

**Department of Transportation
Maritime Administration
Information Collection Request (ICR)
OMB 2133-0542
United States Merchant Marine Academy (USMMA) Alumni Survey**

SUPPORTING STATEMENT A

INTRODUCTION

This submission is to request three-year approval from the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) for the information collection entitled OMB 2133-0542 (United States Merchant Marine Academy Alumni Survey), which expires on July 31, 2025. Since the last renewal, the survey is being updated to include the following minor changes: removal of gender-related questions, reworded question to reflect the Academy's current learning outcomes, alignment of salary ranges to the current market, and disaggregation of cohort groups at the academic major level. Consequently, this collection will be submitted *as an extension with a minor change* request.

A. JUSTIFICATION

1. Circumstances Making the Collections of Information Necessary

The United States Merchant Marine Academy (the Academy) is an accredited Federal service academy that confers both Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degrees. Title 46 United States Code (U.S.C.) 51309 authorizes the Secretary to prescribe regulations necessary to administer programs to maintain appropriate academic standards. The Academy is expected to assess its educational outcomes and report those findings to the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE), which is the regional accrediting body for the Academy. The MSCHE is recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education to accredit degree-granting institutions. Thus, the Academy is required to conduct periodic surveys of alumni cohorts and data analysis, in order to obtain the necessary information to meet these reporting requirements and maintain the institution's degree granting status. This type of census survey is a routine higher education assessment practice in the United States. This collection of information supports DOT's Strategic Goal of Security, Preparedness and Response by providing a means for graduates of the Academy to provide feedback about their experience and training as personnel that support United States emergency preparedness effort across the maritime industry.

2. Purpose and Use of the Information Collection.

The Academy will conduct an annual survey of its one-year, five-year and ten-year alumni, consisting of approximately 600 individuals each year. The survey will be administered by the Office of Institutional Assessment. The information gathered will be analyzed and used to measure the Academy's success producing graduates who have attained institutional and program learning outcomes and are adequately prepared to enter the workforce. The survey

contains five sections with numbered queries related to each. These sections are: 1) **Continuing Education**, which includes degrees and licenses obtained after graduation with results to demonstrate life-long learning; 2) **Employment**, which includes employment status, time to obtain employment, type of employment and position, and current salary with results used to ensure job placement of graduates within the maritime industry; 3) **Sailing Experience**, which includes whether the graduate has sailed or is sailing on their US Coast Guard license and if so, on which types of vessels with results used to ensure the modernization of the curriculum; 4) **Learning Outcomes Assessment**, which evaluates the graduate's perceived attainment of the Academy's institutional and program learning outcomes with results used to modify or improve the curriculum; and 5) **Overall Academic Experience**, which surveys the quality of the program in preparing students for today's workforce in a domestic and international environment with results to ensure the Academy continues to meet its mission. Summary of findings will serve as supporting evidence to inform senior leadership with decision-making on the curriculum and allocation of resources, and in meeting the criteria established for accreditation by demonstrating continuous improvement.

3. Automation or Use of Information Technology (IT)

This information collection involves the use of automated/electronic collection techniques and is conducted entirely through the Survey Monkey platform.

4. Efforts to Identify Duplication

There is no duplication of effort with this collection, as similar information is not currently gathered by any other entity.

5. Impact on Small Businesses or Other Small Entities

The only intended recipients of the survey are graduates of the Academy. This collection has no impact on small businesses or other small entities.

6. Impact of not conducting or Less Frequent Collection of Information

Without this collection of information, the Academy would be unable to maintain its regional and programmatic accreditation and thereby its ability to offer a Bachelor of Science degree. Current accreditation expectations include regular annual survey of alumni to gather information related to the effectiveness of academic programs. In addition, if the collection of this data is not performed, the Academy will not be able to identify changes needed to improve the curriculum, course offerings, and educational support services.

7. Special Circumstances Relating to the Guidelines 5 CFR 1320.5

There are no special circumstances that require this collection of information to be conducted in a manner described 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 19086, Vol. 90, No. 85) on May 4, 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.

Aside from Alumnae feedback, no effort is made to acquire outside consultation for the purpose of this survey.

9. Explanation of Any Payments or Gift to Respondents

No payments or gifts are provided to respondents.

10. Assurance of Confidentiality and Protection of Privacy

There are no assurances of confidentiality provided to respondents as part of this information collection. However, the Academy has no mechanism in place to identify individual respondents as not personally identifiable information (PII) is collected. Analysis will be done at the aggregate level and all reports produced will summarize the survey results.

11. Justification for Sensitive Questions

This survey does not collect any PII or sensitive information.

12. Estimate of Annualized Burden Hours and Cost

a. Estimated Annualized Burden Hours

Approximately 600 alumnae of the Academy will receive this survey annually. The survey may be administered to one-year alumni. Subsets of the survey may be distributed to the five-year and ten-year graduates of the Academy as well. Each

respondent will take approximately 15 minutes (or .25 hours) to respond once to this collection. Therefore, the total burden hours for this collection are 150, which can be calculated as shown in the table below:

Total Respondent s		Total Responses per Respondent		Total Responses		Average Time Taken to Respond (Hour)		Total Burden Hours
600	*	1	=	600	*	0.25 (15 mins)	=	150

13. Estimate of Total Annual Costs Burden to Respondents and/or Recordkeeper

There are not capital, start-up, operation, or maintenance costs to respondents and/or recordkeepers for this collection.

14. Estimates of Federal Government Costs

The total annual cost to the Federal Government for processing applications associated with this collection is \$ 813,600.00:

According to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM)¹ wage tables, the hourly wage rate for the following Federal Employees with a New York-Newark, NY-NJ-CT-PA locality pay is as follows: One Supervisory Personnel (GS-14, Step 10) is \$ 91.41, Analyst (GS-12, Step 5) is \$ 56.71, and Office Assistant (GS-8, Step 10) is \$ 40.62. When combined with the Federal Employee Compensation rate of 31%², the hourly wage rate for each professional is: One Supervisory Personnel (GS-14, Step 10) is \$ 119.75, Analyst (GS-12, Step 5) is \$ 56.71, and Office Assistant (GS-8, Step 10) is \$ 53.21. These individuals will spend six (6) hours, five (5) hours, and five (5) hours respectively to review the design and tabulate questions and data required, analyze, and report results for all 600 surveys. The total combined costs for these efforts are \$ 813,600.00, which can be calculated as shown in the table below:

FTE Grade and Step & Job Title	Hourly Wage	Average Hourly Wage Rate with 31% Compensation	Total Employees	Total Time for Per application (Hours)	Total Survey	Total Federal Government Wages
GS 14 (Step 10): Supervisory Personnel	\$ 91.41	\$ 119.75	1	6	600	\$ 431,100.00
GS 12 (Step 5): Analyst	\$ 56.71	\$ 56.71	1	5		\$ 222,870.00
GS 8 (Step 10): Office Assistant	\$ 40.62	\$ 53.21	1	5		\$ 159,630.00
TOTAL COMBINED FEDERAL WAGES						\$ 813,600.00

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

15. Explanation of Program Changes or Adjustments

Since the last renewal, there are minor changes to this survey. For instance, the questions related to learning outcomes assessment were updated to reflect wording changes in the academic program over time. Salary ranges were also adjusted to align with increasing salaries over time. Questions were slightly reworded for clarity and reordered in order to make skip logic more effective, thereby showing appropriate questions to respondents based on responses to prior questions.

16. Publication of Data Collection Results

Collected data will be analyzed and relevant results shared with internal program managers. Summary findings will be included in the self-study and follow-up reports will be submitted to regional and programmatic accreditors, as required, to maintain accreditation.

17. Display of the OMB Expiration Date

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

18. Exceptions to the Certification Statement

There are no exceptions to the certification statement.