

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT
SOUTHEAST REGION DEALER AND INTERVIEW FAMILY OF FORMS
OMB CONTROL NO.: 0648-0013**

B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

In contrast to the mandatory landings and value data collected from all wholesale seafood dealers, effort and area data (i.e., the interviews in the shrimp statistics and TIP) are collected from fishing trips by interviewing fishermen as they are encountered at the docks. Thus, an "opportunistic" sampling approach is employed. This "opportunistic" type of sampling eliminates the ability to follow a statistically-designed sampling strategy. Neither of these two interview data collection methods employs predetermined stratified statistical sampling designs.

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.

Interview programs:
Shrimp Interviews
Trip Interview Program

The universe includes all commercial fishing trips. Due to the opportunistic nature of intercepting vessels, no statistical sampling methods are used for selecting respondents. Informal approaches (port agents' knowledge of the fishery) are used to attempt to obtain information from trips, which are representative of the fishery in a given port. No formal attempt is made to ensure similar sampling intensity across ports. Port agents are instructed to sample trips, which are representative of the fishery in their area; thus, trips are generally selected in proportion to the landing frequency by gear and species in their respective area. It is typical for port agents to adjust their daily work schedules to accommodate the public. Specific sampling targets are established based upon sampling strata (area, gear and stock) but, because of the broad nature of those strata, the targets usually encompass large areas, which cross over specific port agent areas of responsibilities.

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.

Interview programs:

Fin fish sampling:

Port agents work within their defined area of coverage, and attempt to obtain data, which is representative of the local fisheries. No formal statistical methods are used to select fishing trips

for interviews. In 2006 4,400 trips were sampled by the trip interview program out of approximately 40,500 trips reported to the SEFSC coastal logbook program. This represents a sampling fraction of 10.9%, which may be an over-estimate due to possible non-reporting to the coastal logbook program.

Shrimp sampling:

Port agents work within their defined area of coverage, and attempt to obtain data, which is representative of the shrimp fishery. No formal statistical methods are used to select trips for interviews. On average, the trip interview program conducts 3,229 interviews annually and approximately 112,401 shrimp trips are made each year. This represents an approximate sampling fraction of 2.9% annually.

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.

Interview programs:

Port agents attempt to maintain cooperative relationships with fishermen and attempt to ensure that interviews are conducted so that they have minimal impact on business activity. To maximize response rates port agents stay in close contact with dealers and fishermen to determine when vessels will be arriving at the dock and off-loading. When possible, sampling is conducted when multiple vessels will be off-loading to increase the chances of sampling multiple vessels.

The reliability of data collected under the finfish (and shrimp) sampling program(s) are primarily examined through extensive computer-based code and value checking at data entry. Also, sampling personnel are instructed to visually compare entered data with data sheets after data entry. Additional quality control checks are performed periodically in preparation for analyses.

In addition, the South Atlantic, Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Fisheries Management Councils, in cooperation with the NOAA Fisheries Southeast Fishery Science Center, have developed a process called Southeast Data, Assessment and Review (SEDAR) to conduct assessments of the status of exploited finfish and shell fish marine stocks. The process involves a series of workshops and involves knowledgeable fishermen, representatives of non-governmental organizations, regional scientists from both state and federal agencies and independent scientists, often from outside of the region and from other nations. A central component of that process is extensive review of the reliability and adequacy of the data used to characterize the fish and the fisheries. That review is primarily conducted in the SEDAR Data Workshop, but also in the Assessment and Review Workshops. The types of criteria used by the reviewers generally include the consistency of the data with historical patterns, the expected patterns across fisheries, the perceptions of knowledgeable resource users and samplers, sampling fractions, the internal consistency of the data, and the like. The SEDARs have found sampling to be adequate for the species which comprise substantial proportions of the landings.

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.

Tests of procedures and methods involving additional burden on the public are not routinely conducted. Interaction and feedback with the public being interviewed and scientists from the SEDAR process will provide sufficient information about the data collection procedures to make whatever adjustments to the interviews are needed.

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.

The following Southeast Fisheries Science Center staff was consulted on the statistical aspects of this data collection activity:

Dr. Steve Turner, Survey Statistician Group Leader Fisheries Statistics Group, is responsible for the data collection activity (305) 361-4482.

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