SUPPORTING STATEMENT FOR PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT SUBMISSION

Public Diplomacy Evaluation Office: Performance Measurement, Evaluation and Public Diplomacy Program Surveys

OMB CONTROL NUMBER: 1405-0158

INTRODUCTION

The Department of the State is requesting an extension of the currently approved clearance for performance measurement, evaluation and customer satisfaction surveys. Included in this request is a collection of questions designed to measure and evaluate the performance of programs, products and services provided by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), the Bureau of International Information Programs (IIP), and the Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, Office of Policy, Planning and Resources (R/PPR).

The extension as requested will cover the evaluation and performance research studies that will be conducted by ECA, IIP and R/PPR. These offices' overall mandate is to evaluate all major public diplomacy programs, products and services, and educational and cultural exchange programs. This extension covers a question bank, or a compendium of questions, developed to collect evaluation and performance measurement data and information.

Under the procedures proposed here, the offices involved will conduct the necessary quality control, including assurances that the individual survey instruments comport with the guidelines of the OMB clearance.

A. JUSTIFICATION

1. The programmatic clearance enables the offices involved to conduct evaluations and performance measurement research through survey data collection efforts. This information is being collected to improve the services and products that DOS provides to the public and thus, better carry out part of its mission. The data captured has also been used to help DOS and Public Diplomacy successfully meet organizational performance and accountability goals through the following three legislative mandates:

- Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA), further information can be found at: http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/mgmt-gpra/gplaw2m.html;

- President's Management Agenda (PMA), further information can be found at: http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budintegration/pma_index.html, http://spp.rm.state.gov/spp800x600template.cfm?ID=43, http://www.state.gov/s/d/rm/rls/perfrpt/2005/html/56281.htm; and

- OMB's Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART), further information can be found at: http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/expectmore/summary/10004600.2006.html.

This information collection allows the use of performance measurement and evaluation data to assess Public Diplomacy (PD) programming, products and services more effectively. This clearance reinforces programmatic compliance with established reporting mandates while ensuring the best value for public resources spent on PD programs. These evaluation and measurement efforts provide methodologically rigorous data collection and analyses in place of more subjective, ad hoc, non-standardized anecdotal material.

2. The purpose of this clearance for information collection is to have a question bank that contains a set of pre-approved questions. These questions emphasize attitudinal and behavior change along with customer satisfaction scales for use on surveys that have already been cleared by OMB. This clearance will allow direct assessment and measurement of the customer/respondent base for participation in, and satisfaction with ECA, IIP and R/PPR programs, products and services. The clearance will also allow the offices to assess participants experience and accomplishments during or since participation and their preferences for existing and future programming, products and services. The information collected using these tools informs and supports budgeting, program management and design, program planning, results reporting, information dissemination and outreach initiatives.

Data collected through the clearance will be derived from customer/respondent surveys. The data collection instruments are designed to assess participant/respondent satisfaction and to determine the overall effectiveness of ECA, IIP and R/PPR, programs, products and services in meeting GPRA, PMA and PART legislative requirements. The clearance will cover revision, and program-based evaluations and performance measurement research for ECA exchanges and PD programs, products and services. The customer/respondent-base (or target audience) is limited primarily to participants and alumni of ECA exchange's and PD programs, users of PD products and services, and to a lesser extent, U.S. and foreign host families, institutions and program administrators in ECA, IIP and R/PPR.

Each evaluation incorporates general consistency and comparability in research questions and methodological approaches. Because each evaluation relates to a different ECA exchange or PD program, data collection instruments vary as necessary in intent and response choices.

3. More than 95% of the data collection uses electronic collection techniques. Technology is used in nearly every survey in which safety, security, programmatic, cultural or political concerns are not of sufficient magnitude to pose a negative impact on the respondent. Survey instruments are distributed via web-based or e-mail technology in PDF format, allowing the respondent to complete the survey and return it anytime during the survey period.

4. ECA, IIP and R/PPR are responsible for the collection, analysis and reporting of performance and evaluation data needed to fulfill the requirements of the Department's annual strategic planning process and annual Congressional budget exercises as part of the GPRA, PART and PMA mandates. Coordinating evaluation and measurement research efforts between the three evaluation staffs will help to avoid duplication and over-surveying of respondents while minimizing data collection costs. The information captured, analyzed and reported by this collection is not available through any other office at the Department of State.

5. The information collection activities under this clearance will have no impact on small businesses.

6. If the information is not collected, the Bureau, and the Department of State, will be unable to document the effectiveness, impacts or outcomes of its vital public diplomacy works or exchange programs. In addition, ECA, IIP and R/PPR will not be able to meet accountability requirements or to assess the degree to which programs are meeting their goals. Moreover, the Department will be unable to comply fully with its congressional and executive mandates, including OMB's mandate to evaluate and report the results of exchange and public diplomacy programs.

7. There are no special circumstances associated with this collection.

8. A 60-day notice was published in the *Federal Register* on 12/6/2007. No public comments were received. The offices involved consult with external organizations about survey design, methodology, analysis, data collection approaches and sampling frames. The vendors that have been consulted with include, SRI, Aguirre International, American Institutes for Research (AIR), ForeSee Results, T.E. Systems Inc., and Macro International. These organizations are available for future consultations when needed.

9. No payments or gifts will be made to respondents.

10. The offices and external contractors will follow all procedures and policies stipulated under the Privacy Act of 1974 to guarantee the privacy of the respondents.

11. Questions are carefully composed and structured to avoid being sensitive or offensive to respondents. On occasion, however, respondents may be asked about their religious or ethnic affiliation, which are optional survey items. This type of sensitive information will be used to provide only demographic output data.

12**.** It is estimated that the annual hour burden for respondents will be 4,188.3 hours for 8,377 respondents. For the three year period of the generic clearance request the burden will be 12,565 hours for 25,131 respondents.

ITEM	ANUAL TOTAL	3 YEAR TOTAL
Estimated Number of Respondents	8,377	25,131
Estimated Number of Responses	8,377	25,131
Average Hours Per Response[1]	30 Minutes	30 Minutes
Total Hours	4,188.33	12,565

The time to complete a survey ranges from 15-45 minutes. The averaged estimated time to complete a survey is 30 minutes.

13. There are no costs incurred by respondents.

14. The most recent estimate of costs to the US Government was $1.1 million to capture evaluation and performance measurement data needed to conduct its research studies. Included are estimates of staff labor and research expenditures.

Nine (9) Staff Members (including FTE and Contract Labor)	$ 700,000
Research Expenditures (survey translation, data collection, printing, software licenses)	$ 400,000
Total	$1,100,000

15. There are no changes requested for this extension

16. The specific offices are responsible for all publications associated with its evaluation and performance measurement efforts, and are considered to be the sole property of the Department of State. Contractors are forbidden contractually from publishing results unless specifically granted an exemption. This information will not be published for public use; however, some aggregate data is made available through OMB's ExpectMore.gov official website.

17. The OMB expiration date will be displayed.

18. There are no exceptions requested for this collection.

SECTION B:

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COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

1. Respondent Universe

Every effort is made to ensure that the respondent universe will be kept to those individuals that have been identified as appropriate respondents.

The offices gather information from participants in ECA and PD programs, selected users of PD products and services, and others engaged in DOS efforts. As a result, the potential respondent universe for a given assessment, performance measurement, satisfaction study, or evaluation is highly dependent upon the nature and purpose of the specific project.

The size of the respondent universe in past evaluations, performance measurement and management studies have varied from program to program and project to project, ranging from the teen's in a management survey, to the thousands (1,000-3,000), for multi-year assessments. Currently, the majority of evaluations are conducted as a census (all participants surveyed) increasing the size of the respondent universe. In the future we hope to increase our use of sampling methodologies as a way to reduce the number of individuals contacted, the number of responses received, and the respondent burden associated with our survey research. The offices will investigate the relationship between the size of the respondent universe/population surveyed and response rates.

Response Rates

Response rates for our performance measurement and evaluation studies ranged 18% to 100% for a questionnaire delivered to a focus group.

A factor affecting survey response rates for many of our performance measurement studies was the touch point (pre-program, post-program and follow-up). Survey response rates in 2007, for our performance measurement research, were closely associated with the survey touch point. Pre-program and post-program surveys had substantiality higher response rates than did the follow-up survey. Follow-up surveys are typically conducted 8-10 months after a program ends. The follow-up surveys had an average response rate that was significantly lower than the pre-program and post-program surveys.

Provided in the Table I, are examples of response rates from studies conducted in 2007. Included is information on the size of the respondent universe, the actual number of respondents, target audience, data collection methodology, research initiative and method of administration:

TABLE I

REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE OF RESPONSE RATES BY SURVEY TYPE, METHOD OF ADMINISTRATION OR RESEARCH INITITATIVE

Name of Study	Potential Respondent Universe	Number of Respondents	Response Rates	Respondent Selection	Audience	Method of Administration /Research Initiative
Evaluation International Visitors Leadership Program	95	61	64%	Census	Program Participants	Evaluation/Paper
Performance Measurement/ Management						

Foreign Press Center (**Management**)	2000	364	18.2%	Census	Domestic/ Employees	Electronic
Performance Measurement						
National Security Language Initiative (**Pre-program**)	132	122	92.4%	Census	Domestic/ Program Participants	Electronic
Foreign Leaders Exchange Program **(Post-program)**	1173	903	76.9%	Census	Foreign/ Program Participants	Electronic
Study of the U.S. (**Follow-Up**)	149	70	46.9%	Census	Foreign/ Program Participants	Electronic
Public Measurement Data Collection Project (PMDCP)	541	541	100%	Sampling	Selected Countries Participants	Face-Face /Telephone

2. Procedures for the Collection of Information

The majority of performance measurement studies conducted are census. However, in the conduct of evaluations, the offices use standardized and known sampling methodologies including: random sampling, availability sampling, expert sampling and quota sampling. Table II below provides a heuristic device for mapping the data collection methodologies used in the different research initiatives:

Table II

	DATA COLLECTION TOOLS/METHODOLOGIES USED BY ECA/P/V			
Research Initiative	**Questionnaire**	**Observation**	**Focus Groups**	**Interviews**
Performance Measurement/ Management	**X**			
Evaluations	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**
Public Measurement Data Collection Project	**X**		**X**	**X**

The offices intend to include sample design in its research studies more frequently as we expand our performance measurement and evaluation efforts.

3. Methods to Maximize Response Rate and Quality of Responses

The offices pre-test their data collection instruments, proposed procedures and methods when possible. The purpose is to ensure clarity, brevity, relevance, user-friendliness, understandability, and sensitivity to a respondent's culture and the political climate in which they live.

When pre-tests are conducted, they use the same methodology and procedures that will be implemented in the actual survey process. These processes include distributing the survey by e-mail or regular mail, conducting focus groups, and meeting with contractors/researchers to go over results and re-visit the instruments content. In all cases, pre-tests have been extremely useful for clarifying instructions and questions, refining the response categories, and adding new questions when necessary. We believe that each of these activities help to achieve higher response rates.

All data collection methods are tailored to fit the prevailing political, cultural, safety, security, and accessibility conditions in each country in which participants are involved in an evaluation or performance measurement study. Initial contact with prospective respondents is conducted through e-mails or letters, and, when possible, telephone calls are also made. Follow-up reminders sent periodically to non-respondents encourage them to respond. In combination with pre-testing, we believe that these efforts stimulate response rates.

4. Test of Procedures or Methods

Currently, there are no tests of procedure or methods in place.

5. Consultations on Statistics

The offices employ two full time statisticians to provide expertise in sampling, survey methodology and statistical analysis.