

December 8, 2003

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief Information Officers

FROM: Carl P. Staton

SUBJECT: FY 2004 Information Collection Budget
Formulation

This is a call for submissions for the FY 2004 NOAA Information Collection Budget (ICB). A description of the ICB process and the instructions for making a submission are attached.

The ICB and other Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) requirements apply to any voluntary survey affecting ten or more members of the public and to any information requirement in a regulation, regardless of the number of respondents. Any surveys on World-Wide-Web pages also fall under the law; Home Pages may ask for general comments without any clearance as long as no specific questions are asked; but, beyond that, even the most general customer satisfaction questions need OMB clearance.

I have attached a listing of all currently-approved information collections for your organization and the related contact points. Please do not restrict your review to offices already having collection activities. Each year, we find some offices that were planning a new collection but were never contacted about the ICB process.

All responses must be submitted by the close of business on December 29, 2003 to Richard Roberts, CIO/PPA1, SSMC-3, Station 9823. We regret the short turn-around time for this call, but OMB's issuance of the call and its due date leave no alternative.

Submissions may be electronic or hard copy. Questions and negative responses can be directed to Rick on 301-713-3525, extension 212, faxed to (301)713-3554, or e-mailed to Rick.Roberts@noaa.gov.

Attachments

THE FY 2004 INFORMATION COLLECTION BUDGET

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS AND DEFINITIONS

The Information Collection Budget (ICB) is a tool used by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) as part of its implementation of the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995. It aids OMB in controlling the burden placed upon the public by Federal information requests (even if responses are voluntary). New collections or changes to existing collections must be listed in the ICB if they will be submitted for OMB approval in FY 2004. (New collections or revisions of existing collections must be submitted to OMB with a justification for specific approval before they can take place. Information on this overall process is available at www.cio.noaa.gov/itmanagement/prah.htm.)

The ICB deals in "burden hours" and dollars (see the definitions below). Information collections must be included in the ICB regardless of whether response by the public will be voluntary or mandatory.

Submissions for the ICB must be made on the attached form. The form should be used to report on proposals for new information collections or requirements that the organization plans to conduct or impose in FY 2004, and on any increases or decreases in the burden of existing collections and requirements. A minimum amount of information about each item must be included. Existing collections already approved by OMB do not have to be included on the form if no burden change is anticipated. New collections or requirements do not have to be listed if they have already been formally submitted for OMB review. This fact can be determined by examining the list of collections provided with this call. Electronic (PDF, WordPerfect, and Word) versions of the call, including the form and these instructions, can be found on www.cio.noaa.gov/itmanagement/praguide.htm.

DEFINITIONS:

Adjustments - These are changes in the burden or cost of a collection that are not the result of a change in the procedures or content of a collection. Examples would be re-estimates of the time it takes a person to respond or of the number of responses received.

Burden Hours - The impact on the public of an information collection or recordkeeping requirement (see definition below) is measured in terms of "burden hours", which is the total amount of time it will take all respondents to respond to the collection/requirement in a given year. This includes the time necessary to read or listen to the request; to develop, collect, modify, or assemble the information for the response; to conduct any tests, inspections, or observations necessary to acquire the information requested; and to maintain, disclose, or report the information. The time spent filling out a form is often only a small part of the burden. If a respondent is required to obtain a computer or other technology for the purpose of maintaining

or transmitting the information, the time necessary to acquire, install, and utilize that equipment must be included as burden.

NOAA does not have to report the time necessary to gather information if that information has already been gathered for other purposes or as a part of normal business practice. If loan applicants, for instance, are required to include a copy of their tax forms with their applications, NOAA is not charged for the time it took to prepare the tax forms.

If NOAA gathers the results of a state data collection, the burden of the state collection on the public is not included as NOAA burden if it can be shown that the state collection was independently conducted and would have taken place without NOAA involvement.

ICB entries must reflect the total NOAA burden of the collection, so sponsors must calculate the burden on the basis of an estimate of the number of expected responses in FY 2004 and the average time for a response. If the number of responses or burden per response is expected to vary greatly over a three-year period, the numbers should be averaged.

Cost - This is the amount of dollars per year it will cost all respondents to respond to the information collection. **Do not** include a valuation of the hours listed as response burden; in other words, do not multiply the estimated burden hours by an average salary to obtain costs. Instead, the costs should include total capital and start-up costs (annualized over its expected useful life) as well as total costs for operations, maintenance, and the purchase of services. The estimates should take into account costs associated with generating, maintaining, and disclosing or providing the information. Capital and start-up costs include, among other items, preparations for collecting information such as purchasing computers and software; monitoring, sampling, drilling, and testing equipment; and record storage facilities. Operational costs would include fees, postage for mailing in reports, telephone costs for making reports on the phone or by facsimile machine, and similar expenses that would be a part of reporting.

Information Collection/Requirement - The obtaining of facts or opinions from ten or more "persons" by the use of standard questions presented in forms, telephone or personal interviews, requests for narrative responses to questions, or *almost any other means*, regardless of whether response to the collection is voluntary or mandatory. Questions presented on a World-Wide-Web Home Page are deemed information collections, although such Home Pages are not subject to the PRA if they just invite users to submit comments and no specific questions are presented. Collections or requirements contained in a rule of general applicability are presumed to potentially affect at least ten persons, even if it is estimated that there will be fewer actual respondents in the near future. All collections on a Home Page (even if not "directed" to any specific individuals) are also deemed to involve ten or more persons. Requiring members of the public to provide information to the general public or to some third party is also regarded as an information requirement.

Any requirements to label or mark items (e.g. boxes of fish, fishing gear, etc.) or vessels (e.g. vessel identification numbers) need clearance. The PRA also applies to any use of technological

methods to monitor public compliance with government requirements, as well as to automated collection techniques. Requirements to put transponders on fishing vessels to help track their location, for instance, need PRA clearance. OMB is using an extremely broad definition of "information requirement", especially when contained in a regulation, so it is safest to assume that any action collecting information from *or on* the public needs PRA clearance unless a determination to the contrary has been made by clearance personnel.

Information Collection Sponsors - The collection sponsor is responsible for initiating the ICB submission and subsequent OMB clearance requests. You are regarded as the sponsor of a collection or requirement if the information is being gathered for your use or with your funds, even if a contractor, grantee, or other third party does the actual collecting of the data. You are regarded as the sponsor of a collection conducted by a grantee if the information collection is specified in the grant proposal/award or if your approval is required for any procedures or forms to be used.

Persons - Individuals; corporations; universities; state, local and tribal governments; associations; and foreign persons or groups are all considered "persons". Foreign governments are not.

ASSISTANCE - Contact Richard Roberts on 301-713-3525, ext. 212 if you have questions about the ICB process. The e-mail address is Rick.Roberts@noaa.gov.

FY 2004 INFORMATION COLLECTION BUDGET

FORM FOR NEW OR REVISED COLLECTIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

Use this form to report on any new information collections or any revisions to existing information requirements planned to take place in FY 2004. Information collections that are currently approved by OMB and whose requirements will not change do not have to be listed unless you expect to make adjustments in the estimates of anticipated burden or cost. Definitions for “information collection”, “burden hours”, “adjustments”, and “cost” have been provided with the ICB call. Please do not include salary or wage costs in your cost estimate. When listing a new information collection leave the “OMB #” column blank. For revisions to existing collections, list only the change in burden hours and costs taking place, not the overall burden and costs associated with the entire collection. You must provide one of the explanation codes at the bottom of the page for any changes being made. If more than one explanation applies, divide your entry and estimate the portions attributable to each applicable explanation. Multiple entries can be made on one form, but provide all of the information for each individual entry.

OMB #	Description of Change	Est. Change in Burden Hours	Est. Change in Cost (\$K)	Explanation Code
0648-				

Explanation Codes:

SC = Statutory Change. Use this if a collection is directly related to a change in statute within the last 5 years. Cite the statute in the description section.

N = New collection

R = Reinstatement of a previously approved collection whose approval had expired.

E = Expiration of collection. Use this only to show reductions from the planned elimination of a collection.

A = Adjustments. Use this for re-estimates of burden or cost where no changes in requirements will take place.

O = Other. If this code is used, provide an explanation in the description of the change.