

Appendix B

Office of Management and Budget (1545-2250)
Customer Satisfaction Research for Continuous (Annual) Surveys
Summary of Data Collections (2013-2017)

Control #: BU-12-368

Re: CCE Mail

Participants: 3,326 (16,605 Requests)

Burden Hours: 881

Cost: \$188,550

Response Rate: 20%

Purpose: The objectives of this study were to identify what CCE staff and managers can do to improve customer service, and track taxpayer's satisfaction with components of CCE service over time. The key goals of the CCE Customer Satisfaction Mail Survey are to gauge customer expectations and perceptions about the Compliance Center Examination (CC Exam) process.

Findings: In FY-2014, 48% of CCE taxpayers reported being satisfied overall with the way their audit was handled, while 38% reported being dissatisfied. In FY 2015, 41% of CCE closed case taxpayers were satisfied overall with the way their audit was handled, while 45% were dissatisfied overall. Mean overall satisfaction was 2.89. The highest rated CCE satisfaction or fairness component was agreement on whether taxpayers had the opportunity to provide information important to their case (68%). Satisfaction with the length of the audit process (36%) was the lowest rated CCE satisfaction or fairness component.

Actions Taken/Lessons Learned: Consider conducting taxpayer and employee focus groups to identify where in the process inconsistencies are occurring and develop ways to increase the consistency of information provided to the taxpayer. Consider the feasibility of offering an online status update tool and/or an automated telephone system that provides case status updates. Improving the consistency of information and how well the IRS kept taxpayers informed of their case status were top priorities for CCE. The function could also continue using training and communication opportunities with representatives to review and highlight key areas of the CCE process to ensure taxpayers receive consistent information. Taxpayers' ability to obtain accurate, consistent and current status information in an easily accessible manner could decrease the number of telephone calls and improve ratings for both of these satisfaction components as well as overall satisfaction.

Control #: BU-12-376

Re: Appeals Survey

Participants: 8,658 (28,477 Requests)

Burden Hours: 2,376

Cost: \$600,000

Response Rate: 41%

Purpose: This research is being conducted as part of the IRS agency-wide initiative to monitor and improve taxpayer satisfaction with its services provided. The objectives of this study are to—1. Identify what Appeals staff and managers can do to improve customer service; 2. Track customer satisfaction with the Appeals' process over time.

Findings: Overall satisfaction is 68% for FY2013. This is similar to 67% in FY2012. Overall satisfaction has steadily increased since it dropped in FY2010 (63%). Dissatisfaction remains consistent from previous years (18% in FY2012).

Actions taken or lessons learned: Appeals has focused on improving customer satisfaction to Pro Se taxpayers. The survey has revealed that Pro Se taxpayers require more information, both written and web-based, to better understand what functions Appeals can and cannot perform for them. By adjusting written material in our communications, Appeals is making a concerted effort to state our mission more clearly. Appeals is also using all survey results as a basis for reviewing areas in need of attention and addressing them accordingly.

Control #: BU-13-391

Re: Domestic IC/CIC Survey

Participants: 1,560 (9,099 Requests)

Burden Hours: 1,176

Cost: \$ 554,321

Response Rate: 17%

Purpose: The objective of this study was to guide LB&I on how to achieve audit process goals and improve the taxpayer experience. To identify improvement priorities in key attributes of the audit

experience that aligns with LB&I's strategic goals: Collaboration/Fairness, Transparency, Certainty and Administrative Burden. Also to understand the taxpayer experience in more depth through Voice of Taxpayer analysis of text commentary

Findings: Ratings are 'High' or 'Very High' for Collaboration/Fairness, Transparency & Certainty, but 'Low' for Administrative Burden; Leverage Analysis indicates that working on three aspects to improve 'Certainty' will be most effective for increasing satisfaction; and Insufficient info in the plan, issues & use of dispute resolution options, or disagreement with the outcome lower satisfaction; and Working on reducing issues with the team & specialists before they get elevated will be most impactful for increasing satisfaction

Actions Taken/Lessons Learned: LB&I concentrated improvement efforts on the identified areas of focus to improve the overall satisfaction.

Control #: BU-13-392

Re: International Compliance Mail

Participants: 4,332 (21,503 Requests)

Burden Hours: 2317

Cost: \$ 157,881

Response Rate: 20%

Purpose: To obtain detailed insights from LB&I taxpayers of their pre-filing, filing and post-filing experiences with the IRS. This study includes a previously un-surveyed group of taxpayers – those that have not undergone audits with the IRS.

Findings: For 2015 overall satisfaction with the taxpayer experience is 'slightly low' at 49%, decreasing to 38% for audits with TCOs. Leverage Analysis indicates that less time burden for the taxpayer and a shorter exam process will increase satisfaction the most. Leverage Analysis by Survey Language indicates that for English and Spanish speakers, reducing the time burden is the #1 priority to fix. In the audit experience with Revenue Agents it is most important to improve the explanation of how long the exam process would take. For the current fiscal year 2014 (October 2013 through September 2014), more than half (51%) of LB&I International taxpayers are satisfied with the service they received (giving an overall satisfaction rating of somewhat satisfied or very satisfied), while 36% are dissatisfied (giving a rating of very dissatisfied or somewhat dissatisfied). The current average overall satisfaction rating is 3.19. The increase in the current overall satisfaction rating from 3.16 in 2013 to 3.19 in 2014 is not statistically significant. When compared to FY 2013, the items that show a significant difference in ratings are the explanation of how long the exam process would take from start to finish, courtesy of auditor, and amount of time you personally had to spend on exam. Taxpayers may evaluate the LB&I International process differently depending on certain characteristics and give overall satisfaction ratings that are significantly different from those given by taxpayers as a whole. For the current fiscal year 2013 (October 2012 through September 2013), less than half (49%) of LB&I International taxpayers are satisfied with the service they received (giving an overall satisfaction rating of somewhat satisfied or very satisfied), while 35% are dissatisfied (giving a rating of very dissatisfied or somewhat dissatisfied). The current average overall satisfaction rating is 3.16. The decrease in the current overall satisfaction rating from 3.27 in 2012 to 3.16 in 2013 is statistically significant. Compared to last period, fewer customers had no change with their audit outcome (36% vs. 44%) and these customers tend to give higher overall satisfaction ratings. When compared to FY 2012, the following items show a significant decrease in ratings: Reasonableness of information asked to provide, Auditor's understanding of your business, Timeliness of status updates provided by the auditor, Length of exam process, Explanation of how long the exam process would take from start to finish, and Amount of time you personally had to spend on exam.

Actions Taken/Lessons Learned: LB&I concentrated improvement efforts on the identified areas of focus to improve the overall satisfaction.

Control #: BU-13-395

Re: Taxpayer Experience

Participants: 8,320 (13,000 Requests)

Burden Hours: 3,268

Cost: \$ **Response Rate:** 64%

Purpose: The overall objective of this task is to administer the English and Spanish versions of the Taxpayer Experience Survey to survey customers regarding their pre-filing, filing, and post-filing experiences, needs, and preferences. The key goals of this research are to determine pre-filing, filing, and post-filing experiences, needs, and preferences, and to identify service needs of W&I taxpayers.

Findings: Forty-four percent of individual taxpayers reported they contacted the IRS within the past 12 months; 56% of individual taxpayers had no contact with the IRS during this timeframe. With a few exceptions, channel awareness and use were similar in Tax Year (TY) 2014 and 2013, with awareness highest for IRS.gov (80% aware) and the Toll-Free line (72%). Thirty-five percent of taxpayers reported using IRS.gov which is higher compared to TY2013. The IRS Toll-Free line was the next most frequently used IRS channel (19%), followed by VITA sites (8%), IRS2Go mobile application (8%), local IRS office (6%), regular mail (6%), and email (5%). More than half (55%) of self-preparers reported contacting the IRS in the past 12 months, compared to 35% for those who use paid preparers and 46% who use unpaid preparers.

Control #: BU-13-400

Re: TAS Survey

Participants: 29,915 (107,220 Requests)

Burden Hours: 6,774

Cost: \$ 991,149

Response Rate: 33%

Purpose: To measure the satisfaction of taxpayers who received assistance from TAS in resolving their tax issues.

Findings: In FY 2014, TAS customers expressed an 87% level of satisfaction with the services they received, a decrease from 89% in FY 2013. As of the 4th quarter, FY 2014 National report, the questions that showed the highest correlation to improving overall satisfaction are: A. Advocate's explanation of the time it would take to work your case, B. Advocate's responsiveness, C. Advocate stayed with you every step of the way; and D. Advocate took responsibility for getting your problem solved. In FY 2015, TAS customers expressed an 88% level of satisfaction with the services they received, an increase from 87% in FY 2014. As of the 4th quarter, FY 2015 National report, the questions that showed the highest correlation to improving overall satisfaction are: A. Length of time it took to work your case; B. Advocate was easy to reach; C. Advocate stayed with you every step of the way; and D. Advocate's updates on the progress of your case.

Action taken or lessons learned: TAS Initiatives-During FY 2014, TAS leadership focused on the need to improve the frequency and quality of verbal communications with taxpayers, especially the initial contact to explain how TAS will advocate. In addition to survey data, TAS used reports identifying offices with high volumes of taxpayers who called NTA Toll-Free Operations for assistance while their case was being worked because TAS did not reach out by telephone for the initial contact and/or did not keep the taxpayer informed. TAS leadership encouraged those identified offices to improve communications with their taxpayers and encouraged more proactive advocacy to improve customers' satisfaction. During FY 2015, TAS leadership focused on the need to improve the frequency and quality of verbal communications with taxpayers, especially the initial contact to explain how TAS will advocate for the taxpayer. In addition to survey data, TAS used reports identifying offices with high volumes of taxpayers who called the NTA Toll-Free Operations for assistance while their case was being worked by a case advocate. In many instances, it was discovered TAS did not reach out by telephone for the initial contact, and/or did not keep the taxpayer informed. TAS leadership encouraged those identified offices to improve communications with their taxpayers and encouraged more proactive advocacy to improve customers' satisfaction. In FY 2015, TAS developed an Advocacy, Communications and Engagement (ACE) initiative as part of a renewed emphasis on organizational improvement. TAS used employee satisfaction data with customer satisfaction data to identify LTA offices in need of this support. Leaders in these offices are being challenged to better engage and support their employees in order to improve the customer experience and overall advocacy.

Control #: BU-13-402

Re: Field Collection Survey

Participants: 4,975 (30,504 Requests)

Burden Hours: 922

Cost: \$66,496

Response Rate: 16%

Purpose: This research was conducted as part of the IRS agency-wide initiative to monitor taxpayer satisfaction with the service provided. The objectives of this study were to identify what Field Collection staff and managers can do to improve customer service, and to track customer satisfaction with Field Collection's progress over time.

Findings: SB/SE Field Collection management focus on efficiency in terms of delivering consistent information via timely status updates. Recommend SB/SE Field Collection management focus on

instilling within their customers reasonable expectations for the length of time it takes to complete their Field Collection audits. Recommend SB/SE Field Collection management focus on Fairness in Taxpayer Treatment with an emphasis on respect and empathy as well as providing the customer ample opportunity to provide their justifying information.

Actions Taken/Lessons Learned: Field Collection continues to actively monitor the findings as legislated.

Control #: BU-13-403

Re: Field Exam Mail

Participants: 6,390 (32,114 Requests)

Burden Hours: 1,067

Cost: \$ 66,496

Response Rate: 19%

Purpose: This research was conducted as part of the IRS agency-wide initiative to monitor taxpayer satisfaction with the service provided. The objectives of this study were to identify what Field Exam staff and managers can do to improve customer service, and to track customer satisfaction with Field Exam's progress over time.

Findings: Findings recommend SB/SE Field Exam management focus on efficiency in terms of delivering consistent information via timely status updates. Recommend SB/SE Field Exam management focus on instilling within their customers reasonable expectations for the length of time it takes to complete their Field Exam audits. Recommend SB/SE Field Exam management focus on Fairness in Taxpayer Treatment with an emphasis on respect and empathy as well as providing the customer ample opportunity to provide their justifying information.

Actions Taken/Lessons Learned: Field Exam continues to actively monitor the findings as legislated.

Control #: BU-13-404

Re: Excise Tax Mail Survey

Participants: 3,715 (21,380 Requests)

Burden Hours: 665

Cost: \$ 66,495

Response Rate: 17%

Purpose: This research was conducted as part of the IRS agency-wide initiative to monitor taxpayer satisfaction with the service provided. The objectives of this study were to identify what Excise Tax staff and managers can do to improve customer service, and to track customer satisfaction with Excise Tax's progress over time.

Findings: Findings recommend SB/SE Excise Tax management focus on efficiency in terms of delivering consistent information via timely status updates. Recommend SB/SE Excise Tax management focus on instilling within their customers reasonable expectations for the length of time it takes to complete their Excise Tax audits. Recommend SB/SE Excise Tax management focus on Fairness in Taxpayer Treatment with an emphasis on respect and empathy as well as providing the customer ample opportunity to provide their justifying information.

Actions Taken/Lessons Learned: Excise Tax continues to actively monitor the findings as legislated.

Control #: BU-13-405

Re: Estate and Gift Survey

Participants: 2,427 (15,592 Requests)

Burden Hours: 461

Cost: \$ 66,495

Response Rate: 15%

Purpose: This research was conducted as part of the IRS agency-wide initiative to monitor taxpayer satisfaction with the service provided. The objectives of this study were to identify what Estate and Gift Tax staff and managers can do to improve customer service, and to track customer satisfaction with Estate and Gift Tax's progress over time.

Findings: Findings recommend SB/SE Estate and Gift Tax management focus on efficiency in terms of delivering consistent information via timely status updates. Recommend SB/SE Estate and Gift Tax management focus on instilling within their customers reasonable expectations for the length of time it takes to complete their Estate and Gift Tax audits. Recommend SB/SE Estate and Gift Tax management focus on Fairness in Taxpayer Treatment with an emphasis on respect and empathy as well as providing the customer ample opportunity to provide their justifying information.

Actions Taken/Lessons Learned: Estate and Gift Tax continues to actively monitor the findings as legislated.

Control #: BU-13-406

Re: Employment Survey

Participants: 1,915 (36,669 Requests) **Burden Hours:** 220

Cost: \$66,495 **Response Rate:** 5%

Purpose: This research was conducted as part of the IRS agency-wide initiative to monitor taxpayer satisfaction with the service provided. The objectives of this study were to identify what Employment staff managers can do to improve customer service, and to track customer satisfaction with Employment's progress over time.

Findings: Findings recommend Employment management focus on efficiency in terms of delivering consistent information via timely status updates. Recommend SB/SE Employment management focus on instilling within their customers reasonable expectations for the length of time it takes to complete their audits. Recommend SB/SE Employment management focus on Fairness in Taxpayer Treatment with an emphasis on respect and empathy as well as providing the customer ample opportunity to provide their justifying information.

Actions Taken or Lessons Learned: Employment continues to monitor the findings actively, as legislated.

Control #: BU-13-407

Re: CSCO Mail Survey

Participants: 4721 (31,794 Requests) **Burden Hours:** 1,452

Cost: \$84,952 **Response Rate:** 15%

Purpose: This research was conducted as part of the IRS agency-wide initiative to monitor taxpayer satisfaction with the service provided. The objectives of this study were to identify what CSCO staff and managers can do to improve customer service, and to track customer satisfaction with CSCO's progress over time.

Findings: Findings state overall satisfaction is trending steadily around 59%. Customer service is the major driver of customer satisfaction this survey year with an emphasis on fairness of taxpayer treatment. Clarity of IRS communications such as explanations of actions and notices also play a role in customer satisfaction.

Actions Taken/Lessons Learned: CSCO continues to actively monitor the findings as legislated.

Control #: BU-13-408

Re: ACS IVR Survey

Participants: 14,248 (100,276 Requests) **Burden Hours:** 4,046

Cost: \$84,942 **Response Rate:** 14%

Purpose: This research was conducted as part of the IRS agency-wide initiative to monitor taxpayer satisfaction with the service provided. The objectives of this study were to identify what ACS staff and managers can do to improve customer service, and to track customer satisfaction with ACS's progress over time.

Findings: Overall satisfaction ranged between 90% and 93% for the past three years. Overall satisfaction is likely to be high when the respondent is satisfied with the ACS IVR representative's knowledge or the representative's willingness to help. The perception of the phone representative's knowledge and customer service was an important component of overall satisfaction. The survey's open-ended comment analysis ranked the ACS representative having a positive impact on customers when being approached for almost any issue. However, complaints about the long hold times were the most common negative comment.

Actions Taken/Lessons Learned: ACS continues to actively monitor the findings as legislated.

Control #: BU-13-409

Re: CCE IVR Survey

Participants: 56,425 (1,997 Requests) **Burden Hours:** 1,206

Cost: \$18,387 **Response Rate:** 3%

Purpose: This research was conducted as part of the IRS agency-wide initiative to monitor taxpayer satisfaction with the service provided. The objectives of this study were to identify what CCE staff and managers can do to improve customer service, and to track customer satisfaction with CCE's progress over time.

Findings: Findings suggest management continue to maintain and develop the quality of service that Campus Exam provides to their customers, specifically with regard to the following aspects of customer service: Recommend Campus Exam management focus on clarity and efficiency in terms of improving

and maintaining staff's ability to deliver clarity in explanation to their customers, whether through an expanded knowledge base or an emphasis in staff training to issue succinct, easy-to-understand explanations to campus exam customers. Recommend Campus Exam management focus on professionalism by maintaining and when relevant, improve upon the courtesy level that Campus Exam representatives have been trained to deliver on their Campus Exam toll-free calls with an emphasis on the dimension of willingness to help.

Actions Taken/Lessons learned: CCE continues to actively monitor the findings as legislated.

Control #: BU-13-410

Re: CCE Mail Survey

Participants: 25,920 (5,217 Requests)

Burden Hours: 1,299

Cost: \$ 18,387 **Response Rate:** 20%

Purpose: This research was conducted as part of the IRS agency-wide initiative to monitor taxpayer satisfaction with the service provided. The objectives of this study were to identify what CCE staff and managers can do to improve customer service, and to track customer satisfaction with CCE's progress over time.

Findings: Findings recommend SB/SE Campus Exam management focus on efficiency in terms of delivering consistent information via timely status updates. Recommend SB/SE Campus Exam management focus on instilling within their customers reasonable expectations for the length of time it takes to complete their Campus Exam audits. Recommend SB/SE Campus Exam management focus on Fairness in Taxpayer Treatment with an emphasis on respect and empathy as well as providing the customer ample opportunity to provide their justifying information.

Actions Taken/Lessons learned: CCE continues to actively monitor the findings as legislated.

Control #: BU-13-411

Re: AUR IVR Survey

Participants: 4,549 (71,397 Requests)

Burden Hours: 1,797

Cost: \$18,387 **Response Rate:** 6%

Purpose: This research was conducted as part of the IRS agency-wide initiative to monitor taxpayer satisfaction with the service provided. The objectives of this study were to identify what AUR staff and managers can do to improve customer service, and to track customer satisfaction with AUR's progress over time.

Findings: Recommend management continue to maintain and develop the quality of service that AUR provides to their customers, specifically with regard to the following aspects of Customer Service. Recommend AUR management focus on efficiency in terms of reducing long wait times on hold, for instance, through the vehicle of hiring more representatives. Recommend AUR management focus on efficiency by ensuring the prompts on the AUR Automated Answering System menu are brief and to the point. Recommend AUR management focus on clarity by increasing the staff knowledge base so that their explanations about the AUR process and the next steps are clear and succinct, averting long conversations with the customer. Recommend AUR management focus on professionalism by maintaining and when relevant, improve the courtesy level that AUR representatives have been trained to deliver on their AUR toll-free calls.

Actions Taken/Lessons Learned: AUR continues to actively monitor the findings as legislated.

Control #: BU-13-412

Re: AUR Mail

Participants: 4,644 (18,387 Requests)

Burden Hours: 925

Cost: \$18,837 **Response Rate:** 3%

Purpose: This research was conducted as part of the IRS agency-wide initiative to monitor taxpayer satisfaction with the service provided. The objectives of this study were to identify what AUR staff and managers can do to improve customer service, and to track customer satisfaction with AUR's progress over time.

Findings: Staff's efficiency and clarity are the major drivers of respondent satisfaction this survey year. Recommend management continue to maintain and develop the quality of service that SB/SE AUR provides to their customers, specifically with regard to the following aspects of Customer Service: Recommend SB/SE AUR management focus on clarity of explanations, whether explaining to the taxpayer the initial cause of the AUR case, what documents are required, or why and how their case was

ultimately resolved. Recommend SB/SE AUR management focus on efficiency in their process as manifested by the AUR staff, such as focusing on shortening the length of the AUR process in general. **Actions Taken/Lessons Learned:** AUR continues to actively monitor the findings as legislated.

Control #: BU-13-414

Re: CAP Survey

Participants: 195 (319 Requests)

Burden Hours: 52

Cost: \$83,490

Response Rate: 61%

Purpose: The objective of this research is to track ongoing satisfaction among CAP customers and to identify top improvement priorities. Taxpayer feedback on the expanding CAP program will assist the Large Business and International (LB&I) Division in refining the service elements of the program.

Findings: In 2013, 96% of LB&I CAP survey respondents are satisfied overall with the CAP process (giving a rating of somewhat satisfied or very satisfied on a 5-point scale—82% of taxpayers gave a rating of very satisfied); 3% of taxpayers are dissatisfied (giving a rating of very dissatisfied or somewhat dissatisfied). Compared to 2012, the percent of satisfied respondents increased this year (87% to 96%). The difference is statistically significant. The overall satisfaction rating of 4.76 for 2013 is higher than the rating for 2012 (4.49). Taxpayers' overall perceptions of the CAP process have improved. CAP participants are most satisfied with items related to Opening Conference, followed by CAP Features and Account Coordinator. Arenas receiving the lowest average satisfaction ratings are Specialists, Issue Resolution, and Proposed Adjustment Process. The percentage of CAP participants who stated they would likely recommend the program to another organization has decreased this year, from 87% in 2012 to 84% in 2013. However, this decrease is not statistically significant. In 2015, 94% of LB&I CAP survey respondents are satisfied overall with the CAP program, while only 5% are dissatisfied, with an average rating of 4.69. Compared to prior years, the percent of satisfied respondents decreased in 2012 to 87%, but has since risen to 96% in 2013, and remained flat at 94% in 2015. The overall satisfaction rating of 4.69 for 2015 is lower than the rating for 2013 (4.76). Those dissatisfied with the CAP program cite a lack of timeliness and inefficiencies in issue resolution and the overall process. In 2015, 82% of LB&I CAP survey respondents indicate that they are satisfied with the amount of time they and their company had to spend on the audit, while 14% are dissatisfied. A majority (69%) expected the audit to take a year or more (average of 14 months), and for most (78%) their expectations were met. Despite the dissatisfaction around timeliness, nearly all (96%) of those surveyed indicate that they are likely to recommend CAP to other organizations. This percentage has increased significantly (from 87%) since 2012. CAP participants are most satisfied with items related to Opening Conference, followed by CAP Features and Issue Identification. While, arenas receiving the lowest average satisfaction ratings are IRS Team, Proposed Adjustments, and Issue Resolution. The top two pain points in the CAP program are: Issue Resolution: Assistance from Counsel (34% Dissatisfied, Mean=3.29) and IRS Team (Members): Specialist understanding of the CAP objectives and purpose (20% Dissatisfied, Mean=4.01).

Actions Taken/Lessons Learned: LB&I concentrated improvement efforts on the identified areas of focus to improve the overall satisfaction.

Control #: BU-13-418

Re: SPEC Partner/CSAT

Participants: 2115 (5429 Requests)

Burden Hours: 647

Cost: \$46767

Response Rate: 41%

Purpose: This research is being conducted as part of the IRS agency-wide initiative to monitor and improve customer satisfaction with the service provided. In addition, this effort seeks to assess SPEC Partner Groups' satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the support, products, and services that SPEC provides. And finally, this research provides customized feedback to SPEC on key drivers of partner satisfaction and high-leverage areas that provide the greatest improvement potential.

Findings: During FY2014, 88% of SPEC Partners indicated overall satisfaction with SPEC's products and services, which is consistent with FY2013 (87%). About 3% of SPEC Partners indicated dissatisfaction overall with SPEC's products and services in FY2014. No significant differences in overall satisfaction were observed between FY2014 and FY2013. FY2014 included, for the first time, calculation of a Net Promoter Score (NPS). These scores are based on the difference between SPEC Partners who are very likely to recommend SPEC ("Promoters") and those who are unlikely to recommend SPEC ("Detractors"). NPS is used to gain insight on a firm's growth. In 2014, SPEC had an overall NPS of

25%. During FY2015, 88% of partners indicated overall satisfaction with SPEC's products and services, whereas 5% indicated dissatisfaction. There were no significant differences observed in proportions or means between FY2014 and FY2015 in the measurement of overall satisfaction. The Net Promoter Score was 37%, significantly higher than in the FY 2014 baseline (25%). FY2015 had proportionately more SPEC Partners who indicated they were "very likely" to recommend partnering with SPEC than detractors ("neutral" to "very unlikely").

Actions Taken/Lessons Learned: During FY2014 there were several key organizational initiatives that SPEC emphasized. For instance, efforts were taken to maintain and increase the number of volunteers in the program. From the survey, SPEC determined from partners that the most important task SPEC can help with to recruit volunteers is to help with referrals, organization and community recruiting, and earlier recruitment. In addition, SPEC Partners reported the most important task SPEC can help with to retain volunteers is to help with recognition, rewards, and/or stipends and training, certification, and/or testing help. For FY 2015 adjustments were made to Form 13614 — C and Publication 1084, which were positively reflected in significantly higher mean overall satisfaction ratings. New to the survey in FY 2015 was measurement of satisfaction with Publication 5159 — Filing Season Readiness Partner Guide. There is room for improvement to Publication 5159, SPEC may want to address prior to the tax year 2015 filing season.

Control #: BU-13-420

Re: E-help Survey

Participants: 2,765 (21,601 Requests)

Burden Hours: 1,768

Cost: \$203,037

Response Rate: 13%

Purpose: This research is being conducted as part of the IRS agency-wide initiative to monitor and improve taxpayer satisfaction with the service provided. The objectives of this study are:

Customer satisfaction with help desk services (including call handle/hold times, accuracy of assistor responses, etc.); Customer needs (including preferred method of contact); and work processes that need improvement

Findings: In Fiscal Year 2013-2016, 90% of e-help Desk customers are satisfied (giving a rating of somewhat satisfied or very satisfied), and only 7% are dissatisfied (giving a rating of very dissatisfied or somewhat dissatisfied). The average overall satisfaction rating is 4.5. In 2014- For FY 2014, 92% of e-help Desk callers reported overall satisfaction with the service they received and 5% reported dissatisfaction. Mean overall satisfaction for FY 2014 (4.61). For FY 2015, 95% of e-help Desk callers reported overall satisfaction with the service they received and 2% reported dissatisfaction. The mean satisfaction was significantly higher than in FY 2014 for overall satisfaction, professionalism of representative, willingness to help, and knowledge of representative. All other satisfaction questions directly follow the overall satisfaction question – A comparison of the old survey and the current survey indicates that overall satisfaction is significantly higher for the current e-help Desk survey.

Actions Taken/Lessons Learned: FY2013-2016 - Maintaining current service level with ease of locating the e-help telephone number, professionalism of representatives, and willingness of representatives to help with issues are important in order to sustain the current overall satisfaction level. – Professionalism of representatives and willingness of representatives to help with issues are highly correlated with overall satisfaction and are important service components to maintain. Ensure that training continues to support these areas. – Maintain or improve the ease of locating the e-help telephone number. With a satisfaction rate of 84%, the ease of locating the e-help telephone has room for improvement but it has a relatively weak correlation with overall satisfaction. Consequently, improving the ease of locating the e-help telephone number could reduce burden for taxpayers, but may not have a significant impact on overall satisfaction.

Control #: BU-13-421

Re: CAS Adjustments

Participants: 13,329 (111,000 Requests)

Burden Hours: 5,255

Cost: \$150,000

Response Rate: 12%

Purpose: The solicitation of feedback will target areas such as: timeliness, appropriateness, accuracy of information, courtesy, efficiency of service delivery, and resolution of issues with service delivery. Responses will be assessed to plan and inform efforts to improve or maintain the quality of service offered to the public.

Findings: 62% of Adjustments taxpayers reported being satisfied overall with the way their issue was handled, a significant increase from FY 2013 (57%). Additionally, 25% said they were dissatisfied overall with the way their issue was handled. Mean overall satisfaction increased significantly between FY 2014 and FY 2013 (3.60 and 3.42, respectively). Nearly all mean satisfaction ratings were significantly higher in FY 2014 compared with FY 2013.

Actions Taken/Lessons Learned: The top two improvement priorities ease of getting more information and keeping taxpayers informed about their case.

Control #: BU-13-422

Re: Injured Spouse Survey

Participants: 9831 (47162 Requests)

Burden Hours: 2719

Cost: \$138,479

Response Rate: 20%

Purpose: This research is being conducted as part of the IRS agency-wide initiative to monitor and improve customer satisfaction with the service provided. Improving agency programs requires ongoing assessment of service delivery, by which we mean systematic review of the operation of a program compared to a set of explicit or implicit standards, as a means of contributing to the continuous improvement of the program. W&I will employ a contractor to collect, analyze, and interpret information gathered to identify strengths and weaknesses of current Injured Spouse services and make improvements in service delivery based on feedback. The solicitation of feedback will target areas such as: timeliness, appropriateness, accuracy of information, courtesy, efficiency of service delivery, and resolution of issues with service delivery. Responses will be assessed to plan and inform efforts to improve or maintain the quality of service offered to the public. If this information is not collected, vital feedback from customers and stakeholders on Injured Spouse services will be unavailable.

Findings: In FY 2013, 52% of Injured Spouse taxpayers reported being satisfied overall with the way their issue was handled, while 31% said they were dissatisfied. The mean overall satisfaction rating for FY 2013 (3.22) was significantly *lower* than the corresponding mean for FY 2012 (3.44). In FY 2014, 52% of Injured Spouse taxpayers reported overall satisfaction with the service received from the IRS while 31% said they were dissatisfied. The mean satisfaction rating and the percent satisfied and dissatisfied ratings were not significantly different from the FY 2013 measures. In FY 2014, all mean satisfaction ratings regarding calls for help with preparation of Form 8379 had significantly lower mean satisfaction ratings than in FY 2013. Overall satisfaction ratings significantly decreased as the number of times taxpayers reported calling the IRS increased. According to Target Analysis of all taxpayers, the greatest likelihood to improve overall satisfaction among Injured Spouse taxpayers as a whole is to: ensure taxpayers receive an adequate description of the Injured Spouse process; Improve treatment so taxpayers feel they are being treated with respect during the Injured Spouse process; increase the ease of finding out about the Injured Spouse program; Target Analysis of only those taxpayers who called the IRS indicate the greatest likelihood to improve overall satisfaction among this group is to ensure callers' questions get answered on calls about Allocation outcomes; improve callers' satisfaction with updates received when contacting the IRS regarding case status; increase taxpayers' satisfaction with getting through to someone who can help answer questions about Form 8379.

Actions Taken/Lessons Learned AM HQ and Tax Forms and Publications collaborated to update the form and related instructions providing additional information in the November 2012 and January 2015 release. AM HQ will evaluate adding Injured Spouse information to IRS.gov as well as providing appropriate links to resources. The Form 8379 Instructions currently provides the time needed to process Form 8379 as 14 weeks (11 weeks if filed electronically) if filed with the original Form 1040 or about 8 weeks if filed after an offset has occurred. Among taxpayers who contact the IRS, another improvement priority is to ensure questions are correctly answered on calls about the taxpayer's case outcome. Injured Spouse Allocation calls are transferred to Application 35. To address this concern, AM HQ will review Application 35 calls to determine if additional training is needed and provide feedback to the call site for evaluation as appropriate. Injured Spouse taxpayers call for updates because they were unaware there are no status updates/interim letters from the IRS pertaining to Form 8379 processing. AM HQ will evaluate the possibility whether an interim letter is warranted. In addition, it was suggested that a future solution may include the implementation of an online status update system such as "Where's My Amended Return?" It is not feasible to implement such a system for Injured Spouse Allocations. IRS must consider

current budget and resource issues. Additionally, IRS process less than 400,000 Injured Spouse Allocations annually. The last improvement priority among taxpayers who contact the IRS is to get through to someone who can help with preparation of Form 8379. Preparation of any tax form is considered “out of scope” for CSRs. However, a general overview may be provided. In addition, to assist taxpayers with the preparation of Form 8379, the Instructions were updated in November 2012 providing a chart on page 3 of the Instructions to include where to find the information needed to complete the form.

Control #: BU-13-423

Re: Practitioner Priority

Participants: 10,050 (201,000 Requests) **Burden Hours:**

Cost: \$ 180,000 **Response Rate:** 5%

Purpose: The solicitation of feedback will target areas such as: timeliness, appropriateness, accuracy of information, courtesy, efficiency of service delivery, and resolution of issues with service delivery. Responses will be assessed to plan and inform efforts to improve or maintain the quality of phone services offered to the public.

Findings: Annual results indicated 89% of PPS callers were satisfied overall with the service they received, while 6% were dissatisfied overall. Mean overall satisfaction for FY 2015 (4.51) was not significantly different than FY 2014 (4.52). Mean satisfaction ratings for four components of satisfaction were significantly *lower* in FY 2015 when compared with FY 2014.

Actions Taken/Lessons Learned: The function can potentially improve customer satisfaction by identifying additional information needs through focus groups with practitioners who reported they would need to call back.

Control #: BU-13-424

Re: TEGE Toll Free

Participants: 10,560 (132,000 Requests) **Burden Hours:** 3,256

Cost: \$129,000 **Response Rate:** 8%

Purpose: The solicitation of feedback will target areas such as: timeliness, appropriateness, accuracy of information, courtesy, efficiency of service delivery, and resolution of issues with service delivery. Responses will be assessed to plan and inform efforts to improve or maintain the quality of phone services offered to the public.

Findings: Survey results indicated 89% of TEGE callers were satisfied overall with the service they received from TEGE Toll-Free representatives, while 6% were dissatisfied. These results were significantly *lower* than last year.

Actions Taken/Lessons Learned: Target analysis showed that representative’s willingness to help caller, knowledge of representative, and professionalism of representative were the top three areas for TEGE to maintain current level of service.

Control #: BU-13-425

Re: CAS Toll Free Survey

Participants: 72,000 (900,000 Requests) **Burden Hours:** 27,000

Cost: \$160,000 **Response Rate:** 8%

Purpose: This feedback will provide insights into customer perceptions, experiences and expectations, provide an early warning of issues with service, or focus attention on areas where communication, training or changes in operations might improve delivery of services.

Findings: In FY 2014, 89% of AM IVR callers reported being satisfied overall with the service they received, while 7% said they were dissatisfied overall. Mean overall satisfaction *decreased* significantly between FY 2013 (4.63) and FY 2014 (4.53). Mean overall satisfaction as well as means for all other components of caller satisfaction were significantly *lower* in FY 2014 compared with FY 2013.

Actions Taken/Lessons Learned: Maintain current levels of representative knowledge, willingness to help callers and courtesy by continuing to focus on these topics during training and communication opportunities.

Control #: BU-13-426

Re: Field Assistant Survey

Participants: 476,150 (5,476,276 Requests) **Burden Hours:** 23,807

Cost: \$419,873 **Response Rate:** 11.5%

Purpose: The purpose of the Field Assistance customer satisfaction survey is to survey external customers on an on-going basis regarding their expectations of the TAC offices; to track customer satisfaction at all TAC offices nationwide; and to identify customer satisfaction improvement opportunities.

Findings: FA was able to determine the satisfaction levels, expectations and issue resolution at all levels from national all the way to TAC level and compare it over time. FA learned respondent characteristics. FA gained data by service options such as FSA, VSD, appointment based service model and Spanish. FA identified improvement priorities. FA was able to obtain recommendations based on the data provided.

Actions Taken/Lessons Learned: FA customers were most satisfied with professionalism of staff and were least satisfied with promptness of service. Promptness of service was the top improvement priority. Improving the current service level with promptness of service, professionalism of staff, and knowledge of staff are important in order to improve or maintain the current overall satisfaction level. FA customers who visited sites offering appointment only service had significantly *higher* mean ratings for all components of satisfaction when compared with those who visited sites without the appointment service. Customers who reported using Facilitated Self-Assistance (FSA) had significantly *higher* ratings for all components of satisfaction, expectations, and issue resolution when compared with ratings from FA customers who reported using traditional service. FA customers who used Virtual Service Delivery (VSD) reported significantly *higher* ratings for promptness of service, expectations and issue resolution but significantly *lower* ratings for professionalism of staff and knowledge of staff when compared with ratings from those who reported using traditional service. Customers who filled out the Spanish version gave significantly *lower* mean ratings for all components of satisfaction but gave significantly *higher* ratings for expectations and issue resolution components when compared with those who filled out the survey in English.

Control #: BU-13-428

Re: AUR Mail Survey

Participants: 1,307 (4,368 Requests)

Burden Hours: 298

Cost: \$29,923

Response Rate: 30%

Purpose: To identify what AUR staff and managers can do to improve customer service and track taxpayers' satisfaction.

Findings: Overall, 67% of AUR taxpayers reported being satisfied with the way the IRS handled their possible discrepancy, while 16% reported being dis-satisfied.

Actions Taken/Lessons Learned: Top improvement priorities include: consistency of information provided by IRS throughout the process; how well the IRS kept taxpayers informed of case status; the length of process to resolve discrepancy.

Control #: BU-13-429

Re: AUR IVR Survey

Participants: 4,192 (44,196 Requests)

Burden Hours: 1,155

Cost: \$ 29,923

Response Rate: 9%

Purpose: The purpose of this study was to identify what AUR Toll-free staff and managers can do to improve customer service and taxpayers' satisfaction.

Findings: Survey results indicated that 92% of AUR taxpayers were satisfied overall with the service they received, while 4% were dissatisfied.

Actions Taken/Lessons Learned: Target analysis showed that clarity of explanation of issue and courtesy of the representative were the top areas for AUR to maintain current level of service.

Control #: BU-13-430

Re: CCE IVR

Participants: 11,222 (128,530 Requests)

Burden Hours: 3,638

Cost: \$188,550

Response Rate: 9%

Purpose: The objectives of this study were to identify what CCE staff and managers can do to improve customer service, and track taxpayer's satisfaction with components of CCE service over time. The key goals of the CCE IVR Customer Satisfaction Survey are to investigate what specific actions IRS can take to improve customer satisfaction with the current CCE-IVR W&I service and to gauge the effectiveness of changes to the CCE Toll-free W&I service.

Findings: This report represents the results of the 2,567 callers who completed the Compliance Center Examination (CCE) Toll-Free survey during FY 2015. Among these respondents, 306 completed a Spanish language survey A significantly *higher* proportion of callers experienced call lengths including hold time of more than 30 minutes in FY 2015 (52%) compared to FY 2014 (32%). Correspondingly, a significantly *lower* proportion of callers experienced call lengths of less than 10 minutes, 10 to 20 minutes, and 21 to 30 minutes in FY 2015 compared with FY 2014 Key areas to maintain or improve current levels of satisfaction for CCE callers are knowledge of the representative, how clearly the representative explained the issue, length of time it took to complete the call, and how clearly the representative explained the next steps

Actions Taken/Lessons Learned: To ensure the current high level of overall satisfaction, maintain current high levels of the representative's knowledge and willingness to help, as well as how clearly the representative explains the issue. Callers who reported checking the status of their case or tell the IRS about documents they sent in are likely to call more than once about their issue. Working with developers to design self-service tools for taxpayers with these types of issues may reduce the number of these contacts and free up resources for callers with other needs. Providing web tools and automated phone services to allow callers to access summaries of their previous calls to the IRS and an updated status of their case may be beneficial in increasing overall satisfaction

Control #: BU-13-431

Re: VITA FSA-TCE Survey

Participants: 490 (4300 Requests)

Burden Hours: 153

Cost: \$1,250

Response Rate: 11%

Purpose: The purpose of this study was to assess the satisfaction of VITA taxpayers who use the FSA program for tax preparation.

Findings: The overwhelming majority (98%) of FSA taxpayers (whether they had prior VITA/TCE experience or not) indicated they would be willing to use FSA in the future. This is a slight increase from future willingness to use FSA (96%) as reported on the 2013 survey.

Actions Taken/Lessons Learned: The 2014 VITA FSA Survey provided a snapshot of customer satisfaction with FSA tax preparation. Administration setbacks hindered the response rate.

Control #: BU-13-432

Re: Virtual VITA TCE Survey

Participants: 229 (2000 Requests)

Burden Hours: 72

Cost: \$750

Response Rate: 11%

Purpose: The purpose of this study was to assess the satisfaction of VITA taxpayers who use the Virtual VITA program for tax preparation.

Findings: The overwhelming majority (95% among first time taxpayers, 97% among repeat taxpayers) of VITA/TCE respondents indicated they would be willing to use this service in the future. This is a slight decrease from future willingness to use FSA (98%) as reported on the 2013 survey.

Actions Taken/Lessons Learned: The 2014 Virtual VITA Survey provided a snapshot of customer satisfaction with Virtual tax preparation. Administration setbacks hindered the response rate.

Control #: BU-13-433

Re: ISP IVR Survey

Participants: 823 (13,096 Requests)

Burden Hours: 506

Cost: \$29,923

Response Rate: 6%

Purpose: The purpose of this study was to identify what Innocent Spouse staff and managers can do to improve customer service and to track taxpayers' satisfaction.

Findings: Survey results indicated that 91% of ISP taxpayers were satisfied overall with the service they received from toll-free representatives, while only 5% were dis-satisfied.

Actions Taken/Lessons Learned: Maintaining or improving high levels of satisfaction among improvement priorities will help maintain the current high level of overall satisfaction.

Control #: BU-13-434

Re: ISP Mail Survey

Participants: 2,663 (23,186 Requests)

Burden Hours: 995

Cost: \$29,923

Response Rate: 11%

Purpose: To identify what Innocent Spouse staff and managers can do to improve customer service and track Innocent Spouse taxpayers' satisfaction.

Findings: For Fiscal Year 2014, 69% of Innocent Spouse taxpayers reported being satisfied overall with the way the IRS handled their claim, while 23% reported being dis-satisfied.

Actions Taken/Lessons Learned: Survey results indicate that taxpayers are willing and want to communicate electronically with the IRS.

Control #: BU-13-435

Re: ACS IVR Survey

Participants: 5,695 (55,631 Requests)

Burden Hours: 1,781

Cost: \$37,349

Response Rate: 10%

Purpose: To identify what ACS Toll-Free staff and managers can do to improve customer service and taxpayer satisfaction.

Findings: Overall satisfaction results indicated that 93% of ACS callers were satisfied with the service they received from the toll-free telephone line while 4% were dis-satisfied.

Actions Taken/Lessons Learned: Top improvement priorities for ACS were: maintain courtesy of ACS representatives; maintain how clearly IRS representative explained the issue; and maintain the knowledge of representatives.

Control #: BU-13-436

Re: CSCO Telephone Survey

Participants: 7,503 (71,566 Requests)

Burden Hours: 2,193

Cost: \$37,349

Response Rate: 10%

Purpose: This purpose of this study was to identify what CSCO Managers and staff could do to improve CSCO's customer service, and track taxpayer's satisfaction.

Findings: Annual overall satisfaction results indicated that 58% of CSCO taxpayers were satisfied with the service they received from the Collections Operations, while 20% were dis-satisfied.

Actions Taken/Lessons Learned: Improving Satisfaction with top improvement priorities will help to increase rates of overall satisfaction.

Control #: BU-13-437

Re: ACSS Mail Survey

Participants: 2,972 (28,760 Requests)

Burden Hours: 927

Cost: \$37,370

Response Rate: 10%

Purpose: This research was conducted as part of the IRS agency-wide initiative to monitor taxpayer satisfaction with the service provided. The objectives of this study were to identify what ACSS staff and managers can do to improve customer service, and to track customer satisfaction with ACSS's progress over time.

Findings: Overall satisfaction has been trending steadily between 59% and 64% for the past five years. The two important components affecting overall satisfaction were respondents agreeing they had an adequate description of the collection process and respondents being satisfied with their IRS letter's explanation of their case resolution. Customer service scores higher in efficiency and clarity, but has lower impact on taxpayer's satisfaction. The survey's open-ended comment analysis ranked the length of time getting back to the taxpayer and his or her issue first as the most problematic and negative comment with ACSS.

Actions Taken/Lessons Learned: ACSS continues to actively monitor the findings as legislated.

Control #: BU-13-438

Re: Media & Pub Survey

Participants: 7,390 (32,490 Requests)

Burden Hours: 2,758

Cost: \$221,306

Response Rate: 24%

Purpose: The primary goals of the survey are to survey external customers who use the documents and services provided by M&P (i.e., individual taxpayers, business taxpayers, tax preparers and forms distributors). More specifically to assess the level of customer satisfaction with M&P's products and services; provide M&P with suggestions for product and service improvements; produce actionable results that can be used to improve specific products and business processes; and generate an understanding of customer satisfaction with all aspects of a document (e.g., ease of use, readability, clarity of language) or service (forms distribution).

Findings: In 2014 overall satisfaction was 71%. There was a significant increase in satisfaction in business taxpayers, tax preparers and forms distributors in 2014. In 2015, the overall satisfaction was 60.2%. Satisfaction stayed the same for individual taxpayers and tax preparers, but dropped for business, forms distributors and SPEC partners.

Actions Taken/Lessons Learned: TF&P has conducted focus groups testing on some of the tax products with low satisfaction scores over the past few years. They have also gathered recommendations from the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel on certain products to improve understandability and tax compliance. Forms Distribution sent out instructions with the forms for tax year 2015. For tax year 2014 they did not send the associated instructions to forms to the distribution centers; e.g., libraries. This increased satisfaction scores.

Control #: BU-13-439

Re: TE/GE Survey

Participants: 16,706 (46,431 Requests)

Burden Hours: 2,227

Cost: \$862,545

Response Rate: 36%

Purpose: TE/GE collects feedback from the surveys to track customer satisfaction over time and identify improvement opportunities.

Findings: TE/E saw changes in customer satisfaction that correlated with significant program changes. For example, overall customer satisfaction for the EO Determination program increased significantly from a low of 44% at the end of the first half of FY 2014 to a high of 84% at the end of the second half of FY 2015 following a process change that streamlined the taxpayer's application process that occurred during that timeframe.

Actions Taken/Lessons Learned: Customer satisfaction surveys are one way to assist TE/GE with monitoring program changes. This will be particularly important as TE/GE moves toward its Future State.

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