

From: [Tom Berrigan](#)
To: [Richard Champley](#)
Subject: Response to April 14, 2021 notice in Federal Register of Request for Comments regarding SIAT,
Date: Thursday, May 6, 2021 8:17:59 AM
Attachments: [LTR R Champley 05 06 21.docx](#)

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May 6, 2021

Richard Champley,
Program Manager,
U.S. National Travel and Tourism Office

Dear Richard:

I am writing you in response to last month's "Federal Register Notice Requesting Comments on the Survey of International Air Travelers Program (SIAT)." Comments are due by May 17, 2021, according to the announcement, which also directed the attention of readers to channels for communicating their suggestions and comments. My hope is that your office can convey the contents of this message to you.

Specifically, I wanted to address the question of "Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency (NTTO), including whether the information shall have practical utility; and the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden (including hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information."

Simply stated, as one who relies on, and uses, the SIAT data furnished by NTTO—I consider it to be essential to my work, which involves the coverage of the inbound travel and tourism market to the United States.

Reliance on SIAT as a source: Yes, as managing editor of the INBOUND Report, I find myself using some part of the data sets at a pace in at least one article every other issue. Readers of the newsletter have come to rely on the SIAT-driven material. Of particular interest to our readers are the country-market outlooks and an annual outlook for the top overseas tourism markets (suspended this year in the wake of the COVID-19 driven global pandemic) for the United States. These items make liberal use of SIAT-driven charts and tables.

A Key Planning Tool: As a part of, or in addition to the above, there is a keen appreciation of those who market the U.S. travel product internationally of the NTTO country market profiles, which provide basic information on a number of key overseas markets, as well as Canada and Mexico. U.S. travel marketers use data on such points as a traveler's purpose of trip; where they come into the United States; what sources of information they use in purchasing their travel products; where they visit; and what activities they engage in on their travels. All of these data are driven by SIAT research and product. And all of them help travel marketers in both the United States and in those in source-market countries to promote the U.S. travel experience.

A Complement to Proprietary Research: While some major U.S. businesses are large enough—and have sufficient resources to do so—to conduct, contract for, and produce their own proprietary research for the international travel market, the small and mid-size entities (tour operators, receptive tour operators, in-country representatives of U.S. companies) who

are a part of the travel and tourism industry rely to a far greater extent on the SIAT product.

Recommendations: As for suggestions that I might have to improve the product in question, I defer to the clinicians here, except to suggest that individuals who have my role in the mix of things always want more—more of everything.

Seriously, I am looking forward to see how the recently launched and more robust and regular dissemination of news releases and related notices serve to increase the reach of NTTO.

I also suggest that there be a greater live and in-person presentation and discussion and release of NTTO information to the meetings, conferences and events various industry organizations and associations. Personal contact between travel and the tourism professionals and the experts and analysts of NTTO will better spread the latter's message and mission—both abroad and within the United States.

To illustrate: prior to the pandemic, the practice of Brand USA having presentations at IPW on various markets was enormously popular—no doubt because of the SIAT-generated information that Brand USA highlighted at these sessions. A greater NTTO presence at such events at these events will help the SIAT-driven data have greater reach and utility.

Thank you for the opportunity to send these comments. I look forward to following the developments that come about as a result of this endeavor.

Sincerely,

Tom Berrigan
Managing Editor
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