

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT  
HIGH SEAS FISHING VESSEL IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS  
OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-0348**

**A. JUSTIFICATION**

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

The success of fisheries management programs depends significantly on regulatory compliance. Vessel identification requirements are essential to facilitate enforcement. The ability to link fishing or other activity to the vessel owner or operator is crucial to enforcement of regulations issued under numerous Federal fishery management statutes. This particular submission is to request renewal of clearance for vessel identification requirements imposed by **50 CFR 300.14** to help enforce the High Seas Fishing Compliance Act (HSFCA), **16 U.S.C. 5501 et seq.**

**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.**

Section 104 of the HSFCA and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)'s regulation require that a vessel's official number or international radio call sign be displayed on the port and starboard sides of the deckhouse or hull, and on a weather deck. This information identifies each vessel and is intended to be visible at distances at sea level and from the air. This information provides law enforcement personnel with a means to monitor fishing, at-sea processing, and other related activities, to ascertain whether a vessel's observed activities are in accordance with those authorized for that vessel. The identifying number is used by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), and other marine agencies in issuing violations, prosecutions, and other enforcement-related actions. Vessels that qualify for particular fisheries are readily identified, and more efficiently and expediently prosecuted, thereby allowing for more cost-effective enforcement. Cooperating fishermen and other interested parties also use the number to report suspicious activities. Fishermen in compliance with fishery management regulations ultimately benefit, as unauthorized and illegal fishing is deterred and more burdensome regulations are avoided.

The information collected will not be disseminated to the public; as it consists solely of identification on a vessel.

**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.**

The requirement that each vessel display an identification number on its deckhouse or hull, and its weatherdeck, does not lend itself to technology. Transponders and vessel monitoring systems are comparatively expensive and their signals cannot be accessed by the USCG in the air or by its vessels at this time. Painting identification information on vessels is the least costly and most efficient method available at this time to provide the information necessary to support enforcement.

**4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.**

There is no duplication with other collections.

**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.**

This collection is consistent with Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidelines.

**8. Provide information on 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. No comments were received.

**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.**

No assurance of confidentiality is provided to respondents.

**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.**

The estimated burden for this collection is 37.5 (38) hours. This is based upon 50 vessels, not already subject to acceptable vessel identification requirements under other regulations, required to be marked in 3 locations at 15 minutes per location.

$$50 \text{ vessels} \times 45 \text{ minutes/vessel} = 38 \text{ hrs.}$$

**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).**

The cost to fishermen is minimal. Materials needed are paint and paintbrush, and possibly a stencil. Total estimated cost for all vessels is \$1,250 per year (\$25 per vessel).

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

There is no cost to the Federal government associated with this collection.

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

An increase of one hour is due to an adjustment: previously the time was rounded down incorrectly from 37.5 to 37.

The cost of paint and brushes per vessel was adjusted upward from \$20 to \$25, resulting in a total cost increase of \$250.

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

The results of this collection will not be published.

**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.**

There are no exceptions.

**B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS**

This collection does not employ statistical methods.