



UNDER SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON

MAR 02 2022

Ms. Sharon Block
Acting Administrator
Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, NW Washington, DC 20503

Dear Ms. Block:

Pursuant to Office of Management and Budget (OMB) procedures established at 5 C.F.R. Part 1320, Controlling Paperwork Burdens on the Public, I request that the proposed Department of the Air Force (DAF) information collection, "Bringing the Invisible Talent to the Table: The Underrepresentation of Women in Executive Leadership," (enclosed) be processed as an emergency clearance request in accordance with 5 C.F.R. § 1320.13, Emergency Processing.

I have determined that this information is to be collected prior to the time periods established under Part 1320 of the regulations and that this information collection is essential to evaluate the DAF approach to maintaining a diverse senior civilian workforce. This study responds to the problem of underrepresentation of women at the senior level. The 2020 DAF Racial Disparity Review highlighted the fact that DAF has not maintained a diverse senior civilian workforce (GS13 – SES level) and women are significantly underrepresented at the senior level. The 2021 DAF Disparity Review specifically calls out gender as a significant challenge at the senior level.

This emergency clearance request is necessary due to the timing of this study in relation to the revised policies on the OMB Paperwork Reduction Act, extending OMB's oversight to DoD information collections for specific sensitive topics such as gender. When the study topic was planned in 2019, the new guidance requiring OMB approval for surveys focused on gender was not issued. This new OMB approval requirement represents an unexpected review element that could put the results for the study's timeline and need to address the challenges from the Racial Disparity at risk if not expedited. If granted, this emergency clearance request will avoid a work stoppage and major setbacks.

The current study is also consistent with a call from the 2021 White House Executive Order on Establishment of the White House Gender Policy Council. The Council's focus is to establish and pursue a comprehensive approach to ensure that the Federal Government is working to advance equal rights and opportunities, regardless of gender or gender identity, including by promoting workplace diversity, fairness, and inclusion across the Federal workforce and military. Conducting this survey and associated initiatives evaluation aligns with the Council's call to advance gender equity and equality, including policies and programs to promote gender equity in leadership.

The Department is requesting an expedited approval for this critical evaluation to proceed. This study is in collaboration with the DAF Diversity and Inclusion civilian career progression line of effort under the barrier analysis working group. The purpose is to better understand barriers,

challenges, and perspectives women face while preparing for leadership opportunities and development. The survey will be conducted with senior executive service members and general officers for the purpose of gaining senior level insights. The results will be used by the DAF to evaluate policies and initiatives to fully and inclusively leverage our diverse workforce.

The Department's desire to create an equitable environment for all DAF personnel now, it is impractical for DAF to consult in advance with interested agencies and members of the public in order to minimize the burden of the collection of information pursuant to 5 C.F.R. § 1320.13(c). Therefore, DAF requests a 180-day emergency clearance to obtain the information required for "The Bringing the Invisible Talent to the Table: The Underrepresentation of Women in Executive Leadership Survey." During the 180-day emergency clearance period, DAF will work to establish a regular clearance submission. As this request for approval concerns an urgent safety need, DoD is also seeking OMB's approval to waive the need for the Federal Register Notices otherwise required by 5 C.F.R. 1320.5(a)(1)(iv) and 1320.8(d)(1) prior to publication and implementation of this disclosure.

We would appreciate if you could please provide an approval/disapproval determination of this request to collect information under an emergency clearance by close of business on March 11, 2022.

Sincerely,



Gina Ortiz Jones
Under Secretary of the Air Force

Enclosure:

As stated

Survey

This questionnaire measures senior leadership's perception of the barriers that limit women's opportunities to gain senior leadership positions using a 5-point Likert Scale. The qualifiers for this scale are listed per question below. Please only select one answer for each question, save the file, and return via email to wanda.jonesheath@us.af.mil.

1. How often are you in a position to select a woman for a leadership position?

– Never; – Rarely; – Occasionally; – Often; – Very Often

2. How often are you in a position to select a woman for a leadership development and/or training opportunity?

– Never; – Rarely; – Occasionally; – Often; – Very Often

3. How often do you mentor women?

– Never; – Rarely; – Occasionally; – Often; – Very Often

4. How often does the Department of the Air Force develop women?

– Never; – Rarely; – Occasionally; – Often; – Very Often

5. Have you worked for a woman senior leader that was not successful as a leader?

– Never; – Rarely; – Occasionally; – Often; – Very Often

6. How often do you encourage women to apply for leadership positions, training, and/or other opportunities?

– Never; – Rarely; – Occasionally; – Often; – Very Often

7. Are women senior leaders that you know successful?

– Never; – Rarely; – Occasionally; – Often; – Very Often

8. Do you think there are benefits to having women in senior leadership positions?

– Never; – Rarely; – Occasionally; – Often; – Very Often

9. Do you have complete faith in women in senior leadership positions in the Department of the Air Force?

– Never; – Rarely; – Occasionally; – Often; – Very Often

10. Do you think women face more barriers to becoming senior leaders than men?

– Never; – Rarely; – Occasionally; – Often; – Very Often

11. Do you see different leadership characteristics in men compared to women?

– Never; – Rarely; – Occasionally; – Often; – Very Often

12. Have you pushed for systematic changes in order to develop more women for leadership opportunities?

– Never; – Rarely; – Occasionally; – Often; – Very Often

13. Are women in senior leadership positions held to a higher standard than men?

– Never; – Rarely; – Occasionally; – Often; – Very Often