

SUPPORTING STATEMENT - PART A

NCA Customer Satisfaction Surveys – OMB Control Number 2900-0571

Summary of Changes from Previously Approved Collection

- *NCA Customer Satisfaction Surveys – There is no change in the title.*
- *Changes in burden? (e.g., increase, decrease, or complex calculations) The burden has decreased since the previous approval due to recalculations surrounding funeral director survey response. In addition, all survey-type respondent totals reflect the most recent available data, which is lower than the prior estimates. The number of responses declined from 56,650 to 33,650. The total respondent time burden declined from 26,158 to 11,325 hours.*
- *VA did not receive comments on the 60-day FRN.*

1. Need for the Information Collection

In response to the legal requirements annotated in the footnote below¹, the National Cemetery Administration (NCA) conducts surveys to determine the level of satisfaction with existing services among their customers. The surveys solicit voluntary opinions and are not intended to collect information required to obtain or maintain eligibility for a VA program or benefit. Baseline data obtained through these information collections are used to validate customer service standards. This submission is a request by NCA to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for the following approval:

- Grant NCA a three-year extension of its generic clearance authority;
- Allow NCA to establish a maximum number of annual burden hours against which burden will be charged for each survey used; and
- Allow for the submission of summary of objectives, specific burden estimates, and final survey instruments (focus group scripts, test questions, etc.) covered by the generic clearance from OMB (and inclusion in the OMB public docket) prior to their use.

¹ -OMB Circular A-11, Section 280 Implementation.

- Executive Order 12862, *Setting Customer Service Standards*.
- President Obama establishing the Core Federal Services Council on March 30, 2016.
- President Trump's President Management Agenda and establishment of new Cross-Agency Priority (CAP) Goals in March 2018.
- President Biden's 2021 EO 14058, *Transforming Customer Experience and Service Delivery to Rebuild Trust in Government*.
- President Trump's President's Management Agenda in December 2025.
- 5 U.S.C. Sections 321-24.
- 44 U.S.C. Section 3501.

2. Use of the Information

NCA conducts an annual survey of satisfaction (also referred to as Customer Satisfaction Surveys) using four surveys targeted at participants engaging different aspects of VA's burial and memorial programs: 1) National Cemeteries Next of Kin/Family Member Satisfaction Survey, 2) State, Tribal or Territorial Veterans Cemeteries Next of Kin/Family Member Satisfaction Survey, 3) VA Memorial Products Next of Kin/Family Member Satisfaction Survey, and 4) Funeral Director Satisfaction Survey.

The National Cemetery Administration continues to conduct customer satisfaction surveys under this generic clearance for the purpose of implementing the Executive Order. If surveys are not conducted, NCA is unable to comply with the legal requirements noted and will lack the information needed to improve established standards for the best possible customer focused service. NCA continues to use the information gathered to determine what services are satisfactory and meet customer needs and expectations. Additionally, NCA gains insight into areas for improvement. NCA has revised some questions for clarity, removed questions no longer required, and added questions to support new priorities and product offerings. This results in the elimination of questions deemed no longer relevant, and the addition of questions that address new opportunities.

By grouping, the count of recommendations are as follows:

Survey	Proposed New	Proposed Revision	Proposed Deletion
NC/Next of Kin	2	7	10
MPS	5	7	7
STVC	2	5	5
Funeral Director	0	4	6
Total	9	23	28

NCA is respectful of our request for the time of those responding to our surveys. For the three next of kin surveys (for national cemeteries, State, Tribal or Territorial cemeteries, and Memorial Products), there is no expectation of time investment for research, collecting documentation, or travel. The burden for funeral directors is slightly higher, calling for information in support of national, VA grant-funded, and memorial product categories of input, but overall, this is not projected to be (nor was it reported via prior focus groups) to be a significant burden. Third party consultation (through Federal Register notices) has demonstrated no significant respondent burden.

To date, NCA has used survey findings to inform strategic and operational plans and activities, to include relevant changes to how NCA conducts business and enhances how it serves Veterans and their families during their time of need, as well as supports funeral directors

assisting Veterans and their families. Moreover, aggregates of survey findings inform budget submission and is a criterion considered in evaluating cemetery operations and staff. Internal survey operations are corroborated through a third-party vendor through the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) methodology. NCA efforts over the last few years have resulted in NCA achieving a 98-index score (out of 100) in 2025, exceeding the extraordinary score of 97 achieved in 2019 and 2022 on the ACSI methodology, the highest score ever recorded for a public or private organization. This demonstrates how seriously NCA takes the customer's experience and feedback on NCA's surveys.

NCA surveys next of kin/family members of Veterans and their families interred at VA national cemeteries, State, Tribal or Territorial Veteran cemeteries, or private cemeteries and using VA memorial products, as well as the funeral directors assisting them, using mail surveys and comment cards. Participation in the surveys is voluntary, and the generic clearance is not used to collect information required to obtain or maintain eligibility for a VA program or benefit. Voluntary customer surveys are not program evaluations and are not used as substitutes for traditional program evaluation surveys that measure objective outcomes. To maximize the voluntary response rates, the information collection is designed to make participation convenient, simple, and free of unnecessary barriers. To minimize the impact of the language barrier, surveys are offered in both English and Spanish. If the respondent receives a survey in the language in which they are not comfortable, there is a statement (i.e., the English language survey includes a statement in Spanish) inviting the respondent to request the alternative language survey instrument. Furthermore, the survey process is supported by a telephone helpline. This helpline is set up to respond to questions about the survey but has (as necessary) been used to allow the respondent to work with a trained interviewer to respond to the survey via the telephone. In the cover letter sent with the survey, respondents are also offered a website with personal survey token with which they can access and complete the survey on-line. Each survey includes a statement that "Failure to furnish the requested information will have no adverse effect on any VA benefit to which you may be entitled." NCA recognizes that this survey addresses events around a highly emotional and personal event – the death of a loved one. This organization works to minimize the potential psychological impact through allowing a minimum of a 90-day grieving period before a survey is mailed, ensuring that a respondent will only be contacted for one survey, and through maximizing the various opportunities (multiple languages, option for a paper or electronic survey response, a telephone help line) to minimize the burden on the respondent.

The National Cemetery Administration has found that the surveys help identify those aspects of services that are most important to its customers - Veterans and their families, and funeral directors. NCA requests that upon renewal of this approval from OMB, this generic ICR becomes a generic clearance that remains in place for the PRA's maximum approval period of three years. Individual surveys are sent to OMB for clearance as individual information

collections (“IC”) prior to collecting data. NCA shall track the usage of all collections approved under this clearance including instruments, methodology, respondents, and total burden hours to ensure compliance with the description of collections approved under this generic clearance.

Surveys developed under this generic clearance number contain questions like those that might be asked in the customer satisfaction surveys included in this Generic ICR package. Again, prior to use, each individual survey or IC requires a separate submission to OMB (through the generic ICR process, with a short OMB review) with the exact questions and with burden hours specified.

3. Use of Information Technology

Information technology is used wherever possible to reduce the information collection burden these activities place on the public. To date, NCA offers participants the option to respond via paper or by accessing an online survey with a unique web token assigned to them. The online URL is provided on the paper survey that participants receive in the mail. Since offering the online URL option for responding to surveys, NCA has found that most participants complete the paper version of the survey. All participants receive paper-based surveys. This customer requirement was derived through focus sessions with NCA customers. Customers (mostly elderly) felt that receiving a survey over the phone or electronically so soon after the death of a loved one would be insensitive, hurtful and impact on the grieving process. Using a paper survey ensured consistency in message and tone. Additionally, they noted that most NCA customers are elderly and do not have access to computers for electronic surveys.

NCA continues exploring options for the continuous improvement of both the survey process and questions. With this application for renewal, NCA is submitted revised questions which will better target the data collection to the needs of NCA.

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

The nature of NCA burial and memorial benefits requires a recurring and timely understanding of its customer needs. Legally, NCA must meet the legal requirements cited above; not doing this survey as a primary means for understanding and improving upon customer service and utilizing our understanding of it to enhance operational performance would cause NCA to be noncompliant. Moreover, NCA's customer satisfaction surveys are recurring so that ongoing measures can be created to measure satisfaction and to determine how well the agency meets customer service standards.

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 Monday, May 4, 2026. The 60-Day FRN citation is 91 FRN 24032.

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

A 30-Day Federal Register Notice for the collection published on Friday, July 10, 2026. The 30-Day FRN citation is 91 FRN 42790.

Part B: CONSULTATION

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

9. Gifts or Payment

No payments or gifts are being offered to respondents as an incentive to participate in the collection.

10. Confidentiality

The identities of individuals and organizations contacted are carefully protected. Names and personal identifiers are used to locate survey participants and are thereafter stripped from any files kept for analysis purposes. The participants in the sample are all assigned a survey ID, which is used in place of their personal identifiable information to preserve the integrity of the data responses and to facilitate NCA's ability to follow up with participants who request additional VA benefit information or follow up on an NCA benefit in the comment sections of their survey.

11. Sensitive Questions

No questions considered sensitive are being asked in this collection.

12. Respondent Burden and its Labor Costs

Part A: ESTIMATION OF RESPONDENT BURDEN

- 1) National Cemetery Administration Visitor Comments Cards (Local Use)
National Cemetery Administration Visitor Comment Cards
 - a) Number of Respondents: 2,500
 - b) Number of Responses Per Respondent: 1
 - c) Number of Total Annual Responses: 2,500
 - d) Response Time: 5 minutes
 - e) Respondent Burden Hours: 208 hours
- 2) National Cemetery Administration Mail Surveys
National Cemeteries Next of Kin/Family Member Satisfaction Survey
 - a) Number of Respondents: 18,000
 - b) Number of Responses Per Respondent: 1
 - c) Number of Total Annual Responses: 18,000
 - d) Response Time: 20 minutes
 - e) Respondent Burden Hours: 6,000 hours
- 3) National Cemetery Administration Mail Surveys
Funeral Director Satisfaction Survey
 - a) Number of Respondents: 2,000
 - b) Number of Responses Per Respondent: 1
 - c) Number of Total Annual Responses: 2,000
 - d) Response Time: 30 minutes
 - e) Respondent Burden Hours: 1,000 hours
- 4) National Cemetery Administration Mail Surveys
State, Tribal or Territorial Veterans Cemeteries Next of Kin/Family Member Satisfaction Survey
 - a) Number of Respondents: 8,000
 - b) Number of Responses Per Respondent: 1
 - c) Number of Total Annual Responses: 8,000
 - d) Response Time: 20 minutes
 - e) Respondent Burden Hours: 2,667 hours
- 5) Program/Specialized Service Survey
VA Memorial Products Survey (Next of Kin)
 - a) Number of Respondents: 3,000
 - b) Number of Responses Per Respondent: 1
 - c) Number of Total Annual Responses: 3,000
 - d) Response Time: 20 minutes

- e) Respondent Burden Hours: 1,000 hours
- 6) Focus Groups with Next of Kin, Funeral Directors, Veterans Service Organizations
 - a) Number of Respondents: 150
 - b) Number of Responses Per Respondent: 1
 - c) Number of Total Annual Responses: 150
 - d) Response Time: 3 hours
 - e) Respondent Burden Hours: 450 hours
- 7) Total Submission Burden (Summation or average based on collection)
 - a) Total Number of Respondents: 33,650
 - b) Total Number of Annual Responses: 33,650
 - c) Total Respondent Burden Hours: 11,325 hours

Part B: LABOR COST OF RESPONDENT BURDEN

- 1) Collection Instrument
[National Cemetery Administration Visitor Comment Cards (Local Use)]
 - a) Number of Total Annual Responses: 2,500
 - b) Response Time: 5 minutes
 - c) Respondent Hourly Wage²: \$32.66
 - d) Labor Burden per Response: \$2.72
 - e) Total Labor Burden: \$6,804.17
- 2) Collection Instrument
[National Cemeteries Next of Kin/Family Member Satisfaction Survey]
 - a) Number of Total Annual Responses: 18,000
 - b) Response Time: 20 minutes
 - c) Respondent Hourly Wage: \$32.66
 - d) Labor Burden per Response: \$10.89
 - e) Total Labor Burden: \$195,960.00
- 3) Collection Instrument
[Funeral Director Satisfaction Survey]
 - a) Number of Total Annual Responses: 2,000
 - b) Response Time: 30 minutes
 - c) Respondent Hourly Wage: \$32.66
 - d) Labor Burden per Response: \$16.33
 - e) Total Labor Burden: \$32,660.00
- 4) Collection Instrument
[State, Tribal or Territorial Veterans Cemeteries Next of Kin/Family Member Satisfaction Survey]

² The Respondent hourly wage was determined by using the Bureau of Labor Statistics website. Source: May 2024 Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics, All Occupations.
<https://data.bls.gov/oes/#/industry/000000>.

- a) Number of Total Annual Responses: 8,000
 - b) Response Time: 20 minutes
 - c) Respondent Hourly Wage: \$32.66
 - d) Labor Burden per Response: \$10.89
 - e) Total Labor Burden: \$87,093.33
- 5) Collection Instrument
[VA Memorial Products Survey (Next of Kin)]
 - a) Number of Total Annual Responses: 3,000
 - b) Response Time: 20 minutes
 - c) Respondent Hourly Wage: \$32.66
 - d) Labor Burden per Response: \$10.89
 - e) Total Labor Burden: \$32,660.00
- 6) Collection Instrument
[Focus Groups with Next of Kin, Funeral Directors, Veterans Service Organizations]
 - f) Number of Total Annual Responses: 150
 - g) Response Time: 3 hours
 - h) Respondent Hourly Wage: \$32.66
 - i) Labor Burden per Response: \$97.98
 - j) Total Labor Burden: \$14,697.00
- 7) Overall Labor Burden
 - a) Total Number of Annual Responses: 33,650
 - b) Total Labor Burden: \$369,874.50

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

The estimated annual costs for these mail surveys, and comment cards including contract support, travel costs, and other direct costs are approximately \$716K in 2026 but reduces in the option years to less than \$570K per year. In addition to recurring survey work, additional efforts to enhance and redesign surveys, sampling plans, and survey administration protocols will be conducted in phases over the course of the next 4.5 years (2026 – 2030).

Year	Amount
2026	\$716,171.64 (Base Year)
2027	\$549,095.16
2028	\$559,372.68
2029	\$569,904.12
2030	\$455,921.40

- 1) Overall Labor Burden to the Federal Government
 - a) Total Number of Annual Responses: 33,650
 - b) Total Labor Burden: \$2,850,465.00

Part B: OPERATIONAL AND MAINTENANCE COSTS

- 1) Cost Categories
 - a) Equipment: \$0
 - b) Printing: \$130,000
 - c) Postage: \$ 200,000
 - d) Software Purchases: \$0
 - e) Licensing Costs: \$0
 - f) Other: \$0
- 2) Total Operational and Maintenance Cost: \$330,000

Part C: TOTAL COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

- 1) Total Labor Cost to the Federal Government: \$2,850,465.00
- 2) Total Operational and Maintenance Costs: \$330,000
- 3) Total Cost to the Federal Government: \$3,180,465.00

15. Reasons for Change in Burden

The burden has decreased since the previous approval due to recalculations surrounding funeral director survey response burden. These calculations were overrepresented in the prior submission due to inadvertent triple counting. The complete funeral director survey for all sub-sections is estimated at 30 minutes and is reflected once in this document. In addition, all survey-type respondent totals reflect the most recent available data, which is lower than the prior estimates.

16. Publication of Results

To provide the timeliest actionable data for NCA executive leadership, NCA begins sending surveys July of the prior year through April of the following year. Data files are reviewed and

cleaned to reduce duplication of surveys being resent to next of kin/family members each quarter. The survey fielding wraps up in April and data analysis commences with final reports being made available in July and August. The results obtained from these information collections are disseminated to management officials, VA employees, and the public. NCA leadership teams get the data rolled up at the national level, district level, and cemetery level. NCA publishes the data outside of NCA at the national level rollup of findings, this includes the publicly available data.

17. Non-Display of OMB Expiration Date

NCA displays OMB expiration dates on the enclosed surveys of satisfaction. We are not seeking approval to omit the display of the expiration date of the OMB approval on the collection instruments.

18. Exceptions to "Certification for Paperwork Reduction Submissions"

We are not requesting any exemptions to the provisions stated in 5 CFR 1320.9.