

Supporting Statement
Approval Request to Conduct Customer Satisfaction Research (OMB #1545-1432)
Automated Collection System (ACS) Interactive Voice Recognition Survey

A. JUSTIFICATION

1. Circumstances Making the Collection of Information Necessary

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) engages a balanced measurement system consisting of business results, customer satisfaction, and employee satisfaction. This initiative is part of the Service-wide effort to establish a 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 Automated Collection System (ACS) section within the Compliance Operating Unit of SB/SE is responsible for notifying taxpayers of discrepancies between the income information reported on their tax returns and the income information supplied by their employers and other organizations.

2. Purpose and Use of the Information Collection

In addition to the objective of measuring customer satisfaction to meet a balanced measures requirement, ACS management is motivated to use survey results to identify improvement opportunities and as the basis for enacting improvements.

The key goals of the survey are 1) to survey our external customers on an ongoing basis regarding their expectations, 2) track customer satisfaction progress over time nationwide and 3) identify operational improvements within SB/SE ACS. The feedback received will not institute new policy, yet will enable the Service to meet taxpayer needs effectively.

3. Consideration Given to Information Technology

ACS is an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) survey and will be administered via telephone.

4. Duplication of Information

This is the only formal mechanism by which ACS telephone customers provide immediate feedback to SB/SE on their experiences with the ACS telephone site.

5. Reducing the Burden on Small Entities

N/A

6. Consequences of Not Conducting Collection

SB/SE initiatives fall under the IRS goal to *“IMPROVE SERVICE TO MAKE VOLUNTARY COMPLIANCE EASIER, and ENFORCE THE LAW TO ENSURE EVERYONE MEETS THEIR OBLIGATION TO PAY TAXES.* If the requirement is not funded, SB/SE will not have the external measures used to assess their success in meeting IRS goals. This will also cause SB/SE to be less effective as it will not have the data to know which products and services identified by customers need improvement or need to be developed to service these populations.

7. Special Circumstances

There are no special circumstances. The information collected will be voluntary. These statistics could be used in making management decisions such as in business improvement opportunities.

8. Consultations with Persons Outside the Agency

N/A

9. Payment or Gift

N/A

10. Confidentiality

One voluntary survey question asks if participants are interested in participating in future research, if so they are requested to provide their telephone number and e-mail address (if available). This information is not shared with the IRS and is only used by the contractor for research purposes.

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 ACS customer. The time that a respondent takes to complete a survey has been carefully considered and only the most important areas are being surveyed. The current selection criteria established in the survey methodology will allow the respondent to participate in only one survey. The average time of survey completion is expected to be 10 minutes. The questions are generally one sentence in structure and on an elementary concept level.

Based on a sample of potential respondents of 9,087 and a response rate of 50%, we expect 4,544 survey participants, leaving 4,543 non-participants. The contact time to determine non-participants could take up to one minute, with the resulting burden for non-participants being $4,543 \times 1 \text{ minute} = 4,543/60 \text{ minutes} = \underline{75.7 \text{ burden hours}}$.

For participants, the time to complete the survey is up to 11 minutes. This reflects the time to get into the automated survey (1 minute) as well as the time to complete the survey (10 minutes). The time burden for participants being $4,544 \times 11 \text{ minutes} = 49,984/60 \text{ minutes} = \underline{833 \text{ burden hours}}$.

The total burden hours for the survey would be $(75.7 + 833) = \underline{908.7 \text{ burden hours}}$.

Minor revisions, that will not impact the burden hours, may be made to the survey questionnaire.

ACS IVR Survey

Category of Respondent	No. of Respondents	Participation Time	Burden
ACS Non-participant	4,543	1 min	75.7
ACS Expected Participants	4,544	11 min	833
Totals	9,087		908.7

Estimated Response Rate: 50%

Total Burden Estimate= 908.7 hrs

13. Costs to Respondents

N/A

14. Costs to Federal Government

The estimated cost is \$26,503.79. This cost is a portion of the total contract cost, which includes two separate surveys.

15. Reason for Change

N/A

16. Tabulation of Results, Schedule, Analysis Plans

The survey data is collected via an IVR phone questionnaire. The representative asks the customer to participate in the survey. Callers who agree to participate are transferred to the IRS monitor, who then transfers the customer into the automated survey, which is conducted by the contractor. This data is transferred to the contractor to conduct analysis and prepare reports if these optional tasks are exercised. If not, the analysis and reporting will be conducted by SB/SE Research.

Survey scoring for this contract is based on the Customer Satisfaction Survey Score response average to the keystone question – “Everything considered, 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 are released only as summaries. The contractor shall hold the identities, of the taxpayers responding to the survey, private to the extent permitted by law.

The collected data is used to survey and track customer satisfaction at the SB/SE site level and nationally. The respondent data is analyzed with a view to:

- Provide insight from the customer’s perspective about possible improvements.
- Provide useful input for program evaluation and execution at the programmatic and area office level of service delivery.
- Provide additional information on important “drill down” areas.

The contractor will not provide the IRS with data or status updates that are linked to individual respondents. Upon completion of data collection and cleaning, the contractor will provide de-identified survey data to the IRS. This data will not include any individually identifying information such as name, address, or taxpayer identification number.

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

April 1, 2013 through September 30, 2014

B. STATISTICAL METHODS

1. Universe and Respondent Selection

The contractor will develop a monthly sampling plan, which will detail the entire sampling and weighting process, where applicable. The sampling plan will be executed by IRS monitors at the call center site.

2. Procedures for Collecting Information

Callers who agree to participate are transferred to the IRS monitor who transfers the customer into the automated survey, which is conducted by the contractor. The data is collected by the contractor.

3. Methods to Maximize Response

The questionnaire length is minimized to reduce respondent burden; thereby, tending to increase response rates. Respondents are assured anonymity of their responses. Also, weighting procedures can be applied to adjust aggregated data from those who do respond.

4. Testing of Procedures

The Toll-free questionnaire is an established and tested survey instrument. If changes are made to the questionnaire, only minor changes are expected. Revising the coding scheme for open-ended questions is one example.

5. Contacts for Statistical Aspects and Data Collection

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

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Note: The Assistor Guide and ACS IVR survey questionnaire are included in a separate file.