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World's First *Charter of Respondent Rights* Highlights Research Industry's Commitment to the Canadian Public

OTTAWA—The Marketing Research and Intelligence Association (MRIA) today launched the world's first Charter of Respondent Rights, clearly articulating to Canadians the industry's commitment to respect their time, their privacy, and to honour the societal contribution they make by voicing their opinions.

"MRIA has adopted some of the toughest professional standards for survey and opinion research in the world," said MRIA President Nik Nanos at an unveiling event on Parliament Hill in Ottawa. "The Charter lets Canadians know that we are serious about our commitment to respecting their Rights as research project participants," he added.

MRIA has dedicated considerable time, effort and resources to elevating standards and professionalism in the market, survey and public opinion research industry. The Charter, which sets out nine Rights of respondents, is a public expression of the fact that MRIA members must adhere to the Association's strict code of professional conduct that protects the good relationship that exists between researchers and the general public.

"Canadians clearly see the value in participating in opinion research it's an important forum that allows them to express their opinions to government and corporate decision-makers. And Canadians recognize how their opinions can help shape new products and services, improve existing ones, and improve customer service; and, by the same measure, how their views can influence laws and public policies" said Mr. Nanos. "Unfortunately, though, there are unscrupulous companies out there that pose as bona fide research companies, and play upon this good relationship in an attempt to sell products or services. With our new MRIA Charter as a declaration of their rights as respondents, Canadians can now better distinguish between legitimate research and fraudulent selling-under-the-guise-of-research."

The Charter encapsulates MRIA's Responsibilities to Respondents standards into one respondent-friendly document, informing research participants of their rights. For example:

- they will never be sold anything or asked for money;
- they are entitled to know the approximate duration of the research interview and, if contacted at an inconvenient time, may ask to be re-contacted at a preferred time;
- their privacy and the privacy of their answers will be respected and strictly preserved in accordance with the law.

MRIA is the single authoritative voice of the survey research industry in Canada, representing all sectors of the survey research industry. Its members include over 1,700 individual research professionals and over 250 Corporate members, comprised of small to large research agencies, and many buyers of research services, such as Canada's major financial institutions, retailers, insurance companies, telecommunications firms, and manufacturers.

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For more information or to arrange an interview, please contact Brendan Wycks, MRIA Executive Director, at 1-888-602-6742, ext. 8724. Or Greg Jodouin at (613) 859-8390. www.mria-arim.ca