

# Supporting Statement for Fuel Economy, GHG, Other Emissions, and Alternative Fuels Education Program Qualitative Research Plan

February 10, 2014

## **Section B: Recruitment Procedures**

**B1. Describe (including a numerical estimate) the potential respondent universe and any sampling or other respondent selection methods to be used.**

The potential respondent universe of this study includes any licensed driver ages 18 or older who currently owns or leases a vehicle. We will also require that those who are recruited into the focus groups are the primary and/or shared decision maker for new vehicle purchases.

Based on the Federal Highway Administration's 2011 Highway Statistics, there are approximately 103.1 million licensed drivers age 18 and older<sup>1</sup> in the United States. The below table includes estimates for the number of licensed drivers in the areas we will conduct this research. Note these figures are only estimates and are based on the assumption that at least 40% of this population is likely to possess a valid driver's license, which helps to provide context for the potential universe.

	<b>Total Population 18+<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Estimated Licensed Drivers 18+</b>	<b>No. of Qualitative Research Participants</b>
Philadelphia Metro Area	4.1 million	1.6 million	16 (8 per group)
Seattle Metro Area	2.98 million	1.2 million	16 (8 per group)
Kansas City Metro Area	1.5 million	0.6 million	16 (8 per group)

**B2. Describe the procedures for the collection of information.**

### *Focus Group Recruitment Process*

Focus groups for the Fuel Economy, GHG, Other Emissions, and Alternative Fuels Education Program will be held utilizing the services of professional focus group facilities, with attention paid to those facilities with a long history of quality respondents.

For any focus group research, recruitment can be executed using one or a mix of the following methods:

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/policyinformation/statistics/2011/dl20.cfm>

<sup>2</sup> Source U.S. Census Bureau: State and County QuickFacts.

- 1) A list of potential respondents is provided to the focus group facility. This method is generally used when participants must meet specific and unique criteria or when the group is to be made up of a specific population for which a list of members exists.
- 2) A database of potential local respondents is compiled by facilities over time. This database is compiled through a mix of word of mouth, paid advertisements and free advertising on local websites. These are people who have agreed in advance to participate in focus groups, if they qualify. The focus group facility maintains this database and adheres to the Marketing Research Association's code of ethics on data collection in keeping personal information private.
- 3) An advertisement looking for participants can be included in the local newspaper, on a local website, or through some other channel to attract potential participants.

Since the first methodology does not apply to this program, participants for this research will be recruited using the latter methods. Facilities will begin the recruitment by making random calls to their database of respondents seeking to invite potential participants who fit the screening criteria provided. As recruitment moves along, the facility may employ other tactics as described above in order to attract potential participants to ensure the group consists of a diverse mix of respondents based on various demographic criteria.

Potential participants will be screened for various criteria and the sample for these discussion groups will be built in the following way:

- 1) First, participants must qualify as an adult over the age of 18.
- 2) Next, participants will be identified for inclusion in either the male or female focus group.
- 3) Next, participants will be asked if they or any of their family members work or have worked in the automotive, ethanol and alternative fuel, or marketing and market research industries. Those answering 'yes' will not qualify.
- 4) Next, participants must qualify as a licensed driver.
- 5) Next, participants must qualify as an owner or lessee of a vehicle.
- 6) Finally, participants must qualify as the primary or shared decision maker for vehicle purchases.

Focus groups will be homogenous by gender as past experience has demonstrated that in mixed groups that discuss vehicle-related issues, women generally defer to male opinions rather than providing their own, well-thought out perspectives. Therefore, we will seek out an even number of males and females in each city in order to hold one female group and one male group.

We will also look to have a generally even mix of average driving distance and type of vehicle owned (i.e. large SUV, sedan, etc.) within each group. This will help us to receive perspective from a variety of driving and fuel economy mindsets; however, we do not intend to impose hard quotas for these.

#### *Focus Group Execution*

Once in the group, data will be collected via an in-person group discussion. A trained moderator will facilitate this discussion utilizing the questions included in the discussion guide (Appendix E). Results from these discussions will be viewed in aggregate and analysts will seek to compare and contrast the information collected in different regions or across different audience types (e.g., male versus female).

Data collected in this research are intended to be directional in nature, and will not be generalized to the total universe studied.

**B3. Describe methods to maximize response rates and to deal with issues of non-response.**

This item does not apply to this package as this is a qualitative research effort.

**B4. Describe any tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken.**

This item does not apply to this package as this is a qualitative research effort.

**B5. Provide the name and telephone number of individuals consulted on statistical aspects of the design and the name of the agency unit, contractor(s), grantee(s), or other person(s) who will actually collect and/or analyze the information for the agency.**

The following individuals have reviewed technical aspects of this research plan:

**Susan McMeen**  
Director, Consumer Information  
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Marketing Specialist  
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The company selected as a contractor for this study is Edelman Berland, the market research and analytics division of Edelman. This team has extensive experience in both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies and has worked with NHTSA on a number of past research projects including the previous rounds of research for the Fuel Economy, GHG, Other Emissions, and Alternative Fuels Education Program.

More information can be found at their website (<http://www.edelmanberland.com>).

The contact information for this team is as follows:

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