

Department of Transportation (DOT)

Federal Highway Administration

The Supporting Statement A

Emergency Relief Funding Applications

OMB Control No. 2125-0525

Introduction: This is to request OMB renew three-year approved clearance for the information collection entitled Emergency Relief Funding Applications (OMB Control No. 2125-0525).

Part A. Justification.

1. Circumstances that make collection of information necessary:

States are required to submit an application for emergency relief (ER) funds to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to receive Federal-aid highway disaster assistance. The law on the ER program, 23 U.S.C. 125(a), requires a finding by the Secretary of Transportation that the damage is sufficiently serious to warrant Federal funding for repairs. In order to make this determination, the Secretary relies on the information provided in the State's application for disaster assistance. The authority and responsibility of the Federal Highway Administrator to prescribe policies and procedures for the proper submission of information necessary to allow this determination is established at 23 U.S.C. 315.

This information collection supports the DOT Strategic Goal of Improving System Condition and Reliability by providing a mechanism by which States may receive Federal-aid highway funds to maintain accessible and efficient travel.

2. How, by whom, and for what purpose is the information used:

State Transportation Departments (State DOTs), equivalent highway agencies in the District of Columbia, Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the Territories of Guam, the Virgin Islands, and American Samoa, and Federal Land Management Agencies (FLMAs) submit ER applications to the FHWA for review and approval. Once the application is accepted by FHWA, the Applicant may be reimbursed with Federal funds. Without the information, an ER funding determination cannot be made.

3. Extent of automated information collection:

The FHWA ER Program collects, stores, analyzes, and reports accurate and timely emergency event program and financial data via multiple electronic systems. Mobile Solutions for Assessment and Reporting (MSAR) is an electronic application designed to perform disaster assessment, damage inspection, and reporting to support the ER/ ERFO program. The ER Data Portal provides recipients with a data entry interface to populate emergency event program and financial information, incorporates a data connection to the Integrated Transportation Information Platform (ITIP), and contains summary reports that pull together information from multiple forms throughout the portal, as well as FMIS obligation and Delphi expenditure data through ITIP. The portal also streamlines the event declaration and approval process, as well as the funding request and allocation process. There is a system workflow that allows a user to route a populated form

from the State Department of Transportation to the FHWA Division Office and from the Division Office to the FHWA Headquarters Office of Infrastructure.

The ER Data Portal is accessed via the User Profile and Access Control System (UPACS). The Portal was developed within the Policy Information Data Portal (PIDP). The ER Data Portal is currently utilized by all FHWA Federal-aid Division Offices, Federal Lands Divisions, and State and Territorial Transportation Agencies.

4. Efforts to identify duplication:

This information collection requirement does not duplicate any other requirements.

5. Efforts to minimize the burden on small businesses:

There is no impact on small businesses.

6. Impact of less frequent collection of information:

Each ER application is a one-time submission triggered by an ER-eligible disaster. Once an emergency event is approved by FHWA, further submission of ER applications is not required. The FHWA could not approve the payment of ER funds to the State(s) based on a less frequent collection of this information.

7. Special circumstances:

There are no special circumstances related to this information collection.

8. Compliance with 5 CFR 1320.8:

The 60-day Federal Register notice intended to solicit comments from the public on this information collection was published on February 18, 2026, at [91 FR 7620]. There was 1 comment received.

Virginia DOT (VDOT):

VDOT commented on the labor-intensive nature of the work required to compile Detailed Disaster Inspection Reports (DDIRs) and suggested that FHWA provide funds based on observed damage, use available geospatial imagery to review infrastructure damage, and use a formula to disburse funding to deliver initial repair dollars based on observed damage.

- FHWA's response: FHWA concurs that the Emergency Relief process is labor-intensive and is committed to identify ways to streamline the process. FHWA has been exploring opportunities to utilize existing post-disaster imagery for damage assessments and will continue to do so. The comments related to program improvements related to funding are not directly related to the ER Funding Application.

VDOT states that FHWA's estimate of 250 hours per assessment significantly underestimates the true burden, as it only accounts for office-based data compilation while ignoring extensive field data collection and travel times.

- FHWA's response: FHWA concurs that the Emergency Relief process is labor-intensive. Taking into consideration the time required to conduct site assessments, gather supporting documentation (including photographs, maps, repair information, and cost estimates), prepare necessary paperwork, and submit to FHWA for review, we have increased the estimated burden from 250 hours to 350 hours per DDIR. However, development and submittal of the ER application, including the field report required by 23 CFR 668.111(b), is a one-time effort. Additional DDIRs documenting damage to other

sites may be submitted but they would not be accounted for within the ER Funding Application.

VDOT proposed the development of a standardized, nationwide, GIS-based DDIR tool to allow states to quickly collect, verify, and share spatial data and supporting documentation with FHWA.

- FHWA's response: FHWA is working to provide State DOTs with multiple options for conducting damage assessments. The DDIR is one tool available to States that choose to use it. Other available tools include the Policy Information Data Portal (PIDP) and the Mobile Solution for Assessment & Reporting (MSAR). Both platforms enable State DOTs to collect site assessment data and submit it electronically to FHWA.

VDOT recommended combining DDIRs by logical regional areas (e.g., VDOT's 9 construction districts) to eliminate redundant paperwork. It also suggested that FHWA create a standardized toolkit including federally eligible contract templates for ER applicants. VDOT also recommended FHWA consider changes to the ER process, including FHWA compilation of DDIRs, project approval via DDIR (in lieu of FMIA authorization), and limiting FHWA DDIR reviews and audits.

- FHWA's response: These comments are not directly related to the ER Funding Application.

The 30-day Federal Register notice intended to notify the public this information collection was submitted to OMB for review and approval was published on June 11, 2026, at [91 FR 35602]."

9. Payments or gifts to respondents:

No payments or gifts are provided to the respondents.

10. Assurance of confidentiality:

None of the information is considered confidential as it is all available to the public.

11. Justification for collection of sensitive information:

There are no questions of a sensitive nature.

12. Estimate of burden hours for information requested:

An average of 40 annual ER applications are developed and submitted by the State DOTs described in item 2 above. Development and submittal of the application, including the field report required by 23 CFR 668.111(b), is a one-time effort. On the average, it is estimated to require approximately 350 hours of professional staff time (engineering inspections, background documentation, and data entry) per application. The estimated average annual burden for all respondents per year is 14,000 hours (40 annual applications x 350 hours each).

13. Estimate of total annual costs to respondents:

There are no additional costs to respondents associated with documenting the emergency incident.

14. Estimate of cost to the Federal government:

There are no costs other than Federal government salaries.

It is estimated that the Federal government expends 100 hours of professional staff time for joint inspections and the review and approval process per event. At \$43.57¹/hour (Based on OPM General Schedule salary for a GS-13 equivalent federal employee) the total cost per application is \$4,357. With an average of 40 ER applications nationwide per year, the total Federal government cost is estimated to be \$174,280 (40 applications x \$4,357 per application).

15. Explanation of program changes or adjustments:

As a result of a comment from a stakeholder, FHWA reviewed the hours required to perform the duties captured in the collection and revised the estimated burden from 250 hours to 350 hours per DDIR.

16. Publication of results of data collection:

None of the information collected is to be published.

17. Approval for not displaying the expiration date of OMB approval:

No such approval is being requested.

18. Exceptions to certification statement:

There are no exceptions to the certification statement.

¹ https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/salary-tables/26Tables/pdf/GS_h.pdf