

the current criteria. An emphasis on considering mortalities in the current criteria may also delay a response that could be crucial to identify causal factors. Elevating the importance of "morbidity" could initiate consideration of an UME sooner, and improve the effectiveness of a subsequent investigation. Therefore, the UME criteria have been revised as follows:

(1) A marked increase in the magnitude or a marked change in the nature of morbidity, mortality or strandings when compared with prior records.

(2) A temporal change in morbidity, mortality or strandings is occurring.

(3) A spatial change in morbidity, mortality or strandings is occurring.

(4) The species, age, or sex composition of the affected animals is different than that of animals that are normally affected.

(5) Affected animals exhibit similar or unusual pathologic findings, behavior patterns, clinical signs, or general physical condition (e.g., blubber thickness).

(6) Potentially significant morbidity, mortality or stranding is observed in species, stocks or populations that are particularly vulnerable (e.g., listed as depleted, threatened or endangered or declining). For example, stranding of three or four right whales may be cause for great concern whereas stranding of a similar number of fin whales may not.

(7) Morbidity is observed concurrent with or as part of an unexplained continual decline of a marine mammal population, stock, or species.

As with the original criteria, the Working Group considers whether a single criterion or combination of the revised criteria may indicate the occurrence of an UME. The Working Group agreed to use the revised criteria on a pilot basis beginning in July 2004 and evaluate their utility after applying them to several consultation requests throughout 2005 and 2006. The Working Group has since determined that the revised criteria have been more applicable to current stranding events than the original criteria and has voted to adopt them as the new official UME criteria to be used for all future consultations (or until such time when they are reevaluated and revised again).

Additional information on the MMHSRP and UME program, including frequent updates, can be found on the Internet at: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/health/>

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*

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Dated: December 8, 2006.

James H. Lecky,

*Director, Office of Protected Resources,
National Marine Fisheries Service.*

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION

[OMB Control No. 9000–0094]

Federal Acquisition Regulation; Information Collection; Debarment and Suspension

AGENCIES: Department of Defense (DOD), General Services Administration (GSA), and National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

ACTION: Notice of request for public comments regarding an extension to an existing OMB clearance.

SUMMARY: Under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35), the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Secretariat will be submitting to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) a request to review and approve an extension of a currently approved information collection requirement concerning debarment and suspension. The OMB clearance expires March 31, 2007.

DATES: Submit comments on or before February 12, 2007.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to the General Services Administration, FAR Secretariat (VIR), 1800 F Street, NW, Room 4035, Washington, DC 20405. Please cite OMB Control No. 9000–0094, Debarment and Suspension, in all correspondence.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: William Clark, Contract Policy Division, GSA (202) 219–1813.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

A. Purpose

The FAR requires contracts to be awarded to only those contractors determined to be responsible. Instances where a firm or its principals have been indicted, convicted, suspended, proposed for debarment, debarred, or had a contract terminated for default are critical factors to be considered by the contracting officer in making a responsibility determination. This certification requires the disclosure of this information.

B. Annual Reporting Burden

Respondents: 89,995.

Responses per respondent: 12.223.

Total Responses: 1,100,000.

Hours Per Response: 0.0833 hrs.

Total Burden Hours: 91,667.

Obtaining Copies of Proposals:

Requesters may obtain a copy of the information collection documents from the General Services Administration, FAR Secretariat (VIR), Room 4035, Washington, DC 20405, telephone (202) 501–4755. Please cite OMB Control No. 9000–0094, Debarment and Suspension, in all correspondence.

Dated: December 11, 2006.

Ralph De Stefano,

Director, Contract Policy Division.

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