

**Supporting Statement
for
Mandatory Ship Reporting System for the Northeast and Southeast
Coasts of the United States**

OMB No.: 1625-0103
COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS: Instruction

A. Justification

1. Circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.

Title 33 U.S.C. 1230(d)¹ authorizes the establishment of mandatory ship reporting systems. Title 33 CFR part 169 prescribe the requirements of the system. The purpose of establishing the mandatory ship reporting system is to reduce the likelihood of collisions between ships and northern right whales. The northern right whale is an endangered species. Previous to the establishment of the reporting system, there were high mortality rates attributed to collisions with ships account for up to 50% of all recorded deaths. The populations of remaining northern right whales are concentrated in two regions on the eastern coast of the United States. The northeastern mandatory reporting area (WHALESNORTH) is located mainly off the coast of Massachusetts and is primarily a feeding area for the whales. The southeastern mandatory reporting area (WHALESSOUTH) is located off the coasts of Georgia and Florida and encompasses the species only known calving grounds for the whales.

This information collection supports the following strategic goals:

Department of Homeland Security

- Protection

Coast Guard

- Protection of Natural Resources

Prevention Policy & Response Policy Directorates (CG-5P & CG-5R)

- Human and Natural Environment: Eliminate environmental damage associated with maritime transportation and operations on and around the nation's waterways.

2. Purpose of the information collection.

This reporting requirement triggers issuance of information to the mariner. This information that includes warnings of the risk of hitting northern right whales, where to obtain seasonal right whale advisories, and where to consult for information about precautionary measures that mariners may take to reduce the risk of hitting northern right whales.

3. Consideration of the use of improved information technology.

This is an electronic information collection. The mariner must report when entering either of the reporting systems. There are no forms or recordkeeping requirements. The information is sent via INMARSAT C, TELEX, e-mail, SITOR, or voice radio. Contact details are published annually in the U.S. Coast Pilot.

We estimate that 100% of the reporting requirements can be done electronically. At this time, we estimate that 100% of the responses are collected electronically.

4. Efforts to identify duplication.

A vessel owner/operator must only report in once when first entering the reporting system and is not responsible to report again when leaving. This will minimize the burden on the mariner while providing increased protection to the existing northern right whale populations.

¹ Added by section 313 of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 1998 [Pub. L. 105-383; 112 STAT. 3411; Nov. 13, 1998].

5. Methods to minimize the burden to small businesses if involved.

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

6. Consequences to the Federal program if collection were conducted less frequently.

If the collection were collected less frequently, some vessels would enter these critical zones without receiving instructions or avoidance information and potentially hit a northern right whale.

7. Special collection circumstances.

This information collection is conducted in manner consistent with the guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.5(d)(2).

8. Consultation.

A 60-Day Notice (See [USCG-2015-0692], August 13, 2015, 80 FR 48554) and 30-Day Notice (November 19, 2015, 80 FR 72448) were published in the Federal Register to obtain public comment on this collection. The Coast Guard has not received any comments on this information collection.

9. Provide any payment or gift to respondents.

There is no offer of monetary or material value for this information collection.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents.

There are no assurances of confidentiality provided to the respondents for this information collection.

11. Additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature.

There are no questions of sensitive language.

12. Estimates of annual hour and cost burdens to respondents.

- The estimated number of annual respondents is 1,773.
- The estimated number of annual responses is 2,334.
- The estimated hour burden is 188 hours.
- The estimated cost burden is \$8,272.

The burden to respondents is provided in Appendix A. The number of respondents is the number of distinct vessels that enter WHALESNORTH and WHALESSOUTH in a calendar year. The number of responses is the number of distinct reports received from vessels entering the system. We estimate that the time it takes a vessel operator to report that the vessel is about to enter the system is 0.08 hours (about 5 min.). The position of vessel operator is analogous to a GS-07. The wage rate used is in accordance with the current edition of COMDTINST 7310.1(series) for "Out-Government" personnel.

13. Estimates of annualized capital and start-up costs.

There are no recordkeeping, capital, start-up or maintenance costs associated with this information collection.

14. Estimates of annualized Federal Government costs.

The estimated annual Federal Government cost is \$22,000 (see Appendix B). The cost is based on government communications cost to operate the system.

15. Explain the reasons for the change in burden.

The change in burden hours is an ADJUSTMENT due to a change (i.e., decreased) in the estimated annual number of responses. There is no proposed change to the reporting requirements of this collection. The reporting requirements, and the methodology for calculating burden, remain unchanged.

16. Plans for tabulation, statistical analysis and publication.

This information collection will not be published for statistical purposes.

17. Approval for not explaining the expiration date for OMB approval.

The Coast Guard will display the expiration date for OMB approval of this information collection.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement.

The Coast Guard does not request an exception to the certification of this information collection.

B. Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods

This information collection does not employ statistical methods.