

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT**  
**Paperwork Reduction Act Information Approval Request**  
**to Conduct Customer Satisfaction Research**

**IRS On-Line Payment Agreement Customer Satisfaction Survey**

**A. JUSTIFICATION**

**1. Circumstances Making the Collection of Information Necessary**

The Media and Publication (M&P) Division of the IRS in partnership with SB/SE Finance, Research & Strategy is conducting a taxpayer survey to measure awareness of and barriers associated with the use of the Online Payment Agreement program.

OPA is used to assist taxpayers, who cannot fully pay their balance due, enter into an installment agreement online to resolve their tax issues. Feedback from customers is important in order to assess OPA and to take improvement actions if necessary.

The survey instruments will be used to determine the customer satisfaction and awareness of the Online Payment Agreement program.

The Internal Revenue Service 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 of 1998. This is also a result of Executive Order 12862 (Setting Customer Service Standards, issued on September 11, 1993) that requires all government agencies to survey their customers. Pursuant to Executive Order 12862, agencies that provide significant services to the public must survey customers to determine the kind and quality of services they want and their level of satisfaction with existing services. Executive Order 13571 (Streamlining Service Delivery and Improving Customer Service, issued on April 27, 2011) expands the definition of "customer" and encourages the use of a broader set of tools to solicit actionable, timely customer feedback to capture insights and identify early warning signals. As used in Executive Order 13571, the term "customer" refers to any individual or to any entity, including a business, tribal, state or local government, or other agency, to which the agency directly provides significant services.

**2. Purpose and Use of the Information Collection**

The primary goals of the survey are to determine whether SB/SE taxpayers who entered into an installment agreement meet the qualifications to enter into an installment agreement through the automated OPA system; to determine whether the taxpayer tried to use the OPA system; to determine if the taxpayer would use the OPA system in the future; and to identify potential barriers the taxpayer may perceive in using the OPA system.

**3. Consideration Given to Information Technology**

The questionnaire will be administered via U.S. Mail. Individual Master File Taxpayers who entered into an installment agreement during the fourth quarter of calendar year 2013 will be surveyed. Questionnaires will be mailed to IMF taxpayers who would qualify, based on

established criteria, to enter into an installment agreement using the OPA system. Small Business Entities will not be surveyed.

#### **4. Efforts Not to Duplicate Research**

This is the only study conducted by the IRS to measure the satisfaction of taxpayers who would qualify to use the OPA system, but have not used the OPA system.

#### **5. Reducing the Burden on Small Entities**

NA

#### **6. Consequences of Not Conducting Collection**

Enterprise Collection Strategy within the IRS will not be able to measure external customer satisfaction with OPA or identify barriers to using the system. Feedback from customers is important in order to assess perceptions of the OPA system and develop service improvement actions. If the survey is not conducted, the primary goals of the ECS organization to survey external customers who are qualified to use the OPA service to improve customer satisfaction and reduce burden will not be achieved.

#### **7. Special Circumstances**

There are no special circumstances. The information collected will be voluntary and will not be used for statistical purposes

#### **8. Consultations with Persons Outside**

N/A

#### **9. Payment of Gift**

N/A

#### **10. Confidentiality**

All participants will be subject to the provisions of the Taxpayer Bill of Rights II during this study and SB/SE FR&S and ECS will ensure that all participants are treated fairly and appropriately.

The security of the data used in this project and the privacy of taxpayers will be carefully safeguarded at all times to the extent allowed by law. 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 and secure server. 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 protection, to the extent allowed by law, 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.

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. IRS will hold the identities of respondents private to the extent permitted 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 personal or sensitive nature.

**12. Burden of Information Collection**

The ECS OPA survey was designed to minimize burden. The time a respondent takes to complete the survey has been carefully considered and only the most important areas are being surveyed. We made every attempt in designing this survey to minimize burden and maximize response rate. Burden estimates are based on a 20% response rate.

It is anticipated that 5,000 surveys will be mailed to taxpayers. Using a 20% response rate, we expect to receive 1,000 responses. Contact time and survey completion time is five minutes. The contact time to determine non-participation is one minute. The total annual burden hours requested is 149.9 hrs.

The estimated time to complete the survey is five minutes with an assumed 20 percent response rate. We expect to contact 4,000 ( $4,000 \times 1/60 = 66.6$  hours) potential participants that will not respond to the survey. There are 1,000 taxpayers ( $1,000 \times 5/60 = 83.3$  hours) expected to respond to the survey.

Category of Respondent	No. of Respondents	Participation Time (in minutes)*	Burden (in hours)
Individual Taxpayers	1000	$1000 \times 5/60$	83.3
Individual Taxpayers (non-participation population)	4000	$4000 \times 1/60$	66.6
<b>Totals</b>	<b>5000</b>	<b>9000</b>	<b>149.9</b>

**Estimated Response Rate: 20%**

**13. Costs to Respondents**

N/A

**14. Costs to Federal Government**

It will cost a total of \$5,000 to print and mail the pre-survey letter, the survey and the survey reminder letter to each taxpayer in the study.

**15. Reason for Change**

N/A

## 16. Tabulation of Results, Schedule, and Analysis Plans

A survey will be mailed to taxpayers who entered into a streamlined installment agreement via a method other than the Online Payment Agreement system. SB/SE FR&S Research will send a survey to 5,000 taxpayers that entered into a streamlined installment agreement during the fourth quarter of calendar year 2013.

With regard to the low response rate, the IRS will assume that all data collected from this survey is **qualitative in nature**, and no critical decisions will be made by this office solely from the analysis of data from this survey. The results from this survey are simply one piece of a larger set of information needed to assess the needs related to services provided by the IRS. IRS will hold the identities of respondents private to the extent permitted by law. Because the anticipated response rate is less than 80%, Research will conduct the required non response analysis if the response rate is below 80%.

## 17. Display of OMB Approval Date

N/A

## 18. Exceptions to Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

These activities will comply with the requirement in 5 CFR 1320.9.

## 19. Dates collection will begin and end

October 1, 2014 –December 31, 2014

## B. STATISTICAL METHODS

The primary purpose of these collections will be for internal management purposes; there are no plans to publish or otherwise release this information. The ECS OPA taxpayer satisfaction survey is attached. The survey questions are designed to determine what method the taxpayer chose to enter into their installment agreement; why the taxpayers selected the method they chose for their installment agreement; if the taxpayer had knowledge of the OPA system; and if the taxpayer would use the online system to enter into an installment agreement in the future. The results should facilitate more effective OPA services by providing insight from the taxpayer's perspective about possible reasons the taxpayer did not use the OPA to enter into an installment agreement.

### 1. Universe and Respondent Selection

The survey participants will consist of taxpayers who entered into a streamlined installment agreement within the fourth quarter of calendar year 2013. The survey will be mailed to 5,000 taxpayers who entered into a streamlined installment agreement via a method other than the Online Payment Agreement system. The taxpayers surveyed will represent a sample of the overall population.

### 2. Procedures for Collecting Information

IRS SB/SE Finance, Research & Strategy will be responsible for collecting the data and conducting data analysis.

### 3. Methods to Maximize Response

IRS will attempt to achieve an overall 20% response rate in the surveys. We have enhanced protocols to maximize the response rate. IRS will send a pre-survey notification letter and a

survey. A follow up letter will be sent at four weeks to those taxpayers who did not respond to the initial survey mailing. If the taxpayer did not receive a survey, they will be directed to call a number and a replacement survey will be mailed to them for completion. We made every attempt in designing this survey to minimize burden and maximize response rate. Burden estimates are based on a 20% response rate.

#### **4. Testing of Procedures**

Pretesting will not be conducted.

#### **5. Contacts for Statistical Aspects and Data Collection**

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

Kate Preston  
SB/SE Finance, Research & Strategy  
Mountain site  
[Kathryn.Preston@irs.gov](mailto:Kathryn.Preston@irs.gov)  
303-603-4801 (Wednesdays)

or

Joe Villeneuve  
SB/SE Finance, Research & Strategy  
Central site  
[Joe.Villeneuve@irs.gov](mailto:Joe.Villeneuve@irs.gov)  
313-628-3746 (Wednesdays)