

Supporting Statement
OMB Information Collection (ICR) Approval Request to Conduct
Customer Satisfaction Research (OMB #1545-1432)
Private Collection Agency (PCA) Survey

A. JUSTIFICATION

1. Circumstances Making the Collection of Information Necessary

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) enlists a balanced measurement system consisting of business results, customer satisfaction and employee satisfaction. This initiative is part of the Service-wide effort to maintain a system of balanced organizational performance measures mandated by the IRS Restructuring and Reform Act (RRA) of 1998. This is also a result of Executive Order 12862 that requires all government agencies to survey their customers.

Pursuant to the FAST Act of 2015, IRS is required to hire Private Collection Agencies (PCAs) to collect delinquent taxes where there has been no collection action in over 12 months. This covers tax debts owed that are currently not being worked by the IRS. The PCA phone survey will collect information regarding taxpayer satisfaction with their interaction with the PCA.

2. Purpose and Use of the Information Collection

In addition to the objective of measuring customer satisfaction to meet a balanced measures requirement, Private Debt Collection (PDC) management is motivated to use survey results to identify improvement opportunities and as the basis for enacting improvements.

The key goals of the survey are 1) to survey our external customers on an ongoing basis regarding their experience with PCAs, 2) track customer satisfaction progress over time, and 3) identify operational improvements within SB/SE PDC. The feedback received will not institute new policy yet will enable the Service to meet taxpayer needs effectively.

3. Consideration Given to Information Technology

PCA is an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) survey and will be administered via telephone.

4. Duplication of Information

This is the only formal mechanism by which PCA telephone customers provide immediate feedback to SB/SE on their experiences with the PCA telephone site.

5. Reducing the Burden on Small Entities

Small Entities are not involved.

6. Consequences of Not Conducting Collection

SB/SE initiatives fall under the IRS goal to *"IMPROVE SERVICE TO MAKE VOLUNTARY COMPLIANCE EASIER and ENFORCE THE LAW TO ENSURE EVERYONE MEETS THEIR OBLIGATION TO PAY TAXES.* If the requirement is not funded, SB/SE will not have the external measures used to assess their success in meeting IRS goals. This will also cause SB/SE to be less effective as it will not have the data to know which products and services identified by customers need improvement or need to be developed to service these populations.

7. Special Circumstances

There are no special circumstances relating to this request. The information collected will be voluntary and will not be used for statistical purposes.

8. Consultations with Persons Outside the Agency

No consultations with persons outside the agency.

9. Payment or Gift

No payments or gifts.

10. Confidentiality

IRS will ensure privacy to the extent allowed by law and security of the aggregated results will receive the utmost attention. Public and official access to the information will be tightly controlled. The criterion for disclosure laid out in the Privacy Act, the Freedom of Information Act, and section 6103 of the Internal Revenue Code, provides for the protection of taxpayer information as well as its release to authorized recipients.

11. Sensitive Nature

No questions will be asked that are of a personal or sensitive nature.

12. Burden of Information Collection

The average time of survey completion is expected to be eight minutes. Based on a sample of potential respondents of 9,087 and a response rate of 40%, we expect 3,635 survey participants, leaving 5,452 non-participants. The contact time to determine participants could take up to one minute to get into the automated survey, with the resulting burden being $9,087 \times 1 \text{ minute}/60 = 151.5 \text{ burden hours}$.

For participants, the total time to complete the survey is eight minutes. The burden for expected participants is $3,635 \times 8/60 = 484.7 \text{ burden hours}$.

The total burden hours for the survey is $(151.5 + 484.7) = 636.2 \text{ burden hours}$.

| Type of Collection | Participation | Response Time | Burden (hours) |
|---------------------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| PCA Potential Respondents | 9,087 | 1 min | 151.5 |
| PCA Expected Participants | 3,635 | 8 min | 484.7 |
| Grand Total Burden | | | 636.2 |

Estimated Response Rate: 40%

Total Burden Estimate= 636.2 hrs

13. Costs to Respondents

No cost to respondents resulting from the collection of information. The total estimated annual cost burden to respondents is \$15,892.00. The surveys take place across the United States with all cross-sections of society. This estimate was created using the mean hourly wage for all occupations (\$24.98) from the BLS May 2018 National Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates - United States.

14. Costs to Federal Government

The estimated cost is \$59,090.

15. Reason for Change

No change is being requested. This is a new collection.

16. Tabulation of Results, Schedule, Analysis Plans

The survey data is collected via an IVR phone questionnaire. The representative asks the customer to participate in the survey. Callers who agree to participate are transferred into the automated survey,

which is conducted by the contractor. The analysis and reporting will be conducted by SB/SE Research. If changes are made to the questionnaire, they are expected to be minor. Revising the coding scheme for open-ended questions is one example.

Survey scoring for this contract is based on the Customer Satisfaction Survey Score response average to the keystone question – “Everything considered, rate your overall satisfaction with the service you received during this call.” Questions utilize a 5-point rating scale, with 1 being very dissatisfied and 5 being very satisfied. All survey responses are released only as summaries. The contractor shall hold the identities, of the taxpayers responding to the survey, private to the extent permitted by law.

The collected data is used to survey and track customer satisfaction with the Private Collection Agencies (PCAs) hired to collect delinquent taxes. The respondent data is analyzed with a view to:

- Provide insight from the customer’s perspective about possible improvements.
- Provide useful input for program evaluation and execution at the programmatic and area office level of service delivery.
- Provide additional information on important “drill down” areas.

The contractor will not provide the IRS with data or status updates that are linked to individual respondents. Upon completion of data collection and cleaning, the contractor will provide de-identified survey data to the IRS. This data will not include any individually identifying information such as name, address, or taxpayer identification number.

17. Display of OMB Approval Date

IRS is seeking approval to not to display the expiration date for OMB approval, as this is one-time, limited collection.

18. Exceptions to Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

These activities comply with the requirements in 5 CFR 1320.9.

19. Dates collection will begin and end

April 2020 through March 2021

B. STATISTICAL METHODS

1. Universe and Respondent Selection

IRS will develop a monthly sampling plan, which will detail the entire sampling and weighting process, where applicable. The sampling plan will be executed by IRS monitors at the call center site.

2. Procedures for Collecting Information

Callers who agree to participate are transferred to the IRS monitor who transfers the customer into the automated survey, which is conducted by the contractor. The data is collected by the contractor.

3. Methods to Maximize Response

The questionnaire length is minimized to reduce respondent burden; thereby, tending to increase response rates. Respondents are assured anonymity of their responses. Also, weighting procedures can be applied to adjust aggregated data from those who do respond.

4. Testing of Procedures

The toll-free questionnaire is an established and tested survey instrument. If changes are made to the questionnaire, only minor changes are expected. Revising the coding scheme for open-ended questions is one example.

5. Contacts for Statistical Aspects and Data Collection

For questions regarding the study or questionnaire design or statistical methodology, contact:

Kathleen P. Holland
Supervisory Social Scientist
470-639-3110
kathleen.m.holland@irs.gov

Note: The PCA IVR survey questionnaire is included in a separate file.