

**Department of Transportation
Maritime Administration
Information Collection Request (ICR)
OMB 2133-0506
Merchant Marine Medals and Awards**

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

INTRODUCTION

This submission is to request a three-year approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for the information collection entitled, OMB 2133-0506 (Merchant Marine Medals and Awards), which expires on July 31, 2025. There are no program changes since the last renewal, so this collection will be submitted as *an extension without change of a currently approved collection*.

A. JUSTIFICATION

1. Circumstances Making the Collection of Information Necessary

This information collection provides a method of awarding merchant marine medals and decorations to masters, officers, and crew members of United States ships, in recognition of their service in areas of danger during the operations by the Armed Forces of the United States in World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, the Somalia Conflicts and the replacement of awards previously issued. This information collection supports the Department of Transportation's strategic goal for National Security by ensuring that vessels, infrastructure, and mariners will be available to support our nation during times of war or national emergency.

These medals are authorized by Public Law 100-324, "The Merchant Marine Decorations and Medals Act."

2. Purpose and Use of the Information Collection

U.S. Maritime Administration (MARAD) personnel will use collected data to assist in processing and verifying requests for seamen's service awards. The issuance of awards is based upon regular requests received from the public. Without this information collection, merchant seamen who have valiantly served their nation during wartime or risked their lives to rescue other seamen during peacetime, would have no other method to obtain actual or replacement service decorations.

3. Automation or Use of Information Technology

MARAD provides a fully electronic option for submitting responses to this collection. However, we estimate that the total electronic submission for this collection is 50% or half of all responses received.

4. Efforts to Identify Duplication

MARAD is the only Federal agency collecting the information needed for this collection and is the only agency issuing these types of decorations.

5. Impacts on Small Businesses or Other Small Entities

This information collection does not affect small businesses. The requests or recommendation for awards come from individual seamen, and/or their families. The information collected is the minimum required to effectively administer the program and maintain internal controls.

6. Impact of Not Conducting or Less Frequent Collection of Information

Medals and other decorations are issued only by request from individual citizens. Without this collection, merchant seamen would have no other method of obtaining actual or replacement service decorations.

7. Special Circumstances Relating to the Guidelines 5 CFR 1320.5

There are no special circumstances that require the collection of information to be conducted in a manner as listed below:

- Requiring respondents to report information to MARAD more often than quarterly;
- Requiring respondents to prepare a written response in fewer than 30 days after receipt of a collection instrument;
- Requiring respondents to submit more than one original copy 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;
- Requiring the use of any statistical data 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;
- Requiring any pledge of confidentiality; or
- Requiring respondents to submit any proprietary or trade secrets.

8. Public Comments in Response to the Federal Register Notice and Outside Consultation

MARAD published a 60-day notice and request for comments on this information collection in the Federal Register (FR 19085 Vol. 90, No. 85) on May 5, 2025, indicating comments should be submitted on or before July 7, 2025. No comments were received. A 30-day notice will now be published in the Federal Register to solicit public comments.

Contact with persons outside MARAD regarding the operating of this program is continuous and extensive. Hundreds of applications/requests are processed each year and contact with requestors and feedback opportunities are commonplace.

9. Explanation of Any Payments or Gifts to Respondents

MARAD does not provide any payment or gift to respondents.

10. Assurance of Confidentiality and Protection of Privacy

No assurances of confidentiality are provided to respondents.

11. Justification for Sensitive Questions

No questions of a sensitive nature are asked of respondents.

12. Estimates of Annualized Burden Hours and Cost

a. Estimated Annualized Burden Hours

An estimated 550 respondents will each take one (1) hour to respond once annually to this collection for a total 550 hours, which can be calculated as shown in the table below:

Number of Respondents		Responses per Respondent		Total Responses Annually		Hours per Response		Total Hours Annually
550	*	1	=	550	*	1	=	550

13. Estimate of the Total Annual Cost Burden to Respondents or Recordkeepers

There are no capital, start-up, operation, maintenance, and purchase of services costs associated with this information collection.

14. Estimates of Federal Government Costs

The total annual cost to the Federal Government for processing the collection is \$ 55,787.50.

According to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM)¹ wage tables, the hourly wage rate for one (GS 13 step 4) employee with a Washington-Baltimore-Arlington locality pay is \$ 63.55. When combined with the Federal Employee Compensation rate of 31%², the total hourly wage rate for this employee is \$ 83.25. This employee will take approximately one (1) hour to review and process requests received, and prepare,

¹ The hourly Federal Government wage is taken from OMB 2025 wage tables: https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/salary-tables/25Tables/html/DCB_h.aspx

² Per BLS Employee Compensation Memo, the total compensation rate for the Federal Government is 31%, :<https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/ecec.pdf>

photocopy, and mail each award. Therefore, the total combined cost associated with this effort is \$ 45,787.50, which can be calculated as shown in the table below:

FTE Grade and Step & CRF Program Related Task	Hourly Wage	Average Hourly Wage Rate with 31% Compensation		Total Employees		Total Time for Per Request/ Recommendation (In Hours)		Total Requests/ Recommendations		Total Federal Government Wages
GS 13 (Step 4): Review and Process Requests & Mail Awards	\$ 63.55	\$ 83.25	*	1	*	1	*	550	=	\$ 45,787.50

15. Explanation of Program Changes or Adjustments

There were no program changes or adjustments since the last renewal.

16. Publication of Data Collection Results

There are no plans to publish the results of this information collection.

17. Display of the OMB Expiration Date

MARAD is not seeking approval to avoid displaying the expiration date.

18. Exception to the Certification Statement

There are no exceptions to the certification statement.