OMB Survey Clearance Package

Survey of Stakeholders who Support HCTC TAA Participants and Potentially Eligibles

I. Introduction:

Background:
The Health Coverage Tax Credit (HCTC), a federal tax credit established by the Trade Act of 2002, is designed to help eligible Americans and their families pay for health coverage they might otherwise not be able to afford, by paying 80% of an eligible individual's health plan premiums.

The program is a partnership of the federal government, state governments and health plan administrators. The federal government administers the program. State agencies help identify people who are eligible and help promote the program. State agencies and health plan administrators work together to make qualified coverage options available for eligible individuals.

Traditionally, the HCTC was designed to assist:

1. Workers who lose their jobs due to the effects of international trade and who are eligible for certain Trade Adjustment Assistance (**TAA**) benefits (i.e., for workers who have been certified to have lost their jobs, or whose hours of work or wages are reduced due to increased imports); or who are eligible for benefits under the Alternative Trade Adjustment Assistance (ATAA) program.

2. People who receive benefits from the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (**PBGC**) and who are at least 55 years old.

In 2003 and 2004, research was conducted with program participants and potentially eligibles to understand their perceptions of the program. Survey 1 was conducted with participants and non-responders to understand program awareness, interest, usage and satisfaction. Survey 2 was conducted among the potentially eligible population to better understand what percentage would actually qualify for the HCTC. This research has not been repeated since that time.

Objectives of Data Collection:

In May and June 2009, in-depth interviews were conducted by phone and in-person with a representative set of stakeholders to better understand the mindset of participants and potentially eligibles as well as to gauge the level of knowledge and engagement these stakeholders have with the HCTC program. As part of this effort, a quantitative survey is planned to interview a broader set of stakeholders so we can understand how widely held the views expressed in the exploratory phase are and ultimately how we can better equip these stakeholders as they interact with HCTC participants and potentially eligibles.

II. Methodology:

Sample Design:

The sampling plan will be representative of the stakeholders serving the TAA population at a confidence level of 95% and will include all representative stakeholder groups (i.e. SWA's, One-Stops, Conference Attendees, etc.) The total universe size is approximately 2000 and we expect a survey sample size of approximately 200.

Survey Methodology and Administration:

The stakeholder survey is designed to be administered on-line via a survey tool like Survey Monkey or Zoomerang. The survey is intended to be short and focused—less than 20 questions plus demographics and it is expected to take respondents no more than 10 minutes to complete. Respondents will be sent an email (see email invitation attached for wording) explaining the purpose of the survey and instructions for completion. They will be invited to begin by clicking a link to the web survey imbedded in the email message. Each link will have a numerical id to protect anonymity. Upon completion, they will click a 'submit' button. Responses will be analyzed in aggregate and not associated with any one individual.

Data Collection Dates:

Once approval to proceed is secured, it is expected to be a 4 week effort. At present time, we expect the timeframe to commence in mid-late July and end in mid-late August 2009.

Survey Questions:

The full survey instrument is attached in this package. Topic areas include:

- Clients (from the perception of the stakeholder):
    - Mindset of the individuals
    - Level of decision-making in their HH about HCTC
    - Level of awareness and usage of the Program Kit
- Stakeholders:
    - How they help clients determine eligibility
    - Level of confidence in understanding and presenting HCTC
    - Type and degree of training received about HCTC
    - Barriers to understanding HCTC
    - Resources found to be valuable in understanding HCTC
    - Preferences for receiving information about HCTC
    - Demographics (work group, length of time, length of time working with the HCTC program, level of client contact, state)

How data will be used:

The data will be used to answer the objectives of the survey. A written report and a PowerPoint presentation will be derived from the data collected on the survey instruments. No individual data will reported, only summary statistics will be reported out.

How data will be analyzed:

We will provide analysis of the survey for each stratum (i.e. work-group) and all combined stratum. Appropriate statistics will be computed using frequencies, cross tabulations, and confidence intervals.

Who is conducting the research:

The research is being coordinated by Wage & Investment, Research Group 4 of the IRS. Accenture will be designing, analyzing and managing the subcontractor who will be programming and hosting the survey data collection.

Location – region/city and facilities:

The survey sample will be drawn from all of stakeholders eligible to participate in the program. Therefore, the survey will likely be sent to all regions of the country.

Stipend:

Respondents will not be paid to participate in the survey.

Recruitment efforts:

Stakeholders who are selected to participate in the survey will also receive a cover letter, in addition to the survey, that will encourage their participation.

Methods to maximize response rate:

The survey will include a cover letter encouraging participation. The cover letter will emphasize the importance of responding and how results will be used to better equip participants to serve their clients. The number of questions has been limited to reduce participant fatigue. Additionally, due to the on-line methodology, a respondent may start, stop and resume with previous answers saved to maximize time spent.

Expected Response Rate:

Previous experience with surveys indicates the response rate will be approximately 10 percent. With regard to the low response rate, the IRS will assume that all data collected from this survey is qualitative in nature, and that no critical decisions will be made by this office solely from the analysis of data from this survey. The results from this survey are simply one piece of a larger set of information needed to assess the needs related to services provided by the IRS.

Efforts to not duplicate research:

We not have found any previous research that duplicates our efforts.

III. Participant Criteria:

The market segment consists of front-line stakeholders who interact with TAA participants and the potentially eligible

The audience for this quantitative survey is public officials on a local level that interact directly with individuals who have been Trade Certified by the US Department of Labor. The clients of these individuals are, or could become, Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), Alternative Trade Adjustment Assistance (ATAA) or Reemployment Trade Adjustment Assistance (RTAA) program recipients and are therefore potentially eligible for the Health Coverage Tax Credit (HCTC). This front line audience has been broken down into the following two high level groupings:

- **State and Local Rapid Response:** Rapid Response coordinators, both on the state and local level, interact with HCTC potentially eligible individuals. They are responsible for working with companies, employees, labor organizations and the Department of Labor in the wake of a labor displacement event (impacting multiple individuals). Their role is to provide general unemployment benefit information to displaced employees. In most cases, after the Department of Labor has issued a TAA certification for a company or group of employees, a Rapid Response representative will make a second visit to provide an overview of Trade Benefits, such as the HCTC.
    - These contacts were obtained from the National Department of Labor website. An e-mail was sent to the each state's central Rapid Response contact asking him/her to provide additional information for the Rapid Response professionals within their respective states.
    - There are approximately 250 Rapid Response individuals in the HCTC program master contact list.

- **Local One Stop Center Directors:** One Stop representatives work with unemployed individuals on a local level. They provide an overview of unemployment benefits to anyone who has lost his/her job for any reason. They do not work with companies, employees, or labor organizations at the point of any specific event; rather, their client base includes any dislocated workers that are seeking federal or state unemployment benefits. Any of their clients that are Trade Certified could be potentially eligible for the HCTC.
    - These contacts were obtained from the National Department of Labor through a database export of the servicelocator.org website. (This site provides a comprehensive list of local workforce services for unemployed individuals, including One Stop contact information)
    - There are approximately 1800 One Stop director contacts in the HCTC program master contact list.

IV. Privacy, Security, Disclosure

Research Group 4 will ensure that the utmost scrutiny is given to privacy, security, and disclosure when profiling the stakeholders that respond to this survey. Every precaution will be taken to assure the proper protection of the stakeholder's survey responses. The survey responses will be associated with the amount of stakeholder data that is necessary to accomplish the objectives. We will limit and control the amount of information that we collect to those items that are necessary to accomplish the research objectives.

We will carefully safeguard the security of data utilized, as well as, the privacy of the stakeholders. Physical security measures include a locked, secure office. In addition, we will store printouts of sensitive data in locked cabinets, and shred the data when we no longer need it. We will accomplish data security at the C-2 level through the Windows NT operating system. Systems are password protected, users are profiled for authorized use, and individual audit trails will be generated and reviewed. We will apply fair information and record-keeping practices to ensure protection of all stakeholder information.

We will protect the privacy of the stakeholders that participate in the surveys by not using names in our report. We will also control official access to the information and will not allow public access to the information. The surveys and stakeholder data will be destroyed when we have completed the project and there is no further need for the data.

We will apply fair information and record-keeping practices to ensure protection of all stakeholders. The criterion for disclosure laid out in the Privacy Act, the Freedom of Information Act, and section 6103 of the Internal Revenue Code provides for the protection of stakeholder information as well as its release to authorized recipients.

V. Burden Hours

- Invitation/Letter:
    - An email invitation will be sent to the universe of potential respondents (2000.) It is estimated it will take 1 minute for respondents to read the invitation. 2000x1/60=33.33 burden hours
- Survey Completion:
    - The survey is expected to take participants 10 minutes to complete and 200 respondents will complete the survey. 200x10/60=33.33 burden hours
- Total burden: 66.66 hours (33.33 invites, 33.33 survey completion)

The total cost for this research is $7,500.

VI. Special Tallies and Other Information

The following information will be provided within 10 business days after the close of the survey data collection operations:

1. Findings: a brief summary of significant (important) findings that were evidenced in the results.

2. Actions taken or lessons learned: a brief summary of actions taken or lessons learned as a result of the findings

3. Number of requests for stakeholder participation

4. Number of completed questionnaires