

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT
COMMERCIAL OPERATOR'S ANNUAL REPORT (COAR)
OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-0428**

This action requests extension of this existing information collection.

INTRODUCTION

Fishing for groundfish by United States (U.S.) vessels in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) in waters off the coast of Alaska is authorized under the [Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act](#), 16 U.S.C. 1801, *et seq.* (Magnuson-Stevens Act) as amended in 2006. The North Pacific Fishery Management Council prepares and amends fishery management plans for any fishery in waters under its jurisdiction. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) manages groundfish according to the Fishery Management Plan for Groundfish of the Gulf of Alaska and the Fishery Management Plan for the Groundfish Fishery of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area.

The first buyer of raw fish, persons who catch and process fish, and persons who catch and have fish processed by another business are required to file an annual report of their purchasing and processing activities. This report is called the State of Alaska Commercial Operators Annual Report (COAR) and is due by April 1 of the following year. NMFS also requires annual COAR reports from catcher/processors and motherships operating in the EEZ off Alaska.

The COAR reports contain data on seafood purchasing, production, and both ex-vessel and wholesale values of seafood products. The buying information from COAR is reported by species, area of purchase, condition of fisheries resources at the time of purchase, type of gear used in the harvest, pounds purchased, and ex-vessel value. The ex-vessel value in COAR includes any post-season adjustments or bonuses paid after the fish was purchased.

The production information from COAR is reported by species, area of processing, process type (frozen, canned, smoked, etc.), product type (fillets, surimi (fish puree), sections, etc.), net weight of the processed product, and the first wholesale value.

A. JUSTIFICATION

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

Catcher/processors and motherships operating in the EEZ off the coast of Alaska represent a significant part of the total capacity of groundfish processors in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area (BSAI) and Gulf of Alaska (GOA) and account for a substantial part of the total landings each year. NMFS requires motherships and catcher/processors that are issued a Federal fisheries permit (FFP) to complete and submit the Alaska COAR on an annual basis.

These mothership and catcher/processor data, when added to the COAR information collected from shoreside processors and stationary floating processors required under State of Alaska requirements, yield a complete data base of equivalent annual product value information for all respective processing sectors. It also provides a consistent time series according to which groundfish resources may be managed more efficiently. Use of the information generated by the COAR is coordinated between NMFS and the State of Alaska, Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G).

NMFS uses the COAR database in the annual NMFS Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation documents for the groundfish fisheries of the BSAI and GOA, annual Federal publications on the value of U.S. commercial fisheries, and in periodic reports that describe the fisheries and that serve as reference documents to management agencies, the industry, and others.

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 all applicable Information Quality Guidelines.

The COAR is used to gather statewide fish and shellfish information describing Buying (ex-vessel) and Production (wholesale or retail) activities. Each mothership or catcher/processor is required to complete and submit one or more pages of the COAR to ADF&G for computer data entry, whether the processor operated or not. A certification page is available to indicate no receipt or production took place for that year; in this case, no other COAR pages are required. The COAR form can be downloaded from <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=fishlicense.coar>.

The owner of a mothership or catcher/processor must annually complete and submit to ADF&G the appropriate Forms A through M and COAR certification page for each year in which the mothership or catcher/processor was issued an FFP.

The owner of a mothership must record and submit the appropriate COAR production forms for all production that occurred for each species during the applicable year:

- ◆ that were purchased from fishermen on the grounds and/or dockside, including both processed and unprocessed seafood
- ◆ that were then either processed on the mothership or exported out of the State of Alaska
- ◆ that were received from an associated buying station.

The motherships and catcher/processors must submit the COAR by the following April 1 to

Alaska Department of Fish & Game
Division of Commercial Fisheries
Attn: Seafood Industry Coordinator
P.O. Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526
Telephone: 907-465-6131
Email: dfg.seafood-coord@alaska.gov

The COAR is available in fillable forms at <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=fishlicense.coar>
under Commercial Fish Reporting.

Commercial Operator's Annual Report (COAR)

Certification page

If a processor **did not participate in fishing activity** in a calendar year, either inside or outside of the 3-mile zone, submit only the Certification Page. Enter processor code. A separate form must be completed for each ADF&G processor code.

Check YES or NO to indicate:

Did you operate using the above processor code this reporting year

Were fish tickets written using the above processor code this reporting year

Did you operate **only** in EEZ this reporting year

Company name and address, including street, city, state and zip code

Physical location of land-based plant

Vessel name

Contact name and title

e-mail address, telephone number, and company fax number

Alternate contact printed name, email address, and telephone number

Printed name, signature, and date signed

Buying (ex-vessel) forms A(1-3), C(1-2), E, G, I(1-2), and K

Species name and code

Area purchased

Gear code

Delivery code (form G only)

Total weight (to the nearest lb) purchased from fishermen

Total amount paid to fishermen

Average price per pound

Wholesale production forms B(1-6), D, F, H, J(1-2), and K)

Canned production.

Complete an entry for each can size produced.

Area of processing

Process 51 (conventional canned) or

Process 52 (smoked, conventional canned)

Total value (\$)

Can size (in ounces, to the hundredth of an ounce)

Number of cans per case

Number of cases

Production, non-canned.

Area of processing

Processed product (enter three codes)

Process prefix code

Product suffix code

Product code

Total net weight (in lb)

Total value (\$)
 Average price per pound
Custom production forms L(1-2)
For another processor L(1)
 (Do not include any of that production in this report)
 Processor name
 State processor code (if known),
 Location of company or vessel name
By another processor L(2)
 (use a separate page to list each processor)
 Name of company
 Processor code
 Location or vessel name performing custom production
Custom fresh/frozen miscellaneous production
 (wholesale/retail market and which are not frozen for canning later)
 Species name and code
 Area of processing
 Processed product (use 3 codes)
 Process prefix code
 Process suffix code
 Product code
 Total net weight (lb)
 Total wholesale value (\$)
Custom canned production
 (Complete an entry for each can size produced:
 Species name and code
 Area of processing
 Process 51 or 52
 Total wholesale value
 Can size (in ounces, to the hundredth of an ounce)
 Number of cans per case
 Number of cases
Fish buying retro payments/post-season adjustments, form M
 Species name and code
 Area purchased
 Gear code
 Total pounds purchased from fishermen
 Total amount paid to fishermen (base + adjustment)

COAR, Respondent	
Estimated number of responses	204
170 catcher/processors	
34 motherships	
Total annual responses	204
Frequency of response, annual	
Total annual time burden hours	1,632 hr
Estimated average response time = 8 hr	
Total personnel cost	\$40,800
Cost per hour = \$25	
Total miscellaneous cost	\$816
Postage 204 x \$2.50 = 510	
Copy 204 x 0.05 x 30pp = 306	

COAR, Federal Government	
Total annual responses	0
Total annual time burden	0
Total personnel cost	0
Total miscellaneous cost	0

It is anticipated that the information collected will be disseminated to the public or used to support publicly disseminated information. As explained in the preceding paragraphs, the information gathered has utility. The COAR is a document of ADF&G. ADF&G maintains control of publication and distribution of the form and maintenance of the data obtained from the form. See Question 10 of this Supporting Statement for more information on confidentiality and privacy. The information collection is designed to yield data that meet all applicable information quality guidelines. Prior to dissemination, the information will be subjected to quality control measures and a pre-dissemination review pursuant to Section 515 of Public Law 106-554.

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.

ADF&G requires an original signature on the COAR. At this time, ADF&G does not have funding to provide for electronic submission of the COAR. *Although NMFS has attempted to procure grants or other funding for this purpose, so far funding is not available.* The form is available on the Internet in fillable format that can be printed and mailed. The applicant provides a completed COAR in printed form directly to ADF&G.

4. Describe your efforts to identify duplication.

No duplication exists with other information collections.

5. If the collection of information involves small businesses or other small entities, describe the methods used to minimize burden.

NA: None of these respondents are small entities.

6. Describe the consequences to the Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently.

A Federal requirement for catcher/processors and motherships to submit the COAR is a method to obtain complete and equivalent annual product value information for all respective processing sectors. The COAR data are fundamental to the agency's mandated obligations under [Executive Order \(E.O.\) 12866](#) and the Magnuson-Stevens Act, [American Fisheries Act](#), [Regulatory Flexibility Act](#), and National Standards 4, 5, 7, and 8 (MSA Section 301). The COAR database is used in the annual NMFS Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation documents for the groundfish fisheries of the BSAI and GOA, annual Federal publications on the value of U.S. commercial fisheries, and in periodic reports that describe the fisheries and that serve as reference documents to management agencies, the industry, and others. Without the COAR data base, NMFS would be deficient in these very important data sectors.

7. Explain any special circumstances that require the collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with OMB guidelines.

The COAR is a State of Alaska form and thus does not have an OMB Control No. or expiration date on it.

8. Provide information on the 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 August 26, 2011 (76 FR 53412) solicited public comments. No comments were received.

9. Explain any decisions to provide payments or gifts to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.

No payment or gift is provided under this program.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.

The COAR form has no confidentiality statement. However, the information collected is confidential under Section 402(b) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act. It is also confidential under NOAA Administrative Order 216-100, which sets forth procedures to protect confidentiality of fishery statistics. The information submitted in the COAR also is protected by Alaska State confidentiality statute [AS 16.05.815](#).

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.

This information collection does not involve information of a sensitive nature.

12. Provide an estimate in hours of the burden of the collection of information.

Total estimated unique respondents: 204, increased from 99. Total estimated responses: 204 increased from 99. Total estimated burden: 1,632, increased from 792 hr. Total estimated personnel costs: \$40,800, increased from \$19,800.

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 Question 12 above).

Total estimated miscellaneous costs: \$816, increased from \$122.

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

There are no appreciable costs to NMFS. The COAR is submitted by respondents to ADF&G and data from the COAR are maintained and analyzed by ADF&G.

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments.

Adjustments are made in this collection, due in part to differences in numbers of participants, based on current permit counts. Also, the cost of copying was inadvertently omitted from previous analyses and is added here.

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

Individual data from the COAR is confidential. Fishermen, researchers, economists, etc. request and receive ad hoc reports (non-confidential data) from COAR data for various reasons. NMFS economists use data from COAR as a source for a variety of tables that appear in an economic appendix to the annual Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation Reports and also in regulatory analyses for groundfish fisheries such as Supplemental Environmental Impact Statements and Regulatory Impact Reviews.

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.

This is a State of Alaska form; the OMB number and expiration date will not be displayed.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement.

Not Applicable.

B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

This collection does not employ statistical methods.