

B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

1. Describe (including a numerical estimate) the potential respondent universe and any sampling or other respondent selection method to be used. Data on the number of entities (e.g. establishments, State and local governmental units, households, or persons) in the universe and the corresponding sample are to be provided in tabular form. The tabulation must also include expected response rates for the collection as a whole. If the collection has been conducted before, provide the actual response rate achieved.

Vessels/plants may carry several observers or the same observer on several trips throughout the year. We expect Comment Forms to be returned after 75% of the trips. It is expected that NPGOP may observe 400 different vessels/plants a year. The average number of times a vessel/plant is observed per year is three, for an average yearly total of 1200 observations. At a 75% return rate, we expect to receive 900 Comment Forms per year.

2. Describe the procedures for the collection, including: the statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection; the estimation procedure; the degree of accuracy needed for the purpose described in the justification; any unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures; and any use of periodic (less frequent than annual) data collection cycles to reduce burden.

Every observer will leave a copy of this Comment Form on the vessel (or at the plant) at the completion of each trip, unless the vessel/plant operator already has one and does not wish to have another. Extra copies will be made available at the plants and at our field stations. The Comment Form will also be made available electronically on our FMA website at:

<http://www.afsc.noaa.gov/refm/observers/default.htm>

Hard copies of the Comment Form may also be made available at Fisheries Management Council Meetings and other outreach events. The Comment Forms may also be distributed by the various fishing organizations to their members. Each Comment Form will be accompanied by a postage-paid, self-addressed envelope.

3. Describe the methods used to maximize response rates and to deal with nonresponse. The accuracy and reliability of the information collected must be shown to be adequate for the intended uses. For collections based on sampling, a special justification must be provided if they will not yield "reliable" data that can be generalized to the universe studied.

The response rates will be maximized by ease of completion and availability of the Comment Form. Forms will be handed out by observers, by field station staff, at public meetings and will also be available on the web. This form is being developed at the request of industry, and we will stress the need for a high response rate at Fisheries Management Council Meetings and other outreach events. We will also follow up with the fishermen in person at the docks and at public meetings to encourage participation. Each Comment Form will be accompanied by a postage-paid, self-addressed envelope.

We will also use a Non-response Follow-up Form. This follow-up will be performed either in person or by phone.

4. Describe any tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken. Tests are encouraged as effective means to refine collections, but if ten or more test respondents are involved OMB must give prior approval.

Not applicable.

5. Provide the name and telephone number of individuals consulted on the statistical aspects of the design, and the name of the agency unit, contractor(s), grantee(s), or other person(s) who will actually collect and/or analyze the information for the agency.

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