

**Supporting Statement
for
Voyage Planning for Tank Barge Transits
in the Northeast United States**

A. Justification.

1. Circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.

A permanent regulated navigation area (RNA) is established within the geographic boundaries of the First Coast Guard District (northeast region) to increase the operational safety of towing vessels and single-hulled tank barges. The information collection requirements described in this supporting statement are necessary to comply with 33 CFR Part 165.100. The U.S. Coast Guard requires any owner or operator of a towing vessel, which is engaged in towing a petroleum-laden single-hulled tank barge, to prepare a written voyage plan prior to departure.

These recordkeeping requirements are largely consistent with good commercial practices and the dictates of good seamanship for safe navigation. Furthermore, the voyage plan provides a mechanism for assisting masters of towing vessels in identifying those specific risks, potential equipment failures, or human errors that may lead to an incident. Without an information collection, there would be reduced means for the owner or operator of a towing vessel to be held accountable for adequate navigational practices.

This information collection supports the following strategic goals:

Department of Homeland Security

- Prevention
- Protection
- Recovery

Coast Guard

- Marine Safety
- Protection of Natural Resources

Marine Safety, Security and Stewardship Directorate (CG-5)

- Safety: Eliminate deaths, injuries, and property damage associated with commercial maritime operations.
- Human and Natural Environment: Eliminate environmental damage associated with maritime transportation and operations on and around the nation's waterways.

2. By whom, how, and for what purpose the information is to be used.

Accidents sometimes occur because towing vessels lack appropriate voyage planning. The information collection aids safe passage by ensuring that the crew will properly plan for the anticipated voyage. The master of the towing vessel that is engaged in towing a petroleum-laden single-hulled tank barge will develop the content of the voyage plan prior to the voyage. The master is also responsible for ensuring that the voyage plan is followed, or, if deviations from the plan are made during the voyage, that the plan is modified to a safe and appropriate alternative. The voyage plan must be in written or electronic form, be retained onboard the vessel, and be readily available to the Coast Guard upon request.

Voyage plans also serve as a means for Coast Guard inspectors/investigators to determine if a vessel is in compliance or, in the case of a casualty, whether failure to meet this regulation contributed to the casualty. Voyage plan information includes, but is not limited to: a) description of cargo type, volume, and grade; b) sensitive navigational information from nautical charts and publications, including Coast Pilot, Coast Guard Light List, and Coast Guard Local Notice to Mariners for the intended voyage and destination(s); c) current and forecasted weather conditions including visibility, wind, and sea state for the intended voyage; d) relevant tide and tidal current data for the intended voyage; e) forward and after drafts of the tank barge, under-keel and vertical clearances for the port(s) and berthing area(s); f) pre-departure checklists; g) calculated speed and estimated time of arrival at proposed way-points; h) communication contacts at Vessel Traffic Service (VTS) New York (if applicable), bridges, facilities, and port-specific VHF radio requirements; and i) master's standing orders detailing closest points of approach, special conditions and critical maneuvers. CG boarding officers are trained law enforcement personnel. The CG does not provide a checklist for each and every regulation that we enforce. Local units may create job aids for boarding officers if they deem it necessary.

3. Consideration of the use of improved information technology.

This requirement does not restrict the voyage plan to paper format. Electronic files are allowed and would reduce the physical volume of records on the vessel. We estimate that 33% of respondents maintain their voyage plans electronically, as previously reported.

4. Efforts to identify duplication. Why similar information cannot be used.

There are no State or local regulations relating to this issue. No similar information collection is conducted by other Federal agencies.

5. Methods to minimize the burden to small businesses if involved.

This information collection does not have an impact on small businesses or other small entities.

6. Consequences to the Federal program if collection were not done or conducted less frequently.

If the collection was conducted less frequently, compliance with the voyage plan requirement may not be verifiable. Although the Coast Guard believes that most prudent operators already employ many of these safety principles, the regulations are intended to ensure compliance by those vessels not conforming to the safety practices of the majority of the industry.

7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause the information collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with guidelines.

This information collection is conducted in manner consistent with the guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.5(d)(2).

8. Consultation.

A 60 day Notice was published in the Federal Register to obtain public comment on this collection (See [USCG-2008-1036], October 27, 2008, 73 FR 63720). The USCG has not received any comments on this information collection.

9. Explain any decision to provide payment or gift to respondents.

There is no offer of monetary or material value for this information collection.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents.

There are no assurances of confidentiality provided to the respondents for this information collection.

11. Additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature.

There are no questions of sensitive nature.

12. Estimates of reporting and recordkeeping hour and cost burdens of the collection information.

The owners and operators of the towing vessel industry will incur most of the collection's cost. For each trip, the master of the towing vessel¹ spends approximately 30 minutes preparing the voyage plan. The Coast Guard assumes that 55% of all transits in District One are petroleum-laden and that 61% of all tank barges are single-hulled vessels.

Based upon these assumptions, the total number of respondents is **5,384**. Furthermore, the total annual hour burden to industry is **2,692 hours** and the total annual cost burden to industry is **\$196,968**.

Total Respondents:

$$5,384 \text{ respondents}^2 = (16,049 \text{ avg. annual transits (inbound and outbound)})^3 \times (0.55 \text{ petroleum-laden transits}) \times (61\% \text{ single-hulled vessels})^4$$

Hour Burden:

$$2,692 \text{ hours} = (16,049 \text{ avg. annual transits (inbound and outbound)}) \times (0.55 \text{ petroleum-laden transits}) \times (30 \text{ min/trip}) \times (61\% \text{ single-hulled vessels})$$

Cost Burden:

$$\$196,516 = (16,049 \text{ avg. annual transits (inbound and outbound)}) \times (0.55 \text{ petroleum-laden transits}) \times [\$73/\text{hour}^1 \times 30 \text{ min/trip}] \times (61\% \text{ single-hulled vessels})$$

13. Estimates of annualized capital and start-up costs.

There are no capital, start-up or maintenance costs associated with this information collection.

¹ Equivalent to GS-13 per COMDTINST 7310.1L.

² Respondent, Hour Burden and Cost Burden figures are rounded.

³ Three year average for 2004-2006 based on data from U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Navigation Data Center.

⁴ Percentage of single-hulled, tank barges based on data from MISLE, as of May 5, 2008.

14. Estimates of annualized Federal Government costs.

It is expected that a Coast Guard Investigation Officer will require 5 hours to review a voyage plan when a vessel has been in an accident resulting in a significant oil spill. Based upon historical data, we estimate an inspection would occur approximately three times per year. Therefore, the annual hour burden is 15 hours. Assuming an average salary of \$67/hour⁵, the annual cost burden is \$1,005.

15. Explain the reasons for the change in burden.

The change (i.e., decrease) in burden is an ADJUSTMENT, due to a decrease in the single-hulled tank vessel population. Single-hulled tank barges are being replaced by more modern double-hulled tank barges. This shift in vessel hull type is due to the mandated single-hull tank vessel phase-out prescribed in the Oil Pollution Act of 1990.

16. For collections of information whose results are planned to be published for statistical use, outline plans for tabulation, statistical analysis and publication.

This information collection will not be published for statistical purposes.

17. Approval to not display expiration date.

USCG will display the expiration date for OMB approval of this information collection.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement.

USCG does not request an exception to the certification of this information collection.

B. Collection of Information Employing Statistical Method.

This information collection does not employ statistical methods.

⁵ Equivalent to an O-3 or Lieutenant per COMDTINST 7310.1L.