

INFORMATION COLLECTION REQUEST (ICR):  
SUPPORTING STATEMENT  
FOCUS GROUPS – GENERIC CLEARANCE  
REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF GENERIC CLEARANCE

A. Justification

*1. Information to be collected and circumstances that makes the collection of information necessary*

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is an independent federal regulatory agency that was created in 1972 by Congress in the Consumer Product Safety Act (CPSA). In that law, Congress directed the Commission to “protect the public against unreasonable risks of injuries and deaths associated with consumer products.” The Commission is authorized under section 5(a) of the CPSA, 15 U.S.C. 2054(a), to collect information, conduct research, perform studies and investigations relating to the causes and prevention of deaths, accidents, injuries, illnesses, other health impairments, and economic losses associated with consumer products. Section 5(b) of the CPSA, 15 U.S.C. 2054(b), further provides that the Commission may conduct research, studies and investigations on the safety of consumer products or test consumer products and develop product safety test methods and testing devices.

In order to better identify and evaluate the risks of product-related incidents, the Commission staff seeks to solicit and obtain direct feedback from consumers on issues related to product safety such as recall effectiveness, product use, and perceptions regarding safety issues. Through participation in certain focus groups, consumers will be able to answer questions and provide information regarding their actual experiences, opinions and/or perceptions on various safety issues such as the use or pattern of use of a specific product or type of product.

Staff requested an amendment (increase in burden hours) to the current approval to conduct focus groups regarding how consumers use information received from CPSC’s website and data sources. Staff anticipates conducting additional focus groups in order to assure that the new Consumer Product Safety Risk Management System (CPSRMS) is user friendly. Staff also requested an amendment to the current approval to conduct focus groups pertaining to a large public awareness campaign for the new Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act. Staff anticipates additional focus groups to be conducted beyond the current approval period.

In August and December 2007, Commission staff contracted four focus groups (two in August and two in December) to assess consumers’ behavior related to two different product recalls. The focus groups were helpful in understanding what type of information consumers receive and act upon when a recall personally affects them. Information we received from the focus groups helped support how and what information is presented in CPSC recall notices.

## *2. Use and sharing of collected information*

The information collected from the Consumer Focus Groups will help shape the Commission's evaluation of consumer products and product use by providing insight and information into consumer perceptions and usage patterns. Such information may also assist the Commission in its voluntary standards activities, and help the staff identify areas regarding consumer safety issues that need additional research. In addition, the information will assist with forming new ways of providing user friendly data to consumers through CPSC's website and public affairs campaigns.

## *3. Use of information technology (IT) in information collection*

The information collection may be audio and video recorded. The information will be summarized into a final report.

## *4. Efforts to identify duplication*

The intent of the focus groups is to obtain information that is not readily available elsewhere. The information collected will not just be hypothetical consumer opinions, but will be what consumers actually did and thought regarding a specific product issue. The information will also be about how consumers use CPSC data and information and how CPSC can make that information more accessible and usable.

## *5. Impact on small businesses*

The information will not be collected from small businesses or other small entities. Individual consumers will participate in the focus groups.

## *6. Consequences to Federal program or policy activities if collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently*

If this information is not collected, the Commission may not have available certain useful information regarding consumer experiences, opinions, and perceptions related to specific product use, which the Commission uses, in part, in its ongoing efforts to improve the safety of consumer products and safety information on behalf of consumers. Currently, the Commission staff relies on their expert judgment about consumer behavior, perceptions, and similar information related to consumer products and product use. Not conducting the information collection activity, therefore, would not reduce the quality of assessments currently completed by the staff. However, conducting the information collection activity would likely provide the staff with evidence that would focus the staff's assessments, or could provide insight into consumer perceptions and usage patterns that could not be anticipated by the staff. Hence, conducting the information collection activity would likely improve the quality of the staff's assessments.

7. *Special circumstances requiring respondents to report information more often than quarterly or to prepare responses in fewer than 30 days*

Not applicable.

8. *Agency's Federal Register (FR) Notice and related information*

The first FR notice announcing CPSC's intent to request an extension of approval of information collection requirements was published June 7, 2010. No comments were received. The second Fr notice was published September 17, 2010.

9. *Decision to provide payment or gift*

It is anticipated that a cash incentive will be provided to participants. It is standard industry practice to provide monetary incentives to those individuals who participate in the focus group session, along with meals, snacks and beverages prior to their focus group. This honoraria covers the cost of transportation to and from the facility, parking, and childcare (if necessary), as well as compensation for the time they are spending to attend the group. Without the incentives, the cost for recruitment would increase greatly, and would likely result in a less diverse group with a lower attendance rate.

10. *Assurance of confidentiality*

None of the participants will be specifically identified by their full name. To facilitate open conversations, individual's first names will be used during the session and therefore may be recorded on the audio and video tapes. However, the audio and video tapes will not be released to the public. Only demographic information will be generalized in the final report and none of the responses in the final report will be attributed to any specific individual.

The contractor for the focus groups will include specific guidance for the security and privacy of the participants and their contact information. Upon completion of the contract the Contractor will be required to return all previously provided databases and will provide documentation demonstrating that no other copies and references to the personal data of the potential and actual focus group participants is maintained. Upon approval of the final report, the Contractor will provide all copies of audio/video data collected for this contract.

11. *Questions of a sensitive nature*

Not applicable. The staff will not pose questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior or attitudes, religious beliefs, or other matters commonly considered private.

12. *Estimate of hour burden to respondents*

We estimate the burden of this collection of information as follows. We anticipate that, over the three year period of this request we will conduct 40 focus groups and 20 one-on-one interviews for a variety of projects. The total hours of burden to the respondents are (4 hours per person x 400 participants) + (30 minutes per person x 20 participants) = 1,610 hours (537 hours budgeted per year for three years). The total annual cost is 1,610 x \$29.40 (U.S. Department of Labor, Employer costs for Employee Compensation, September 2009) = \$47,334 (\$15,778 budgeted per year for three years).

13. *Estimate of total annual cost burden to respondents*

Not applicable, see 12 above.

14. *Estimate of annualized costs to the Federal government*

The estimated annual cost of the information collection requirements to the Federal government is approximately \$140,000 per year for three years. Salary and benefits costs for government personnel assigned to this study are estimated at \$127,573 based on 9 months of staff time at an average level of GS-14 step 5, using a 70.1 percent ratio of wages and salary to total compensation from Table 1 of the December 2009 Employer Costs for Employee Compensation, published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. This sum also includes travel costs expended for meeting with contractors and contracts for conducting focus groups and/or one-on-one interviews.

15. *Program changes or adjustments*

Burden hours increased due to the number of planned focus groups per year, projected type of focus groups, and better estimates of burden based on actual experience.

16. *Plans for tabulation and publication*

The Commission has no plans to publish this information in a peer reviewed journal; however, staff reports are typically posted on CPSC's website. Such reports are summaries of the focus groups and do not specifically identify any of the participants. These summaries do not make statistical assertions or implications. Because CPSC does not plan to disseminate the data collected, the requirements of the OMB and the CPSC Information Quality Guidelines do not apply.

17. *Rationale for not displaying the expiration date for OMB approval*

Not applicable.

18. *Exception to the certification statement*

Not applicable.

B. Statistical Methods – Collection of information will not employ statistical methods.