

JUSTIFICATION FOR CHANGE
SOUTHEAST REGION LOGBOOK FAMILY OF FORMS
OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-0016

This request is to modify the paper logbook form that has been approved for charter boats and headboats to an online version, with no other changes to the form. **We are requesting review as soon as possible, to enable collection of information related to impacts of the Deepwater Horizon incident.**

Current efforts to collect catch and effort information from recreational charter fishing vessels in the Gulf of Mexico rely upon a complemented surveys approach that includes telephone surveys of charter vessels (operators) to estimate total fishing effort (angler trips) and dockside surveys of completed charter fishing trips to estimate catch per trip. These data are collected as part of the Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey (OMB Control No. 0648-0052). In 2006, the National Research Council conducted an independent review of recreational fisheries survey methods (NRC 2006). The NRC review recognized that in regions such as the Gulf of Mexico, the magnitude of the charter boat sector and the potential scale for fishery removals warrants the use of mandatory logbooks as the source of catch and effort.

In 2009, a more detailed review of for-hire data collection methods in the United States supported the NRC recommendation for logbook reporting. In addition, the reviewers provided a list of best practice recommendations for collecting logbook data that included the development of an online reporting option. As a result of these recommendations, we requested and received approval as part of the renewal of OMB Control No. 0648-0016 to conduct a data collection for charter boats that included a paper logbook form. This change request is to implement an online logbook form as an alternative to the approved charter boat/headboat paper form.

Providing an online option will not impact the estimated reporting burden. However, we believe the online form will result in more timely reporting of fishing activity and provide more timely access to for-hire catch and effort statistics.