

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT
HIGH SEAS FISHING VESSEL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS
OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-0349**

A. JUSTIFICATION

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.

This information collection is necessary to comply with the High Seas Fishing Compliance Act (HCSFA) (16 U.S.C. 5501 et seq). The collection of information regarding catch and effort on the high seas by vessels holding HSFCA permits is provided for by Section 104(d)(2) of the HSFCA. The requirements are contained in regulations at 50 CFR 300.17.

In some cases, regulations promulgated under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSFCMA) require that the reporting of catch and effort on the high seas (i.e., logbooks that must be used in the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) must also be filled out when the reporting vessel is fishing on the high seas. The HSFCA specifically calls upon National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) at Section 105(d) to minimize reporting requirements, and to the extent practicable, ensure that regulations promulgated under the HSFCA are consistent with regulations promulgated under the MSFCMA.

To this end, NMFS considers those HSFCA-permitted vessels that already are reporting their catches and effort on the high seas based on regulations promulgated under the MSFCMA to be in compliance with HSFCA reporting requirements. This arrangement will avoid imposing any duplicative reporting requirements on HSFCA permit holders.

2. Explain how, by whom, how frequently, and for what purpose the information will be used. If the information collected will be disseminated to the public or used to support information that will be disseminated to the public, then explain how the collection complies with applicable NOAA Information Quality Guidelines.

The information collected by the HSFCA family of logbooks will be integrated into the national NMFS fishery statistics system to calculate the catch and effort of United States (U.S.) vessels on the high seas. The data collected will be used in the management of fisheries. The United States is also obligated to provide such data to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Aggregated data relating to high seas catches, species composition, effort, etc., will be compiled and made available to the international community through the FAO.

Each logbook sheet begins by collecting information related to the identity of the vessel and the vessel operator, the time frame of the activity being reported, the sequential number of the particular logsheet being filled out, the crew size (of interest from an economics/effort perspective), and whether an observer is onboard (knowledge of observer presence vs. non-presence is useful when examining any differences in data reported by observed vs. unobserved fishing operations). Each logbook sheet also collects, if appropriate, information necessary to identify specific characteristics of the type of gear used. Finally, each logsheet collects the standard information items necessary to ascertain catch and effort for the gear type employed. Note that this renewal cycle adds a new form to the HSFCA family of forms. The new form is

the High Seas Squid Fishing Log. This form could potentially be used by up to four vessels fishing in the Western Pacific for squid. However, the addition of this form does not change the overall burden for this collection because the squid fishing vessels were previously required to report on the High Seas Fishing Log, which is the general form to be used when a more specific gear log is not available. It was determined to be worthwhile to develop a log specific to squid fishing for inclusion with this renewal cycle.

It is anticipated that information collected will be disseminated to the public or used to support publicly disseminated information. As explained in the preceding paragraphs, the information gathered has utility. NMFS will retain control over the information and safeguard it from improper access, modification, and destruction, consistent with National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) standards for confidentiality, privacy and electronic information. See response to Question 10 of this Supporting Statement for more information on confidentiality and privacy. The information collection is designed to yield data that meet applicable information quality guidelines. Prior to dissemination, the information will be subjected to quality control measures and a pre-dissemination review pursuant to Section 515 of Public Law 106-554.

3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological techniques or other forms of information technology.

Long experience in using other logbooks, such as those that served as models for the high seas logbooks, has revealed these logbooks to be the most practical, efficient and cost effective method of collecting the needed information. Although not related to information technology, as previously noted, total burden hours have been kept to a minimum by considering those HSFCA permit-holders already reporting high seas catch and effort as meeting HSFCA reporting requirements.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.

As noted in Questions 1 and 3 above, duplicative reporting requirements were identified and eliminated.

5. If the collection of information involves small businesses or other small entities, describe the methods used to minimize burden.

The collection will not have a significant impact on small businesses, organizations or governmental entities.

6. Describe the consequences to the Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently.

Failure to conduct the collection would make it impossible for the agency to carry out its responsibilities under the HSFCA.

7. Explain any special circumstances that require the collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with OMB guidelines.

Except for the frequency with which data are reported (recorded daily during a fishing period), this collection is consistent with Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidelines.

8. Provide a copy of the PRA Federal Register Notice that solicited public comments on the information collection prior to this submission. Summarize the public comments received in response to that notice and describe the actions taken by the agency in response to those comments. Describe the efforts to consult with persons outside the agency to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instructions and recordkeeping, disclosure, or reporting format (if any), and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported.

A Federal Register Notice published on January 9, 2008 (73 FR 1600) solicited public comment on this renewal.

Only one comment was received. The commenter suggested that respondents do not accurately report their catch and effort on the high seas log forms and suggested “there should be enforcement.” In fact, U.S. vessels are subject to random inspection by NMFS and U.S. Coast Guard law enforcement personnel and inspections include examination of logs and the quantity of fish onboard to ascertain if accurate data are being recorded in the high seas logs. Additionally, some vessels are selected to carry scientific observers whose duties include ensuring that accurate data are being reported.

9. Explain any decisions to provide payments or gifts to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.

No payments or gifts will be provided to respondents under this collection.

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

Data submitted pursuant to this information collection will be accorded confidentiality in accordance with 50 CFR Part 600, Subpart E.

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private.

No questions of a sensitive nature are included in this collection.

12. Provide an estimate in hours of the burden of the collection of information.

There will be an estimated 50 respondents (i.e., vessel operators) using one of the high seas logbooks that are the subject of this collection to report fishing activities on the high seas throughout the year. For purposes of this calculation, each affected vessel has been estimated to spend 180 days per year fishing on the high seas (based on 15 days at sea for each of 12 months).

An estimated average response time of 5 minutes a day for filling out a logbook form has been estimated. Using these estimates results in an estimated annual burden of 750 hours:

$$50 \text{ vessels} \times 180 \text{ days} = 9,000 \text{ responses} \times 5 \text{ min}/60 \text{ min}/\text{day} = 750 \text{ hours.}$$

There will be an estimated 500 respondents using one of the high seas logbooks that are the subject of this collection to submit negative reports throughout the year. To account for the time necessary to submit negative reports, 100 hours can be added to the above burden estimate. The 100 hours for negative reports is calculated as follows:

$$500 \text{ respondents} \times 12 \text{ reports} = 6,000 \text{ responses} \times 1 \text{ min}/60 \text{ min}/\text{report} = 100 \text{ hours.}$$

The total estimated annual burden for this collection is 550 unduplicated respondents, 15,000 responses, and 850 hours.

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to the respondents or record-keepers resulting from the collection (excluding the value of the burden hours in #12 above).

Mailing costs for vessels that fished are estimated as follows: \$492 for 50 vessels reporting monthly on 15 days of fishing per month ($50 * 12 * \$0.82$). Mailing costs for vessels that did not fish are estimated as follows: \$2,520 for 500 vessels reporting no monthly fishing ($500 * 12 * \$0.42$). Therefore, total costs are estimated at \$3,012.

14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government.

Aside from minimal costs associated with reproducing copies of the logsheets for permit holders, there are only infinitesimal costs associated with this information collection for the Federal government. No new personnel or equipment costs will be incurred by the Federal government; data will be entered into the NMFS fisheries statistics system by existing staffers with time available within their regular work schedules using existing data programs, procedures and equipment.

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

The increase in cost from \$2,664 to \$3,012 results from increased postage costs. In ROCIS, the change shows as only a \$12.00 increase, as the previous cost was rounded up to \$3,000 when the ICR was migrated to ROCIS.

16. For collections whose results will be published, outline the plans for tabulation and publication.

The data collected will not be published per se. However, as noted in Question 2, the data will be integrated into the NMFS fisheries statistics system, and will therefore ultimately be reflected in

the U.S. catch section of the annual NMFS publication, "Fisheries Statistics of the United States." In this sense, the results of the collection will be published annually.

17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons why display would be inappropriate.

Not applicable.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in Item 19 of the OMB 83-I.

Not applicable.

B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

This collection does not use statistical methods.