Date of Approval: 06/22/2025
Questionnaire Number: 1985

Basic Information/Executive Summary

What is the name of your project (system, database, pilot, product, survey, social media site, etc.)?

Determinations Customer Satisfaction Survey and Examinations Customer Satisfaction Survey

Business Unit

Tax Exempt and Government Entities

Preparer

For Official Use Only

Subject Matter Expert

For Official Use Only

Program Manager

For Official Use Only

Designated Executive Representative

For Official Use Only

Executive Sponsor

For Official Use Only

Executive Summary: Provide a clear and concise description of your project and how it will allow the IRS to achieve its mission.

Tax Exempt and Government Entities (TEGE) collects feedback over time from the customers (taxpayers) of Exempt Organizations (EO), Employee Plans (EP), Federal; State & Local Governments (FSL), Indian Tribal Governments (ITG), and Tax-Exempt Bonds (TEB) to identify process improvement opportunities that will help TEGE leadership to achieve the IRS mission. The data collection method is a paper survey administered by a survey contractor, Pacific Consulting Group (PCG) Enterprises Inc. The contractor mails survey questions to pre-identified samples of EO, EP, FSL, ITG, TEB customers and receives the survey responses via mail. The surveys are addressed to these exempt organizations, whose determination and examination cases were closed, and not addressed to officials or staff of the organizations. Survey participation is voluntary, and their responses are completely anonymous.

Personally Identifiable Information (PII)

Will this project use, collect, receive, display, store, maintain, or disseminate any type of Sensitive but Unclassified (SBU), Personally Identifiable Information (PII), or Federal Tax Information (FTI)?

Yes

Please explain in detail how this project uses sensitive data from inception to destruction (data lifecycle).

To develop the population of customer satisfaction survey, TEGE extracts monthly data of EO and EP determination closed cases and EO, EP, FSL, ITG, and TEB examination closed cases from IRS database systems, which include case closing date and code, return form type, customers (tax-exempt organizations) Employer Identification Number (EIN); name; and address, and their power of attorney (POA) name and address. TEGE provides the population data to the survey contractor for selecting survey samples. Before selecting the samples, the contractor removes the EIN from the population data and creates random identification (ID) numbers that are paired with the organizations' identity for tracking who have responded the survey (survey respondents) and who have not responded the survey. Before the contractor sends the survey responses data to TEGE, all the respondents identifying information are removed from the file to ensure the respondents anonymity. With respect to survey data life cycle, TEGE has a file plan. Every year, TEGE assess the records retention of the survey project files according to the Internal Revenue Manual (IRM) 1.15.3 (10-13-2023), Records and Information Management, Disposing Records. TEGE will work with the Washington DC Territory records specialist to prepare Form 11671 (Certificate of Records Disposal) based on Publication 5681 (General Records Schedules) and Document 12990 (Records Control Schedules). TEGE will destroy the records after the Form 11671 is approved by the records specialist.

Please select all types of Sensitive but Unclassified data (SBU)/Personally Identifiable Information (PII)/Federal Tax Information (FTI) that this project uses.

Address
Employer Identification Number
Name

Cite the authority for collecting SBU/PII/FTI (including SSN if relevant).

PII for federal tax administration - generally IRC Sections 6001 6011 or 6012

Product Information (Questions)

1 Is this survey a result of an initiative or a process improvement?

No

2 What is your research method(s) used (i.e., survey, telephone interview, focus group or usability testing)?

Survey

3 Is this a new survey, telephone interview, focus group, or usability test? Throughout the rest of this questionnaire, we will use the term "survey" to include all of these.

Yes

3.1 Is there a Privacy and Civil Liberties Impact Assessment (PCLIA) for this project?

No

4 Which Business Unit (BU) is requesting this survey?

Tax Exempt and Government Entities (TEGE)

5 Who will the survey be administered to?

EO and EP determinations and examinations taxpayers and FSL, ITG, and TEB examinations taxpayers.

6 Is this a reoccurring survey?

Yes

6.1 Will the survey be administered annually (3-year expiration)?

Yes

7 What is the start date?

04-01-2025

8 What is the end date?

03-31-2028

9 Will PII be used to select or contact survey participants or administer the survey?

Yes

10 Explain how the participants are selected. Include a detailed description. Please provide your research plan as supporting documentation.

The survey contractor selects samples (or census as appropriate) based on monthly population data of EO and EP determination closed cases and EO, EP, FSL, ITG, and TEB examination closed cases received from TEGE. When sampling is appropriate, the contractor will use at least 90% confidence interval and 5% precision for each type on a biennial basis (potentially annual basis for fiscal years 2026 and 2025 if the survey funding is available). Otherwise, when a complete census is appropriate, surveys are sent to all customers on the monthly population data. For examinations surveys, the survey will exclude cases closed by the Appeals division, cases closed with either of two disposal codes (claims allowed in full and referrals to other Operating Divisions), and cases with international addresses. Finally, the contractor will not send a survey questions to any customer that received TEGE's survey in the last six months. The Performance Work Statement in the attached V_1 - Task Order 2032H8-21-F-00084 - Signed OF347 provides more detail information.

11 Describe the SBU/PII data, if applicable, that is collected, disclosed, or studied on individuals who choose not to participate.

TEGE extracts monthly data of EO and EP determination and EO, EP, FSL, ITG, and TEB examination closed cases consisting of organization EIN, name and address, and POA name and address, and then; provides the data to the survey contractor. Once received the data, the contractor immediately removed EIN from the data and creates random ID numbers. The contractor does not disclose to TEGE individual organizations, who do not participate in the survey, and does not analyze them.

12 Explain how participants are notified of the survey (letter, postcard, email, etc.); indicate if the notice lets them know the survey is voluntary/optional; indicate if the privacy act notice was included; lastly, if your survey is not voluntary, explain why it is mandatory.

The survey mailings consist (1) an advanced letter (pre-note) from TEGE Commissioner informing the organizations about the upcoming mail survey, (2) A wave-1 letter, which includes the survey and a postage-paid return envelope, (3) A follow-up postcard -formatted by the survey contractor, and (4) A wave-2 letter, which includes the survey and a postage-paid return envelope that is sent only to the organizations, who have not responded by the first cutoff date for the monthly file in which they were included. In all the letters, it is clearly indicated that survey participation is voluntary. Because the survey is not online data collection, the survey letters and postcard do not include the privacy act notice. In the three letters include a paragraph that states Pacific Consulting Group, an independent research company, will administer the survey under the authority of Internal Revenue Code Section 7801, they are authorized to receive case information, they are legally compelled to protect it under Internal Revenue Code Section 6103, their response will be anonymous.

13 What tool(s) is/are used to conduct the survey? Please explain how you ensure anonymity of the participants.

The contractor administers the survey via a paper survey mailed to pre-identified sample of EO, EP, FSL, ITG, and TEB customers, which has been used for four years (beginning in 2021). The contractor mails survey questions and a postage-paid return envelope to the customers. The survey respondents will send back the survey responses to the contractor using the return envelope. The survey responses will be scanned to extract data from paper to digital. The contractor creates random ID numbers that are used to tract survey responses. Before sending survey responses data to TEGE, the contractor removes the survey respondents' identifying information (organization EIN, name, and address and their POA name and address) to ensure anonymity of the respondents.

14 Will the survey be audio-recorded or video-recorded?

No

15 Do participants provide information about themselves? The Privacy Act of 1974 (5 USC § 552a(e)(3)) requires each agency that maintains a system of records to inform each individual requested to supply information.

No

16 Who administers (conducts) the survey? (IRS, Vendor or Both)

Vendor

17 Who performs the analysis of the survey? (IRS, Vendor, or Both)

Vendor

18 If a contractor administers (conducts) and analyzes the survey, is all work performed and contained in the United States?

Yes

19 How does the administrator of the survey protect employees' or taxpayers' SBU/PII from compromise, loss, theft, or disclosure?

The survey contractor stores all samples files in its servers which meet the security requirements of IRS Publication 4812. This data safeguarding process is compliant with the Blanket Purchase Agreement (BPA) contract requirements, and the contractor undergoes regular site reviews by IRS Contractor security team. The data handling protocols have been in place for over twenty years, updated as IRS and government regulations and policies required. This contract allows TEGE project manager to request the contractor to purge data, and the contractor would provide evidence to that effect. The contractor also has own data purging policies. Personally Identifiable Information (PII) is removed from data files whenever it is not necessary to the task being completed.

20 Provide the information technology (IT)-approved encryption methods and access controls used to transfer data electronically from the IRS to contractors and back to the IRS. (Or contractor to contractor/subcontractors.)

TEGE provides monthly survey population data to the survey contractor using Encrypt-Only email encryption (the only IRS authorized encryption method since 08-06-2024), that encrypts the body of the message and any attachments. Once the sample files are received, the contractor assigns each case a random ID number. These sample files are stored in servers which meet the security requirements of IRS Publication 4812. Only staff of the contractor, who have a legitimate, project-specific need to access these files, are granted access. The contractor sends the GPO print contractor an encrypted electronic file with the random ID number, names, and addresses of potential survey participants. The contractor receives completed survey responses data via encrypted electronic file paired with the random ID number (PII is removed). Any data transfer between the contractor, TEGE, and the GPO print contractor that contains PII is conducted via the encrypted email processes and the Enterprise File Transfer Utility (EFTU).

21 Has a Contracting Officer or Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) verified the contract included privacy and security clauses for data protection and that all contractors have signed non-disclosure agreements which are on file with the COR?

Yes

22 Identify all IRS/Contractor roles and their access level to the PII data.

The IRS/TEGE project manager supervises the project as a whole and ensures that it's successfully completed within its scope. The project manager has read only access to PII data. The survey project analyst serves as the TEGE's point of contact by coordinating with the TEGE PM, contractor office, contractor, and the publication office. The survey project analyst has full permission to the PII data including the underlying code that pulls the PII data. The TEGE contract officer representative (COR) assists with bidding for new contracts and has no data access permission. The IRS publication specialists with the Government Printing Office (GPO) and the Government Task Manager (GTM) to create and mail out the letters and survey questionnaires. These specialists have read only access to the PII data. The contractor research project manager coordinates survey design, fielding, and insight generation. The research project manager has read only access to the PII data. The contractor senior research analyst creates sample, conducts data cleaning, quality compliance, and analysis. This role also has read only permission. All the contractor staff participating in the survey process have completed their IRS background information and were cleared prior to assuming their roles on this project.

23 Explain the precautions taken, to ensure that employees or taxpayers who participate in the survey cannot be identified or re-identified under any circumstances.

Whenever possible, the survey respondents are paired with their ID number only and PII is removed from files. When PII must be included (for example addresses of participants must be accessed to send the survey), the PII is sent via encrypted electronic file and stored in servers which meet the security requirements of IRS Publication 4812. These servers have limited access to only staff who have completed their IRS background clearance and have a documented need to access the location, and the sever location is password-protected.

24 Explain the precautions taken to ensure no adverse actions can be taken against participants.

The survey contractor works with the Government Printing Office (GPO) who will administer the mail survey monthly. The survey contractor sends the GPO contractor an encrypted electronic file with ID numbers, names, and addresses of potential survey participants for printing and mailing the survey questions and letters. The contractor receives completed survey data via encrypted electronic file paired with the ID number (PII is removed). The contractor sends this data without PII to TEGE.

25 Explain how you have ensured that no "raw" or unaggregated employee or taxpayer data will be provided to any IRS office.

The survey contractor aggregates the survey responses data immediately after being received, disconnected from PII and associated only with an ID number. Once this step is complete, no one without access to the protected file could identify or re-identify the taxpayers. In addition, the contractor provides the survey final report to TEGE only and TEGE never shares the reports with others outside TEGE or IRS.

26 Does your survey use, maintain, collect, or display any records describing a participant's tax return information or income, deductions, credits, etc. that are covered by the individual's First Amendment rights.)

No

Interfaces

Interface Type

IRS Systems, file, or database

Agency Name

Return Inventory and Classification System (RICS)

Incoming/Outgoing

Outgoing (Sending)

Transfer Method

Secure email/Zixmail

Interface Type

IRS or Treasury Contractor

Agency Name

Pacific Consulting Group

Incoming/Outgoing

Incoming (Receiving)

Transfer Method

Secure email/Zixmail

Interface Type

IRS Systems, file, or database

Agency Name

Business Objects Application

Incoming/Outgoing

Outgoing (Sending)

Transfer Method

Secure email/Zixmail

Systems of Records Notices (SORNs)

SORN Number & Name

IRS 00.003 - Taxpayer Advocate Service and Customer Feedback and Survey Records

Describe the IRS use and relevance of this SORN.

This survey is used to collect information about the experience of TEGE taxpayers and their most recent interaction with IRS processes. These surveys are voluntary, and the information collected tracks responses or feedback to said survey questionnaire.

Records Retention

What is the Record Schedule System?

General Record Schedule (GRS)

What is the retention series title?

6.5 - Public Customer Service Records

What is the GRS/RCS Item Number?

10

What type of Records is this for?

Both (Paper and Electronic)

Please provide a brief description of the chosen GRS or RCS item.

Public Service Operations Records, temporary

What is the disposition schedule?

Destroy 1 year after resolved or when no longer needed for business use case, whichever is appropriate.

Data Locations

What type of site is this?

Shared Drive

What is the name of the Shared Drive?

vp0sentshrcmn47.ds.irsnet.gov

What is the sensitivity of the Shared Drive?

Personally Identifiable Information (PII) including Linkable Data

What is the URL of the item, if applicable?

S:\CPC\IISR\Customer Sat Surveys

Please provide a brief description of the Shared Drive.

TEGE shared S drive for tracking projects, cases, and other collaborative work across teams.

What are the incoming connections to this Shared Drive?

We receive survey outcome data and reports via secure/encrypted email from the contractor. We store the information in the shared drive.

What are the outgoing connections from this Shared Drive?

We source PII data from IRS databases (see Interface) and store it in the shared drive. We send the PII data to the contractor via secure/encrypted email. This is the information that the contractor will sample from and send to the publication office for mailing.