

**Supporting Statement for Paperwork Reduction Act Submission  
3090-0278 – National Contact Center Customer Evaluation Survey**

**A. Justification**

**1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.**

The purpose of the General Services Administration (GSA) USA.gov Contact Center (formerly the Federal Citizen Information Center's (FCIC) National Contact Center) voluntary and optional customer satisfaction surveys is to measure consumer satisfaction with the service and assess the effectiveness of marketing efforts.

Executive Order 13571: Streamlining Service Delivery and Improving Customer Service requires that agencies establish mechanisms to solicit customer feedback on Government services and use such feedback regularly to make service improvements. Through these surveys, the National Contact Center collects voluntary feedback from our customers. This feedback is in turn used to identify improvements to services.

The information received from these surveys is used by the contractor to make adjustments to training for their employees, the contact center agents. It allows them to set priorities for the factors they use when evaluating the work of the agents through the industry standard process of Quality Assurance. The information also helps us understand what information might be missing or need improvement in the knowledge base used by the agents.

The USA.gov Contact Center is a performance-based contract. One critical measure of the USA.gov Contact Center's customer service, as outlined in GSA's contract, is the use of customer satisfaction data. These surveys are essential to gather the customer satisfaction data that is required to evaluate performance of the contract. The data will be collected for calls answered by an agent, e-mail responses, and web chat services.

Automatically acquired metrics such as volume, call time, and time to answer do not provide us with information regarding the quality of the services we provide the public. The only way to learn if we are giving the public what they need is to ask them. These surveys are an industry-standard method for acquiring that feedback.

**2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used.**

The voluntary and optional telephone survey for callers who speak with a specialist will capture customer feedback regarding the courteousness and professionalism of the specialist to whom they spoke. In addition, the survey will assess whether the caller feels he or she received the correct information.

The voluntary and optional web survey will capture customer feedback regarding the quality of the e-mail response or chat service in terms of accuracy, organization, and timeliness.

For the web survey, information will be collected via an online web form. The information will be automatically deposited into a web report. Feedback will be used to

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assess customer satisfaction for the project and to guide management to make course corrections that would improve service to the American people.

The USA.gov Contact Center will use survey information to improve overall customer service, fine tune the type of information provided in automated messages, enhance the delivery of those automated messages, and to evaluate the effectiveness of marketing activities to promote the Center.

The survey will garner feedback in the form of suggestions and comments from callers. These suggestions will be used to develop and implement enhanced services to further meet the needs of the public.

Customer satisfaction data will be used to ensure that the USA.gov Contact Center's information specialists are courteous, professional, knowledgeable about searching the database to provide information and contact referrals, and responsive to customer needs. If survey ratings show that information specialists are performing inadequately in a service area, then appropriate training will be provided to improve communication skills, database knowledge, or responsiveness.

Customer satisfaction data will be considered when adjusting staffing levels in the customer service center. If customers feel that it is difficult to reach an information specialist, the automated messages may be modified or additional specialists may be added.

Customer satisfaction data will also be considered when scripting new information for automated messages, especially as decisions are made regarding the location and delivery of the information available through automated messages.

Customer satisfaction data will be used to develop training for agents, redefine the quality monitoring tools, and to determine future contract requirements.

Our surveys utilize the Government Customer Experience Index core questions, allowing us to benchmark our performance against other government products and services that also use these four core questions.

**3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.**

All of the survey responses are submitted using electronic systems. E-mail and chat customers receive an e-mail invitation to participate in a web-based survey using an off-the-shelf plug-in for our Customer Resource Management (CRM) software-as-a-service product. The E-mail and chat customers initially contacted us using forms on our website; therefore, completing a survey via web is convenient for them. Telephone customers provide feedback to a live operator over the telephone, and the operator enters that data into an electronic system.

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All survey responses are uploaded into our secure CRM for integration with case data. This integration provides us with rich insight into what aspects of our service are in need of improvement.

**4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.**

These customer satisfaction surveys are the only formal assessment of the public's perception of the quality of service they receive from the USA.gov Contact Center.

**5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities (item 5), describe any methods used to minimize burden.**

Information will be collected from USA.gov Contact Center customers, which include American citizens living in the U.S., Canada, and abroad. This information collection does not impact small businesses or other small entities.

**6. Describe the consequence to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.**

First, GSA's Statement of Work mandates that the USA.gov Contact Center is the primary vehicle for the American people to access, via the telephone, Government information and referrals. If the customer satisfaction survey is not conducted, GSA will not be able to gauge the Contact Center's effectiveness, quality, and service from its customers' perspective.

In addition, USA.gov will use survey information to improve the quality of its information provided in the automated messages. USA.gov is depending on this survey to provide important information that will be used to improve the organization, content, and usefulness of the Contact Center's current automated messages. Without this feedback, USA.gov will be severely handicapped by not knowing what information the public needs. This is especially important since the automated messages are the primary telephonic means of obtaining Government information and referrals after business hours and during weekends.

If the USA.gov does not collect this information, it would not be able to fulfill Executive Order 13571: Streamlining Service Delivery and Improving Customer Service. The FCIC needs this information to make service improvements based on customer feedback.

**7. Explain any special circumstances.**

There are no special circumstances that would cause this information collection to be conducted in an unusual or intrusive manner. All participation will be voluntary. All potential participants will be selected randomly, and most users access the USA.gov Contact Center infrequently. Therefore, it is extremely unlikely that participants would be invited to participate more often than annually. This information collection is designed to produce reliable and valid results that can be generalized to the public.

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**8. Describe efforts to consult with persons outside the agency.**

Participants in our surveys are free to provide us with welcomed feedback to the surveys and the process, either by commenting within the survey itself or by reaching out to our contact center again. We have a mechanism in place to track this feedback and none has come to pass. We also have received extensive input into survey design from two consultant groups that have provided assistance with surveying in general at GSA and with our contact center specifically.

A 60-day notice was published in the *Federal Register* at 81 FR 48797 on July 26, 2016. No comments were received. A 30-day notice was published in the *Federal Register* at 81 FR 78813 on November 9, 2016. No comments were received.

**9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.**

Survey participants will not be offered any payment or gift in exchange for completing the survey.

**10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.**

We will continue to protect all data by following GSA and NIST security standards as required in our contract. Our contact center systems are certified as a medium security system, meaning, among other things, that employees with access to the system must be vetted through rigorous background checks. Also, the system itself must be seeded secure and accessible only through dual-factor authentication sign-in. Data from the surveys is only used on an anonymous basis and generally in aggregate.

**11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature.**

The USA.gov Contact Center survey contains no sensitive or private questions. The surveys only contain questions that assess customer service quality, a question designed to learn how users heard about the Contact Center. Questions about whether the user resides in the United States or in another country and age are to better understand the audience we're reaching. None of the information obtained with the surveys are attached to personally identifying information, so survey responses cannot be traced to an individual. Even so, all survey questions are optional for the participant to answer. The surveys assess the extent to which customer service staff is courteous, professional, knowledgeable and responsive to customer needs. The survey also assesses the organization, content, and usefulness of the automated messages and the chat and e-mail responses.

**12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information.**

The following are estimates of the annual hourly burdens for our surveys based on historical participation in our surveys.

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Telephone Survey:

Respondents 6000

Responses Per Respondent: 1

Annual Responses 6000

Hours Per Response: 0.12

Total Burden Hours: 720

Web Chat Survey:

Respondents: 2400

Responses Per Respondent: 1

Annual Responses 2400

Hours Per Response: 0.12

Total Burden Hours: 288

E-mail Survey:

Respondents: 3600

Responses Per Respondent: 1

Annual Responses: 3600

Hours Per Response: 0.12

Total Burden Hours: 432

Total Burden Hours: 1440

**13. Provide an estimate for the total annual cost burden to respondents or recordkeepers resulting from the collection of information.**

Not applicable.

**14. Provide estimates of annualized costs to the Federal Government.**

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We estimate that the cost for survey implementation and analysis to the government to be \$75,000.00 annually. Cost primarily consists of the work of employees to implement, maintain, and perform survey collection; manage the technologies required for successful collection; analyze resulting data; and to incorporate analysis of results into training methodologies for agents.

**15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in Items 13 or 14.**

We have made some changes to the collection of our survey data. Telephone operators collect responses from telephone customers now, whereas before survey responses were entered by customers using telephone buttons. This has allowed us to follow up-to-date industry standards for survey collection and increases in reliability of data. It has also increased cost. We also integrate survey responses with our CRM data for the first time. This allows us to e-mail survey invitations and combine contact center metrics with survey response statistics in revealing ways. This has also led to an increased cost.

**16. For collections of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication.**

USA.gov plans to begin data collection upon OMB approval. Survey data will be collected every month until the expiration of the OMB approval, 3 years from the approval date.

This information will allow USA.gov to track customer satisfaction from quarter to quarter.

Survey results will be used internally by USA.gov management staff to assess customer service performance per GSA's contract, improve the quality of its information provided in automated messages, and assess the effectiveness of marketing activities. There are no plans for formal publication of results.

**17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.**

It is appropriate for the Contact Center survey to display the expiration date for OMB approval. However, the phone survey will not be in paper format, it is only available via telephone. If directed, the OMB approval number and expiration date will be read during the survey introduction.

**18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in Item 19, "Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions".**

Not applicable.

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