

**Supporting Statement
Information Collection (ICR) Approval Request to Conduct Customer Satisfaction
Research (OMB #1545-1432)**

Title: Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Contractor Satisfaction Survey

A. JUSTIFICATION

1. Circumstances Making the Collection of Information Necessary

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.

Satisfaction surveys have proven to produce significant information about the key dimensions of the customers' experience in dealing with IRS Procurement as well as pointers to where improvement opportunities might lie.

2. Purpose and Use of the Information Collection

The Contractor Satisfaction Survey is part of a program that measures contractor satisfaction with IRS Procurement. Results are used to identify improvement opportunities and make changes, if necessary, in the way IRS Procurement conducts business with its contractors.

3. Consideration Given to Information Technology

The survey is administered electronically, using the Verint (formerly Vovici) software, on a yearly basis after the completion of a fiscal year.

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

The survey is only administered once a year and only to contractors that conducted business with IRS Procurement in the fiscal year being surveyed.

6. Consequences of Not Conducting Collection

Maintaining good relations with our contractors is key to IRS Procurement's success. The data retrieved from this survey measures how well IRS Procurement is communicating and working with our contractors and identifies areas where we can improve. The improvements made help ensure the retention of good contractors on future acquisitions.

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 participants if they would like to be contacted to discuss the survey further. If they respond “Yes,” they are requested to provide their name and telephone number or e-mail address (whichever they prefer). They are told that if they provide their name and contact information, the information they provided in the survey will be shared with the service provider.

The IRS will apply and meet fair information and record-keeping practices to ensure privacy protection of all taxpayers to the extent allowed by law. 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.

The survey will not contain tax return or taxpayer information. Survey participants will not be identified in any of the documents or files used for this project. We will limit and control the amount of information we collect to those items that are necessary to accomplish the research questions. We will carefully safeguard the security of data utilized as well as the privacy of the survey respondents to the extent allowed by law.. We will apply the fair information and record-keeping practices to ensure protection of all survey respondents. 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 information as well as its releases 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 amount of recipients is dependent on the amount of contracts IRS Procurement has active in a fiscal year. The time that a respondent takes to complete the survey is carefully considered, as only 5 questions are asked. The average time of survey completion is expected to be 6 minutes.

Based on a sample of potential respondents of 1,900 and a response rate of 15%, we expect 285 survey participants, leaving 1,615 non-participants. The contact time to determine non-participants could take up to one minute to read the email invitation, with the resulting burden for non-participants being $1,615 \times 1 \text{ minute} = 1,615/60 \text{ minutes} = \underline{26.92 \text{ burden hours}}$.

For participants, total participation time is 6 minutes. This reflects the time to read the email invitation (1 minute) and time needed to complete the survey (5 minutes). The time burden for participants is $285 \times 6 = 1,710/60$ minutes = 28.50 burden hours.

The total burden hours for the survey is $(26.92 + 28.50) =$ **55.42 burden hours**

Type of Collection	Participation	Response Time (minutes)	Total Burden (Hours)
Expected non-participants	1,615	1	26.92
Expected participants	285	6	28.50
Grand Total Burden			55.42

13. Costs to Respondents

N/A

14. Costs to Federal Government

IRS Procurement currently has 3 licenses under an IRS Human Capital Office software contract with the Verint (formerly Vovici) organization. The overall cost of the software contract is approximately \$16,000 per year.

15. Reason for Change

N/A

16. Tabulation of Results, Schedule, Analysis Plans

The survey data is collected via an electronic questionnaire through the Verint survey software. The survey questions remain the same year after year so that we may obtain comparative data over the years. The survey includes several ratings questions, evaluating overall service as compared to other federal agencies, timeliness of the procurement actions, communication and professionalism of the procurement staff, and ease of the procurement process. In addition, ample space is provided for suggestions for improvement.

Survey scoring is based on a 5 point scale with 1 being Very Dissatisfied and 5 being Very Satisfied. The comments are organized and reported in 5 categories: Communication, Customer Burden, Professionalism, Timeliness and Not Actionable. These comments are also categorized as negative or positive to identify IRS Procurements' strengths and weaknesses. All survey responses will be released only as summaries. No responses or comments are attributed to any one survey recipient unless they ask to be contacted.

17. Display of OMB Approval Date

N/A

18. Exceptions to Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

N/A

19. Dates Collection of Information will Begin and End

The survey is generally open a total of 3 weeks, in late November or early December of each year. Data for our next survey will be retrieved from Fiscal Year 2014, running from October 2013 through September 2014.

B. STATISTICAL METHODS

1. Universe and Respondent Selection

The contractor names and email addresses are pulled from the IRS Integrated Procurement System (IPS) who conducted business with the IRS in the fiscal year being surveyed.

2. Procedures for Collecting Information

The survey is administered electronically, using the Verint (formerly Vovici) software, on a yearly basis after the completion of a fiscal year. The procedure for collecting information consists of:

1. Issuing an initial email invitation to participate in the survey
2. After two weeks, a survey reminder is sent to non-responders
3. Survey closes a week after the reminder is issued and reporting information is provided to managers for review

3. Methods to Maximize Response

The questionnaire length is minimized to 5 questions to reduce respondent burden; thereby, tending to increase response rates. Respondents are assured anonymity of their responses unless they ask to be contacted.

4. Testing of Procedures

The questionnaire is an established and tested survey instrument. If changes are made to the questionnaire, only minor changes are expected as we prefer to keep the survey consistent year after year for comparative data.

5. Contacts for Statistical Aspects and Data Collection

Cindi Wallace
IRS Procurement, Office of Strategic Acquisition Initiatives, Business Operations Specialist
240-613-8379
Cynthia.Wallace2@irs.gov

Survey instruments include the following and are attached in one document as a separate file.

- Email Invitation
- Survey Questions
- Email Reminder