

Supplemental and Part B Questions for DOC/NOAA Customer Survey Clearance

Supplemental Questions

1. Explain who will be conducting this survey. What program office will be conducting the survey? What services does this program provide? Who are the customers? How are these services provided to the customer?

The National Virtual Data System (National Climatic Data Center, National Oceanographic Data Center and National Geophysical Data Center) will be conducting the survey. These Centers provide climatological, oceanographic, geophysical and satellite data and products to customers from many categories. They include individuals, private industry (attorneys, consultants, utility companies, etc.), universities, research institutions, foreign, local, state and federal governments. Data and products may be ordered and delivered either on-line (web) or off-line. The large majority of customers prefer online data retrieval. The Climate Services and Monitoring Division (CSMD) of the National Climatic Data Center will be responsible for summarizing the surveys. The CSMD provides access to data and products produced by and/or archived at the NCDC, the NGDC and the NODC.

2. Explain how this survey was developed. With whom did you consult during the development of this survey on content? Statistics? What suggestions did you get about improving the survey?

This survey was developed by selecting applicable questions from the “cleared questions” under OMB Control Number 0648-0342, some of which were used in the Centers’ approved 2003 and 2008 customer satisfaction surveys. A couple of the questions were edited. Representatives from NCDC, NODC and NGDC agreed upon the questions. When preparing the initial (2003) customer satisfaction survey, we consulted with Steve Sonka and Todd Doehring of Centrec Consulting Group regarding the content. We also consulted with Tamara Creech Houston, an NCDC employee who completed a Customer Satisfaction Survey as part of her Masters Thesis and Dr. Alan McNab, a retired Research Meteorologist at the NCDC. Both Mrs. Houston and Dr. McNab have strong statistics backgrounds and were helpful in discussing statistics and choosing the customers to survey. Suggestions for improving content were to limit the survey to only those questions to which the responses will be most valuable. Usually, shorter surveys result in more responses.

3. Explain how the survey will be conducted. How will the customers be sampled (if fewer than all customers will be surveyed)? What percentage of customers asked to take the survey will respond? What actions are planned to increase the response rate? (Web-based surveys are not an acceptable method of sampling a broad population. Web-based surveys must be limited to services provided by Web.)

This will be a census survey of all customers from the past year for whom we have contact information. The results of this survey will be compared with the results of the 2003 and 2008

surveys to evaluate improvements made and areas in which improvements are needed. This will help to ensure products and services provided in the future will address the needs expressed by our customers and not our perceptions of their needs. The Centers named above are participants, and therefore their customers will be included in the survey. The survey will be conducted by emailing an electronic message with the link to the online survey to those customers for whom we have email addresses and mailing paper copies to those for whom we do not have email addresses. Customers for the year from July 1, 2011 thru June 30, 2012 will be surveyed. We expect a response rate of at least 35%. If less than this response rate is achieved, follow-up mailings containing information regarding the importance of the customers' responses will be done to attempt to increase the response rate.

4. Describe how the results of this survey will be analyzed and used. If the customer population is sampled, what statistical techniques will be used to generalize the results to the entire customer population? Is this survey intended to measure a GPRA performance measure? (If so, please include an excerpt from the appropriate document.)

All responses will be summarized using a frequency analysis. A URL will be provided and customers will be encouraged to respond using this option in order to save government resources needed to summarize the results. Those responses sent back by mail will be entered by government personnel via the URL after receipt. Surveying 100% of the customers in the categories listed in Question 1, who ordered during the stated period, negates the need to use any pre-defined statistical sampling methods. This survey is not intended to measure a GPRA performance measure.

B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

- 1. Describe (including a numerical estimate) the potential respondent universe and any sampling or other respondent selection method to be used. Data on the number of entities (e.g. establishments, State and local governmental units, households, or persons) in the universe and the corresponding sample are to be provided in tabular form. The tabulation must also include expected response rates for the collection as a whole. If the collection has been conducted before, provide the actual response rate achieved.**

The survey will be conducted by emailing a message with the link to the online survey to those customers for whom we have email addresses (7,161 customers) and mailing paper copies to those for whom we do not have email addresses (1,621 customers). Each non-foreign customer for the year from July 1, 2011 thru June 30, 2012 will be surveyed. Surveying 100% of these customers who ordered during the stated period negates the need to use any pre-defined statistical sampling methods. *We expect a response rate of at least 35%.* If less than this response rate is achieved, follow-up mailings containing information regarding the importance of the customers' responses will be done to attempt to increase the response rate. The response rate was 28% and 13.7% in 2003 and 2008, respectively. Considering users are encouraged to respond to the survey online and considering more users are requesting data online than in the past, we expect the response rate to be higher in 2012.

- 2. Describe the procedures for the collection, including: the statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection; the estimation procedure; the degree of accuracy needed for the purpose described in the justification; any unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures; and any use of periodic (less frequent than annual) data collection cycles to reduce burden.**

Surveying 100% of the non-foreign customers who ordered during the stated period negates the need to use any pre-defined statistical sampling methods. Surveys have been administered approximately every 5 years (2003, 2008, 2012)

- 3. Describe the methods used to maximize response rates and to deal with nonresponse. The accuracy and reliability of the information collected must be shown to be adequate for the intended uses. For collections based on sampling, a special justification must be provided if they will not yield "reliable" data that can be generalized to the universe studied.**

The survey consists of 20 closed-ended questions with an option to include additional suggestions. Only the questions which we consider to be most helpful were used, as shorter surveys tend to elicit more responses. The time of year that the survey will be administered was also considered (during the early fall, to avoid its arrival during summer vacations/holidays). If less than a 35% response rate is achieved, follow-up mailings containing information regarding the importance of the customers' responses will be done to attempt to increase the response rate.

- 4. Describe any tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken. Tests are encouraged as effective means to refine collections, but if ten or more test respondents are involved OMB must give prior approval.**

No tests of procedures or methods will be undertaken.

- 5. Provide the name and telephone number of individuals consulted on the 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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