ARMY SURVEY REQUEST INSTRUCTIONS

Proposed collections of information from Army personnel, including surveys, interviews and focus groups generally must meet three separate requirements: sponsorship by the Army, approval or exemption from a licensing authority, and approval or exemption from an Army IRB or the Army Human Research Protection Office (AHRPO). These instructions explain the requirements and processes for survey approval and licensing, as exercised by the Army’s two survey licensing authorities for internal Army information collections, the U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences (ARI) and the office of the Army’s Information Management Control Officer (IMCO).

The licensing authority for multi-Service surveys is Washington Headquarters Services (WHS). The licensing authority for surveys of the general public is the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Information on the approval processes for these types of surveys may be obtained from Army IMCO Sandra Stroud at 703-428-6440 (DSN 328) or sandra.d.stroud.civ@mail.mil.

Organizations conducting surveys without proper licensing may be reported to the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, and/or the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, G-1. If surveys collect information from the public without OMB approval, they may be reported to OMB through the DoD CIO as violations of the Paperwork Reduction Act and become part of OMB’s Information Collection Budget report to Congress.

Review and Licensing Requirements for Army Internal Surveys. DoD policy empowers each Service’s survey office (ARI, for the Army) to determine which types of internal, single-Service surveys require Service-level review and licensure.

Surveys distributed only to Army personnel (military or civilians) on broad beliefs, attitudes, or opinions, with sample sizes of 100 or more should be sent to either ARI or the Army IMCO for review and licensure (i.e., assignment of a Survey Control Number [SCN]). Regardless of sample size, surveys whose sample includes senior leaders (e.g., flag officers or the Senior Executive Service) or vulnerable populations (e.g., minors, surviving spouses), and surveys containing sensitive questions (e.g., health status, sexual harassment or assault, risky behaviors, personal finances, unethical or illegal activities) require an intensive technical review and must be submitted to ARI for review.

All internal Army surveys other than those described above should be submitted to the Army IMCO. Typically, the following types of surveys do not require Army IMCO or ARI review/licensure: surveys with a very narrow programmatic focus, customer feedback surveys, on-site training/course evaluations, equipment evaluations, surveys administered to select or classify individuals, and health assessments for clinical purposes. However, IAW with the above, these types of surveys must be sent to ARI for review and licensure determination if they are to be administered to a vulnerable population or contain sensitive questions.

Survey leads are encouraged to contact the ARI survey POCs (listed near the end of this Section) to confirm whether an ARI technical review and license is required for their survey. If a review
and license are required, the survey lead should complete and return to ARI the Army Survey Request. ARI will review the request and take one of the following actions: (1) exempt the survey from review and licensure, (2) approve the survey for distribution and provide a SCN, (3) deny approval and advise that the request may be revised and resubmitted for a second, final review, or (4) disapprove the survey for distribution. If the application is reviewed and denied a second time, the survey may not be resubmitted for a third review and cannot be administered. Upon approval, a SCN will be assigned and should appear on the front page of the survey questionnaire.

Requirements for Surveys and Other Types of Information Collections

Army and/or DoD policies require that information collections comply with the following. For more information on each requirement, see the referenced policy(ies).

No Undue Burden. Individuals requesting an information collection must ensure that the information to be collected is not duplicative of information already available. When the information is not already available, requesters must demonstrate that they are using methods (e.g., a scientific sample vice census) to minimize the information collection burden on Soldiers. (Reference: DoDI 8910.01)

Army Sponsorship. Surveys, interviews and focus groups of Army personnel conducted by military or civilian students or by parties external to the Army require an Army Sponsor at the Brigadier General or Senior Executive Service (SES) level or higher. The Army Sponsor must assert that he or she:
- has read the draft instrument and how it will be administered and analyzed
- believes the survey is mission critical and, therefore, is worth the time of the personnel who would participate
- plans to take action as a result of the survey’s findings
- shares responsibility for meeting the requirements described in the Army Survey Request
- shares responsibility for any negative publicity that could result from the survey’s administration and/or release of findings

The sponsor or his/her designee must also:
- provide general survey oversight
- determine the sensitivity of survey findings and ensure that all documents are marked with the appropriate distribution/release statement
- monitor any release of survey data

Information Security. Any data collected from Army agencies or personnel must be stored, processed, or transmitted only on information systems that have obtained information assurance (IA) approval to operate in accordance with Army processes for the confidentiality level of their information. (Reference: AR 25-2)

Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA). When personal information on individuals is collected in an electronic form, a PIA (DD Form 2930) must be performed to ensure that the data remain protected and private. (Reference: DoDI 5400.16)

Human Research Protections Review. Individuals conducting human subjects research must coordinate with an Army or DoD Institutional Review Board (IRB) or Human Research Protections Office to determine the type of review needed. This review can sometimes be concurrent with the review for licensure. It is incumbent upon the researcher(s) to share substantive changes made in response to one review with those doing the other review. (Reference: DoDI 3216.02; also see 32 CFR 219)

Operations Security (OPSEC). Army personnel conducting or sponsoring a survey must ensure that all publications and presentations containing Army survey data are reviewed by an OPSEC Level II Certified Officer. (Reference: AR 530-1)

Public Release Clearance. Publications and presentations intended for public release and containing Army survey data must be reviewed by a Public Affairs Officer (PAO) prior to release to non-DoD persons (including, but not limited to, ghostwriters, literary agents, editors, and publishers). (Reference: DODD 5230.09; also see AR 360-1)

Requesting a Review and License from ARI

To request ARI review and licensure of attitude and opinion surveys, focus groups or interviews, contact Dr. Robert Simmons (robert.o.simmons2.civ@mail.mil) or Dr. Nicole Thompson (nicole.j.thompson14.civ@mail.mil) to request the latest form(s) used for review. Alternately, you may send an e-mail requesting same to the following address: usarmy.pentagon.hqda-ari.mbx.usarmy-survey-approval@mail.mil.

On average, if all necessary documents are submitted, reviews can be accomplished in 4–6 weeks. Failure to supply the necessary documents or submission of incomplete documents prolongs the time required to review. Upon approval, ARI will assign a Survey Control Number (SCN) which should be on the first page of the instrument or website in the following format:

SURVEY APPROVAL AUTHORITY:
U.S. ARMY RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR THE
BEHAVIORAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
SURVEY CONTROL NUMBER: DAPE-ARI-AO-xx-xx
RCS: xxxxxx
EXPIRES: xx/xx/xxxx

Army IMCO reviews. For information on the reviewing and licensing requirements for surveys of Army contractors, members of the public, members of other Services, or for non-survey information collections, contact Ms. Sandra Stroud, Army IMCO, at (703) 428-6440, DSN 328-6440, and sandra.d.stroud.civ@mail.mil.

Additional information on the licensing requirements for information collections among members of the public or across Services can be found at:
http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/collections/overview.html

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