

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT FOR  
PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT SUBMISSION**

**Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs**

**Youth Programs Division**

**ECA Exchange Student Surveys  
OMB Number 1405-xxxx  
SV2012-0007 and SV2012-0010**

**A. JUSTIFICATION**

1. The U.S. Department of State promotes the long-term foreign policy objectives of the United States and encourages mutual understanding between the people of the United States and other countries by means of educational and cultural exchange programs. The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (“ECA”) supports youth exchanges by awarding institutional grants and cooperative agreements to U.S. non-profits. The authority for such activities is under the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, as amended, 22 U.S.C. 2451 *et seq.* The Department is requesting an information collection for an ECA study. This study is to help ensure the safety and well-being of high school exchange students on Department of State-sponsored academic year programs. It is one part of the overall monitoring effort undertaken by ECA. A survey is not legally or administratively required but provides another avenue for ascertaining whether Department of State sponsored students are healthy and safe and receiving the support they need in their exchange programs.
2. The information gathered will be used internally as part of an overall effort by the Youth Programs Division to ascertain whether there are any issues that would affect the safety and well-being of program participants.
3. The Youth Programs Division has acquired an electronic survey tool for the purpose of undertaking this survey (Survey Monkey). This tool reduces the overall burden on respondents by allowing them to complete the survey at a convenient time and makes it easy to respond and submit answers electronically. This lessens the Department’s burden of printing and postal costs associated with disseminating a paper-based product to the respondents. In addition, the use of the electronic surveys will provide the Department with the means to quickly and easily gather data.

4. There are no equivalent surveys being undertaken, so there is no duplication or a readily available alternate method to collect this information.
5. There is no impact on small businesses or entities as the targeted audience (respondents) are participants in Department-sponsored Youth Programs.
6. The exchange program is an important tool of public diplomacy for the Department of State. Being able to gather information in order to make program decisions and improve the ability of the division to respond to incidents increases the efficiency and reach of this effort. This information collection will gather data to assist the Department in ensuring that Youth programs, authorized under 22 U.S.C. 2452 *et seq.*, meet both statutory and regulatory requirements.
7. There are no special circumstances associated with this information collection.
8. The Department published a 60-day notice in the *Federal Register* to solicit public comments. One comment was received. After examination it was determined to not be relevant to this collection, instead addressed overall government spending policies.
9. No gifts or payments will be provided to respondents and participation is voluntary.
10. Agency will keep the information private to the extent permitted by law.
11. There are no questions of a sensitive nature contained in this information collection.
12. It is expected that there will be approximately 1,800 respondents to this survey (1 response each) and that the survey will require about 15 minutes per respondent for a total burden of 450 hours. This was calculated by providing the survey to program officers in the division and eliciting their responses. The survey has 11 short questions. The respondents are expected to be 1500 foreign

high school exchange students on J-1 visas (SV2012-0007) and 300 US students on Department of State sponsored programs (SV2012-0010).

The annualized cost to the respondents for the hour burdens for collection of information based upon the appropriate wage categories is \$13,413 (rounded to the nearest dollar). This was calculated using the total hours (450) and multiplying it by \$21.29/hour using the average mean hourly civilian wages from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and multiplying this by the overhead factor of 1.4.

**Table 2**  
**Respondent Burden per Survey**

	<b>ITEM</b>	<b>ANNUAL TOTAL</b>	<b>3 YEAR TOTAL</b>
Foreign Exchange Students in US Survey	Estimated Number of Respondents	1500	4500
	Estimated Number of Responses	1500	4500
	Average Hours Per Response	15 Minutes	15 Minutes
US Students Overseas on Exchange Programs Survey	Estimated Number of Respondents	300	900
	Estimated Number of Responses	300	900
	Average Hours Per Response	15 Minutes	15 Minutes
<b>Total Hours</b>		<b>450</b>	<b>1350</b>
<b>Total Respondents</b>		<b>1800</b>	<b>5400</b>

13. There will be no cost to respondents. Participation is voluntary and no fee is charged in connection with this Survey.

14. The annual fee for the survey, paid by the Department, is \$300. The cost in employee time is calculated as; one employee (GS-13) with an average hourly wage of \$75.00 (including benefits), will spend approximately 5 percent of his/her time processing and analyzing the surveys, which yields a cost of \$3,000. The total cost is \$3,300.

15. This is a new collection.

16. The Department will not publish the collected information. Analysis of the information collected will not involve any substantial statistical methodology.

17. The Department will display the OMB expiration date.

18. The Department is not requesting any exceptions to the certification statement.

## **B. COLLECTION OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS**

1. There is no sampling for this information collection, as the potential respondent universe for this information collection will be all of the approximately 1800 student exchange participants for each program year. The anticipated response rate for this collection is 60-70%.

Respondents	Number
- all high school students	
US Citizens	300
Foreign Citizens	1500

2. This information collection will consist of surveys that will be administered to participants from one of the following programs: foreign exchange students on scholarships in the United States and US foreign exchange students on scholarships in other countries. The entire universe of students will be surveyed because the purpose of the questions is to determine whether the students are safe. There is no methodology for stratification, sample selection, or estimation. This information collection will only be conducted once per year as part of this effort.
3. All ECA/PE/C/PY data collection methods are tailored to fit the prevailing political, cultural, safety, security, and accessibility conditions in each country in which participants are located. Successfully contacting and achieving the highest possible response rates are the goals of survey administration. None of the following increase the burden on respondents. Our methods will include:

- **Updating Contact Information Prior:** Contact information for program participants will be updated through internal Department of State database searches. This information is required at the time of application to the programs and will be checked to ensure that it is accurate prior to the survey being sent.
- **Customized Intro:** Customized introductory emails will be sent at the start of survey administration to encourage respondent cooperation. The email will inform potential respondents about the evaluation, and explain that the survey is voluntary.
- **Informing the Grantee Organizations Prior:** The grantee organizations will be informed prior to the survey being sent to participants and will be provided with a copy of the survey in the case that questions arise from the participants.
- **English language:** The participants are; US citizens who speak English or foreign citizens who must have a sufficient level of English to study at US high schools.
- **Non-Response and Reminders:** A limited number of follow-up reminders will be sent periodically to non-respondents to encourage them to respond.

Using such methods as listed above has in our previous experiences increased response rates.

Additionally, the data collected is only representative of the evaluation's respondents and therefore all analysis of results and future reports will be clearly linked to only the universe that was surveyed.

4. Pre-testing the surveys is extremely useful for clarifying instructions and questions, refining the response categories, as well as ensuring clarity, brevity, relevance, user-friendliness, understandability, and sensitivity to a respondent's culture. This in turn will allow minimum burden to respondents and encourage them to complete their survey. The survey was pre-tested using 5 current/past participants via e-mail. This will be done every year that the survey is used. The purpose of this series of interviews was to assist with development of survey questions and appropriate response categories.

The purpose of these voluntary and confidential e-mails was to get enough information about the respondents' comprehension and preparation of a response to assess whether they understood the questions and responded as intended. A secondary goal of this exercise was to garner information to improve the construction and administration of the questions. Individual questions were tested for clarity, relevance and comprehensibility. Typical probes in this research included questions such as: How easy or difficult was it to respond to this survey? Did you have difficulty with the meaning of any of the questions? What, if anything, was confusing? Did these response categories make sense to you? Did you have any difficulties answering this question? The information and feedback from the respondents were used to refine the survey instrument,

identify additional response categories, and pinpoint potential changes needed to make the instrument more precise in its language and meaning for the broader group of target respondents.

5. The ECA/PE/C/PY individual managing this survey is Andrej Kolaja 202-632-9362.