

Supporting Statement B
Army Marketing and Research Group- “DA Civilian Employment and Marketing Feedback”

SUPPORTING STATEMENT (Refer to OMB Form 83-I INST)

B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

1. Description of the Activity

The goal of the study is to inform how the Army can more effectively market to support the recruiting of Department of the Army (DA) civilian critical occupations. This study is important to the Army as attracting a high-quality talent pool in mission-critical occupations such as Engineering, Information Technology and Cyber Security is vital to the Army’s ability to prevail in complex environments and remain adaptable in a difficult recruiting environment. This study focuses on high profile, difficult to fill DA civilian fields, but, where appropriate, the results will be used in marketing for all DA civilian occupations.

An Army civilian is an employee of the United States Army who fills Department of Defense roles in more than 500 careers, including contracting, engineering, medicine and information technology. Army Civilian Service provides mission-essential support to Soldiers by providing a workforce of talented, qualified people to fill critical non-combat mission-critical positions.

Focus groups will be conducted to gauge insights for potential marketing concepts and to inform the study’s Phase II quantitative survey which will reduce the survey respondent burden and improve the survey collection instrument utility. Some of the information gathered from focus group discussions will be analyzed using summary statistics, e.g., number of times a certain comment was made. However, most of the information gathered will be qualitative. The study will to gather insights on non-federal employees’ awareness of and attitudes toward civilian career opportunities within the Army. The insights gathered will inform a civilian brand campaign for the FY 2019 Annual Marketing Plan (AMP). Upon completion of the focus groups, Phase II needs to begin in January 2018 in order for results from both phases to be used to develop a marketing campaign for the FY2019 AMP.

Focus group participants will be prospective candidates for Army civilian employment who are either:

- College juniors, seniors or graduate students currently pursuing a major that aligns with one of the following careers, or:
- Professionals currently employed at different career stages (junior and mid-level) in one of the mission-critical careers below:
 - Civil Engineering
 - Electronics Engineering
 - Contracting
 - Information Technology Management

The number of respondents in the respondent universe is not known. Participants will be recruited for focus groups comprised of specific careers and career stages. Response rates are anticipated to be high as participants are personally contacted, screened and incentivized (and therefore much different than survey response rates).

The project will use data collected from 16 focus groups (lasting about 1.5 hours each). Each group will include 8 participants for a total of 128 participants. To achieve this, a total of 160 qualified people will be recruited, 10 people per group in order to seat 8 participants. The recruiting of extra participants is necessary because it is typical for one or two focus group recruits to not show up for a focus group. If more than 8 potential participants show up for a session the extras will be randomly selected, thanked, compensated, and excused. There will be a total of 128 participants in the focus groups.

2. Procedures for the Collection of Information

This information collection does not use rigorous sampling or weighting procedures as these focus groups will be conducted to inform the study’s Phase II quantitative survey and therefore reduce the survey respondent burden and improve the survey collection instrument utility. Groups will be assigned by participant type (student, junior professional, mid-level professional) and by specific career. Additionally, in each group, respondents will be recruited in rough proportion to their representation in the particular occupation, ensuring that minorities and veterans (if applicable) are represented. The focus groups will be conducted in three cities (TBD). Research sites will cover cities as well as a less urban location.

In each city, potential participants will be identified from the focus group facility database and then screened for qualification. (A screener document is included in the submission package.) Those participants who qualify will be offered a time for a focus group. They will receive one call to remind them about the group. Once the participant arrives at the focus group facility, the focus group moderator will read an informed consent document to them, they will be presented with the PRA Agency Disclosure Notice (ADN) and they will be verbally invited to participate in the focus group. (The informed consent, PRA ADN and verbal invitation script documents are included in submission package.) The focus groups will be conducted by an Army contractor (RAND, and their subcontractor, Echo Cove Research).

Target Audience	# of Groups
College Students	8
Civil Engineering	2
Electronics Engineering	2
Contracting	2

Information Technology Management	2
Professionals Junior Level	4
Civil Engineering	1
Electronics Engineering	1
Contracting	1
Information Technology Management	1
Professionals Mid-Level	4
Civil Engineering	1
Electronics Engineering	1
Contracting	1
Information Technology Management	1
Total	16

3. Maximization of Response Rates, Non-response, and Reliability

Only focus groups will be used to collect information. We will take steps to maximize response rates and minimize non-response rates for the focus groups including:

- Providing potential participants adequate advanced notice of the groups
- Attempting to accommodate potential participants' schedules
- Holding the sessions at a professional focus group facility rather than a college or company site. This will allow for a more diverse set of participants and not limit participants to being from a single company or college (which may have a distinct culture that is not representative of other companies/colleges). A focus group facility has lists of potential participants (the Army does not) and recruiters who are trained to screen and encourage participation. Also, discussing employment with another (competing) employer at a company site is awkward for the participants. A neutral focus group facility will be an easier place to discuss their attitudes about employment and potential employers.
- Providing reassurance of the legitimacy of the study as well as of the confidentiality of participants' information. Potential participants have a verbal invitation read to them when they arrive at the focus group facility. In addition, participants will be given an oral consent document and have it read to them, followed by the moderator asking them if

they would like to stay for the focus groups. (The verbal invitation and informed consent documents are included in submission package.)

- Telling participants that there will be refreshments available during the 1.5 hour focus groups, which is industry standard for focus groups
- We will recruit 10 people per group in order to seat 8 participants. It is typical for one or two focus group recruits to not show up for the focus groups. By recruiting 10 people, there is a greater likelihood of having at least 8 recruits show up to participate.
- As this data is more qualitative in nature and sample sizes are small, results will not be generalizable to the universe under study.
- Providing monetary incentives to participants.

We will also address different aspects of the focus groups that impact reliability:

- The sample will accurately represent the target population (within a margin of error). This is addressed in section 2 above.
- The questions are framed in the research instrument (discussion guide) and presented to respondents by the interviewer (in this case the focus group moderator) to produce consistent, unbiased results. The discussion guide is included in this submission package).
- The groups size (8 participants) was chosen to provide representation while preventing domination of the discussion by one or two participants. The moderator also will ensure broad participation in the discussion.
- The senior researchers (including the moderator) each have decades of experience in the research field, and will draw on their knowledge to guide the questions, probes, and discussion. All groups will be moderated by the same moderator to ensure consistency.
- Individual participants who exhibit behavior that the moderator believes might bias other participants will be politely asked to leave the group.

4. Test of Procedures

These focus groups will be conducted to inform and refine the study's Phase II quantitative survey (to be submitted in a separate submission package) and therefore reduce the survey respondent burden and improve the Phase II survey collection instrument utility.

Identification and screening of potential participants are based on a structured process conducted by an experienced moderator to guarantee strict adherence to specifications. The moderator's guide and discussion within the focus groups will be based on established rules and procedures for in-person discussions.

The discussion guide covering all topics of interest is prepared, extensively reviewed, and approved in advance.

Results will be reviewed following each group to determine if any refinements should be made to the guide or discussion to improve future groups.

5. Statistical Consultation and Information Analysis

The information gathered from focus group discussions will be analyzed using summary statistics e.g., number of times a certain comment was made or similar statistics. However, most of the information gathered will be qualitative. Any statistical analyses will be carried out and overseen by the Rand Corporation, with support from Echo Cove Research & Consulting. The principal investigators each have more than 25 years in marketing and recruiting research.

The focus group moderator is Altagracia Ramos, Echo Cover Research & Consulting, 703-975-7465.

Also overseeing the research is Richard Schreuer, Echo Cover Research & Consulting, 978-578-4028.