Supporting Statement
Approval Request to Conduct Stakeholder Liaison (SL) Field
Virtual Events Survey

A. JUSTIFICATION

1. Circumstances Making the Collection of Information Necessary

Stakeholder Liaison (SL) Field's mission is to provide outreach and education, delivering IRS key messages to practitioner, payroll and industry stakeholders. Due to budget and resource restrictions, we are currently reducing the number of face-to-face events and increasing the number of virtual events that we hold with our partners. The web conferencing software that we have contracted with is WebInterpoint; although, we also use partner-owned technology such as GoToWebinar and AT&T Connect to create virtual events. We anticipate that the future IRS Enterprise-wide web-conferencing solution will be WebEx.

All of these types of software allow SLs to poll their audience electronically. To obtain consistent feedback from our partners on their virtual experience in using the different types of software, we would like to ask 6 polling questions at the end of virtual events.

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) enlists a balanced measurement system consisting of business results, customer satisfaction, and employee satisfaction. This initiative is part of the Service-wide effort to maintain a system of balanced organizational performance measures mandated by the IRS Restructuring and Reform Act (RRA) of 1998. This is also a result of Executive Order 12862 that requires all government agencies to survey their customers.

2. Purpose and Use of the Information Collection

This survey has the potential to obtain pointers on where improvement opportunities might lie and the likelihood of future participation in IRS virtual events. SL Field leadership is motivated to use survey results to identify improvement opportunities as the basis for enacting improvements.

The goals of the survey are to survey our external customers on an ongoing basis regarding their virtual experience, track customer satisfaction on a geographic basis nationwide and to identify potential improvements. The feedback received will enable SL Field to meet stakeholder needs effectively which will in turn, increase the effectiveness of SL Field delivery of IRS key messages.

3. Consideration Given to Information Technology

The SL Field Virtual Events Survey will be administered electronically through the software used during SL Field virtual events.

4. Duplication of Information

This survey will provide valuable information that is not available in any internal IRS data source.

5. Reducing the Burden on Small Entities

N/A

6. Consequences of Not Conducting Collection

The first IRS goal is to "Improve service to make voluntary compliance easier." If this survey is not approved, SL Field will not have any external measures to assess our success in meeting this IRS goal as it related to providing outreach and education to our practitioner, payroll and industry stakeholders.

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

No personally identifiable information (PII) or sensitive but unclassified (SBU) information will be associated with the survey responses;

All participants will be subject to the provisions of the Taxpayer Bill of Rights II during this study and the vendor will ensure that all participants are treated fairly and appropriately.

The security of the data used in this project and the privacy to the extent allowed by law of taxpayers will be carefully safeguarded at all times. Security requirements are based on the Computer Security Act of 1987 and Office of Management and Budget Circular A-130, Appendices A & B. Physical security measures include a locked, secure office. Notes are stored in locked cabinets or shredded. Data security at the C-2 level is accomplished via the Windows NT operating system. Systems are password protected, users profiled for authorized use, and individual audit trails generated and reviewed periodically."

The IRS will apply and meet fair information and record-keeping practices to ensure privacy to the extent allowed by law protection of all taxpayers. This includes criteria for disclosure—laid out in the Privacy Act of 1974, the Freedom of Information Act, and Section 6103 of the Internal Revenue Code—all of which provide 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 interview is designed to minimize burden on the taxpayer. The time that a respondent takes to complete the survey is carefully considered and only the most important areas are being surveyed. The average time of survey completion is expected to be less than 5 minutes.

Based on a sample of potential respondents of 18,000 and a response rate of 20%, we expect 3600 survey participants, leaving 14,400 non-participants. The contact time to determine non-participants could take up to one minute, with the resulting burden for non-participants being 14,400 x 1 minute = 14,400/60 minutes= 240 burden hours.

For participants, the time to complete the survey is 5 minutes. This reflects the time to get into the automated polling questions (1 minute) as well as the time to complete the survey (polling questions) 4 minutes. The time burden for participants being 3600 x 5 minutes/60 minutes = 300 burden hours.

Thus the total burden hours for the survey would be (240 +300) 540 burden hours.

Stakeholder Liaison Event Survey

Category of respondent	No. of participants	Participation Time	Burden
SL Non-participant	14,400	1 minute	240 hours
SL Participant	3600	5 minutes	300 hours
Totals	18,000		540 hours

13. Costs to Respondents
   N/A

14. Cost to Federal Government
   There is no cost to the Federal Government

15. Reason for Change
   N/A

16. Tabulation of Results, Schedule, Analysis Plans

   The survey data is collected electronically. If changes are made to the questionnaire, they are expected to be minor. Ample space is provided for suggestions for improvement.

   SLs will tabulate the results of the surveys they receive at the completion of their virtual events and provide the results through their Area Manager to Kristen Hoiby as the lead for the SL Field Webconferencing Team and Kristy Washington as the lead for the Communications and Stakeholder Outreach (CSO) Technology Outreach Team. This data will not include any PII or SBU information. The Webconferencing and Technology Outreach Teams will analyze the results to determine geographic and/or technology problems to determine needed improvement.

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
May 1, 2014 through November 2015.

B.   STATISTICAL METHODS

1.   Universe and Respondent Selection

Survey participants are attendees at SL Field virtual events with practitioner, payroll and industry stakeholders.

2.   Procedures for Collecting Information

The webconferencing software used for the virtual event will produce a report which will be generated by the SL conducting the event.

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 questionnaire was reviewed and approved by SB/SE Research. 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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Survey instrument is included in a separate document.