

Supporting Statement
Approval Request to Conduct Customer Satisfaction Research (OMB #1545-1432)
Compliance Center Exam (CCE) Interactive Voice Recognition Survey

A. JUSTIFICATION

1. Circumstances Making the Collection of Information Necessary

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) engages a balanced measurement system consisting of business results, customer satisfaction, and employee satisfaction. This initiative is part of the Service-wide effort to establish a system of balanced organizational performance measures mandated by the IRS Restructuring and Reform Act of 1998. This is also a result of Executive Order 12862, which requires all government agencies to survey their customers and incorporate customer preferences in their process improvement efforts.

The Compliance Center Examination (CCE) section within the Compliance Operating Unit of SB/SE is responsible for responding to customer technical and account inquiries, resolving customer account issues, providing account settlement (payment) options, and working related issues.

2. Purpose and Use of the Information Collection

In addition to the objective of measuring customer satisfaction to meet a balanced measures requirement, CCE management is motivated to use survey results to identify improvement opportunities and as the basis for enacting improvements.

The key goals of the survey are 1) to survey our external customers on an ongoing basis regarding their expectations, 2) track customer satisfaction progress over time nationwide and 3) identify operational improvements within SB/SE CCE. The feedback received will not institute new policy, yet will enable the Service to meet taxpayer needs effectively.

3. Consideration Given to Information Technology

CCE is an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) survey and will be administered via telephone.

4. Duplication of Information

This is the only formal mechanism by which CCE telephone customers provide immediate feedback to SB/SE on their experiences with the CCE telephone sites.

5. Reducing the Burden on Small Entities

N/A

6. Consequences of Not Conducting Collection

SB/SE initiatives fall under the IRS goal to “*IMPROVE SERVICE TO MAKE VOLUNTARY COMPLIANCE EASIER, and ENFORCE THE LAW TO ENSURE EVERYONE MEETS THEIR OBLIGATION TO PAY TAXES.*” If the requirement is not funded, SB/SE will not have the external measures used to assess their success in meeting IRS goals. This will also cause SB/SE

to be less effective as it will not have the data to know which products and services identified by customers need improvement or need to be developed to service these populations.

7. Special Circumstances

There are no special circumstances. The information collected will be voluntary. These statistics could be used in making management decisions such as in business improvement opportunities.

8. Consultations with Persons Outside the Agency

N/A

9. Payment or Gift

N/A

10. Confidentiality

One voluntary survey question asks if participants are interested in participating in future research, if so they are requested to provide their telephone number and e-mail address (if available). This information is not shared with the IRS and is only used by the contractor for research purposes. The data returned to IRS will have no identifying information relating specific records to individual taxpayers. Nonetheless, IRS will ensure that privacy to the extent allowed by law and security of the aggregated results will receive the utmost attention. Public and official access to the information will be tightly controlled. The computer files containing this tabulated information will remain password protected at all times. We will apply fair information and record-keeping practices to ensure protection of all taxpayers. The criterion for disclosure laid out in the Privacy Act, the Freedom of Information Act, and section 6103 of the Internal Revenue Code, provides for the protection of taxpayer information as well as its release to authorized recipients.

11. Sensitive Nature

No questions will be asked that are of a personal or sensitive nature.

12. Burden of Information Collection

The survey has been designed to minimize burden on the CCE customer. The time that a respondent takes to complete a survey has been carefully considered and only the most important areas are being surveyed. The current selection criteria established in the survey methodology will allow the respondent to participate in only one survey. The average time of participation is expected to be 9 minutes. The questions are generally one sentence in structure and on an elementary concept level.

Based on a sample of potential respondents of 7,500 (including 5 call sites) and a response rate of 30%, we expect 2,250 survey participants, leaving 5,250 non-participants. The contact time to determine non-participants could take up to one minute, with the resulting burden for non-participants being $5,250 \times 1 \text{ minute} = 5,250/60 \text{ minutes} = \underline{87.5 \text{ burden hours}}$.

Participation time is expected to be 9 minutes. This reflects the time to get into the automated survey (1 minute) as well as the time to complete the survey (8 minutes maximum). The time burden for participants being $2,250 \times 9 \text{ minutes} = 20,250/60 \text{ minutes} = \underline{337.5 \text{ burden hours}}$.

The total burden hours for the survey would be $(87.5 + 337.5) = 425$ burden hours.

Minor revisions, that will not impact the burden hours, may be made to the survey questionnaire. If changes are made to the questionnaire, only minor changes are expected. Revising the coding scheme for open-ended questions is one example.

CCE IVR Survey

Category of Respondent	No. of Respondents	Participation Time	Burden
CCE Non-participant	5,250	1 min	87.5
CCE Expected Participants	2,250	9 min	337,5
Totals	7,500		425

Estimated Response Rate: 30%

Total Burden Estimate = 425 hrs

13. Costs to Respondents

N/A

14. Costs to Federal Government

The estimated cost is \$21,225.50. This cost is a portion of the total contract cost, which includes four separate surveys.

15. Reason for Change

N/A

16. Tabulation of Results, Schedule, Analysis Plans

The survey data is collected via an IVR phone questionnaire. The representative asks the customer to participate in the survey. Callers who agree to participate are transferred to the IRS monitor, who then transfers the customer into the automated survey, which is conducted by the contractor. This data is transferred to the contractor to conduct analysis and prepare reports if these optional tasks are exercised. If not, the analysis and reporting will be conducted by SB/SE Research. If changes are made to the questionnaire, they are expected to be minor. Revising the coding scheme for open-ended questions is one example.

Survey scoring for this contract is based on the Customer Satisfaction Survey Score response average to the keystone question – “Everything considered, rate your overall satisfaction with the service you received during this call.” Questions utilize a 5-point rating scale, with 1 being very dissatisfied and 5 being very satisfied. All survey responses are released only as summaries. The contractor shall hold the identities, of the taxpayers responding to the survey, private to the extent permitted by law.

The collected data is used to survey and track customer satisfaction at the SB/SE site level and nationally. The respondent data is analyzed with a view to:

- Provide insight from the customer’s perspective about possible improvements.
- Provide useful input for program evaluation and execution at the programmatic and area office level of service delivery.
- Provide additional information on important “drill down” areas.

The contractor will not provide the IRS with data or status updates that are linked to individual respondents. Upon completion of data collection and cleaning, the contractor will provide de-identified survey data to the IRS. This data will not include any individually identifying information such as name, address, or taxpayer identification number.

17. Display of OMB Approval Date

N/A

18. Exceptions to Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

N/A

19. Dates collection will begin and end

April 1, 2014 through September 30, 2015

Data collection is for one year 4/2014-3/2015. Final Data Analysis is expected to conclude September 2015.

B. STATISTICAL METHODS

1. Universe and Respondent Selection

The contractor will develop a monthly sampling plan, which will detail the entire sampling and weighting process, where applicable. The sampling plan will be executed by IRS monitors at call center sites.

2. Procedures for Collecting Information

Callers who agree to participate are transferred to the IRS monitor who transfers the customer into the automated survey, which is conducted by the contractor. The data is collected by the contractor.

3. Methods to Maximize Response

The questionnaire length is minimized to reduce respondent burden; thereby, tending to increase response rates. Respondents are assured anonymity of their responses. Also, weighting procedures can be applied to adjust aggregated data from those who do respond.

4. Testing of Procedures

The Toll-free questionnaire is an established and tested survey instrument. If changes are made to the questionnaire, only minor changes are expected. Revising the coding scheme for open-ended questions is one example.

5. Contacts for Statistical Aspects and Data Collection

For questions regarding the study or questionnaire design or statistical methodology, contact:

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Note: The Assistor Guide and CCE IVR survey questionnaire are included in a separate file.