

**Supporting Statement for
Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions**

Information Collection Title: Hazardous Conditions Complaints

Collection Instrument(s): Hazardous Condition Complaint. *(Web Only Instrument)*

Authority: 30 CFR 43.4 and 43.7

General Instructions

A Supporting Statement, including the text of the notice to the public required by 5 CFR 1320.5(a)(i)(iv) and its actual or estimated date of publication in the Federal Register, must accompany each request for approval of a collection of information. The Supporting Statement must be prepared in the format described below, and must contain the information specified in Section A below. If an item is not applicable, provide a brief explanation. When the question “Does this ICR contain surveys, censuses or employ statistical methods” is checked "Yes", Section B of the Supporting Statement must be completed. OMB reserves the right to require the submission of additional information with respect to any request for approval.

Specific Instructions

A. JUSTIFICATION

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. Identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection. Attach a copy of the appropriate section of each statute and regulation mandating or authorizing the collection of information.

Section 103(h) of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977 (Mine Act), 30 U.S.C. 813(h), authorizes the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) to collect information necessary to carry out its duty in protecting the safety and health of miners. Further, section 101(a) of the Mine Act, 30 U.S.C. 811, authorizes the Secretary of Labor to develop, promulgate, and revise as may be appropriate, improved mandatory health or safety standards for the protection of life and prevention of injuries in coal and metal and nonmetal mines.

Under section 103(g) of the Mine Act, a representative of miners, or any individual miner where there is no representative of miners, may submit a written or oral notification of an alleged violation of the Mine Act or a mandatory standard, or that an imminent danger exists. This representative or individual has the right to obtain an immediate inspection by MSHA. A copy of the notice must be provided to the operator, with individual miner names redacted.

MSHA regulations at 30 CFR Part 43 implement section 103(g) of the Mine Act. These regulations provide the procedures for submitting notification of the alleged violation and the actions that MSHA must take after receiving the notice. Although the regulations contain a review procedure (required by section 103(g)(2) of the Mine Act) whereby a miner or a representative of miners may in writing request a review if no citation or order is issued as a result of the original notice, the option is so rarely used that it was not considered in the burden estimates.

2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used. Except for new collections, indicate the actual use the agency has made of the information received from the current collection.

A notification of an alleged violation or imminent danger by a miner or a representative of miners is investigated as soon as possible to determine if a citation or a withdrawal order is appropriate, unless on the face of the complaint the condition complained of, even if it were found to exist, would clearly not constitute a violation or imminent danger. Where an inspector makes an investigation and finds a violation or imminent danger, the inspector issues a citation or withdrawal order as appropriate.

3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses, and the basis for the decision for adopting this means of collection. Also describe any consideration of using information technology to reduce burden.

MSHA has implemented a toll-free telephone line that is staffed 24 hours a day by a live operator, for the reporting of hazardous conditions. MSHA also provides posters for display at mine surface facilities and other public places informing miners of the toll free line available at telephone number 1-800-746-1553. In addition to the toll-free telephone line, MSHA implemented a web-based email reporting system in 2002 that provides for electronic submission of hazardous condition complaints. The Hazardous Conditions Complaints (HCC) email submission forms can be found on MSHA's website at <http://www.msha.gov>. See <https://www.msha.gov/support-resources/forms-online-filing/2018/05/23/hazardous-condition-complaint>.

Neither the use of electronic nor telephone options for the reporting of hazards, significantly reduces the burden, as the time required to verbally describe a hazardous condition and to reduce it to a written document by hand or on a keyboard is essentially the same.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purpose(s) described in Item 2 above.

There is no similar or duplicate information that could be used. Complaints are unique and generally pertain to specific conditions at specific mines.

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

This information does not have a significant impact on small businesses or other small entities.

6. Describe the consequence to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.

Elimination of the written/verbal complaints or MSHA's inspection and investigation of the reported hazardous conditions could prolong the exposure of miners to the alleged hazardous condition, weaken the confidence of miners in the Agency's ability to protect their health and safety, and discourage mine operators from developing and maintaining compliance programs which protect miners.

7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner:

*** requiring respondents to report information to the agency more often than quarterly;**

*** requiring respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it;**

*** requiring respondents to submit more than an original and two copies of any document;**

- * requiring respondents to retain records, other than health, medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records for more than three years;
- * in connection with a statistical survey, that is not designed to produce valid and reliable results that can be generalized to the universe of study;
- * requiring the use of a statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by OMB;
- * that includes a pledge of confidentiality that is not supported by authority established in statute or regulation, that is not supported by disclosure and data security policies that are consistent with the pledge, or which unnecessarily impedes sharing of data with other agencies for compatible confidential use; or
- * requiring respondents to submit proprietary trade secret, or other confidential information unless the agency can demonstrate that it has instituted procedures to protect the information's confidentiality to the extent permitted by law.

This collection of information is consistent with the requirements of 5 CFR Section 1320.5.

8. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publication in the Federal Register of the agency's notice, required by 5 CFR 1320.8(d), soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB.

MSHA published a 60-day *Federal Register* notice on September 20, 2019 (84 FR 49560). MSHA received no public comments.

9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.

MSHA provides no payment or gifts to the respondents.

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

To ensure the confidentiality of the complainant, as required by section 103(g) of the Mine Act, all references that could identify the complainant in the notice provided to the mine operator are removed. In addition, MSHA accepts anonymous and verbal hazard complaints over its toll-free hazard condition complaints phone line or calls directly to Headquarters, District, or Field Offices, which Agency personnel reduce to writing

ensuring confidentiality. MSHA also accepts anonymous email complaints if it appears those complaints allege safety and health hazards to miners. MSHA accepts all written and oral hazardous condition complaints.

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. This justification should include the reasons why the agency considers the questions necessary, the specific uses to be made of the information, the explanation to be given to persons from whom the information is requested, and any steps to be taken to obtain their consent.

There are no questions of a sensitive nature.

12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information. The statement should:

*** Indicate the number of respondents, frequency of response, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated. Unless directed to do so, agencies should not conduct special surveys to obtain information on which to base hour burden estimates. Consultation with a sample (fewer than 10) of potential respondents is desirable. If the hour burden on respondents is expected to vary widely because of differences in activity, size, or complexity, show the range of estimated hour burden, and explain the reasons for the variance. Generally, estimates should not include burden hours for customary and usual business practices.**

*** If this request for approval covers more than one form, provide separate hour burden estimates for each form and aggregate the hour burdens.**

*** Provide estimates of annualized cost to respondents for the hour burdens for collections of information, identifying and using appropriate wage rate categories. The cost of contracting out or paying outside parties for information collection activities should not be included here. Instead, this cost should be included in Item 13.**

MSHA's records show that 3,516 Metal and Nonmetal (MNM) HCC were received between calendar years 2016-2018. Also, approximately 2,412 Coal HCC were received during calendar years 2016 - 2018. Although the time required by individual miners to prepare a written notification of an alleged violation may vary widely from a few minutes to hours, MSHA estimates it will take an average of 12 minutes for a miner

to prepare a written notification of an alleged violation. MSHA estimates that the hourly wage rate¹ is \$35.36 for a MNM miner and \$40.53 for a coal miner².

Based on the previous 3-year collection, MSHA estimates, that on average, it will receive approximately 1,976 complaints $[(3,516 / 3 \text{ yrs.} = 1,172) + (2,412 / 3 \text{ yrs.} = 804)]$ annually.

<u>Annual Burden Hours</u>	
1,172 MNM complaints x 12 min	= 234 h
<u>804 Coal complaints x 12 min</u>	= <u>161 h</u>
Total Burden Hours	= 395 h

<u>Hour Burden Cost</u>	
234 h x \$35.36 per h	= \$8,274
161 h x \$40.53 per h	= <u>\$6,525</u>
Total Hour Burden Cost	= \$14,799

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to respondents or record keepers resulting from the collection of information. (Do not include the cost of any hour burden already reflected on the burden worksheet).

*** The cost estimate should be split into two components: (a) a total capital and start-up cost component (annualized over its expected useful life); and (b) a total operation and maintenance and purchase of services component. The estimates should take into account costs associated with generating, maintaining, and disclosing or providing the information. Include descriptions of methods used to estimate major cost factors including system and technology acquisition, expected useful life of capital equipment, the discount rate(s), and the time period over which costs will be incurred. Capital and start-up costs include, among other items, preparations for collecting information such as purchasing computers and software; monitoring, sampling, drilling and testing equipment; and record storage facilities.**

*** If cost estimates are expected to vary widely, agencies should present ranges of cost burdens and explain the reasons for the variance. The cost of purchasing or**

1 For all wage rates, MSHA uses the relevant precision throughout the calculation to avoid compound rounding errors and rounds at the final rate value. Displayed intermediate calculation values are presented to explain the calculation and are representative but the final rate value reflects the correct rounding and final estimate.

2 For the miner hourly wage rates, MSHA used the employment weighted mean hourly wage from the OES May 2018 survey (www.bls.gov/oes), for 13 extraction worker occupations from Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) major group codes 47, 49, 51, and 53 and industry codes 212100, 212200, and 212300 of the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes historically represented in the approval requests. The weighted mean was adjusted for benefits and inflation to obtain a fully loaded rate of \$35.36 ($\$23.27 \times 1.49 \times 1.02$) for a MNM miner and \$40.53 ($\$26.66 \times 1.49 \times 1.02$) for a coal miner.

contracting out information collection services should be a part of this cost burden estimate. In developing cost burden estimates, agencies may consult with a sample of respondents (fewer than 10), utilize the 60-day pre-OMB submission public comment process and use existing economic or regulatory impact analysis associated with the rulemaking containing the information collection, as appropriate.

*** Generally, estimates should not include purchases of equipment or services, or portions thereof, made: (1) prior to October 1, 1995, (2) to achieve regulatory compliance with requirements not associated with the information collection, (3) for reasons other than to provide information or keep records for the government, or (4) as part of customary and usual business or private practices.**

MSHA accepts 103(g) complaints in whatever form they are submitted. Telephone complaints or electronic complaints are reduced to a written format by MSHA. In all cases, no special equipment is required by the standard for the respondents to file a complaint. MSHA estimates the cost to the respondent per complaint to be negligible. The complaints may take the form of a hand written note, a formal letter sent by certified mail, anonymous phone calls, letters, text messages, or emails to MSHA's toll-free hotline, Headquarters, District, or Field Office. In addition, many formal letters of complaint come through a union or safety advocacy organization and those costs are not borne by the individual complainant. Verbally communicated complaints are most often local or over the toll-free MSHA phone line or via emails and, as a result, have negligible cost to the complainant. Only the handwritten complaints sent through the U.S. Post Office or private delivery service would incur a cost borne by the complainant and these complaints are rare.

14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government. Also, provide a description of the method used to estimate cost, which should include quantification of hours, operational expenses (such as equipment, overhead, printing, and support staff), and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information. Agencies also may aggregate cost estimates from Items 12, 13, and 14 in a single table.

MSHA is responsible for reducing the complaints to writing and forwarding the complaints to the appropriate field office. MSHA investigates all complaints received verbally, by phone, by email or fax, or by MSHA's website.

These activities are usually handled by MSHA hotline, headquarters, and district staff members, performing at the GS 12 level, earning \$56.34 per hour³ (including benefits).

³ The wage rates shown here come from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) March 2018 FedScope employment cube, <http://www.fedscope.opm.gov/>. Average salary was obtained for the appropriate grade and occupation for DOL-MSHA employees. In order to include the cost of benefits, this annual average salary was multiplied by a benefits scaler of 1.39

MSHA estimates that, on average, it will take 4 hours to process each complaint. MSHA's estimate of the annual burden cost to the Federal government is shown below.

$$1,976 \text{ complaints} \times 4 \text{ h} \times \$56.34 \text{ hourly wage} = \$445,311$$

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported on the burden worksheet.

The decrease of 107 burden hours (from 502 to 395) is due to a decrease in the number of responses as well as respondents (both from 2,511 to 1,976). The burden costs remain at \$0.

16. For collections of information whose results are planned to be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication. Address any complex analytical techniques that will be used. Provide the time schedule for the entire project, including beginning and ending dates of the collection of information, completion of report, publication dates, and other actions.

MSHA does not publish results from this information collection.

17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.

MSHA is not seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of this information collection.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in "Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions."

There are no certification exceptions identified with this information collection.

B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

The collection of this information does not employ statistical methods.

computed from MSHA's 2018 budget submission. The final hourly wage rate was derived by dividing the adjusted annual average salary by 2,087 hours ($\$56.34 = \$84,469 \times 1.392 \div 2,087$). Data search qualifiers agency=DLMS, occupation=1822, GSEG=GS12.