

Data Management Plan (DMP) for “National Census of Ferry Operators (NCFO): 2008” dataset.

Office of Survey Programs (OSP),
Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS),
U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT)
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Change log:

2021-12-16: Initial DMP written

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0. Dataset and Contact Information

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U.S. Department of Transportation, Bureau of Transportation Statistics, Office of Survey Programs

Title of Dataset: National Census of Ferry Operators (NCFO): 2014

URL: <https://doi.org/10.21949/1506020> or <https://www.bts.gov/surveys/national-census-ferry-operators-ncfo/ncfo-previous-datasets>

This is an ☒ initial DMP or a ☐ revised DMP.

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1. Data Description:

The National Census of Ferry Operators (NCFO) is a biennial census of all ferry operators in the United States and its territories. The information collected from the census is maintained in a national ferry database containing information regarding ferry routes, vessels, passengers and vehicles carried, funding sources, and other information.

The data is collected by a survey form over a 6-month period, then the data is input into a database and downloaded into 5 spreadsheets that are linked by a common identifier.

Primary stakeholders in the data are the maritime industry, Federal Highways Administration, the Passenger Vessel Association, ferry operators, and State DOTs.

BTS compiles and maintains the ferry data. The data management plan for the NCFO will be reviewed and updated as needed at the time of each publication.

2. Standards Employed:

The NCFO is administered as a mail-out, mail-back analog collection that is manually keyed into Microsoft Access and exported into Microsoft Excel for public release. Microsoft Excel is used for its wide-spread use and ability to be easily imported into statistical softwares for data analysis. There are also a number of open source spreadsheet programs available for viewing the data. The data files are also available as .csv files, which can be open in any text editor or spreadsheet program. A data dictionary is available to specifically define each variable in the dataset. The data dictionary will also be available in a plain text file for easy machine access. A DCAT-US Version 1.1 (Project Open Data) .json metadata file will accompany the data files.

3. Access Policies:

Access to the actual survey responses is limited to a small number of BTS staff. The hard copies of the data are stored in a secured room, and the electronic data is stored on a secure drive, due to the presence of business-sensitive data. Survey respondents are able to specify data as business-sensitive in the survey tool. The data specified as business-sensitive by the respondents is not shared with the public. Business-sensitive data is not published, and its exclusion is noted. Final datasets, cleaned of business-sensitive data, are shared with the public via the BTS website, and the National Transportation Library Digital Repository. Data files that have had business-sensitive responses removed contain no other security concerns for public access.

4. Re-Use, Redistribution, and Derivative Products Policies:

The NCFO team lead and Office of Survey Programs, Office Director are the only team members with the rights to manage the raw, collected data. As cited by the FAST Act, the data will be sent to the Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) for use in calculating Ferry Fund allocations. The final, non-sensitive, public dataset is in the public domain and has no copyright restrictions. The dataset will also be preserved in the NTL Digital Repository, where it will remain under public domain. The data are under public domain and free for reuse, redistribution, and derivative products.

5. Archiving and Preservation Plans:

The dataset will be archived in the National Transportation Library Repository and Open Science Access Portal (ROSA P). The dataset will be updated in ROSA P as needed. Prior to archiving, the data are stored on the secured BTS networks and drives, which are backed up nightly. The US DOT systems are secured from outside users and backed up daily.

This dataset was first preserved in 2021, many years after its initial public release. The data and its documentation are presented “as-is,” and as the data and documentation existed on 2021-12-16. We apologize for omissions.

Files in ROSA P are backed up in NTL drives at US DOT, daily; at the Centers for Disease Control, the repository managing facility, daily; and in Amazon Web Service Cloud servers in Virginia and Oregon daily.

The dataset will be retained in perpetuity.

NTL staff will mint persistent Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs) for each dataset stored in ROSA P. These DOIs will be associated with dataset documentation as soon as they become available for use.

ROSA P meets all of the criteria outlined on the “Guidelines for Evaluating Repositories for Conformance with the DOT Public Access Plan” page: <https://doi.org/10.21949/1520563>

6. Policies Affecting this Data Management Plan

This data management plan was created to meet the requirements enumerated in the U.S. Department of Transportation's "Plan to Increase Public Access to the Results of Federally-Funded Scientific Research" Version 1.1 << <https://doi.org/10.21949/1520559> >> and guidelines suggested by the DOT Public Access website << <https://doi.org/10.21949/1503647> >>, in effect and current as of September, 2021.