

## Supporting Statement

Information Collection Title: Records of Preshift and Onshift Inspections of Slope and Shaft Areas of Slope and Shaft Sinking Operations at Coal Mines

OMB	30 CFR	
<u>CONTROL</u>	<u>Section</u>	<u>CFR Title</u>
1219-0082	§ 77.1901	Records of preshift and onshift inspections; reports.

### A. Justification

**1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. Identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection. Attach a copy of the appropriate section of each statute and regulation mandating or authorizing the collection of information.**

Section 103(h) of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977 (Mine Act), 30 U.S.C. § 813(h), authorizes MSHA to collect information necessary to carry out its duty in protecting the safety and health of miners. The sinking of slopes and shafts is a particularly hazardous operation where conditions change drastically in short periods of time. Explosive methane and other harmful gases can be expected to infiltrate the work environment at any time. The working environment is typically a confined area in close proximity to moving equipment. Accordingly, 30 CFR §77.1901 requires operators to conduct examinations of slope and shaft areas for hazardous conditions, including tests for methane and oxygen deficiency, within 90 minutes before each shift, once during each shift, and before and after blasting. The surface area surrounding each slope and shaft is also required to be inspected for hazards.

The standard also requires that a record be kept of the results of the inspections. The record includes a description of any hazardous condition found and the corrective action taken to abate it. The record is necessary to ensure that the inspections and tests are conducted in a timely fashion and that corrective action is taken when hazardous conditions are identified, thereby ensuring a safe working environment for the slope and shaft sinking employees. The record is maintained at the mine site for the duration of the operation.

**2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used. Except for a new collection, indicate the actual use the agency has made of the information received from the current collection.**

The records are used by slope and shaft supervisors and employees, State mine inspectors, and Federal mine inspectors. The records show that the examinations and tests were conducted and give insight into the hazardous conditions that have been

encountered and those that may be encountered. The records of inspections greatly assist those who use them in making decisions that will ultimately affect the safety and health of slope and shaft sinking employees.

**3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses, and the basis for the decision for adopting this means of collection. Also describe any consideration of using information technology to reduce burden.**

No improved information technology has been identified that would reduce the burden, however in order to comply with the Government Paperwork Elimination Act, and 30 CFR § 77.1901(f), mine operators may record the results of preshift and onshift inspections of slope and shaft areas in whatever method they choose, which may include utilizing computer technology.

**4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purposes described in Item 2 above.**

Generally, this information exists only as a result of the Federal requirement. Some States have a similar requirement, however many do not. A nationwide requirement, therefore, remains a necessity. Where States do require the same records, those would satisfy MSHA requirements.

**5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities (Item 5 of OMB Form 83-I), describe any methods used to minimize burden.**

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

**6. Describe the consequence to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.**

A reduction in the frequency of examinations and tests could allow unsafe conditions to develop, jeopardizing the safety of the slope and shaft sinking employees. Section 101(a)(9) of the Mine Act prohibits any regulatory action that would reduce the protection afforded miners by an existing standard.

**7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner:**

**\* requiring respondents to report information to the agency more often than quarterly;**

- \* requiring respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it;**
- \* requiring respondents to submit more than an original and two copies of any document;**
- \* requiring respondents to retain records, other than health, medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records, for more than three years;**
- \* in connection with a statistical survey, that is not designed to produce valid and reliable results that can be generalized to the universe of study;**
- \* requiring the use of a statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by OMB;**
- \* that includes a pledge of confidentiality that is not supported by authority established in statute or regulation, that is not supported by disclosure and data security policies that are consistent with the pledge, or which unnecessarily impedes sharing of data with other agencies for compatible confidential use; or**
- \* requiring respondents to submit proprietary trade secrets, or other confidential information unless the agency can demonstrate that it has instituted procedures to protect the information's confidentiality to the extent permitted by law.**

The collection of this information is consistent with the guidelines in 5 CFR § 1320.5

**8. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publication in the Federal Register of the agency's notice, required by 5 CFR 1320.8(d), soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB. Summarize public comments received in response to that notice and describe actions taken by the agency in response to these comments. Specifically address comments received on cost and hour burden.**

**Describe 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.**

**Consultation with representatives of those from whom information is to be obtained or those who must compile records should occur at least once every 3 years - even if the collection of information activity is the same as in prior periods. There may be circumstances that may preclude consultation in a specific situation. These circumstances should be explained.**

MSHA published a 60-day Federal Register notice on September 19, 2012 (77 FR 58172). One comment was received. The comment stated that it would be more practical to retain the current practice of recording examination results in written form in a book or ledger. This commenter seemed to suggest that examination results should only be written in a book or ledger to the exclusion of other methods of recording the information. MSHA agrees that the practice of writing examination results in a readily accessible book or ledger should be retained. However, the Government Paperwork Elimination Act requires federal agencies to allow individuals or entities that deal with

the agencies the option to submit information or transact with the agency electronically as a substitute for paper and to maintain records electronically, when practicable. Therefore, MSHA allows operators to record the results of preshift and onshift inspections of slope and shaft areas in a secure book that is not susceptible to alteration or electronically in a computer system so as to be secure and not susceptible to alteration. MSHA intends the term “secure and not susceptible to alteration” when applied to electronic storage to mean that the stored record cannot be modified.

**9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.**

MSHA does not provide payments or gifts to respondents.

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

No assurance of confidentiality is provided.

**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 justification should include the reasons why the agency considers the questions necessary, the specific uses to be made of the information, the explanation to be given to persons from whom the information is requested, and any steps to be taken to obtain their consent.**

There are no questions of a sensitive nature.

**12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information. The statement should:**

**\* Indicate the number of respondents, frequency of response, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated. Unless directed to do so, agencies should not conduct special surveys to obtain information on which to base hour burden estimates. Consultation with a sample (fewer than 10) of potential respondents is desirable. If the hour burden on respondents is expected to vary widely because of differences in activity, size, or complexity, show the range of estimated hour burden, and explain the reasons for the variance. Generally, estimates should not include burden hours for customary and usual business practices.**

**\* If this request for approval covers more than one form, provide separate hour burden estimates for each form and aggregate the hour burdens in Item 13 of OMB Form 83-I.**

**\* Provide estimates of annualized cost to respondents for the hour burdens for collections of information, identifying and using appropriate wage rate categories. The cost of contracting out or paying outside parties for information**

**collection activities should not be included here. Instead, this cost should be included in Item 13.**

MSHA's records show that there are about 27 slope and shaft sinking operations ongoing on coal mine property at any given time. The average coal mine works 220 days per year and 2 shifts per day. Inspections are conducted prior to and during each shift and before and after blasting which, when combined, take an average of 1 hour per shift to conduct and 15 minutes (0.25 hour) per shift to record. All wages used are fully loaded.

Inspections:

27 slopes and shafts x 220 days per  
year x 2 shifts per day x 1 hour = 11,880 hours

Recordkeeping:

27 slopes and shafts x 220 days per  
year x 2 shifts per day x 0.25 hour = 2,970 hours

**Total Hour Burden = 14,850 hours**

Hour Burden Cost

Based on data from the U.S. Coal Mine Salaries, Wages, & Benefits - 2007 Survey Results, MSHA estimates that the 2010 hourly wage rate for supervisory/professional/technical employees at slope and shaft sinking operations at coal mines to be \$78.35 per hour, and \$26.44 per hour for clerical. Accordingly, the hour burden cost is estimated to be:

11,880 hours x \$78.35 per hour = \$930,798

2,970 hours x \$26.44 per hour = \$ 78,527

**Total Hour Burden Cost = \$1,009,325**

**13. Provide an estimate for the total annual cost burden to respondents or recordkeepers resulting from the collection of information. (Do not include the cost of any hour burden shown in Items 12 and 14).**

**\* The cost estimate should be split into two components: (a) a total capital and start-up cost component (annualized over its expected useful life) and (b) a total operation and maintenance and purchase of services component. The estimates should take into account costs associated with generating, maintaining, and disclosing or providing the information. Include descriptions of methods used to estimate major cost factors including system and technology acquisition, expected useful life of capital equipment, the discount rate(s), and the time period over which costs will be incurred. Capital and start-up costs include, among other items, preparations for collecting information such as purchasing computers and software; monitoring, sampling, drilling and testing equipment; and record storage facilities.**

**\* If cost estimates are expected to vary widely, agencies should present ranges of cost burdens and explain the reasons for the variance. The cost of purchasing or contracting out information collections services should be a part of this cost burden estimate. In developing cost burden estimates, agencies may consult with a sample of respondents (fewer than 10), utilize the 60-day pre-OMB submission public comment process and use existing economic or regulatory impact analysis associated with the rulemaking containing the information collection, as appropriate.**

**\* Generally, estimates should not include purchases of equipment or services, or portions thereof, made: (1) prior to October 1, 1995, (2) to achieve regulatory compliance with requirements not associated with the information collection, (3) for reasons other than to provide information or keep records for the government, or (4) as part of customary and usual business or private practices.**

MSHA does not anticipate that shaft and slope sinking operators will incur any costs other than those described in Item 12.

**14. Provide estimates of annualized costs to the Federal government. Also, provide a description of the method used to estimate cost, which should include quantification of hours, operational expenses (such as equipment, overhead, printing, and support staff), and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information. Agencies may also aggregate cost estimates from Items 12, 13, and 14 in a single table.**

Because the review of records of preshift and onshift inspections of slope and shaft areas is just one aspect of the inspections required under Section 103(a) of the Mine Act, MSHA believes that this burden is minimal and has assigned no federal cost burden for this specific information collection.

**15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reporting in Items 13 or 14 of the OMB Form 83-I.**

Presently, the coal industry is relatively stable and because of this the rate of development of slopes and shafts has had no appreciable change. Therefore, there have only been minor changes in the number of Respondents, Responses, Hours, and Cost.

*Respondents:* Decreased from 35 to 27 due to a decrease in the number of slope and shaft development operations

*Responses:* Increased from 11,858 to 11,880 due to an increase in the average number of shifts worked at operating mines.

*Hours:* Increased from 14,823 to 14,850 due to an increase in the average number of shifts worked at operating mines.

Cost: Remains at \$0.

**16. For collections of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulation, and publication. Address any complex analytical techniques that will be used. Provide the time schedule for the entire project, including beginning and ending dates of the collection of information, completion of report, publication dates, and other actions.**

MSHA has no plans to publish the information obtained through this information collection.

**17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.**

There are no forms associated with this collection.

**18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in Item 19, "Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submission," of OMB 83-I.**

There are no certification exceptions identified with this information collection.

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

When Item 17 on the Form OMB 83-I is checked "Yes", the following documentation should be included in the Supporting Statement to the extent it applies to the methods proposed:

The collection of this information does not employ statistical methods.

## **Federal Mine Safety & Health Act of 1977 (the Mine Act)**

### **MANDATORY SAFETY AND HEALTH STANDARDS**

SEC. 101. (a) The Secretary shall by rule in accordance with procedures set forth in this section and in accordance with section 553 of title 5, United States Code (without regard to any reference in such section to sections 556 and 557 of such title), develop, promulgate, and revise as may be appropriate, improved mandatory health or safety standards for the protection of life and prevention of injuries in coal or other mines.

### **INSPECTIONS, INVESTIGATIONS, AND RECORDKEEPING**

SEC. 103. (a) Authorized representatives of the Secretary or the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare shall make frequent inspections and investigations in coal or other mines each year for the purpose of (1) obtaining, utilizing, and disseminating information relating to health and safety conditions, the causes of accidents, and the causes of diseases and physical impairments originating in such mines, (2) gathering information with respect to mandatory health or safety standards, (3) determining whether an imminent danger exists, and (4) determining whether there is compliance with the mandatory health or safety standards or with any citation, order, or decision issued under this title or other requirements of this Act. In carrying out the requirements of this subsection, no advance notice of an inspection shall be provided to any person, except that in carrying out the requirements of clauses (1) and (2) of this subsection, the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare may give advance notice of inspections. In carrying out the requirements of clauses (3) and (4) of this subsection, the Secretary shall make inspections of each underground coal or other mine in its entirety at least four times a year, and of each surface coal or other mine in its entirety at least two times a year. The Secretary shall develop guidelines for additional inspections of mines based on criteria including, but not limited to, the hazards found in mines subject to this Act, and his experience under this Act and other health and safety laws. For the purpose of making any inspection or investigation under this Act, the Secretary, or the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, with respect to fulfilling his responsibilities under this Act, or any authorized representative of the Secretary or the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, shall have a right of entry to, upon, or through any coal or other mine. ...

(h) In addition to such records as are specifically required by this Act, every operator of a coal or other mine shall establish and maintain such records, make such reports, and provide such information, as the Secretary or the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare may reasonably require from time to time to enable him to perform his functions under this Act. The Secretary or the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare is authorized to compile, analyze, and publish, either in summary or detailed form, such reports or information so obtained. Except to the extent otherwise specifically provided by this Act, all records, information, reports, findings, citations, notices, orders, or decisions required or issued pursuant to or under this Act may be published from time to time, may be released to any interested person, and shall be made available for public inspection. \* \* \* \* \*



## 30 CFR PART 77 Subpart T – Slope and Shaft Sinking

§ 77.1901 Records of preshift and onshift inspections; reports

(a) Examinations of slope and shaft areas shall be made by a certified person for hazardous conditions, including tests for methane and oxygen deficiency:

(1) Within 90 minutes before each shift;

(2) At least once on any shift during which men are employed inside any slope or shaft during development; and

(3) Both before and after blasting.

\* \* \* \* \*

(f) The results of all inspections conducted in accordance with the provisions of paragraph (a) of this section shall be recorded in a book approved by the Secretary.