Employee and Guest Researcher Engagement Survey
for the Material Measurement Laboratory

<u>**FOUR STANDARD SURVEY QUESTIONS**</u>

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

The Material Measurement Laboratory (MML) of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) is seeking to conduct a survey of its current federal employees and guest researchers that work side-by-side in the same laboratory and organizational environment. This request concerns the collection of data from the guest researcher population.

Collecting this information will assist MML managers and leaders determine best practices for employee engagement and effectiveness for current and future projects and/or programs.

Analysis and actions based on this collection will enable MML to improve its performance through:

- Building structures and processes that more effectively support the NIST/MML mission and strategy
- Assessing and developing leaders who can create better performing teams
- Benchmarking and aligning roles and rewards with MML strategies
- Uncovering workforce insights to improve engagement and performance

NIST guest researchers work side-by-side with NIST MML employees, and while each is engaged in his/her specific research interest, acceptance of guest researchers into our laboratories is contingent on the high degree of overlapping interests and synergy with MML programs. Guest researchers have their own perspective within the framework of the NIST Guest Researcher environment, and it is important that they be surveyed for MML to get a complete picture of its programs.

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

The collection instrument was developed by a contractor, C^2 in partnership with the Hay Group, who won a competitive process to provide an engagement survey that is supported by national benchmark norms for the best companies and agencies in the U.S. The contractor is nationally

known for the quality of its survey instrument, its database of benchmark norms, and its ability to design action plans in specific response to survey results.

The C^2 team:
- Provided a recommended definition and approach to address employee engagement and effectiveness at MML. C^2 Team's Employee Effectiveness framework, which is based on years of research and has been validated with organizations across industries, will serve as the basis for defining and measuring employee engagement and effectiveness;
- Designed a customized survey to assess employee engagement and identify specific management and organizational issues. The survey includes validated employee engagement and effectiveness survey questions, as well as customized questions to measure issues specific to MML;
- Met with two MML staff focus groups to elicit cross-cutting issues from which to craft customized questions for the survey.

MML leadership reviewed the questions and offered several suggested modifications to further delineate question scopes at the group, division, and OU level. The collection instrument was finalized.

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.

All members of the population will be invited to complete the survey.

The C^2 team will send an invitation by email to MML staff and guest researchers. The invitation text is as follows:

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Subject: **NOW AVAILABLE! 2013 Employee and Guest Researcher Engagement Survey - Information and Access**
Dear MML Employee:

The 2013 Employee and Guest Researcher Engagement Survey is now available online! This e-mail contains the information you will need to access the survey. Your participation is very important, so we encourage you to please take approximately 20 minutes to complete the survey between now and **<End Day and Date of Survey Administration>**. For your convenience, the survey is available 24 hours a day, seven days per week.

As you may know, the results of this survey will be used to help make MML a better, more

effective place to work. Your responses to the survey are completely confidential. No one from your MML will see an individual's survey. Completed survey responses go directly to Hay Group, the external partner assisting in this survey effort. To further ensure confidentiality, no employee group with fewer than five respondents will be reported on its own.

To access/start the survey:

To start the survey, click on the link below or launch your Internet browser and enter the following URL in your browser's address line:

<LINK TO SURVEY PROVIDED HERE>

Please do not forward this e-mail; it will only allow one survey submission.

When you reach the end of the survey, please click the button labeled "Submit Survey". Next, a thank you message will appear and you can then exit your browser. If you would like to save a partially completed survey and return at a later time to finish, simply click the "Save and Return Later" link at the top left of your screen. Then, to finish the survey, return to this e-mail invitation and click the link above.

If you have technical questions or concerns, email Hay Group at <u>\<HayGroup</u> Email Address>.

Thank you in advance for your valuable input.

Hay Group

The C^2 team will also send reminders during the time the survey is open. We anticipate this period of time to be two weeks. MML leadership will also encourage participation. The C^2 team will assist MML in creating a survey communications strategy and survey brand, if desired, and provide sample survey communications materials. Survey-based communications are aimed at promoting the survey, maximizing survey response rates, and ensuring that leaders and managers understand their roles in the survey process and their responsibility for taking action. The target response rate is 70 %.

The C^2 team will program and test the survey online. The format and functionality of the survey site will be customized to MML's specifications (e.g., brand, "look and feel"). The survey will be programmed to include the following functionality:
- Secure connection that can be recognized by participants' browsers as secure (e.g., https//).
- Password protection (unique id embedded in the link).
- Save-and-return feature—if a respondent is forced to terminate his or her session prior to completing the survey, any data entered prior to that point are saved automatically.

- When the respondent returns to the survey, he or she will automatically resume at the point at which the previous session was terminated.
- Branching of survey questions and skip patterns.
- Survey progress completion bar (shows respondent how much of the survey he or she has completed).

The C^2 Team will then administer the survey to approximately 391 guest researchers using a proven, secure online survey system. C^2's online survey makes it easy for employees to complete the survey in a confidential manner. C^2 will provide real-time response rate updates to help MML track participation throughout the survey administration window.

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

The C^2 team will analyze the data collected and provide reports for MML as a whole and Divisions and Groups via C^2's leading-edge Manager Reports. Reports aggregated by OU, Division and Group will be provided. In no case will a group report be produced if the group had fewer than 4 respondents. These reports will allow MML leaders and managers the ability to analyze the survey data collection results in a user-friendly, interactive way that facilitates action planning. The reports will include advanced functionality that allows users (MML managers and leaders) to sort their results in various ways, "slice and dice" their results based on demographic variables, and compare results to internal and external benchmarks.

Each Manager Report will include:
- Custom logins with data restriction (providing a user with access only to data views within their span of control).
- Embedded Help Document that guides users through the process (e.g., instructions for reading the reports and interpreting the data).
- Characteristics of respondents (number of employees responding from the Division or Group and number of respondents in each of the demographic groups, such as level and tenure).
- Bar charts displaying frequency distributions (percent favorable, neutral, and unfavorable) for all survey dimensions (subcategories) and questions.
- Internal comparisons to broader organizational results. For example, results for a particular Division will be compared to results for MML as a whole.
- Comparisons to Hay Group normative benchmarks (e.g., Federal Government norm, High Performance norm).
- Identification of questions that are the biggest drivers of employee engagement and enablement to help managers prioritize areas for action.

- Comparisons of survey results among different demographic segments (e.g., grade, tenure, supervisory status), where there are a sufficient number of respondents to maintain employee anonymity.
- Benchmark MML's survey results to Federal Government-wide norms, Federal R&D organizations, and high-performing organizations.

The C² Team will analyze MML's survey results in depth by all key cuts and comparisons and develop an executive presentation that will be delivered to the senior leadership.
The executive presentation will:

- Identify key strengths and opportunities for improvement for MML overall.
- Identify any important differences in survey findings by Division, grade, level, function, or other key demographic groups.
- Compare results to normative, external benchmarks (e.g., Federal Government norm, High Performance norm).
- Focus on assessing the survey findings considering MML's strategic goals and values.
- Present relevant statistical analyses, including key drivers of employee engagement and enablement derived specifically for MML.
- Draw conclusions about the extent to which MML is creating an engaging workplace environment where employees are enabled for success.
- Provide top-line recommendations for action (e.g., "quick wins" and longer-term actions for improving the workplace environment) based on your strategic context.

The C² Team will provide continued support to help MML translate survey results into positive organizational change throughout the organization. The types of post-survey support and consultation they will provide MML to ensure that action is taken in response to survey results are:
- Action Planning Strategy Sessions
- Guidance on Specific Action Plans and Best Practice Recommendations
- "Best practice" recommendations for addressing areas identified by the survey.