

2700-0113: ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

1) To better justify this information collection activity, please update B.3 to describe more accurately what the study is asking respondents. Adversity to pre-disposing responses to actual questions on the survey is one matter, documenting and describing the survey as part of an ICR is another. Also, please upload the actual survey instrument for review - the ICR should now be "open for amendment" (but let me know if you are having trouble there).

New Section B.3:

The U.S. public does "invest" in their civilian space program, and it is important to the Agency that the public understands NASA's mission, programs and results. To do so, public opinion surveys provide the necessary data to direct an effective communication strategy. That strategy must be based on a good understanding of the various target audiences and how they receive and evaluate information. For example, if the data shows that the 18-24 demographic receives 75% of their news and information from pod-casting, NASA's communication strategy for dissemination mechanisms were be redirected accordingly.

In addition, NASA needs to know if Agency messages are understandable and resonate with each of these audiences. This aspect comes from the "how" questions as mentioned in the supporting statement under A.1. NASA wants to know "how" the public thinks about NASA, which is more of an intuitive, social response. Questions such as "what comes to mind when you think of America's space program?" provides a first response that can show us the emotional or "how" the individual feels about NASA. These qualitative responses also indicate how NASA "resonates" with the public. Furthermore, resonance is indicated by "relevance" questions, such as, "would you say that as a result of NASA's work that your life is better without it, somewhat...or not at all?" Data from this type of question helps the Agency determine its relevance to the public and how the public perceives the benefits of its missions; with those results, NASA communications would respond accordingly.

To get a true intuitive response, it is necessary to avoid any predisposition. Therefore, the respondents are immediately told that the call is for a national market research study on current social issues, and are not informed that NASA is the subject matter. The term "social issues" also connotes a "non-technical" nature to the questions. The survey is intended to provide NASA with a better understanding of how to communicate with the public about its missions.

Respondents are told that they will remain anonymous and not be held accountable for their views. They are also told their opinions may represent thousands of other people like themselves, and are important for us to hear so that they may be included in the study. They are assured that they are not being solicited to try or use any product or service.

Calls are made from a central phone bank. Calling is computerized, so that all contacts are automatically verified and classified. Additionally, supervisory personal are auditing the calls for validation and other aspects of quality control.

Contact with unwilling respondents is quickly and politely terminated, and substitution is made following the random selection procedure.

2) Who in the White House has requested to review the results of the survey? the response to A.1 it says results may be shared with them.

Answer: No one specifically has asked to see the results.

3) Can NASA explain what is purchased (as described in B.1) from the firms specializing in extracting records from the government census data?

Answer: The random sample contains only phone numbers, no other demographic or personal information would be purchased.

4) Does NASA expect respondents to feel misled after it becomes clear from answering the first few questions that the survey is about NASA?

Answer: It is not the intention to mislead any of our respondents. The only reason to keep the respondents - initially - uninformed, is to be able to get a true, intuitive response, as mentioned in B.3