

## Change Request Justification OMB Control No. 0625-0227

### **This is a request for approval to pilot test viability of collecting information via electronic devices**

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#### Overview

The Office of Travel and Tourism Industries (OTTI), within the International Trade Administration (ITA), wishes to run a pilot to determine public response in completing the *Survey of International Air Travelers (SIAT)* via electronic format through the use of personal mobile devices. *No changes to the content (questions) will occur.* The pilot, which will run concurrently with distribution of the paper survey for a four-week time period, will help determine whether OTTI should a) offer this option in lieu of the paper survey or b) in addition to the paper survey. The electronic completion of the SIAT would not increase the burden on the individual respondent (0 burden hour change). However, we expect an increase in the number of respondents. The logistical burden associated with the distribution, collection, printing/inventory/storage, postage, etc. of the paper survey will decrease substantially. The effect will be a reduction in unit costs to USG. Should the number of responses begin to approach our program cap of 99,640 annual responses approved by OMB, OTTI will seek OMB clearance to lift that cap so that we will be in compliance with recent legislative mandates (see below).

#### Justification

OTTI has been mandated to increase sampling size to 1% (currently at .2%) as specified in the 2009 *Travel Promotion Act (TPA)*. OTTI is seeking alternatives to the paper collection to a) meet this mandate, b) collect information more efficiently, economically and environmentally friendly, c) reduce burden and d) take advantage of new technologies.

During this pilot, OTTI will ask respondents to complete the SIAT via electronic devices. OTTI's existing contractor will replicate the questionnaire on its survey system in a few languages and will conduct this in airport departure lounges that are NOT currently targeted for collection. There will be no interference with the on-going sampling. The results of this Pilot will only be used to determine whether an electronic collection method is supported by the public. The currently approved paper form of SIAT will continue until further analysis or alternative collection methods have been analyzed. If public support for an electronic collection method is determined to be significantly positive, OTTI envision the current paper survey would be phased out/eliminated, in the foreseeable future. Until that time OTTI would offer both options to potential respondents.

#### Differences between the proposed "electronic" form and the currently approved "SIAT" form

The differences between the proposed "electronic" form and the currently approved "SIAT" form fall into three categories:

1. Potential respondents, upon being asked if they would be willing to complete the SIAT, will be provided with a link to the URL that hosts the electronic SIAT. *(Currently they are handed the paper questionnaire.)*

2. Potential respondents will need to use personal electronic devices to complete the electronic survey. This can be done in the departure gate area, on-board the airline, for a short time (24hours) after arrival/debark at flight destination. Therefore, the expanse of available time will be greater than what is currently available (assuming the carrier supports international internet Wi-Fi service) or within one day of arrival at the respondent's destination. *(Currently the respondents use the DOC supplied pencil to complete the paper survey. This is done either in the departure gate area or on-board the flight.)*
3. Responses via the electronic format will be routed directly to OTTI's existing contractor and will not go through airline or sub-contractor personnel in the airport. *(Currently the completed, and not completed, surveys are collected - either in the gate area or on-board - and are mailed back to OTTI's contractor.)*

### Changes to Information fields on the currently approved "SIAT"

There will be no changes/modifications to any of the Information Fields with the following exception:

- The current paper questionnaire is designed to accommodate either a non-U.S. citizen/resident or a U.S. citizen/resident respondent (skip patterns help the respondent navigate through the survey). The e-version will split those two segments and enable the respondent to move through in less time. *(Most of the questions are common to both non-residents and U.S. residents. However, U.S. residents are not asked to furnish spending details (Q19.d and e.) nor Customs and Border Patrol processing (Q28.a and b.) nor U.S. trip experience (Q29.a and b.). They are asked for their ethnicity/race (Q33.a and b.), Since the U.S. residents are asked fewer questions, the net 'burden' on them is less.)*