

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT
U.S. PACIFIC ALBACORE LOGBOOK
OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-0223**

A. JUSTIFICATION

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.

This request is for extension of a current information collection.

The United States (U.S.) is a major consumer of white meat tuna (albacore). The U.S. North and South Pacific fisheries contribute a major portion of the domestic supply of white meat tuna, while the rest of the U.S. consumer demand is met by foreign imports. Therefore, assessments of the status of Pacific albacore stocks and the monitoring of both the foreign and domestic fisheries is vital to the U.S. fishermen, consumers and producers of white meat tuna. Data collected through this program are essential to assessing the status of the Pacific albacore stocks by providing abundance indices and locations of catches. Albacore is one of the species covered by the [Magnuson Fishery Conservation Act](#), with a permit that is part of a Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Fishery Management Plan (FMP), as well as a [High-Seas Fishing Compliance Act](#) (HSFCA) permit that is required to fish for these species outside of the Exclusive Economic Zone.

Under the FMP and HSFCA, albacore fishing vessels are required to purchase a permit and provide logbook information on daily fishing activity, including catches, effort and positions. The data and associated analyses help the Center provide the needed management advice to the U.S. in its negotiations with foreign fishing nations exploiting Pacific albacore. The data have been collected since the early 1960s and future collections of these data will ensure a complete series of data for monitoring and analysis purposes.

In the early 1970s, the collection of the data was contracted through the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC). The Commission then decided to collect the data through a uniform logbook system and developed a predecessor to the current logbook. The current logbook has evolved through comments from the fishermen and changes in the fishery. The logbooks are distributed by HMS FMP permit office and collected by the Southwest Fisheries Science Center (SWFSC).

2. Explain how, by whom, how frequently, and for what purpose the information will be used.

The logbook data will be collected throughout the year and submitted within 30 days of the end of each fishing trip. The collected information will be used by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to assess the status of Pacific albacore stocks and monitor the fisheries. Data on catches and catch locations are used to determine population size, abundance levels and data on vessel characteristics are used to standardize fishing effort and for economic analyses. After data are standardized, catch and effort information are used to determine year class

strength, fishing mortality, maximum sustainable yields and descriptive information on where and how many fish are caught.

Environmental data are used to correlate catches with certain environmental conditions in an effort to predict locations of favorable catches.

The information is stored on computer databases and analyzed through standard population dynamics models. Results of these analyses will show the condition of the stock and, if the stocks are under-exploited, will indicate where increased catches can be made or, in the case where the stocks are over-exploited, can be used to determine quotas, area closures or other methods to enhance stock recovery. This information will be used by U.S. negotiators in international and domestic forums to develop policy related to the continued harvesting of Pacific albacore. The data will also be summarized yearly and provided to the fishermen for their use.

NOAA Fisheries 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. See response to Question 10 of this Supporting Statement for more information on confidentiality and privacy. 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](#).

3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological techniques or other forms of information technology.

The logbook is made available in both paper and electronic form. Fishermen are encouraged to use the electronic logbook program, available at http://swfsc.noaa.gov/uploadedFiles/Divisions/FRD/Large_Pelagics/Albacore/albeloginstall.zip; however, its use is voluntary. Use of the program requires a computer that many vessels do not carry.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.

No other collection of these data exists that fulfills the reporting obligations of the HMS FMP. HMS permit holders were informed that the existing Pacific albacore logbook (previously submitted voluntarily for over 30 years, before the implementation of the FMP made submission mandatory) would fulfill the HMS permit requirement for the albacore troll fisheries.

5. If the collection of information involves small businesses or other small entities, describe the methods used to minimize burden.

Most albacore troll vessel owners are small business entities. Every attempt has been made to keep the collection of data as simple as possible for the respondent. The logbook is very close to the actual logs that the vessels would keep as standard records. The current data collection

system and forms are therefore the least burdensome available. Since the albacore fishermen were and still are an integral part of both the development and modification of the forms and the sampling program, the burden to them has been minimized through their own inputs.

6. Describe the consequences to the Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently.

Collection of these logbook data are required to obtain a HMS FMP or High-Seas Fishing Compliance Act permit. Cancellation or decreases in coverage will hinder management of these permit programs and allocation of quotas in the future.

7. Explain any special circumstances that require the collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with OMB guidelines.

Not Applicable.

8. Provide information on the PRA Federal Register notice that solicited public comments on the information collection prior to this submission. Summarize the public comments received in response to that notice and describe the actions taken by the agency in response to those comments. Describe the efforts to consult with persons outside the agency 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.

A Federal Register Notice published on October 6, 2014 (FR 79 60139) solicited public comment on this renewal. No comments were received.

The SWFSC works closely with the Western Fishboat Owner's Association (WFOA), American Albacore Fisherman's Association (AAFA) and other fishing organizations on research and data collection activities that support stock assessments and research on Pacific albacore. The initial development of the data collection system and forms as well as all changes to the system and forms were made only after consultation and approval by the membership of WFOA and AAFA. NMFS annually reviews the collection activities for problems with data collection procedures and problems with data collection forms. Proposals for any changes to these procedures or forms are submitted for review and approval by constituents and management as needed.

Suggestions received from vessel captains regarding the albacore logbook computer program during 2014 include expanding the range of valid values for sea surface temperature, modifying the program to run on Macintosh computers and iPad, simplifying the installation steps, simplifying transmission of the data and provide receipt to confirm the information was received, and prevention of previous trips from being transmitted along with the most recent trip. The SWFSC planned to collaborate with industry to upgrade the current logbook computer program during the winter of 2014-2015. At this point, we've tried to develop a replacement program but don't have the programming expertise in-house to meet all the programming requirements. An

industry group that we collaborate with on research projects submitted a grant proposal to create a replacement program but that proposal didn't get funded. So we have a partially developed replacement solution but are stuck until we find appropriate developers and funds to contract with them. So, realistically, we are not expecting the replacement program to be completed until later in 2015, or early in 2016.

9. Explain any decisions to provide payments or gifts to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.

No payments or gifts are made to respondents.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.

As stated on the form, per [NOAA Administrative Order 216-100](#), data are considered confidential and can only be distributed in summary form so as not to reveal the operations of a unique vessel. This practice is consistent with the [Trade Secrets Act](#).

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private.

No information of a sexual, religious or other private nature is collected.

12. Provide an estimate in hours of the burden of the collection of information.

Approximately 1,000 logbooks will be distributed. As logbook completion is required in order to maintain the applicable permits, the response rate should be 100%. Each respondent should make on average 4 trips a year, for a total of 4,000 responses. The burden is approximately 1 hour per response (it should be noted that data supplied would be recorded by the captain for his/her own use and carbons are kept for the vessels records).

4,000 responses x 1 hour/response = 4,000 hours.

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to the respondents or record keepers resulting from the collection (excluding the value of the burden hours in Question 12 above).

Mailing costs are estimated to be \$0.64 per submission, for a total of \$2,560. There are no other costs.

14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government.

Annualized cost for the Federal Government is a contract for \$100,000, one GS-9 Information Technology Specialist at \$50,000; printing costs \$25,000 and computer, \$2,000, totaling \$177,000.

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments.

Not Applicable.

16. For collections whose results will be published, outline the plans for tabulation and publication.

Results are published annually for distribution to the fishermen. The summaries are completed in August and are published as a Center Administrative Report. The content varies but includes annual landings, geographical locations of catches and effort and size distribution of the fish caught.

17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons why display would be inappropriate.

Not Applicable.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement.

Not Applicable.

B. COLLECTION OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

This collection does not employ statistical methods.