the state level. The 2002 figures for establishments include the summation of operations for each state allocated from these nationwide reports.

In 2002, as in prior censuses since 1967, data for single-unit firms without paid employees were excluded. This exclusion had only a slight effect on industry aggregates for most industries. Data for firms without employees were included in the 1963, 1958, and 1954 censuses, if they reported more than \$500 in (1) value of shipments and receipts, (2) cost of supplies and purchased machinery, or (3) capital expenditures.

The 2002 Economic Census — Mining excludes data for central administrative offices (CAOs). These would include separately operated administrative offices, warehouses, garages, and other auxiliary units that service mining establishments of the same company. These data are published in a separate report series.

RELIABILITY OF DATA

All data compiled in the economic census are subject to nonsampling errors. Nonsampling errors can be attributed to many sources during the development or execution of the census:

- inability to identify all cases in the actual universe;
- definition and classification difficulties;

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- differences in the interpretation of questions;
 - errors in recording or coding the data obtained; and
 - other errors of collection, response, coverage, processing, and estimation for missing or misreported data.

The Census Bureau obtains limited information extracted from administrative records of other federal agencies, such as gross receipts from federal income tax records and employment and payroll from payroll tax records. This information is used in conjunction with other information available to the Census Bureau to develop estimates for nonemployers, small employers, and other establishments for which responses were not received in time for publication.

DUPLICATION IN COST OF MATERIALS AND VALUE OF SHIPMENTS

Data for cost of materials and value of shipments include varying amounts of duplication, especially at higher levels of aggregation. This is because the products of one establishment may be the materials of another. The value added statistics avoid this duplication and are, for most purposes, the best measure for comparing the relative economic importance of industries and geographic areas.

VALUE OF INDUSTRY SHIPMENTS COMPARED WITH VALUE OF PRODUCT SHIPMENTS

The 2002 Economic Census — Mining shows value of shipments and receipts data for industries and products. In the industry statistics tables and files, these data represent the total value of shipments of all establishments classified in a particular industry. The data include the shipments of the products classified in the industry (primary to the industry), products classified in other industries (secondary to the industry), and miscellaneous receipts (repair work, sale of scrap, research and development, installation receipts, and resales). Value of product shipments shown in the products statistics tables and files represent the total value of all products shipped that are classified as primary to an industry regardless of the classification of the producing establishment. The value of products shipped also may include some products shipped from manufacturing establishments with mining operations.

DISCLOSURE

In accordance with federal law governing census reports (Title 13 of the United States Code), no data are published that would disclose the operations of an individual establishment or company. However, the number of establishments in a specific industry or geographic area is not considered a disclosure; therefore, this information may be released even though other information is withheld. Techniques employed to limit disclosure are discussed at www.census.gov/epcd/ec02/disclosure.htm.

The disclosure analysis for the industry statistics files is based on the total value of shipments and receipts. When the total value of shipments and receipts cannot be shown without disclosing information for individual companies, the complete line is suppressed except for capital expenditures. If capital expenditures alone is a disclosure, only capital expenditures and cost of supplies statistics are suppressed. Nonetheless, the suppressed data are included in higher-level totals.