

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
U.S. Department of Commerce
National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration
NOAA Teacher-At-Sea Program
OMB Control No. 0648-0283

Abstract

This request is for extension of a currently approved information collection. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) provides educators an opportunity to gain first-hand experience with field research activities through the NOAA Teacher at Sea Program. Through this program, educators spend up to 3 weeks at sea on a NOAA research vessel, participating in an on-going research project with NOAA scientists. Once educators are selected and participate on a cruise, they write a report detailing the events of the cruise and ideas for classroom activities based on what they learned while at sea. These materials are then made available to other educators so they may benefit from the experience, without actually going to sea themselves. The NOAA Teacher at Sea Program application process is competitive and uses an application to make its selections. This information is necessary so that the panel members can make the best selection for the program.

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.

Consistent with the support for research and education under the National Marine Sanctuaries Act (16 U.S.C. 32 §1440) and other coastal and marine protection legislation, NOAA provides educators an opportunity to gain first-hand experience with field research activities through the Teacher at Sea Program. Through this program, educators spend up to 3 weeks at sea on a NOAA research vessel, participating in an ongoing research project with NOAA scientists.

The application solicits information from interested educators, and participants in the program are selected following review of their application. The application includes two recommendation forms. The NOAA Health Services Questionnaire (NHSQ) and Tuberculosis Screening Document (TSD). is a requirement of anyone going to sea and must be completed by teachers who are selected for the program. Once an educator is selected and participates on a cruise, s/he writes a report detailing the events of the cruise and her/his ideas for classroom activities based on what was learned while at sea. These materials are then made available to other educators so they may benefit from the experience, without actually going to sea themselves. NOAA does not collect information from this universe of respondents for any other purpose

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

Applications are accepted annually, from November through December, for the purpose of identifying prospective participants in the Teacher at Sea Program via an electronic application on the website and collected by the Teacher at Sea Program staff. The specific items of information on the application will be used in the following manner:

Name, Home Address, Home Phone, Name of School, School Address, Work Phone, email address, citizenship, and Age Range are necessary self-identification information for the applicants.

Gender information is used to accommodate berthing requirements aboard the ship.

The questions: What subjects and grades do you currently teach? and What subjects and grades are you likely to teach next year? are used to determine the areas of discipline of the applicant. This information is useful when placing more than one teacher on a ship in order to match their areas of expertise, when evaluating their classroom activities for their appropriate subject matter and age level, and to determine that an applicant is, in fact, an educator.

The question: What leadership roles have you held in education? is used to evaluate the applicants. Applicants are given a higher score for holding leadership roles in their schools, participating in their own professional development, and being a role model for their students. These skills and activities directly relate to a teacher's ability to translate the experience into their classroom.

Question #1, How will you use this experience to benefit your students and colleagues? is the most important selection criteria on the application. The information details what plans the teacher has for their follow-up classroom activities, as well as their plans for conducting workshops, in-service training, and writing articles for publication. These are the "products" that NOAA can show to justify the existence of the program.

Question #2, Describe your experience and ability to write your own classroom activities, directly relates to an educator's ability to make use of the experience for teachers and students. The more skilled a teacher is at writing curriculum and adapting life experiences to the classroom the better they are at taking an immersive experience, like being at sea, and translating it to classroom lessons.

Question #3, What type of project would you prefer to join? Explain the parameters that go into your decision? It encourages applicants to consider what type of research they would be most interested in pursuing and why. It also encourages them to consider where they would be most suited and most likely to become meaningfully engaged in the project.

Question #4, Discuss your ability to adapt to the physical and personal demands of life on-board a ship, is an attempt to encourage the applicants to consider what life is like on board a ship. The quarters are small, space is limited, it is difficult to "get away" from other people, communications and medical facilities are limited. All these factors are important considerations to make before one embarks on a three-week cruise in the open ocean. While this information is not used in the rating process, it is important for the applicants to give due consideration to these conditions.

The recommendations, one from an Administrator and one from a Colleague, give good insight into an educator's teaching ability and their creativity in the classroom. This is an important evaluation criterion.

The NOAA Health Services Questionnaire (NHSQ) and Tuberculosis Screening Document (TSD) provides the necessary information for the NOAA Medical Officer to determine whether an applicant is fit for sea duty.

The Follow-up Report is collected as a completion of the agreement between NOAA and the participating teacher so that NOAA can distribute the materials to non-participating teachers thereby broadening the impact of the program to benefit more teachers.

It is anticipated that the Follow-up Report will be disseminated to the public and used to support

publicly disseminated information. As explained in the preceding paragraph, the information gathered has utility. NOAA will retain control over the information and safeguard it from improper access, modification, and destruction, consistent with NOAA standards for confidentiality, privacy, and electronic information. See response to Question 10 of this Supporting Statement for more information on confidentiality and privacy. The information collection is designed to yield data that meet all applicable information quality guidelines. Prior to dissemination, the information will be subjected to quality control measures and a pre-dissemination review pursuant to Section 515 of Public Law 106-554.

NOAA does not plan to disseminate the submitted Participant's Applications to the public

Sample Table: Information Requirements and Needs and Uses of Information Collected

Item #	Requirement	Statute	Regulation	Form #	Needs and Uses
1	Application Requirement	16 U.S.C. 32 §1440	16 U.S.C. 32 §1440	0648-2083	Used by the Bureau's Teacher at Sea Program to select participants.

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.

This application is available on the Internet and teachers are able to download the application from the Teacher at Sea Web site. The Teacher at Sea Internet URL is widely distributed and communication is often provided through direct email contact between the Program Administrator and the applicants.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purposes described in Question 2

There are no other known collections gathering similar information. The Teacher at Sea Program is the only NOAA information collection directed at educators.

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

No small businesses will be responding to this collection.

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.

If this information collection were not conducted, the opportunity to participate in NOAA research projects would not be open to a broad audience, and very few educators would be able to participate.

7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with OMB guidelines.

This collection will be conducted in a manner consistent with OMB guidelines.

8. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publications 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. Summarize public comments received in response to that notice and describe actions taken by the agency in response to these comments. Specifically address comments received on cost and hour burden.

A Federal Register Notice published on November 4, 2022 (87 FR 66658) solicited public comment on this collection. No comments were received.

NOAA reached out to several Teacher at Sea alumni to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instructions and recordkeeping, disclosure, or reporting format (if any), and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported. No comments were received.

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

There are no payments made or gifts given to respondents.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy. If the collection requires a systems of records notice (SORN) or privacy impact assessment (PIA), those should be cited and described here.

As stated on the form, the NOAA Teacher at Sea applications, references, and NOAA Health Services Questionnaire (NHSQ) will be protected as a Privacy Act record and treated confidentially. A Privacy Act System of Records Notice for the NHSQ and TSD published in the Federal Register on January 19, 2016 and became effective March 1, 2016.

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior or 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 or any matters that are commonly considered private.

12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information.

The estimates for the burden of the collection of information have been gathered by surveying applicants. The estimates are as follows:

Application Process

Number of respondents expected annually = 375

Frequency of response = once annually

Average response time per respondent = 1 hour and 15 minutes

15 minutes to read the application

30 minutes to complete the application

15 minutes to deliver and discuss the recommendation forms

15 minutes to complete the Health Services Questionnaire
Total hours: 468.75 (469).

Recommendations (2 per applicant)
 Number of respondents expected annually = 350
 Frequency of response = twice annually
 Average response time per respondent = 15 minutes
Total hours: 187.5 (188).

NOAA Health Services Questionnaire (NHSQ)
 Number of respondents expected annually (selected applications only) = 45
 Frequency of response = once annually
 Average response time per response = 45 minutes
Total Hours: 33.75 (34).

Follow-up report
 Number of respondents expected annually = 45
 Frequency of response = once annually
 Average response time per respondent = 2 hours
 1 hour to gather data and materials
 1 hour to write report
Total hours: 90.

Information Collection	Type of Respondent (e.g., Occupational Title)	# of Respondents/year (a)	Annual # of Responses / Respondent (b)	Total # of Annual Responses (c) = (a) x (b)	Burden Hrs / Response (d)	Total Annual Burden Hrs (e) = (c) x (d)	Hourly Wage Rate (for Type of Respondent) (f)	Total Annual Wage Burden Costs (g) = (e) x (f)
NOAA Teacher-At-Sea Program Participant Application	Teachers/Educators	375	1	375	1.25	468.75	\$27.51*	12,895
NOAA Teacher At Sea Recommendations	Teachers/Educators	375	2	750	0.25	187.5	\$27.51	5,158
NOAA Teacher At Sea Follow-up Reports	Teachers/Educators	45	1	45	2	90	\$27.51	2,476
Health Services Questionnaire	Teachers/Educators	45	1	45	0.75	33.75	\$27.51	929
Totals				1,215		781		21,458

*25-0000 Educational Instruction Operations per BLS's *Occupational Outlook Handbook*

13. Provide an estimate for 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).

There are no capital/start-up or ongoing operation/maintenance costs associated with this information collection.

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.

Cost Descriptions	Grade/Step	Loaded Salary /Cost	% of Effort	Fringe (if Applicable)	Total Cost to Government
Federal Oversight	PBIII	95,000	15%		14,250
Other Federal Positions					
Contractor Cost					0
Travel					0
Other Costs:					0
TOTAL					14,250

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in ROCIS.

Information Collection	Respondents		Responses		Burden Hours		Reason for change or adjustment
	Current Renewal / Revision	Previous Renewal / Revision	Current Renewal / Revision	Previous Renewal / Revision	Current Renewal / Revision	Previous Renewal / Revision	
NOAA Teacher-At-Sea Program Participant Application	375	375	375	375	469	469	No changes
NOAA Teacher At Sea Recommendations	375	375	750	750	188	188	
NOAA Teacher At Sea Follow-up Reports	45	45	45	45	90	90	
Health Services Questionnaire	45	45	45	45	34	34	
Total for Collection	375	375	1,215	1,215	781	781	
Difference	0		0		0		

Information Collection	Labor Costs		Miscellaneous Costs		Reason for change or adjustment
	Current	Previous	Current	Previous	
NOAA Teacher-At-Sea Program Participant Application	12,895	NA	0	788	Labor costs not previously calculated. All submissions expected electronically going forward, eliminating previous postage costs.
NOAA Teacher At Sea Recommendations	5,158	NA	0	0	
NOAA Teacher At Sea Follow-up Reports	2,476	NA	0	0	
Health Services Questionnaire	929	NA	0	95	
Total for Collection	21,458	NA	0	883	
Difference	21,458		-883		

16. For collections of information whose results will 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.

The results of the collection will not be published for statistical use.

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.

The agency plans to display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection on all instruments.

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

The agency certifies compliance with [5 CFR 1320.9](#) and the related provisions of [5 CFR 1320.8\(b\)\(3\)](#).