



U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board
Supporting Statement A for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

OMB Control Number: 3124-0012

Title: Reinstatement and Revision of a Previously Approved Information Collection for Voluntary Customer Surveys

The U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) is seeking to reinstate and revise a previously approved information collection in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA). The Information Collection Request (ICR) will be submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and clearance. This information collection is part of MSPB's efforts to improve customer service delivery. The information collection instruments consist of short customer-focused surveys distributed through Qualtrics, MSPB's survey platform. Through this collection and approval process, MSPB is complying with normal clearance procedures and meeting our commitments under Executive Order 12862, "Setting Customer Service Standards" (September 11, 1993).

JUSTIFICATION

1. Circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.

MSPB is seeking a reinstatement and three-year renewal of its previously approved Generic Clearance Request for Voluntary Customer Surveys. Executive Order 12862, "Setting Customer Service Standards," mandates agencies to identify their customers and survey them to determine the kind and quality of services they want and their level of satisfaction with existing services. In addition, OMB Circular A-11, Part 6, [Section 280](#), "Managing Customer Experience and Improving Service Delivery," provides guidelines for gathering customer feedback. More recently, the 21st Century Integrated Digital Experience Act or the 21st Century (IDEA Act) requires agencies to use quantitative data from their public-facing websites to improve digital service delivery ([Public Law 115-336](#)).

Customers and stakeholders include persons who file appeals with MSPB of agency actions taken against them (appellants), their representatives, and representatives of the agency which took the action; and Federal officials and members of the public (academicians, researchers, consultants, and web users) who read and use the findings of reports issued by our Office of Policy and Evaluation (OPE) or who are interested in MSPB role in overseeing the Office of Personnel Management.

Over the past several years, we have used customer satisfaction surveys to evaluate how well we are serving our customers in terms of their perceptions of our timeliness, fairness, accessibility, and sensitivity to their situation in deciding their appeals. We have also used customer surveys to determine the usefulness of the reports issued by OPE. As a result of these surveys, we have established baseline performance measures for both our appeals process and merit systems review responsibilities. We have also instituted a number of changes to both of these processes as a result of feedback obtained from our customers. We plan to use customer surveys



U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board

Supporting Statement A for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

periodically or on an ongoing automated electronic basis over the next three years to measure the success of our changes and to attempt to identify additional areas where improvements can be made. The views of our customers are also important measures we may use to report our performance under the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) as amended by the GPRA Modernization Act of 2010.

2. Purpose and Use of the Information Collection

As mentioned in response to question 1, the results of these surveys will be used to improve the timeliness, fairness, accessibility and sensitivity of the Board's adjudication processes and outcomes. Responses will also be used to improve the usefulness of our reports on merit systems issues. We have used information obtained from customer satisfaction surveys conducted in the past to improve the form used by appellants to file appeals with the Board. We have also used information obtained from surveys of users of our merit systems reports to determine what issues we should be studying and how best to communicate our findings to our intended audience. We also use surveys to consult with our stakeholders during strategic planning. In addition, the perceptions stakeholders and customers have of our work processes and work products are important ways we measure the success of our programs under the GPRA, as amended.

3. Use of Automated Collection Procedures

The collection of information from our customers uses automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology to the maximum extent possible. In addition, we make every effort to reach our customers using information technology that would reduce the burden on them and ensure the validity of the information we are trying to obtain. On occasion, we may use paper surveys where electronic means are not available or practical.

4. Duplication of Information

As far as we know, no duplication of efforts exists since we know of no one who intends to survey our customers concerning their satisfaction with our work. The information obtained in the past will be used as a baseline to compare the results of future surveys, but the surveys we have conducted in the past do not tell us what our customers currently think about the work we are performing.

5. Impact on Small Businesses

The information we plan to collect does not impact small businesses or other small entities.

6. Consequences of Not Conducting Collection

If the surveys are not conducted, we will be unable to fully comply with Executive Order 12862. We would be limited in the extent to which we could obtain reliable and valid information



U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board

Supporting Statement A for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

concerning what our customers think about the work we are performing. We would be unable to measure whether we have met annual performance goals involving customer perceptions of our processes and work products.

7. Special Circumstances

On occasion, an agency representative or appellant representative may be connected to more than one appeal. Because our level of analysis is usually an individual case, an agency or appellant representative may receive more than one survey. It is also possible that the same individual could be contacted about more than one merit system study. We suspect this to be a rare occurrence. When appropriate, we may adjust our sampling to ensure no individual gets a survey more than once every few months.

8. Consultations with Persons Outside the Agency

A 60-day Federal Register Notice inviting public comments was published on March 28, 2023, at 88 FR 18349. No comments were received.

A 30-day Federal Register Notice inviting public comments was published on June 8, 2023, at 88 FR 37582.

No consultation was conducted with persons outside the agency.

9. Payments or Gifts to Respondents

No payments or gifts of any kind have been provided to any individuals who are connected to this collection.

10. Assurance of Confidentiality

Respondents are advised in invitation emails that their answers will be kept completely confidential. Certain information may be used in depersonalized form to establish overall program statistics. Responses to the survey are entirely voluntary. There is no requirement to complete the survey to maintain a relationship with MSPB. The only use of the data from the survey instrument will be to monitor and improve customer service and track and report our progress in meeting performance goals or measures.

11. Justification for Any Questions of a Sensitive Nature

There will be no questions of a sensitive nature on the surveys.

12. Estimates of Annualized Costs for Collection of Information

We anticipate that a total of up to 3,000 customer satisfaction surveys will be distributed



U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board
Supporting Statement A for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

annually during each year of the three-year period covered by this request. For purposes of calculating the burden on respondents we are assuming that 600 people will respond to our surveys. Our surveys generally take about 5 to 45 minutes to complete, with an average completion time of 30 minutes. Multiplying 30 minutes by 600 respondents yields a total maximum burden on respondents of 300 hours.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor’s Bureau of Labor Statistics’ website (www.bls.gov), the wage rate category for All Occupations is estimated to be \$37.90 per hour including the 1.4 wage rate multiplier. If respondents chose to participate in our survey, it is anticipated that the average time to complete and return our survey will be about 30 minutes therefore, the estimated burden hour cost to respondents is \$11,370.

13. Total Cost to Respondents or Record Keepers.

There are no annualized costs to respondents other than the labor burden costs addressed in Section 12 of this document to complete this collection.

14. Estimates of Annualized Costs to the Federal Government

There are costs to the Federal Government associated with conducting the anticipated customer satisfaction surveys. These include:

Annual Cost to the Federal Government	
Item	Cost (\$)
Contract Costs	\$ -
Staff Salaries* [One GS 14, step 5 employee spending approximately 4% of their time and one GS 15, step 5 spending approximately 2% of their time annually: \$4,712 + \$8,012) = \$12, 724	\$12,724
Facilities [cost for renting, overhead, etc., for data collection activity]	0
Computer Hardware and Software [cost of equipment annual lifecycle] (Qualtrics license)	12,100
Equipment Maintenance [cost of annual maintenance/service agreements for equipment]	0
Travel	0
Total	\$24,824

* Note: The “Salary Rate” includes a 1.4 multiplier to reflect a fully-loaded wage rate.

15. Explanation of Program Changes or Adjustments

This renewal reflects updated burden calculations on affected population.

16. For Collection of Information Whose Results Will be Published, Outline Plans for Tabulation and Publication

The results of the surveys conducted under this request will not be published. Aggregated results such as arithmetic means or measures of variability might be included in agency performance reporting. The information obtained in these surveys will be used only by MSPB to improve service.



U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board
Supporting Statement A for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

17. Display of OMB Approval Date

This collection does not seek approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval.

18. Exceptions to Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

This collection does not seek exception to “Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions.”