

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

NATIONAL BRIDGE INSPECTION PROGRAM

This request is for OMB's approval to renew a currently approved information collection titled, "National Bridge Inspection Program" (OMB Control No. 2125-0501). This information collection is scheduled to expire on October 31, 2014.

1. Circumstances that make collection of information necessary:

Because of a catastrophic bridge failure in December 1967, the Congress enacted initial legislation which now requires the inspection of all highway bridges on public roads. This collection is necessary to meet legislative requirements of Title 23 United States Code section 144, and the Code of Federal Regulations, 23 Highways Part 650, Subpart C - National Bridge Inspection Standards which require States, Federal Agencies, and Tribal Governments to: (1) perform and report inventory data from routine inspections, fracture critical inspections, and underwater inspections on all highway bridges on public roads, and element level inspections on highway bridges on the National Highway System; (2) report costs associated with the replacement of structurally deficient bridges; and (3) follow up on critical findings. The bridge inspection and replacement cost information that is provided to the FHWA is on an annual basis. The critical findings information is periodically provided to the FHWA. This collection of bridge inspection information is contained on the Structure Inventory and Appraisal (SI&A) Sheet. Data to be collected for the element level inspection is contained in Table 1, Bridge Elements, from the Specification for the National Bridge Inventory Bridge Elements. Data that is collected for the cost data on structurally deficient bridges is contained on input form Replacement Costs for Structurally Deficient Bridges.

2. How, by whom, and for what purpose is the information used:

The information is collected by the States, Federal Agencies, and Tribal Governments as part of their bridge inspection programs, and it is used:

- to determine the condition of the Nation's bridges which is included in the biennial report to Congress titled *Status of the Nation's Highways, Bridges, and Transit: Conditions & Performance*;
- for a report to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate on the Nation's bridge inventory;
- as the data source for executing various sections of the Federal-aid program which involve highway bridges;
- as the data source for assessing the bridge penalty provisions of Title 23 United States Code section 119;
- to assist in the oversight of the National Bridge Inspection Program; and
- for strategic national defense needs.

Users of the information are:

- Federal Highway Administration;
- Department of Transportation, Office of the Secretary;
- State and Local Transportation Departments;
- Congressional committees;
- Department of Defense;
- Highway construction industry;
- General public:
 - news agencies;
 - special interest groups; and
 - private individuals;
- Universities; and
- Other Federal agencies.

3. Extent of automated information collection:

FHWA receives 100% of the data electronically. With the development and implementation of the National Bridge Inventory web-based system, the data can be submitted electronically through the National Bridge Inventory system. Utilization of computerized information technology, such as laptop and handheld computers for field use during inspections for recording data and direct transmittal into a State's inventory system along with the mechanism of electronic submittal effectively reduces the reporting burden when compared to the manual reporting system.

4. Efforts to identify duplication:

The FHWA is not aware of any other record keeping or bridge reporting requirements imposed by the FHWA or any other Federal agencies, which duplicates this process. The information collected is not available anywhere except under this program.

5. Efforts to minimize the burden on small businesses:

State and local transportation departments, Federal Agencies, and Tribal Governments collect this information. There are no small businesses or other small entities involved.

6. Impact of less frequent collection of information:

The current regulation requires a 24 month routine bridge inspection interval as a standard and annual data reporting. Annual performance measures determination; penalty determination; and compliance and oversight of the legislative requirements are required to be determined annually. If the data were to be reported less frequently requirements of law would not be met and

decisions made for compliance and oversight, performance management, and preservation decisions would be made on data that is outdated.

7. **Special circumstances:**

There are no special circumstances related to this information collection.

8. **Compliance with 5 CFR 1320.8:**

This data collection is in compliance with 5 CFR 1320.8.

The FHWA published a Federal Register notice on June 5, 2014 for renewal of this collection which solicited public comments on our intent to seek OMB renewed approval. No comments were received.

9. **Payments or gifts to respondents:**

The respondents do not receive any gifts or payments for the information they provide.

10. **Assurance of confidentiality:**

The information to be provided in this data collection is not considered confidential in nature.

11. **Justification for collection of sensitive information:**

There is no sensitive information in the data that is collected.

12. **Estimate of burden hours for information requested:**

For the 3 collections;

1. Routine Inspections, Fracture Critical Inspections, and Underwater Inspections.
2. Element Level Data Inspections
3. Report Critical Findings & Structurally Deficient Bridge Construction Unit Costs:

The Respondents are:

- The 50 State Transportation Departments.
- 20 Federal Agencies.
- The transportation departments of the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.
- Tribal governments.

1. Routine Inspections, Fracture Critical Inspections, and Underwater Inspections (306,800 responses)

The number of responses per year for routine inspections is based on the total number of highway bridges in the National Bridge Inventory, 600,000 (rounded).. Approximately one half of the total number of highway bridges are inspected and reported each year as the

routine inspection interval is 24 months. Of the total number of highway bridges, another 8,000 which are on an extended routine inspection interval of 48 months are also annually inspected and reported. Therefore, the annual number of responses for routine inspections is estimated at 292,000 (half of the total rounded number of highway bridges, 300,000, minus a quarter of the total number of highway bridges on an extended routine interval, 8,000).

The number of responses per year for fracture critical Inspections is estimated at 9,500 and for underwater inspections the estimate is 5,300. These estimates are also based on information in the National Bridge Inventory. Fracture critical and underwater inspections are separate inspections that may coincide with the routine inspection.

2. Element Level Data Inspections (69,500 responses)

The MAP-21 requirement for element level data collection for NHS highway bridges will typically coincide at the same time as the routine inspection. It is estimated that 69,500 responses from element level inspections of NHS highway bridges will be received each year (half of the total number of NHS highway bridges, 71,500, minus a quarter of the total number of NHS highway bridges on an extended routine interval, 2,000).

3. Critical Findings and Structurally Deficient Bridge Construction Unit Costs
52 responses (State DOTs, District of Columbia and Puerto Rico)

Burden Hours Estimate

1. Routine Inspections, Fracture Critical Inspections, and Underwater Inspections (8 hours per respondent)

The average time to complete a routine bridge inspection is 6 hours, to complete the SI&A Sheet is 1 hour, and to complete a bridge inspection report is 1 hour.

Total Hours 2,454,400 (306,800 responses x 8 hours)

2. Element Level Data Inspections (25 minutes per respondent)

The time to complete the collection of element level data for NHS highway bridges is estimated to be 5% of the total hours needed to complete a routine inspection. This percentage was derived from a limited survey of State DOTs with mature element level data collection programs.

Total Hours 28,958 (69,500 responses x 25 minutes)

3. Critical Findings and Structurally Deficient Bridge Construction Unit Costs (130 hours per respondent)

The time to complete the reporting of structurally deficient bridge construction unit costs is 90 hours. An additional 40 hours is needed to follow up on critical findings. **Total Hours 6,760 (52 responses x 130 hours)**

The estimated total burden is **2,490,118** hours per year.

Burden Hour Breakdown

Routine Inspections, Fracture Critical Inspections, and Underwater Inspections = 306,800
(292,000 (routine inspections) + 9,500 (fracture critical inspections) + 5,300 (underwater inspections) x
8 hours

Burden Hours 2,454,400

Element Level Data Inspections = 69,500 x 25 minutes

Burden Hours 28,958

Critical Findings and Structurally Deficient Bridge Unit Costs = 52 x 130 hours

Burden Hours 6,760

The estimated total burden is **2,490,118** hours per year

13. Estimate of total annual costs to respondents:

There are no annual costs to respondents, other than the salaries described under Item 12 above.

14. Estimate of cost to the Federal government:

There are no costs to FHWA.

15. Explanation of program changes or adjustments:

The FHWA has determined by review of the requirements of the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) (Public Law 112-141) that the burden hours will increase to from 2,296,360 to 2,490,118 and responses increased from 286,200 to 376,352 due to the addition requirement of element level inspection of NHS highway bridges and adjustments to the number of inspections due to inventory increase. The revised total annual burden on the States, Federal Agencies, and Tribal Governments would be 2,490,118.

16. Publication of results of data collection:

- Information on bridge conditions is extracted from the National Bridge Inventory and published in the required report to Congress titled *Status of the Nation's Highways, Bridges, and Transit: Conditions & Performance*.
- report to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate on the Nation's bridge inventory
- Basic statistical information as well as the data itself is made available through the FHWA's website.

17. Approval for not displaying the expiration date for OMB approval:

The FHWA is not requesting OMB's approval for not displaying the expiration date.

18. Exceptions to certification statement:

The FHWA is not requesting exceptions to the certification statement.