

April 2008

## **Background Statement and Request for Clearance**

### **Background:**

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and its various agencies have implemented rules and regulations since the September 11<sup>th</sup> terrorist attacks in order to enhance national security. However, these enhanced measures have created a perception of a “Fortress U.S.A.” This perception has a significant impact on foreign visitors coming to the United States for business, family, or leisure. There has been anecdotal information via correspondence and phone calls that foreign visitors do not feel welcomed when they enter the United States and are processed by DHS agents/officers. Additionally, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff have launched the Rice-Chertoff Initiative to encourage citizens from all over the world to visit study and do business in the US by utilizing improved technology and efficiency at the borders.

This is a reinstatement of a previously approved OMB control number 1601-0003. The primary purpose of this survey is to collect information regarding how welcome foreign visitors feel upon their processing into the US by DHS Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers. This will provide valuable data for enhancing customer service training of DHS CBP officers and will further the efforts by Secretaries Rice and Chertoff in their initiative to make the US more attractive to foreign citizens as a place to visit, study and do business.

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT A**  
**Welcome to the United States Survey**  
**OMB Control Number: 1601-0003**

**1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.**

Since the September 11<sup>th</sup> terrorist attacks, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and its various components have implemented rules and regulations to enhance national security, including processing at the US ports of entry. However, there has been anecdotal information suggesting that some individuals have been treated rudely or felt unwelcome coming into the US. Secretaries Rice and Chertoff have launched an initiative to create a more welcoming atmosphere and experience for foreign visitors entering the US to encourage foreigners to visit; study and do business in the US while still ensuring our homeland is secure. Domestic Security 6 U.S.C. §112(f) authorizes the collection of this information. This information will be used towards the purpose of creating and fostering strategic communications with the private sector to enhance the primary mission of the Department to protect the American homeland.

**2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used.**

Research Triangle Institute, International (RTI) will conduct 939 interviews of foreign visitors at eleven ports of entry (four at the southern border, three at the northern border and four airports). The ports of entry are Portal, North Dakota; International Falls, Minnesota; Jackman, Maine; San Luis, Arizona; Douglas, Arizona; Fabens, Texas; Presidio, Texas; Dulles International Airport, Washington; Houston Intercontinental Airport, Texas; Los Angeles International Airport, California; and John F. Kennedy International Airport, New York. RTI will utilize a computer-assisted information (CAI) collection device to compile electronically the responses to the interview questions. The information will be analyzed via statistical and econometric methodologies in order to obtain a better picture of how welcome foreign visitors feel after processing through US ports of entry.

**3. Describe any consideration of information technology to reduce burden, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.**

The collection of this information will involve the usage of a CAI collection device to compile electronically the responses to the interview questions. This mitigates the burden on the respondent to manually complete a paper interview. This also mitigates the burden on the interviewers to manually input the respondents' data into the analysis database and program as the CAI device can automatically upload the data via a computer. There is no surveying performed online. All data collection will be done via the interviewer entering the answers to the questions directly into the CAI device.

- 4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purposes described in Item 2 above.**

There is a system at DHS CBP that tracks traveler-initiated compliments and complaints. However, there is little information specifically regarding how foreign visitors feel or do not feel welcomed into the US during processing at a port of entry.

- 5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities, describe the methods used to minimize burden.**

This information collection request will not have a significant impact on a substantial number of small businesses or other entities.

- 6. Describe the consequence to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted, or is conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.**

If this collection is not performed, future evaluations of customer service training and related initiatives (Rice-Chertoff Initiative) may not accurately reflect any changes in how welcome foreign visitors feel as there will not be a benchmark from which to measure. As such, any future analysis would have the potential to be skewed either too positive or too negatively which would allow misallocation of DHS resources and increase inefficiencies and ineffectiveness of those resources in terms of promoting the US as a welcoming country for foreigners to visit, study and do business.

- 7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with 5 CFR 1320.5(d) (2)**

There are no special circumstances requiring collection of information to be inconsistent with 5 CFR 1320.5(d) (2). The Agency has taken reasonable steps to ensure that the proposed collection of information is the least burdensome necessary to comply with legal requirements and achieve program objectives; is not duplicative of information otherwise accessible to the agency; and has practical utility.

- 8. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publication in the Federal Register of the agency's notice soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB.**

On January 31, 2008, the Office of Policy published a 60 day notice in the Federal Register for public comments at 73 FR 5861 -5862. To date the Office of Policy has not received any comments regarding this information collection from the public.

- 9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondent, other than remuneration to contractors or grantees.**

RTI will provide a small thank you gift to respondents after the interview is complete as a token of appreciation from DHS. This token is valued at under \$5.00US.

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

There is no assurance of confidentiality. Participation in this survey is voluntary. Individual responses will not be revealed to any unauthorized party. All information submitted by the respondents will be held anonymous in terms of explicitly identified responses that can be directly attributed to the respondent. All information will be compiled for analysis and reported only at the aggregate level (e.g., port specific or geographic land border).

**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.**

There are no questions of sensitive nature proposed in this information collection.

**12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information. The statement should:**

Number of Respondents:	939
Frequency of Response:	1
Total Annual Responses	939
Hours per Response	.0833 (5 minutes)
Total annual Reporting Burden	78.218 or 78.22

This survey should take approximately 5 minutes to complete. The final total hour burden is 78.22 hours.

**13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to respondents or record keepers resulting from the collection of information. (Do not include the cost of any hour burden shown in Items 12 and 14).**

There are no capital or start-up costs, or record keeping costs associated with this information collection.

**14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government.**

There are no additional costs to the Federal government.

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

This is a reinstatement of a previously approved information collection. Program changes are based on deliberate Federal government action taken in response to foreign visitors' comments and input, as well as DHS initiatives.

**16. For collection of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulation, and publication.**

Results of this information will not be published.

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

The Office of Policy will display the expiration date for OMB approval for this information collection.

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

The Office of Policy does not request an exception to the certification of this information collection.