

**OMB STATEMENT FOR THE
COMPLIANCE CENTER EXAM TOLL-FREE
CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY 2008
WAGE & INVESTMENT DIVISION
July 2008 – April 2009
TIRNO-05-Z-00014**

Introduction

IRS has replaced the traditional measures of accomplishment with a balanced measurement system consisting of business results, customer satisfaction, and employee satisfaction. The Toll-free function within the Compliance organization of Wage and Investment (W&I) Division is responsible for responding to customer technical and account inquiries, resolving customer account issues, providing account settlement (payment options), and working related issues. As an important customer interface for W&I, Toll-free needs feedback from customers to continuously improve its operations. This initiative is part of the Service-wide system of balanced organizational performance measures mandated by the IRS Restructuring and Reform Act of 1998. This is also a result of Executive Order 12862, which requires all government agencies to survey their customers and incorporate customer preferences in their process improvement efforts.

The key goals of the Compliance Center Exam Toll-free Customer Satisfaction Survey are to investigate what specific actions IRS can take to improve customer satisfaction with the current CCE Toll-free W&I service and to gauge the effectiveness of changes to the Toll-free W&I service. The survey is used to detect changes in customer satisfaction before and after specific changes made to the CCE Toll-free W&I services such as adding new scripts and features to CCE Toll-free W&I. This project is expected to continue the customer satisfaction research conducted via the IRS's internal automated voice response system.

Telephone Focus Groups

In advance of conducting the telephone survey, the contractor will conduct three focus groups among users of the CCE Toll-Free system. The purpose of the sessions will be to obtain a more in-depth, qualitative understanding of the study. Respondents will be recruited by telephone and participants will be offered an honorarium of \$50 each. We will recruit 27 people for 18 to participate; some recruited people may not actually participate. The screening guide is attached, as is the moderator's discussion guide for the three one-hour teleconference discussions.

Customer Satisfaction Survey

The phone survey (attached) is conducted via an automated computer system. Completion of the survey takes approximately eight minutes. The questionnaire covers the following areas: satisfaction with the automated answering system, wait time, IRS representative, issue resolution, and various demographics. The results help to facilitate more effective management of W&I by:

- Providing insight from the customer's perspective about possible improvements.

- Providing useful input for program evaluation and execution at the programmatic and area office level of service delivery.
- Providing additional information on important “drill down” areas.

Survey scoring for this contract is based on the Customer Satisfaction Survey Score response average to the keystone question – “How would you rate your overall satisfaction with the service you received during this call?” Questions utilize a 5-point rating scale, with 1 being very dissatisfied and 5 being very satisfied. All survey responses generated are kept confidential. The vendor ensures that taxpayers responding to the survey are guaranteed anonymity.

The contractor will prepare a formal sampling plan for the survey. For purposes of budgeting this Task Order, the Contractor should stratify the sample by five Compliance Center Examination sites, drawing 400 samples per site each quarter and resulting in a total of 500 completed questionnaires each quarter (100 per site) and 2000 completed questionnaires per year (400 per site). The sampling procedures put in place will be designed to accomplish this. A precision margin of 5% and confidence interval of 95% is expected.

The contractor will monitor the sampling process to ensure the procedures are providing the desired number of respondents and will coordinate with appropriate W&I personnel on sampling and related matters. Sampling will be performed continuously by IRS quality control monitors in the sites according to the procedures developed by the contractor.

The survey will be conducted via an automated computer system. For costing purposes, changes may occur every six months.

The contractor will administer the survey by phone/IVR on a continuous basis. Standard procedures will be used in order to obtain the highest response rate possible.

Disclosure, Security & Confidentiality

Confidentiality will be safeguarded. The data collection process, participants will be identified to IRS personnel by their first names only. In addition, no participant’s names will be mentioned in the focus group report. Participants will be advised that observers from the IRS may be behind the one-way mirror and that their comments will be audio and videotapes.

The survey will not contain tax return or taxpayer information. Survey participants will not be identified in any of the documents or files used for this project. We will limit and control the amount of information we collect to those items that are necessary to accomplish the research questions. We will carefully safeguard the security of data utilized as well as the privacy of the survey respondents. We will apply the fair information and record-keeping practices to ensure protection of all survey respondents. The criterion for disclosure laid out in the Privacy Act, the Freedom of Information Act, and section 6103 of the Internal Revenue Code provides for the protection of information as well as its releases to authorized recipients.

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Design and Methodology

The survey responses will be scored on a 5-point rating scale, with 1 being very dissatisfied and 5 being very satisfied. All survey responses will be confidential. The contractor shall ensure that taxpayers responding to the survey are guaranteed anonymity.

The contractor will use basic and advanced statistical techniques including, but not limited to, analysis of variance and the prioritization of improvement initiatives, to provide:

- Survey counts and overall response rates for the 5 Exam sites.
- Overall level of customer satisfaction for W&I Toll-free.
- Averages and frequencies for all ratings questions.
- Differences in satisfaction ratings across customer segments.
- Areas of service, in priority order, where W&I Toll-free should focus efforts to improve overall satisfaction.
- Cross tabulations of variables.
- Analysis of open-ended comments
- Quarterly comparisons with prior year's cumulative data

The contractor will include any relevant database variables in the analysis. The contractor and W&I will agree on the exact specifications and contents of reports. Separate open-ended comments will be provided within 30 days after the end of each quarter.

The reports should show the calculation of a weighted rolling cumulative score (12-month period) for Customer Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction with a comparison to at least the prior year, if available. This will appear as an additional table in the reports.

The methodology for this computation will be discussed with and approved by the IRS. Raw data will be provided to a distribution list of IRS personnel and made available within 5 business days of the end of each month.

The contractor will produce reports that include:

1. Leverage Analysis
2. Satisfaction mean scores of rating questions
3. Distribution of dissatisfied, neutral, and satisfied % of rating questions

Evaluation

The vendor will use basic and advanced statistical techniques including, but not limited to, analysis of variance and the prioritization of improvement priorities using the vendor's established technique:

- Survey counts and overall response rates for the 5 sites.
- The overall level of customer satisfaction with services provided by W&I CCE Toll-free.
- The averages and frequencies for all ratings questions.

- The differences in satisfaction ratings and attitudes across customer segments.
- Which areas of service, in priority order, W&I should focus its resources to improve overall satisfaction.
- Cross tabulations of variables.
- Analysis of the relationship between survey responses.
- The vendor's Net Impression analysis, which prioritizes improvement areas.

Estimates of the Burden of Data Collection

Focus Groups

The focus group sessions are designed to minimize taxpayer burden by not requiring any travel. The burden estimate for the focus group effort follows:

Recruitment: 27 recruited participants x 6 minutes = 3 hours; 270 non-participants x 1 minute = 5 hours

Focus group sessions: 18 people x 60 minutes = 18 hours

Focus group burden hours = 23

Survey

The survey interview has been designed to minimize burden on the taxpayer. The time that a respondent takes to complete the phone survey has been carefully considered and only the most important areas are being surveyed. The average time of survey completion is expected to be 8 minutes. The questions are generally one sentence in structure and on an elementary concept level.

We have made every attempt in designing this survey to maximize response rate. Using the response rate of 68%, the total burden in hours is estimated as follows:

Respondents: 2000 completed surveys x 9 minutes (1 minute invitation to the survey and 8 minute questionnaire) = 300 hours

Non-respondents: 941 individuals x 1 minute invitation to the survey = 16 hours

Survey burden hours = 316

TOTAL BURDEN HOURS = 339 hours

Estimated Cost

The estimated cost for this survey is \$71,185.00.

Dates of Study

August 2008 – April 2009

Other Information

The following information will be provided to Human SOI within 60 days after the close of the survey data collection operations:

- Findings: A brief summary of significant findings that were evidenced in the results.
- Actions taken or lessons learned: A brief summary of any action taken or lessons learned as a result of the findings.
- Taxpayer participation (number of requests for taxpayer participation and number of interviews completed).
- Dates on which the data collection began and ended.
- Cost (excluding regular salaries of IRS employees).

Statistical Contact

For questions regarding the study, questionnaire design, or the statistical methodology, contact:

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