

Justification  
**Customer Satisfaction Monitoring**

1. **Circumstances of the collection** - In accordance with E.O. 12862, the Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) conducts periodic surveys designed to determine the kind and quality of services our beneficiaries, claimants, employers and members of the public want and expect, as well as their satisfaction with existing RRB services. As per the instructions received from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), these surveys are limited to data collections that solicit strictly voluntary opinions, and do not collect information which is required or regulated. The RRB requests renewal of the generic authority, that OMB first granted the RRB in 1997, to conduct a number of customer satisfaction surveys over the next three years. OMB's approval of the RRB's renewal request for generic clearance enhances the RRB's ability to comply with E.O. 12862 by providing the agency with the ability to secure timely review and approval of new or revised customer survey instruments, improving the RRB's overall ability to timely implement customer monitoring activities.
  
2. **Purposes of collecting/consequences of not collecting the information** – As the only Federal agency dedicated to providing income security and related programs to a specific industry, the RRB is a customer-centered organization. The agency has traditionally enjoyed a relationship with its customers based on cooperation, respect and service. This was confirmed by recent surveys of RRB customers performed as part of the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI).

The ACSI represents an independent annual measure of national customer satisfaction with corporate and government services. In 2001, the RRB earned a score of 82 on the ACSI survey, 13 points higher than the overall score for the Federal government and 11 points higher than the comparable private-sector average. This ACSI survey focused on the RRB's core constituency of railroad workers who had recently retired and were receiving monthly benefits. The RRB scored highest (91) in the area of customer service, with respondents specifically praising the courtesy and professionalism of agency employees.

A second survey conducted in 2002 focused on rail workers who recently applied for and received unemployment or sickness benefits from the RRB. The agency earned a total score of 75 in that survey, 4 points higher than the overall score for the Federal government. The results showed the RRB scoring highest (88) in the area of customer service, with respondents offering particular praise for the courtesy and professionalism of agency employees.

A third survey conducted in 2005, focused on the RRB survivor benefit process. The agency earned an overall total score of 90, **the highest score** for any agency surveyed that year and 18 points higher than the overall Federal government score,

Most recently, a fourth survey conducted in 2006 focused on railroad workers who were recently awarded disability benefits from the RRB. The RRB earned an overall score of 85 out of a possible 100, 14 points higher than the current overall Federal government score. Highlights of the survey found the RRB scoring highest (89) in the area of customer service, with respondents particularly praising the courtesy and professionalism of agency employees. A confidence index of 90 was earned, indicating that the RRB's customers are satisfied with the service provided by

the agency and are confident they will be well served in the future. A copy of this report is attached as a supporting document.

The RRB plans to continue the use of ACSI surveys as its **primary vehicle** to monitor customer satisfaction. **THE ACSI surveys are cleared under OMB authority granted to the Department of Treasury. The September 2006 survey utilized Department of Treasury, Federal Consulting Group, OMB Control No. 1505-1091 (not 1501-0191 as cited on page 22 of the attached report) and was estimated to take 8 minutes to complete.** However, it still plans to conduct a variety of other activities utilizing smaller periodic surveys to assist in determining the kind and quality of services our beneficiaries, claimants, employers and members of the public want and expect. These periodic surveys enhance the RRB's ability to comply with E.O. 12862, and help the agency to provide the best service possible to the railroad public we serve. It is for these types of activities that the RRB requests renewal of the generic authority to monitor customer satisfaction

The RRB's one current vehicle to conduct on-going measurements of customer satisfaction activity is **Form G-201, Customer Assessment Survey**. Details regarding its use follows:

- **RRB Form G-201, Customer Assessment Survey**, is a point-of-contact questionnaire that is provided to RRB customers (for voluntary completion) at the conclusion of a field office visit, or after completion of an application process, to assess the level of satisfaction with the recently completed service experience.

The RRB plans the following RRB Customer Service Monitoring Activities during the next renewal cycle:

- To periodically obtain comments from members of the public who have been browsing the RRB Web-site on the Internet. Comments received will allow the RRB to tailor the future design and content of our Web-Site to best suit our customers needs.
- To conduct periodic surveys of customer satisfaction. Details regarding the periodic surveys follow:

To periodically monitor a statistically determined sample of retirement, survivor, and unemployment and sickness benefit customers. The voluntary survey will be designed to contain program indicators developed to collect specific data on overall satisfaction, quality of RRB services (both direct and indirect contact), office waiting time, and ease of telephone and office access. The results of the voluntary survey will assist in determining the overall level of customer satisfaction including RRB field office, mail, and telephone services.

- To conduct focus groups periodically. Details regarding the planned activities follow.

To conduct focus groups with railroad employers in each of the next three years. These focus groups will obtain opinions and feelings on a wide variety of railroad employer wage and service

reporting issues. The RRB estimates that representatives of 50 railroad employers will participate annually in sessions lasting up to two hours.

To conduct focus groups with various interest groups over the next three years. Participants will be asked to share their views on how they want to interact with the RRB, their opinion of the RRB's current level of service and what levels of services they want and expect. The RRB plans a broad-based approach in the selection of these participants. They will include a cross section of current railroad retirement beneficiaries, unemployment and sickness insurance claimants, as well as active railroad employees. In addition, participants will be drawn from established interest groups. For reference, we have enclosed copies of previously used (OMB approved) RRB focus group forms which includes a moderator guide, focus group participant evaluation, focus group moderator questionnaire and a focus group participant questionnaire. The RRB estimates that approximately 200 individuals will participate annually in sessions lasting up to two hours.

The data provided by these on-going initiatives, periodic surveys, and focus groups will assist RRB employees in determining where and to what extent services are satisfactory and where and to what extent service can be improved.

The RRB will submit specific survey instruments, supporting statements (including statistical methods when applicable) and burden estimates to OMB for review and approval as they become available. We have included copies of some previously OMB approved forms (not currently in use) as samples of the types of survey instruments we are likely to propose.

**Please note:** In addition, the RRB is likely to plan other ad-hoc client satisfaction monitoring efforts specifically targeting program areas such as retirement and survivor programs, disability, Medicare, unemployment and sickness, and wage reporting during the requested 3 year time frame. The RRB agrees to advise and consult with OMB before proceeding with any monitoring efforts, whether they are specifically outlined above or are planned after OMB approval of the generic clearance, and agrees to provide, upon OMB approval, updated burden estimates that result from such efforts. **\*Conversely, the availability of resources may impact the RRB's ability to conduct the proposed activities.\***

3. **Planned use of improved information technology or technical/legal impediments to further burden reduction** - Improved information technology including the use of the RRB's web-site (WWW. RRB.GOV) will be used whenever possible to reduce the burden on the public.
4. **Efforts to identify duplication** - This information collection does not duplicate any other information collection.
5. **Small business respondents** - Small businesses may be involved in these efforts, but we will keep the burden on them to a minimum by asking for their opinions on a strictly voluntary basis, and by asking only the minimum amount of information needed to evaluate the RRB's performance in the areas of concern.

- 6. **Consequences of less frequent collection** -This information could not be collected less frequently. The surveys gauge customer reaction to the services that the RRB currently provides, as well as customer expectations, desires, and preferences in the areas being surveyed. Such surveys should lead to improved performance and service in specific areas.
- 7. **Special circumstances** - None
- 8. **Public comments/consultations outside the agency** - Consultations may be made on an as needed basis with other Federal agencies (SSA, HCFA, VA, etc) that have conducted or will be conducting surveys similar to those the RRB has planned. In accordance with 5 CFR 1320.8(d), comments were invited from the public regarding this information collection. The notice to the public was published on page 51236 and 51237 of the August 29, 20006, Federal Register. No comments or requests for additional information were received from the public.
- 9. **Payments or gifts to respondents** - N.A.
- 10. **Confidentiality** - Respondents will be advised that participation is voluntary and that their responses are confidential in that neither names nor any other identifying information will be divulged.
- 11. **Sensitive questions** - No sensitive information will be collected.
- 12. **Estimate of respondent burden** - The current and proposed burden for this generic collection is as follows:

**Current Annual Burden**

Form #/Survey	Annual Responses	Time (Min)	Burden (Hrs)
G-201	500	2	17
Web-Site Survey	300	5	25
Periodic Survey	1,000	12	200
Focus Groups	250	120	500
Total	2,050		742

**Estimated Annual Burden**

Form #/Survey	Annual Responses	Time (Min)	Burden (Hrs)
G-201	180	2	6
Web-Site Survey	300	5	25
Periodic Survey	1,020	12	204
Focus Groups	250	120	500
Total	1,750		735

	<u>Responses</u>	<u>Hours</u>
Total Burden Change	<u>-300</u>	<u>-7</u>
Adjustment	-300	-7

13. **Estimated annual cost to respondents or record keepers** - There is no known cost to respondents. Participation/responding is voluntary.
14. **Estimate of cost to Federal government** - N.A.
15. **Explanation for change in burden** - The burden for this collection has been slightly adjusted, largely to adjust the burden estimate for Form G-201 to more accurately reflect past historical activity. We have shown the change as an adjustment.
16. **Time schedule for data collection and publication** - The results obtained from these surveys will be disseminated to key RRB policy and management officials, employees, and the public.
17. **Request not to display OMB expiration date** - Most of the customer satisfaction surveys conducted under the generic clearance umbrella will be one-time surveys. The recurring items will be revised infrequently. The RRB requests that OMB not require the agency to display the OMB expiration date on its customer satisfaction forms and surveys.
18. **Exceptions to Certification Statement** -None