

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT**  
**Approval Request to Conduct Customer Satisfaction Research**  
**W&I FIELD ASSISTANCE 2012 – Option Year 1**

**W&I Field Assistance Comment Card Survey 2012 – Option Year 1**

**A. JUSTIFICATION**

**1. Circumstances Making the Collection of Information Necessary**

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) enlists a balanced measurement system consisting of business results, customer satisfaction, and employee satisfaction. This initiative is part of the Service-wide effort to maintain a system of balanced organizational performance measures mandated by the IRS Restructuring and Reform Act (RRA) of 1998. This is also a result of Executive Order 12862 that requires all government agencies to survey their customers.

For the Wage & Investment (W&I) Division, an important service delivery channel is the 401 Taxpayer Assistance Center (TAC) offices serving walk-in customers. Information collected from the customer satisfaction survey is used to provide meaningful feedback to managers and staff in those TAC offices. This survey will assist Field Assistance in assessing its overall customer satisfaction and overall quality for its balanced measures.

**2. Purpose and Use of the Information Collection**

This Field Assistance customer satisfaction survey has three primary goals:

1. to survey external customers on an on-going basis regarding their expectations of the TAC offices;
2. to track customer satisfaction at all TAC offices nationwide; and
3. to identify customer satisfaction improvement opportunities.

**3. Consideration Given to Information Technology Sample Design**

The functional contact and the contractor have investigated and piloted alternative methods to the comment card technology including a standalone kiosk and an automated phone survey. Although the kiosk technology may work in the future, it was determined that the current comment card process is the best fit right now for the Field Assistance function.

**4. Efforts Not to Duplicate Research**

This is the only study currently conducted service delivery channel survey conducted at the 401 Taxpayer Assistance Center (TAC) offices serving walk-in customers.

**5. Reducing the Burden on Small Entities Expected Response Rate**

The survey has been designed to minimize burden on the respondent. The time that a respondent takes to complete a survey has been carefully considered and only the most important areas are being surveyed.

**6. Consequences of Not Conducting Collection**

Wage & Investment would be unable to meet corporate goals and would fall short of meeting the IRS Mission of a Balanced Measurement System. W&I taxpayer's are a large segment of

the tax filing population. Failure to fund this program would adversely affect our ability to compare our results and determine where customer satisfaction improvements are needed.

### **7. Special Circumstances**

The statistics derived from the customer satisfaction measures could be used in making management decisions such as business improvement opportunities.

### **8. Consultations with Persons Outside**

N/A

### **9. Payment of Gift**

N/A

### **10. Confidentiality**

All participants will be subject to the provisions of the Taxpayer Bill of Rights II during this study and the vendor will ensure that all participants are treated fairly and appropriately.

The security of the data used in this project and the privacy of taxpayers as allowed by law will be carefully safeguarded at all times. Security requirements are based on the Computer Security Act of 1987 and Office of Management and Budget Circular A-130, Appendices A & B. Physical security measures include a locked, secure office. Notes are stored in locked cabinets or shredded. Data security at the C-2 level is accomplished via the Windows NT operating system. Systems are password protected, users profiled for authorized use, and individual audit trails generated and reviewed periodically.

The IRS will apply and meet fair information and record-keeping practices to ensure privacy protection of all taxpayers as allowed by law. This includes criteria for disclosure—laid out in the Privacy Act of 1974, the Freedom of Information Act, and Section 6103 of the Internal Revenue Code—all of which provide for the protection of taxpayer information as well as its release to authorized recipients.

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.

### **11. Sensitive Nature**

No questions will be asked that are of a personal or sensitive nature.

### **12. Burden of Information Collection**

The survey has been designed to minimize burden on the respondent. The time that a respondent takes to complete a survey has been carefully considered and only the most important areas are being surveyed. While there may be up to 6 million TAC visitors, the respondent sample is limited to 350,000 sample size (Comment Cards collected and processed).

**BURDEN HOURS Estimate Calculation**

<b>Category of Respondent</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>Participation Time</b>	<b>Burden</b>
Respondents	350,000	1 ½ minutes	8,750 hours
Non Respondents	Unknown	No estimate	0
<b>Totals</b>			8,750 hours

**Total Burden = 8,750 hours**

**13. Costs to Respondents**

N/A

**14. Costs to Federal Government**

\$439,705.91

**15. Reason for Change**

N/A

**16. Tabulation of Results, Schedule, and Analysis Plans**

For the 3 planning period and 1 annual report both at a national level and a an Area level, the vendor will use basic and advanced statistical techniques including, but not limited to, analysis of variance and the prioritization of improvement priorities using vendor's established technique.

- Comment card counts and overall response rates for the customer.
- The overall level of customer satisfaction with services provided by the territory.
- Mean ratings for all customer satisfaction questions.
- Which areas of service, in priority order, the IRS should focus its resources to improve overall customer satisfaction.
- Trend Data based on past years of data warehoused.
- Cross tabulations of demographic variables, as applicable.
- Analysis of the relationship between comment card responses.

**17. Display of OMB Approval Date**

N/A

**18. Exceptions to Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions**

N/A

**19. Dates collection will begin and end**

Data will be collected January 1, 2012 – December 31, 2012. Analyzing the data and producing the report will be January 1, 2013 – March 31, 2013.

## **B. STATISTICAL METHODS**

The primary purpose of these collections will be for internal management purposes; there are no plans to publish or otherwise release this information.

### **1. Universe and Respondent Selection**

The sampling frame consists of W&I taxpayers.

### **2. Procedures for Collecting Information**

The comment cards are available at all TACs to all customers. TAC managers mail in the completed cards to the contractor who will scan the results.

### **3. Methods to Maximize Response**

Standard procedures will be used in order to obtain the highest response rate possible for the Field Assistance Survey.

### **4. Testing of Procedures**

The function and the contractor have worked together to refine the comment card questions over the years to ensure the right questions are being asked from the IRS' perspective and the taxpayer's perspective. Focus groups held in January 2011 confirmed the taxpayers' point of view.

### **5. Contacts for Statistical Aspects and Data Collection**

For questions regarding the study or questionnaire design or statistical methodology, contact:  
Jennifer Schranz  
Pacific Consulting Group  
602-371-8150  
jschranz@pcgfirm.com

## **Attachments**

- Field Assistance Comment Card English/Spanish (double click comment card for Spanish version)
- The employee should advise the taxpayer that (Script included in burden hours):
  - Completion of the card is voluntary
  - Their feedback is used to improve our customer service
  - The card should not be folded
  - The completed card should be placed in the survey card drop box, or when appropriate, the TAC employee can accept the card and place it into the drop box.

