



Ohio Department of Natural Resources

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Docket Management Facility (M-30)
U.S. Department of Transportation
West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590-0001

Submitted via regulations.gov

RE: Docket No. USCG-2015-0629

On behalf of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Watercraft, I am writing to comment on the **U.S. Coast Guard's Notice of Intent to Submit an Information Collection Request to the Office of Management and Budget regarding approval of an extension of the current collection 1625-0003, Boating Accident Report**. This submission is based on our agency's review of the materials presented, as well as additional discussion at the NASBLA Annual Business Meeting on September 15, 2015 in Wichita, Kansas.

Although the state of Ohio does not use the BAR form directly for officer collection of accident data, the fields contained in the BAR form are directly related to the accident data required to be collected, making the content of this form especially important. Further, as the primary collectors and users of the accident data collected, it stands to reason that the states and the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators should have significant influence on the design and implementation of forms and publications related to the BAR.

It is our understanding that the primary purpose of this Notice is to solicit public comment on the utility and other aspects of this data collected under the authority of Title 46 U.S.C. 6201(a) and (b), with implementing regulations contained in 33 CFR 173 and 174. We are aware that the Coast Guard last received OMB approval for this information collection on December 2, 2012 – approval that was pursued in accordance with the preamble to the Final Rules on Changes to Standard Numbering System (SNS), Vessel Identification System (VIS), and Boating Accident Report Database (BARD) (hereafter referred to as "final rule") issued March 28, 2012, and that the approval for this and the other collections cited in the final rule will expire on December 31, 2015.

We affirm the critical importance of collecting recreational boating accident report data in order to define and direct national- and state-level programs toward the common goals of reducing accidents, injuries and fatalities. **However, at this time, two factors limit our ability to respond to this Notice in a more comprehensive and meaningful way.**

First, it is our understanding that in seeking this approval for extension of the collection, the Coast Guard is not proposing modifications to the current Coast Guard Boating Accident Report (BAR) collection forms. However, the BAR forms CG-3865 and CG-3865SP *will* need to be updated, at minimum, to ensure conformity with terminology and other changes to the casualty report content as authorized in the final rule referenced above. Presumably, the Coast Guard will need to prepare and publish a follow-up Federal Register Notice focusing specifically on changes to the forms in order to meet the January 1, 2017 effective date. Second, while the comment period on this **1625-0003, Boating Accident Report collection** closes September 29, there is a related and far more comprehensive Federal Register Notice that is open for comment until November 19, 2015. The association is currently examining the larger implications of that Notice **2015-20738: Recreational Boating Accident Reporting Manual, COMDTINST M16782.1** (Docket No. USCG-2015-0753).

To the point, the boating accident data collection, its related forms, and the provisions proposed in the manual are all intrinsically linked. In the future, the Coast Guard may wish to consider how it can reset the renewal process such that there can be an alignment of the review of the collection, forms, and associated policies and procedures.

As such, although we appreciate the opportunity to comment on such proposals, we believe that any suggestions we put forward at this time, in response to this current docket – regarding either the BAR Collection itself or the Coast Guard’s BAR forms 3865 and 3865SP – would not be particularly useful and might even be rendered obsolete by the time a Federal Register Notice regarding BAR form changes is issued.

Thank you for your consideration of this submission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael R. Miller', written over a horizontal line.

Michael R. Miller, Acting Chief

Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Watercraft