

Request for Approval under the “Generic Clearance for the Collection of Routine Customer Feedback” (OMB Control Number: 2127-0682)

TITLE OF INFORMATION COLLECTION: Focus Groups for Assessments of Messaging Taglines and Concepts Supporting a National Awareness Campaign to Reduce Fatalities at Railroad Crossings

PURPOSE:

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) was authorized by the Highway Safety Act of 1966 to carry out a Congressional mandate to reduce the mounting number of deaths, injuries and economic losses resulting from motor vehicle crashes on our Nation’s highways. In support of this mission, NHTSA intends to develop a new communications campaign to support efforts to raise drivers’ and pedestrians’ awareness of the risks and dangers of attempting to “race” moving trains. This campaign is slated for implementation as early as September 2016. According to Federal Railroad Administration data (<http://safetydata.fra.dot.gov/officeofsafety/publicsite/Query/gxrtally1.aspx>), a train struck a person or vehicle 2,293 times in 2014; that’s the equivalent of more than six times a day. Further, in 2014, there was a 17% increase in the number of people killed in railroad crossing incidents (<https://www.fra.dot.gov/Media/File/0762>). Of these fatalities, 96% involve drivers trying to beat a train, or people trespassing on railroad tracks (<https://www.fra.dot.gov/Media/File/0762>). These and other facts give credence to the importance of discouraging drivers and pedestrians from risking their lives in the vicinity of moving trains.

Integral parts of NHTSA’s campaign are development of a messaging tagline and creative concepts to assist states in efforts to increase and sustain awareness of the risks and dangers of moving trains, particularly among drivers at railroad crossings. For assessment of the relative strengths and weaknesses of tagline and concept alternatives, NHTSA seeks to use a qualitative research methodology in the form of focus groups. For past NHTSA campaigns, market research in the form of focus groups has been important in gathering feedback because they allow an in-depth understanding of drivers’ attitudes, beliefs, motivations, and feelings than do quantitative studies. Focus groups serve the narrowly defined need for direct and informal opinion on a specific topic.

NHTSA proposes conducting eight focus groups among males who are ages 18-49 and who self-report incidences of trying to race trains at rail crossings. For the focus groups, two groups will be conducted in each of four cities:

- Chicago, IL
- Memphis, TN
- Phoenix, AZ
- Pittsburgh, PA

These cities/states rank among the highest in the U.S. in terms of rail crossing fatalities, per Federal Railroad Administration data. Additionally, NHTSA believes the geographical dispersion of these four communities will yield a more replete picture of which messaging and communications elements will be most effective for national use.

Focus groups will play an important role in gathering this information because they allow for more in-depth understanding of people’s attitudes, beliefs, and motivations than do other kinds of studies. If such information is not collected, it will be more difficult and less cost-effective for NHTSA to develop and distribute potentially life-saving messages to its target audience.

DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDENTS:

Focus group respondents will correspond to the campaign’s target audience: male drivers ages 18 to 49 who pose risks of “racing” trains. Eight groups will be conducted, each composed of seven to nine pre-screened individuals matching that profile. Each group is projected to last 90 minutes in duration. (This total time is a combination of an “arrive early” window of 15 minutes plus 75-minute focus group session). Although no more than nine participants will be seated for each group, more than nine per group will be recruited. Given the target market profile for this effort, twelve people will be recruited for each group in anticipation of at least nine showing. Even with advance confirmations from qualified recruits, the sensitive nature of the subject matter for this research, plus the relatively less reliability of younger males to show for focus groups, necessitates the higher number of recruits. Should more than nine arrive on time, only nine will be seated in the group, and the others will be released (as well as paid their promised incentives). For the eight groups, four cities will be used, with two groups per city. Each proposed city has marketing research industry-accredited focus group facilities available, plus they are in areas that account for high numbers of rail crossing fatalities:

- Chicago, IL
- Memphis, TN
- Phoenix, AZ
- Pittsburgh, PA

TYPE OF COLLECTION: (Check one)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Customer Comment Card/Complaint Form | <input type="checkbox"/> Customer Satisfaction Survey |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Usability Testing (e.g., Website or Software | <input type="checkbox"/> Small Discussion Group |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Focus Group | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

CERTIFICATION:

I certify the following to be true:

1. The collection is voluntary.
2. The collection is low-burden for respondents and low-cost for the Federal Government.
3. The collection is non-controversial and does not raise issues of concern to other federal agencies.
4. The results are not intended to be disseminated to the public.
5. Information gathered will not be used for the purpose of substantially informing influential policy decisions.
6. The collection is targeted to the solicitation of opinions from respondents who have experience with the program or may have experience with the program in the future.

Name: Susan McMeen

To assist review, please provide answers to the following question:

Personally Identifiable Information:

1. Is personally identifiable information (PII) collected? [] Yes [X] No
2. If yes, will any information that is collected be included in records that are subject to the Privacy Act of 1974? [] Yes No
3. If yes, has an up-to-date System of Records Notice (SORN) been published? [] Yes] No

Gifts or Payments:

Is an incentive (e.g., money or reimbursement of expenses, token of appreciation) provided to participants? [X] Yes [] No

Each respondent will be provided with \$75 following his participation in a focus group session. This amount is in line with the industry standard, relative to focus group participation by people in the target market. These industry-standard stipends help to ensure that respondents can be recruited efficiently and ensure their arrival and participation in the groups. These standards exist to provide fair compensation for costs incurred by participants while attending groups, based on the location of and expenses in each market. As noted earlier, pre-screened and invited respondents who arrive on time but are released prior to the group will also be awarded their stipends (also in keeping with marketing research industry standards).

BURDEN HOURS

No. of Respondents	No. of Responses per Respondent	Average Burden per Response (hours)	Total Burden Hours
96 (recruits for screening purposes)	1	6 minutes (1/10-hours) phone interview	10
72 (participants)	1	90 minutes (1-and-1/2-hours) pre-group arrival plus discussion	108
24 (recruits arriving, but released prior to participation)	1	15 minutes (1/4-hours) pre-group arrival only, subsequently released	6
			124 hours

TOTAL BURDEN HOURS: 124 hours

FEDERAL COST: The estimated annual cost to the Federal government is \$75,200.

If you are conducting a focus group, survey, or plan to employ statistical methods, please provide answers to the following questions:

The selection of your targeted respondents

1. Do you have a customer list or something similar that defines the universe of potential respondents and do you have a sampling plan for selecting from this universe?
[X] Yes [] No

If the answer is yes, please provide a description of both below (or attach the sampling plan)? If the answer is no, please provide a description of how you plan to identify your potential group of respondents and how you will select them?

Please see recruitment screener accompanying this clearance request.

Each focus group facility in each city does the recruiting on NHTSA's and NHTSA's contractor's behalf, per the screener NHTSA provides. The facility's recruiting staff works primarily from a pool within its proprietary database of people in that particular marketplace who have previously submitted demographic, lifestyle and product preference information. So when NHTSA submits screeners such as the one for this project, the recruitment manager will filter the database to search for potential respondents in the designated age group (and any other relevant specs if the firm happens to have one or more of those other criteria established in the database). Then the recruiters will use telephone calls to those potential respondents to administer the full screener.

In any given household, only one person will be screened and confirmed.

After going through the database, if the recruiters can't fill the specified total numbers and/or quotas, the secondary step is procuring sample from any of numerous national sample providers of names, addresses and phone numbers. The recruiters will then make phone calls to this list until the recruiting is completed.

Administration of the Instrument

1. How will you collect the information? (Check all that apply)
[] Web-based or other forms of Social Media
[X] Telephone
[X] In-person
[] Mail
[] Other, Explain
2. Will interviewers or facilitators be used? [X] Yes [] No

Please make sure that all instruments, instructions, and scripts are submitted with the rerequest.

Instructions for completing Request for Approval under the “~~Generic Clearance for the Collection of Routine Customer Feedback~~”

~~TITLE OF INFORMATION COLLECTION:~~ Provide the name of the collection that is the subject of the request. (e.g. Comment card for soliciting feedback on xxxx)

~~PURPOSE:~~ Provide a brief description of the purpose of this collection and how it will be used. If this is part of a larger study or effort, please include this in your explanation.

~~DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDENTS:~~ Provide a brief description of the targeted group or groups for this collection of information. These groups must have experience with the program.

~~TYPE OF COLLECTION:~~ Check one box. If you are requesting approval of other instruments under the generic, you must complete a form for each instrument.

~~CERTIFICATION:~~ Please read the certification carefully. If you incorrectly certify, the collection will be returned as improperly submitted or it will be disapproved.

~~Personally Identifiable Information:~~ Provide answers to the questions. Note: Agencies should only collect PI to the extent necessary, and they should only retain PI for the period of time that is necessary to achieve a specific objective.

~~Gifts or Payments:~~ If you answer yes to the question, please describe the incentive and provide a justification for the amount.

~~BURDEN HOURS:~~

~~Category of Respondents:~~ Identify who you expect the respondents to be in terms of the following categories: (1) Individuals or Households; (2) Private Sector; (3) State, local, or tribal governments; or (4) Federal Government. Only one type of respondent can be selected per row.

~~No. of Respondents:~~ Provide an estimate of the Number of respondents.

~~Participation Time:~~ Provide an estimate of the amount of time required for a respondent to participate (e.g. fill out a survey or participate in a focus group)

~~Burden:~~ Provide the Annual burden hours: Multiply the Number of responses and the participation time and divide by 60.

~~FEDERAL COST:~~ Provide an estimate of the annual cost to the Federal government.

If you are conducting a focus group, survey, or plan to employ statistical methods, please provide answers to the following questions:

~~The selection of your targeted respondents.~~ Please provide a description of how you plan to identify your potential group of respondents and how you will select them. If the answer is yes, to the first question, you may provide the sampling plan in an attachment.

~~Administration of the Instrument:~~ Identify how the information will be collected. More than one box may be checked. Indicate whether there will be interviewers (e.g. for surveys) or facilitators (e.g., for focus groups) used.

~~Submit all instruments, instructions, and scripts are submitted with the request.~~