

Supporting Statement
Approval Request to Conduct Customer Satisfaction Research (OMB
#1545-1432)
2012 W&I CAS Toll-free Customer Satisfaction Survey

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.

This collection of information is necessary to enable IRS to garner customer feedback in an efficient, timely manner, in accordance with our commitment to improving service delivery. The information collected from our customers will help ensure that users have an effective, efficient, and satisfying experience with the IRS's Toll-free services. This feedback will provide insights into customer perceptions, experiences and expectations, provide an early warning of issues with service, or focus attention on areas where communication, training or changes in operations might improve delivery of services. These collections will allow for ongoing, collaborative and actionable communications between the IRS and its customers. It will also allow feedback to contribute directly to the improvement of program management.

2. Purpose and Use of the Information Collection

Improving agency programs requires ongoing assessment of service delivery--a systematic review of the operation of a program compared to a set of explicit or implicit standards--as a means of contributing to the continuous improvement of the program. IRS will employ a contractor to collect, analyze, and interpret information gathered to identify strengths and weaknesses of current services and make improvements in service delivery based on feedback. The solicitation of feedback will target areas such as: timeliness, appropriateness, accuracy of information, courtesy, efficiency of service delivery, and resolution of issues with service delivery. Responses will be assessed to plan and inform efforts to improve or maintain the quality of phone services offered to the public. If this information is not collected, vital feedback from customers of Toll-free services will be unavailable.

By conducting this survey, the IRS expects to accomplish the following objectives:

- To measure the level of customer satisfaction concerning services provided to the customer during a particular call to the Toll-free phone line.
- To identify problems that customers encounter when contacting IRS.
- To gain insights on improvements that can be made to products and services.
- To improve the service that IRS provides to customers.
- To assess improvements/problems by comparing this year's results to prior years'.

From the survey responses, the IRS will be able to assess the current level of customer satisfaction with Toll-free services and draw on customer input to improve these services.

3. Consideration Given to Information Technology

Surveys will be offered to randomly selected callers at the conclusion of providing them with phone services.

4. Duplication of Information

This survey will provide valuable information that is not available in any internal IRS data source.

5. Reducing the Burden on Small Entities

NA

6. Consequences of Not Conducting Collection

Without this feedback, IRS will not have timely information to adjust its Toll-free services to meet customer needs.

7. Special Circumstances

There are no special circumstances. The information collected will be voluntary and will not be used for statistical purposes.

8. Consultations with Persons Outside the Agency

A contractor will be employed to conduct the research.

9. Payment or Gift

IRS will not provide payment or other forms of remuneration to respondents.

10. Confidentiality

No PII will be collected during the survey.

11. Sensitive Nature

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

12. Burden of Information Collection

The estimated time to complete the survey is ten minutes, but some variation in the length of time required to answer the survey is expected. Assuming a 50 percent response rate, the total annual burden hours requested (3900 hrs) are based on the number of collections we expect to conduct over the requested period for this clearance (collection start date: January 1, 2012; collection end date: April 30, 2013).

Estimated Annual Reporting Burden				
Type of Collection	No. of Respondents	Annual Frequency per Response	Hours per Response	Total Hours
Random Sample of Toll-free Callers (asked to participate)	39,000	1	1 minute	650 hrs
Customers who respond to survey (subset of above)	19,500	1	10 minutes	3250 hrs
Total				3900 hrs

13. Costs to Respondents

No costs are anticipated.

14. Costs to Federal Government

Cost estimate: \$130,000

15. Reason for Change

Not applicable.

16. Tabulation of Results, Schedule, Analysis Plans

Findings will be used for general service improvement, but are not for publication or other public release. Although IRS does not intend to publish its findings, IRS may receive requests to release the information (e.g., congressional inquiry, Freedom of Information Act requests). IRS will disseminate the findings when appropriate, strictly following IRS's "Guidelines for Ensuring the Quality of Information Disseminated to the Public", and will include specific discussion of the limitation of the results.

17. Display of OMB Approval Date

We are requesting no exemption.

18. Exceptions to Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

These activities comply with the requirements in 5 CFR 1320.9.

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

IRS Toll-free operations receive millions of phone calls per year. An automated random sample of callers to the Toll-free phone lines will be offered this survey. Historically, approximately 50 percent of those who are offered the survey complete it.

2. Procedures for Collecting Information

After assisting each phone customer with their inquiry, the staff member will read a script specially written for phone call customers (*see Attachment above for a copy of the phone script*). The script explains the basis for the survey and how the responses will be used. Then the staff member will ask the customer if they are willing to participate. Depending on the customer's response, the staff member will either end the call or connect the caller to the automated survey. Feedback from participants will not lead to new policy, but will enable the IRS to better meet taxpayer needs.

3. Methods to Maximize Response

Historically, approximately 50 percent of those who are offered the survey complete it. It is anticipated that this rate will apply in the future as well.

4. Testing of Procedures

The Toll-free survey has been in place for several years, so additional testing is not necessary during this data collection period.

5. Contacts for Statistical Aspects and Data Collection

The IRS employs a contractor to develop, design and conduct the Toll-free customer satisfaction survey and to analyze the data and generate appropriate reports. Contact with the contractor can be arranged through the IRS Contracting Officer's Representative, Jeffery McConnell, who may be reached at (404) 338-9056 or Jeffery.McConnell@IRS.gov.