

SUPPORTING STATEMENT A
AUDIENCE AND PROGRAM RESEARCH ACTIVITY
AMONG CUBAN IMMIGRANTS FOR
BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS,
OMB NO. 3112-0001

A. JUSTIFICATION

1-2 Radio Marti was created by Public Law 98-111, the Radio Broadcasting to Cuba Act, “to provide for the broadcasting of accurate information to the people of Cuba, and for other purposes.” This act was amended (by PL 101-246), which established the authority for TV Marti. The Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) fulfills this mandate through the Office of Cuba Broadcasting. In order to inform Marti’s radio, television and digital program planning, to evaluate the effectiveness of strategies for meeting this mandate and to guide implementation of necessary changes, BBG seeks the best available information on habits of listeners and viewers and qualitative feedback on program reactions and preferences. Because of the closed nature of Cuban society and the practical limitations on gathering such detailed, sensitive information from Cubans on the island, BBG commissions research with convenience samples of recently-arrived immigrants to South Florida. BBG makes use of and shares such information making clear that it cannot be used to estimate behaviors or opinions of larger populations in Cuba, including the size or characteristics of Marti’s audiences in Cuba. Nonetheless, there exist no sources of such feedback that are comparable in terms of the number and range of Cubans who can be reached without threat to those collecting or providing information, or in terms of respondents’ freedom to speak frankly about topics of relevance to BBG’s mission.

3. The focus groups and structured qualitative surveys conducted necessitate personal interaction, and are conducted among a relatively small number recently-arrived Cuban immigrants under circumstances (e.g. lack of access to or experience with Internet) that preclude the use and/or negate any cost efficiencies of automated or electronic collection of the kinds and amount of information gathered. For audience panels, content for evaluation, questionnaires and responses are distributed and collected in digital form.

4. Attempts have been made to identify public and private entities conducting current research on Cuban media habits and preferences. To the best of BBG’s knowledge, there is no public or private entity conducting Cuban audience research that would meet Marti’s information needs either in type or volume. Cuba is subject to a totalitarian state that controls mass media access to information, and carefully limits news and information that might reflect negatively on the political leadership. The lack of significant commercial uses of such information—given Cuba’s socialized and impoverished economy—means that little or no market research infrastructure exists there (except for state-controlled operations).

5. Not Applicable. No data is collected from small businesses.

6. The BBG and Office of Cuba Broadcasting have the need for a variety of information from its target audience that can be used to evaluate and improve its news, information and other programming services in order to meet its congressional mandate. Should information gathering activities be conducted less frequently, Radio and TV Marti would run the risk of losing even indirect touch with their audience and the situation in which they live, resulting in a deterioration of Marti's effectiveness and ability to fulfill its mission.

7. Respondents participate only once in any collection and submit no documents or trade information of any kind. Collections do not involve personal records or statistical methods. All BBG research contracts provide for contractors to follow industry-standard ethical guidelines (International Chamber of Commerce/ESOMAR), which require that respondents' personal identity be withheld from the client (BBG) without his/her explicit request or consent. All personally-identifying information collected by the contractor as a part of recruitment is securely disposed of immediately after conclusion of projects. Contractors conducting research for BBG communicate to respondents these guidelines to which they are contractually bound.

8. Feedback on the way the information is gathered is regularly solicited from the recent immigrants participating in program testing panels, structured surveys, focus groups, and from outside experts on Cuba participating in monitoring panels. Outside market research contractors are required to search for sources of information responsive to the needs underlying these collections.

9. Respondents who participate in monitoring panels, program testing panels, and focus groups may receive an incentive payment of \$50.00 in line with market research industry standard practice, while respondents to structured surveys may receive \$20.00.

10. All BBG research contracts provide for contractors to follow industry-standard ethical guidelines (International Chamber of Commerce/ESOMAR), which require that respondents' personal identity be withheld from the client (BBG) without his/her explicit request or consent. All personally-identifying information collected by the contractor as a part of recruitment is securely disposed of immediately after conclusion of projects. Contractors conducting research for BBG communicate to respondents these standards to which they are contractually bound. The pledge of confidentiality made by BBG contractors to respondents is based on their contractual obligations, not on statute. The BBG's adherence to industry standards on confidentiality of respondent identities in all the research it contracts for is based on policy, not statute. All the research under this request is done subject to this policy, which never puts such identifying information into the possession of the BBG.

11. Respondents are not asked questions of a private, sensitive nature. Respondents are asked questions concerning their use of radio, television, and digital media while in Cuba and their reaction to Marti program content and presentation. Basic demographic data (age, gender, education, occupation) are also gathered. While use of foreign media remains a sensitive topic inside Cuba, this is not the case among Cubans who have immigrated to the United States.

12. In providing research for the Office of Cuba Broadcasting, BBG utilizes three types of research to gather information from convenience samples of Cuban immigrants who left the island no more than six months prior to their recruitment, focusing on media habits of listeners and viewers and qualitative feedback on program reactions and preferences. These include focus group studies, monitoring panels, and structured surveys.

a. Focus Group Studies – BBG contracts for the conduct of focus group studies with recently arrived Cuban immigrants on their media behavior and preferences and on reactions to program content. Focus Groups are conducted at professional research facilities in the greater Miami, Florida area. Discussions are led by an independent, professional moderator, may include exposure to some sample program material and some brief open-ended individual written responses to questions on sample materials. Each discussion group involves 8-12 participants, and last approximately two hours (estimates below include average estimated time for travel to and from the facility where groups are conducted, which can vary). Eight groups are conducted each year.

Number of Respondents	96
Number of Responses per Respondent	1
Total Annual Responses	96
<u>Hours per Response</u>	<u>3</u>
Total Annual Hours (SUB-TOTAL)	288

b. Audience Panels – BBG contracts for the conduct of audience panels with recently arrived Cuban immigrants (15 for each project), which require panelists to monitor up to two hours of program content each week—individually via live TV, recordings supplied by BBG’s contractors, or online—before completing a standard questionnaire on their reactions to the programs, which together takes up to three hours in total to complete (monitoring and completion of questions relevant to four weekly programs). Panelists participate over three weeks. Two projects are conducted each year.

Number of Respondents	30
Number of Responses per Respondent	3
Total Annual Responses	90
<u>Hours per Response</u>	<u>3</u>
Total Annual Hours (SUB-TOTAL)	270

c. Structured Surveys — BBG contracts for the conduct of a structured survey of recently-arrived Cuban immigrants who are recruited for participation in focus groups and monitoring panels (see a. and b. above), with 300 interviewer-administered face-to-face or phone questionnaires (note that not all respondents recruited are able to participate, so less than half those given the survey also participate in a panel or focus group). Respondents are contacted at various locations (immigrant acculturation classes, other public places frequented by recently-arrived Cuban immigrants) and those who have left Cuba within the prior six months and express interest in

participating are interviewed. The questionnaire gathers basic demographic information, plus recall of media use during respondents' last three months in Cuba and, for those who recall having heard content from Radio Martí or saw it from TV Martí, questions on how they heard or saw it, how well they could receive the signal, and brief evaluative questions of the content they heard or saw.

Number of Respondents	300
Number of Responses per Respondent	1
Total Annual Response	300
<u>Hours per Response</u>	<u>0.25</u>
Total Hours (SUB-TOTAL)	75

Cumulative - Annual estimated collection burden for BBG-sponsored research with immigrants on behalf of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting:

Number of Respondents	426
Number of Responses per Respondent	1.14
Total Annual Response	486
<u>Average Hours per Response</u>	<u>1.3</u>
Total Hours -	633

13. There is no quantifiable cost to the respondents aside from the time that they spend in a discussion or completing a questionnaire. Survey questionnaires are administered in person by interviewers during the respondent's non-work hours and with his or her consent. Participants in focus groups attend voluntarily and at their convenience. In accordance with prevailing research industry standards, focus group participants may be given a \$50.00 cash incentive; panel participants are given a 100.00 incentive for each week's participation).

14. This data-collection activity involves no capital or start-up costs that are not part of customary and usual agency activities. All costs derive from operations, maintenance, and purchase of services. Estimates of annual cost to the Federal Government as of FY 2014 are as follows.

Contracts:

Focus Groups (8)	\$90,000
Audience Panels (2)	\$15,000
<u>Structured Survey (1)</u>	<u>\$45,000</u>
 TOTAL COST TO GOVERNMENT	 \$150,000

15. The figures reported in items 13 and 14 reflect inclusion of all research with recent Cuban immigrants commissioned by BBG for the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB), which as of FY 2014 is conducted through the BBG's International Audience Research Program contract.

16. All data collection in focus groups and audience panels are essentially qualitative in nature, requiring minimal tabulation of respondent profiles and a small number of

numerical scores solicited from participants as an adjunct to verbal feedback. Structured surveys of convenience samples of immigrants are coded and entered into a statistical analysis program by the contractor. Reports for all qualitative research are written by contractors and reviewed by the Office of Research. Focus group projects and audience panels typically take from 8-12 weeks from design to final reporting, and surveys from 12-15 weeks. These and any written analyses or reports on structured surveys are designed to inform BBG/OCB management decisions and are disseminated within BBG and, as requested, shared with other executive agencies or with Congress. Neither statistical methods nor complex analyses are involved in any immigrant research project commissioned by BBG.

17. Not applicable.

18. Not applicable.