

SUPPORTING STATEMENT - PART A

Active Duty Spouse Survey – OMB Control Number 0704-0604

Summary of Changes from Previously Approved Collection (Expiration 09/30/2024)

IN 2023 the Active Duty Spouse Survey (ADSS) includes a maximum of 90 questions a spouse may be asked, a possible increase of 15 questions from 2021. For more detail, see Section 15 below and “ADSS2301_2023AnnotatedChanges.docx” (attached).

- Removed questions pertaining to the COVID-19 pandemic that were added in 2021.
- Added new questions or options to current questions to expand knowledge of the current spouse work and educational climate, including types of work arrangements (onsite, remote, and hybrid), types of credentials required, and satisfaction with children’s education by school type.
- Added two new sections to the ADSS: Federal Voting Assistance and Commissaries. Questions about voting were provided by and support the FVAP program to assist military voters, which includes Members and their families. Commissary questions measure spouse access to and use of commissaries located at the nearest base/installation. These questions have been asked either on previous ADSS or other DoD surveys.
- Added back questions deleted in 2023. Some ADSS legacy questions that were deleted in 2021 to accommodate pandemic-related questions were added back in 2023 and include questions about spouse’s stress level, overall financial condition, child health/behavior, spouse counseling, and spouse employment/credentialing.
- Food security questions were removed per the request of Personnel and Readiness (P&R) leadership.

1. Need for the Information Collection

The 2023 DoD Active Duty Spouse Survey (ADSS) is the primary source for reliable and generalizable survey data on the effects of military life on active duty military spouses and their families. The ADSS provides unique, ongoing, reliable data to equip policymakers with the information they need to make strategic, data-driven decisions on a vital component of the total force – active duty military spouses and families.

The survey is conducted by the Office of People Analytics (OPA) for the Defense Human Resources Agency (DHRA), Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel & Readiness (USD, P&R). It is designed to enhance understanding of how spouse and family resilience impact Force readiness and retention and inform the effectiveness of programs and policies under the purview of DOD’s Office of Military Community and Family Policy (MC&FP). The ADSS was

approved/licensed by OMB in 2021 however, changes were made to the 2023 collection that require a re-review (details in section 15).

The legislation authorizing the USD (P&R) to conduct these surveys is provided under 10 United States Code (USC), Sections 136, 1782 and 2358, and 37 USC, Section 1008(b).

Specifically: “The Secretary of Defense, in order to determine the effectiveness of Federal programs relating to military families and the need for new programs, may conduct surveys of: (1) active duty members of the armed forces (2) family members of such members.” (10 USC 1782).

Past spouse survey results can be viewed on Military OneSource at <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/data-research-and-statistics/survey-findings/>), which is publicly accessible, and/or on <https://www.opa.mil/>, which is accessible via CAC/DS logon.

2. Use of the Information

This survey provides an opportunity for active duty spouses to directly expand policymaker’s knowledge by sharing opinions on issues that directly affect them. Success of current efforts and shortfalls in programs and policies are identified through this survey. The survey results ensure decisions are based on current and statistically reliable data. The population of interest for the 2023 ADSS will consist of spouses of active duty members from the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, and Space Force who are below flag rank. Eligible spouses must be currently married to an active duty member. The population is approximately 665,074 active duty spouses.

In 2023, the maximum number of survey questions spouses may be asked on the ADSS is 90, slightly higher than the 2021 ADSS (75 questions) and still much shorter than the 2019 ADSS (154 questions). The 2023 survey reintroduces long-standing ADSS questions such as active duty child well-being, spouse stress, reasons for part-time employment (a GAO interest topic), and sources of counseling, for example. The 2023 also includes a block of questions to support the Federal Voting Assistance Program in their required evaluation of spouse voting experiences. There are also some new questions in 2023 that expand on current topics of interest such as use of flexible and remote work, spouse experience with commissaries, and food security.

Spouses will only be asked to answer questions that apply to them, therefore spouses who do not have children will not be asked questions about their children’s education, for example.

Analysis, including weighting and structuring the dataset, providing statistical demographic comparisons and statistical time series trends takes between four and nine months. Briefings are tailored and delivered in the months following, using this data. The attached *2021 ADSS Tabulation of Responses* (OPA Report No. 2022-053) includes supplementary documentation with this information collection request.

2023 ADSS topics mirror those on the *2021 Active Duty Spouse Survey* (OMB CONTROL NUMBER: 0704-0604) with the exception of COVID-19. Pandemic-specific questions were not included on the 2023 ADSS. The *2021 Active Duty Spouse Survey Tabulation of Responses* (OPA Report No. 2022-053) is accessible by CAC/DS logon: https://www.opa.mil and briefing of 2023 ADSS results is available on Military OneSource at <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/data-research-and-statistics/survey-findings/2021-spouses-survey/>.

OPA will administer the 2023 ADSS as a web-based survey with a paper survey option to maximize response rates. The ADSS also includes a standalone supplemental web-based survey component for non-sampled active duty spouses. Outreach and engagement for active duty spouses occurs via news releases, social media, and one source emails. All questions from the ADSS supplemental are on the main ADSS to ensure DoD captures spouse sentiment on what the military could do to improve support for spouses and their families and factors impacting their quality of life. Respondents may access the survey via the web on a device they select or return the paper survey. Spouses may receive up to 8 scheduled communications (letters and emails) with the possibility of 2 additional touchpoints based on survey response. Only nonrespondents receive the scheduled communication so only a segment of the sample will receive all communications. For example, the ADSS response rate was 21% therefore 89% were sent all 5 letters.

- Physical Mail: OPA utilizes paper mailing to respondents because of the low percentage of spouses with an email address on file. OPA will send 5 letters including one advanced notification of the survey, the initial survey invitation with a paper copy of the survey, and 3 reminders (to any sampled spouses who have not completed the survey). All letters sent to respondents will include a Quick Response (QR) code linking respondents to the survey. Respondents to the survey will not receive additional notifications once their response is received via the web or on paper.
- Email: OPA will also send spouses with a valid email address in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) 3 emails inviting them to complete the survey. These include 1 survey announcement, and 2 email reminders.
 - OPA may send 2 additional emails (for a total of 5 emails) to respondents who have not submitted a survey with approval of the DoD Survey Reviewer, based on the response rate, towards the end of the survey fielding period.

To maximize engagement and increase response rates a second short survey will be fielded on the OPA Survey lookup site at www.dodsurveys.com. The site will direct spouses to the relevant survey once they enter the required information from the survey or their DoD ID number. Spouses who were randomly selected to participate in the main ADSS will be automatically directed to their survey while spouses who are not part of the random sample will be directed to the shorter supplemental survey which hosts 8 standard demographic survey questions and 2 open ended (qualitative) questions. Spouses completing the supplemental survey will be able to provide their opinions as a military spouse and engage directly with DoD regarding how the military can improve support for military families and what most impacts their quality of life. The demographic data for both surveys may be used to investigate potential demographic differences between the scientifically sampled and weighted ADSS population and the convenience sample responding to the supplemental survey. The supplemental survey, though not a representative sample, provides DoD with a broader opportunity to engage with all active duty spouses on how DoD can support active duty spouses and what most impacts their quality of life

Respondents who indicate by phone, fax, postal mail, or e-mail that they do not want to participate in the survey will be coded as actively refusing to participate and will not receive additional invitations to complete the ADSS. Information on the survey website will inform sample members [Privacy Advisory and Informed Consent Statement and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)], “Once you start answering the survey, if you desire to withdraw your

answers, please send an e-mail request to Survey@mail.mil or leave a message any time, toll-free, at 1-800-881-5307.” Upon such notification, OPA’s operations contractor will delete the person’s survey responses and code the person as actively refusing to participate.

For the web version of the survey, survey participants will be presented with the Agency Disclosure Notice, Privacy Advisory, and additional information on the uses of survey results before they are able to access the survey. Web survey participants indicate their consent to take the survey by clicking “Click Continue if you agree to take the survey.” Paper copies of the survey include the following language under the Privacy Advisory: “Returning this survey indicates your agreement to participate in this research.”

To learn more about the *2021 ADSS methodology, the 2021 ADSS Statistical Methodology Report* is available on request: Office of People Analytics. (June 2022). *2021 Survey of Active Duty Spouses: Statistical Methodology Report*. (OPA Report No. 2020-055). Alexandria, VA.

3. Use of Information Technology

The web survey will be administered on proprietary software developed by OPA’s operations contractor, Data Recognition Corporation (DRC). Digitally signed e-mails and web-based technology will be used for respondent communications and for data collection. To reduce respondent burden, web-based surveys use “smart skip” technology to ensure respondents only answer questions that are applicable to them. All postal letters will also include a respondent specific QR code for respondents to quickly access the survey via mobile platforms.

For the 2021 ADSS, the electronic submission rate was 84 percent with over half of all electronic surveys completed by mobile phone; 16 percent responded to a paper survey. It can be assumed that a higher proportion may submit the survey electronically in 2023 given the increase in respondents using their mobile phone to complete the web survey, as seen on the *2021 Active Duty Spouse Survey (OMB Control Number 0704-0604)*.

4. Non-duplication

The information obtained through this collection is unique and is not already available for use or adaptation from another cleared source.

5. Burden on Small Businesses

This information collection does not impose a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small businesses or entities.

6. Less Frequent Collection

Without this survey, DoD would not have current data to guide limited resources to the appropriate programs, policies, and services related to military spouses, their families and ultimately Service members. Less frequent collection of the data would not provide information on military families and their spouses, would decrease the responsiveness of policy makers based on the results, and may not capture significant trends early enough to impact outcomes, for example the impact of activation and deployment on spouse employment, child care needs and other socioeconomic factors that impact both family and member resilience. A lack of probability based survey data on the military spouse population could lead policy offices and the

Services to conduct their own research, elevating the potential for duplication/greater survey burden, less methodological rigor, lower response rates and higher costs for DoD research. It could also, result in the use of non-probability based convenience samples to collect this data which may not accurately estimate the active duty spouse population.

7. Paperwork Reduction Act Guidelines

This collection of information does not require collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with the guidelines delineated in 5 CFR 1320.5(d)(2).

8. Consultation and Public Comments

Part A: PUBLIC NOTICE

A 60-Day Federal Register Notice (FRN) for the collection published on May 5, 2023. The 60-Day FRN document citation is 88 FR 29103.

No comments were received during the 60-Day Comment Period.

A 30-Day Federal Register Notice for the collection published on Monday, September 11, 2023. The 30-Day FRN citation is 88 FR 62351.

Part B: CONSULTATION

No additional consultation apart from soliciting public comments through the Federal Register was conducted for this submission.

9. Gifts or Payment

To increase response rates among historically hard to reach spouses of junior enlisted members, OPA will include a five dollar cash incentive with the survey invitation. In past survey years, the junior enlisted spouse population had significantly lower raw response rates to the Active Duty Spouse Survey, with a 12.4 percent response rate in 2021 which was far lower than the overall response rate in 2021 (21%).

10. Confidentiality

A Privacy Act Statement is not required for this collection because we are not requesting individuals to furnish personal information for a system of records.

Both the web and paper versions of the ADSS include a privacy advisory that respondents view before taking the survey. The web-based advisory includes the instruction “Click Continue if you agree to take the survey.” The paper survey includes the instruction “Returning this survey indicates your agreement to participate in this research.”

The System of Record Notice (SORN) for this collection is DHRA 03 (Survey Data and Assessment [July 28, 2021, 86 FR 40498]). The SORN is located at:
<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/07/28/2021-16054/privacy-act-of-1974-system-of-records>

A Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA): The surveys including the collection of emails are covered by a Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) (Survey Database, 12/18/2020, DHRA/OPA); <https://www.dhra.mil/Portals/52/Documents/Privacy/PIA/OPA%20-%20Survey%20Database.pdf>

The current disposition authority for survey data is N1-330-03-001, item 8. FILE NUMBER: 1805-09 FILE TITLE: Survey and Census Database FILE DESCRIPTION: Records of census forms completed by military members, civilians, and all persons eligible for DoD benefits. Information in this database are used for policy planning purposes, manpower and benefits research, and other manpower research activities, included are: Survey and Census database master file, codebooks, record layouts, and other technical information required to use the database. OSD Records Disposition Schedules SERIES 1800 342 DISPOSITION: Permanent. Cutoff on completion of the report for the DoD office requiring the creation of the report. Transfer master file and system documentation to NARA at cutoff in accordance with the standards of 36 CFR 1228.270 and 36 CFR 1234. AUTHORITY: N1-330-03-00

Reports would fall under FILE NUMBER: 103-01.2 FILE TITLE: Policy Files – Evaluation FILE DESCRIPTION: Analyses, studies, and substantive correspondence and memos that evaluate or assist in the evaluation of a process, procedure, or function. These files accumulate in the offices of the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Defense, immediate offices of the Under and Assistant Secretaries of Defense, or any element of any OSD Component involved in making, promulgating, or analyzing policy relating to a Component's mission. They are not to be confused with Policy and Precedent (102-05.1), Publications (102-06.1), or Instruction (103-02.1) files. NOTE: Use 101-14 for background papers associated with policy case files. DISPOSITION: Permanent. Retire to the WNRC when superseded or obsolete. Transfer to NARA 25 years after cutoff. AUTHORITY: N1-330-93-001, item 2 PRIVACY ACT: Not applicable

OPA currently has an SF-115 request for disposition authority for all survey records, to include the reports, labeled DAA-0330-2021-0008. That has a temporary retention of 30 years for confidential data, permanent retention of 30 years for public use data, and permanent retention of 30 years for reports.

11. Sensitive Questions

Military spouse surveys primarily address personnel-related issues. The 2023 ADSS, as in previous years, does contain a request for voluntary provision of race, ethnicity, and may include additional requests for age, gender and other demographics where administrative record data is not available. These demographic items allow for the results to be segmented by these key demographic groups. Because the survey is designed to inform policymakers on the experiences and needs of military spouses and families, it is necessary to survey active duty spouses on perceptions and opinions of issues such as marriage, employment, financial readiness, food security, and health/well-being. While some of these may be considered sensitive, all questions are asked to ensure adequate programs are in place to address these issues. The Informed Consent information will inform sample members that the survey is voluntary, that they may decline or skip questions they do not wish to answer, and identify any potential risks and benefits of participation.

12. Respondent Burden and its Labor Costs

Part A: ESTIMATION OF RESPONDENT BURDEN

1) Collection Instrument(s)

2023 Survey of Active Duty Spouses

- a) Number of Respondents: 15,540
- b) Number of Responses Per Respondent: 1
- c) Number of Total Annual Responses: 15,540
- d) Response Time: .36 hour
- e) Respondent Burden Hours: 5,594 hours

2023 Survey of Active Duty Spouses – Supplemental Survey

- a) Number of Respondents: 5,000
- b) Number of Responses Per Respondent: 1
- c) Number of Total Annual Responses: 5,000
- d) Response Time: .10 hour (6 minutes)
- e) Respondent Burden Hours: 500 hours

2023 Survey of Active Duty Spouses – Phone Reminder

- a) Number of Respondents: 20,000
- b) Number of Responses Per Respondent: 1
- c) Number of Total Annual Responses: 20,000
- d) Response Time: .05 hour (3 minutes)
- e) Respondent Burden Hours: 1,000 hours

2) Total Submission Burden (Summation or average based on collection)

- a) Total Number of Respondents: 40,540
- b) Total Number of Annual Responses : 40,540
- c) Total Respondent Burden Hours: 7,094 hours

Part B: LABOR COST OF RESPONDENT BURDEN

1) Collection Instrument(s)

2023 Survey of Active Duty Spouses

- a) Number of Total Annual Responses: 15,540
- b) Response Time: .36 hour
- c) Respondent Hourly Wage: \$29.96
- d) Labor Burden per Response: \$10.79
- e) Total Labor Burden: \$167,608

2023 Survey of Active Duty Spouse – Supplemental Survey

- a) Number of Total Annual Responses: 5,000
- b) Response Time: .10 hour

- c) Respondent Hourly Wage: \$29.96
- d) Labor Burden per Response: \$3.00
- e) Total Labor Burden: \$14,980

2023 Survey of Active Duty Spouse – Phone Reminder

- a) Number of Total Annual Responses: 20,000
- b) Response Time: .05 hour
- c) Respondent Hourly Wage: \$29.96
- d) Labor Burden per Response: \$1.50
- e) Total Labor Burden: \$29,960

2) Overall Labor Burden

- a) Total Number of Annual Responses: 40,540
- b) Total Labor Burden: \$212,548

Source for average national wage: <http://www.dol.gov/dol/topic/wages/index.htm>

13. Respondent Costs Other Than Burden Hour Costs

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. Cost to the Federal Government

Part A: LABOR COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

1) Collection Instrument(s) Contractor

2023 Survey of Active Duty Spouses

- a) Number of Total Annual Responses: 15,540
- b) Processing Time per Response: .54 hour
- c) Hourly Wage of Worker(s) Processing Responses : \$78.14
- d) Cost to Process Each Response: \$42.20
- e) Total Cost to Process Responses: \$655,788

2023 Survey of Active Duty Spouses - Supplemental Survey

- a) Number of Total Annual Responses: 5,000
- b) Processing Time per Response: .03 hour
- c) Hourly Wage of Worker(s) Processing Responses : \$78.14
- d) Cost to Process Each Response: \$2.34
- e) Total Cost to Process Responses: \$11,700

2023 Survey of Active Duty Spouses – Phone Reminder

- a) Number of Total Annual Responses: 20,000
- b) Processing Time per Response: .03 hour
- c) Hourly Wage of Worker(s) Processing Responses : \$78.14
- d) Cost to Process Each Response: \$2.34

- e) Total Cost to Process Responses: \$4,680
- 1) Collection Instrument(s) Government
 - 2023 Survey of Active Duty Spouses
 - a) Number of Total Annual Responses: 15,540
 - b) Processing Time per Response: .112 hour
 - c) Hourly Wage of Worker(s) Processing Responses: \$71.35
 - d) Cost to Process Each Response: \$7.99
 - e) Total Cost to Process Responses: \$124,165
 - 2023 Survey of Active Duty Spouses – Supplemental Survey
 - a) Number of Total Annual Responses: 5,000
 - b) Processing Time per Response: .056 hour.
 - c) Hourly Wage of Worker(s) Processing Responses : \$71.35
 - d) Cost to Process Each Response: \$4.00
 - e) Total Cost to Process Responses: \$20,000
 - 2023 Survey of Active Duty Spouses – Phone Reminder
 - a) Number of Total Annual Responses: 20,000
 - b) Processing Time per Response: .03 hour.
 - c) Hourly Wage of Worker(s) Processing Responses : \$71.35
 - d) Cost to Process Each Response: \$2.14
 - e) Total Cost to Process Responses: \$42,800
 - 2) Overall Labor Burden to the Federal Government
 - a) Total Number of Annual Responses: 40,540
 - b) Total Labor Burden: \$859,133

Part B: OPERATIONAL AND MAINTENANCE COSTS

- 1) Cost Categories
 - a) Equipment: \$0
 - b) Printing: \$ (See f)
 - c) Postage: \$203,500
 - d) Software Purchases: \$0
 - e) Licensing Costs: \$ (See f)
 - f) Other: \$172,250 (Printing, paper and miscellaneous costs) + (Junior Enlisted Spouse Incentive) \$150,000 = \$322,250
- 2) Total Operational and Maintenance Cost: \$525,750

Part C: TOTAL COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

- Total Labor Cost to the Federal Government: \$859,133
- 1) Total Operational and Maintenance Costs: \$525,750

2) Total Cost to the Federal Government: \$1,384,833

15. Reasons for Change in Burden

The ADSS was approved/licensed by OMB in 2021. Changes were made to the 2023 collection that require a re-review:

- 1) COVID-19 questions are no longer on the survey.
- 2) Removed food security questions. Removal of these questions does not significantly impact burden
- 3) Some survey items collected in 2019 (and before) have made a return.
- 4) The method has been updated to include an incentive to spouses of junior enlisted members.

The 2023 ADSS is slightly longer (maximum of 90 questions) than in 2021 (maximum of 75 questions), but still much shorter than in 2019 (154 questions). The 2021 survey eliminated some long-standing questions that were the source of trend data on military families such as spouse stress, overall financial condition, child behavior, etc., to accommodate new questions on COVID-19 and the pandemic's impact on military families. The overall burden has decreased due to the adjusted number of responses collected from the 2021 ADSS.

The following is a summary of changes to the 2023 ADSS and ADSS Supplemental questionnaires (new questions, prior questions added back in 2023 for trend analysis, streamlined questions).

16. Publication of Results

Summary of changes to ADSS-Main Survey

Spouses randomly selected to participate in the full length survey

- **Removed**
 - **COVID-19 and related items were** removed in 2023, including vaccine adoption, impact of pandemic on employment and childcare, and use of economic incentive to meet spending needs, for example.
 - **Food security:** Do you have any additional feedback related to access to quality food for you and your family (Q47), nutrition assistance benefits received (Q82)
- **Added**
 - **Child care:** Main reason for not using (Q10), satisfaction with child's education by type of school (Q14)
 - **Employment:** Reason for working part time (Q29), reason spouse has not been looking for work (Q26), type of work location (hybrid, remote, onsite) (Q33), expanded professional license/certification options (Q38), use of portability provisions of an occupational licensure compact to help secure transfer of professional credentials, time to acquire credentials after a PCS move.
 - **Commissaries:** Use, frequency of use, experiences with commissaries and satisfaction with commissary offerings (Q48-Q51).
 - **Spouse and child well-being and health:** Spouse overall stress level (Q72)

the collection instrument.

18. Exceptions to “Certification for Paperwork Reduction Submissions”
We are not requesting any exemptions to the provisions stated in 5 CFR 1320.9.