Supporting Statement
for
Plan Approval and Records for Load Lines
-- Title 46 CFR Subchapter E

OMB No.: 1625-0013
COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS: Instruction

A. Justification

1. Circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.

Title 46 U.S. Code sections 5101 through 5116 provide the Coast Guard with the authority to enforce the provisions of the International Convention on Load Lines 1966 (ICLL) on vessels entering U.S. waters and on vessels engaged in coastwise voyages by the sea. These provisions include the prescription of minimum freeboard, the marking of load lines, the issuance of load line certificates, and associated condition surveys. Title 46 CFR Part 42 contains the applicable regulations for both foreign and domestic voyages. Part 44 treats special service load line requirements for steam colliers, barges, and self-propelled barges engaged in specially limited coastwise voyages. Parts 45 and 46 prescribe the load line requirements for Great Lakes vessels, and for passenger vessels engaged in foreign, coastwise, and Great Lakes voyages. Part 45 also prescribes requirements for certain unmanned dry cargo river barges depending upon the route, eligible for a limited domestic service load line assignment or a conditional exemption from any load line assignment at all.

Since the United States is signatory to the ICLL, it must fulfill its obligation and administer the Convention as it applies to vessels under its jurisdiction. As provided for in international conventions and national law, the Coast Guard delegates the tasks of assigning load lines and issuing of certificates primarily to the American Bureau of Shipping (ABS). Other recognized ship classification societies to which such authority has also been delegated are: Lloyds Register, Germanischer Lloyd, Det Norske Veritas, Bureau Veritas and Registro Italiano Navale. The Coast Guard administers the load line regulations by ensuring that the delegated responsibilities are carried out in accordance with established procedures.

It is necessary for the Coast Guard to collect information and require recordkeeping in the administration of load line regulations so that:

(a) there are procedures for vessel owners to obtain load line certificates;
(b) the Coast Guard or a delegated classification society may determine that the vessel complies with minimum design standards prior to certification;
(c) the Coast Guard or a delegated classification society can ensure vessel compliance with design requirements after certification;
(d) the master can operate his vessel in compliance with the load line regulations; and
(e) the Coast Guard or delegated authority can ensure continued vessel operation in compliance with the load line regulations.

The statutory authority is 46 U.S. Code 5101 through 5116

2. Purposes of the information collection.

(a) *46 CFR 42.11, 44.01-5(b) and 46.10-20: Application for Load Line Assignment, Surveys, Certificates, and Renewals.* These sections provide for the owner, master, or agent of a vessel to apply in writing to the American Bureau of Shipping (ABS) or other recognized classification society for assignment, survey, and certification of load lines. The application is typically a letter notifying the delegated classification society of the vessel's intent to load line a vessel.

(b) *46 CFR 42.07-25, 44.01-13, 44.05-25(a) and 46.10-70(a): Submission of Plans and Calculations.* The submitted plans are primarily the vessel's constructions plans. The ABS uses the

plans to determine whether the vessel is compliant with stability and structural requirements. The plans are then returned to the submitter, and marked to indicate approval or any areas of noncompliance. Copies of plans and calculations are retained during the period of vessel construction should any question arise. Copies of certain key plans and calculations are retained for future reference. All submissions are nonrecurring.

(c) *46 CFR 42.07-45, 44.05-30, 45.11, 46.01-15(b), and 46.10-10(d): Load Line Certificates.* This documentation is required by to serve as guidance and reference for operators, surveyors, and load line enforcement officers to ensure that the vessel is not loaded above the calculated and approved line of safety. Types of load line certificates include Coastwise and International, Non-Convention Foreign, Special Service, International Exemption; Great Lakes, Passenger Vessel Subdivision Load Line Certificates. These certificates are issued by the delegated classification society. The certificate indicates the location of load line marks assigned to the vessel and that the vessel is compliant with the applicable requirements. It also describes the applicable conditions, restrictions, and/or exemptions that the vessel shall observe according to the season, zone, or area in which the vessel operates.

(d) *46 CFR 42.09-15(d): Annual Surveys of Load Lines.* Vessels are subject to annual surveys about the time of the load line certificate anniversary date. The extent and scope of the annual survey insures that (a) vessel fittings and appliances are maintained, and (b) no alterations have been made to the hull that would affect the calculations which would determine the position of the load line marks. The associated collection of information is the approving signature on an existing load line certificate if the vessel is determined to be compliant.

(e) *46 CFR 42.09-15(c): Periodic Surveys for Certificate Renewal.* The vessel survey is conducted at 5 year intervals from the initial survey or previous periodical survey. The associated collection of information is the issuance of a load line certificate renewal if the vessel is determined to be compliant.

(f) *46 CFR 42.07-20 and 46.10-55: Logbook Entries.* This information is required by international convention and by regulations of signatory nations to ensure continued operational compliance with the regulations during the time period between surveys. The logbook entries are kept by the master or owner for a period of one year after the actions noted therein. Upon request, this information is to be furnished to any load line enforcement officer. The master of the vessel is required to record in his logbook the following information:

(i) a statement of the load line marks applicable to the voyage,
(ii) a statement of the position of the load line marks with respect to the waterline, port and starboard, at the time of departure, and
(iii) vessel drafts, forward and aft, at time of departure.

(g) *46 CFR 45.181 and 45.183: Special Load Line regime for certain unmanned dry cargo river barges while operating on Lake Michigan.* This information is required for certain unmanned dry cargo river barges to obtain a limited domestic service load line assignment or a conditional exemption from any load line assignment at all.

- Barges operating on the Burns Harbor and Milwaukee routes may be conditionally exempted from load line assignment if the owner registers the barge (in writing) with the Officer in Charge, Marine Inspection (OCMI), U.S. Coast Guard Sector. The registration may be faxed to the OCMI in advance, with the original following by mail. The registration will be kept on file.
- Barges operating on the St. Joseph and Muskegon routes are required to have a limited-service, domestic voyage load line certificate. The initial load line certificate is to be issued for a term of 5 years, or until the barge reaches 10 years of age, whichever occurs first.

3. Consideration of the use of improved information collection technology.

We estimate that 100% of the reporting requirements can be done electronically. At this time, we estimate that approximately 50% of the responses are collected electronically. The information may be e-mailed to the Coast Guard's Marine Safety Center (MSC) at the following link MSC@uscg.mil. Amplifying information on this capability may be found at the MSC pages on the Coast Guard's "Homeport" internet

portal, at the following link: http://www.dco.uscg.mil/msc/ > Contact The MSC. Information may also be submitted to the CG Officer in Charge, Marine Inspection (OCMI) at the local Sector Office. Contact info for CG OCMIs can be found at—https://www.uscg.mil/Units/Organization/. Additionally, records sent to or maintained by the delegated classification society may be computerized. Certificates required to be posted on vessels are not handled electronically.

Regarding Usability Testing, this ICR—

- Public-facing instructions were tested by the staff of the CG Office of Standards Evaluation and Development (CG-REG) to ensure the use of plain language. Usability testing participants reported that they had no difficulty understanding the instructions. As a result, the USCG did not make any changes to the collection.
- Is not related to a public benefit program as detailed in OMB M-22-10 (titled "Improving Access to Public Benefits Programs Through the Paperwork Reduction Act" dated April 13, 2022).
- Is required by international treaty, statute, and/or regulation as noted in section 1 of the Supporting Statement.
- Does not require the use of a form.

4. Efforts to identify duplication.

There are no other Federal Agencies with similar programs. This information is unique to each vessel for structure, loading, stability, service area, season of operation, etc. Therefore, no other information can be used in its place.

5. Methods to minimize the burden to small entities 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.

Information regarding the issuance of original load line certificates is collected once for any particular vessel. Annual and periodic surveys are necessary to ensure the vessel's continued compliance. Less frequent collection is not acceptable for the administration of these regulations.

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 was published in the Federal Register to obtain public comment on this collection (See [USCG-2024-0784]; October 11, 2024, 89 FR 82618) and 30-Day Notice (March 10, 2025, 90 FR 11615) 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. This information collection request is covered by the Marine Information for Safety and Law Enforcement (MISLE) Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA). The to the MISLE PIA is provided below:

- https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/privacy_pia_uscg_misle.pdf

11. Additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature.

There are no questions of sensitive language.

12. Estimate of annual hour and cost burdens to respondents.

- The total number of respondents is 1,248.
- The total number of responses is 7,419.
- The total hour burden is 782 hours.
- The total cost burden is $52,945.

The burden to respondents is provided in Appendix A.

(a) *Existing Vessels with Load Lines*. We assume that the number of newly constructed vessels and the number of scrapped vessels are relatively the same, resulting in a zero growth rate. Furthermore, we assume that about 6 responses per respondent are associated with this collection (5 logbook records and an annual survey).

1) Logbook Records for Current Vessel Population. The Master of a vessel is required to record information in logbooks for each voyage, when departing from the loading port. We estimate that the vessels average 5 trips per year where an information record is required. These records require approximately 5 minutes to complete. For the wage rate, we used the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) wage rate for Captains, Mates and Pilots of Water Vessels (53-5021) [May 2023, mean hourly wage, loaded 50%, and rounded].[1]

2) Annual Surveys for Current Vessel Population. Each vessel with a load line certificate must have an annual survey. Following a satisfactory inspection, an endorsement is made on the reverse of the load line certificate. The collection requirement for the endorsement (conducted by the American Bureau of Shipping (ABS)) is assumed to require approximately 5 minutes. Furthermore, we assume that the endorsement would be completed by a Port Engineer or Captain. For the wage rate, we used the BLS wage rate for Captains, Mates and Pilots of Water Vessels (53-5021).

3) Certificate Renewal for Current population. The load line certificate must be renewed every 5 years. We assume that the vessel population is evenly distributed, and that 20% of the vessels would need to renew their load line certificates each year. This renewal would be performed by the ABS. We further assume that the collection associated with this responsibility would require approximately 5 minutes, and would be performed by a Port Engineer or Captain. For the wage rate, we used the BLS wage rate for Captains, Mates and Pilots of Water Vessels (53-5021).

(b) *New Vessels with New Load Lines.* These vessels are required to apply in writing for load line assignments, surveys, and certificates. The initial survey inspection is completed before the vessel is put in service. After the initial inspection, the load line is marked, and the load line certificate is issued. It is assumed that as long as no major alterations are done on each vessel and load line certification is kept up to date; this initial cost is a non-recurring requirement.

1) Initial Survey. To complete an initial survey application letter, we assume that approximately 30 minutes are required by a Marine Engineer or Naval Architect. For the wage rate, we used the BLS wage rate for Marine Engineers and Naval Architects (17-2121) [May 2023, mean hourly wage, loaded 50%, and rounded].[2]

2) Load Line Certificate. The collection requirement for the load line certificate (conducted by the delegated classification authority) is assumed to require approximately 5 minutes. Furthermore, we assume that the certificate's endorsement would be completed by a Port Engineer or Captain. For the wage rate, we used the BLS wage rate for Captains, Mates and Pilots of Water Vessels (53-5021).

3) Load Line Markings. We assume that approximately 2 hours are required to apply the load line marks on both sides of the vessel amidships. Furthermore, we assume that the load line marks

[1] https://www.bls.gov/oes/2023/may/oes535021.htm
[2] https://www.bls.gov/oes/2023/may/oes172121.htm

would be completed by a vessel crewmember. For the wage rate, we used the BLS wage rate for Sailors and Marine Oilers (53-5011) [May 2023, mean hourly wage, loaded 50%, and rounded].[3]

(c) *Vessels operating with a conditional exemption.* Barges operating on the Burns Harbor and Milwaukee routes may be conditionally exempted from load line assignment if the owner registers the barge (in writing) with the Officer in Charge, Marine Inspection (OCMI), U.S. Coast Guard Sector Office. The owners have to register the barge, only once, prior to its first voyage onto Lake Michigan. The registration may be faxed to the OCMI in advance, with the original following by mail. The registration will be kept on file. The registration is valid until the 10th anniversary of the delivery date (for Milwaukee route), or until the barge is no longer fit for this service (due to damage, or barge change in ownership). The burden associated with the renewal of the registration is minimal.

We estimate about 2 hours per barge to gather required information, compile it into a single form and mail it to the Coast Guard. Furthermore, we assume that the registration papers would be completed by a Port Engineer or Captain. For the wage rate, we used the BLS wage rate for Captains, Mates and Pilots of Water Vessels (53-5021).

(d) *Vessels operating with a limited domestic service load line.* Barges operating on the St. Joseph and Muskegon routes are required to have a limited service, domestic voyage load line certificate. The initial load line certificate is to be issued for a term of 5 years, or until the barge reaches 10 years of age, whichever occurs first.

1) Initial survey. To complete an initial survey application letter, we assume that approximately 30 minutes are required by a Marine Engineer or Naval Architect. For the wage rate, we used the BLS wage rate for Marine Engineers and Naval Architects (17-2121).

2) Load Line Certificate. Drafting the load line certificate (conducted by the delegated classification authority) is assumed to take approximately 5 minutes. Furthermore, we assume that the certificate's endorsement would be completed by a Port Engineer or Captain. For the wage rate, we used the BLS wage rate for Captains, Mates and Pilots of Water Vessels (53-5021).

13. Total 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 $4,094 (see Appendix B). For vessels with a Load Line Certificate, the cost is based on Coast Guard personnel review of the certificate/survey/log book during periodic inspections, random boardings, and post-casualty investigations. We estimate that about 10% of all U.S. load line vessels will be reviewed per year, with the review conducted by a CG Lieutenant (O-3) taking about 5 minutes per review. For a vessel that requires a conditional exemption or limited domestic service load line, the cost is based on Coast Guard personnel review/approval of the application. We estimate that the review/approval is conducted by a Lieutenant taking about 1 hour per review. For the wage rate, we used the current edition of COMDTINST 7310.1(series) for "In-Government" personnel.

15. Reasons for the change in burden.

The change in burden is an ADJUSTMENT due to a change (i.e., increase) in the estimated annual number of respondents. There is no proposed change to the reporting or recordkeeping requirements of this collection. The reporting and recordkeeping requirements, and the methodology for calculation burden, remain unchanged.

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

[3] https://www.bls.gov/oes/2023/may/oes535011.htm

This information collection will not be published for statistical purposes.

17. Approval for not explaining the expiration date for OMB approval.

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 Methods

This information collection does not employ statistical methods.