



SOCIAL SECURITY

MEMORANDUM

Date: February 7, 2012

Refer To:

To: The Commissioner

From: Inspector General

Subject: Performance Indicator Audit: Customer Service (A-15-11-11183)

We contracted with KPMG LLP to evaluate three of the Social Security Administration's performance indicators (PI) established to comply with the *Government Performance and Results Act of 1993*. The attached final report presents the results of the evaluation of one PI. For the PI included in this audit, KPMG's objectives were to:

1. Comprehend and document the sources of data that were collected to report on the specified PI.
2. Identify and test critical controls (both electronic data processing and manual) of systems from which the specified performance data were gathered.
3. Test the adequacy, accuracy, reasonableness, completeness, and consistency of the underlying data for each of the specified PI.
4. Recalculate each measure to ascertain its accuracy.

If you wish to discuss the final report, please call me or have your staff contact Steven L. Schaeffer, Assistant Inspector General for Audit, at (410) 965-9700.

Patrick P. O'Carroll, Jr.

Attachment

**OFFICE OF
THE INSPECTOR GENERAL**

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

**PERFORMANCE INDICATOR AUDIT:
CUSTOMER SERVICE**

February 2012 A-15-11-1183

AUDIT REPORT



Mission

By conducting independent and objective audits, evaluations and investigations, we inspire public confidence in the integrity and security of SSA's programs and operations and protect them against fraud, waste and abuse. We provide timely, useful and reliable information and advice to Administration officials, Congress and the public.

Authority

The Inspector General Act created independent audit and investigative units, called the Office of Inspector General (OIG). The mission of the OIG, as spelled out in the Act, is to:

- Conduct and supervise independent and objective audits and investigations relating to agency programs and operations.
- Promote economy, effectiveness, and efficiency within the agency.
- Prevent and detect fraud, waste, and abuse in agency programs and operations.
- Review and make recommendations regarding existing and proposed legislation and regulations relating to agency programs and operations.
- Keep the agency head and the Congress fully and currently informed of problems in agency programs and operations.

To ensure objectivity, the IG Act empowers the IG with:

- Independence to determine what reviews to perform.
- Access to all information necessary for the reviews.
- Authority to publish findings and recommendations based on the reviews.

Vision

We strive for continual improvement in SSA's programs, operations and management by proactively seeking new ways to prevent and deter fraud, waste and abuse. We commit to integrity and excellence by supporting an environment that provides a valuable public service while encouraging employee development and retention and fostering diversity and innovation.



MEMORANDUM

Date: January 30, 2012

To: Inspector General

From: KPMG, LLP

Subject: Performance Indicator Audit: Customer Service (A-15-11-11183)

OBJECTIVE

The *Government Performance and Results Act of 1993* (GPRA)¹ seeks to improve the Government's internal management, as well as program effectiveness and public accountability, by promoting a new focus on results, service quality, and customer satisfaction. Specifically, GPRA requires that the Social Security Administration (SSA) establish performance indicators (PI) to measure or assess the relevant outputs, service levels, and outcomes of each program activity.² GPRA also requires a description of the means employed to verify and validate the measured values used to report on program performance.³

For this audit of SSA's PI for Fiscal Year (FY) 2010, *Percent of individuals who do business with SSA rating the overall services as "excellent," "very good," or "good,"* our objectives were to:

1. Comprehend and document the sources of data that were collected to report on the specified PI.
2. Identify and test critical controls (both electronic data processing and manual) of systems from which the specified performance data were gathered.
3. Test the adequacy, accuracy, reasonableness, completeness, and consistency of the underlying data for each of the specified PIs.
4. Recalculate each measure to ascertain its accuracy.

¹ Pub. L. No. 103-62, 107 Stat. 285 (codified, as amended, in scattered sections of 5 U.S.C., 31 U.S.C., and 39 U.S.C.).

² 31 U.S.C. §1115(a)(4).

³ 31 U.S.C. § 1115(a)(6).

This performance audit did not constitute an audit of financial statements in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. KPMG was not engaged to, and did not, render an opinion on SSA's internal controls over financial reporting or financial management systems (for purposes of Office of Management and Budget Circular A-127, *Financial Management Systems*, July 23, 1993, as revised). KPMG cautions that projecting the results of its evaluation to future periods is subject to the risks that controls may become inadequate because of changes in conditions or because compliance with controls may deteriorate.

BACKGROUND

We audited the following PI, which was included in SSA's FY 2010 *Performance and Accountability Report (PAR)*.

PI	FY 2010 Target	FY 2010 Actual
Percent of individuals who do business with SSA rating the overall service as "excellent," "very good," or "good." ⁴	83.5% ⁴	78.2% ⁴

SSA linked the PI to its strategic objective 3.4a, *Improve Service for Individuals Who Visit Our Field Offices*,⁵ and strategic goal to *Improve Our Retiree and Other Core Services*.⁶

SSA provides a range of services to the general public including issuing Social Security number cards and paying retirement and long-term disability benefits. SSA provides the public a variety of service options for conducting business and obtaining information. These options consist of customers calling SSA's national toll-free number, calling and/or visiting local field and hearing offices, and using SSA's Website. By continually assessing how it delivers services to the public, SSA has expanded from an entirely field office-based operation to one that offers an array of methods the public can interact with the Agency.⁷

Historically, SSA's Office of Quality Performance (OQP) has used the results of three ongoing surveys for the PI. Because Internet transactions have become an important way of doing business with SSA, Internet users were added to the calculation of the PI for the first time in FY 2009, and the Internet Report Card Survey was introduced as ongoing performance measurement in FY 2010.

⁴ SSA, *Performance and Accountability Report (PAR) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2010*, page 66, November 2010.

⁵ Id.

⁶ SSA, *Annual Performance Plan for FY 2011 and Revised Final Performance Plan for FY 2010*, page 8, February 2010.

⁷ SSA, *PAR for FY 2010*, supra note 4 at page 8.

OQP conducts four surveys using data provided by third-party vendors: the 800-Number Caller Survey, Field Office Caller Survey, Office Visitor Survey, and Internet Report Card Survey.

The PI reflects the percent of individuals rating SSA service as excellent, very good, or good on SSA's standard six-point rating scale: Excellent; Very Good; Good; Fair; Poor; Very Poor.

Additionally, SSA will add further segments of individuals using transactional Internet services incrementally each year from FY 2011 to FY 2013 in the following categories: changes to beneficiary records; completion of medical forms; and information requests (such as request for benefit verification).

For additional detail on the surveys and reporting process, refer to the flowcharts in Appendix C.

PI Background

The 800-Number Caller Survey is conducted with a sample of individuals who received customer service using SSA's national 800-number. A detailed call record is generated and captured by the service provider (currently Verizon), and the raw data are transmitted to SSA daily over a 4-week period in March/April.

Each year, OQP conducts the Field Office Caller Survey in a random sample of 50 of SSA's almost 1,300 field offices. As a result of the multi-year Telephone Service Replacement Project (TSRP) in which new voice-over Internet telephones are being installed in all field offices, major changes were needed to the sampling methodology for the Field Office Caller Survey in FY 2010. OQP conducted a "pilot" field office TSRP Survey in October 2009 to ensure the new methodology would be successful.

The Office Visitor Survey is conducted with a sample of individuals who conducted business at 52 randomly selected field offices and 13 hearing offices over a 4-week period each October. The Office of Quality and Data Management, Division of Modeling, selects participating field offices using a computer-generated random selection of offices proportionate to each region to ensure all 10 SSA regions are represented in the survey. Since there are only 143 hearing offices in total, hearing offices are randomly selected without regard to region. Each office participates for only 1 week of the 4-week sample period.

The Office of Systems Electronic Services houses records of internet transactions and provides the Office of Quality Review, Division of Public Service Evaluation, with a file containing all applications for the designated online service(s) that were completed during a targeted timeframe. The file provides the sampling frame for the survey. The timeframe may vary depending on the transaction sampled. However, the file is always requested in the first or second quarter of the FY to have data available by July to allow for incorporation into the same FY's PI by the September reporting due date.

PI Calculation

The PI percentage is derived by dividing the number of respondents who rate overall service as “good,” “very good,” or “excellent” on a six-point scale ranging from “excellent” to “very poor” in the FY, by the total number of respondents.

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{Percent of individuals who do} \\ \text{business with SSA rating the} \\ \text{overall services as “excellent,”} \\ \text{“very good,” or “good”} \end{array} = \frac{\begin{array}{l} \text{The number of respondents who rate} \\ \text{overall service as “excellent”, “very good,”} \\ \text{or “good” on a six-point scale ranging from} \\ \text{“excellent” to “very poor”} \end{array}}{\text{Total number of respondents}}$$

RESULTS OF REVIEW

Our audit did not identify any significant findings related to the internal controls over the systems supporting the PI. In addition, our audit did not identify significant findings regarding the adequacy, accuracy, reasonableness, completeness, and consistency of the underlying data for the indicators subject to audit. We were able to recalculate the accuracy of the PI without exception.

We noted that SSA management appeared to have remediated previously identified issues by improving their internal controls related to documentation of the survey processes. Survey processes appeared to be current and well-documented.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of our audit, we believe the PI was adequate, accurate, reasonable, complete, and consistent with the underlying data. In addition, we noted that internal controls over the system supporting the PI were operating effectively.

Appendices

APPENDIX A – Acronyms

APPENDIX B – Scope and Methodology

APPENDIX C – Flowcharts and Narratives

APPENDIX D – Agency Comments

Acronyms

ANI	Automatic Number Identifier
APP	<i>Annual Performance Plan</i>
CATI	Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing
DITM	Division of Integrated Telecommunications Management
DM	Division of Modeling
DPSE	Division of Public Service Evaluation
FY	Fiscal Year
GPRA	<i>Government Performance and Results Act of 1993</i>
IDMS	Integrated Database Management System
OIG	Office of the Inspector General
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
OQDM	Office of Quality and Data Management
OQP	Office of Quality Performance
OQR	Office of Quality Review
OSES	Office of Systems Electronic Services
OTSO	Office of Telecommunications and Systems Operations
PAR	<i>Performance and Accountability Report</i>
PI	Performance Indicator
Pub. L. No.	Public Law
SSA	Social Security Administration
TSRP	Telephone Service Replacement Project
U.S.C.	United States Code
VoIP	Voice over Internet Protocol

Scope and Methodology

We obtained an understanding of the Social Security Administration's (SSA) *Government Performance and Results Act of 1993*¹ business processes related to the performance indicator (PI), *Percent of individuals who do business with SSA rating the overall services as "excellent," "very good," or "good."* Our understanding was obtained through research and interviewing key SSA personnel from the Office of Quality Performance (OQP).

Through inquiry, observation, and other substantive testing, including testing of source documentation, we performed the following.

- Reviewed the *Annual Performance Plan for FY 2011 and Revised Final Performance Plan for 2010* to obtain an understanding of the Fiscal Year 2010 PIs.
- Reviewed prior Office of the Inspector General and Government Accountability Office reports related to SSA's PIs.
- Reviewed the OQP Overall Service Satisfaction: Fiscal Year 2010 Performance Indicator Report (October 2010).
- Reviewed applicable laws, regulations, and SSA policy.
- Reviewed documentation and flowcharts of the performance indicator components.
- Flowcharted the customer service processes. (See Appendix C.)
- Identified and tested key controls related to manual or basic computerized processes (for example, spreadsheets, databases, etc.).
- Determined the adequacy, accuracy, reasonableness, completeness, and consistency of performance data reported in SSA's Fiscal Year 2010 Performance and Accountability Report.
- Assessed the completeness and accuracy of the data to determine their reliability as they pertain to the audit objectives.

We conducted our performance audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the

¹ Pub. L. No. 103-62, 107 Stat. 285 (codified as amended in scattered sections of 5 U.S.C., 31 U.S.C. and 39 U.S.C.).

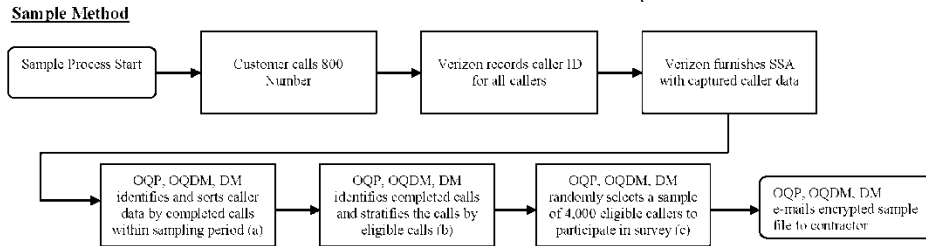


audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

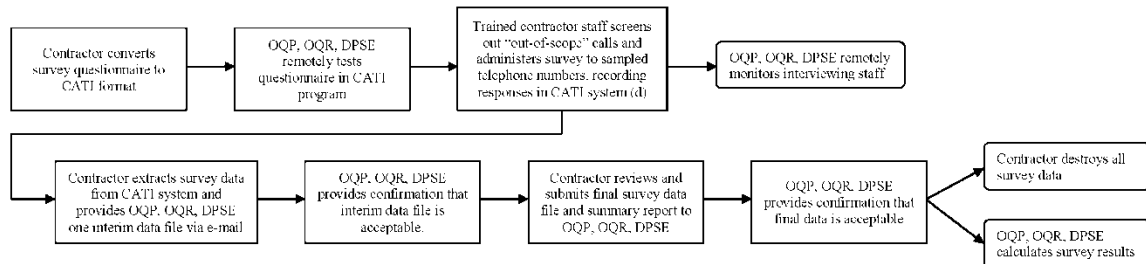
We determined that the data used in the report were sufficiently reliable and believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

Flowcharts and Narratives

800 Number Caller Survey Process



800 Number Caller Survey Process



- a) A completed call is a call in which the customer has selected to speak with an SSA representative or selected an option from the automated system.
- b) An eligible call is one that meets one of the following criteria:
 - i. Call made between 7am - 7pm local time
 - ii. Fewer than 100 calls received from a given phone number that day
 - iii. Call made during the sample period
- c) Over the 4 week survey period OQP, OQDM, DM randomly selects, bi-weekly, 200 callers per day from the recorded caller population provided by Verizon.
- d) For each sample listing, the contractor has 3 weeks to conduct telephone interviews and key responses into a CATI system using the software of their choice. The contractor must make at least 15 attempts to reach the caller over the course of the 3 week period. "Out-of-scope" calls are calls from businesses, pay phones, blocked-numbers, and other non-residential locations where the caller cannot be identified

800-NUMBER CALLER SURVEY

Background/Description

Teleservice became a major vehicle for delivering service to the public with the introduction of SSA's national 800-number in October 1988. This toll-free system allows 1 of the nearly 4,000 teleservice representatives in Social Security Administration (SSA) answering sites to answer calls from anywhere in the country. From the start, SSA received high marks for the quality of its 800-number service and courtesy of its representatives. To continue this tradition of service, the Office of Quality Performance (OQP) conducts the 800-Number Caller Survey to measure customer satisfaction. In addition to obtaining ratings of various aspects of service, the survey is designed to elicit factual information about caller experiences using SSA's 800-number and preferences for conducting future business, including potential for Internet use. The results of this survey are also used to calculate the Agency's annual performance indicator for overall satisfaction of individuals who do business with SSA.

Process to Define Workload/Sampling

The sampling process for this survey begins when a customer contacts SSA's national 800-number. The service provider (currently Verizon) generates and captures a detailed call record, and the raw data are transmitted to SSA daily over a 4-week period in March/April. The Office of Telecommunications and Systems Operations (OTSO), Division of Integrated Telecommunications Management (DITM), in the Office of Systems receives the raw data and imports it into the mainframe where it is stored in the Automatic Number Identifier (ANI) database in an Integrated Database Management System (IDMS) format.

After the data have been stored in the ANI database, the Office of Quality and Data Management (OQDM), Division of Modeling (DM), imports the data from the IDMS format into SAS using the FOCUS information control system. If there are any issues importing the data, FOCUS generally indicates a problem with the data download. To ensure that valid data are imported, DM advises DITM of issues with data. DITM then contacts the vendor to download the data file again. After the data have been imported without technical errors, DM performs its first manipulation of the raw data using SAS to extract calls that would disproportionately distort the results of the survey. Calls not in the specified date/time range, duplicate calls, previously sampled calls, and high volume callers are removed from the scope of the survey, thus producing a reservoir of eligible calls in which the caller either selected an automated service or opted to speak to an agent. DM then reevaluates the end results of this analysis to verify correctness. This process establishes a list of eligible survey candidates.

After the eligible survey candidates have been established DM, uses SAS to select a random sample of callers to participate in the survey. This process generates a list of survey participants that OQDM, DM, exports to a text file, encrypts using WINZIP to protect personally identifiable information, and emails to the contractor's project manager to begin data collection. This process is repeated bi-weekly for the duration of the 4-week data collection period.

Review/Survey Process

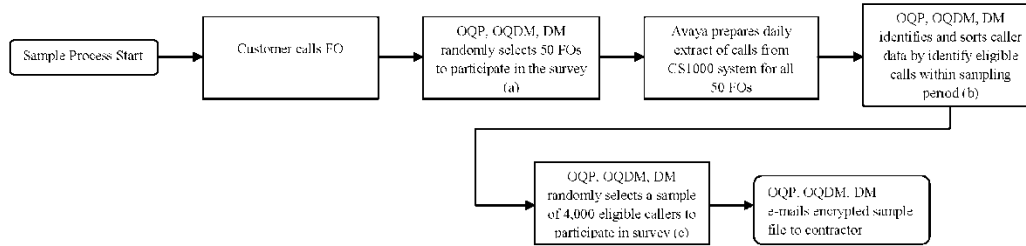
The data collection method used for the 800-Number Caller Survey is telephone interviewing that is done by a privately contracted vendor. SSA provides the vendor with an Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approved survey questionnaire in Microsoft Word format in English and Spanish (see Appendices B and C for copies of the Fiscal Year [FY] 2010 questionnaire in each language) as well as 8 sample files containing a total of 4,000 telephone numbers. The vendor converts the questionnaire to Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) format using a software product of its choice. CATI is a telephone surveying technique in which the interviewer follows a script provided by a software application. The interview questions are displayed on the computer monitor and follow the sequence indicated by the software designer. The interviewer is able to input the responses received by telephone directly into the computer system using the keyboard. SSA provides test sample records for the contractor to prepare the CATI program. To ensure the contractor's CATI system is programmed to accurately capture the survey results, the contractor furnishes SSA with the CATI survey program for testing and validation. The test includes a review of the flow of questions in the CATI system to ensure the skips are correct and the questionnaire is set up as intended.

The contractor is responsible for all aspects of the data collection phase of the survey process. It uses CATI software to manage survey administration, record survey responses, and monitor case completion. Approximately 1 week after interviewing begins, the contractor sends SSA an interim data file of survey responses. SSA reviews the contents of the interim file as a further check on the accuracy of the CATI program.

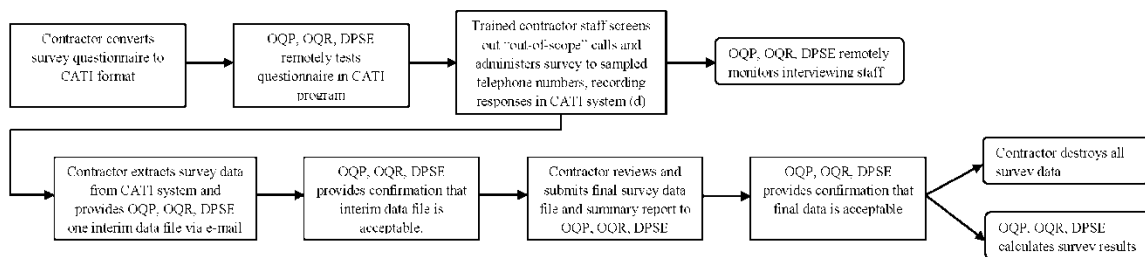
At the end of the interviewing period, the contractor provides SSA with a final data file containing a disposition for every record, showing the date and time of all call attempts, the outcome of each call attempt (for example, busy signal, interview successfully completed, refusal, appointment scheduled, etc.), and the final outcome of each case. The final data file also contains the responses from all completed surveys. The encrypted file, which contains the raw data for all eight samples, is then emailed to the Office of Quality Review (OQR), Division of Public Service Evaluation (DPSE), for analysis.

Field Office Caller Survey

Sample Method



FO Caller Survey Process



- a) The FO sample is a subset of the 110 FOs randomly selected every year for the Telephone Service Evaluation undertaken separately by OQP, OQR, DPSE to evaluate the accuracy of information provided to calls by FO staff.
- b) An eligible call is one that meets one of the following criteria:
 - i. Call made between 7am - 7pm local time.
 - ii. Multiple calls from the same phone number (if less than 100) are given one opportunity for selection in a sample period.
 - iii. Call made during the sample period and telephone number not previously sampled during the survey period.
- c) Over the 4 week survey period OQP, OQDM, DM randomly selects, bi-weekly, 200 callers per day from the pool of eligible callers.
- d) For each sample listing, the contractor has 3 weeks to conduct telephone interviews and key responses into a CATI system using the software of their choice. The contractor must make at least 15 attempts to reach the caller over the course of the 3 week period. "Out-of-scope" calls are personal calls to SSA employees and calls from businesses, pay phones, blocked-numbers, and other non-residential locations where the caller cannot be identified.

1

FIELD OFFICE CALLER SURVEY

Background/Description

SSA offers telephone service in almost 1,300 field offices. To help improve service and operations, OQP conducts a survey to assess public satisfaction with field office telephone service in a random sample of 50 different field offices each year. The survey is designed to obtain ratings of various aspects of service and to elicit factual information about caller experiences and preferences for conducting future business, including potential for Internet use. The results of this survey are also used to calculate the Agency's annual performance indicator for overall satisfaction of individuals who do business with SSA.

As a result of the multi-year Telephone Service Replacement Project (TSRP) in which new Voice-over Internet Protocol (VOIP) telephones are being installed in all field offices, major changes were needed to the sampling methodology for the Field Office Caller Survey in FY 2010. To ensure the new methodology would be successful, OQP conducted a "pilot" field office TSRP Survey in October 2009. The majority of the appendices in this document refer to the field office TSRP Survey because they describe the current procedures for the field office Caller Survey. Updated versions of

these appendices specific to the annual field office Caller Survey will be substituted as they are developed.

Process to Define Workload/Sampling

Each year the OQDM, DM selects a sample of 110 field offices to participate in OQP's field office Telephone Service Evaluation. From this sample, OQDM, DM identifies a sub-sample of 50 field offices for inclusion in the annual field office Caller Survey. The sub-sample is drawn after sorting the parent sample by region and area. As a result, the field office Caller Survey sample has a distribution by region and area similar to the parent field office Telephone Service Evaluation sample.

Avaya is the contractor providing SSA's VOIP telephone service and call data management information. Sampling for the field office Caller Survey is limited to calls recorded in Avaya's CS1000 system. That file consists only of calls that were answered by an employee or connected to a voice mailbox. Callers who experience one of the following situations are not available for sampling: (a) callers who heard the message that all agents are busy/call back later; (b) callers who used an automated service; (c) callers who only listened to field office hours and directions; (d) callers who abandoned in queue; and (e) callers who were transferred to an overflow line after the maximum wait in queue if their call was ultimately not answered. It is possible that some of these categories of callers may be subject to sampling in future surveys if Avaya's management information structure changes.

From the CS1000 system, Avaya prepares extracts of calls to all 50 sample field offices for each day in the 4-week sampling period that covers a March/April timeframe. OQDM, DM manipulates the raw data using SAS to extract calls that would disproportionately distort the results of the survey. Calls not in the specified date/time range, duplicate calls, and previously sampled calls are removed from the scope of the survey, thus producing a reservoir of eligible calls. The end results of this analysis are then reevaluated by DM to verify correctness. This process establishes a list of eligible survey candidates.

After the eligible survey candidates have been established, DM uses SAS to select a random sample of callers to participate in the survey. This process generates a list of survey participants which DM exports to a text file, encrypts using WINZIP to protect personally identifiable information, and emails to the contractor's project manager to begin data collection. This process is repeated bi-weekly for the duration of the 4-week data collection period.

Review/Survey Process

The data collection method used for the field office Caller Survey is telephone interviewing, which is accomplished by a privately contracted vendor. SSA provides the vendor with an OMB-approved survey questionnaire in Microsoft Word format in English and Spanish as well as 8 sample files containing a total of 4,000 telephone numbers. The vendor converts the questionnaire to CATI format using a software product of its choice. CATI is a telephone surveying technique in which the interviewer follows a

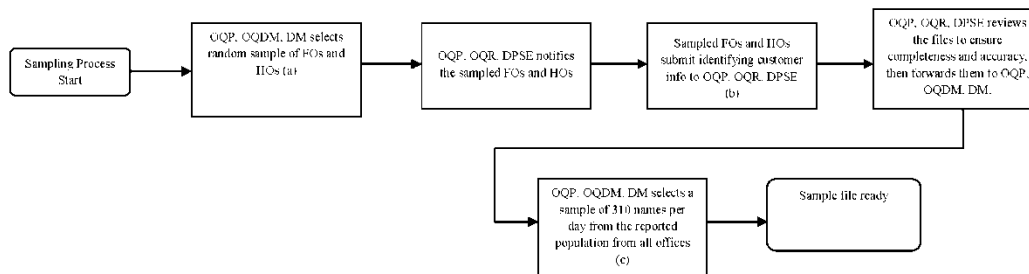
script provided by a software application. The interview questions are displayed on the computer monitor and follow the sequence indicated by the software designer. The interviewer is able to input the responses received by telephone into the computer system using the keyboard. SSA provides test sample records for the contractor to use in preparing the CATI program. To ensure the contractor's CATI system is programmed to accurately capture the survey results, the contractor furnishes SSA with the CATI survey program for testing and validation. The test includes a review of the flow of questions in the CATI system to ensure the skips are correct and the questionnaire is set up as intended.

The contractor is responsible for all aspects of the data collection phase of the survey process. It uses CATI software to manage survey administration, record survey responses, and monitor case completion. Approximately 1 week after interviewing begins, the contractor sends SSA an interim data file of survey responses. SSA reviews the contents of the interim file as a further check on the accuracy of the CATI program.

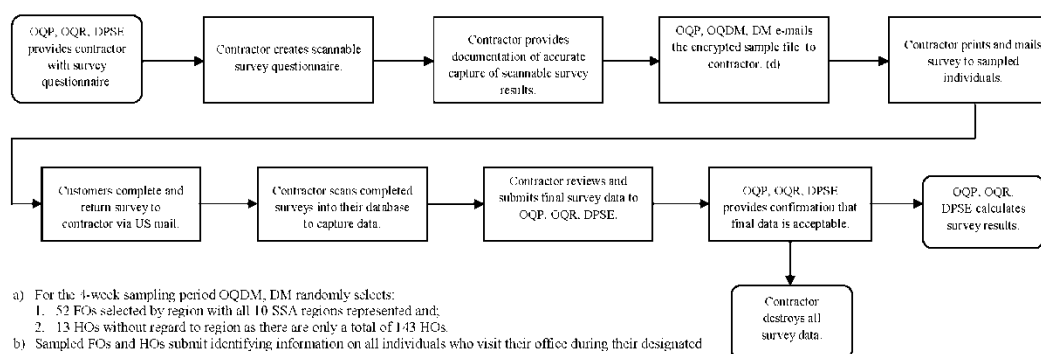
At the end of the interviewing period, the contractor provides SSA with a final data file containing a disposition for every record, showing the date and time of all call attempts, the outcome of each call attempt (for example, busy signal, interview successfully completed, refusal, appointment scheduled, etc.), and the final outcome of each case. The final data file also contains the responses from all completed surveys. The encrypted file, which contains the raw data for all eight samples, is then emailed to OQR), DPSE for analysis.

Office Visit Survey Process

Sample Method



Office Visitor Survey Process



- a) For the 4-week sampling period OQDM, DM randomly selects:
 1. 52 FOs selected by region with all 10 SSA regions represented and;
 2. 13 HO without regard to region as there are only a total of 143 HOs.
- b) Sampled FOs and HOs submit identifying information on all individuals who visit their office during their designated week; via the OQP Survey Screens in the Visitor Intake Program (VIP) or using an independent Access database provided by OQR, DPSE.
- c) OQDM, DM selects a sample twice a week covering 2 days and 3 days, targeting a daily sample of 275 FO visitors and 35 HO visitors.
- d) Files are encrypted using WINZIP to protect personally identifiable information (PII).

OFFICE VISITOR SURVEY

Background/Description

Each year, SSA conducts an office visitor survey to measure the satisfaction of individuals who have visited one of SSA's field offices or hearing offices to complete their business. It collects information that aids in understanding the customer experience that substantiates satisfaction ratings. SSA has been conducting a satisfaction survey with the office visitor population since 1999.

Process to Define Workload/Sampling

The first step in conducting the office visitor survey is to select the offices that will participate in the survey. The survey is conducted with a sample of individuals who transacted business at 52 randomly selected field offices and 13 hearing offices over a 4-week period in October each year. To ensure all 10 SSA regions are represented in the survey, DM selects participating field offices using SAS to randomly select offices proportionate to region. Since there are only 143 hearing offices, hearing offices are randomly selected without regard to region.

DPSE notifies each sampled office of their selection and provides explicit instructions for collecting and submitting daily visitor information. Each office participates for only 1 week of the 4-week sample period.

Once the field offices/hearing offices have been selected, the next phase of the survey involves establishing the universe of survey participants. The office visitor survey differs from the other performance measure surveys in that eligible survey participants are not selected electronically from an automated data collection system. Instead, service representatives and claim representatives in field offices/hearing offices collect contact information from all visitors and input it into an electronic data file, which they then transmit to DPSE.

To record identifying information, all individuals who visit the field office/hearing office to conduct business with SSA are included and considered eligible survey participants. A visit is considered a business contact with the Agency and should be included even if no action is taken. For hearing offices, all claimants who visit the hearing office to attend a scheduled hearing and visitors to remote hearing sites are considered office visitors.

The field office/hearing office records each customer's full name, complete mailing address including apartment number, city/State/ZIP code, telephone number, reason for visit, and the visitor's preferred language for conducting business with SSA. At the close of business each day, the survey coordinator in the field office/hearing office sends the file of visitor information to DPSE. Upon receipt of the data file, DPSE analysts review the data to ensure they are complete and accurate. Once verified, DPSE forwards the file to DM for sampling.

To select the sample of eligible visitors, OQDM, DM uses SAS to randomly select a sample of 310 names per day (up to 275 from field offices and 35 from hearing offices) from the reported population every 2 to 3 days during the survey period. One sample file each week contains approximately 930 names, addresses, control numbers and language indicators (representing 3 days of selections). The second sample file (representing 2 days of selections) includes approximately 620 names, addresses, and language indicators. Once prepared, DM encrypts the sample files using WINZIP to protect PII and electronically sends them to the contractor to prepare the scannable forms for mailing and data collection. This sampling and mailing process is repeated bi-weekly for each week during the survey period.

Review/Survey Process

The contractor is responsible for designing a scannable questionnaire in both English and Spanish based on questions that SSA furnishes (Spanish translations are provided by SSA).

The data collection method used for the office visitor survey is a scannable mail survey, which is carried out by a privately contracted vendor. SSA provides the contractor with the necessary tools to conduct the survey, such as an OMB-approved survey questionnaire in Microsoft Word format in both English and Spanish for the pre-notice

postcard and initial and follow-up cover letters in both English and Spanish, and eight Excel sample files. To ensure the success and accuracy of the survey, SSA provides the contractor with test sample data at a mutually agreed upon time to develop any aspect of the printing, mailing or data collection operation.

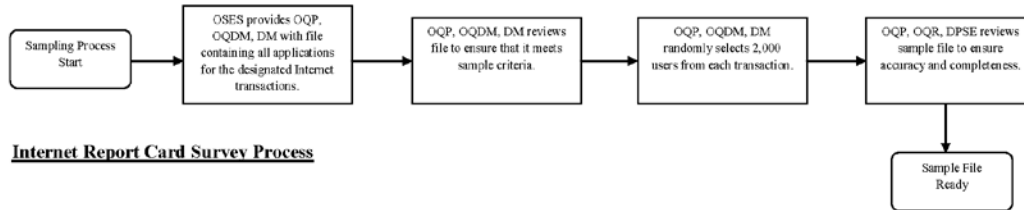
The contractor is responsible for all aspects of the data collection phase of the survey process. It creates scannable surveys, mails the surveys, tracks the disposition of the surveys, processes all completed surveys, and provides the results of the surveys. It also develop the database to capture the results of the survey. The hardware and software platform used to process the questionnaires is left to the contractor's discretion. DPSE reviews a set of test data to confirm that the data scanning process accurately records the answers on completed survey forms in the database.

OQR, DPSE assigns a control number to each participant and includes it in the sample file that is sent to the contractor. The contractor tracks the disposition of all mailed survey packages and records the final outcome for every sampled individual based on the assigned control number.

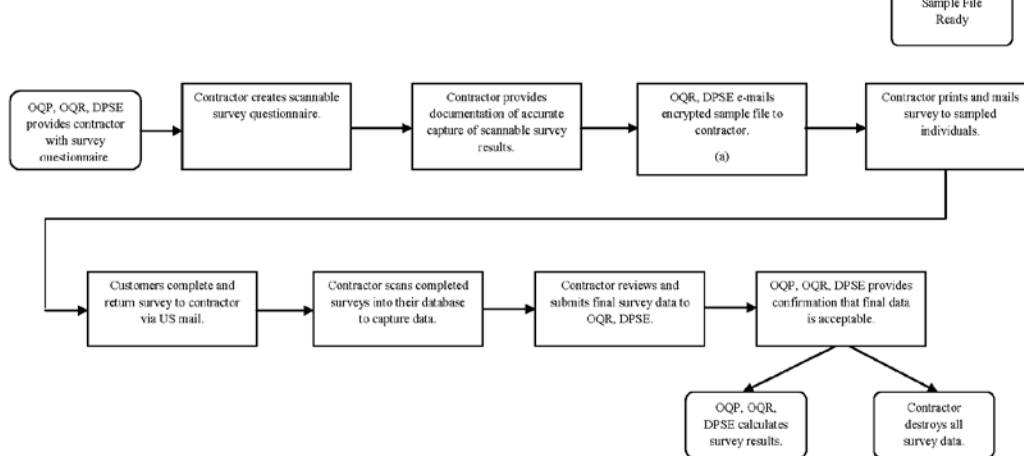
The contractor is responsible for processing all completed questionnaires. The results for all sample listings are returned to SSA in an electronic format and include all responses and all narrative comments associated with each unique control number represented by the barcode on completed questionnaires. A questionnaire is considered "complete" if at least one question was answered. On all other records (questionnaire not completed), the results contain a disposition indicator which specifies a final outcome (no survey returned, wrong address, etc.) for each sampled individual. The contractor provides raw data to DPSE in a WINZIP-encrypted file to protect sampled individuals' PII. DPSE ensures that data are recorded for each control number.

Internet Report Card Survey

Sample Method



Internet Report Card Survey Process



a) Files encrypted using WinZip to protect personally identifiable information (PII)

INTERNET REPORT CARD SURVEY

Background/Description

Annually, SSA surveys individuals who do business with SSA to assess their satisfaction with the specific mode of contact they used. Traditionally, SSA used the results of three ongoing surveys of 800-number and field office callers and office visitors to produce its key performance indicator, “percent of individuals doing business with SSA who rate overall service excellent, very good or good.” Because Internet transactions have grown into another important method for doing business with SSA, OQP added the satisfaction of Internet users into the calculation of our performance indicator for the first time in FY 2009 and introduced the Internet report card Survey into the ongoing performance measurement in FY 2010.

The Internet report card Survey assesses the satisfaction of the people who use our online transaction services. Conducted by mail shortly after participants complete their transaction on SSA’s Website, it also collects information that will help SSA understand the customer experience behind their satisfaction ratings.

Process to Define Workload/Sampling

To establish eligible participants for the Internet report card Survey, the Office of Systems Electronic Services (OSES) in DPSE with a file containing all applications for the designated online service(s) that were completed during a targeted timeframe. This timeframe may vary depending on the transaction sampled, but the file is always requested in the 1st or 2nd quarter of the FY to have data available by July to allow for incorporation into the same FY's performance indicator by the September reporting due date. At a minimum, the file itself includes the following information for every record: the sampled individual's name and Social Security number as well as the type of online business transacted. If the mailing address is not available from the online transaction (for example, as in direct deposit transactions), the OSES file is matched against other SSA databases such as the Master Beneficiary Record to obtain a mailing address.

In light of workload and budget constraints, SSA is implementing the Internet report card Survey incrementally. The sample for the FY 2010 Internet report card Survey included three strata of individuals who completed one of SSA's online applications: iClaim for retirement or Title II disability benefits or an i1020 for Medicare Part D Subsidy. In subsequent years OQR, DPSE plans to expand the Internet report card Survey to include iClaim for Medicare only (FY 2011) and the three other categories of transactions SSA currently offers on its Website: reports of a change (FY 2011), disability report forms (FY 2012), and requests for information (FY 2013).

Upon receipt of the data file, the DM staff applies the sampling criteria and use SAS to randomly select 2,000 users for each of the strata within a transaction category and provide DPSE with a sample file in Excel. DPSE staff then review the Excel sample file to ensure that it is complete and accurate. Finally, DPSE encrypts the sample using WinZip and emails it to the contractor to prepare the scannable forms for mailing and data collection.

Review/Survey Process

The contractor is responsible for designing a scannable questionnaire based on questions that SSA furnishes. The survey is conducted in English only because SSA's transactional online services are available only in English. SSA will provide a unique questionnaire for the remaining Internet transaction categories as each option year contract is exercised. Although the content of each questionnaire is tailored to the particular Internet transaction, all questionnaires will be similar in size and format to the questionnaire designed for FY 2010.

The data collection method used for the Internet report card Survey is a scannable mail survey. Data collection is carried out by a privately contracted vendor. SSA provides the contractor with the necessary tools to conduct the 3-part survey, which includes: An OMB-approved survey questionnaire in Microsoft Word format, language for a pre-notice postcard and initial and follow-up survey letters, and sample files containing 2,000 records per stratum. To ensure the success and accuracy of the survey, SSA also provides the contractor with test sample data at a mutually agreed upon time to develop any aspect of the printing, mailing or data collection operation.

The contractor is responsible for all aspects of the data collection phase of the survey process. It creates scannable survey forms, mails the surveys, tracks the disposition of the surveys, processes all completed surveys, and provides the results of the surveys. It also develops a database to capture the results of the survey. The hardware and software platform used to process the questionnaires is left to the contractor's discretion. DPSE reviews a set of test data to confirm that the data scanning process accurately records the answers on completed survey forms in the database.

DPSE assigns a control number for each participant and provides it to the contractor. The contractor tracks the disposition of all mailed survey packages and records the final outcome for every sampled individual based on the assigned control number.

The contractor is responsible for processing all completed questionnaires. The results for all sample listings are submitted in an electronic format and include all responses and all narrative comments associated with each unique control number represented by the barcode on completed questionnaires. A questionnaire is considered "complete" if at least one question was answered. On all other records (questionnaire not completed), the results contain a disposition indicator which specifies a final outcome (no survey returned, wrong address, etc.) for each sampled individual. The contractor provides raw data to DPSE and is not required to perform any data tabulations. DPSE ensures that data are recorded for each control number.

Agency Comments



Social Security

MEMORANDUM

Date: January 13, 2012

Refer To: SIJ-3

To: Patrick P. O'Carroll, Jr.
Inspector General

From: Dean S. Landis /s/ TF
Deputy Chief of Staff

Subject: Office of the Inspector General Draft Report, "Performance Indicator Audit: Customer Service" (A-15-11-11183)—INFORMATION

Thank you for the opportunity to review the draft report. We reviewed the report and have no comment.

Please let me know if we can be of further assistance. You may direct staff inquiries to Frances Cord at (410) 966-5787.

DISTRIBUTION SCHEDULE

Commissioner of Social Security

Chairman and Ranking Member, Committee on Ways and Means

Chief of Staff, Committee on Ways and Means

Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, Subcommittee on Social Security

Majority and Minority Staff Director, Subcommittee on Social Security

Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, Committee on the Budget, House of Representatives

Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, Committee on Appropriations, House of Representatives

Chairman and Ranking Minority, Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies, Committee on Appropriations, House of Representatives

Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, Committee on Appropriations, U.S. Senate

Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies, Committee on Appropriations, U.S. Senate

Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, Committee on Finance

Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, Subcommittee on Social Security Pensions and Family Policy

Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, Senate Special Committee on Aging

Social Security Advisory Board

Overview of the Office of the Inspector General

The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) is comprised of an Office of Audit (OA), Office of Investigations (OI), Office of the Counsel to the Inspector General (OCIG), Office of External Relations (OER), and Office of Technology and Resource Management (OTRM). To ensure compliance with policies and procedures, internal controls, and professional standards, the OIG also has a comprehensive Professional Responsibility and Quality Assurance program.

Office of Audit

OA conducts financial and performance audits of the Social Security Administration's (SSA) programs and operations and makes recommendations to ensure program objectives are achieved effectively and efficiently. Financial audits assess whether SSA's financial statements fairly present SSA's financial position, results of operations, and cash flow. Performance audits review the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of SSA's programs and operations. OA also conducts short-term management reviews and program evaluations on issues of concern to SSA, Congress, and the general public.

Office of Investigations

OI conducts investigations related to fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement in SSA programs and operations. This includes wrongdoing by applicants, beneficiaries, contractors, third parties, or SSA employees performing their official duties. This office serves as liaison to the Department of Justice on all matters relating to the investigation of SSA programs and personnel. OI also conducts joint investigations with other Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies.

Office of the Counsel to the Inspector General

OCIG provides independent legal advice and counsel to the IG on various matters, including statutes, regulations, legislation, and policy directives. OCIG also advises the IG on investigative procedures and techniques, as well as on legal implications and conclusions to be drawn from audit and investigative material. Also, OCIG administers the Civil Monetary Penalty program.

Office of External Relations

OER manages OIG's external and public affairs programs, and serves as the principal advisor on news releases and in providing information to the various news reporting services. OER develops OIG's media and public information policies, directs OIG's external and public affairs programs, and serves as the primary contact for those seeking information about OIG. OER prepares OIG publications, speeches, and presentations to internal and external organizations, and responds to Congressional correspondence.

Office of Technology and Resource Management

OTRM supports OIG by providing information management and systems security. OTRM also coordinates OIG's budget, procurement, telecommunications, facilities, and human resources. In addition, OTRM is the focal point for OIG's strategic planning function, and the development and monitoring of performance measures. In addition, OTRM receives and assigns for action allegations of criminal and administrative violations of Social Security laws, identifies fugitives receiving benefit payments from SSA, and provides technological assistance to investigations.