

SUPPORTING STATEMENT B FOR PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT SUBMISSION

Generic Clearance for Improving Customer Experience (OMB Circular A-11, Section 280 Implementation)

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 activities under this clearance may involve samples of self-selected customers, as well as convenience samples, and quota samples, with respondents selected either to cover a broad range of customers or to include specific characteristics related to certain products or services.

Results will not be used to make statements representative of the universe of study, to produce statistical descriptions (careful, repeatable measurements), or to generalize the data beyond the scope of the sample. The specific sample planned for each individual collection and the method for soliciting participation will be described fully in each information collection request.

Qualitative research interviews and surveys are tools used by program managers to change or improve programs, products, or services. The accuracy, reliability, and applicability of the results of these surveys are adequate for their purpose.

The samples associated with this collection are not subjected to the same scrutiny as scientifically drawn samples as they are not meant to be interpreted similarly.

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.**

Data collection methods and procedures will vary and the specifics of these will be provided with each collection request. The Agency expects to use a variety of methodologies for these collections. For example, the Agency or its contractors may use commercial survey-specific

software to automate its collection and analysis of feedback. In addition to physical copies, information collection instruments may be electronically disseminated and/or posted on target pages of the Agency's web site. Telephone scripts, personal interviews, and focus groups with professional guidance and moderation may also be used.

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.

Information collected under this generic clearance will not yield generalizable quantitative findings; it can provide useful customer input. The use of the government-wide standard customer feedback measures and recommended methods for implementing (asking no more than the 7 questions, plus up to two free response, asking these questions as close to the transaction as possible) are aimed at increasing response rates of feedback surveys.

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.

Pretesting may be done with internal staff, and no more than nine external colleagues, and/or customers who are familiar with the programs and products.

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.

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