

# **Coast Guard Customer Satisfaction Surveys**

## **Supporting Statement for**

### **1625-0080**

#### **OMB Form 83-1 Section B: Collection of Information Employing Statistical Methods**

The Coast Guard uses Customer Satisfaction Surveys in a variety of programs. The surveys currently in use are under the OMB approval # 1625-0080. These include the National Exercise Program (NEP) Exercise Conference Feedback Survey, the Mariner Credentialing Program Customer Satisfaction Survey, and the Maritime Safety and Security Customer Satisfaction Report.

#### **Background**

##### **National Exercise Program (NEP)**

The NEP provides a framework for prioritizing and coordinating federal, regional and state exercise activities, without replacing any individual department or agency exercises. The NEP enables federal, state and local departments and agencies to align their exercise programs. The Exercise Conference Feedback Survey collects input from exercise planning meeting participants including Coast Guard, Federal, State, local governments and private industry exercise planners to assist the Coast Guard Exercise Support Branch (ESB) to improve exercise design and planning effectiveness.

##### **Mariner Credentialing**

The Coast Guard National Maritime Center (NMC) is the maritime licensing authority for the United States. Their mission is to issue credentials to fully qualified mariners in order to assure a safe, secure, economically efficient and environmentally sound Marine Transportation System. NMC uses a voluntary survey form to gauge mariner satisfaction with the service received in procuring a Merchant Marine Credential.

##### **Maritime Safety and Security**

Maritime Safety and Security covers many activities and program areas including Marine Inspection, Marine Investigation, Port Safety and Security, Boating Safety, and Waterways Management. The Maritime Safety and Security Customer Satisfaction Report is a voluntary survey to gauge the satisfaction of the maritime public with Coast Guard service and performance.

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**QUESTION 1.**

Describe (including a numerical estimate) the potential respondent universe and any sampling or other respondent selection methods to be used. Data on the number of entities (e.g., establishments, State and local government units, households, or persons) in the universe covered by the collection and in the corresponding sample are to be provided in tabular form for the universe as a whole and for each of the strata in the proposed sample. Indicate expected response rates for the collection as a whole. If the collection had been conducted previously, include the actual response rate achieved during the last collection.

**AGENCY'S RESPONSE**

**NEP**

The potential respondent universe includes exercise planners/participants from the CG, Federal, State, local government and maritime partners (i.e. FBI, Customs and Borders Patrol, FEMA, military State Emergency Managers, Police, Fire, Marine Patrol, etc.).

The type and number of agency participants for each of these exercise planning conferences will vary depending on the Tier level of the exercise and whether it is discussion or operation based. There are approximately 45 exercises per fiscal year (FY) with each exercise having two to four planning conferences. Planning conference attendees vary from 5 - 30 (including military). These variables will affect the total respondent universe year to year. The universe and response rate for the latest survey are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Respondent rate from previous survey

<b>Number of Planning Conferences</b>	<b>Number of Attendees</b>	<b>Number of Completed Surveys</b>	<b>Percentage of attendees Surveyed</b>
19	400	148	37%

No personally identifiable information is collected.

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### **Mariner Credentialing**

The universe of Mariner Survey Responders is 225,000+ Merchant Mariners Licensed/Credentialed serving in the Marine Industry. A License/Credential has a five (5) year period of validity, often Mariner’s professionally upgrade, promote, require endorsements/changes before the expiration of the five (5) year period, and there are new entries into the mariner profession, these factors translate into an average of approximately 60,000 mariners served annually (5,000 monthly) who make up the annual respondent universe. Participation in the survey is voluntary. No personally identifiable information is collected.

<b><u>Method of Application Stratification</u></b>	
	Percentage of surveys received
In Person	31%
Mail	47%
Electronic	22%
<b><u>Transaction Type Stratification</u></b>	
Original	27%
Renewal	49%
Raise in Grade	12%
Change in Scope	11%
Duplicate	< 2%
<b><u>Credential Type</u></b>	
License	47%
Merchant Marine Document (MMD)	53%

For January thru March, 2010: the National Maritime Center received 2143 surveys (650, 567, and 926 monthly, respectively) netting a near 20% response rate, and 3% to 5% margin of error for responder results, and in-line with expectations.

### **Maritime Safety and Security**

The respondent universe for the Maritime Safety and Security Survey is the national population. The survey link is posted on the public homepage for the Coast Guard’s Homeport website and may be accessed by anyone with the desire to provide feedback to the Coast Guard. Since the survey is voluntary, and participation is not actively sought, a response rate cannot be determined. The survey form is also used to obtain qualitative data where members of the public can communicate issues/comments of concern to the Coast Guard. The respondent is not required to provide any personally identifiable information. The respondent may provide contact information if follow-up contact from the Coast Guard is desired in relation to any qualitative information provided, such as a continuing unresolved problem.

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**QUESTION 2.**

Describe the procedures for the collection of information including:

- ◆ Statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection,
- ◆ Estimation procedure,
- ◆ Degree of accuracy needed for the purpose described in the justification,
- ◆ Unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures, and
- ◆ Any use of periodic (less frequently than annual) data collection cycles to reduce burden.

**AGENCY’S RESPONSE:**

In all three surveys, the sampling method used is convenience sampling, an appropriate method for these customer satisfaction surveys. Analysis is limited to use of bar charts or average to show where the relative number of responses to each question.

Estimation procedures are not used.

No specialized sampling procedures are required.

All three surveys are voluntary, and continuous without a cycle time.

**NEP**

Survey and data collection is on a continual basis.

Stratification is achieved through the following groupings:

NEP Meeting Types	NEP Exercise Names
Concept and Objectives	Example-Key West PREP/AMSTEP
Initial Planning Conference	
Mid Planning Conference	
Final Planning Conference	
After Action Report	

The Exercise Conference Feedback survey seeks answers via a 5 point Likert Scale response to 11 questions focused on their satisfaction with Coast Guard exercise conference planning and preparation. The survey is strictly voluntary. The information gathered from the survey is compiled and analyzed to assist the ESB in the development and execution of the exercise through the exercise planning cycle.

**Mariner Credentialing**

The mariner is sent a link to the Mariner Survey in a follow-up email after a credential transaction is performed. The responder’s survey responses are electronically submitted and as saved into an MS Access Database, requiring no manual paper exchange.

As noted, a targeted 3% to 5% margin of error for responder results is desired.

The survey seeks answers via a 5 point Likert Scale response to 10 questions focused on their “customer experience” with the Coast Guard. The responses can be collated into bar charts, and central tendency determined. Survey and data collection is on a continual basis. The Credentialing process operates in continuum and the survey’s responses provide the necessary “how goes it?” feedback to the USCG NMC.

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Stratification is achieved through the following groupings:

<b>Application Submission Method</b>	<b>Transaction Type Requested</b>	<b>Credential Type Applied For</b>
In person	Original	Officer Endorsement
By Mail	Duplicate	Rating Endorsement
By Electronic Means	Renewal	STCW Endorsement
	Raise of Grade	Staff Officer Endorsement
	Modification or Increase of Scope	
	Endorsement	
	Document of Continuity	

### **Maritime Safety and Security**

Survey and data collection is on a continual basis. The survey seeks answers via a 5 point Likert Scale response to 8 questions focused on their satisfaction with Coast Guard performance. The responses can be collated into bar charts, and central tendency determined. Any stratification is achieved through the following groupings, however, no analysis is currently being conducted associated with these groupings. The groupings are currently used to ensure proper handling of any qualitative issues raised in the survey response.

<b>Maritime Activity Type</b>	<b>Local CG Sector Unit or Port</b>
Aids to Navigation	Baltimore
America's Waterway Watch Program	Boston
Area Committee	Buffalo (including Cleveland)
Area Maritime Security Committee	Charleston
CG Auxiliary Recreational Boating Safety Exam	Corpus Christi
Commercial Fishing Vessel At-Sea Safety Boarding	Delaware Bay
Commercial Fishing Vessel Dockside Safety Exam	Detroit
Container Inspection	Duluth
Facility Safety Inspection	Guam
Harbor Safety Committee	Hampton Roads
Marine Event	Honolulu
Marine Investigation	Houston-Galveston
Maritime Exercise	Jacksonville
Pollution Response	Key West
Port Security Grant Program	Lake Michigan
Search and Rescue	Long Island Sound
Uninspected Passenger Vessel Exam	Los Angeles-Long Beach
Uninspected Towing Vessel Exam	Lower Mississippi River (Memphis)
Vessel MTSA/ISPS Security Inspection	Miami
Vessel Plan Review	Mobile
Vessel Safety Inspection	Morgan City
Vessel Security Boarding	New Orleans
Vessel Security Inspection	New York
Vessel Traffic Service	North Carolina

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Other	Northern New England (Portland, ME)
	Ohio Valley
	Pittsburgh
	Port Arthur and Lake Charles
	Portland, OR
	Prince William Sound (Valdez)
	San Diego
	San Francisco
	San Juan
	Sault Ste. Marie
	Savannah
	Southeast Alaska (Juneau)
	Seattle (Puget Sound)
	Southeastern New England (Providence)
	St. Petersburg (Tampa)
	Upper Mississippi River (St. Louis)
	Western Alaska (Anchorage)

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### QUESTION 3.

Describe methods to maximize response rates and to deal with issues of non-response. The accuracy and reliability of information collected must be shown to be adequate for intended uses. For collections based on sampling, a special justification must be provided for any collection that will not yield "reliable" data that can be generalized to the universe studied.

### AGENCY'S RESPONSE:

Procedures to maximize the response rate will include the following:

#### NEP

All exercise planning conference attendees enter their contact information on a sign-in sheet. At the conclusion of each planning conference, an electronic "Exercise Conference Feedback Survey" is sent to their email address by the ESB Metrics and Analysis Officer. The survey is voluntary and no follow-up reminders are sent. No personally identifiable information is collected in the survey.

#### Mariner Credentialing

The survey collects no personally identifiable information, so anonymity is assured. The survey is brief, a single page

The introduction/implementation of email-linked access to the single page Mariner Survey for Mariner's recently participating in the credentialing process raised the response rate to near 20% (18.2%) during the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter of 2010. This rate of response meant sample sizes enabling our 3% to 5% margin of error target for responder results to be met. As example, in March 2010 – for the 926 responders to question 6 in the survey (The staff was knowledgeable and professional), 86% were in some form of positive agreement, while 14% were in some form of disagreement. The margin of error was 3.3%.

#### Maritime Safety and Security

The Maritime Safety and Security Survey is brief, a single page

The respondent is not required to provide any personally identifiable information, so anonymity is assured. The respondent may provide contact information if follow-up contact from the Coast Guard is desired in relation to any qualitative information provided, such as a continuing unresolved problem.

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**QUESTION 4.**

Describe any tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken. Testing is encouraged as an effective means of refining collections of information to minimize burden and improve utility. Tests must be approved if they call for answers to identical questions from 10 or more respondents. A proposed test or set of tests may be submitted for approval separately or in combination with the main collection of information.

**AGENCY'S RESPONSE:**

**NEP**

There are no tests of procedures or methods planned. Survey questions will remain the same as from the previous OMB approved survey.

**Mariner Credentialing**

There are no tests of procedures or methods planned. The NMC will reevaluate testing needs in the future as further data regarding response rates using the email-linked transmission initiative become available.

**Maritime Safety and Security**

There are no tests of procedures or methods planned. Survey questions will remain the same as from the previous OMB approved survey.



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**QUESTION 5.**

Provide the name and telephone number of individuals consulted on statistical aspects of the design and the name of the agency unit, contractor(s), grantee(s), or other person(s) who will actually collect and/or analyze the information for the agency

**AGENCY'S RESPONSE:**

**NEP**

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**Mariner Credentialing**

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**Maritime Safety and Security**

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