

departments to identify and survey its customers to determine the kind and quality of services they want and their level of satisfaction with existing service. The VHA uses customer

satisfaction surveys to gauge customer perceptions of VA services as well as customer expectations and desires. The results of these information collections lead to improvements in the quality of

VHA service delivery by helping to shape the direction and focus of specific programs and services.

*Affected Public:* Individuals or households.

Year	Number of respondents	Estimated annual burden (hours)	Frequency of response
<b>Nationwide Inpatient Survey</b>			
1998 .....	40,992	15,248	Annually.
1999 .....	40,992	15,248	Annually.
2000 .....	40,992	15,248	Annually.
<b>Nationwide Outpatient Survey</b>			
1998 .....	30,672	15,336	Annually.
1999 .....	30,672	15,336	Annually.
2000 .....	30,672	15,336	Annually.
<b>Special Emphasis (Different Special Emphasis Programs will be surveyed annually; for example, in 1997, VHA is surveying inpatient and outpatient Persian Gulf Veterans and inpatient and outpatient Spinal Cord Injury patients. Special Emphasis program selections have not been made for FYs 1998–2000. Burden hours for the out-years are based on 1997 estimates.)</b>			
1998 .....	46,800	18,200	Annually.
1999 .....	46,800	18,200	Annually.
2000 .....	46,800	18,200	Annually.
<b>Long Term Care Inpatient (Long Term Care populations will be surveyed annually, and some may change from year to year: for example, in 1997 VHA is surveying Nursing Home Care and Home Based Primary Care patients. Estimates for the out-years are based on 1997 estimates.)</b>			
1998 .....	4,000	1,333	Annually.
1999 .....	4,000	1,333	Annually.
2000 .....	4,000	1,333	Annually.
<b>Long Term Care Outpatient (Long Term Care populations will be surveyed annually, and some may change from year to year. Estimates for the out-years are based on 1997 estimates.)</b>			
1998 .....	2,507	627	Annually.
1999 .....	2,507	627	Annually.
2000 .....	2,507	627	Annually.
<b>Local Facilities Surveys</b>			
1998 .....	12,000	3,000	One-time.
1999 .....	12,000	3,000	One-time.
2000 .....	12,000	3,000	One-time.

Most customer satisfaction surveys will be recurring so that the VHA can create ongoing measures of performance and to determine how well the agency meets customer service standards. Each collection of information will consist of the minimum amount of information necessary to determine customer needs and to evaluate the VHA's performance. The VHA expects to distribute written surveys with a total annual burden of approximately 53,744 hours in 1998, 1999, and 2000.

The areas of concern to the VHA and its customers may change over time, and it is important to have the ability to evaluate customer concerns quickly. OMB will be requested to grant generic clearance approval for a 3-year period to conduct customer satisfaction surveys

and focus groups. Participation in the surveys will be voluntary and the generic clearance will not be used to collect information required to obtain or maintain eligibility for a VA program or benefit. In order to maximize the voluntary response rates, the information collection will be designed to make participation convenient, simple, and free of unnecessary barriers. Baseline data obtained through these information collections will be used to improve customer service standards. The VHA will consult with OMB regarding each specific information collection during this approval period.

Dated: June 3, 1997.

By direction of the Secretary.

**Donald L. Neilson,**

*Director, Information Management Service.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

[OMB Control No. 2900–0548]

**Proposed Information Collection Activity; Proposed Collection; Comment Request; Extension**

**AGENCY:** Board of Veterans' Appeals, Department of Veterans Affairs.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The Board of Veterans' Appeals (BVA) is announcing an opportunity for public comment on the proposed collection of certain information by the agency. Under the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995, Federal agencies are required to publish notice in the **Federal Register** concerning each proposed collection of information, including each proposed extension of a currently approved collection, and allow 60 days for public comment in response to the notice. This notice solicits comments on requirements relating to BVA's customer satisfaction survey.

**DATES:** Written comments and recommendations on the proposed collection of information should be received on or before August 11, 1997.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit written comments on the collection of information to William J. Alexander, Board of Veterans' Appeals (01C), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420. Please refer to "OMB Control No. 2900-0548" in any correspondence.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** William J. Alexander at (202) 565-4059.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Under the PRA of 1995 (Public Law 104-13; 44 U.S.C. 3501-3520), Federal agencies must obtain approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for each collection of information they conduct or sponsor. This request for comment is being made pursuant to Section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the PRA.

With respect to the following collection of information, BVA invites comments on: (1) whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of BVA's functions, including whether the information will have practical utility; (2) the accuracy of BVA's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (4) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or the use of other forms of information technology.

**Title:** Generic Clearance for the Board of Veterans' Appeals Customer Satisfaction Survey.

**OMB Control Number:** 2900-0548.

**Type of Review:** Extension of a currently approved collection.

**Abstract:** Executive Order 12862, Setting Customer Service Standards, requires Federal agencies and departments to identify and survey its customers to determine the kind and quality of services they want and their level of satisfaction with existing service. The BVA uses the customer satisfaction survey to evaluate customer services as well as customer expectations and desires. The results of this information collection lead to improvements in the quality of BVA service delivery by helping to shape the direction and focus of specific services.

**Affected Public:** Individuals or households.

**Estimated Annual Burden:** 400 hours.  
**Estimated Average Burden Per Respondent:** 6 minutes.

**Frequency of Response:** Annually.

**Estimated Number of Respondents:** 4,000.

The BVA anticipates the survey will identify those aspects of service that are most important to benefit claims appellants. The areas of concern to the BVA and its customers may change over time, and it is important to have the ability to evaluate customer concerns quickly. The OMB will be requested to grant generic clearance approval for a 3-year period to conduct a customer satisfaction survey. Participation in the survey will be voluntary and the generic clearance will not be used to collect information required to obtain or maintain eligibility for a VA program or benefit. In order to maximize the voluntary response rates, the information collection will be designed to make participation convenient, simple, and free of unnecessary barriers. Baseline data obtained through these information collections will be used to improve customer service standards. The BVA will consult with OMB regarding any changes to the information collection during this approval period.

Dated: June 3, 1997.

By direction of the Secretary.

**Donald L. Neilson,**

*Director, Information Management Service.*  
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