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January 30, 2017

Docket Management Facility (M-30)
U.S. Department of Transportation
West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590-0001

Submitted via regulations.gov

RE: Docket No. USCG-2014-0713

On behalf of the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA), which represents the recreational boating law officials in the 50 states and six U.S. territories, I am writing to comment on the U.S. Coast Guard's Notice of Intent to Submit an **Information Collection Request to the Office of Management and Budget; OMB Control Number: 1625-NEW, State Registration Data**. NASBLA first submitted comments to this docket on December 8, 2014, and we welcome the opportunity to do so again.

It is our understanding that the primary purpose of this current Notice is to solicit additional public comment on the utility and other aspects of this data collected under 33 CFR 174.123 (Annual Report of Numbered Vessels) and submitted by the states to the Coast Guard on Form CGHQ-3923. We know that the content of the certificates of number – which are issued by the states and form the basis for this annual collection – has been affected by regulatory amendments in the Final Rule on Changes to Standard Numbering System (SNS), Vessel Identification System (VIS) and Boating Accident Report Database {BARS} (hereafter referred to as “final rule”) issued March 28, 2012, with state implementation effective January 1, 2017. We are also aware that on December 16, 2012, the Coast Guard received OMB approval to continue the SNS information collection (OMB control number 1625-0108), but that in the October 7, 2014 Notice, in order to prepare for and enforce the January 1, 2017 changes in the annual collection of the resulting registration data from states, the Coast Guard had to begin the process of seeking OMB approval for



the revised collection and issuance of a valid control number for a revised CGHQ-3923 form. We further understand that the publication of this current 60-day Notice for public commenting is due to the fact that significant time has elapsed since the initial Notice.

In that context, we have reviewed the current Notice, giving particular attention to the supporting statement and revised Form CGHQ-3923 presented in the agency's Paperwork Reduction Act Submission, and to the Coast Guard's responses to the comments received as a result of the 2014 Notice and comment period.

NASBLA participated in the comment process that led to the issuance of the final rule, and for the sake of our state members, we have had to become very familiar with the revisions imposed in it. As such, we note here what seems to be a radical disconnect between the rigors that the final rule has placed on the states' collection of vessel registration data and the simplified report form CGHQ-3923 proposed by the Coast Guard for the states' submission of that collected data. In the NPRM (USCG-2003-14963) published in 2010 and which kicked off this sequence of events leading to CFR changes, the Coast Guard went through a lot of effort to harmonize terms across the three databases in question—the SNS, VIS, and BARD—as it was significant and important to "...leverage our ability to coordinate data from all three databases to facilitate boating safety, law enforcement, and maritime security enforcement." As an organization, NASBLA has been and continues to be supportive of such harmonization of terms. In September 2008, for example, the NASBLA membership approved a policy position stating that the such uniformity would "assist with better collection of data, allow users to process the data more efficiently, and improve the user's ability to analyze the data to more effectively prevent boating accidents." On behalf of our state members, then, we seek clarification as to why the Coast Guard exerted significant effort to modify CFR to incorporate authorized terms and definitions and harmonize the data across systems when it appears, from the Coast Guard's own admission, including in its formal responses to the 2014 comments, that it has not and does not use a lot of the data that has been and will continue to be collected by the states under the CFR.



For example, in this current Notice, in response to one of the 2014 comments posed by NASBLA regarding the omission of details such as hull and engine drive types (information that could augment the broad vessel type categories authorized in the final rule), the Coast Guard stated they had “not used the hull material or engine drive information collected in prior registration collections [onCGHQ-3923]. Because we have not used the data, we removed it from the form so as to reduce the burden of data reporting on the States.”

- How is this a less burden to the states in reporting their registration data to the Coast Guard? The states will still be required to capture this and other data under CFR 174.17 and 174.19 and store the data, so in their annual reports to the Coast Guard, using the proposed CGHQ-3923, states would have to make additional alterations to the data in order to report on the proposed revised form--that is an additional burden on the states.
- If the engine drive type and hull type have not been used by the Coast Guard, why was it important to incorporate these terms and others in the harmonization of SNS, VIS and BARD?

Based on our own evaluations and consultations, we believe that these data—which the states are mandated to collect-- remain of interest to various sectors identified as users of the vessel registration data, and that they will only be available through the states’ reporting to the Coast Guard on the Form CGHQ-3923. As part of this process, we reviewed the “old” Form CGHQ-3923, which has been in use for over a decade, against the proposed form included in the supplemental materials to this Notice, and respectfully recommend against use of the proposed form. On the recommendation of our Vessel Identification, Registration, and Titling Committee, NASBLA would instead like to see a revised version of the “old” CGHQ-3923 that fully incorporates the terms used in the final rule. We are submitting a prototype of a potential form for consideration. Given that states will still be required to capture all information under CFR 174.17 and 174.19, we feel it is imperative to have states report “all” registration information that is required to be captured under the CFR.



We appreciate your consideration of these comments, our requests for clarification, and our proposed, further revisions to the annual report form CGHQ-3923.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "SKW", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and somewhat cursive.

Stephanie Weatherington
President

RECREATIONAL BOATS ONLY*

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION U.S. COAST GUARD CGHQ 3923 (Rev. 1-17)	REPORT OF CERTIFICATES OF NUMBER ISSUED TO BOATS Numbered in accordance with 33 CFR Parts 173 & 174 (Total Valid State Certificates Outstanding As of 31 December 20__)	FOR STATE/TERRITORY OF _____
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HULL MATERIAL	UNDER 16 FEET				16 TO LESS THAN 26 FEET				26 TO LESS THAN 40 FEET			
	ENGINE DRIVE TYPE				ENGINE DRIVE TYPE				ENGINE DRIVE TYPE			
	INBOARD	OUTBOARD	POD DRIVE	STERNDRIVE*	INBOARD	OUTBOARD	POD DRIVE	STERNDRIVE*	INBOARD	OUTBOARD	POD DRIVE	STERNDRIVE*
Wood												
Fiberglass												
Plastic												
Aluminum												
Steel												
Rubber/Vinyl/Canvas												
Other												

HULL MATERIAL	40 TO 65 FEET				OVER 65 FEET				TOTAL			
	ENGINE DRIVE TYPE				ENGINE DRIVE TYPE				ENGINE DRIVE TYPE			
	INBOARD	OUTBOARD	POD DRIVE	STERNDRIVE*	INBOARD	OUTBOARD	POD DRIVE	STERNDRIVE*	INBOARD	OUTBOARD	POD DRIVE	STERNDRIVE*
Wood												
Fiberglass												
Plastic												
Aluminum												
Steel												
Rubber/Vinyl/Canvas												
Other												

*The term "sterndrive" includes inboard/outboards and jet drives.

HULL MATERIAL	OTHER BOATS					TOTAL	SCOPE OF CURRENT NUMBERING SYSTEM	*TOTALS: Commercial Passenger: _____ Commercial Fishing: _____ Commercial Other: _____ Total Commercial Vessels: _____
	NOT MECHANICALLY PROPELLED			PERSONAL WATER-CRAFT	OTHER BOATS			
	Sail Only	Row Only	Paddle Craft					
Wood								
Fiberglass								
Pastic								
Aluminum								
Steel								
Rubber/Vinyl/Canvas								
Other								

COMMENTS (Continue on plain paper or reverse)

TOTAL NUMBER OF CERTIFIED VESSELS: 0

I Certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief, the data above are correct.

Signature _____ Date _____