



**REVIEW OF
FEDERAL EMPLOYEES' COMPENSATION
PROGRAM CUSTOMER SERVICE SURVEYS
FOR THE EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS
ADMINISTRATION**

**U.S. Department of Labor
Office of Inspector General
Office of Analysis, Complaints and Evaluations**

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Acronyms

FEC	Division of Federal Employees' Compensation
FECA	Federal Employees' Compensation Act
GAO	U.S. General Accounting Office
OIG	Office of Inspector General, U.S. Department of Labor
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
OWCP	Office of Workers' Compensation Programs

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) reviewed the Office of Workers' Compensation (OWCP) 1995 - 1998 customer service surveys, which were conducted by the Division of Federal Employees' Compensation (FEC). We analyzed the surveys' methodology in order to determine their accuracy and usefulness in providing sound information about customer service. Although OWCP has made efforts to improve the surveys each year, our analysis revealed the existence of methodological flaws in several areas, including survey design, measurement of customer service, sampling, response rate, and survey operations.

We make the following recommendations to enhance the accuracy of the data by improving the survey methodology and thus help OWCP judge and improve the quality of customer service provided by FEC.

Survey Design

1. Revise the questionnaire to shorten it, improve formatting of questions, and eliminate duplicate questions.
2. Reformat the questions to reduce the burden on claimants.
3. Conduct a pilot test for any future survey to increase clarity and relevance.

Measurement of Customer Service

Supplement reporting on customer service with focus group data.

Sampling

1. Draw a sample weighted to reflect the differences in sizes among the five claimant subgroups.
2. Analyze the sample to identify and eliminate overlap in sample selection from each subgroup.
3. Focus analysis of the survey data on only the key questions for which the research is being conducted.
4. Include additional analysis of samples, including: a comparison of the sample to the national claimant universe, using demographic variables and estimation of sampling error.

Response Rate

1. Establish higher standards for the response rate.
2. Include a cover letter on the contractor or DOL letterhead explaining at a minimum the importance of the survey, that participation is voluntary, a promise of confidentiality, and contact information for any questions.

3. Review follow-up procedures to ensure that nonrespondents who do not return the survey after the first postcard receive a new copy of the survey with a different cover letter stating the urgency of the project.

Survey Operations

1. Keep a record of the surveys returned in the mail as undeliverable and identify the reason why they were returned.
2. Ensure that the claimants sampled have the necessary experience with agency services to be able to answer the questions that are asked.
3. Keep a copy of the final data set as a permanent agency record.

The following report contains our analysis, findings, and recommendations regarding the methodology of the FEC customer service surveys. We provided a draft of this report to OWCP. The agency response is found in the body of the report and in its entirety in Appendix III. OWCP agreed to implement most of our recommendations if they conduct another survey and we consider those recommendations OWCP agreed with resolved. We are awaiting written confirmation of OWCP's corrective actions so that we can close the recommendations.

I. PURPOSE

The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) conducted a review of the Office of Workers' Compensation's (OWCP) 1994-1998 customer service surveys of claimants covered under the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA). Because we believe that OWCP's ability to effectively measure customer satisfaction with FECA service is critical toward improving customer service, we analyzed the methodology of the surveys in order to determine whether they provide accurate and useful information.

Earlier OIG and U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO) reports found no evidence of anti-claimant bias on the part of OWCP¹. However, while conducting research that resulted in our *Review of Medical Reimbursements and Authorization of Surgical Requests for the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs* (1999), we requested a copy of the OWCP customer service survey report. Upon examination, we found methodological flaws in the questionnaire, casting doubt on the surveys' ability to provide accurate and useful information to the agency on customer service.

To assess the surveys' ability to provide useful information on customer service, we analyzed OWCP's customer service survey methodology in the following areas:

- \$ Survey design,
- \$ Measurement of customer service,
- \$ Sampling,
- \$ Response rate, and
- \$ Survey operations

We conducted our review according to the *Quality Standards for Inspections* published by the President's Council on Integrity and Efficiency.

¹ U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, *Review of FECA Program Administration*, 1998. U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, *Review of Medical Reimbursements and Authorization of Surgical Requests for the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs*, 1999. U.S. General Accounting Office, *Federal Employees' Compensation Act -- Non Evidence That Labor's Physical Selection Processes Biased Claimants' Decisions*, 1994.

II. BACKGROUND, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

1. Background

OWCP has conducted an annual customer service survey of claimants covered under FECA since 1995. The purpose of this survey, which focuses on customer service process issues and not on adjudication, is to measure agency performance to monitor customer service and for planning purposes. The agency samples five groups of claimants: periodic roll payment recipients (who were in receipt of payments released every 28 days for wage loss); daily roll payment recipients (claimants who receive intermittent payments for wage loss); employees injured but with no salary loss; employees whose claims for injury or disease have been denied; and employees who filed claims for occupational disease. Management uses this information for monitoring customer service and planning.

The first round of customer service surveys was conducted in-house. The agency sent the surveys to respondents in June, 1994 and reported on its findings in 1995. Since then, OWCP has hired a contractor to conduct the surveys. Customarily, OWCP mails the surveys in March and the contractor records and analyzes the data and submits a formal report on the findings by August of the same fiscal year. A contractor report has been submitted to the agency each year the survey has been conducted.

OWCP contracted out the second round of surveys to Market Research Bureau, Inc. of Washington, D.C. The contractor conducted the survey in September of 1995 and issued a report in January of 1996. The sampling for this survey appears to have used the previously determined claimant subgroups. According to the report, the agency mailed an equal number of questionnaires (600) to the five client categories for a total of 3,000. The returned questionnaires were sent to DOL and then forwarded to the contractor for analysis. Six hundred and thirty-five were returned for a response rate of 21%. The questionnaire included both open-ended and closed-ended questions and covered a range of customer service related issues. This survey also allowed respondents to provide verbatim comments that were not consistently analyzed from year to year.

Contractor D. M. Saunders was awarded the contract for the 1996 survey. To increase the response rate in this round, OWCP made some changes: it increased the sample size by 500 and mailed follow-up postcards to nonrespondents. Data collection was completed in February 1997 and the report was issued in May of 1997. OWCP reported the response rate for this survey to be 29%.

The original contractor, Market Research, Inc., was awarded the contract for the 1998 survey. The number of followup postcards was increased to two and respondents were given a deadline for returning the survey. The report based on data collected for this survey was issued in 1998. In this survey the total response rate was 44%. To gather

information on nonrespondents, a telephone interview supplemented this survey.

2. Scope

OIG reviewed customer service surveys conducted annually from 1994 -1998 by OWCP. Our analysis focused on survey methodology in the following areas: survey design, measurement of customer service, sampling, response rate, and survey operations. The following issues were outside the scope of our review: efforts that may be occurring at the district level to measure customer service; initiatives that OWCP may have taken to improve customer service in response to survey information; performance planning that may have been conducted using the data obtained from the surveys; and contracting issues with regard to procurement of the survey.

3. Methodology

To analyze the methodological issues within the scope of our review, we inspected customer service survey questionnaires and reports and written agency documentation, policies, and procedures on how the survey was conducted; and held interviews with OWCP officials.

III. FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on all the information reviewed, OIG identified specific research methodology deficiencies that detract from the ability to make inferences about the claimant population from the sample. Our recommendations are designed to ensure that high quality data are available for the agency's management of customer service.

In order to make our recommendations immediately useful, we chose to only report on the most salient issues that need attention. The following sections list our findings, conclusions, and recommendations regarding (1) survey design, (2) measurement of customer service, (3) sampling, (4) response rate, and (5) survey operations.

1. Survey Design

Our review found problems and deficiencies with regard to the length, construction, and testing of the survey instrument. Specifically, we found that the questionnaire is too long; the number of answer formats, as well as the sequencing of questions, is problematic; and the questionnaire was never pilot tested. Appendix II contains copies of the questionnaires for the 1996, 1997, and 1998 reports.

Questionnaire length. The survey is four pages long, which is excessive for the goals of the annual customer service survey. The length of the questionnaire may encourage respondents to rush or skip items, reducing the quality of the response. By making the following revisions the questionnaire could be shortened to two pages. The first four paragraphs of the survey should be moved to a cover letter, any duplicate questions should be eliminated, and the questions could be reformatted to save space. Research shows that shorter, focused questionnaires have a higher probability of yielding reliable responses and higher response rates.

Questionnaire construction. The questionnaire construction is deficient. The questionnaire uses nine types of formats interspersed throughout. For example, question formats 1, 2a, 3, 4a, 4b, 5b, 5c, 6, and 7 in the 1998 survey are all different response formats (see Appendix II). Using many answer formats makes it difficult for the respondent to answer. The number of answer formats should be reduced to no more than four, and questions should be grouped by the answer format used. Screening questions should be located early in the questionnaire. For example, question 6 is a screening question and should be asked early in the questionnaire (see Appendix II). Placing screening questions early in the questionnaire has two advantages: it (1) prevents claimants from wasting their time when they do not have the experience necessary to answer and (2) strengthens survey findings. Improving the formatting will decrease the amount of time needed for completion and improve the probability of response. Claimants who lack the necessary experience will be screened out early and will not be burdened with completing the entire questionnaire.

Pilot test. No pilot test was conducted. The questionnaires were not tested with a small group of claimants before they were used with thousands of claimants over the last 3 years. Testing a questionnaire before it is mailed to the entire sample can help the agency learn whether the questionnaire is long and confusing to respondents and gauge whether it is asking relevant questions.

Recommendations

1. Revise the questionnaire to shorten it, improve formatting of questions, and eliminate duplicate questions.

OWCP Response

"We agree with #1 that the questionnaire could benefit from being revised to shorten its length, improve the formatting and eliminate duplicate questions."

OIG Conclusion

On the basis of OWCP's response, we consider this recommendation resolved. To close this recommendation, we would appreciate receiving a printed copy of the revised questionnaire that is sent out to respondents.

2. Reformat the questions to reduce the burden on claimants.

OWCP Response

"We agree with Recommendation #2 regarding the formatting of questions to put the like questions together. We would note, however, that OWCP/FEC has received no complaints from claimants through the past three years that there is undue 'burden' in completion of the questionnaires, as your report suggests."

OIG Conclusion

On the basis of OWCP's response, the issue of reformatting of questions is resolved. To close this recommendation, we would appreciate receiving a copy of the 1999 questionnaire as mailed to respondents. Although OWCP has received no adverse comments on the surveys, our assessment is that the low response rates may be claimant reaction to the "burden" created by a poorly-designed questionnaire. Research in this area shows that response rates go down when questionnaires are too long.

3. Conduct a pilot test for any future survey to increase clarity and relevance.

OWCP Response

“We agree with Recommendation #3 that a pilot test may be useful should we substantially revise the survey in the future.”

OIG Conclusion

On the basis of OWCP’s response, we consider this recommendation resolved. To close this recommendation, we would appreciate receiving a copy of the pilot test methodology and results.

2. Measurement of Customer Service

The use of a single questionnaire can result in unreliable reporting. It is advisable that the agency measure customer service through a variety of data sources instead of relying solely on one survey.

Reporting on customer service. Even if a survey is conducted perfectly, it cannot capture all the dimensions of a multifaceted topic such as customer service. Focus groups are particularly useful for exploring issues and can contribute a clear understanding of customer service². In addition, programmatic areas that require improvement are more likely to be identified, making it possible to correct customer service problems before they escalate.

Recommendation

Supplement reporting on customer service with focus group data.

OWCP Response

“We will review this suggestion, to supplement the use of a survey on customer satisfaction by using focus groups, depending on the availability of funding.”

OIG Conclusion

On the basis of OWCP’s response, we do not consider this recommendation resolved. As stated in our report, we believe that, to have valid and useful information, the agency needs to collect information from more than one source.

²William G. Zikmund, *Business Research Methods*, 3rd ed. (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1989), p. 82.

3. Sampling

Examination of the sample revealed that it was not proportional to the different subgroups comprising the entire group of claimants. Further, our review disclosed that (1) the categories of claimant groups were not mutually exclusive, thereby raising the potential for overlap; (2) District Office comparisons were not statistically valid for the 1997 and 1998 surveys; and, (3) no analysis was conducted by the agency to ensure the sample approximated the entire group's characteristics.

The sample. The sample drawn was not proportional to the different subgroups comprising the entire group of claimants. The different subgroups of claimants vary in size. Some of the five groups are over-sampled while others are under-sampled. The five claimant subgroups, the number of claimants in each subgroup, and the number of questionnaires sent to each group can be found below in Table 1.

Table 1
Identification of 1998 FEC Claimant Subgroups and their Size

Claimant Subgroup at the Time Sample Was Drawn	Number Of Claimants	Questionnaires Sent
1. Periodic Roll Payment Recipients (Claimants who were in receipt of payments released every 28 days for wage loss)	49,000	689
2. Daily Roll Payment Recipients (Claimants who received intermittent payments for wage loss)	9,200	680
3. Injured Employees with No Wage Loss	154,000	699
4. Employees Whose Claims for Injury/Disease Have Been Denied	24,000	618
5. Employees Who Filed Claims For Occupational Disease	27,000	700

For example, there are 154,000 claimants with no lost time from work and only 24,000 claimants who have been denied a claim. Sampling a virtually equal number from these two groups and the three others does not reflect the proportional differences in the national claimant population. To report on the national population of claimants, weighting of the sample needs to be

considered.³ Because the sample drawn was not proportional to the different subgroups, it likely does not represent the national universe of claimants. This means that analytical results reported on the data gathered probably do not represent the national claimant population when responses of all subgroups are added to form an aggregate measure.

Categories of claimants. The categories of claimant groups are not mutually exclusive, thereby raising the potential for overlap. This means that a claimant may be included in more than one subgroup. The samples from 1994-1998 could have been contaminated by sampling the same claimant more than once. Analyzing the sample by running a cross reference of case file numbers to identify repeated cases will protect it against including respondents in more than one category. In addition, the analytical findings of the data can be accepted with greater confidence.

Comparison of District Office performance. Comparison of District Offices was not statistically valid for the 1997 or 1998 surveys, because (1) the sample sizes for comparison were not large enough and (2) comparing District Office performance was not one of the key research questions listed in the agency's documentation. Analysis of survey data should be focused on the key questions for which the research is being conducted to avoid findings that are not statistically valid. Otherwise, District Offices may receive invalid feedback on their performance. Research is enhanced by ensuring consistency and a focused analyses in each part of the survey.

Relationship between sample and claimant population. No analysis was conducted to ensure that the sample used approximated the characteristics of the entire group and to estimate the sampling error. We did not find that any comparison of the sample to the population was done using demographic variables such as age and gender. Conducting this analysis would indicate whether the samples drawn match the target FEC claimant population on such characteristics as age and gender.

Another analysis that is standard practice includes estimating sampling error. Sampling error is expressed by stating the confidence level and the confidence interval. In national opinion polling, the confidence interval is often expressed as +/- a given percentage (or probability that the sample represents the population of interest). Without such comparison, there is no assurance that the sample is representative of the population. Conducting analysis to determine the sample quality will ensure that the sample is representative of claimants nationwide.

³Earl Babbie, *The Practice of Social Research*, 5th ed. (New York: Wiley and Sons, 1989) p. 198

Recommendations

1. Draw a sample weighted to reflect the differences in sizes among the five claimant subgroups for reporting national aggregated data.

OWCP Response

“We agree with Recommendation #1, regarding weighting the sample. It should be noted, however, that OWCP’s original design sought to determine satisfaction among each of the different types of claimants. We continue to need that level of specific information to guide our efforts.”

OIG Conclusion

Based on OWCP’s response, we consider this recommendation resolved. To close this recommendation, we would appreciate receiving written evidence that the sample was weighted to reflect the differences in sizes among the five claimant subgroups.

2. Analyze the sample to identify and eliminate overlap in sample selection from each subgroup.

OWCP Response

“We agree to analyze the sample to identify and eliminate any overlap in sample selection from each subgroup.”

OIG Conclusion

Based on OWCP’s response, we consider this recommendation resolved. To close this recommendation, we would appreciate receiving written evidence that OWCP has analyzed the sample to identify and eliminate overlap in sample selection from each subgroup.

3. Focus analysis of the survey data on only the key questions for which the research is being conducted.

OWCP Response

“We agree in general with #3 that focusing the analysis of the survey data on the key questions may improve the contractor's report. However, the program believes that discussion of district office level data, while not necessarily statistically valid, can be useful in guiding individual offices' communication plans.”

OIG Conclusion

On the basis of OWCP's response, this recommendation is not resolved. We believe that feedback using data that may not be valid can be misleading rather than helpful. In this case, we do not know who the respondents are.

4. Conduct additional analysis of samples, including: a comparison of the sample to the national claimant universe, using demographic variables and estimation of sampling error.

OWCP Response

“We agree to conduct additional analysis of samples, including: a comparison of the sample to the national claimant universe, using demographic variables and estimation of sampling error.”

OIG Conclusion

On the basis of OWCP's response, we consider this recommendation resolved. To close this recommendation, we would appreciate receiving written evidence that OWCP has conducted additional analysis of samples, including: a comparison of the sample to the national claimant universe, using demographic variables and estimation of sampling error.

4. Response Rate

The questionnaire response rate is considerably below the OMB standard of 80%. In addition, the agency needs to (1) reinstate the use of a cover letter to minimize claimant confusion and improve response rates, and (2) improve follow-up methods.

OMB standard. The response rate on the questionnaires is low. OMB has a response rate standard of 80% for all surveys, a standard that is supported by many research experts.⁴ The response rates on the surveys we analyzed were 21% in 1996, 29% in 1997, and 44% in 1998. Although the response rate is improving, it remains below standard. A low response rate means that the responses received may not be representative of the population of claimants, resulting in response bias. Setting a higher standard will improve the probability of a higher response rate, which will improve the accuracy of descriptions about the population.

Cover letter. After the first year, no cover letter was attached to the questionnaire that was sent to claimants. Using a cover letter has been found to improve the response rate.⁵ Sending the survey form by itself weakens communication on critical topics that impact the response rate. The cover letter included in the mailing with the questionnaire explains, at a minimum, the survey's importance and protections of anonymity or confidentiality, and offers a point of contact for additional information. The cover letter also provides a place for an explanation of technical terms such as "anonymous" or "confidential." The cover letter minimizes claimant confusion and highlights the importance of the survey. Claimants also understand their rights for participation or refusal.

Addressing nonresponse. Follow-up methods to address nonresponse have been inadequate. Specifically, follow-up methods were not substantially updated in response to inadequate response rates. Although OWCP has tried to increase the response rate through the use of postcards and telephone follow-up, the response rate remains low. One option for improving follow-up is to ensure that nonrespondents who do not return the survey after the first postcard receive a new copy of the survey with a different cover letter, stating the urgency of the project. By changing follow-up methods, the response rate can be improved, OWCP can learn what particular methods are most effective, and the data can be protected against response bias⁶.

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⁴Zikmund, p. 175, and Babbie, p.242.

⁵Don A. Dillman, *Mail and Telephone Surveys: The Total Design Method* (New York: Wiley and Sons, 1978) p. 165, and Zikmund p. 176.

⁶A response bias occurs when nonrespondents self-select or respondents tend to answer in a certain pattern, thus skewing the direction of responses.

Recommendations

1. Establish higher standards for the response rate.

OWCP Response

“We agree with Recommendation #1 that we seek to hold the contractor to a higher standard for response rates. We will include this in future work statements. However, we anticipate that the cost of requiring such a response rate may be substantially higher. Even using a fixed price contract with a mandated response rate, the OMB goal of 80% may not be attainable. OWCP also notes that it required the 1998 contractor to conduct a telephone survey which measured non-respondents' attitudes. This was not aimed at increasing response rates; this data set was used to determine whether or not the non-respondent population held views similar to those measured for the respondents. As reported in that survey, the two groups had comparable scores, providing increased confidence in the reported statistics.”

OIG Conclusion

On the basis of OWCP's response, we do not consider this recommendation resolved. The agency's goal/expectation falls short of OMB's 80% response standard. We do not concur with OWCP's position regarding funding constraints. The recommendations we are making are standard professional practices and the contractor should conduct them for no additional charge. Implementing the recommendations can be expected to increase the response rate and allow savings through a decreased sample size. In addition, valid information will provide the organization with a valuable management tool that can help save resources by making the organization more productive.

2. Include a cover letter on the contractor or DOL letterhead explaining at a minimum the importance of the survey, that participation is voluntary, a promise of confidentiality, and contact information for any questions.

OWCP Response

“We agree with Recommendation #2, to add a cover letter from the FEC program to explain the importance of the survey.”

OIG Conclusion

On the basis of OWCP's response, we consider this recommendation resolved. To close this recommendation, we would appreciate receiving a copy of the 1999 questionnaire with the cover letter.

3. Review follow-up procedures to ensure that nonrespondents who do not return the survey after the first postcard receive a new copy of the survey with a different cover letter stating the urgency of the project.

OWCP Response

"We do not agree with Recommendation #3 that an additional copy of the survey itself should be mailed, since the survey is anonymous and there is no record of who are the "non-respondents". To implement this would allow for duplicate submission of the survey by a given respondent (see Recommendation #2 regarding sampling, requiring that we avoid duplicate replies). OWCP has scrupulously maintained the anonymity of the survey respondents, and coding the surveys to allow identification of responses could undermine confidence in that process."

OIG Conclusion

On the basis of OWCP's response, we do not consider this recommendation resolved. OWCP may want to consider ensuring confidentiality, rather than anonymity (as is the practice in most customer surveys), to make it easier to implement this recommendation.

5. Survey Operations

We found problems/deficiencies with regard to the survey process, i.e., returned surveys, sample-questions relationship and record-keeping. Specifically, we found that no records are kept or analyses conducted of surveys returned in the mail as undeliverable; the sample drawn in 1998 did not support the questions asked in the questionnaire; and, no final data sets are kept on file by the agency after completion of analysis and reporting.

Returned surveys. No records are kept or analysis is conducted with surveys that are returned in the mail without ever having reached the addressee. Returned surveys were set aside without inquiry into why they were returned. As a result, follow-up postcards and questionnaires may have been sent to the original wrong addresses. Analyzing returned surveys enables the agency to correct potential mailing problems so that they do not reoccur each year.

Relationship between sample and questions. The sample drawn in 1998 did not support the questions asked in the questionnaire. The sample was pulled to include individuals who had some contact with the agency between October 1, 1996, and September 30, 1997. However, the questionnaire was not sent until the second week of March 1998. The questionnaire stated in eight places that respondents were to answer the questions based on their last 12 months of experiences with agency services.

However, many of the claimants included in the sample did not have experience with the agency within the last 12 months specified. As a result, many claimants may have believed the questionnaire did not apply to them. Since a high proportion of respondents did not have contact or experience with the office in the previous year, they had no basis to respond to questions relating to their satisfaction. When the sample supports the questions asked, the probability of a higher response rate increases and claimants who do not have the necessary experience with agency services are not unduly burdened. Establishing consistency between the sample and the questionnaire improves the quality of the data collected.

Record-keeping. No final data sets are kept on file after completion of analysis and reporting. No data sets are available for the surveys for any of the years that they were conducted, as a hard copy document or on a statistical or spreadsheet software program. Because of incomplete records, the data and research conducted can not be verified. In addition, an opportunity for subsequent research with the data sets is missed. Thus, valuable information is lost. Records that include data collected can be used to verify the research conducted. The data can also be analyzed to answer additional questions to support management decisions.

Recommendations

1. Keep a record of the returned surveys and identify the reason why they were returned.

OWCP Response

"We agree to keep a record of the returned surveys and identify the reason why they were returned."

OIG Conclusion

On the basis of OWCP's response, we consider this recommendation resolved. To close this recommendation, we would appreciate receiving written evidence that OWCP has kept a record of the returned surveys and has identified the reason why they were returned.

2. Ensure that the claimants sampled have the necessary experience with agency services to be able to answer the questions that are asked.

OWCP Response

"We agree that the time period we use as the basis for drawing the sample should be coordinated with the time frame specified in the

questionnaire, and that the questionnaires should be distributed as close as possible to that time frame.”

OIG Conclusion

On the basis of OWCP's response, we consider this recommendation resolved. To close this recommendation, we would appreciate receiving written evidence that claimants sampled in the next survey had experience with the office in the previous 12 months.

3. Keep a copy of the final data set as a permanent agency record.

OWCP Response

“We agree with Recommendation #3 that the full data sets derived from the questionnaire by the contract be provided back to FEC as one of the project deliverables.”

OIG Conclusion

On the basis of OWCP's response, we consider this recommendation resolved. To close this recommendation, we would appreciate the opportunity to inspect the data sets received by OWCP.

Major Contributors

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Appendix I

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Appendix II

Agency Response

Appendix III

Customer Service Questionnaires, 1994, 1996-1998

Claimant

Dear Workers' Compensation Claimant:

The Office of Workers' Compensation Programs oversees the administration of the Federal Employees' Compensation Act. Claims are reported directly to FECA district offices located in the major cities in the United States and decisions made on eligibility in those district offices. How well this system works affects individuals like yourself. The Office of Workers' Compensation Programs needs to know how well this system is working in fulfilling its mission.

You are one of a small number of injured workers being asked to give their opinions on these matters. You were drawn from a random sample from injured workers subject to the provisions of the Federal Employees' Compensation Act. If the results are to truly represent the thinking of all injured workers covered by this program, it is important that each questionnaire be completed and returned.

You may be assured of complete confidentiality. The questionnaire has an identification number for mailing purposes only. This is so that we may check your name off the mailing list when your questionnaire is returned. Neither your name nor the name of your employer will ever be placed on the questionnaire.

The results of this study will be used to determine how well the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs is serving you, the customer.

We appreciate your cooperation in completing this questionnaire.

Sincerely,

Thomas M. Markey
Director for Federal
Employees' Compensation

Denial Claims (For identification purposes; not to be placed on survey questionnaire)

DIVISION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES' COMPENSATION
CUSTOMER SURVEY

Submission of this information is entirely voluntary and will not be utilized by other government agencies. The primary use of this information will be by the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs to determine how well our customers are being served. The responses provided will have no effect on your entitlement to benefits.

1. Were you treated in a professional and courteous manner by the Department of Labor's FECA district office staff?
 Always Usually Sometimes
 Rarely Never Does not apply
2. Did the FECA district office employee who assisted you address all the concerns you raised? All Some
 Neutral Few None Does not apply
3. Did you receive accurate information when you telephoned the FECA district office? Very Accurate Accurate
 Neutral Inaccurate Very Inaccurate Does not apply
4. Was the written correspondence that you received from the FECA district office clear and understandable? Very Clear
 Clear Neutral Unclear Very Unclear
 Does not apply
5. When you called the FECA district office, was it easy for you to speak directly with a person or leave a voice mail message? Very Easy Easy Neutral Difficult
 Very Difficult Does not apply
6. If you left a voice mail message, was your call returned promptly?
 Very Promptly Promptly Neutral Not promptly
 Had To Call Again Does not apply
7. Did the formal denial notice that you received from the FECA district office clearly explain why your claim was rejected?
 Very Clear Clear Neutral Unclear
 Very Unclear Does not apply

8.. Did the FECA district office provide an explanation of your appeal rights along with your denial notice? Yes No

9. Were the forms required for benefits understandable?
 Very Understandable Understandable Neutral
 Not Understandable Very Difficult To Understand
 Does not apply

10. Were you able to complete the forms easily? Very Easily
 Easily Neutral Not Easily Very Difficult To Complete
 Does not apply

11. Did you receive a timely response, either by mail or phone, to any letter you may have sent to the FECA district office?
 Very Timely Timely Neutral Untimely
 Very Untimely Does not apply

12. How many times have you called/contacted the FECA district office in regard to your claim? 1 2-4 5-10
 Over 10 Does not apply

13. How long ago was your last contact with the FECA district office? Less than 1 week 2-4 weeks 5-10 weeks
 10-24 weeks Over 6 months Does not apply

14. Please provide any additional comments concerning the service you received in connection with the processing of your claim, including any specific changes you think would improve the process.

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We estimate that it will take an average of 15 minutes per respondent to complete this survey. If you have any comments regarding this estimate or any other aspect of the survey, including suggestions for reducing the time needed to respond, send them to the Office of IRM Policy, Department of Labor, Room N-1301, 200 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20210 and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project, (1225-0058), Washington, D.C. 20503

DO NOT SEND THE COMPLETED FORM TO EITHER OF THESE ADDRESSES

Customer Service Evaluation

In an effort to improve the service we provide to our customers, the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs is conducting this survey. You have been selected at random from a list of individuals who have filed claims with OWCP in the past year. Your response to this questionnaire is entirely voluntary and will be used only by OWCP and no other government agencies. You can remain entirely anonymous in any case. Your participation or responses will have no effect on your entitlement to benefits.

We encourage you to participate so that we can learn how we currently are doing in our relationships with our customers. The OWCP has contracted with a professional research company, the Market Research Bureau, to collect and analyze the surveys.

If you have any questions about this survey, please call Maria Ivancin at the Market Research Bureau at 202-333-4245. Thank you for your cooperation.

1a. How would you rate your overall satisfaction with the service that you received from the Department of Labor's Office of Workers' Compensation?

- 4[] Very satisfied
 3[] Somewhat satisfied
 2[] Not very satisfied
 1[] Not at all satisfied

1b. Why do you say that? PLEASE BE SPECIFIC _____

2a. What, if anything, about the service did you find particularly positive? PLEASE BE SPECIFIC

2b. What, if anything, about the service did you find particularly negative? PLEASE BE SPECIFIC

3. Please rate your level of satisfaction with each of the following regarding the service that you received.

	<u>Very Satisfied</u>	<u>Somewhat Satisfied</u>	<u>Not Very Satisfied</u>	<u>Not at All Satisfied</u>
a. The ease of understanding the application instructions	4[]	3[]	2[]	1[]
b. Answers to questions you had	4[]	3[]	2[]	1[]
c. Any written correspondence you may have gotten	4[]	3[]	2[]	1[]
d. Communications over the telephone	4[]	3[]	2[]	1[]
e. The case worker's knowledge of your specific case	4[]	3[]	2[]	1[]
f. The case worker's knowledge of, and ability to explain, rules and regulations	4[]	3[]	2[]	1[]

5f. How satisfied were you with the thoroughness and clarity of the response to your written correspondence? (That is, was the response that you received easy to understand, did it answer the questions or concerns that you had, etc.)

- 4[] Very satisfied
- 3[] Somewhat satisfied
- 2[] Not very satisfied
- 1[] Not at all satisfied

6. When was the last time that you had any contact with the FECA district office?

- 1[] Within the last week
- 2[] 1-2 weeks ago
- 3[] 3-4 weeks ago
- 4[] 1-3 months ago
- 5[] 4-6 months ago
- 6[] 7-12 months ago
- 7[] More than a year ago

7a. Did you find anything confusing or difficult to understand about the process you had to go through in filing your claim?

- 1[] Yes - CONTINUE
- 2[] No - SKIP TO QUESTION 8

7b. What was confusing or difficult to understand? PLEASE BE SPECIFIC.

8. How helpful were the people who processed your claim at your employing agency in putting you in contact with the FECA district office?

- 4[] Very helpful
- 3[] Somewhat helpful
- 2[] Not very helpful
- 1[] Not at all helpful

9. The following questions are about the people that you dealt with at the FECA district office. Please rate the people you dealt with at the FECA district office on each of the following using the scale below.

	<u>Very</u>	<u>Somewhat</u>	<u>Not very</u>	<u>Not at all</u>
a. How <i>helpful</i> were the people you dealt with at the FECA district office?	4[]	3[]	2[]	1[]
b. How <i>pleasant and courteous</i> were the people at the FECA district office?	4[]	3[]	2[]	1[]
c. How <i>knowledgeable about the claims process</i> (i.e., rules and regulations) were the people at the FECA district office?	4[]	3[]	2[]	1[]
d. How <i>knowledgeable about your specific case</i> were the people at the FECA district office?	4[]	3[]	2[]	1[]
e. How <i>accessible</i> were the people at the FECA district office? (That is, were they easy to reach/ did they return your phone calls, etc.)	4[]	3[]	2[]	1[]

10a. Have you received notification of a formal decision about your claim?

- 1[] Yes - CONTINUE
- 2[] No - SKIP TO QUESTION 12

10b. Did you understand your rights as they were explained to you when you were notified about the decision?

- 1[] Did not understand rights - CONTINUE WITH QUESTION 10c
- 2[] Understood rights as explained - SKIP TO QUESTION 11
- 3[] Do not remember that rights were explained - SKIP TO QUESTION 11

10c. What did you find difficult to understand about your rights as explained in the notification?
PLEASE BE SPECIFIC

11a. Have you received any payments as a result of your claim?

- 1[] Yes - CONTINUE
- 2[] No - SKIP TO QUESTION 12

11b. Has payment of your benefits been prompt?

- 1[] Yes
- 2[] No

11c. Have any payments been missed?

- 1[] Yes - CONTINUE
- 2[] No - SKIP TO QUESTION 12

11d. Were the missed payments replaced in a timely manner?

- 1[] Yes
- 2[] No

12. What, if anything, would you change about the service that you got from the OWCP or the FECA district office? PLEASE BE SPECIFIC

13. Do you have any additional comments? _____

The following information will help us in our analysis of the data.

14. Are you: 1[] Male 2[] Female

15. What is your age? _____

Thank you for your time and your comments. Please return the questionnaire in the postage-paid envelope provided.

Customer Service Evaluation

In an effort to improve the service we provide to our customers, the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) is conducting this survey. This survey is to be based only on your direct experience with the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) *in the last 12 months*. It is not to be based on your experience with the organization you work for or have previously worked for. Nor should it be based on any experience with OWCP more than 12 months ago.

You have been selected at random from a list of individuals who have filed claims with OWCP in the past 12 months. Your response to this questionnaire is entirely voluntary and will be used only by OWCP and no other government agencies. You can remain entirely anonymous in any case. Your participation or responses will have no effect on your entitlement to benefits.

We encourage you to participate so that we can learn how we currently are doing in our relationships with our customers. The OWCP has contracted with a professional research company, the Market Research Bureau, to collect and analyze the surveys. Please complete and return your survey before **April 15, 1998**. Thank you for your cooperation.

Public Burden Statement: We estimate that it will take an average of 15 minutes to complete this collection of information, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. If you have any questions regarding these estimates or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, send them to the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs, U.S. Department of Labor, Room S-3229, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20210. **DO NOT SEND THE COMPLETED FORM TO THIS OFFICE.**

1. How would you rate your overall satisfaction with the service that you received from the Department of Labor's Office of Workers' Compensation within the last 12 months?

- 4 Very satisfied
 3 Somewhat satisfied
 2 Not very satisfied
 1 Not at all satisfied

- 2a. What, if anything, about the service did you find particularly positive? PLEASE BE SPECIFIC
-
-

- 2b. What, if anything, about the service did you find particularly negative? PLEASE BE SPECIFIC
-
-

3. Please rate your level of satisfaction with each of the following regarding the service that you received within the last 12 months.

	<u>Very Satisfied</u>	<u>Somewhat Satisfied</u>	<u>Not Very Satisfied</u>	<u>Not at All Satisfied</u>
a. The ease of understanding the application instructions.	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
b. Answers to questions you had.	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
c. Any written correspondence you may have gotten.	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
d. Communications over the telephone.	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
e. The claims examiner's knowledge of your specific case.	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
f. The claims examiner's knowledge of rules and regulations.	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>

4a. Did you call the OWCP district office about your claim within the last 12 months?

- Yes - CONTINUE
- No - SKIP TO QUESTION 5a

4b. How many times did you call the OWCP office within the last 12 months? _____ INDICATE # OF TIMES YOU CALLED

4c. How long did it take the OWCP district office to return your phone calls? (If you made more than one phone call, please indicate about how long it took for each call.)

	First <u>Call</u>	Second <u>Call</u>	Third <u>Call</u>	Fourth <u>Call</u>	Fifth <u>Call</u>	Sixth <u>Call</u>
Did not have to leave message / spoke with someone when you called	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The same day	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The next day	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2-3 days later	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4-5 days later	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
More than 5 days	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never returned the call	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4d. How satisfied were you with how quickly the phone calls were returned?

- Very satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Not very satisfied
- Not at all satisfied

5a. Did you send any written correspondence to the OWCP district office within the last 12 months?

- Yes - CONTINUE
- No - SKIP TO QUESTION 6

5b. How many times did you write to the OWCP district office within the last 12 months? _____ INDICATE # OF TIMES YOU WROTE

5c. Was the response you received from the OWCP office by phone, mail, fax or other means? CHECK ALL THAT APPLY

- Phone
- Mail
- Fax
- Other PLEASE SPECIFY _____

5d. How quickly did you get a response to your written correspondence? (If you sent written correspondence more than once, please indicate how long it took to get a response for each time you sent something.)

	First Time	Second Time	Third Time	Fourth Time	Fifth Time	Sixth Time
Within a week	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1-2 weeks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3-4 weeks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
More than 4 weeks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never received a response	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5e. How satisfied were you with the timeliness of the response to your written correspondence?

- 4 Very satisfied
- 3 Somewhat satisfied
- 2 Not very satisfied
- 1 Not at all satisfied

5f. How satisfied were you with the thoroughness and clarity of the response to your written correspondence? (That is, was the response that you received easy to understand, did it answer the questions or concerns that you had, etc.)

- 4 Very satisfied
- 3 Somewhat satisfied
- 2 Not very satisfied
- 1 Not at all satisfied

6. When was the last time that you had any contact with the OWCP district office?

- 1 Within the last week
- 2 1-2 weeks ago
- 3 3-4 weeks ago
- 4 1-3 months ago
- 5 4-6 months ago
- 6 7-12 months ago
- 7 more than a year ago

7. Did you find anything confusing or difficult to understand about the process you had to go through in filing your claim?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

8. How helpful were the people who processed your claim at your employing agency in putting you in contact with the OWCP district office?

- 4 Very helpful
- 3 Somewhat helpful
- 2 Not very helpful
- 1 Not at all helpful

9. The following questions are about the people that you dealt with at the OWCP district office within the last 12 months. Please rate the people you dealt with at the OWCP district office on each of the following using the scale below.

	<u>Very</u>	<u>Somewhat</u>	<u>Not very</u>	<u>Not at all</u>
a. How <i>helpful</i> were the people you dealt with at the OWCP district office?	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
b. How <i>pleasant and courteous</i> were the people at the OWCP district office?	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
c. How knowledgeable about the claims process (i.e., rules and regulations) were the people at the OWCP district office?	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
d. How <i>knowledgeable about your specific case</i> were the people at the OWCP district office?	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
e. How <i>accessible</i> were the people at the OWCP district office? (That is, were they easy to reach/ did they return your phone calls, etc.)	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>

10a. Have you received notification of a formal decision about your claim?

- 1 Yes - CONTINUE
- 2 No - SKIP TO QUESTION 11

10b. Did you understand your rights as they were explained to you when you were notified about the decision?

- 1 Did not understand the rights
- 2 Understood rights as explained
- 3 Do not remember that rights were explained

11. Do you have any additional comments regarding the customer service provided to you by telephone or written correspondence in the last 12 months?

The following information will help us in our analysis of the data.

12. Are you:

- 1 Male
- 2 Female

13. What is your age? _____

Thank you for your time and comments. Please return the questionnaire in the postage-paid envelope provided.

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1. How would you rate your overall satisfaction with the service that you received from the Department of Labor's Office of Workers' Compensation in the last 12 months?

- 4 Very satisfied
 3 Somewhat satisfied
 2 Not very satisfied
 1 Not at all satisfied

- 2a. What, if anything, about the service did you find particularly positive? PLEASE BE SPECIFIC
-
-

- 2b. What, if anything, about the service did you find particularly negative? PLEASE BE SPECIFIC
-
-

3. Please rate your level of satisfaction with each of the following regarding the service that you received within the last 12 months.

	Very <u>Satisfied</u>	Somewhat <u>Satisfied</u>	Not Very <u>Satisfied</u>	Not at All <u>Satisfied</u>
a. The ease of understanding the application instructions.	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
b. Answers to questions you had.	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
c. Any written correspondence you may have gotten.	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
d. Communications over the telephone.	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
e. The claims examiner's knowledge of your specific case.	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
f. The claims examiner's knowledge of rules and regulations.	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>

4a. Did you call the OWCP district office about your claim within the last 12 months?

- Yes - CONTINUE
- No - SKIP TO QUESTION 5a

4b. How many times did you call the OWCP office within the last 12 months? _____ INDICATE # OF TIMES YOU CALLED

4c. How long did it take the OWCP district office to return your phone calls? (If you made more than one phone call, please indicate about how long it took for each call.)

	<u>First Call</u>	<u>Second Call</u>	<u>Third Call</u>	<u>Fourth Call</u>	<u>Fifth Call</u>	<u>Sixth Call</u>
Did not have to leave message / spoke with someone when you called	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The same day	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The next day	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2-3 days later	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4-5 days later	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
More than 5 days	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never returned the call	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4d. How satisfied were you with how quickly the phone calls were returned?

- Very satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Not very satisfied
- Not at all satisfied

5a. Did you send any written correspondence to the OWCP district office within the last 12 months?

- Yes - CONTINUE
- No - SKIP TO QUESTION 6

5b. How many times did you write to the OWCP district office within the last 12 months? _____ INDICATE # OF TIMES YOU WROTE

5c. Was the response you received from the OWCP office by phone, mail, fax or other means? CHECK ALL THAT APPLY

- Phone
- Mail
- Fax
- Other PLEASE SPECIFY _____

5d. How quickly did you get a response to your written correspondence? (If you sent written correspondence more than once, please indicate how long it took to get a response for each time you sent something.)

	<u>First Time</u>	<u>Second Time</u>	<u>Third Time</u>	<u>Fourth Time</u>	<u>Fifth Time</u>	<u>Sixth Time</u>
Within a week	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1-2 weeks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3-4 weeks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
More than 4 weeks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never received a response	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5e. How satisfied were you with the timeliness of the response to your written correspondence?

- 4 Very satisfied
- 3 Somewhat satisfied
- 2 Not very satisfied
- 1 Not at all satisfied

5f. How satisfied were you with the thoroughness and clarity of the response to your written correspondence? (That is, was the response that you received easy to understand, did it answer the questions or concerns that you had, etc.)

- 4 Very satisfied
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- 2 Not very satisfied
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6. When was the last time that you had any contact with the OWCP district office?

- 1 Within the last week
- 2 1-2 weeks ago
- 3 3-4 weeks ago
- 4 1-3 months ago
- 5 4-6 months ago
- 6 7-12 months ago
- 7 more than a year ago

7. Did you find anything confusing or difficult to understand about the process you had to go through in filing your claim?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

8. How helpful were the people who processed your claim at your employing agency in putting you in contact with the OWCP district office?

- 4 Very helpful
- 3 Somewhat helpful
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- 1 Not at all helpful

9. The following questions are about the people that you dealt with at the OWCP district office within the last 12 months. Please rate the people you dealt with at the OWCP district office on each of the following using the scale below.

	<u>Very</u>	<u>Somewhat</u>	<u>Not very</u>	<u>Not at all</u>
a. How <i>helpful</i> were the people you dealt with at the OWCP district office?	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
b. How <i>pleasant and courteous</i> were the people at the OWCP district office?	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
c. How <i>knowledgeable</i> about the claims process (i.e., rules and regulations) were the people at the OWCP district office?	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
d. How <i>knowledgeable about your specific case</i> were the people at the OWCP district office?	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
e. How <i>accessible</i> were the people at the OWCP district office? (That is, were they easy to reach/ did they return your phone calls, etc.)	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>

10a. Have you received notification of a formal decision about your claim?

- Yes - CONTINUE
 No - SKIP TO QUESTION 12

10b. Did you understand your rights as they were explained to you when you were notified about the decision?

- Did not understand the rights
 Understood rights as explained
 Do not remember that rights were explained

11a. Have you received any payments as a result of your claim?

- Yes - CONTINUE
 No - SKIP TO QUESTION 12

11b. Has payment of your benefits been prompt?

- Yes
 No

11c. Have any payments been missed?

- Yes - CONTINUE
 No - SKIP TO QUESTION 12

11d. Were the missed payments replaced in a timely manner?

- Yes
 No

12. Do you have any additional comments regarding the customer service provided to you by telephone or written correspondence in the last 12 months?

The following information will help us in our analysis of the data.

13. Are you:

- Male
 Female

14. What is your age? _____

Thank you for your time and comments. Please return the questionnaire in the postage-paid envelope provided.