

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT A**  
**U.S. Department of Commerce**  
**National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration**  
**Foreign Fishing Vessel Permits, Vessel and Gear Identification, and Reporting**  
**Requirements**  
**OMB Control No. 0648-0075**

**Abstract**

This is a request for an extension of a currently approved collection.

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) issues permits, under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*; MSA), to foreign fishing vessels fishing or operating in U.S. waters. MSA and associated regulations at 50 CFR Part 600 require that vessels apply for fishing permits, that vessels and certain gear be marked for identification purposes, that observers be embarked on selected vessels, and that permit holders report their fishing effort and catch or, when processing fish under joint ventures, the amount and locations of fish received from U.S. vessels. These requirements apply to all foreign vessels fishing, transshipping, or processing fish in U.S. waters. Information is collected from persons who operate a foreign fishing vessel in U.S. waters to participate in a directed fishery or joint venture operation, transship fish harvested by a U.S. vessel to a location outside the U.S., or process fish in internal waters. Each person operating a foreign fishing vessel under MSA authority may be required to submit information for a permit, mark their vessels and gear, or submit information about their fishing activities.

To facilitate observer coverage, foreign fishing vessel operators must provide a quarterly schedule of fishing effort and upon request must also provide observers with copies of any required records. For foreign fishing vessels that process fish in internal waters, the information collected varies somewhat from other foreign fishing vessels that participate in a directed fishery or a joint venture operation. In particular, these vessels may not be required to provide a permit application or mark their vessels. The information submitted in applications is used to determine whether permits should be used to authorize directed foreign fishing, participation in joint ventures with U.S. vessels, or transshipments of fish or fish products within U.S. waters. The display of identifying numbers on vessels and gear aid in fishery law enforcement and allows other fishermen to report suspicious activity. Reporting of fishing activities allows monitoring of fish received by foreign vessels.

**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.**

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) issues permits, under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*; MSA), to foreign fishing

vessels fishing or operating in U.S. waters. MSA and associated regulations at 50 CFR Part 600 requires applications for the permits, vessels and certain gear be marked for identification purposes, and for permit holders to report their fishing effort and catch or, when processing fish, amount and locations of fish received from U.S. vessels. These requirements apply to all foreign vessels fishing, transshipping, or processing fish in U.S. waters.

**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.**

Information is collected from persons who operate a foreign fishing vessel in U.S. waters to participate in a directed fishery or joint venture operation, transship fish harvested by a U.S. vessel to a location outside the U.S., or process fish in internal waters.

Each person may be required to submit information for a permit, mark their vessels and gear, or submit information about their fishing activities. To facilitate observer coverage, foreign fishing vessel operators must provide a quarterly schedule of fishing effort and upon request must also provide observers with copies of any required records. For foreign fishing vessels that process fish in internal waters, the information collected varies somewhat from other foreign fishing vessels that participate in a directed fishery or a joint venture operation.

In particular these vessels may not be required to provide a permit application or mark their vessels. The information submitted in applications is used to determine whether permits should be used to authorize directed foreign fishing, participation in joint ventures with U.S. vessels, or transshipments of fish or fish products within U.S. waters.

The display of identifying numbers on vessels and gear aid in fishery law enforcement and allows other fishermen to report suspicious activity. Reporting of fishing activities allows monitoring of fish received by foreign vessels. Foreign fishing activity reports are made by radio when fishing begins or ceases, to report on transfers of fish, and to file weekly reports on the catch or receipt of fish. Weekly reports may be submitted by e-mail.

Recordkeeping requirement for foreign vessels include a communications log, a transfer log, a daily fishing log, a consolidated fishing or joint venture log, and a daily joint venture log. These records must be maintained for three years. Paper forms are used for foreign fishing vessel permit applications. No information is submitted for the vessel and gear marking requirements.

Item #	Requirement	Statute	Regulation	Form #	Needs and Uses
1	Reports on fish received by foreign vessels operating in U.S. waters, from U.S. vessels	N/A	50 CFR 600.501	N/A	Used by the BUREAU to track transshipment of fish.
Item #	Requirement	Statute	Regulation	Form #	Needs and Uses

2	Information packet for vessel ID form and 3 permit types: directed, joint venture and transshipment	N/A	50 CFR600.501	N/A	Used by agency to register vessels applying for fishing or transshipment in U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone
<b>Item #</b>	<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Statute</b>	<b>Regulation</b>	<b>Form #</b>	<b>Needs and Uses</b>
3	Daily Fishing, Daily Joint Ventures and Daily Consolidated Logs	N/A	50 CFR600.501	N/A	Used by agency to register vessels applying for fishing or transshipment in U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone
<b>Item #</b>	<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Statute</b>	<b>Regulation</b>	<b>Form #</b>	<b>Needs and Uses</b>
4	Foreign Fishing Vessel and Gear Identification Requirements	N/A	50 CFR600.503	N/A	Used by U.S. enforcement agencies to visually verify that vessels are conforming to regulations

**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.**

Electronic copies of forms for weekly reports and logs are available. Activity reports and permit applications may be submitted via e-mail.

**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**

Information collected in connection with these requirements is unique.

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

This collection will not have a significant impact on small businesses, organizations or governmental 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.**

Failure to collect the information would make it impossible for NMFS to carry out its

responsibilities under the MSA. If this information were to be collected less frequently, the management of fisheries stocks would be impaired and the fish stocks might be harmed.

**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;  
This collection requires reports more frequently than quarterly since quarterly reports are not timely enough to allow monitoring of quotas and thus may not be adequate for collection of information necessary for stock assessment purposes. Otherwise, this information collection is conducted in a manner consistent with OMB guidelines.
- requiring respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it;  
This collection does not require 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;  
This collection does not require more than an original.
- requiring respondents to retain records, other than health, medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records for more than three years;  
This collection does not have a record retention requirement.
- 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;  
This collection does not have a statistical survey requirement.
- requiring the use of a statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by OMB;  
This collection does not have a statistical survey requirement.
- 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  
This collection does not include a confidentiality requirement.
- 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 does not include a requirement to provide any confidential or protected information.

**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 was published on March 20, 2024 (89 FR 19813 2024-0320). No comments were received.

There may be communications, as appropriate, with NMFS personnel who administer the NMFS National Observer Program and with the designated agents and representatives of foreign fishing nations. These contacts provide ongoing opportunities for the exchange of ideas regarding the requirements of this information collection. No comment have been given at this time.

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

No gifts or payments are provided.

**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.**

Limited Personally Identifiable Information (PII) is collected as contemplated under SORN NOAA-19, *Permits and Registrations for United States Federally Regulated Fisheries*. Data submitted based on this information collection will be accorded confidentiality pursuant to 50 CFR Part 600, Subpart E.

**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.**

No questions of a sensitive nature are included in this information collection.

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

We are estimating an annual burden of 17 hours for reporting and recordkeeping under this collection, broken down as follows; 5 hours for reporting requirements for foreign vessels operating in internal waters, 2 hours for foreign fishing and transshipment permit applications, 5 hours for joint venture reporting and recordkeeping requirements, and 5 hours for foreign fishing vessel and gear identification requirements. Further details on how these burdens were calculated are below.

With respect to the reporting and record keeping requirements for foreign vessels operating in internal waters, we assume that a foreign fishing vessel would make 2 activity reports per year and 8 weekly reports per year, spending 30 minutes per report, totaling 10 responses and a burden of 5 hours  $[(2+8)(30) = 300/60 = 5 \text{ hours}]$ .

With respect to foreign fishing, joint venture, and transshipment permit application requirements, we estimate preparation of the annual application package including the vessel identification form will take approximately 2 hours for any applications, for a total of 1 response and 2 hours.

With respect to the reporting and record keeping requirements for foreign fishing joint ventures, we assume that a foreign fishing vessel would make 2 activity reports per year and 8 weekly reports per year, spending 30 minutes per report, totaling 10 responses and a burden of 5 hours  $[(2+8)(30) = 300/60 = 5 \text{ hours}]$ . With respect to foreign fishing vessel identification requirements, it is estimated that 5 vessels would be affected, and that it would take 60 minutes to mark each of the three locations: 5 responses and 5 hours (5 vessels x 1 hour/vessel = 5 hours.)

Total respondents = 4

Total Responses = 26

Total burden hours = 17

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)
Reports on fish received by foreign vessels operating in U.S. waters, from U.S. vessels	45-1011 First-Line Supervisors of Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Workers	1	10	10	0.5	5	\$29.23	\$146.15
Permit Application Package	45-1011 First-Line Supervisors of Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Workers	1	1	1	2	2	\$29.23	\$58.46
Daily Fishing, Daily Joint Ventures and Daily Consolidated Logs	45-1011 First-Line Supervisors of Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Workers	1	10	10	0.5	5	\$29.23	\$146.15
Foreign Fishing Vessel and Gear Identification Requirements	45-1011 First-Line Supervisors of Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Workers	1	5	5	1	5	\$29.23	\$146.15
<b>Totals</b>				<b>26</b>		<b>17</b>		<b>\$496.91</b>

Hourly wages estimate is based on BLS's *Occupational Outlook Handbook*. <https://www.bls.gov/bls/blswage.htm>. Respondents for each IC is a vessel owner or captain, which is listed in the Handbook as 45-1011 First-Line Supervisors of Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Workers.

**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).**

The estimated total annual cost to the public is \$1737.5 in recordkeeping/reporting costs, broken down as follows:

For foreign fishing vessels operating in internal waters reporting requirements, the costs to respondents would include email transmissions that should not exceed \$8 per month or \$2 per week. On an annualized basis, such costs would be estimated to be 10 weekly reports at \$2 per weekly report or \$20 per year.

For foreign fishing vessel permit applications, copying and mailing costs are estimated at \$5 with application fees currently at \$285/vessel. These permit costs are recalculated every two years. The current permit fees are set to expire at the end of this calendar year, and therefore later this year, we will be conducting the exercise of calculating the permit costs. We expect the price will increase due to salary/inflation increases. We are therefore adding a precautionary 10% to the current permit application costs as a rough estimate to account for expected cost increases, at  $((\$285 \times 1.1) / \text{vessel} \times 5 \text{ vessels}) = \$1567.5$  plus the mailing costs for a total cost estimate of \$1,572.5.

For foreign fishing joint venture reporting requirements, the cost to respondents would include emails, copying and/or phone calls to appropriate NMFS and Coast Guard offices averaging \$2.00 per weekly report and daily log (10 estimated), totaling \$20.

For foreign fishing vessel and gear identification requirements, we estimate paint and brush costs at \$25 per vessel for a total cost of \$125.

Information Collection	# of Respondents/year (a)	Annual # of Responses / Respondent (b)	Total # of Annual Responses (c) = (a) x (b)	Cost Burden / Respondent (h)	Total Annual Cost Burden (i) = (c) x (h)
Reports on fish received by foreign vessels operating in U.S. waters, from U.S. vessels	1	10	10	\$2	\$20
Permit Application Package	1	1	1	\$1,572.5	\$1,572.5
Daily Fishing, Daily Joint Ventures and Daily Consolidated Logs	1	10	10	\$2	\$20
Foreign Fishing Vessel and Gear Identification Requirements	1	5	5	\$25	\$125
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>4</b>		<b>26</b>		<b>\$1737.5</b>

**\*Due to rounding in ROCIS total dollar amount will display as \$1,738.**

**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.**

Annualized costs to the Federal Government has been estimated at \$3,045.36 to cover salary costs needed to process applications and issue permits for foreign fishing vessels. One permit processor at 2 percent annual effort and a supervisor are necessary to process all information and record information.

Cost Descriptions	Grade/Step	Loaded Salary /Cost	% of Effort	Fringe (if Applicable)	Total Cost to Government
Federal Oversight	GS-12/III	\$ 105,812	2%		\$2116.24
Other Federal Positions	GS-15/V	\$185,824	.5%		\$929.12
Contractor Cost					\$0
Travel					\$0
Other Costs:					\$0
<b>TOTAL</b>					<b>\$3,045.36</b>

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

There are no programmatic changes from previous years. The information collection is mandated by the Magnuson Stevens Reauthorization Act.

This renewal reflects only adjustments to the number of responses (increased by one) and therefore burden hours, as well a decrease in the cost of the permit application package due to permit processing time decreases. Labor costs have increased as salaries have also been updated to current rates.

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	
Reports on fish received by foreign vessels operating in U.S. waters, from U.S. vessels	1	1	10	10	5	5	No change.
Permit Application Package	1	1	1	1	2	2	No change.
Daily Fishing, Daily Joint Ventures and Daily Consolidated Logs	1	1	10	10	5	5	No change.
Foreign Fishing Vessel and Gear Identification Requirements	1	1	5	4	5	4	One additional vessel expected to be subject to requirements.
<b>Total for Collection</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>16</b>	
<b>Difference</b>	<b>0</b>		<b>+1</b>		<b>+1</b>		

Information Collection	Labor Costs		Miscellaneous Costs		Reason for change or adjustment
	Current	Previous	Current	Previous	
Reports on fish received by foreign vessels operating in U.S. waters, from U.S. vessels	\$146.15	\$126.25	\$20	\$20	Salary increases, no other change.
Permit Application Package	\$58.46	\$50.50	\$1572.5	\$1585	Salary increases and decrease in the application cost for permit package.
Daily Fishing, Daily Joint Ventures and Daily Consolidated Logs	\$146.15	\$126.25	\$20	\$20	Salary increases, no other change.
Foreign Fishing Vessel and Gear Identification Requirements	\$146.15	\$101.00	\$125	\$100	Salary increases and one additional vessel expected to be subject to requirements
<b>Total for Collection</b>	<b>\$496.91</b>	<b>\$404</b>	<b>\$1737.5</b>	<b>\$1,725</b>	
<b>Difference</b>		<b>+92.91</b>		<b>+12.5</b>	

**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 will not be published.

**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.”**

**Certification Statement for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions**

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