

RRB's Request for Generic Clearance

The Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) request for the Office of Management and Budget's Generic Clearance of customer survey activity is supporting statement A. We will ensure that the activities designed to gather and measure customer satisfaction with RRB's programs and services satisfy the requirements and the spirit of Executive Order (EO) 12862, as well as the Open Government Directive. We have also reviewed the OMB Manual "Resource Manual for Customer Surveys (the Manual)", and believe that our current and proposed activities meet the requirements and follow the guidelines of the Manual. We agree to adhere to the guidelines set forth in the EO, the Manual and the Open Government directive and understand that the generic clearance covers only voluntary customer surveys, whether they are qualitative or quantitative. Steps will be taken to insure anonymity of respondents in each activity under this request. The request is limited to collections of information from current or potential RRB customers.

The RRB's service delivery proposals and customer service plan reflect our priority to provide the highest quality service to our customers and clients. The RRB's goal is to have our service match that of the best in the private and public sectors, and to reflect their best practices. We will continue to use the results of our customer input activities to improve and refine our goals.

The RRB has immediately identifiable groups of customers:

- Our retirement beneficiaries, our unemployment and sickness claimants, and employers who must report earnings. We will also view the term "customer" in its broadest sense to include every railroad worker, all potentially eligible individuals and established interest groups. We will ensure that this broad definition is thoughtfully addressed in our activities.

The RRB has previously surveyed its customers to determine the kind and the quality of services desired and their satisfaction with our existing services. We have done this through questionnaires, face-to-face interviews, focus groups, and the use of the RRB Web-Site. Our activities over the next three years will reflect a continued emphasis on these activities through an organized, coordinated, program type approach to obtaining customer input.

- As outlined in Form IB-3, Customer Service Plan, the RRB has developed service standards and notified the public of the standards. Periodically, we will monitor these standards to see if they remain the right ones, and will update them as needed.
- We will survey our front-line employees. The surveys will be directed to employees in our field offices who deal with the public on a daily basis. The RRB has had a formal suggestion program in place for many years and we receive and adopt many suggestions which directly address service to our customers and/or which improve the RRB's processes affecting our service to the public.
- We recognize that not every delivery mechanism is appropriate to satisfy every customers needs. The RRB has a wide range of customers in terms of age, geographic location, physical condition and educational level. We currently use a variety of delivery mechanisms to meet our customer's needs. These include face-to-face contact in RRB facilities, visits by RRB staff to itinerant points and to individual's homes, mailings,

informational publications and the RRB web-site.

- We will strive to deliver our information and services to our customers in as many ways, and as efficiently as possible. Therefore, we will continue to analyze the diverse needs of our customers and tailor delivery mechanisms to meet those needs. We will use focus groups to help us accomplish this.
- Our on-going initiative, a customer comment card (RRB Form G-201), provides our customers with a very convenient mechanism to let us know of any issues, difficulties or complaints they may have. We will continue to ensure that the responses received obtain management attention to address any complaints.
- We will ensure that survey results are linked and shared with RRB management to implement the results of the survey to the greatest extent possible. We will also ensure that the structure of our survey groups reflect a cross-section of our client population to the greatest extent possible. ¹Statistical standards and sampling methodology will be applied, where applicable.
- Regarding review levels, the RRB has an internal review process in place which requires an independent review, organizationally separate from the submitting program component. Staff from the Bureau of Information Services, Information Resources Management (BIS-IM), are always involved in the review process and are knowledgeable in and experienced with the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act. BIS-IM staff will review each submission to ensure that it meets the requirements of the PRA, any conditions of the generic approval, and verify that each submission is accurate, timely and complete. BIS-IM staff will coordinate all submission and review activity with OMB. The RRB's Division of Benefit and Employment Analysis (B&EA) will be responsible for reviewing statistical design and methodology when needed. Members of the B&EA staff are professional statisticians, acknowledged as experts in statistical research. In the event that B&EA is the requesting organization for the customer service activity, we will have staff from the Office of Programs review the survey design and methodology.
- We agree to prepare and submit periodic updates and reports whenever a material change to the information collection occurs. The updates and reports will include a corrected estimate of the number of burden hours used, and will address any revisions required in the clearance.

1 Statistical methods will not be used for Form G-201 or the majority of the collections covered under this generic clearance. However, when one of the surveys uses statistical methods to select respondents, answers to questions 1 through 5 in OMB's guidelines for preparing the supporting statement will be provided for that specific survey when we submit specific information (instrument, description and burden hours) for each activity