

**SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS PART A**  
**U.S. Department of Commerce**  
**National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration**  
**DOC/NOAA Customer Surveys**  
**NOAA Products and Services for Community Rating System Communities**  
**OMB Control No. 0648-0342**

**1. Explain who will be conducting this survey. What program office will be conducting the survey? What services does this program provide? Who are the customers? How are these services provided to the customer?**

NOAA provides coastal communities with a number of products and services that help reduce the risks and impacts of flood events. Many of the products and services can be used by those communities to earn credit points under the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA's) Community Rating System (CRS) program. The CRS is a component under FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and offers flood-prone communities the opportunity to earn discounts on NFIP-backed flood insurance. Communities can earn these discounts by earning points from performing activities that reduce risk and/or increase resilience. These discounts can range from 5 to 45 percent of the policy premium for homeowners in the riskiest areas. The activities and points are defined by FEMA in the CRS Coordinator's Manual.

Under this survey, NOAA's Office for Coastal Management (OCM) is looking to assess the extent to which coastal CRS communities use NOAA's products and services for earning points under the CRS program and the extent to which NOAA's products and services have been useful to those communities. OCM plans to use the information from this survey to identify areas for improvement among its existing products and services and to identify gaps that NOAA can fill for the communities.

OCM hopes to perform this survey on a regular basis to assess how well its products and services are meeting the needs of coastal communities. For the initial effort, however, OCM's plan is test the level of information that can be reasonably collected without over-burdening respondents. OCM plans to collect a base set of information from all respondents. OCM has also identified additional information that would be valuable. To determine whether collecting that additional information over-burdens respondents and/or reduces response rates, OCM will collect additional information from subsets of respondents and compare times needed to complete the survey and response rates. The additional information covers (1) a larger set of NOAA products and services and (2) more detailed information on how useful the respondents found NOAA's products and services in earning points. Although the additional information would be valuable to OCM in assessing its products and services, OCM also needs to ensure a high response rate and does not want to over-burden respondents.

**2. Explain how this survey was developed. With whom did you consult during the development of this survey on content? statistics? What suggestions did you get about improving the survey?**

The survey was developed by Eastern Research Group, Inc. (ERG) under contract to OCM. ERG has significant experience in developing customer service surveys that assess use and usefulness of products and services. During the design process, OCM and ERG discussed ways to collect the

needed data and to reduce burden. Thus, ERG developed a series of potential options for OCM to consider. The final set of design considerations appear in Question B of this submission and include ways for OCM to test whether collecting additional information would reduce response and over-burden respondents.

NOAA OCM also consulted with FEMA's CRS program itself during this process. NOAA OCM has met in person and via teleconference on multiple occasions to explain our intent to and reasons for implementing this survey. FEMA has provided valuable input on how to interpret our results and succeed in reaching local respondents. FEMA recognizes the value of NOAA's products and services in flood risk reduction and supports NOAA's effort to improve them.

In implementing the survey, OCM will not need to use any sampling statistics. Rather, OCM will send the survey to all potential respondents.

**3. Explain how the survey will be conducted. How will the customers be sampled (if fewer than all customers will be surveyed)? What percentage of customers asked to take the survey will respond? What actions are planned to increase the response rate?**

The survey will be implemented by ERG using its Qualtrics survey account. FEMA has agreed to provide to OCM a complete list of all CRS communities, including contact names and email addresses for the CRS Coordinator in each community. OCM has a list of all coastal communities and will parse out a list of coastal communities from the complete FEMA data. This is approximately 800 communities.

The survey will be implemented using the following steps:

- OCM will send a notification to the CRS communities that a NOAA contractor (ERG) will be performing a survey. This first step is intended to ensure respondents understand the survey is "legitimate" and that it has importance to NOAA in improving its products and services.
- Approximately 1-2 days after the OCM email, ERG will send the survey respondents a survey invitation that provides a link to the survey instrument.
- ERG will then send up the three reminders approximately 3-4 days apart to respondents who have not completed the survey.

As noted above, no sampling will take place. All coastal communities will receive a survey invitation.

OCM expects a 40-60 percent response rate from this survey and will take the following steps to increase response:

- ERG will be following good survey design practices in this project. This includes sending a well-designed survey and sending reminders to increase response.
- As noted above, one aspect of the design is to assess whether collecting additional information would lead to lower response rates.
- Finally, many respondents may not be familiar with some of the NOAA products and services in the survey. Thus, OCM has determined that an appropriate incentive for the

respondents is to provide a PDF document that contains information on how to access the NOAA products and services mentioned in the survey upon *completion* of the survey. This accomplishes two things. First, respondents can be assured additional information they can use if they complete the survey. Second, providing the respondent an assurance they will be provided details on the products and services reduces the incentive for respondent to leave a survey mid-task to access a specific product or service mentioned.

**4. Describe how the results of this survey will be analyzed and used. If the customer population is sampled, what statistical techniques will be used to generalize the results to the entire customer population? Is this survey intended to measure a GPRA performance measure? (If so, please include an excerpt from the appropriate document.)**

OCM will tabulate responses to the questions in the survey to determine:

- The extent to which NOAA products and services are being used by CRS communities. Knowing which products are being used by communities will provide a sense of extent to which NOAA has successfully made these communities aware of tools that could assist them in earning points.
- The extent to which NOAA products and services are helpful to communities in earning CRS points. Among the tools that communities have used, understanding the extent that those tools are helpful would be useful information for NOAA. This would allow NOAA to assess how to improve less helpful products and to continue to make available more helpful ones.
- The areas in the CRS Coordinator's Manual that CRS communities use NOAA products and services to earn points. This is one area where NOAA is testing the potential to collect additional information. Knowing the areas of the CRS Coordinator's Manual that NOAA products and services have addressed will assist NOAA in identifying gaps that could be filled with new or existing products or services.

Additionally, NOAA will analyze response rates and survey completion times among the groups that are asked different sets of questions (see response to Question B.1). Specifically, the analysis will address the following two other questions:

- Does the addition of asking about a larger number of NOAA products and services significantly reduce response or increase time to complete the survey?
- Does asking more detailed questions about the usefulness of NOAA products and services significantly reduce response or increase time to complete the survey?

The survey does not employ statistical methods

The survey does not contribute to a GPRA measure.