

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT**  
**Information Collection (ICR) Approval Request to Conduct Customer Satisfaction Research**  
**(OMB#: 1545-1432)**

**2013 W&I Virtual VITA TCE - Customer Satisfaction Survey**

**A. JUSTIFICATION**

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

On July 5, 2012, the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA) released a report (Reference Number 2012-40-073) asserting the need for the development of quantifiable measures to be used as a gauge to measure the success of the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA), and Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE), Virtual technology program. The Virtual program provides assistance in locations that are not staffed or are unable to meet taxpayer demand. The Virtual program uses video monitors to offer video conferencing that allows VITA and TCE volunteers to interact virtually with taxpayers who are at a different location. Currently, there are ongoing efforts by Stakeholder Partnerships, Education & Communication (SPEC) to expand the Virtual program; however, TIGTA determined that SPEC “does not yet have sufficient data to determine if the Virtual program is an effective and efficient means of providing customer service”. As a result, TIGTA recommended the inclusion of a customer satisfaction survey, among other measures, as a program metric.

Wage & Investment Research and Analysis (WIRA) is working in conjunction with SPEC to administer a customer satisfaction survey to taxpayers that prepare their Tax Year 2012 return through the Virtual VITA and TCE program. Results from this survey will be used to determine the satisfaction of Virtual VITA and TCE taxpayers and as a metric to fulfill TIGTA’s recommendation.

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

The purpose of the VITA/TCE Virtual survey is to assess the satisfaction of taxpayers who use the program to prepare their Tax Year 2012 return. The TY2012 survey will serve as a baseline to measure satisfaction amongst taxpayers who utilize SPEC’s Virtual service and to meet operational requirements outlined by TIGTA.

**3. Consideration Given to Information Technology**

The questionnaire will be handed to taxpayers following their use of the Virtual service for tax preparation.

**4. Duplication of Information**

This is the only survey administered by the IRS to measure the satisfaction of taxpayers that use SPEC’s Virtual tax preparation service.

**5. Reducing the Burden on Small Entities**

N/A

**6. Consequences of Not Conducting Collection**

Without conducting this survey, Wage & Investment’s SPEC Division of the IRS will not be able to measure taxpayer customer satisfaction. Feedback from taxpayers is important in order to assess customer satisfaction with the Virtual service to help develop a baseline metric and develop service

improvement actions. If the survey is not conducted, SPEC's ability to meet the program evaluative recommendations suggested by TIGTA, and accepted by the IRS, will not be achieved.

**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**

Not applicable

**9. Payment or Gift**

Not applicable

**10. Confidentiality**

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

The security of the data used in this project and the privacy to the extent allowed by law of the taxpayers 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. 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 to the extent allowed by law 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 personal or sensitive nature.

**12. Burden of Information Collection**

The estimated time to complete the survey is three minutes. Based on a potential sample of 10,000 and assuming a 20 percent response rate, the total annual burden hours requested (266.67 hrs) are based on the number of collections we expect to conduct over the requested period for this clearance.

Type of Collection	No. of Respondents	Minutes per Response	Total Hours
Soliciting customer participation	10,000	1 minute	166.67 hrs
Survey completion	2,000	3 minutes	100 hrs
<b>Total</b>			<b>266.67 hrs</b>

**13. Costs to Respondents**

Not Applicable

**14. Costs to Federal Government**

\$2,820

**15. Reason for Change**

Not applicable

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

SPEC taxpayers that use the Virtual service will be asked to take the survey at a SPEC partner VITA or TCE location. SPEC partners will be asked to mail completed surveys to W&I Research and Analysis at predetermined intervals during the 2013-filing season.

Given a statistically valid sample size, results from the Virtual survey will be presented as a representation of the larger VITA and TCE taxpayer population that utilizes the Virtual service. Descriptive techniques will be employed to provide SPEC with a basic understanding of this population and their overall satisfaction with the Virtual service. The results from this survey are simply one piece of a larger set of information needed to assess the needs related to Virtual services provided by SPEC.

**17. Display of OMB Approval Date**

Not applicable

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

These activities comply with the requirements in 5 CFR 1320.9.

**19. Dates Collection of Information will Begin and End**

January 21, 2013 - April 15, 2013

**B. STATISTICAL METHODS****1. Universe and Respondent Selection**

SPEC's VITA and TCE taxpayers will be asked to take the survey after using the Virtual service.

**2. Procedures for Collecting Information**

The VITA and TCE sites will mail the completed surveys to W&I Research and Analysis for input and analysis. W&I Research and Analysis will be responsible for tabulating the data and conducting data analysis.

**3. Methods to Maximize Response**

W&I Research and Analysis will attempt to achieve an overall response rate of 20 percent for this survey. W&I Research and Analysis will utilize a protocol where, taxpayers are recruited immediately following their use of the Virtual service and asked to complete the survey while on the premises.

**4. Testing of Procedures**

Pretesting will not be conducted.

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

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

Robert Thomas  
Wage & Investment Research and Analysis  
[Robert.thomas2@irs.gov](mailto:Robert.thomas2@irs.gov)  
(404) 422-6175