

National Recreational Boating Survey

Supporting Statement for 1625-0089

SECTION A: Justification

1. Circumstances that make the collection of information necessary:

This information collection supports the following strategic goal:

- Safety: To reduce the number of deaths, reduce the number and severity of injuries, and reduce the amount of property damage associated with the use of recreational boats.

Recreational boating is important from many different perspectives including being a very popular recreational pursuit that also represents a major source of economic stimulus and community development. Boating experienced dramatic increases in participation and facility development from the 1960s thru the 1990s. However, recreational boating agencies, organizations and different industry sectors are confronting a wide array of complex issues and challenges. These include:

- (1) Changing demographics that are influencing recreational boating participation levels, behaviors and expectations;
- (2) Recruiting new boaters that represent the changing diversity of the U.S. population;
- (3) Assessing boating needs and forecasting boating participation;
- (4) Developing new boating products, facilities and services in response to changing tastes and preferences of existing and potential boaters;
- (5) Developing policies and regulations that enhance both the quality (e.g., safety, environmental protection) and sustainability of boating;
- (6) The need to focus and coordinate the investments and combined efforts (e.g. recruitment, boater safety, service enhancement) of different recreational boating agencies, organizations and businesses.

The majority of these challenges and issues require reliable and valid information. Information that is continuously required for policy investment/budgeting, educational and evaluation decisions includes:

- (1) Numbers and characteristics of boating participants (i.e., boat owners and non-owners);
- (2) Perceptions of boaters;
- (3) Participation rates (i.e., boating trips, “boat days”) and behaviors;
- (4) Boater tastes and preferences;
- (5) Numbers and types of boats (i.e., registered, documented, unregistered);
- (6) The effectiveness of boating information, education, safety and enforcement programs.

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The objective of the U.S. Coast Guard's National Recreational Boating Safety (RBS) Program is to ensure the public has a safe, secure, and enjoyable recreational boating experience by implementing programs that minimize the loss of life, personal injury, and property damage while cooperating with environmental and national security efforts. The National Recreational Boating Survey information collection enables the Coast Guard to better identify safety priorities, coordinate and focus research efforts and encourage consistency in the information that is collected as well as methods of analysis that are employed.

A National Recreational Boating Safety (RBS) Program requirement as set forth in Title 46, United States Code, § 13101 is to "encourage greater State participation and uniformity in boating safety efforts, and particularly to permit the States to assume the greater share of boating safety education, assistance, and enforcement activities." As coordinator of the National RBS program, the Coast Guard provides support for safety initiatives in every jurisdiction (States and Territories) by making available timely and relevant information on boating activities that occur in each respective jurisdiction. Working in partnership with State Boating Law Administrators (BLAs), the boating information provided by the Coast Guard enables each State agency to tailor and implement safety initiatives that address the needs of boaters in each respective jurisdiction.

Due to differing State policies in regard to boat operation as well as the unique waterways in each State where boating takes place, reporting individual State level estimates of boating activity and operation rather than grouping similar States is required so safety advocates can better address the diverse needs of boaters in each respective State. Thus, a primary objective of the information collection is to capture sufficient data for each State to yield precise State level estimates of boat use, operator age and boating safety instruction levels and safety measures taken that are essential for State program direction and policy development.

In summary, the information collection is critical for the following reasons:

- (1) It gathers reliable and consistent data for use in developing valid safety performance measures;
- (2) It gathers information in regard to the changing demographics of boaters, the numbers of boats and type of boating activity essential for national RBS program direction and policy;
- (3) It provides the data necessary to better define and measure the effectiveness of State RBS program activities aimed at reducing the number of boating fatalities. This in turn will support states in their efforts to reach specific performance goals and objectives.

2. How, by whom, how frequently, and for what purpose the information is to be used:

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The most meaningful measure of boating safety would be based on the exposure of boaters to the risks of boating; measured in some metric of boat use (i.e., passenger hours, participation days, boat days or boating days). A primary objective of the National Recreational Boating Survey information collection is to obtain such data/information on boating practices, safety, and exposure to enable boating safety officials to assess boating risk, implement appropriate safety intervention strategies, and measure program effectiveness in reducing the number of fatalities, injuries, and the amount of property damage associated with the use of recreational boats.

This type of information is essential for the Coast Guard as well as for State agencies and should be collected on an ongoing basis (in this case every two years). The data will be available for use by national safety organizations, marine industry, recreational boating safety educators, the public health community, law enforcement officers, and legislators.

3. Consideration given to use of improved information technology:

In year 2007, the National Recreational Boating Survey will have two components in states that will provide boat registration data including registered boat owner names and addresses. The first component is a mail survey that will target U.S. households that own a registered or documented boat, while the second component is a telephone survey that will target U.S. households not owning a registered boat, but having a member who was a recreational boating participant in 2007. If the 2007 survey results indicate a widespread use of the Internet among registered boaters, our plan will include offering registered boat owners with an alternative reporting method through the use of web enabled Internet forms in addition to the regular paper forms.

Furthermore, the telephone survey will be conducted using the Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) software developed at the University of California at Berkeley. This software allows for quality checks to be built into the programming, providing virtually error-free data collection. Note that for states that will not provide boat registration data, only the household telephone survey will be conducted.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication:

The Coast Guard did an extensive search of available information on boats, boaters and boating activities to determine if the critical need for recent boating information could be met. No comprehensive national boating data source was identified. Since our most recent information collection which ended in September 2002, no information collections have been conducted from which the Coast Guard can obtain reliable up-to-date estimates on the number of recreational boats, boating households, boaters and activities at the national and at the State level.

5. Impact on small business or other small entities:

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The National Recreational Boating Survey is a social survey primarily designed to collect data from individual recreational boating participants. Therefore, this data collection effort will not place an undue response burden on small businesses or other small entities. Small businesses particularly will not be affected by this survey. Additionally, this survey is voluntary and only those who express the desire to participate will be contacted.

6. Consequence to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted:

If reliable boating data are not collected, the Coast Guard will be unable to perform the following:

- (1) Measure the effectiveness of various boating safety programs
- (2) Identify and satisfy recreational boater needs;
- (3) Improve the effectiveness of the boating safety programs by setting well-defined goals and developing targeted strategies in support of those goals; and
- (4) Make prudent resource allocation decisions and provide program oversight using the most meaningful performance measures.

7. Special Circumstances:

The information collection activities discussed in this ICR comply with all Paperwork Reduction Act regulatory guidelines. No special circumstances are anticipated in this collection of information.

8. Compliance with CFR 1320.8:

The Coast Guard initially published the proposed information collection requirements in the Federal Register (Docket Number USCG 2007-28578) on July 16, 2007. The objective was to notify the public that these requirements are being reviewed in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, and to give interested persons 60 days to submit comments. Following this 60-day period the Coast Guard received 12 comments. We reviewed each of these comments with diligence, and made some changes to section B of survey supporting statement where it was deemed appropriate.

Although 11 of the 12 comments were positive statements from the boating public in support of the survey, one commenter raised a number of technical issues. The commenter essentially requested that more details be provided regarding weighting procedures, the expected response rates, the questionnaire design, and the practical use of the dual-frame approach. All these details were added in the statistical methods section of the supporting statement. The complete Coast Guard's response to the comments is included in the Federal register notice.

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- 9. Explanation on a decision to provide any payment or gifts to respondents:**
Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.

The Coast Guard has decided not to provide any gifts to respondents.

- 10. Assurance of confidentiality: Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.**

Individuals contacted will be assured of the confidentiality of their responses under 42 U.S.C. 1306, 20 CFR 401 and 422, 5 U.S.C. 552 (Freedom of Information Act), 5 U.S.C. 552a (Privacy Act of 1974), and OMB Circular No. A-130. Moreover, this information collection is anonymous in the sense that the Coast Guard will not be collecting any information that could be used to identify the survey participants. The survey questionnaires will be used only for collecting basic demographic data such as age, gender, household income, as well as recreational boating participation data.

- 11. Additional justification for collection of sensitive information:**

No sensitive information will be collected.

- 12. Estimate of burden hours and respondent's cost for information requested:**

- (a) **Indicate the number of respondents, frequency of response, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated. Unless directed to do so, agencies should not conduct special surveys to obtain information on which to base hour burden estimates. Consultation with a sample (fewer than 10) of potential respondents is desirable. If the hour burden on respondents is expected to vary widely because of differences in activity, size, or complexity, show the range of estimated hour burden, and explain the reasons for the variance. Generally, estimates should not include burden hours for customary and usual business practices.**
- (b) **If this request for approval covers more than one form, provide separate hour burden estimates for each form and aggregate the hour burdens in Item 13 of OMB Form 83-I.**
- (c) **Provide estimates of annualized cost to respondents for the hour burdens for collections of information, identifying and using appropriate wage rate categories. The cost of contracting out or paying outside parties for information collection activities should not be included here. Instead, this cost should be included in Item 14.**

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The National Recreational Boating Survey is a survey of recreational boating households¹. States were asked to provide their respective boat registration data to be used as sampling frame for selecting boating households. However, the content of state boat registration databases is limited to recreational vessels that owners are required by law to register, which are typically power boats or boats of a certain size. It is also anticipated that state confidentiality laws will prevent some states from providing their registration data to the Coast Guard. Consequently, we will need to select a Random Digit Dialing (RDD) sample of boating households to cover the portion of the boating population not included in the states boat registration databases. In states that provide boat registration data, only households that do not own any registered or documented recreational vessel will be eligible to be included in the RDD sample. In states for which boat registration data are not available, all boating households will be eligible for selection in the sample.

While the state's boat registration databases will allow for the targeting of specific boats in order to obtain precise boat statistics at a fine level, the RDD sample will allow for the collection of data on unregistered recreational vessels and their owners, operators or passengers. In states not providing boat registration data, statistics specific to registered boats will still be produced, although their precision will be inferior to that of mail survey statistics.

Households with owners of registered recreational vessels are readily identifiable from the states databases and will be selected following a one-phase sampling procedure. Boating households that cannot be reached with the use of a boat registration database² will be selected following a two-phase sampling procedure. The first-phase sample (i.e. the screener sample), is used to identify a sizeable number of eligible boating households (i.e. boating households not owning a registered recreational vessel in states providing registered data, or all boating households in states not providing registration data), and the second-phase sample (a sub-sample of the first-phase sample) is selected for a detailed interview.

The screener is necessary to adequately characterize recreational boating in U.S. households that do not own any registered recreational vessel. Because publicly available information from states as well as from the boating industry does not characterize boating with unregistered vessels, additional information from the public is needed to enable the Coast Guard to develop a statistically valid stratified random sample for the detailed telephone survey. After receiving and analyzing the results from the screener, we will distribute a detailed telephone survey to a stratified random sample of boating households not eligible for a mail survey.

Here are the different cost estimates associated with the 2007 recreational boating survey:

¹ A recreational boating household (or boating household in the context of this document) is a U.S. household with at least one member who was a recreational boating participant during the survey year.

² These are households that do not own a registered boat or reside in a state that does not provide registration data

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Table 1: Cost Evaluation of the Surveys

Cost Elements	Survey			
	Screener Survey	Detailed Telephone Survey	Mail Survey	All Surveys
Initial Contacts	879,121	52,632	90,226	
Response Rate	65%	40%	35%	
Completed Surveys	571,429	21,053	31,579	
Eligibility Rate	14%	95%	95%	
Eligible Boaters	80,000	20,000	30,000	
Survey duration (hrs)	0.083	0.42	0.42	
Annual Burden (hrs)	47,619	8,400	12,600	68,619
Cost/hr	\$25	\$35	\$35	
Total Annual Cost	\$1,190,476	\$294,000	\$441,000	\$1,925,476

Overall, survey participants will spend about 68,619 hours filling out the different survey questionnaires that will be handed to them for a total cost of \$1,925,476. Note that Table 1 is based upon the assumption that all states will make their boat registration databases available to the Coast Guard.

◆ **Telephone Survey Screener to Identify Boating Households:**

The screener survey will require an estimated total of 47,619 hours for those responding [(5 minutes per person x 879,121 initially contacted) x 65% response rate / 60 minutes]. It is anticipated that it should not take more than 5 minutes to complete the screener questionnaire.

The calculation of the total annual cost of the screener survey is based upon the fact that on average the respondents will have a salary of \$25/hour. This figure comes from the 2006 Current Population Survey conducted by the US Census Bureau. This survey indicates that the median annual household income in the United States in 2006 was about \$46,326. If this income is assumed to be generated by full-time employment, then it represents an hourly salary of about \$25.

◆ **Detailed Telephone Survey of Recreational Boating Participants.**

The telephone survey will require an estimated total of 8,400 hours for those responding [(25 minutes per person x 52,632 contacted) x 40% response rate x 95% eligibility rate / 60 minutes]. This calculation is based upon the assumption that survey respondents will need no more than 25 minutes to complete the survey.

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The cost to recreational boating participants to complete the detailed survey instrument is estimated at \$294,000. This number is obtained as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Total Annual Cost} &= (\text{Response Burden} \times \text{Hourly wage rate}) \\ &= 8,400 \times \$35 = 294,000\end{aligned}$$

This calculation is based upon the fact that on average, households that own a recreational boat have an annual income of about \$70,000³. This leads to an hourly wage rate of about \$35/hr.

◆ Mail Survey of Registered Boat Owners

This mail survey of registered recreational boat owners will require an estimated total of about 12,600 hours for those responding. This number is obtained as follows:

$$\text{Burden} = \frac{25 \text{ minutes/person}}{60 \text{ minutes}} \times 90,226 \text{ (contacts)} \times 35\% \text{ (resp rate)} \times 95\% \text{ (elig rate)}$$

The cost to recreational boating participants to complete the detailed survey instrument is estimated at \$442,105. This number is obtained as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Total Annual Cost} &= (\text{Response Burden} \times \text{Hourly wage rate}) \\ &= 12,600 \times \$35 = 442,105\end{aligned}$$

13. Estimate of total annual start-up costs to the respondents:

There is no capital or start-up cost. Respondents will receive pre-stamped envelopes and should not incur any postage costs. The information asked from the survey participants is about their recreational boating habits and practices and does not require any formal record keeping.

14. Estimated annual costs to the Federal Government:

Under section 13106(c) of title 46 U.S.C. funding is made available for payment of expenses of the Coast Guard for activities directly related to coordinating and carrying out national recreational boating safety programs. A contract to perform this survey will be awarded in the fall of 2007 for an approximate amount of \$4,000,000.00 to conduct the 2007 National Recreational Boating Survey. The effort is expected to take approximately 18 months.

15. Explanation of program changes or adjustments:

³ From "2005 Recreational Boating Statistical Abstract", published by the National Marine Manufacturers Association

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Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reporting in Items 13 or 14 of the OMB Form 83-I.

The 2002 National Recreational Boating Survey provided the Coast Guard's Office of Boating Safety with valuable information on Americans' recreational boating participation, exposure, and awareness of boating safety and safe boating practices. However, the Office has long recognized that this data collection effort has not always met the data needs of its most important boating partners, and decided to expand it in collaboration with several boating agencies, and academic institutions around the country.

Among the key objectives of the new survey, the need to improve the precision of exposure statistics, to collect additional data to meet the Coast Guard boating partners needs, and the need to produce reliable state-level statistics on unregistered boats. These goals would be achieved by expanding the survey questionnaires, by using a more effective survey design, and by increasing the number of survey respondents in each state.

16. Publication of collected information:

The contractor selected to conduct the survey will use advanced statistical software such as SAS or SPSS to generate frequencies of responses, cross-tabulations on key variables using weighted data. National, Coast Guard regional and State-wide estimates of recreational boats, boating households, boaters, boating exposures, practices, and activities during the boating season will be published in a report and disseminated to boating safety officials. Results of the survey will be compared to previous boating surveys. The entire project will take approximately 12 months.

17. Expiration date of OMB approval:

We are not seeking such approval. The OMB number will appear in appropriate PRA disclosure information.

18. Exceptions to certification statement:

There are no exceptions to the certification statement.