




UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Research Triangle Park, NC 27711

May 29, 2008

Office of the
Chief Financial
Officer

Memorandum

Subject: Request for Clearance of 2008 Voluntary Contractor Payment Satisfaction Survey, ICR 1711.05, OMB Number 2090-0019

From: Douglas L. Barrett, Director (D143-02)
EPA, Office of the Comptroller
Office of Financial Services
RTP- Finance Center 

Through: Patricia A. Bonner (1807T)
Customer Service Director
Office of the Administrator

To: Spencer Clark (2822T)
Information Collections Division
Office of Environmental Information

The purpose of this letter is to request approval to continue with OCFO's Office of Financial Services initiative to receive customer satisfaction feedback from to its external stakeholders. The intent of the survey questionnaire is to better understand the areas where the RTP-Finance Center can improve its contract payment services.

Background

The RTP-Finance Center is responsible for processing all EPA commercial payments. It is one of four finance centers within the OCFO's Office of Financial Services. The Office of Financial Service is involved in a major initiative to measure customer satisfaction, through various survey instruments. Last year several internal customer satisfaction surveys were conducted with excellent results. This fiscal year (FY2008) the RTP-Finance Center is seeking to receive feedback from its external stakeholders, commercial contractors that do business with the Agency.

The RTP-Finance Center has shown remarkable success in obtaining a "green" rating with regard to the Government wide performance metrics governing Prompt Payment, EFT/ACH, and Improper Payments. It has also implemented improved efficiencies, which directly benefit Agency contractors. Accordingly, the Center expects to receive positive feedback on these areas and to pinpoint specific problem areas which can be improved. The RTP-Finance Center is the lead organization over this EPA external survey and is responsible for the tabulation and submission of the results.

Customer Survey

The proposed customer satisfaction survey is completely voluntary and will appear as a link in an email memo from the RTP Finance Center to Agency contractors. The survey is expected to be completed this fiscal year. It will repeat as necessary, not to exceed being initiated on an annual basis. Approximately 500 of our contractors will receive notice of the survey's availability on our website along with a request that they access and complete it.

Respondents will have approximately three (3) weeks to complete the survey. The attached survey is comprised of 13 questions and should take respondents approximately 15 minutes to complete. It is estimated around 20% (100 contractors) will respond to the survey via a secure internet web address. The total burden on respondents will be approximately 25 hours. The estimated total annual burden to EPA for tracking, collection, analysis, and reporting is estimated to be 40 hours. The questions relate to feedback on the Finance Center's performance and its initiatives. There is one question related to the respondent's position within the company. The last question is an open-ended space for the contractor to voice any concerns, or make recommendations to improve EPA's contract payment process.

Survey Monitoring

The Center's staff will routinely monitor responses. If the response rate is estimated to fall below 15%, the Center will reissue the questionnaire, again through email, as the survey will not be repeated again this fiscal year. The Center's plan is to analyze the results as they become available, maintaining detailed records of responses in a spreadsheet format. All responses will be stored in a secure database. Since the Center has had a close relationship with many of its contractors, we expect the return rate will be sufficient to draw sound conclusions. The Center will follow up with all respondents who state a contact's name and phone number to gain additional information if they point out an area of concern or a recommendation for improvement.

Survey Results

The results of this survey will be the property of the OCFO's Office of Financial Services. Results will be used by the RTP-Finance Center to assess the contractor's perception of the Center's ability to process payments both timely and accurately, and to determine the satisfaction rate with its Customer Assistance help lines. Also, the intent of the Center is to receive: 1) inquiries regarding contractor's enrollment for emailing invoices, as oppose to using standard, or overnight mail, and 2) additional information contractors would like to see on the Agency's internet contract payment web page.

Survey Contact

Questions regarding the RTP-Finance Center contractor survey questionnaire should be directed to Guy Hickey at (919) 541-2300, email: hickey.guy@epa.gov.

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