

Supporting Statement A For:

**DoD Comprehensive Review Working Group (CRWG)
ON THE IMPACT OF REPEALING THE
“DON’T ASK, DON’T TELL” POLICY
Spouse Mail Survey**

3 August 2010

Revised

SPOUSE SURVEY

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A. JUSTIFICATION

A.1. Circumstances that make the collection of information necessary

In the January 27, 2010, State of the Union address, the President announced that he would work with Congress this year to repeal 10 U.S.C. § 654, the law commonly known as “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell.” On February 2, 2010, Secretary Robert Gates, in testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC), announced that he had “appointed a high-level working group within the Department that will immediately begin a review of the issues associated with properly implementing a repeal of the ‘Don't Ask, Don't Tell’ policy.”

This high-level working group, the DoD Comprehensive Review Working Group (CRWG), has contracted with Westat to systematically engage the armed forces, including spouses to assess and consider any impacts a change in the law would have on military readiness, unit cohesion, morale and family readiness.

This OMB submission relates to a mail survey data collection from spouses of active duty and reserve component members of the armed forces.

A.2. Purpose and Use of Information

The objective of this effort is to obtain an independent analysis that will identify all significant impacts a repeal of the law, commonly known as “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell”, would have on military readiness, unit cohesion, morale and family readiness in order to support the Department's implementation of a change of the law from the perspective of armed forces’ spouses.

The result of this work will lead to insights and recommendations essential to the Department's implementation of a change of the law.

A.2.1 Research Questions

The primary research questions for the spouse mail survey are how spouses believe a change in the Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell policy will influence retention of their military spouse and how it will influence family readiness. Among the issues that will be covered are appropriate changes to policies regarding, personnel management, facilities, benefits, and standards of conduct. In

addition, the survey will address spouse's assessments of how the policy will impact overall military readiness, military effectiveness and unit cohesion.

■ **Research Question 1:** How do spouses believe that the repeal of the law will impact retention of their military spouses?

■ **Research Question 2:** How do spouses believe that the repeal of the law will impact family readiness?

■ **Research Question 3:** How do spouses believe that the repeal of the law will impact overall military readiness, military effectiveness and unit cohesion?

A.2.2 Audiences for Data and Results

The direct audience for data and results will be decision-makers and analysts within the DoD. Additionally, selected results from this research will be included in briefings to congress and the White House and in a variety of other communications from the DoD to the public, and other government entities.

A.3 Use of Information Technology and Burden Reduction

The mail survey will be sent to known addresses of spouses of active military or reserve personnel, eliminating the need for eligibility screening calls and the contact of individuals, thereby reducing respondent burden.

The Mail survey will be designed so as to reduce respondent burden. The most important features that reduce burden are described below. These features of the mail survey not only reduce respondent burden, but also enable efficient use of study resources and timely capturing of information during the field period.

■ **Skip Patterns.** The skip patterns on the mail survey will be minimal, and when employed, easily guide the respondent skip patterns in the questionnaire, reducing the potential for respondent error and shortening the questionnaire administration time.

■ **Receipt Control.** The Mail Survey will have a bar code at the top of the survey, providing for the means of computerized receipt control that will be used to produce status reports that allow ongoing monitoring of the survey's progress and real-time knowledge of participant status.

A.4 Efforts to Identify Duplication

DOD's Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) is a source of administrative data about military service members and their spouses. The majority of the information in DEERS, however, is demographic information about the service members, not their spouses. The survey data to be collected from the spouses, however, will in many cases be summarized with respect to the demographic characteristics of the service members. For example, the sample responses of spouses may be compared across military services and/or pay grades of military service members. Consequently, it will be possible to use some of the information in DEERS to analyze the collect survey data, which will avoid new data collection of this information.

Recent surveys of military spouses conducted by DOD include the 2008 Survey of Active Duty Spouses, the 2008 and 2009 Surveys of Reserve Component Spouses, and the 2010 Survey of Army Spouses. Previous DOD surveys of spouses of military service members, however, have not contained any questions related to the Don't Ask Don't Tell policy. In November of 2009, the *Military Times* conducted a sample survey of its readers about the Don't Ask Don't Tell policy. The number of responses was 8,214, but the received survey data were filtered to include only the 3,030

responses from active-duty members, including currently mobilized members of the National Guard and reserves. The published results for the *Military Times* survey did not contain results for military spouses.

A.5 Impact on Small Business and Other Small Entities

The survey will not affect small businesses, as they are not involved in the survey.

A.6. Consequence to the Government of less frequent collection

This request is a one-time data collection. This is the first data collection requesting information from spouses on the impact of the repeal of 'Don't Ask Don't Tell' on their spouses and family readiness.

A.7 Special Circumstances Relating to the Guidelines of 5 CFR 1320.5

There are no special circumstances related that would require collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with 5 CFR 1320.5.

A.8 Type of Review Requested

This collection is being processed under emergency clearance procedures. Public comments have been solicited in the Federal Register under a shortened timeframe. A notice published in the Federal Register on June 9, 2010 (75 FR 32749) and June 18, 2010 (75 FR 34706). Two sets of comments were received that are not relevant to the actual instrument(s) being reviewed and go to the policy under consideration. The policy is currently being studied by the CRWG and issues relevant to our policy decision will be considered as part of the CRWG's final report and recommendation. This, however, is not the appropriate time or place to address these comments and issues.

The collection of information related to the repeal of 'Don't Ask Don't Tell' is needed prior to the submission of recommendations from DoD to the White House. The report on the impact of the repeal of the law on spousal family readiness and perceived unit stability and cohesion is needed by September 2010. As data collection procedures needed to ensure high response rates

require a 2 month field period, it is necessary to begin data collection procedures no later than mid-July.

DoD has consulted both inside and outside of the agency to ensure that procedures minimize the burden of the collection of information. Individuals consulted are listed in section A.9.

A. 9 Efforts to Consult Outside Agency

DoD has consulted with the following staff at Westat regarding this information collection:

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On DoD's side, those consulted in the development process included:

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A.10 Explanation of Any Payment or Gift to Respondents

Respondents will not receive any gift or payment for their participation in the survey.

A.11 Assurance of Confidentiality Provided to Respondents

Volunteers who participate in this study will be subject to assurances and safeguards as provided by the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 USC 552a), which requires the safeguarding of individuals against invasion of privacy. The Privacy Act also provides for the confidential treatment of records maintained by a Federal agency according to either the individual's name or some other identifier.

Participation in the study is voluntary and respondents will be so informed before completing the mail questionnaires. Subjects are informed of the measures taken to protect their confidentiality in the introductory letter. Additionally, respondents are informed again of measures taken to protect their confidentiality with the mailing of the questionnaire. Language insuring confidentiality for the mail survey can be found in Appendix A.

Westat has received Certificate of Confidentiality from the Department of Health and Human Services. This certificate was requested and granted because sensitive information will be collected during the course of the study. This certificate allows Westat to further protect the privacy of the survey participants by withholding their names and other identifying characteristics from all persons not connected with the study. As provided in section 301 (d) of the Public Health Service Act 42 U.S.C. 241(d): 'Persons so authorized to protect the privacy of such individuals may not be compelled in any Federal, State, or local civil, criminal, administrative, legislative, or other proceedings to identify such individuals.'

Respondent names and addresses are the only information in identifiable form (IIF) and will only be used by DoD and Westat to send prenotification and mail surveys (Westat). After the survey effort is complete, name and addresses will not remain linked to the data and will not be provided with the data file to DoD. Survey respondents will have a unique ID number and analysis will be conducted on data sets that include only respondent ID numbers. All data will be securely stored in locked file cabinets or password-protected computers, and accessible only to Westat project staff. Names and addresses of respondents will not be kept in a system of records, and will be destroyed at the end of the study. Westat will certify back to DoD that the data has been appropriately destroyed.

A.12 Justification for Sensitive Questions

The sensitive nature topic of questionnaire is appreciated. Questions themselves will focus on military member and family readiness, and unit cohesion and preparedness. Questions will not focus on individual's own, or feelings toward, sexuality.

Study procedures will be designed to make respondents feel as comfortable as possible in answering these questions. These procedures will involve assuring respondents of the confidentiality of their responses and of the voluntary nature of their participation in the survey or any of its components, including specific questions that they may prefer not to answer. Furthermore, participants' names will not appear on any study documents containing data. A crosswalk between study ID and participant name will be kept in a secured electronic file and will be accessible only to those working on the study. Electronic interview data will be identified by the unique study ID only. The linkage between study ID and personal identifiers will be destroyed upon completion of the study.

A.13 Estimates of Hour Burden Including Annualized Hourly Costs

Estimates of hour burden and costs to respondents for the mail survey are shown in Table A-1. The mail survey will take approximately 20 minutes (.33 hours) to complete. The total estimate of respondent burden for the mail survey is 17,325 hours. Respondent costs were calculated using the most recent National Compensation Survey for hourly rates for all occupations, published on the Bureau of Labor Statistics website. The current hourly rate is \$18.62 and we rounded up to \$19.00. The cost to the respondents for the total burden is estimated to be \$329,175; that is, \$19 per hour for 17,325 burden hours.

Table A-1. Estimate of respondent burden for DADT (mail survey).

Type of respondent	Estimated number of respondents	Frequency of response	Average hours per response	Annual hour burden	Respondent cost**
Mail Survey	52,500	1	.33	17,325	\$329,175
Total	52,500	1	.33	17,325	\$329,175

**Hourly wage rate = \$19.00.

There are no other costs to respondents and no respondent record keeping requirements associated with the collection.

A.14. Estimates of Other Total Annual Cost Burden to Respondents or Record keepers

There are no costs to respondents beyond those presented in Section A.12. There are no operating, maintenance or capital costs associated with the collection. Return postage for the return of the mail survey to the Coordinating Center is provided via the use of pre-stamped Business Return Permits on the return envelopes.

A.15. Estimates of Annualized Costs to the Federal Government

Based on the current DoD CRWG on the Impact of Repealing the DADT Policy budget, the total cost to the Federal Government for the development, production, execution and of the spouse mail survey is \$1,683,984. This includes the development, sampling, and cleaning and analysis of data from 150,000 military and reserve spouses, \$562,740 and the production and mailing of surveys and accompanying material, \$1,121,244.

A.16.Explanation for Program Changes or Adjustments

This is a new collection of information.

A.17. Plans for tabulation and publication

The analysis of the data for the spouse survey will be included in the final report to the Secretary of Defense due on December 1, 2010. The report will be made public some time after that date.

A.17.1 Analysis Plans Mail Survey

The focus of the analysis of the survey response data is to address the research question(s) of interest to the CRWG. The purpose of these analyses is to:

- Summarize the main themes and issues raised,
- Identify the issues of greatest concern, and
- Identify how issues vary among population subgroups.

The final analysis file, containing constructed variables, and any other data items appended or created during the survey database development, will be used to analyze survey results.

Statistical Analytical Methods. Analysis will initially begin using univariate analysis to examine item characteristics using frequencies distributions and calculating basic statistics (standard deviations (or standard errors), means, etc). Table B.1 in section B.2.1 specifies the sub-population domains for which univariate frequencies and associated standard errors will be calculated. Bivariate relationships that may exist within the data (e.g. differences in opinions by rank of serving spouse or Service that spouse is in), will also be examined using correlation analysis (for two continuous variables), chi-square analysis (for two nominal variables), or analysis of variance (for the combination of a nominal and continuous variable). Finally, a multivariate analysis will be used to examine relationships, key item responses, and individuals background characteristics. A regression analysis would be used to examine how demographic characteristics (rank, Service, gender, etc) affect how individuals responded to this question.

Open-Ended Questions Responses. The mail survey will contain two open-ended questions towards the end of the questionnaire. These open-

ended questions serve to enrich the quantitative data collected by obtaining results on the topic in the respondent's own words. To analyze these questions, NVivo8 software will be used. This software assists in the iterative sorting and coding of large volumes of qualitative data to facilitate topic and theme identification of text data.

A.17.2 Publication plans

The analysis of the data for the spouse survey will be included in the final report to the Secretary of Defense due on December 1, 2010. The report will be made public some time after that date.

A.17.3 Time schedule

The time schedule for data collection is dependent on the timing of OMB clearance. Our project time schedule for the completion of the survey groups after OMB approval is given below in Table A.16.

Component	Time after OMB approval
Start mail data collection	8/12/2010
Duration of mail data collection	8/12/2010 - 9/27/2010
Data editing	9/27/2010 - 10/8/2010
Data analysis	10/8/2010-10/22/2010
Final report	11/5/2010

A.18 Reasons(s) Display of OMB Expiration Date is Inappropriate

DoD is not seeking an exception to the display of the OMB expiration date.

A.19 Exceptions to Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

DoD is not requesting an exception to the certification requirements.