

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

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**TITLE OF INFORMATION COLLECTION:** Focus Groups for Assessments of Messaging Concepts Supporting a National No-Texting-While-Driving Campaign

### **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 is developing a new paid media and earned media communications campaign to be implemented as early as April 2017 to help stem rising rates of fatalities in vehicle crashes in which texting by a driver is a factor. Data collected by the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) report that 3,477 fatalities occurred in 2015 due to distracted driving -- an 8 percent increase over 2014 -- in which drivers lost focus on the safe control of their vehicles due to manual, visual and/or cognitive distraction. (*Source: NHTSA OP Division – Distracted Driving Program, MV & LLS, November 1, 2016*). While objective measures do not exist to determine the number of fatalities associated with texting specifically, a 2012 survey by NHTSA reported that an estimated 10 percent of drivers send text messages or emails while driving at least sometimes. (*Source: National Survey of Distracted Driving Attitudes and Behaviors, NHTSA, 2012*). NHTSA’s 2015 National Occupant Protection Use Survey (NOPUS) found that the percentage of drivers visibly manipulating handheld devices while driving remained constant at 2.2 percent at any given point in time. (*Source: National Occupant Protection Use Survey, NHTSA, 2015*). A substantive body of medical research has shown that texting simultaneously involves manual, visual and mental distraction. As such, USDOT has deemed texting to be among the worst of all driver distractions.

An integral part of NHTSA’s campaign is development of a messaging tagline and creative concept to accompany television, radio, Internet and print advertisements to support a message that texting while driving is both dangerous and unlawful in 46 states (i.e., nearly nationwide). 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 NHTSA campaigns in the past, focus groups have provided an important role in gathering feedback to taglines and creative concepts because the groups allow for a more 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 four focus groups among drivers who are ages 18-34 and who self-report likely use of text messaging via their phones while driving. This age group is of particular concern because it accounts for a disproportionate share of distracted driving fatalities. For the focus groups, groups will be conducted in Hartford, Connecticut, and Albuquerque, New Mexico. Rationale for selection of these markets for this research project are as follows:

- Hartford is located in one of three states classified as “comprehensive” by USDOT relative to distracted driving grants. This “comprehensive” designation is based on the states’ adherence to at least five criteria relative to distracted driving. Further, out of all the metropolitan areas in the three “comprehensive” states (Connecticut, Maine and New

Jersey), Hartford’s population demographic composition most closely resembles that of the U.S. population overall.

- Albuquerque is located in one of 24 states/territories (including Guam and Puerto Rico) classified as “special” by USDOT relative to distracted driving grants. “Special” states adhere to particular (but more limited than “comprehensive”) stipulations, relative to distracted driving, for grant purposes. Albuquerque is one of ten metropolitan areas of the country where the demographic composition most closely matches that of the U.S. population overall.
- Ample geographic dispersion exists between Hartford and Albuquerque, neutralizing potential biases in research findings that could be posed by “regional” homogeneity.

This research will help refine and sharpen a communications approach that will be most effective in convincing drivers to not text while operating a vehicle. 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, drivers ages 18 to 34 who text regularly and who self-report having sent at least one text message while driving within the past 30 days. Because research shows that females are more likely than males to text while driving (*source: NHTSA OP Division – Distracted Driving Program, MV & LLS, November 1, 2016*), two-thirds of the respondents will be female, one-third will be male. Four groups will be conducted, each comprised of seven to nine pre-screened individuals matching this profile. Each group is projected to last 75 minutes in duration once the discussion begins. In addition to this discussion time, respondents will be encouraged to arrive 15 minutes early to ensure the groups start on time. In keeping with conventional focus group recruiting standards, twelve individuals will be recruited for each group in anticipation of seven to nine actually arriving. 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). Of the four groups, two will be facilitated in Hartford, Connecticut, and two in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

**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 her/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
48 (recruits)	1	10 minutes (1/6-hours) phone interview	8
36 (participants in group discussions)	1	90 minutes (1-and-1/2-hours): pre-group arrival (15 minutes) + discussion (75 minutes)	54

12 (recruits arriving, but released prior to participation)	1	15 minutes (1/4-hours) pre-group arrival	3
			<b>65 hours</b>

**TOTAL BURDER HOURS: 65 hours**

**FEDERAL COST:** The estimated annual cost to the Federal government is \$39,400.

**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?  
 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 attached.

Each focus group facility does the recruiting on our behalf, per the screener we provide. Its recruiting staff works primarily from a pool within their proprietary database of people in that particular marketplace who have previously submitted demographic, lifestyle and product preference information. So when we submit a screener such as the one for this project, the recruitment manager will filter the database to search for potential respondents in our 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.

If there is more than one person in a household ages 18-34, the recruiter will screen only the first one willing to be screened. This will prevent multiple respondents from the same household.

After going through the database, if the recruiters can't fill our 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 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  
 Telephone  
 In-person

Mail

Other, Explain

2. Will interviewers or facilitators be used?  Yes  No

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

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

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**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 PII to the extent necessary, and they should only retain PII 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.**