

**PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT
DOC/NOAA/NMFS SURVEY CLEARANCE FORM
Economic Surveys for U.S. Commercial Fisheries
OMB CONTROL NUMBER 0648-0369**

This form should be used if you are submitting a collection of information for approval under the NOAA customer survey clearance assigned OMB control number 0648-0369. E-mail this form, full Supporting Statement (including Part B), the collection instrument, and any additional documentation to:

Rita.Curtis@noaa.gov

If the collection does not satisfy the requirements of the program clearance, you should follow the regular PRA clearance procedures described in 5 CFR 1320.

NOAA Subagency _____

Title (Please be specific) _____

Burden Hour Estimates

Number of respondents _____

Total Burden Hours _____

Hours per response _____

Cumulative Burden Hours
under Program Clearance _____

Agency Contact (*person who can best answer questions about the content of the submission*)

Name _____

Phone _____

Certification: The collection of information requested by this submission meets the requirement of the OMB approval for OMB control number 0648-0369.

Signature of Program Official

9-20-06
Date

Signature of NOAA Paperwork Clearance Officer

9-22-06
Date

OIRA

Date

RESPONSES TO SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS FOR PRA CLEARANCE OMB REVIEW OF INDIVIDUAL INSTRUMENTS

NOAA will submit each individual instrument for OMB review. OIRA will inform the agency when each instrument is cleared, after which the agency may use OMB Control No.: 0648-0369. The information provided along with each instrument must address the following items.

1. The potential respondent universe and any sampling or other respondent selection method to be used and the expected response rate.

Potential Respondent Universe

The potential respondent universe consists of 1,900 active commercial fishing vessels holding a current Northeast Region permit in any fishery. Active fishing vessels are defined as having reported landing fish through the Northeast Seafood Dealer Reporting System during 2005.

Sampling and Other Respondent Selection Methods

This survey will be sent to all of the 1,900 vessels in the population of interest. However, the survey is divided into three sections and respondents will be asked to complete two of the three sections. All respondents will be asked to complete the first section. Half the respondents will be randomly selected to complete the second section and the other half will be asked to complete the last section.

Expected Response Rate

The expected response rate is 70-80%.

2. Data collection procedures, including the statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection, the estimation procedures, the degree of accuracy needed for the intended purpose, expected dates of survey implementation, and any unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures.

The desired degree of accuracy, and corresponding desired response rate, depends upon the application for which the data is being used. A basic application of the survey data will be the inference of unobserved population mean values from the observed sample mean values.

Given a population of 1,900 vessels and assuming a margin of error of 5% and a confidence level of 90%, the minimum sample size is 237 vessels. If the confidence levels are increased to 95% and 99%, minimum sample sizes increase to 320 and 492, respectively. These sample sizes are what would be required if each respondent completed the entire survey. Since the survey is divided into three sections with the first section completed by all respondents and the other two sections completed by separate halves of the respondents, these minimum sample sizes need to be doubled (resulting in sample sizes of 474, 640, 984). The largest of these minimum sample size scenarios (a sample size of 984) can be reached with a response rate of 52%.

Two reasons can be identified for desiring higher response rates than those needed to support inference of population means from sample means. First, data from this survey will be used to develop a variety of economic models covering applications such as fleet efficiency and fishery participation. In these applications, error will arise not only from how well the data used for model development represents the population, but also from model specification and estimation. Since it is not possible to completely avoid specification and estimation error in model development, there is good reason to desire a higher response rate and higher degree of accuracy in the data collection process. Second, future applications of the data may require further disaggregating the population into smaller groups according to factors such as state of operation gear type, or vessel size. Identification of all such future disaggregated data needs is not possible at the present time. A higher response and higher degree of accuracy in the current data collection process will facilitate such future population disaggregation. While a response rate of 52% will support basic statistical inference regarding the entire population of active commercial fishing vessels with Northeast permits, a higher response rate is desired for the above reasons.

Survey Fielding

The Permit Office within NOAA's Northeast Regional office will administer the survey in conjunction with their fishing permit renewal process. Along with the permit renewal form, a separate fixed cost survey will be sent directly to owners of record. While the survey is voluntary, being associated with a permit renewal form should increase the amount of attention it gets, and thus improve response rates over a separate mail survey. Instructions accompanying the fixed cost survey form will, however, clearly state that the fixed cost survey is voluntary.

The Permit Office will be provided with a list of vessel hull numbers to be surveyed. Surveys will be printed with the hull number pre-coded on the form. Surveys will then be inserted into the appropriately addressed envelope with the permit renewal form and respondents will return the completed survey and permit renewal form in a stamped and addressed return envelope.

To limit the number of questions each vessel owner is asked, the survey is divided into three sections. Section A questions will be asked of all vessel owners. Then, half the owners will be asked the questions in Section B and the other half Section C. This is done not only to limit respondent burden but to help assure owners that they will never be reporting all of their costs for a particular fiscal year.

Expected Dates of Survey Implementation

The permit renewal forms are mailed in January of each year. The fixed cost survey that will accompany these forms and will provide a census of active permit holders will occur in January of 2006.

3. The methods used to maximize response rates and address non-response. The accuracy and reliability of the information collected must be shown to be adequate for the intended uses.

Strategy to Maximize Response Rates

There are a number of reasons why a response rate of 70% to 80% is anticipated for this survey. Primarily, the survey will accompany the annual fishing vessel permit renewal process administered by the Northeast Region Permit Office. One of the major reasons mail survey response rates tend to be lower than other methods, such as personal interviews, is that the respondent is more likely to discard it before giving it much attention. The annual renewal of fishing permits is very important to fishermen because it maintains access to their commercial fishing interests. Sending the fixed cost survey with this critical document will get the attention of the person (presumably the owner) most knowledgeable about the business.

Extensive outreach activities will also help the response rate. Informing the fishing industry about the purpose and need for the fixed cost survey will be important to the success of the survey. Outreach will occur on a number of levels:

- Written materials: news articles in trade magazines such as Commercial Fisheries News and National Fisherman and handouts made available at Fishery Management Council meetings and other fishing industry meetings. Written material will describe the purpose and need of the survey and how it will be administered.
- Presentations: Council meetings and other fishing industry meetings
- Port Agents' dockside interactions with fishermen

The role of the Port Agents will be to help the industry understand the purpose and need of the data collection program. They will be trained to answer questions about the logistics of the survey, why it is being administered through the permit renewal process, how data will be kept confidential, as well as the types of questions asked on the survey.

Port Agents will be asked to proactively promote the program by distributing handouts, meeting with groups of fishermen, and being available to discuss the survey and answer questions.

Lastly, the response rate is expected to be aided by a re-mailing to non-respondents.

Strategy to Address Non-Response

A considerable amount of information is currently available about vessel characteristics and landings for the survey population. This information will be used to compare the survey population with survey respondents, and to make any adjustments for systematic bias in survey response.

While landings information will not be collected in this survey, other data collection efforts such as the Northeast Seafood Dealer Reporting System, in conjunction with the Vessel Logbook Program, provides individual vessel landing information, both pounds landed and value of landings, species, port, and gear for all vessels in the survey population. As a result, it is possible to compare respondents and non-respondents with regard to seasonal patterns, species landed, and location of landings.

Re-mailing the survey to non-respondents will also help to increase the final response rates. If particular groups of vessels, characterized by the criteria described above, have low response rates, additional outreach can be targeted at those groups.

4. How the survey instrument was developed, including the steps taken to validate the questionnaire design.

The Social Sciences Branch (SSB) of the Northeast Fisheries Science Center has been involved in various efforts to collect fixed cost information over the past eight years. The SSB has advised the Cooperative Marine Education and Research (CMER) Program universities on their data collection efforts to collect vessel costs on a fishery-by fishery-basis. These snap-shot surveys, carried out in the late 90's, while useful for understanding vessel costs at that time, highlighted the need for an ongoing data collection program. This led to the eventual implementation of a cost data collection experiment of several years' duration, the Atlantic Coast Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) pilot data collection project. This was intended to be an ongoing data collection system but was ultimately not adopted by East Coast fishery management agencies. However, valuable experience was gained in formulating, administering, and refining the survey instrument. Both the CMER and ACCSP surveys formed the basis for the current questionnaire design.

The survey was pre-tested by fishing vessel owners and their comments were considered in the final survey format.

5. The reporting and use of the results of the survey

Use of Survey Results

NOAA Fisheries needs to measure the economic performance of northeast commercial fisheries in order to meet legal and regulatory requirements, support fisheries management decision making, and undertake economic research. Currently available cost earnings data is very limited, particularly information on fixed costs, and does not meet these needs. The Northeast Fisheries Science Center's Fixed Cost Survey will collect the additional data that is needed to construct key economic performance measures such as profitability, capacity utilization, efficiency, productivity, and economic impacts.

Reporting of Survey Results

A web site managed by the Northeast Fisheries Science Center will be available for the general public to obtain summary results of survey responses. Summaries will include descriptive statistics (such as mean and standard deviation) of the various costs being collected. Users will be able to refine their queries to vessel size classes, gear types, and principal state of landing. Qualified researchers with data access and confidentiality agreements will have access to raw data for performing analyses.

Survey results will be reported over time through a series of studies prepared for fisheries management. It is anticipated that results will also be reported through academic publications,

presentations at conferences, and technical guides. All reporting of survey results will conform to data confidentiality requirements.

Information Quality Guidelines and Confidentiality

It is anticipated that the information collected will be disseminated to the public or used to support publicly disseminated information. As explained in the previous paragraphs, the information gathered has utility. NMFS will retain control over the information and safeguard it from improper access, modification, and destruction, consistent with NOAA standards for confidentiality, privacy, and electronic information. In particular, the data collected will be kept confidential as required by section 402(b) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act and NOAA Administrative Order 216-100, Confidentiality of Fisheries Statistics, and will not be released for public use except in aggregate statistical form without identification as to its source.

The information collection is designed to yield data that meet all applicable information quality guidelines. Prior to dissemination, the information will be subjected to quality control measures and a pre-dissemination review pursuant to Section 515 of Public Law 106-554.

6. Contact information for agency coordinator and principal investigator.

Agency Coordinator and Principal Investigator:

Andrew Kitts

NOAA Fisheries

Northeast Fisheries Science Center

166 Water Street

Woods Hole, MA 02543

508-495-2231

Andrew.Kitts@noaa.gov

7. Estimated burden and number of respondents

Reviewing the survey, collecting requested data, and completing the survey is expected to take one hour per respondent. With the expected 80% response rate, a total of 1,520 responses will be received. As a result, the survey is expected to impose a total of 1,520 burden hours on the Northeast fishing industry.

Total # of active permit holders	1,900
Expected survey response rate	80%
Expected # survey respondents	1,520 (=1,900*80%)
Average burden hours/survey	1
Total annual burden hours	1,520

COVER LETTER PRINTED ON REGIONAL OFFICE LETTERHEAD

DATE OF MAILING

Dear Fishing Vessel Owner,

You have been selected to participate in a survey about certain costs related to your fishing vessel. Fishing vessel cost information is needed to help fisheries managers understand the economic implications of the management alternatives they are considering. Since there are many different methods for reaching a conservation objective (for example, trip limits, closed areas, days-at-sea, quotas), managers need to incorporate economic factors into their decisions.

Fisheries Economists at the Northeast Fisheries Science Center provide managers with various analyses of proposed management actions as well as conduct research on economic issues related to commercial fishing. Comprehensive economic data is required to complete many of these analyses, to obtain a clearer understanding of fishing business practices, and to evaluate the financial health of commercial harvesters. Fishing vessel operating costs are an important component.

Information about fixed costs is lacking. These are expenses that don't vary directly with the number of trips a vessel may take in a year and includes insurance, mooring and dockage fees, repair and maintenance, and the cost of adding or replacing equipment and gear, among others. To improve the collection of fixed cost information, this fixed cost survey you are being asked to complete and return is being sent directly to owners of record.

The analysis of economic information, collected systematically over the long term, will help managers 1) understand the economic impacts of proposed fishery management regulations, and 2) choose measures that generate the greatest net benefits to the nation. Also, such information is likely to reveal where, how, and why some measures will have differential impacts on different sectors of the industry, different ports and/or different groups of fishermen and fishing communities. Over time this data, and the analyses based upon it, should enable managers to develop regulations that will simultaneously improve resource utilization, increase the net benefits derived from fishery resources, and preserve fishery dependent communities. The first step in achieving these goals is to consistently generate comprehensive economic data on all fisheries.

Data you submit will be kept confidential. Only information summarized by gear type, vessel size, region, or other characteristic will be reported in analyses. Also, since all vessel costs will not be known (not all trips are covered by observers); the annual profit of your vessel will not be known. In addition, to help ensure that individual vessel profits cannot be calculated, the fixed cost survey is divided into three sections and you are asked to reply to only two of these (please see survey instructions). You may reply to the entire survey if you wish.

Thank you very much for participating in this survey! Your voluntary cooperation in helping to improve the understanding of fishing vessel economics is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Social Sciences Branch
Northeast Fisheries Science Center

Northeast Fisheries Science Center - Fishing Vessel Cost Survey



United State Department of Commerce
National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration
National Marine Fisheries Service
Permit Office
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298
Tel: (978) 281-9370



Instructions: Please record the costs associated with only the vessel identified below. If you own more than one vessel, certain costs may need to be divided among vessels. **IMPORTANT:** *if you do not know the cost of a particular item (but a cost was incurred), please write "XX" in the field. If a cost was not incurred, please record a zero. PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE A COST ITEM BLANK.*

Please complete Section A and then either Section B or C, whichever section is **NOT highlighted in grey**. If you would like to, you may complete the entire survey.

Please return completed surveys to the Permit Office with the permit renewal form.

SECTION A

Survey Document Number: **123456** (survey number will be hard coded)

Coast Guard Documentation or State Registration Number: **12345678** (hull number will be hard coded)
(one survey per vessel)

Start date of your fiscal year (answers below should correspond with the fiscal year):

// (mm/dd/yyyy)

Vessel Ownership Type:

Check one:

- A. Sole proprietorship
- B. General partnership
- C. Limited Partnership
- D. Corporation

If D, check corporation type: "C" corp. "S" corp. "LLC"

If B, C, or D - number of owners:

Was the vessel purchased from a previous owner or was it bought new? Previous owner New

In what calendar year did you acquire the vessel?

Please estimate the market value of your vessel (including all equipment, fishing gear, permits, and fishing history). \$,,

SECTION B

What improvements (new or replacement gear, equipment, electronics, etc) were made to the vessel this fiscal year? Please use the table to list the improvements. Also in this table, **please include the cost of buying permanent quota** (includes permanent transfer of quota in the surf clam/ocean quahog ITQ and within the George Bank Cod Hook Sector)

Description of improvement or quota transfer	Cost of improvement or quota transfer
	\$ <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> , <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
	\$ <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> , <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
	\$ <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> , <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
	\$ <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> , <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
	\$ <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> , <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
	\$ <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> , <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>

Was the vessel hauled out this fiscal year for routine maintenance and repair? Yes No

If yes, what was the cost of the haul-out (please do not include the cost of any vessel improvements listed above)? \$,

What is the typical number of years between haul-outs for this vessel?

What was the cost of all other repair/maintenance this fiscal year (not including haul-out and improvement costs)? \$,

Please record the cost of these following cost items:

Permit/license fees: \$,

Cost of leasing quota or days-at-sea for use this fiscal year: \$,
 (includes one-year leasing of surf clam/ocean quahog ITQ, cod quota in the Georges Bank Cod Hook Sector, or days-at-sea in the multispecies fishery)

Total value of share paid to crew for the fiscal year: \$, ,

SECTION C

Please record the cost of these following cost items:

Mooring/dockage fee: \$ <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> , <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> Business vehicle: \$ <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> , <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> Business travel costs: \$ <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> , <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> Professional fees: (accounting, legal, bookkeeping, etc): \$ <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> , <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> Association fees: (cooperative, fishing organization, etc) \$ <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> , <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	Vessel Insurance: \$ <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> , <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> Crew benefits: \$ <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> , <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> Business taxes: \$ <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> , <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> Non-crew labor services: \$ <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> , <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> Interest on loans: \$ <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> , <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
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Other costs not listed in Sections B or C

Cost	Description of "other" cost
\$ <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> , <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	
\$ <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> , <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	
\$ <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> , <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	
\$ <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> , <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	

Comments

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT STATEMENT: The Northeast Fixed Cost Survey provides economic data for all federally permitted fisheries in the Northeast region. This information will be used to improve research and management of these fisheries. Public reporting burden for this information collection, including time for reviewing instructions and collecting the needed data, is estimated to average 1 hour per response. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to: Andrew Kitts, Northeast Fisheries Science Center, 166 Water Street, Woods Hole, MA 02540; Email: Andrew.Kitts@noaa.gov, Phone: 508-495-2231.

Confidential name and address information may be released via a NOAA Fisheries website for informational purposes. All other data submitted will be handled as confidential material in accordance with NOAA Administrative Order 216-100, Protection of Confidential Fishery Statistics. Notwithstanding any other provisions of the law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subjected to a penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act, unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB Control Number.