

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
U.S. Department of Commerce
National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration
Wage Mariner Hiring Portal (WMHP)
OMB Control No. 0648-0790

Abstract

This is a request for extension of an existing information collection. There are no changes to this collection. NOAA is home to the nation's largest fleet of oceanographic research ships. With 15 ships in our fleet, OMAO operates worldwide to support diverse information programs, environmental stewardship services, and applied scientific research. The Wage Mariner Hiring Portal (WMHP) is an internet-based system (web site) that is designed to allow an applicant to apply for a "wage mariner" position within the NOAA fleet of maritime vessels. The WMHP system collects basic user information, wage mariner licensing, certifications, and relevant current and or past work history. The regulations allow OMAO to hire wage mariners into excepted service positions within the NOAA fleet of ocean-going vessels in order to maintain adequate operations, maintenance, and safe staffing of the maritime ships.

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 Department of Commerce (DOC), through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Office of Marine and Aviation Operations (OMAO) has special hiring authority under [Code of Federal Regulations \(CFR\), Title 5, Chapter 1, Subchapter A, Part 3, §3.2](#)¹ and under the DOC [Department Administrative Order \(DAO\) 202-302](#)² Section 2, Subsection .02a. specific to the hiring of federal wage mariner employees in order to ensure a core of federal wage mariners to operate and maintain NOAA's fleet of ocean going scientific platforms.

The [Wage Mariner Hiring Portal](#)³ (WMHP) is an internet-based system (web site) that is designed to allow an applicant to apply for a "wage mariner" position within the NOAA fleet of maritime vessels. The WMHP system collects basic user information, wage mariner licensing, certifications, and relevant current and or past work history. The regulations allow OMAO to hire wage mariners into excepted service positions within the NOAA fleet of ocean-going vessels in order to maintain adequate operations, maintenance, and safe staffing of the maritime ships.

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.

¹ <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-5/chapter-I/subchapter-A/part-3>

² https://www.commerce.gov/opog/directives/DAO_202-302

³ <https://marinerhiring.noaa.gov/Account/Login>

NOAA's fleet of 15 research [ships](#)⁴ operate world-wide in direct support of NOAA's diverse environmental information collection programs, environmental stewardship services and applied scientific research. NOAA ships are operated by a combination of [NOAA commissioned officers](#)⁵ and civilian professional mariners (wage marine job series). The ships' officers and crew provide mission support and assistance to embarked scientists from NOAA laboratories and the academic community.

NOAA regularly has openings for civilian mariners aboard NOAA research and survey ships. Professional mariner personnel include licensed masters, mates, and engineers, and unlicensed members of the engine, stewards, and deck department. Survey and electronic technicians operate and/or maintain the ship's mission, communication and navigation equipment.

Professional mariners are the backbone of the fleet, an integral part of achieving NOAA's mission to understand the condition of the ocean and atmosphere. NOAA ships typically spend from 180 to 240 days at sea per year in support of NOAA's objectives, which include nautical charting, bathymetric mapping, fisheries research, ecosystem assessments, marine environment baseline assessments, coastal-ocean circulation studies, and oceanic and atmospheric research. Professional mariners provide the specialized skills and technical expertise to make these projects successful, whether it is deploying scientific equipment, operating the propulsion plant, or prepping the food line.

No physical forms are used in this collection, it is all online and is available to prospective applicants 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Applicants fill out basic personal, licensure, and work history information into a profile resume. Once their basic profile is complete, applicants can submit this resume for available wage mariner positions as shown on the [WMHP web site](#)⁶. The application information received is used to determine if the applicant meets the basic job qualification. If the basic job qualifications are met, the applicant's information is passed on to the hiring official or placed in a pool of prospective candidates for future openings. Application information includes: first and last name, contact number and email address, wage mariner licenses and certifications, and relevant work history. OMAO administrative staff use this information for evaluation and hiring purposes.

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.

Information will be collected electronically (Internet) through an online web-based interactive system.

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

This is unique information that is not captured by any other means. No other federal or state agency collects this information or has a hiring system that is specific for federal wage mariners in excepted positions.

5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities, describe any

⁴ <https://www.oma.noaa.gov/marine-operations/ship-finder>

⁵ <https://www.oma.noaa.gov/noaa-corps>

⁶ <https://marinerhiring.noaa.gov/Jobs/Openings>

methods used to minimize burden.

This collection of information applies to individuals and does not involve small businesses or other small entities. Only the information required to ascertain the individual's basic qualifications is collected.

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.

If the collection is not collected or is collected less frequently, it will affect NOAA's ability to hire wage mariners within the NOAA fleet. The NOAA fleet requires a regulated minimum number of crew to safely operate a NOAA vessel, maintain adequate operations, and maintenance. Without a steady core of wage mariners, the NOAA fleet will not be able to continue its primary mission of collecting environmental intelligence.

7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with OMB guidelines.

This information collection will be conducted in a manner consistent with OMB guidelines.

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 published on May 1, 2026 (91 FR 23405) solicited public comments. No comments were received.

OMAO reached out to five wage mariners to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instructions and recordkeeping, disclosure, or reporting format (if any), and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported. No comments were received.

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

No payments or gifts are provided to respondents.

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 system of records notice (SORN) or privacy impact assessment (PIA), those should be cited and described here.

Disclosure of this information is permitted under the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. Section 552a) to be shared among OMAO Administrative staff for evaluation and hiring purposes. Disclosure of this information is also subject to all of the published routine uses as identified in the Privacy Act System of Records Notice [COMMERCE/DEPT-18](https://www.commerce.gov/node/4953)⁷, Employees Personnel Files Not Covered by Notices of Other

⁷ <https://www.commerce.gov/node/4953>

Agencies. An approved Privacy Impact Assessment is on file for the system (NOAA2220) where this information is stored.

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.

There are no questions of a sensitive nature.

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

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)
Wage Mariner Hiring Portal	Sailors & Marine Oilers	1000	1	1000	1	1000	\$27.32	\$27,320
Totals				1000		1000		\$27,320

*The wage rate for Sailors & Marine Oilers (53-5011) from the BLS Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics page (https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_nat.htm#53-0000) was used to determine the hourly wage rate.

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).

There are no capital costs or operating and maintenance costs associated with this information collection. All information is submitted electronically.

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.

Cost Descriptions	Grade/Step	Loaded Salary /Cost	% of Effort	Fringe (if Applicable)	Total Cost to Government
Federal Oversight	ZP-4/2	\$226,245	25%		\$56,561
Contractor Cost					
Travel					
Other Costs:					
TOTAL					\$56,561

The Commerce Alternative Personnel System (CAPS) [pay tables](https://www.commerce.gov/sites/default/files/2026-01/CAPS%20Standard%20Pay%20Tables%202026.pdf)⁸ for the Rest of U.S. locality was used to determine the base salary. The Rest of U.S. locality was used since NOAA staff are geographically dispersed. The upper bound salary for a ZP-IV Interval 2 was used as the base salary and a multiplier of 1.5 applied to calculate the loaded salary.

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

There have been no changes to the information collection since the last OMB approval.

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 information in this collection 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 OMB Control Number and collection expiration date will be displayed on the Wage Mariner Hiring Portal.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in "Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions."

⁸ <https://www.commerce.gov/sites/default/files/2026-01/CAPS%20Standard%20Pay%20Tables%202026.pdf>

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