

**Supporting Statement
for
Voyage Planning for Tank Barge Transits in the Northeast United States**

**OMB No.: 1625-0088
COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS: Instruction**

A. Justification.

1) Circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.

A permanent regulated navigation area (RNA) is established within the geographic boundaries of the First Coast Guard District (northeast region of the U.S.) to increase the operational safety of towing vessels and tank barges. The information collection requirements described in this supporting statement are necessary to comply with 33 CFR 165.100(d)(3).¹ The U.S. Coast Guard requires any owner or operator of a towing vessel, which is engaged in towing a tank barge, to prepare a written voyage plan prior to departure. The RNA regulations are issued under the authority of 33 U.S.C. 1231.

These recordkeeping requirements are largely consistent with good commercial practices and the dictates of good seamanship for safe navigation. Furthermore, the voyage plan provides a mechanism for assisting masters of towing vessels in identifying those specific risks, potential equipment failures, or human errors that may lead to an incident. Without an information collection, there would be reduced means for the owner or operator of a towing vessel to be held accountable for adequate navigational practices.

This information collection supports the following strategic goals:

Department of Homeland Security

- Prevention
- Protection
- Recovery

Coast Guard

- Marine Safety
- Protection of Natural Resources

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

- Safety: Eliminate deaths, injuries, and property damage associated with commercial maritime operations.
- 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.

Accidents sometimes occur because towing vessels lack appropriate voyage planning. The information collection aids safe passage by ensuring that the crew will properly plan for the anticipated voyage. The master of the towing vessel that is engaged in towing a tank barge will develop the content of the voyage plan prior to the voyage. The master is also responsible for ensuring that the voyage plan is followed, or, if deviations from the plan are made during the voyage, that the plan is modified to a safe and appropriate alternative. The voyage plan must be in written or electronic form, be retained onboard the vessel, and be readily available to the Coast Guard upon request. Voyage plans also serve as a means for Coast Guard inspectors/investigators to determine if a vessel is in compliance or, in the case of a casualty, whether failure to meet this regulation contributed to the casualty.

3) Consideration of the use of improved information technology.

¹ The Title 33 CFR Part 165 statutory authorities are 33 U.S.C. 1231, 46 U.S.C. 3306, 3307 & Chapter 701, and 50 U.S.C. 191 & 195.

This requirement does not restrict the voyage plan to paper format. Electronic files are allowed and would reduce the physical volume of records on the vessel. We estimate that 50% of respondents maintain their voyage plans electronically.

4) Efforts to identify duplication.

There are no State or local regulations relating to this issue. No similar information collection is conducted by other Federal agencies.

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 was conducted less frequently, compliance with the voyage plan requirement may not be verifiable. Although the Coast Guard believes that most prudent operators already employ many of these safety principles, the regulations are intended to ensure compliance by those vessels not conforming to the safety practices of the majority of the industry.

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-2015-0636], August 13, 2015, 80 FR 48552) and 30-Day Notice (November 19, 2015, 80 FR 72447) 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 payments or gifts 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 hour and cost burdens to respondents.

- The estimated number of annual respondents is 1,759.
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- The estimated hour burden is 880 hours.
- The estimated cost burden is \$73,040.

The burden to respondents is provided in Appendix A. We estimate that it will take the master of the towing vessel about 0.5 hour to prepare a voyage plan. The position of a master is analogous to a GS-13. The wage rate used is in accordance with the current edition of COMDTINST 7310.1(series) for "Out-Government" personnel.

We estimate the number of voyage plans (i.e., voyages) based on U.S. Army Corp of Engineers data.² We assume that a certain percentage of voyages are petroleum-laden. Additionally, we assume that a certain percentage of voyage plans would be developed without this regulation (i.e., voluntarily compliance). To estimate the number of voyage plans for this collection, we multiply the estimated annual number of voyages times the percentage of voyages that are petroleum-laden times the required compliance percentage to obtain the number of required voyage plans.

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

There are no 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 \$780 (see Appendix B). The cost is based on Coast Guard personnel reviews of the voyage plans during periodic inspections, random boardings, and post-casualty investigations. We estimate 100 reviews per year, conducted by a Lieutenant (LT, O-3) at 6 minutes (0.1 hours) per review. The wage rate used is in accordance with the current edition of COMDTINST 7310.1(series) for "In-Government" personnel.

15) Explain the reasons for the change in burden.

The change (i.e., decrease) in burden is an ADJUSTMENT due to a decrease in the estimated annual number of responses. There is no proposed change to the recordkeeping requirements of this collection. The recordkeeping requirements remain unchanged.

16) Plans for tabulation, statistical analysis, and publication.

This information collection will not be published for statistical purposes.

17) Approval to not display expiration date.

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. Collection of Information Employing Statistical Method.

This information collection does not employ statistical methods.

² Waterborne Commerce of the United States, Calendar Years 2010, 2011 & 2012, for selected ports in the New England District and New York, NY District.