

NASA Guidance for Completing PRA/ICB Supporting Statement

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

2700- 0113

A. Justification.

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. Identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection.

NASA is mandated to inform the public of its activities through the Space Act and the 2005 Authorization Act. This collection of information is an important component of that responsibility.

And, as a consequence of the Columbia accident, the ongoing White House and Congressional dialogue on the future of space exploration, the resulting public discussion of the goals of the nation's civilian space program, as well as a number of findings by the Columbia Accident Investigation Board, NASA has become convinced that it needs a well-thought out communications plan to accurately reflect to the American people any decisions which may be forthcoming. The results of the proposed survey effort may also aid the White House as it implements its new space vision and communicates that vision to the public.

The collection of this public opinion data is necessary based upon administrative requirements to be responsive and transparent with the public regarding their investments in a civilian space program. It is essential to understand the expectations that the American people have for their space program, specifically in the area of human and robotic exploration, if NASA wishes to remain relevant as an Agency that inspires a quest for knowledge and motivates students to become the next generation of scientists, engineers and technologists.

The continuation of this survey enables NASA to keep current on *how* the public thinks about NASA. If NASA can understand how the public evaluates information about the nation's space program, the Agency can frame or redirect an outreach strategy that meets the public at their current level of interest and awareness.

In summary, the Agency will follow a four-part approach to developing and executing a communications plan.

1. NASA must understand how various target audiences view the Agency. *NASA Public Messaging Survey #1*, as submitted to OMB, is crucial for this step.
2. NASA will design an overall communications approach consistent with the Administration's new strategic direction, including specific messages for identified audiences.

3. These messages will be tested and verified with the aid of *NASA Public Messaging Survey #2*¹ to ensure effectiveness.
4. NASA will institute metrics to assure that the messages released are adequately reaching the public.

2. Indicate how, by whom, how frequently, and for what purpose the information will be used. Except for a new collection, indicate the actual use the agency has made of the information received from the current collection.

NASA will utilize the information collected to determine the scope and accuracy of the target publics' perceptions of the Agency's endeavors and will consider these current findings in developing a more effective internal communications, and especially, communications for informational, educational and media purposes. The data received from the original efforts were used as a baseline for communication strategy and products. In addition, the original data helped improve the Agency's methods of providing information about NASA programs, as mandated by the National Aeronautics and Space Act of 1958 (the Space Act), in more consistent and coordinated ways that better resonate with NASA's various publics. For instance, the previous results showed us that the public did not realize all that NASA does. Therefore, today's Agency communication materials strengthen the tie between a particular program and NASA and to its relevance to its various publics.

3. Describe whether, and to what extent the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology. Also describe any consideration of using information technology to reduce burden.

Survey responses will be collected via personal group interview and interview and tabulated electronically. This is consistent with *The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995: Implementing Guidance* suggestion that "an agency should use electronic collection techniques where such techniques reduce burden on the public, increase efficiency of government programs, reduce costs to the government and the public, and/or provide better service to the public."

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.

The Agency is currently coordinating all efforts to collect similar information specifically to avoid duplication. This extension provides us the ability to continue to gather pertinent information that will be beneficial to NASA Headquarters as well as the NASA field centers. We know of no other Agency collections of information with regard to perceptions of NASA as they relate to NASA's reformulated strategic mission and goals.

5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities (Item five of form OMB 83-I, the Paperwork Reduction Act Submission form), describe any methods used to minimize burden.

¹ NASA Public Messaging Survey #2 will be produced based upon the results of NASA Public Messaging Survey #1. It will include 9 questions specifically targeted to validate NASA Public Messaging Survey #1 responses.

Not applicable.

6. Describe the consequence to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently.

The legislation that chartered NASA in 1958, the Space Act, directed that NASA “provide the widest practicable and appropriate dissemination of information concerning its activities and the results thereof.” NASA’s mission and goals must be communicated clearly and correctly to NASA stakeholders, NASA’s employees, science leaders, media, educators and the public. NASA cannot conduct effective communication of the Agency’s position and objectives critical to keep the American people engaged in exploration and to keep the country’s youth inspired by science, technology, and engineering without a clear understanding of current public sentiment.

7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in certain manners (as listed).

Not applicable.

8. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publication in the Federal Register of the agency's notice, required by 5 CFR § 1320.8 (d), soliciting comments on the information collection before submission to OMB.

See attached Federal Register notices.

9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.

Not applicable.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.

Each survey respondent will be advised that respondents will remain anonymous, that they will not be held accountable for their views, and that they have no obligation to comply. Respondents will be further advised that they will not be individually identified in the survey results. A Privacy Impact Assessment is attached.

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private.

Not applicable.

12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information.

It is estimated that the survey will take 20 minutes to complete by each respondent. Based upon four samplings of 550 respondents each and a testing survey of an additional 500 respondents, this results in a total of 2,700 responses collected and 900 hours expended annually.

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to respondents or record keepers resulting from the collection of information.

There is no cost to respondents resulting from this information collection.

14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government. Also, provide a description of the method used to estimate cost, which should include quantification of hours, operational expenses, and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information.

The project cost for this work, which will be done under a contract, is estimated at approximately \$300,000. NASA believes that this cost will be offset by the benefit this information should provide to the Federal government, inasmuch as it will provide the means for NASA to target communications efficiently and without redundancy.

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in Items 13 or 14 of the OMB Form 83-I.

The delta from 2300 to 2700 respondents is to ensure that each sampling has a statistically sound respondent base of 550. Even with the slight increase in the number of respondents, the overall burden of 900 hours is the same as under the original authority.

16. For collections of information intended for publication, outline plans for tabulation and publication.

Not applicable.

17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display may be inappropriate.

Not applicable.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in item 19, “Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions” of OMB Form 83-1.

Not applicable.

B. Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods.

1. Describe (including a numerical estimate) the potential respondent universe and any sampling or other respondent selection methods to be used. Data on the number of entities in the universe covered by the collection and in the corresponding sample are to be provided in tabular form for the universe as a whole and for each of the strata in the proposed sample. Indicate expected response rates for the collection as a whole. If the collection had been conducted previously, include the actual response rate achieved during the last collection.

The potential respondent universe is the total current population of the U.S. There are, according to the 2000 Census, 104.7 million households forming the universe. The research sample will be purchased from one of the many firms specializing in extracting records from the government census data, such as American Business Information, Donnelley Marketing/American Consumer Lists, Hugo Dunhill Mailing Lists, Experian, and Scientific Telephone Samples. The lists may be purchased as Random Digit Dial samples, using any one of the standard sampling methodological selection methods: Type A (EPSEM), Type B (weighted) Cluster, Mitofsky Waksberg, or Sudman.

Refusal rates for marketing research studies typically run between 20%-30% depending on the nature and timing of the project. Thus, expected response rates are between 70%-80%. In the last collection, the response rate was the same.

2. Describe the procedures for the collection of information including:

- **Statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection,**
- **Estimation procedure,**
- **Degree of accuracy needed for the purpose described in the justification,**
- **Unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures, and**
- **Any use of periodic (less frequent than annual) data collection cycles to reduce burden.**

RDD samples are constructed using one of two different methodologies for pulling working blocks, either Type A (EPSEM/pure4/unweighted) or Type B (weighted/efficient).

Type A samples are pulled using a strict definition of randomness. They are called unweighted samples because each possible telephone number within appropriate blocks has an equal chance of being selected to generate a random digit number.

Type B samples are pre-weighted so RDD numbers are created from telephone working blocks in proportion to the estimated number of household listings in each working block.

Lists include name, addresses, and phone numbers for each household, along with other specific demographic information, which may be relevant to monitor the structure of the sample compared to substrata of the universe.

The standard degree of confidence set for statistical accuracy in marketing research is the .90 level. However, higher standards are often applied where more sensitive issues are concerned, moving to the .95 confidence level.

Other types of collections may be used. Focus groups will enable more qualitative data.

3. Describe methods to maximize response rates and to deal with issues of non-response. The accuracy and reliability of information collected must be shown to be adequate for intended uses. For collections based on sampling, a special justification must be provided for any collection that will not yield “reliable” data that can be generalized to the universe studied.

The U.S. public does "invest" in their civilian space program, and it is important to the Agency that the public understands NASA's mission, programs and results. To do so, public opinion surveys provide the necessary data to direct an effective communication strategy. That strategy must be based on a good understanding of the various target audiences and how they receive and evaluate information. For example, if the data shows that the 18-24 demographic receives 75% of their news and information from pod-casting, NASA's communication strategy for dissemination mechanisms were be redirected accordingly.

In addition, NASA needs to know if Agency messages are understandable and resonate with each of these audiences. This aspect comes from the "how" questions as mentioned in the supporting statement under A.1. NASA wants to know "how" the public thinks about NASA, which is more of an intuitive, social response. Questions such as "what comes to mind when you think of America's space program?" provides a first response that can show us the emotional or "how" the individual feels about NASA. These qualitative responses also indicate how NASA "resonates" with the public. Furthermore, resonance is indicated by "relevance" questions, such as, "would you say that as a result of NASA's work that your life is better without it, somewhat...or not at all?" Data from this type of question helps the Agency determine its relevance to the public and how the public perceives the benefits of its missions; with those results, NASA communications would respond accordingly.

To get a true intuitive response, it is necessary to avoid any predisposition. Therefore, the respondents are immediately told that the call is for a national market research study on current social issues, and are not informed that NASA is the subject matter. The term "social issues" also connotes a "non-technical" nature to the questions. The survey is intended to provide NASA with a better understanding of how to communicate with the public about its missions.

Respondents are told that they will remain anonymous and not be held accountable for their views. They are also told their opinions may represent thousands of other people like themselves, and are important for us to hear so that they may be included in the study. They are assured that they are not being solicited to try or use any product or service.

Calls are made from a central phone bank. Calling is computerized, so that all contacts are automatically verified and classified. Additionally, supervisory personal are auditing the calls for validation and other aspects of quality control.

Contact with unwilling respondents is quickly and politely terminated, and substitution is made following the random selection procedure.

4. Describe any tests or procedures or methods to be undertaken. Testing is encouraged as an effective means of refining collections of information to minimize burden and improve utility. Tests must be approved if they call for answers to identical questions from 10 or more respondents. A proposed test or set of tests may be submitted for approval separately or in combination with the main collection of information.

Initial interviews are reviewed to ensure that the research is producing the type of responses intended. In other words, they are examined to be certain that questions are being understood by respondents, and answered in a complete and satisfactory manner.

The computerized administration of the interview insures that all appropriate questions are asked, and that any skip patterns are followed. Along with the computerized approach, standard interviewer training and briefing ensures that administration is consistent from interview to interview.

Any interview found for any reason not to be completed to standards will be replaced with an interview among a respondent with identical demographic characteristics.

5. Provide the name and telephone number of individuals consulted on statistical aspects of the design and the name of the agency unit, contractor(s), grantee(s), or other person(s) who will actually collect and/or analyze the information for the agency.

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