

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT  
WEATHER MODIFICATION ACTIVITIES REPORTS  
OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-0025**

**A. JUSTIFICATION**

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

This request is for extension of this information collection.

P.L. 92-205, enacted December 18, 1971 ([amended by Public Law 94-490, Section 6\(b\)](#), October 15, 1976) requires that all non-federal weather modification activities in the United States and its territories be reported to the Secretary of Commerce. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has implemented the Act and the current reporting requirements are published in the Code of Federal Regulations ([15 CFR 908](#)).

**2. Explain how, by whom, how frequently, and for what purpose the information will be used.**

Respondents to this data collection are operators of aircraft which engage in cloud-seeding and other related activities in an attempt to modify the weather, i.e., to increase precipitation, mitigate hail, and disperse fog. They are required to file two one-page reports annually. Each project must file with NOAA an initial report (Form 17-4) and a final report (Form 17-4A) - or an interim report on the same form if the project continues beyond December 31.

NOAA assembles, analyzes, and retains records of reported weather modification activities, makes the records publicly available to the fullest extent practicable, and publishes summaries from time to time. The intent of the program is to increase expertise in the field of weather modification, to allow scientists and other concerned persons to have access to information on current and past efforts at weather modification, to help avoid unneeded and wasteful duplications, to aid in preventing territorial overlapping of weather modification operations, to provide data to assess possible harmful or dangerous activities, and to furnish information to check both desirable and undesirable atmospheric changes against records of weather modification efforts.

To meet this objective, information is collected on the location and size of the target area, names and addresses of sponsors and operators, beginning and ending dates of the project, specific purpose, description of apparatus and seeding agents to be used, number of days of operations, number of hours of operations of each type of weather modification apparatus, and total amount of seeding agent used.

The reports of weather modification activities on file with NOAA as a result of the reporting program furnish useful information for several purposes. Persons planning projects, writing news articles, or preparing term papers request historical and current data for individual states,

regions, or the United States. Congressional staffs, Federal and State officials, and private citizens inquire or complain about weather modification activities that are thought to be associated with adverse weather conditions. On occasion, plaintiffs, defendants, or their lawyers ask for records of activities in connection with law suits. Even the practitioners upon whom the reporting burden is placed are interested in the level of activity throughout the country, and summary reports have been prepared (at their request) for publication in their association journal in the years when an official NOAA report has not been published. The data contained in the reports are also used to provide information (1) required by a March 26, 1975, U.S.- Canada agreement to exchange information on weather modification activities within 200 miles of our common boundary and (2) to the World meteorological Organization (WMO) for publication in its yearly "Register of National Weather Modification Projects".

NOAA will retain control over the information and safeguard it from improper access, modification, and destruction, consistent with NOAA standards for confidentiality, privacy, and electronic information. See response to 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. Although the information collected is not expected to be disseminated directly to the public, results may be used in scientific, management, technical or general informational publications. Should NOAA decide to disseminate the information, it will be subject to the quality control measures and 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.**

Beginning in 2000, the NOAA Forms 17-4 and 17-4A became available on the Internet at <http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/~noaaforms/eforms/> in order for the respondents to have the capability of being able to fill out and print forms on-line. However, the forms can not be submitted electronically at this time because the forms are required to be signed by the equipment operator. The forms may be faxed to (301) 713-1459 to the attention of Karen Williams or may be mailed to the NOAA - Weather Modification Reporting Office in Silver Spring, MD. Electronic signature capability is being planned but security requirements are still to be addressed. The NOAA Forms 17-4 and 17-4A are still available by mail to those who do not have access to a computer.

Note: currently a redesign of the forms is planned, as the previously fillable forms were locked by a retired employee.

**4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.**

NOAA is the only organization/activity collecting this information.

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

Currently, only one of our respondents is a small business owner. Only minimal information is required and the forms are designed to minimize the burden on all reporting entities.

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

Current information is needed to respond to Congressional and public requests for information, and most projects require only an initial and final report each year. Lack of this information would render the Government unable to comply with requests for data as outlined in Question 2, and the data that is used for so many purposes would be unavailable.

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

This collection is being conducted in a manner consistent with the guidelines.

**8. Provide information on the PRA 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 May 5, 2014 (FR-10174) solicited public comment on this renewal. No comments were received.

The following comments were received in response to direct request from respondents:

- Nowhere on Form 17-4A is the type of apparatus used requested.

Response: The information can be documented in Box 6 of NOAA Form 17-4.

- The frequency of data collection is very reasonable.
- I hope that in the future, Forms 17-4 & 17-4A become available in PDF online as they were in the past.

Response: The person that created the PDF version of the form has retired; and the new staff didn't have permission rights to perform the updates. We are in the process of revisiting this problem with our IT department to see if they can recommend a solution.

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

No payments, gifts, or remuneration of any kind are provided.

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

No confidentiality is promised or 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.**

No sensitive questions are asked on the report.

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

We expect approximately 55 respondents annually. They are required to file two one-page reports annually. Each project must file with NOAA an initial report (Form 17-4) and a final report (Form 17-4A - or an interim report on the same form if the project continues beyond December 31). The annual burden for these activities is estimated to be:

55 respondents x 1 Form 17-4 x 30 minutes = 27.5 hours  
55 respondents x 1 Form 17-4A x 30 minutes = 27.5 hours

**Totals: 55 respondents, 110 responses, and 55 hours.**

**13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to the respondents or record-keepers resulting from the collection.**

The annual cost burden for copying, mailing minimal long-distance telephone costs, and filing is approximately \$4.00 - \$5.00 per respondent. 55 respondents x \$5 = **\$275.**

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

The total annual cost to the Federal Government of this reporting is estimated at **\$15,805.00.** The following is the breakdown:

Personnel compensation	\$10,285	
Personnel benefits		2,520
Transportation of things		0
Rents, Communications, Utilities	1,500	

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

There are no changes or adjustments.

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

The data is used by special request, i.e., responses to various queries, except for an annual report which is provided to the National Weather Service (NWS) for transmittal to the World Meteorological Report. This report is a compilation of fiscal year data and is sent to NWS on a spreadsheet.

**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.**

N/A.

**18. Explain each exception to the certification statement.**

N/A.

**B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS**

N/A.