

CommCheck® FAQs

The Everett Group

What are they? *CommCheck*® surveys are a professionally developed tool to enable installation commanders to conduct base-level audience assessments themselves, focusing on how Airmen and civilian employees use and value internal information sources under the commander's control – and on how well Airmen are receiving and internalizing key information and messages.

Both interpersonal (e.g., Chain of Command) and media-based (e.g., base newspaper, web sites, Commander's Access Channel, Facebook, etc.) info sources are covered. Emerging communication tools (social media) are addressed as well.

Also, because of the current emphasis the USAF places on Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR), we offer a set of SAPR comms assessment questions of likely value to wing SARCs. The survey wraps up with some demographic questions (e.g, pay grade and gender), to allow drill-down analyses to better target subgroups of the base population.

Assessments will inform base leaders' efforts to communicate more effectively and efficiently with their people, dedicating often scarce resources where they do the most good. In short – what communication channels work best now and what needs improvement or adjustment?

Who produces *CommChecks*? They're designed, managed, analyzed and reported out by The Everett Group (www.everettgroup.com), a commercial communication research firm specializing in audience assessments for military clients. Dr Steve Everett, Principal and founder of The Everett Group, stood up SAF/PA's communication research program (as a contractor) in 1999. He and his research team supported HAF audience research needs for more than 16 years, until their most recent contract expired in Mar 2015. *CommChecks* are an independently developed research product being offered to wing and other installation leaders directly.

Who actually conducts the survey? The installation commander conducts the survey, using the *CommCheck* tool on a licensed basis. The Everett Group provides full support, however, including all analysis and reporting duties.

How are they conducted? *CommCheck* surveys are fielded via secure Web-based questionnaire, hosted on Everett Group servers (<https://usafcommcheck.com/Yourwingname>). The wing commander will send out e-mail invitations to wing members, pointing them to the survey site. Respondents log in using a shared password (to preserve anonymity) and complete the brief questionnaire. Responses are captured in a secure database at the Everett Group for analysis and reporting to the wing.



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What will the wing have to do? (1) You'll need to select the questions you'd like included in your wing survey, providing the customizing info (names, titles, etc.) if your selected items require it. (2) Your wing leaders will need to spread the word among all your Airmen that they'll be receiving an invitation from the commander soon with log-in information for the survey (which is voluntary but important). (3) Your wing commander will need to send out a blast e-mail to all people invited to participate in the *CommCheck* survey (we'll provide you with sample text to adopt for your use). (4) After the survey has been in the field a week or so, your wing commander will need to send out a blast e-mail reminding people who haven't yet participated that the survey's still available for their feedback. (5) That's it – the Everett Group takes it from there, collecting and analyzing the data, then preparing the report of findings.

How long does it take, from ordering the survey to getting results in hand? Once you've decided which questions you want on your survey and have conveyed that info to us, we'll need just a couple of days to get your survey programmed and on our server, ready for people to access it. Allow up to two weeks for the survey to be in the field, capturing Airmen's responses. Once we close the survey out, we'll need 2-3 days to analyze the data and prepare your report. It's a streamlined, fast survey process.

Are these surveys allowed under AF regulations? According to AFI 38-501, Para. 3.11.7, "single-base surveys initiated by the installation or unit commander only on issues under his or her control" are exempt from oversight under the "Air Force Survey Program." Because all the questions on the *CommCheck* surveys address information channels, products and topics under the commander's control (i.e., no AF-wide information products are assessed via *CommChecks*), they meet the criteria for exemption from AFPC Survey Office oversight. This simplifies and speeds the process up dramatically.

If civilian personnel are surveyed, the AFI calls upon the commander to "coordinate with the Civilian Personnel Officer." The Everett Group will provide the commander documentation (such as the research plan, copy of questionnaire, etc.) to accomplish this coordination.

Who will get the results? Only the installation commander purchasing the *CommCheck* report will receive base-level results from the survey. To enhance value to our customers, once multiple bases have purchased *CommCheck* surveys, we will provide, for purpose of comparison, aggregate results for *CommCheck* surveys conducted within the installation's MAJCOM and all *CommChecks* performed AF-wide (without the ability to link results to any base or installation). Survey results will be delivered electronically. The installation commander may use and distribute the results as he/she wishes.

Once we have our *CommCheck* report in hand, do we still get support from the Everett Group? YES – we will always be available to help you interpret your *CommCheck* results, at no additional cost.



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What about buying more than one *CommCheck*, to look at trending over time? Each *CommCheck* survey is a stand-alone, one-shot data collection. However, customers certainly may wish to purchase follow-on *CommChecks* to see if actions taken to improve communication processes and flow are having the desired effect over time. The Everett Group will conduct and report out statistical analyses showing “needle movement” across time, at no additional charge.

Can the questionnaires be customized in any way? While the general intent is to have customers select their specific questionnaire items from a question pool shared by all, certain parts of the questionnaire are customized (listing name of the base newspaper, wing commander’s name, specific topic of base interest, etc.), to add clarity to questions. Also, as we roll out and develop the *CommCheck* product, we will consider requests from customers for additional questions to be added to the pool.

What’s the cost? Each *CommCheck* survey costs between **\$1,600** and **\$2,400** (depending on questions chosen by the wing from the item pool). For convenience, payment may be made by government-wide commercial purchase card. The survey cost falls below the micro-purchase threshold, so buying a *CommCheck* survey is a simple and fast process, requiring no Contracting Office involvement.



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