

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT B
FOR PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT SUBMISSION**

Technical Evaluation Surveys

OMB Control Number 1029-0114

Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods

The agency should be prepared to justify its decision not to use statistical methods in any case where such methods might reduce burden or improve accuracy of results. When the question "Does this ICR contain surveys, censuses, or employ statistical methods?" is checked "Yes," the following documentation should be included in Supporting Statement B to the extent that it applies to the methods proposed:

1. Describe (including a numerical estimate) the potential respondent universe and any sampling or other respondent selection method to be used. Data on the number of entities (e.g., establishments, State and local government units, households, or persons) in the universe covered by the collection and in the corresponding sample are to be provided in tabular form for the universe as a whole and for each of the strata in the proposed sample. Indicate expected response rates for the collection as a whole. If the collection had been conducted previously, include the actual response rate achieved during the last collection.

The respondent universe for this collection consists of customers who received technical assistance from Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM) during the fiscal year. These individuals are selected because they interacted with OSM technical staff and are in the best position to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the assistance provided.

OSM uses a **census approach** for these surveys: all customers who receive technical assistance during the fiscal year are invited to participate. No sampling is used because the universe is relatively small and highly relevant to program evaluation.

Based on FY 2025 data, OSM sent out 446 technical evaluation surveys and received 366 responses. Historical response rates are shown below.

**Return Response Rate of Technical Assistance Customer Service Surveys for FY
2025**

Survey Name	Number of Surveys Sent	Number of Responses	Response Rate
Technical Assistance	100	98	98%
Technical Transfer	226	222	98%

Meeting/Forum Evaluation	0	0	0%
AVS Technical Assistance	120	46	38%
<i>Total</i>	446	366	82%

Expected Response Rate

The number of potential respondents is expected to remain the same for the foreseeable future. Using the updated overall response rate of 82 percent, an estimated 366 responses can be expected annually out of 446 potential respondents.

2. Describe the procedures for the collection of information including:

- * **Statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection,**
- * **Estimation procedure,**
- * **Degree of accuracy needed for the purpose described in the justification,**
- * **Unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures, and**
- * **Any use of periodic (less frequent than annual) data collection cycles to reduce burden.**

OSM employs business contact, electronic mail, its website, fax, and standard mail to distribute and receive survey responses, depending on the situation and customer preference.

Statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection: None is used because the entire population of customers who received technical assistance during the fiscal year is surveyed.

Estimation procedure: Responses are analyzed descriptively to assess customer satisfaction. No inferential statistics are applied.

Degree of accuracy: Accuracy is achieved by surveying the full population rather than a sample, ensuring comprehensive coverage.

Unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures: None exist; the census approach eliminates the need for specialized sampling.

Periodic data collection cycles: Surveys are distributed as close as possible to the time technical assistance or technology transfer is provided, and each customer is surveyed no more than once annually to minimize burden.

This approach is necessary because the population of respondents is small and diverse, making statistically representative sampling impractical. Based on historical data from 2008 through 2026, the weighted average response rate across all four survey instruments is approximately 70 percent, which is sufficient for qualitative

evaluation. OSM conducts these surveys to obtain actionable feedback on the quality of its technical assistance and services.

3. Describe methods to maximize response rates and to deal with issues of non-response. The accuracy and reliability of information collected must be shown to be adequate for intended uses. For collections based on sampling, a special justification must be provided for any collection that will not yield "reliable" data that can be generalized to the universe studied.

OSM employs multiple strategies to minimize respondent burden and maximize response rates. The surveys are designed with concise, straightforward questions to facilitate quick and easy feedback. Whenever possible, respondents are given the opportunity to complete customer service surveys in person at the time technical assistance or technology transfer is provided.

To further increase participation, OSM offers multiple submission options, including electronic mail, facsimile, and standard mail. Additionally, three of the four surveys are available online at <https://www.osmre.gov/resources/forms> leveraging the widespread availability of Internet access. For the AVS survey, respondents receive an email link immediately following assistance. They can complete the survey online and submit it electronically, ensuring a streamlined process and timely receipt by OSM's AVS office.

These measures collectively aim to reduce barriers to participation and ensure that the data collected is accurate, reliable, and suitable for its intended use.

4. Describe any tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken. Testing is encouraged as an effective means of refining collections of information to minimize burden and improve utility. Tests must be approved if they call for answers to identical questions from 10 or more respondents. A proposed test or set of tests may be submitted for approval separately or in combination with the main collection of information.

OSM does not plan to conduct any tests of procedures or methods at this time. The current collection instruments have been previously implemented and refined through prior renewals, and they are considered effective for minimizing respondent burden and ensuring utility. Should future testing be deemed necessary to improve data quality or reduce burden, OSM will seek appropriate approval before proceeding.

5. Provide the names and telephone numbers of individuals consulted on statistical aspects of the design and the name of the agency unit, contractor(s), grantee(s), or other person(s) who will actually collect and/or analyze the information for the agency.

Individuals Consulted on Statistical Aspects of the Design

Danny R. Brown, Program Analyst

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Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM)
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Agency Units Responsible for Collection and Analysis

Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM)

- The Applicant/Violator System (AVS) is responsible for collecting and reviewing information associated with the AVS Technical Assistance Survey, with Danny R. Brown serving as the program point of contact.
- The Technical Support Division, Geospatial & Technology Transfer Branch, is responsible for collecting and reviewing information associated with the Technical Assistance Evaluation, Technology Transfer Evaluation, and Meeting/Forum Evaluation surveys, with Russell (Jim) Metzger serving as the program point of contact for those survey instruments.