

**Supporting Statement  
for  
Request for Designation and Exemption of  
Oceanographic Research Vessels**

**A. Justification**

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

This data collection is necessary for the designation of Oceanographic Research Vessels (ORV). According to 46 USC 2113, 46 CFR 3.10, and 46 CFR 14.403, oceanographic vessels may be exempted from the statute and regulations governing the shipment, discharge, payment and personal outfitting of merchant seamen.

Section 2113 of USC 46 also provides the Secretary of Homeland Security with the authority to exempt certain vessels from the inspection and manning requirements of law when vessels are engaged in oceanographic research. It also contains flexible exemption authority for regulation of ORVs.

According to 46 CFR Section 3.10-1, an individual can submit a written request to the Officer in Charge, Marine Inspection seeking a vessel be designated as an ORV. At a minimum, the following information must be submitted during the initial request: 1) a detailed description of the vessel, including its identification number, owner and charterer; 2) a specific operating plan stating precisely the intended use of the vessel; and 3) any additional information as may be requested by the Officer in Charge, Marine Inspection. According to 46 CFR Section 3.10-5, at least 60 days prior to the expiration date of the Letter of Designation or Certificate of Inspection, a request for renewal must be submitted in the same manner as above.

According to 46 CFR Section 14.403, certain requirements of 46 USC do not apply to the employment of merchant mariners on ORVs. Those requirements include concerns for the shipment and discharge of mariners, their pay and allotments, and the adequacy of their clothing. According to 46 CFR Section 14.405, an individual in charge of an ORV may submit a written request to the Officer in Charge, Marine Inspection seeking an exemption. The request must state: 1) any requirement of any section listed in 46 CFR 14.403(b) from which the applicant wishes an exemption; and 2) what business practices regarding, among other things, the shipment and discharge of merchant mariners, their pay and allotments, and the adequacy of their clothing would justify the exemption.

This information collection supports the following strategic goals:

Department of Homeland Security

- Prevention

Coast Guard

- Maritime Safety

Marine Safety, Security and Environmental Protection Directorate (CG-5)

- Safety: Reduce deaths, injuries, and property damage associated with commercial maritime operations.
- Economic Growth and Trade/Mobility: Reduce interruptions and impediments that restrict the economical movement of goods and people, while maximizing safe, effective, and efficient waterways for all users.

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

This information is used by the Officer in Charge, Marine Inspection to determine: 1) if a vessel can be designated as an ORV; and 2) can be exempted from specific inspection and/or manning requirements. [According to 46 CFR Section 3.05-3, an ORV is a vessel which the U.S. Coast Guard finds is employed

exclusively in one or more of the following: a) oceanographic instruction, b) limnologic instruction, c) oceanographic research, or d) limnologic research.]

An ORV may be inspected or uninspected. If uninspected, it receives a Letter of Designation; if inspected, its designation appears on its Certificate of Inspection. A Letter of Designation is valid for two years and a Certificate of Inspection is valid for five years. According to the Coast Guard's MISLE database, there are 52 uninspected ORVs with a current Letter of Designation and 27 inspected ORVs with a current Certificate of Inspection. Since uninspected ORVs' Letters of Designation expire after two years, on average half (26 vessels) will expire any given year. The ORV designation on inspected vessels must be renewed every five years, so on average, 20 percent (5 vessels) will need to seek re-designation in any given year.

3. Consideration of the use of improved information technology.

Respondents can either mail or fax their requests for the designation of ORV. They can correspond in writing or electronically to the OCMI. A list of Coast Guard sectors, as part of a comprehensive list of Coast Guard units, can be found at: <http://www.uscg.mil/top/units/>.

We estimate that 100% of the reporting requirements can be done electronically. At this time, we estimate that approximately 50% of the responses are collected electronically.

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

The Coast Guard may hold information regarding the physical description of the vessels concerned. Consequently, if a vessel renews its Letter of Designation or Certificate of Inspection, it does not have to duplicate its physical description unless changes have been made.

With the partial exception of certain inspected vessels, the information necessary to allow designation of ORVs and their exemption(s) from certain requirements is not generated elsewhere.

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.

The initial written request for a vessel to receive the designation of ORV and corresponding exemptions is voluntary and relatively spontaneous. Once designated, an uninspected vessel, on average, must renew its designation every two years, an inspected vessel every five years.

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 a manner consistent with the guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.5(d)(2).

8. Consultation.

A 60-day (See [USCG-2009-0362], June 4, 2009, 74 FR 26875) and 30-day (See [USCG-2009-0362], October 15, 2009, 74 FR 52969) Notice has been published in the *Federal Register* to obtain public comment on this collection. This collection has not received any comments from the public.

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

The Coast Guard does not provide payments or gifts to respondents in exchange for a benefit sought.

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 language.

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

- The estimated annual number of respondents is 35.**
- The estimated annual number of responses is 35.**
- The estimated annual hour burden is 35 hours.**
- The estimated annual cost burden is \$2,555.**

According to the Coast Guard's MSMS database, there are 27 ORVs that have a current Certificate of Inspection and 52 that have a current Letter of Designation. We estimate that 35 (or 44 percent of the 79 vessels) will request an ORV designation or Certificate of Inspection each year. We expect an average of 1 hour to complete the request for ORV designation or Certificate of Inspection. Consequently, we estimate an average of 35 hours to request ORV designation or Certificate of Inspection each year. We estimate the average hourly wage for an owner of this type of vessel is \$73 per hour.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, the total cost to owners to request ORV designation or certificate of inspection each year is estimated to be \$2,555. See Table 1.

**Table 1:** Hour and Cost Burden to Owners of Vessels Seeking ORV Designation/Certification

Number of ORV Designated or Certificated Vessels	Number of Designation or Certification Requests Per Year	Hour Burden Per Request	Total Hour Burden Per Year	Cost Per Hour	Total Cost Per Year
79	35	1	35	\$73	\$2,555

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

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

14. Estimates of annualized Federal Government costs.

The cost to the Government is the cost to the Officer in Charge, Marine Inspection to review the request of an ORV designation or certificate of inspection and determine its eligibility. Assuming it takes 0.5 hours to review and determine if the requesting vessel is eligible, and the average wage of Coast Guard personnel is \$58 per hour,<sup>2</sup> we estimate the annual cost to the Coast Guard is \$1,015 (\$1,015= 35 requests/year x 0.5 hours/request x \$58/hour). See Table 2.

**Table 2:** Hour and Cost Burden to Federal Government

Number of OVR Designated or Certificated Vessels	Number of Designation or Certification Requests Per Year	Hour Burden Per Request	Total Hour Burden Per Year	Cost Per Hour	Total Cost Per Year
79	35	0.5	17.5	\$58	\$1,015

<sup>1</sup> Equivalent to a GS-13 “out-of-government” rate per Commandant Instruction 7310.1L.

<sup>2</sup> Equivalent to a GS-12 “in-government” rate per Commandant Instruction 7310.1L.

15. Explain the reasons for the change in burden.

The change in burden is an ADJUSTMENT due to a change in the vessel population. The methodology for calculating burden remains unchanged.

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.

The Coast Guard will display the expiration date for OMB approval of this information collection.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement.

The Coast Guard does not request an exception to the certification of this information collection.

**B. Collection of Information Employing Statistical Methods**

The collection of information does not employ statistical methods.