

SUPPORTING STATEMENT – PART B

B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

1. Description of the Activity

1. Although the collection of information does not require advanced statistical sampling methods, the following information is being provided. The potential respondent universe is any person or entity that receives a Department of the Army, Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act or Section 404 of the Clean Water Act permits authorization. As an example, included in the permit packet sent to applicants is a request to fill out a 100% voluntary online customer service survey. The majority of applicants do not submit a survey. The results of the submitted surveys are compiled and provided to those offices that received a response. This information may be used to inform any needed changes to existing practices in Corps districts or field offices. The data collection instrument was analyzed and minimized for responses burden, while maximizing data quality. The questionnaire includes only items that have been shown to be reported in previous submittals. Trends may be observable by the districts who utilize the information.

2. Procedures for the Collection of Information

Describe any of the following if they are used in the collection of information:

- a. The total of all responses are averaged together (arithmetic mean) for the question - What is your OVERALL rating of the level of service provided by the Corps of Engineers Regulatory Program? Referring back to the concept of performance management and the goal of 80% on the 100-point converted scale, successful service is defined by research of satisfaction and its relationship to customer loyalty. The successful zone is achieved at 4.3 on the 5-point scale (or 86% on the converted scale).

Overall, most reported a positive experience response from our customer satisfaction metric which indicated a very useful monitoring process. Customer satisfaction is defined as "the number of customers, or percentage of total customers" that provide responses to the survey requesting information related to their experience working with Corps staff through the permit process.

On occasion, a district may share information with customers related to our performance. For instance, some districts will host a Regulatory Program Workshop every quarter, usually attended by 50-70 individuals. Part of the workshop is a report out to customers on how the district is doing, as well as other topic of interest

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

Since this survey is voluntary, the Corps does encourage, but does not mandate use of the customer service survey. Some districts include the survey URL in the signature line of emails, correspondence and post a link to their survey on their websites. As the Corps is cognizant of the need to minimize burdens on small businesses as well as the public in general, the number of questions has purposely been kept small. The data collection instrument was minimized this year for respondent burden, while maximizing data quality. The following strategies were used to achieve these goals:

1. Questions are clearly written.
2. The questionnaire is of reasonable length;
3. The questionnaire includes only items that have been shown to be successful in previous analyses and ease in navigation.

The Corps has worked to better automate and has streamlined the survey so that it takes less time to complete. Questions that received few or no responses were eliminated and the form was reduced from 14 questions to 8. A few questions remain that provide information on the type of respondents and whether respondents may be contacted. The survey is proposed to be included in a Reg App and a small screen rendering version may be created to allow those access the site with smart phones to more easily view and complete the survey. The revised survey is included. Staff could follow-up with repeat applicants that have not responded to the survey to determine their overall satisfaction with their experience.

4. Tests of Procedures

No tests for procedures were performed. To improve the collection of instrument utility, clarification on the rating system was provided to ensure applicants were selecting the correct response.

5. Statistical Consultation and Information Analysis

a. Provide names and telephone number of individual(s) consulted on statistical aspects of the design – None

b. Provide name and organization of person(s) who will actually collect and analyze the collected information – Results are obtained from the Corps website, in an excel format. This requires a login and password. Responses are then provided to districts, via email on a monthly basis. In the spreadsheet, a column is provided for each question, the result (if entered) is displayed in that column. Some only fill out portions of the survey. NA is the result used for items that are not applicable to that particular applicant, a null result is provided when a question was not answered. Headquarters receives monthly data, district can note high and low scores, and can use the information to note areas of strength/weakness for a particular office.