

**Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) DES
Customer Satisfaction Survey**

B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

1. Provide a numerical estimate of the potential respondent universe and describe any sampling or other respondent selection method to be used. Data on the number of entities (e.g. households or persons) in the universe and the corresponding sample are to be provided in tabular format for the universe as a whole and for each strata. Indicate expected response rates. If this has been conducted previously include actual response rates achieved.

During a 30 day period, 403 DES Beneficiary surveys will be conducted to compensation and pension beneficiaries. This is all of the veterans released from active duty as of July 31, 2010 and who participated in the DES program.

	To Be Contacted	Actual Response (Number)	Expected Response (Percent)
Telephone Survey	403	259	64%

No advance survey notification letters or emails will be sent.

2. Describe the procedures for the collection of information, including:

- **Statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection**

. The Survey Group will consist of every veteran who had completed the DES Pilot and had been separated from service for a year or more as of July 31, 2010.

- **Estimation procedure**

The DES customer survey was developed by the VBA and the Department of Defense (DoD) and approved by a VBA survey research specialist. VBA randomly attempted to survey 20 selected veterans.

- **Degree of accuracy needed**

The random sample of 20 selected veterans in a work week. The sample size was 5% of the DES population.

- **Unusual problems requiring specialized procedures**

Many DES veterans' move after they are released from active duty and their telephone numbers change. The test population confirmed this belief. Out of 20 veterans contacted, only five participated in the survey. One veteran refused, four veterans telephone numbers had changed, and ten were not available after repeated calls to their numbers of record.

- **Any use of less frequent than annual data collection to reduce burden**

This is a one-time survey required for a report to Congress.

3. Describe methods to maximize response rate and to deal with issues of non-response. The accuracy and reliability of information collected must be shown to be adequate for intended uses.

For collections based on sampling, a special justification must be provided for any collection that will not yield “reliable” data that can be generalized to the universe studied.

To maximize response rates, Veterans will be left a brief voice mail message requesting participation in the survey. In addition, VBA will attempt to locate any veteran who has changed their number by using the Internet, Choicepoint private database, and VA medical center records. The VBA employee will provide a brief explanation as to why the survey is being conducted to every veteran contacted. The response rate was determined by reviewing the most recent statistical data. A method to improve the response rate is to call the veteran during the employee’s overtime hours which include evenings and Saturdays. VBA believes this will result in a better response rate than the test data reflects. The nonresponses are not included in the sample.

4. Describe any tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken. Testing is encouraged as an effective means of refining collections to minimize burden and improve utility. Tests must be approved if they call for answers to identical questions of 10 or more individuals.

VBA tested the procedures or methods on 5 veterans. As a result, the questions were revised and improve the type of response received by VBA. In addition, available answers will be displayed as radio buttons to the VBA employee conducting the survey. Survey responses will be captured on a survey web page built on the VBA Intranet. The revisions to the survey web page will take 30 days to complete.

5. Describe how confidentiality will be handed.

VBA employees will inform the veteran of confidentiality in participating in the survey and that the answers will not affect benefits.

6. Provide the name and telephone number of individuals consulted on statistical aspects of the design and the name of the agency unit, contractor(s), grantee(s), or other person(s) who will actually collect and/or analyze the information for the agency.

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