National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)
Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP)
ForsMarsh Customer Satisfaction Survey

FOUR STANDARD SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. Explain who will be surveyed and why the group is appropriate to survey.

The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) Centers reporting staff, defined as those people who are designated as the point of contact within each center for NIST MEP Client Impact Survey-related issues. The 59 MEP centers are Cooperative Agreement holders, and are not federal employees. Once a center completes a project with a client, it is reported to NIST MEP, and within six months to a year later, the client will be notified about one week prior to the survey being sent out. Information such as the project type, length, client name, and client contact information are provided by the center reporting staff. Once this is complete, the information file is sent to ForsMarsh, the third party vendor, so they may administer the survey**.** This group is appropriate to survey as they are the primary interface between the MEP centers and the third-party survey vendor. The reporting contacts have the most experience dealing with the NIST MEP Client Impact Survey and its vendor, and would be able to provide the most usable and appropriate feedback regarding ForsMarsh's performance. The MEP centers are responsible for monitoring the survey process and following up with their clients to ensure the survey is completed. This follow-up includes interacting with the staff at ForsMarsh to make sure the correct information is going to the right clients, as well as to troubleshoot any problems that may arise during the survey period. The staff at ForsMarsh is also responsible for providing technical support for aspect of the survey to the center reporting staff.

2. Explain how the survey was developed including consultation with interested parties, pre-testing, and responses to suggestions for improvement.

The survey was drafted by an MEP economist with experience in dealing with both the center reporting contacts and the Survey Vendor. The draft was circulated for comments and suggestions from other knowledgeable MEP staff. All involved parties within NIST MEP agreed upon the survey submitted.

3. Explain how the survey will be conducted, how customers will be sampled if fewer than all customers will be surveyed, expected response rate, and actions your agency plans to take to improve the response rate.

The survey will be conducted via a web-based instrument. All reporting contacts in the centers will receive the survey, so no sampling will be done. The program office works closely with the

center reporting staff and has built a professional relationship with them. The expected response rate is 80%. Achieving that percentage response rate should not be a problem, however if the response rate is lower than expected, NIST MEP will reiterate the value of the survey to the reporting staff, as this is their opportunity to have their voices heard. Additional contact with the center directors encouraging them to have their reporting staff complete the survey will also be made if necessary. Many of the centers reporting staffs have actually requested a survey like this be completed, and reporting staff have been notified of the likelihood that this survey will be coming in the near future.

4. Describe how the results of the survey will be analyzed and used to generalize the results to the entire customer population.

The survey seeks to gather feedback from the center reporting staff regarding the overall performance of ForsMarsh. Feedback will be collected on several aspects of ForsMarsh's performance, including customer service, preparation of survey materials, and the new survey management tools developed. Feedback will be used to determine areas of strength and weakness, and using this feedback, new process improvements will be implemented to ease the burden of the NIST MEP Client Impact survey on all parties involved in the process.