

**Department of Transportation  
Office of the Chief Information Officer**

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT PART FOR  
GENERIC CLEARANCE OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEYS**

**FMCSA Audience Research**

**INTRODUCTION**

This is to request the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) approval for a proposed information collection (IC) titled "FMCSA Audience Research," under the OMB Control Number 2126-0061, "Generic Clearance of Customer Satisfaction Surveys," information collection request (ICR).

**A. JUSTIFICATION**

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

Executive Order 12862, "Setting Customer Service Standards," September 11, 1993 (Attachment A) directs Federal agencies to provide service to the public that matches or exceeds the best service available in the private sector. In order to work continuously to ensure that our programs are effective and meet our customers' needs, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) seeks to obtain OMB approval for a generic clearance to collect qualitative feedback on our safety and compliance communication and outreach efforts. By qualitative feedback we mean open-ended and semi-structured feedback that provides useful insights on underlying perceptions and opinions surrounding an issue. This is contrasted with quantitative survey data that can be broadly generalized to a population at large.

This collection of information is necessary to enable FMCSA to garner public and stakeholder feedback in an efficient, timely manner, in accordance with our commitment to improving communication and outreach efforts. The information collected from our stakeholders will help ensure that end-users—in this case, State agencies—receive communication in an effective, efficient, and satisfying manner. This feedback will provide insights into stakeholder perceptions, experiences and expectations, identify trouble spots with communication, and help uncover and identify opportunities and approaches for improvement. For example, we may find that some parties only receive FMCSA information that's disseminated through a third-party group like an association. And moreover, that the association filters the information by omitting pieces or providing their own interpretation of the content. Therefore, some parties may be receiving partial or misrepresented information. This knowledge would allow FMCSA to, at a minimum, recognize this is happening, and also to develop outreach strategies with associations to more directly get safety and compliance information to parties.

This IC supports the agency's goal of Organizational Excellence.

## **2. How, By Whom, and for What Purpose Is the Information Used**

Improving agency communication requires assessment of existing and potential outreach methods and messages. FMCSA will collect, analyze, and interpret information gathered through this clearance to identify strengths and weaknesses of current communication and make improvements in outreach based on feedback.

This collection of information is necessary to enable FMCSA to garner customer and stakeholder feedbacks in an efficient, timely manner, in accordance with our commitment to improving service delivery. The information collected from our stakeholders will help ensure that they kept abreast of and can comply with all safety programs and regulations set forth by the agency. These collections will allow for ongoing, collaborative and actionable communications between FMCSA and its customers and stakeholders. It will also allow feedback to contribute directly to the improvement of program communications.

Instruments to be considered under this clearance will only include those meant to collect feedback regarding, and in order to improve, FMCSA communication. The qualitative exercises under this clearance – including in-person focus groups – will be of limited size and scope.

Moreover, the information collection under this requested will conform to the following characteristics:

- Information gathered will be used only internally for general communication improvement and outreach management purposes and is not intended for release outside of the agency (if released, procedures outlined in Question 16 will be followed);
- Information gathered will not be used for the purpose of substantially informing influential policy decisions <sup>1</sup>;
- Information gathered will yield qualitative information; the collections will not be designed or expected to yield statistically reliable results or used as though the results are generalizable to the population of study;
- The collections are voluntary;
- The collections are low-burden for respondents (based on considerations of total burden hours, total number of respondents, or burden-hours per respondent) and are low-cost for both the respondents and the Federal Government;
- The collections are non-controversial and do not raise issues of concern to other Federal agencies;
- Any collection is targeted to the solicitation of opinions from respondents who have experience with FMCSA or may have experience with FMCSA in the near future; and

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<sup>1</sup> As defined in OMB and agency Information Quality Guidelines, "influential" means that "an agency can reasonably determine that dissemination of the information will have or does have a clear and substantial impact on important public policies or important private sector decisions."

- Personally identifiable information (PII) is collected only to the extent necessary and is not retained.

### **3. Extent of Automated Information Collection**

If appropriate, FMCSA will collect information electronically and/or use online collaboration tools to reduce burden.

### **4. Efforts to Identify Duplication**

No similar data are gathered or maintained by FMCSA or are available from other sources known to the agency.

### **5. Efforts to Minimize the Burden on Small Businesses**

Small business or other small entities may be involved in these efforts but FMCSA will minimize the burden on them of information collections approved under this clearance by sampling, asking for readily available information, and using short, easy-to-complete information collection instruments.

### **6. Impact of Less Frequent Collection of Information**

Without these types of feedback, FMCSA will not have insight into the awareness and impact of its safety and compliance communication, nor will the agency have information to improve them and ensure it is reaching stakeholders efficiently and effectively.

### **7. Special Circumstances**

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

### **8. Compliance with 5 CFR 1320.8**

The FMCSA published a notice in the Federal Register (79 FR 51639) with a 60-day public comment period to announce this proposed information collection on August 29, 2014 (see Attachment B). The agency received no comments in response to that notice.

The FMCSA published a notice in the Federal Register (79 FR 74158) with a 30-day public comment period that announced this information would be sent to OMB for approval on December 15, 2014 (see Attachment C).

### **9. Payment or Gifts to Respondents**

FMCSA will not provide payment or other forms of remuneration to respondents of its various forms of collecting feedback.

## 10. Assurance of Confidentiality

The information requested is not of a confidential nature. Consequently, no assurance of confidentiality need be given.

## 11. Justification for Collection of Sensitive Information

No questions will be asked that are of a personal or sensitive nature.

## 12. Estimate of Burden Hours for Information Requested

A variety of instruments and platforms will be used to collect information from respondents. The total burden hours requested for six months is 35 and are based on the estimated number of collections we expect to conduct over the requested period for this clearance. The below tables break out the total burden hours by project phase:

Estimated Reporting Burden – In-Person Focus Groups						
Type of Collection	Estimated No. of Respondents	Number of Responses per Respondent	Total of Responses	Frequency per Response	Estimated minutes per Response	Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours
Screening/ recruitment for In-Person Focus Groups	60	1	60	Once	5	5
In-Person Focus Groups (3)	30	1	30	Once	60	30
<b>Project Total</b>	<b>90</b>		<b>90</b>			<b>35</b>

**Estimated Annual Number of Respondents:** 90 [60 in-person focus group screening respondents + 30 in-person focus group respondents = 90].

**Estimated Annual Number of Responses:** 90 [60 in-person focus group screening responses + 30 in-person focus group responses = 90].

**Estimated Annual Burden Hours:** 35 [5 hours in-person focus group screening + 30 hours in-person focus group = 90].

The associated documents for this phase are entitled:

- PRA-2126-0061.Audience Research.StateAgencyFG.Screener.040416.docx
- PRA-2126-0061.Audience Research.StateAgencyFG.Discussion Guide.040416.docx

## 13. Estimate of Total Annual Costs to Respondents

No costs are anticipated.

#### **14. Estimate of Cost to the Federal Government**

The total anticipated cost to the Federal Government is approximately \$22,000. These costs are comprised of estimated contractor costs that are necessary to collect the information.

**Estimated Annual Cost to the Federal Government: \$22,000** [\$22,000 estimated contractor costs for in-person focus groups = \$22,000].

#### **15. Explanation of Program Changes or Adjustments**

This program change increase of an estimated 35 annual burden hours is due to a new generic IC.

#### **16. Publication of Results of Data Collection**

Feedback collected under this generic clearance will provides useful information, but it does not yield data that can be generalized to the overall population. Findings will be used for general communication and outreach improvement, but are not for publication or other public release.

Although FMCSA does not intend to publish its findings, FMCSA may receive requests to release the information (e.g., congressional inquiry, Freedom of Information Act requests). FMCSA will disseminate the findings when appropriate, strictly following FMCSA's "Guidelines for Ensuring the Quality of Information Disseminated to the Public.", and will include specific discussion of the limitation of the qualitative results discussed above.

#### **17. Approval for Not Displaying the Expiration Date of OMB Approval**

We are requesting no exemption.

#### **18. Exceptions to Certification Statement**

There are no exceptions to the certification.