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DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Office of the Comptroller of the Currency

12 CFR Parts 12 and 151

[Docket ID OCC–2017–0013]

RIN 1557–AE24

FEDERAL DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION

12 CFR Part 344

RIN 3064–AE64

Securities Transaction Settlement Cycle

AGENCY: Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Treasury (''OCC''); and Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (''FDIC'').

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: The OCC and the FDIC (''Agencies'') are adopting a final rule to shorten the standard settlement cycle for securities purchased or sold by national banks, federal savings associations, and FDIC-supervised institutions. The Agencies' final rule is consistent with an industry-wide transition to a two business-day settlement cycle, which is designed to reduce settlement exposure and align settlement practices across all market participants.

DATES: This final rule is effective October 1, 2018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

OCC: David Stankiewicz, Special Counsel, Securities and Corporate Practices Division, (202) 649–5510; Daniel Perez, Attorney, Legislative and Regulatory Activities Division, (202) 649–5490 or, for persons who are deaf or hearing-impaired, TTY, (202) 649–5597; or Patricia Dalton, Technical Expert, Asset Management Group, Market Risk, at (202) 649–6360.

FDIC: Thomas F. Lyons, Chief, (202) 898–6850; Michael W. Orange, Senior Trust Examination Specialist, (678) 916–2289, Policy & Program Development, Risk Management Policy Branch, Division of Risk Management Supervision; Annmarie H. Boyd, Counsel, (202) 898–3714; Benjamin J. Klein, Counsel, (202) 898–7027, Bank Activities Unit, Supervision and Legislation Branch, Legal Division.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

On September 5, 2017, the securities industry in the United States transitioned from a standard securities settlement cycle of three business days after the date of the contract, commonly known as ''T+3,'' to a two-business day standard, or ''T+2.'' The transition was the culmination of a multi-year securities industry initiative and rule changes implemented by the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission and securities self-regulatory organizations (such as the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority and the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board). In connection with the transition to T+2, on June 9, 2017, the OCC issued Bulletin 2017–22, which notified national banks, federal savings associations (''FSAs''), federal branches, and federal agencies (together, ''OCC-supervised institutions'') that they should be in compliance with T+2 as of September 5, 2017. The FDIC issued similar guidance applicable to FDIC-supervised institutions [1] through Financial Institution Letter 32–2017 on July 26, 2017.

Regulations governing recordkeeping and confirmation requirements for the securities transactions of national banks and FSAs, both for the bank's own account and for customers, are set out in parts 12 and 151 of the OCC's regulations, respectively. Regulations governing the same for FDIC-supervised institutions are set out in part 344 of the FDIC's regulations. These regulations require that banks generally not effect or enter into a contract for the purchase or sale of a security that provides for payment of funds and delivery of securities later than the third business day after the date of the contract, unless otherwise expressly agreed to by the parties at the time of the transaction.

II. Notice of Proposed Rulemaking

On September 11, 2017, the Agencies published in the **Federal Register** a notice of proposed rulemaking that would amend regulations applicable to OCC-supervised institutions and FDIC-supervised institutions (together, ''banks'') by aligning those regulations with T+2.[2] In the notice of proposed rulemaking, the Agencies proposed to amend their respective regulations by directly changing the settlement period applicable to banks from three business days to two. The Agencies also proposed an alternative approach, which would achieve the same immediate result but operate by tying the settlement period applicable to banks to the ''standard settlement cycle followed by registered broker dealers in the United States.''

The Agencies received three responses to their request for comment. The Investment Company Institute (''ICI'') and the Securities Industry and Financial Markets Association (''SIFMA'') both ''strongly'' supported the proposal as a path to aligning the Agencies' regulations with those applicable to other market participants in the United States. A third commenter, an individual, also expressed support for the final rule. Both ICI and SIFMA expressed a preference for the alternative approach. After considering these comments, the Agencies decided to adopt the alternative approach in order to maintain alignment more readily between the settlement period applicable to banks and the standard settlement cycle followed by registered broker dealers in the United States.

III. Description of the Final Rule

The final rule will require banks to settle most securities transactions within the number of business days in the ''standard settlement cycle followed by registered broker dealers in the United States'' unless otherwise agreed to by the parties at the time of the transaction. Banks will be able to determine the number of business days in the standard settlement cycle

[1] ''FDIC-supervised institution'' means any insured depository institution for which the FDIC is the appropriate Federal banking agency pursuant to section 3(q) of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act, 12 U.S.C. 1813(q). 12 CFR 344.3(h). Pursuant to section 3(q), the FDIC is the appropriate Federal banking agency with respect to: (1) Any State nonmember insured bank; (2) any foreign bank having an insured branch; and (3) any State savings association. 12 U.S.C. 1813(q)(2).

[2] 82 FR 42619 (Sep. 11, 2017).

followed by registered broker dealers in the United States by referencing SEC Rule 15c6–1, 17 CFR 240.15c6–1(a). Effective September 5, 2017, and as of the date of publication of this final rule, the standard settlement cycle followed by registered broker dealers in the United States is two business days after the date of the contract.

The final rule amends the OCC and FDIC regulations at parts 12, 151, and 344, which govern the recordkeeping and confirmation requirements for bank securities transactions. In order to accommodate the change described above, the Agencies made certain additional, purely editorial changes to the language of these parts. The additional changes were intended to make the regulations easier to follow and understand in light of the revisions necessary to implement the alternative approach.

The effective date for this final rule is October 1, 2018. The Agencies understand that, consistent with the industry's transition to T+2, banks are already in compliance with a two-day settlement standard as a practical matter.

IV. Regulatory Analysis

Paperwork Reduction Act

Under the Paperwork Reduction Act (''PRA''), 44 U.S.C. 3501–3520, the Agencies may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, an information collection unless the information collection displays a valid Office of Management and Budget (''OMB'') control number. This final rule does not introduce or change any collections of information; therefore, it does not require a submission to OMB. The Agencies invited comment on their PRA determination when issuing the proposed rule, and no responsive comments were received.

Regulatory Flexibility Act

The Regulatory Flexibility Act, 5 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.* (''RFA''), requires an agency, in connection with a final rule, to prepare a Final Regulatory Flexibility Analysis describing the impact of the rule on small entities (defined by the Small Business Administration (''SBA'') for purposes of the RFA to include banking entities with total assets of $550 million or less) or to certify that the rule would not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities.

FDIC: For the reasons described below and pursuant to section 605(b) of the RFA, the FDIC certifies that the final rule will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities.

As of December 31, 2017, the FDIC supervises 3,643 depository institutions, of which 2,924 are defined as small banking entities by the terms of the RFA. The transition of the standard settlement cycle to two days will reduce by one day the settlement time of transactions for equities, corporate bonds, municipal bonds, unit investment trusts, mutual funds, exchange-traded funds, exchange-traded products, American depository receipts, options, rights, and warrants. According to recent Call Report data, 2,565 FDIC-supervised small entities reported holding some volume of equities that are likely to be affected by the new securities settlement cycle, provide custodial banking services, or possess a subsidiary classified as a securities dealer.

The effects on small entities will vary according to the degree of participation in securities transactions. According to recent Call Report data one small entity identified itself as providing custodial banking services, while seven small entities have a subsidiary classified as a securities dealer according to data from the Federal Reserve's National Information Center.

As discussed above, because the industry has already implemented the practice of a standard settlement cycle, currently consisting of two days, and because the final rule does not contain any new recordkeeping, reporting, or compliance requirements, the FDIC anticipates that it will not impose any significant additional costs on FDIC-supervised institutions. Thus, the final rule will not have a substantial impact on any FDIC-supervised small entities. Therefore, the FDIC certifies that the final rule would not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of FDIC-supervised small entities.

OCC: As of December 31, 2017, the OCC supervised approximately 886 small entities.[3] Because the final rule does not contain any new recordkeeping, reporting, or compliance requirements, the OCC anticipates that it will not impose costs on any OCC-supervised institutions. Further, OCC-supervised institutions were required to comply with the substance of the rule before the proposed rule was published in the **Federal Register**. Thus, the final rule will not have a substantial impact on any OCC-supervised small entities. Therefore, the OCC certifies that the final rule would not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of OCC-supervised small entities.

Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 Determination

The OCC analyzed the final rule under the factors set forth in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1532). Under this analysis, the OCC considered whether the final rule includes a federal mandate that may result in the expenditure by state, local, and Tribal governments, in the aggregate, or by the private sector, of $100 million or more in any one year (adjusted annually for inflation).

The rule does not impose new mandates. Therefore, the OCC concludes that implementation of the rule will not result in an expenditure of $100 million or more annually by state, local, and tribal governments, or by the private sector.

Riegle Community Development and Regulatory Improvement Act

The Riegle Community Development and Regulatory Improvement Act (''RCDRIA'') requires that the Agencies, in determining the effective date and administrative compliance requirements of new regulations that impose additional reporting, disclosure, or other requirements on insured depository institutions (''IDIs''), consider, consistent with principles of safety and soundness and the public interest, any administrative burdens that such regulations would place on depository institutions, including small depository institutions, and customers of depository institutions, as well as the benefits of such regulations. 12 U.S.C. 4802. In addition, in order to provide an adequate transition period, new regulations that impose additional reporting, disclosures, or other new requirements on IDIs generally must take effect on the first day of a calendar quarter that begins on or after the date on which the regulations are published in final form.

The final rule includes no additional reporting, disclosure, or other requirements on IDIs, including small depository institutions, nor on the customers of depository institutions. Therefore, the requirements of RCDRIA

[3] The OCC calculated the number of small entities using the SBA's size thresholds for commercial banks and savings institutions, and trust companies, which are $550 million and $38.5 million, respectively. Consistent with the General Principles of Affiliation, 13 CFR 121.103(a), the OCC counted the assets of affiliated financial institutions when determining whether to classify a national bank or federal savings association as a small entity. The OCC used December 31, 2017, to determine size because a ''financial institution's assets are determined by averaging the assets reported on its four quarterly financial statements for the preceding year.'' See footnote 8 of the SBA's *Table of Size Standards.*

do not apply. Nonetheless, the Agencies invited comment on any administrative burdens that the final rule would place on depository institutions, including small depository institutions, and customers of depository institutions. The Agencies did not receive any comments responsive to this issue.

Plain Language

Section 722 of the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act requires the Agencies to use plain language in all proposed and final rules published after January 1, 2000. When issuing a proposed rule, the Agencies invited comment on how to make this rule easier to understand. No comments responsive to this issue were received.

List of Subjects

12 CFR Parts 12 and 151

Banks, Banking, Federal savings associations, National banks, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Securities.

12 CFR Part 344

Banks, Banking, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Savings associations.

OCC amends 12 CFR parts 12 and 151 and FDIC amends 12 CFR part 344 as follows:

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Office of the Comptroller of the Currency

PART 12—RECORDKEEPING AND CONFIRMATION REQUIREMENTS FOR SECURITIES TRANSACTIONS

■ 1. The authority citation for part 12 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 12 U.S.C. 24, 92a, and 93a.

■ 2. Section 12.9 is amended by revising paragraph (a) to read as follows:

§ 12.9 Settlement of securities transactions.

(a) All contracts effected or entered into by a national bank for the purchase or sale of a security (other than an exempted security as defined in 15 U.S.C. 78c(a)(12), government security, municipal security, commercial paper, bankers' acceptances, or commercial bills) shall provide for completion of the transaction within the number of business days in the standard settlement cycle followed by registered broker dealers in the United States, unless otherwise agreed to by the parties at the time of the transaction. The number of business days in the standard settlement cycle shall be determined by reference to paragraph (a) of SEC Rule 15c6–1, 17 CFR 240.15c6–1(a).

* * * * *

PART 151—RECORDKEEPING AND CONFIRMATION REQUIREMENTS FOR SECURITIES TRANSACTIONS

■ 3. The authority citation for part 151 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 12 U.S.C. 1462a, 1463, 1464, 5412(b)(2)(B).

■ 4. Section 151.130 is amended by:
■ a. Republishing paragraph (a) introductory text.
■ b. Revising paragraphs (a)(1) and (a)(2);
■ c. Redesignating paragraph (a)(3) as (a)(4); and
■ d. Adding a new paragraph (a)(3).

The revisions and addition are set forth below.

§ 151.130 When must I settle a securities transaction?

(a) You may not effect or enter into a contract for the purchase or sale of a security that provides for payment of funds and delivery of securities later than the latest of:

(1) The number of business days in the standard settlement cycle followed by registered broker dealers in the United States after the date of the contract. The number of business days in the standard settlement cycle shall be determined by reference to paragraph (a) of SEC Rule 15c6–1, 17 CFR 240.15c6–1(a);

(2) The fourth business day after the contract, if the contract involves the sale for cash of securities that are priced after 4:30 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on the date the securities are priced and are sold by an issuer to an underwriter under a firm commitment underwritten offering registered under the Securities Act of 1933, 15 U.S.C. 77a, *et seq.,* or are sold by you to an initial purchaser participating in the offering;

(3) Such time as the SEC may specify pursuant to an order of exemption in accordance with paragraph (b)(2) of SEC Rule 15c6–1; or

* * * * *

FEDERAL DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION

PART 344—RECORDKEEPING AND CONFIRMATION REQUIREMENTS FOR SECURITIES TRANSACTIONS

■ 5. The authority citation for part 344 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 12 U.S.C. 1817, 1818, 1819, and 5412.

■ 6. Section 344.7 is amended by revising paragraph (a) to read as follows:

§ 344.7 Settlement of securities transactions.

(a) All contracts effected or entered into by an FDIC-supervised institution that provide for the purchase or sale of a security (other than an exempted security as defined in 15 U.S.C. 78c(a)(12), government security, municipal security, commercial paper, bankers' acceptances, or commercial bills) shall provide for completion of the transaction within the number of business days in the standard settlement cycle followed by registered broker dealers in the United States, unless otherwise agreed to by the parties at the time of the transaction. The number of business days in the standard settlement cycle shall be determined by reference to paragraph (a) of SEC Rule 15c6–1, 17 CFR 240.15c6–1(a).

* * * * *

Dated: May 29, 2018.

Joseph M. Otting,

Comptroller of the Currency.

Dated at Washington, DC, this 31st of May 2018.

By order of the Board of Directors.

Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

Robert E. Feldman,

Executive Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2018–12267 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4810–33–P; 6714–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA–2018–0462; Product Identifier 2018–CE–017–AD; Amendment 39–19292; AD 2018–11–04]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Aircraft Industries a.s. Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Final rule; request for comments.

SUMMARY: We are adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for Aircraft Industries a.s. Models L 410 UVP–E20 and L 410 UVP–E20 CARGO airplanes. This AD results from mandatory continuing airworthiness information (MCAI) issued by the aviation authority of another country to identify and correct an unsafe condition on an aviation product. The MCAI describes the unsafe condition as un-commanded negative thrust mode activated on an engine. We are issuing this AD to require actions to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: This AD is effective June 27, 2018.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of certain publications listed in the AD as of June 27, 2018.

We must receive comments on this AD by July 23, 2018.

ADDRESSES: You may send comments by any of the following methods:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* Go to *http://www.regulations.gov.* Follow the instructions for submitting comments.
- *Fax:* (202) 493–2251.
- *Mail:* U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M–30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12–140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590.
- *Hand Delivery:* U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M–30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12–140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

For service information identified in this AD, contact Aircraft Industries, a.s., 686 04 Kunovice 1177, Czech Republic; phone: +420 572 817 664; fax: +420 572 816 112; email: *pps@let.cz;* internet: *http://www.let.cz/clanek_267_objednavka-bulletinove-sluzby.html.* You may review copies of the referenced service information at the FAA, Policy and Innovation Division, 901 Locust, Kansas City, Missouri 64106. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call (816) 329–4148. It is also available on the internet at *http://www.regulations.gov* by searching for locating Docket No. FAA–2018–0462.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the internet at *http://www.regulations.gov* by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA–2018–0462; or in person at Docket Operations between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this AD, the regulatory evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The street address for Docket Operations (telephone (800) 647–5527) is in the **ADDRESSES** section. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after receipt.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Doug Rudolph, Aerospace Engineer, FAA, Small Airplane Standards Branch, 901 Locust, Room 301, Kansas City, Missouri 64106; telephone: (816) 329–4059; fax: (816) 329–4090; email: *doug.rudolph@faa.gov*.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Discussion

The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Community, has issued AD No. 2018–0057, dated March 14, 2018 (referred to after this as ''the MCAI''), to correct an unsafe condition for Aircraft Industries a.s. Models L 410 UVP–E20 and L 410 UVP–E20 CARGO airplanes and was based on mandatory continuing airworthiness information (MCAI) originated by an aviation authority of another country. The MCAI states:

> The investigation results of an L 410 UVP–E20 accident identified that, during final approach, an un-commanded negative thrust mode was activated on the right-hand engine. Pending the investigation results of the accident, as a preliminary measure, EASA issued SIB 2017–21, recommending operators to check the components of engine and propeller control system, including the beta switch, in accordance with the instructions of Revision 1 of AI SB L410UVP–E/492b.
>
> This condition, if not corrected, could lead to reduced or loss of control of an aeroplane.
>
> To address this unsafe condition, AI issued the MB, providing modification instructions, and issued the DB, amending the Aircraft Flight Manual (AFM), providing instructions for the flight crew in case of inadvertent beta range cell activation in flight and introducing instructions for the flight crew to check the function of pitch lock system before each flight.
>
> For the reasons described above, this [EASA] AD requires modification of the electrical testing circuit of the propeller pitch lock system and amendment of the applicable AFM.

EASA SIB 2017–21 has been withdrawn accordingly. You may examine the MCAI on the internet at *http://www.regulations.gov* by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA–2018–0462.

Related Service Information Under 1 CFR Part 51

Aircraft Industries a.s. has issued LET Aircraft Industries Mandatory Bulletin MB No. L410UVP–E/143a, Revision 2, dated March 7, 2018; and LET Aircraft Industries Documentation Bulletin DB No. L410UVP–E/268d, dated May 9, 2018. Mandatory Bulletin MB No. L410UVP–E/143a describes procedures for modifying the electrical circuit of the propeller pitch lock system function test. Documentation Bulletin DB No. L410UVP–E/268d provides instructions for flight crew in case of inadvertent beta range cell activation in flight and instructions for a pre-flight check of the function of the pitch lock system. This service information is reasonably available because the interested parties have access to it through their normal course of business or by the means identified in the **ADDRESSES** section.

FAA's Determination and Requirements of the AD

This product has been approved by the aviation authority of another country, and is approved for operation in the United States. Pursuant to our bilateral agreement with this State of Design Authority, they have notified us of the unsafe condition described in the MCAI and service information referenced above. We are issuing this AD because we evaluated all information provided by the State of Design Authority and determined the unsafe condition exists and is likely to exist or develop on other products of the same type design.

FAA's Determination of the Effective Date

An unsafe condition exists that requires the immediate adoption of this AD. The FAA has found that the risk to the flying public justifies waiving notice and comment prior to adoption of this rule because there are no airplanes currently on the U.S. registry and thus, does not have any impact upon the public. Therefore, we find good cause that notice and opportunity for prior public comment are unnecessary. In addition, for the reason(s) stated above, we find that good cause exists for making this amendment effective in less than 30 days.

Difference Between the MCAI and This AD

The MCAI requires the AFM changes in accordance with DB No.: L410UVP–E/247d and DB No.: L410UVP–E/259d, both dated March 3, 2018. These documents only apply to airplanes operated under the European type certificate and do not apply to those airplanes operating under the FAA type certificate. Therefore, Aircraft Industries a.s. developed DB No.: L410UVP–E/268d, dated May 9, 2018, and this AD requires the AFM changes in accordance with this document.

Comments Invited

This AD is a final rule that involves requirements affecting flight safety, and we did not precede it by notice and opportunity for public comment. We invite you to send any written relevant data, views, or arguments about this AD. Send your comments to an address listed under the **ADDRESSES** section. Include ''Docket No. FAA–2018–0462; Product Identifier 2018–CE–017–AD'' at the beginning of your comments. We specifically invite comments on the overall regulatory, economic,

environmental, and energy aspects of this AD. We will consider all comments received by the closing date and may amend this AD because of those comments.

We will post all comments we receive, without change, to *http://www.regulations.gov,* including any personal information you provide. We will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact we receive about this AD.

Costs of Compliance

We estimate that this AD will affect 0 products of U.S. registry. We also estimate that it would take about 9 work-hours per product to comply with the basic requirements of this AD. The average labor rate is $85 per work-hour. Required parts would cost about $2,000 per product.

Based on these figures, we estimate the cost of the AD on U.S. operators to be $0 fleet cost, but $2,765 per product if a product is registered on the U.S. registry.

According to the manufacturer, some of the costs of this AD may be covered under warranty, thereby reducing the cost impact on affected individuals. We do not control warranty coverage for affected individuals. As a result, we have included all costs in our cost estimate.

Authority for This Rulemaking

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA's authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. ''Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs,'' describes in more detail the scope of the Agency's authority.

We are issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in ''Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701: General requirements.'' Under that section, Congress charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on products identified in this rulemaking action.

This AD is issued in accordance with authority delegated by the Executive Director, Aircraft Certification Service, as authorized by FAA Order 8000.51C. In accordance with that order, issuance of ADs is normally a function of the Compliance and Airworthiness Division, but during this transition period, the Executive Director has delegated the authority to issue ADs applicable to small airplanes, gliders, balloons, airships, domestic business jet transport airplanes, and associated appliances to the Director of the Policy and Innovation Division.

Regulatory Findings

We determined that this AD will not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This AD will not have a substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the national government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that this AD:

(1) Is not a ''significant regulatory action'' under Executive Order 12866,

(2) Is not a ''significant rule'' under the DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979),

(3) Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska, and

(4) Will not have a significant economic impact, positive or negative, on a substantial number of small entities under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

Adoption of the Amendment

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA amends 14 CFR part 39 as follows:

PART 39—AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVES

■ 1. The authority citation for part 39 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(g), 40113, 44701.

§ 39.13 [Amended]

■ 2. The FAA amends § 39.13 by adding the following new AD:

2018–11–04 Aircraft Industries a.s.: Amendment 39–19292; Docket No. FAA–2018–0462; Product Identifier 2018–CE–017–AD.

(a) Effective Date

This airworthiness directive (AD) becomes effective June 27, 2018.

(b) Affected ADs

None.

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to the following Aircraft Industries a.s. Models L 410 UVP–E20 and L 410 UVP–E20 CARGO airplanes, manufacturer serial numbers 2904 through 3114, that are:

(1) Equipped with GE Aviation H80–200 engines and Avia Propeller AV 725 propellers; and

(2) certificated in any category.

(d) Subject

Air Transport Association of America (ATA) Code 61: Propellers/Propulsors.

(e) Reason

This AD was prompted by mandatory continuing airworthiness information (MCAI) issued by the aviation authority of another country to identify and correct an unsafe condition on an aviation product. The MCAI describes the unsafe condition as un-commanded negative thrust mode activated on an engine. We are issuing this AD to provide guidance to the flight crew in the event of un-commanded negative thrust mode activated on an engine, which could lead to loss of control.

(f) Actions and Compliance

Unless already done, do the following actions.

(1) Within the next 25 hours time-in-service (TIS) after the effective date of this AD or within the next 30 days after the effective date of this, whichever occurs first, modify the electrical testing circuit of the propeller pitch lock system following the Instructions for Implementation in LET Aircraft Industries Mandatory Bulletin MB No. L410UVP–E/143a, Revision 2, dated March 7, 2018.

(2) Within the next 25 hours TIS after the effective date of this AD or within the next 30 days after the effective date of this, whichever occurs first, incorporate airplane flight manual (AFM) changes following the Measures specified in LET Aircraft Industries Documentation Bulletin DB No. L410UVP–E/268d, dated May 9, 2018. After incorporating the AFM changes, operate the airplane accordingly.

(3) If any discrepancies are found during any pitch lock system pre-flight check required in the AFM changes specified in paragraph (f)(2) of this AD, before further flight, contact the manufacturer for FAA-approved repair instructions approved specifically for this AD. You may use the contact information found in paragraph (i)(3) of this AD.

(g) Other FAA AD Provisions

The following provisions also apply to this AD:

(1) *Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs):* The Manager, Small Airplane Standards Branch, FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested using the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19. Send information to ATTN: Doug Rudolph, Aerospace Engineer, FAA, Small Airplane Standards Branch, 901 Locust, Room 301, Kansas City, Missouri 64106; telephone: (816) 329–4059; fax: (816) 329–4090; email: *doug.rudolph@faa.gov.* Before using any approved AMOC on any airplane to which the AMOC applies, notify your appropriate principal inspector (PI) in the FAA Flight Standards District Office (FSDO), or lacking a PI, your local FSDO.

(2) *Airworthy Product:* For any requirement in this AD to obtain corrective actions from a manufacturer, the action must be accomplished using a method approved by the Manager, Small Airplane Standards Branch, FAA; or the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA).

(h) Related Information

Refer to MCAI EASA AD No. 2018–0057, dated March 14, 2018, for related information. You may examine the MCAI on the internet at *http://www.regulations.gov* by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA–2018–0462.

(i) Material Incorporated by Reference

(1) The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference (IBR) of the service information listed in this paragraph under 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51.

(2) You must use this service information as applicable to do the actions required by this AD, unless the AD specifies otherwise.

(i) LET Aircraft Industries Mandatory Bulletin MB No. L410UVP–E/143a, Revision 2, dated March 7, 2018.

(ii) LET Aircraft Industries Documentation Bulletin DB No. L410UVP–E/268d, dated May 9, 2018.

(3) For service information identified in this AD, contact Aircraft Industries, a.s., 686 04 Kunovice 1177, Czech Republic; phone: +420 572 817 664; fax: +420 572 816 112; email: *pps@let.cz;* internet: *http://www.let.cz/clanek_267_objednavka-bulletinove-sluzby.html.*

(4) You may view this service information at FAA, Policy and Innovation Division, 901 Locust, Kansas City, Missouri 64106. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call (816) 329–4148. It is also available on the internet at *http://www.regulations.gov* by searching for locating Docket No. FAA–2018–0462.

(5) You may view this service information that is incorporated by reference at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). For information on the availability of this material at NARA, call 202–741–6030, or go to: *http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/cfr/ibr-locations*.html.

Issued in Kansas City, Missouri, on May 11, 2018.

Melvin J. Johnson,

Aircraft Certification Service, Deputy Director, Policy and Innovation Division, AIR–601.

[FR Doc. 2018–11930 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA–2017–1175; Product Identifier 2017–NM–087–AD; Amendment 39–19300; AD 2018–11–12]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc., Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: We are adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for all Bombardier, Inc., Model CL–600–2C10 (Regional Jet Series 700, 701, & 702) airplanes, Model CL–600–2D15 (Regional Jet Series 705) airplanes, Model CL–600–2D24 (Regional Jet Series 900) airplanes, and Model CL–600–2E25 (Regional Jet Series 1000) airplanes. This AD was prompted by a report that Belleville washers installed on the shimmy damper of the main landing gear (MLG) may fail due to fatigue. This AD requires revising the maintenance or inspection program, as applicable, to incorporate a repetitive task specified in the maintenance review board (MRB) report. We are issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: This AD is effective July 12, 2018.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain publication listed in this AD as of July 12, 2018.

ADDRESSES: For service information identified in this final rule, contact Bombardier, Inc., 400 Côte-Vertu Road West, Dorval, Québec H4S 1Y9, Canada; Widebody Customer Response Center North America toll-free telephone 1–866–538–1247 or direct-dial telephone 1–514–855–2999; fax 514–855–7401; email *ac.yul@aero.bombardier.com;* internet *http://www.bombardier.com.* You may view this referenced service information at the FAA, Transport Standards Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 206–231–3195. It is also available on the internet at *http://www.regulations.gov* by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA–2017–1175.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the internet at *http://www.regulations.gov* by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA–2017–1175; or in person at the Docket Management Facility between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this AD, the regulatory evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The street address for the Docket Office (telephone 800–647–5527) is Docket Management Facility, U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M–30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12–140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Cesar Gomez, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe and Mechanical Systems Section, FAA, New York ACO Branch, 1600 Stewart Avenue, Suite 410, Westbury, NY 11590; telephone 516–228–7318; fax 516–794–5531.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Discussion

We issued a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) to amend 14 CFR part 39 by adding an AD that would apply to all Bombardier, Inc., Model CL–600–2C10 (Regional Jet Series 700, 701, & 702) airplanes, Model CL–600–2D15 (Regional Jet Series 705) airplanes, Model CL–600–2D24 (Regional Jet Series 900) airplanes, and Model CL–600–2E25 (Regional Jet Series 1000) airplanes. The NPRM published in the **Federal Register** on January 2, 2018 (83 FR 83) (''the NPRM'').

Transport Canada Civil Aviation (TCCA), which is the aviation authority for Canada, has issued Canadian AD CF–2017–14, dated April 21, 2017 (referred to after this as the Mandatory Continuing Airworthiness Information, or ''the MCAI''), to correct an unsafe condition for all Bombardier, Inc., Model CL–600–2C10 (Regional Jet Series 700, 701, & 702) airplanes, Model CL–600–2D15 (Regional Jet Series 705) airplanes, Model CL–600–2D24 (Regional Jet Series 900) airplanes, and Model CL–600–2E25 (Regional Jet Series 1000) airplanes. The MCAI states:

> It has been found that Belleville washers installed on the Main Landing Gear (MLG) Shimmy Damper may fail in fatigue. A failed washer segment migrating into the piston cavity may interfere with piston travel. As a result, shimmy damper performance would be compromised, MLG shimmy could occur and potentially lead to a MLG failure.
>
> As a result of this investigation, a restoration task has been added for Belleville washers' replacement at 20,000 flight cycles, during MLG overhaul. For aeroplanes that have passed the 20,000 flight cycle threshold, a phase-in period is defined.
>
> This [Canadian] AD is issued to mandate the Maintenance Review Board (MRB)

revised task for the affected aeroplanes models.

You may examine the MCAI in the AD docket on the internet at *http://www.regulations.gov* by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA–2017–1175.

Comments

We gave the public the opportunity to participate in developing this AD. The following presents the comment received on the NPRM and the FAA's response to that comment.

Request to the Contact Manufacturer for Service Information

Bombardier stated that task number 320100–229, Restoration (Belleville Washer Replacement) of the MLG Shimmy Damper, of the MRB Report of the Bombardier CRJ700/900/1000 Maintenance Requirements Manual (MRM)—Part 1, Volume 1, CSP B–053, Revision 17, dated June 25, 2017, is currently specified in paragraph (g) of the proposed AD. Bombardier commented that it is planning to issue Revision 18 of the service information by June 25, 2018. Bombardier stated to contact Bombardier for the latest service information should the AD be published after June 25, 2018.

We expect to issue this AD prior to the anticipated date of release of new service information, and we do not agree to delay issuance of this AD until new service information is released. However, if new service information is released after this AD is issued, operators may request approval of an alternative method of compliance (AMOC) under the provisions of paragraph (j)(1) of this AD. We have not changed this AD regarding this issue.

Conclusion

We reviewed the relevant data, considered the comment received, and determined that air safety and the public interest require adopting this AD as proposed, except for minor editorial changes. We have determined that these minor changes:

- Are consistent with the intent that was proposed in the NPRM for correcting the unsafe condition; and
- Do not add any additional burden upon the public than was already proposed in the NPRM.

Related Service Information Under 1 CFR Part 51

Bombardier has issued MRB report task number 320100–229, Restoration (Belleville Washer Replacement) of the MLG Shimmy Damper, of the MRB Report of the Bombardier CRJ700/900/1000 Maintenance Requirements Manual (MRM)—Part 1, Volume 1, CSP B–053, Revision 17, dated June 25, 2017. This service information describes the restoration (Belleville Washer Replacement) of the MLG shimmy damper. This service information is reasonably available because the interested parties have access to it through their normal course of business or by the means identified in the **ADDRESSES** section.

Costs of Compliance

We estimate that this AD affects 544 airplanes of U.S. registry.

We estimate the following costs to comply with this AD:

We have determined that revising the maintenance or inspection program takes an average of 90 work-hours per operator, although we recognize that this number may vary from operator to operator. In the past, we have estimated that this action takes 1 work-hour per airplane. Since operators incorporate maintenance or inspection program changes for their affected fleet(s), we have determined that a per-operator estimate is more accurate than a per-airplane estimate. Therefore, we estimate the total cost per operator to be $7,650 (90 work-hours x $85 per work-hour).

Authority for This Rulemaking

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA's authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs, describes in more detail the scope of the Agency's authority.

We are issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701: ''General requirements.'' Under that section, Congress charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on products identified in this rulemaking action.

This AD is issued in accordance with authority delegated by the Executive Director, Aircraft Certification Service, as authorized by FAA Order 8000.51C. In accordance with that order, issuance of ADs is normally a function of the Compliance and Airworthiness Division, but during this transition period, the Executive Director has delegated the authority to issue ADs applicable to transport category airplanes to the Director of the System Oversight Division.

Regulatory Findings

We determined that this AD will not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This AD will not have a substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the national government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that this AD:

1. Is not a ''significant regulatory action'' under Executive Order 12866,

2. Is not a ''significant rule'' under the DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979),

3. Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska, and

4. Will not have a significant economic impact, positive or negative, on a substantial number of small entities under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

Adoption of the Amendment

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA amends 14 CFR part 39 as follows:

PART 39—AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVES

■ 1. The authority citation for part 39 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(g), 40113, 44701.

§ 39.13 [Amended]

■ 2. The FAA amends § 39.13 by adding the following new airworthiness directive (AD):

2018–11–12 Bombardier, Inc., Airplanes: Amendment 39–19300; Docket No. FAA–2017–1175; Product Identifier 2017–NM–087–AD.

(a) Effective Date

This AD is effective July 12, 2018.

(b) Affected ADs

None.

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to all Bombardier, Inc., Model CL–600–2C10 (Regional Jet Series 700, 701, & 702) airplanes, Model CL–600–2D15 (Regional Jet Series 705) airplanes, Model CL–600–2D24 (Regional Jet Series 900) airplanes, and Model CL–600–2E25 (Regional Jet Series 1000) airplanes, certificated in any category.

(d) Subject

Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 32, Landing gear.

(e) Reason

This AD was prompted by a report indicating that Belleville washers installed on the shimmy damper of the main landing gear (MLG) may fail due to fatigue. We are issuing this AD to prevent a failed washer segment migrating into the piston cavity and interfering with piston travel. As a result, the shimmy damper performance could be compromised, and an MLG shimmy could occur, potentially leading to an MLG failure and affecting the airplane's safe flight and landing.

(f) Compliance

Comply with this AD within the compliance times specified, unless already done.

(g) Maintenance or Inspection Program Revision

Within 30 days after the effective date of this AD, revise the airplane maintenance or inspection program, as applicable, by incorporating maintenance review board (MRB) report task number 320100–229, Restoration (Belleville Washer Replacement) of the MLG Shimmy Damper, of the MRB Report of the Bombardier CRJ700/900/1000 Maintenance Requirements Manual (MRM)—Part 1, Volume 1, CSP B–053, Revision 17, dated June 25, 2017. The initial compliance time for MRB report task number 320100–229 is specified in paragraphs (g)(1) and (g)(2) of this AD, as applicable.

(1) For any shimmy damper with 20,000 total accumulated flight cycles or fewer as of the effective date of this AD, the initial compliance time is before the accumulation of 26,000 total flight cycles.

(2) For any shimmy damper with 20,000 total accumulated flight cycles or more as of the effective date of this AD, the initial compliance time is specified in paragraph (g)(2)(i) or (g)(2)(ii), whichever occurs later.

(i) Within 6,000 flight cycles after the effective date of this AD, but prior to the accumulation of 30,000 total flight cycles.

(ii) Within 30 days after effective date of this AD.

(h) Credit for Previous Actions

This paragraph provides credit for actions required by paragraph (g) of this AD, if those actions were performed before the effective date of this AD using Bombardier Temporary Revision MRB–0070, dated October 20, 2015.

(i) No Alternative Actions and/or Intervals

After the airplane maintenance or inspection program has been revised, as required by paragraph (g) of this AD, no alternative actions (*e.g.,* inspections) and/or intervals may be used unless the actions and/or intervals are approved as an alternative method of compliance (AMOC) in accordance with the procedures specified in paragraph (j)(1) of this AD.

(j) Other FAA AD Provisions

The following provisions also apply to this AD:

(1) *Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs):* The Manager, New York ACO Branch, FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested using the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19. In accordance with 14 CFR 39.19, send your request to your principal inspector or local Flight Standards District Office, as appropriate. If sending information directly to the manager of the certification office, send it to ATTN: Program Manager, Continuing Operational Safety, FAA, New York ACO Branch, 1600 Stewart Avenue, Suite 410, Westbury, NY 11590; telephone 516–228–7300; fax 516–794–5531. Before using any approved AMOC, notify your appropriate principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the local flight standards district office/certificate holding district office.

(2) *Contacting the Manufacturer:* For any requirement in this AD to obtain corrective actions from a manufacturer, the action must be accomplished using a method approved by the Manager, New York ACO Branch, FAA; or Transport Canada Civil Aviation (TCCA); or Bombardier Inc.'s TCCA Design Approval Organization (DAO). If approved by the DAO, the approval must include the DAO-authorized signature.

(k) Related Information

(1) Refer to Mandatory Continuing Airworthiness Information (MCAI) Canadian Airworthiness Directive CF–2017–14, dated April 21, 2017, for related information. This MCAI may be found in the AD docket on the internet at *http://www.regulations.gov* by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA–2017–1175.

(2) For more information about this AD, contact Cesar Gomez, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe and Mechanical Systems Section, FAA, New York ACO Branch, 1600 Stewart Avenue, Suite 410, Westbury, NY 11590; telephone 516–228–7318; fax 516–794–5531.

(3) Service information identified in this AD that is not incorporated by reference is available at the addresses specified in paragraphs (l)(3) and (l)(4) of this AD.

(l) Material Incorporated by Reference

(1) The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference (IBR) of the service information listed in this paragraph under 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51.

(2) You must use this service information as applicable to do the actions required by this AD, unless this AD specifies otherwise.

(i) Maintenance review board (MRB) report task number 320100–229, Restoration (Belleville Washer Replacement) of the MLG Shimmy Damper, of the MRB Report of the Bombardier CRJ700/900/1000 Maintenance Requirements Manual (MRM)—Part 1, Volume 1, CSP B–053, Revision 17, dated June 25, 2017.

(ii) Reserved.

(3) For service information identified in this AD, contact Bombardier, Inc., 400 Côte-Vertu Road West, Dorval, Québec H4S 1Y9, Canada; Widebody Customer Response Center North America toll-free telephone 1–866–538–1247 or direct-dial telephone 1–514–855–2999; fax 514–855–7401; email *ac.yul@aero.bombardier.com;* internet *http://www.bombardier.com.*

(4) You may view this service information at the FAA, Transport Standards Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 206–231–3195.

(5) You may view this service information that is incorporated by reference at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). For information on the availability of this material at NARA, call 202–741–6030, or go to: *http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/cfr/ibr-locations.html.*

Issued in Des Moines, Washington, on May 21, 2018.

James Cashdollar,

Acting Director, System Oversight Division, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 2018–11827 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–P

DELAWARE RIVER BASIN COMMISSION

18 CFR Parts 401 and 420

Regulatory Program Fees and Water Charges Rates

AGENCY: Delaware River Basin Commission.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: Notice is provided of the Commission's regulatory program fees and schedule of water charges for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2018.

DATES: This final rule is effective July 1, 2018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Elba L. Deck, CPA, Director of Administration and Finance, 609–883–9500, ext. 201.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Delaware River Basin Commission (''DRBC'' or ''Commission'') is a Federal-interstate compact agency charged with managing the water resources of the Delaware River Basin on a regional basis without regard to political boundaries. Its members are the governors of the four basin states—Delaware, New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania—and on behalf of the federal government, the North Atlantic Division Commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

In accordance with 18 CFR 401.43(c), on July 1 of every year beginning July 1, 2017, the Commission's regulatory program fees as set forth in Tables 1, 2 and 3 of that section are subject to an annual adjustment, commensurate with any increase in the annual April 12-month Consumer Price Index (CPI) for Philadelphia published by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics during that

year. Pursuant to 18 CFR 420.43(c), the same indexed adjustment applies to the Commission's schedule of water charges for consumptive and non-consumptive withdrawals of surface water within the basin. The referenced April 12-month CPI for 2018 showed an increase of 1.38%. Commensurate adjustments are thus required.

This notification is made in accordance with 18 CFR 401.42(c) and 18 CFR 420.42(c), which provide that a revised fee schedule will be published in the **Federal Register** by July 1. The revised fees also may be obtained by contacting the Commission during business hours or by checking the Commission's website.

List of Subjects

18 CFR Part 401

Administrative practice and procedure, Project review, Water pollution control, Water resources.

18 CFR Part 420

Water supply.

For the reasons set forth in the preamble, the Delaware River Basin Commission amends parts 401 and 420 of title 18 of the Code of Federal Regulations as set forth below:

PART 401—RULES OF PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE

■ 1. The authority citation for part 401 continues to read as follows:

Authority: Delaware River Basin Compact (75 Stat. 688), unless otherwise noted.

Subpart C—Project Review Under Section 3.8 of the Compact

■ 2. In § 401.43, revise Tables 1, 2 and 3 to read as follows:

§ 401.43 Regulatory program fees.

* * * * *

TABLE 1 TO § 401.43—DOCKET APPLICATION FILING FEE

Project type	Docket application fee	Fee maximum
Water Allocation	$411 per million gallons/month of allocation [1], not to exceed $15,401 [1]. Fee is doubled for any portion to be exported from the basin.	Greater of: $15,401 [1] or Alternative Review Fee.
Wastewater Discharge	Private projects: $1,027 [1] Public projects: $513 [1]	Alternative Review Fee.
Other	0.4% of project cost up to $10,000,000 plus 0.12% of project cost above $10,000,000 (if applicable), not to exceed $77,003 [1].	Greater of: $77,003 [1] or Alternative Review Fee.

[1] Subject to annual adjustment in accordance with paragraph (c) of this section.

TABLE 2 TO § 401.43—ANNUAL MONITORING AND COORDINATION FEE

	Annual fee	Allocation
Water Allocation	[1] $308	<4.99 mgm.
	[1] $462	5.00 to 49.99 mgm.
	[1] $667	50.00 to 499.99 mgm.
	[1] $847	500.00 to 9,999.99 mgm.
	[1] $1,027	> or = to 10,000 mgm.
	Annual fee	**Discharge design capacity**
Wastewater Discharge	[1] $308	<0.05 mgd.
	[1] $626	0.05 to 1 mgd.
	[1] $842	1 to 10 mgd.
	[1] $1,027	>10 mgd.

[1] Subject to annual adjustment in accordance with paragraph (c) of this section.

TABLE 3 TO § 401.43—ADDITIONAL FEES

Proposed action	Fee	Fee maximum
Emergency Approval Under 18 CFR 401.40	$5,000	Alternative Review Fee.
Late Filed Renewal Surcharge	$2,000.	
Modification of a DRBC Approval	At Executive Director's discretion, Docket Application Fee for the appropriate project type.	Alternative Review Fee.
Name change	$1,027 [1].	
Change of Ownership	$1,540 [1].	

[1] Subject to annual adjustment in accordance with paragraph (c) of this section.

PART 420—BASIN REGULATIONS—WATER SUPPLY CHARGES

■ 3. The authority citation for part 420 continues to read as follows:

Authority: Delaware River Basin Compact, 75 Stat. 688.

■ 4. In § 420.41, revise paragraphs (a) and (b) to read as follows:

§ 420.41 Schedule of water charges.

* * * * *

(a) $82.14 per million gallons for consumptive use, subject to paragraph (c) of this section; and

(b) $0.82 per million gallons for non-consumptive use, subject to paragraph (c) of this section.

* * * * *

Dated: June 1, 2018.

Pamela M. Bush,

Commission Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2018–12258 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6360–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Food and Drug Administration

21 CFR Part 74

[Docket No. FDA–2017–C–0935]

Listing of Color Additives Subject to Certification; D&C Black No. 4

AGENCY: Food and Drug Administration, HHS.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: The Food and Drug Administration (FDA or we) is amending the color additive regulations to provide for the safe use of D&C Black No. 4 for coloring ultra-high molecular weight polyethylene (UHMWPE) non-absorbable sutures for use in general surgery. This action is in response to a color additive petition (CAP) submitted by DSM Biomedical.

DATES: This rule is effective July 10, 2018. See section VIII for further information on the filing of objections. Submit either electronic or written objections and requests for a hearing on the final rule by July 9, 2018.

ADDRESSES: You may submit objections and requests for a hearing as follows. Please note that late, untimely filed objections will not be considered. Electronic objections must be submitted on or before July 9, 2018. The *https://www.regulations.gov* electronic filing system will accept comments until midnight Eastern Time at the end of July 9, 2018. Objections received by mail/hand delivery/courier (for written/paper submissions) will be considered timely if they are postmarked or the delivery service acceptance receipt is on or before that date.

Electronic Submissions

Submit electronic objections in the following way:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal: https://www.regulations.gov*. Follow the instructions for submitting comments. Objections submitted electronically, including attachments, to *https://www.regulations.gov* will be posted to the docket unchanged. Because your objection will be made public, you are solely responsible for ensuring that your objection does not include any confidential information that you or a third party may not wish to be posted, such as medical information, your or anyone else's Social Security number, or confidential business information, such as a manufacturing process. Please note that if you include your name, contact information, or other information that identifies you in the body of your objection, that information will be posted on *https://www.regulations.gov*.
- If you want to submit an objection with confidential information that you do not wish to be made available to the public, submit the objection as a written/paper submission and in the manner detailed (see ''Written/Paper Submissions'' and ''Instructions'').

Written/Paper Submissions

Submit written/paper submissions as follows:

- *Mail/Hand delivery/Courier (for written/paper submissions):* Dockets Management Staff (HFA–305), Food and Drug Administration, 5630 Fishers Lane, Rm. 1061, Rockville, MD 20852.
- For written/paper objections submitted to the Dockets Management Staff, FDA will post your objection, as well as any attachments, except for information submitted, marked and identified, as confidential, if submitted as detailed in ''Instructions.''

Instructions: All submissions received must include the Docket No. FDA–2017–C–0935 for ''Listing of Color Additives Subject to Certification; D&C Black No. 4.'' Received objections, those filed in a timely manner (see **ADDRESSES**), will be placed in the docket and, except for those submitted as ''Confidential Submissions,'' publicly viewable at *https://www.regulations.gov* or at the Dockets Management Staff between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

- Confidential Submissions—To submit an objection with confidential information that you do not wish to be made publicly available, submit your objections only as a written/paper submission. You should submit two copies total. One copy will include the information you claim to be confidential with a heading or cover note that states ''THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION.'' We will review this copy, including the claimed confidential information, in our consideration of comments. The second copy, which will have the claimed confidential information redacted/blacked out, will be available for public viewing and posted on *https://www.regulations.gov*. Submit both copies to the Dockets Management Staff. If you do not wish your name and contact information to be made publicly available, you can provide this information on the cover sheet and not in the body of your comments and you must identify this information as ''confidential.'' Any information marked as ''confidential'' will not be disclosed except in accordance with 21 CFR 10.20 and other applicable disclosure law. For more information about FDA's posting of comments to public dockets, see 80 FR 56469, September 18, 2015, or access the information at: *https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2015-09-18/pdf/2015-23389.pdf*.

Docket: For access to the docket to read background documents or the electronic and written/paper comments received, go to *https://www.regulations.gov* and insert the docket number, found in brackets in the heading of this document, into the ''Search'' box and follow the prompts and/or go to the Dockets Management Staff, 5630 Fishers Lane, Rm. 1061, Rockville, MD 20852.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Joseph M. Thomas, Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (HFS–265), Food and Drug Administration, 5001 Campus Dr., College Park, MD 20740–3835, 301–796–9465.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Introduction

In the **Federal Register** on March 6, 2017 (82 FR 12531), we announced that we filed a color additive petition (CAP 7C0310) submitted by DSM Biomedical (petitioner), 735 Pennsylvania Dr., Exton, PA 19341. The petition proposed to amend the color additive regulations in part 73 (21 CFR part 73), *Listing of Color Additives Exempt from Certification,* to provide for the safe use of high-purity carbon black for coloring UHMWPE non-absorbable sutures for use in general surgery.[1] After the petition was filed and during our review, we determined that the color additive will require batch certification by FDA. We intend to give each certified batch of the subject color additive the name D&C Black No. 4. Therefore, this color additive will be identified as D&C Black No. 4 and will be listed in part 74 (21 CFR part 74), *Listing of Color Additives Subject to Certification.*

II. Identity and Specifications

D&C Black No. 4 is a high-purity carbon black prepared by the oil furnace process. It is manufactured by injecting

[1] The original petition did not specify that the color additive is to be used in sutures that are non-absorbable. Therefore, our March 6, 2017, notice of filing did not specify that the color additive is intended for use in non-absorbable sutures. However, petitioner's subsequent submissions to FDA indicated that the intended use of the additive is for sutures that are non-absorbable.

a heated aromatic petroleum feedstock into the combustion zone of a natural gas-fired furnace to produce carbon black. The reaction is quenched with water and the carbon particles are further cooled and separated by a filter. The recovered high-purity carbon black is dried and pelletized to produce the final D&C Black No. 4 commercial product, consisting of aggregated particles with a surface area ranging from 50 to 260 meters squared per gram (m^2/g). D&C Black No. 4 is mechanically mixed at a maximum level of 1 percent by weight with the UHMWPE suture raw materials to form a homogenous suspension, absent of chemical reaction between components, and extruded to form black colored sutures.

As explained in section III, the color additive D&C Black No. 4 may contain low levels of potentially carcinogenic polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon (PAH) contaminants. To limit the amounts of these contaminants in the color additive, FDA is setting specifications for total PAHs, as well as for the individual PAH species benzo[*a*]pyrene (B[*a*]P) and dibenz[*a,h*]anthracene. These specifications are consistent with specifications for other high-purity carbon blacks approved by FDA, including the color additive D&C Black No. 2 (§ 74.2052 (21 CFR 74.2052)), which is approved for use in certain cosmetics, including cosmetics for use in the area of the eye (*i.e.,* eyeliner, brush-on-brow, eye shadow, mascara), and high-purity furnace black, which is approved for use in food-contact polymers (§ 178.3297 (21 CFR 178.3297)). These specifications are also supported by the safety information reviewed as a part of this petition (see section III). In addition, to ensure compliance with these specifications, FDA is requiring that D&C Black No. 4 for use in UHMWPE non-absorbable sutures be from a batch of the color additive certified by FDA.

The identity for D&C Black No. 4 is the same as D&C Black No. 2, except for the surface area. For D&C Black No. 2, we set specifications for arsenic, lead, and mercury, total color (as carbon), total sulfur, ash content, surface area, and weight loss on heating, in addition to the specifications for total PAHs, benzo[*a*]pyrene (B[*a*]P), and dibenz[*a,h*]anthracene. We are setting the same specifications that were established for D&C Black No. 2 for D&C Black No. 4 for these parameters with the exception of surface area specification, which is broader for D&C Black No. 4.

III. Safety Evaluation

A. Determination of Safety

Under section 721(b)(4) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FD&C Act) (21 U.S.C. 379e(b)(4)), a color additive cannot be listed for a particular use unless a fair evaluation of the data and information available to FDA establish that the color additive is safe under the intended conditions of use. Furthermore, under 21 CFR 70.5(c), a color additive intended for use in a surgical suture must have a listing specifically providing for this use. FDA's color additive regulations in 21 CFR 70.3(i) define ''safe'' to mean that there is convincing evidence that establishes with reasonable certainty that no harm will result from the intended use of the color additive.

Section 721(b)(5)(B)(ii) of the FD&C Act provides that for any use of a color additive that will not result in ingestion of any part of such additive, the color additive shall be deemed to be unsafe and shall not be listed if, after tests that are appropriate for the evaluation of the safety of additives for such use, or after other relevant exposure of man or animal to such additive, it is found to induce cancer in man or animal. Importantly, however, section 721(b)(5)(B) of the FD&C Act applies to the additive itself and not to impurities in the additive. That is, where an additive itself has not been shown to cause cancer, but contains a carcinogenic impurity, the additive is properly evaluated under the general safety standard using risk assessment procedures to determine whether there is a reasonable certainty that no harm will result from the intended use of the additive (*Scott* v. *FDA,* 728 F.2d 322 (6th Cir. 1984)).

B. Safety of the Petitioned Use of D&C Black No. 4

In evaluating the safety of a color additive, FDA customarily reviews the available data on each relevant chemical impurity to determine whether the chemical induces tumors in animals or humans. If FDA concludes that the chemical impurity causes cancer in animals or humans, the Agency calculates the unit cancer risk for the chemical and the upper bound limit of lifetime human cancer risk from the chemical's presence in the additive. To establish with reasonable certainty that D&C Black No. 4 intended to color UHMWPE non-absorbable sutures is not harmful under the intended conditions of use, we have considered the exposure to the color additive and its impurities, the additive's toxicological data, and other relevant information (such as published literature) available to us.

The petitioner incorporated safety information that was previously submitted to FDA on behalf of Cabot Corp. in Food Additive Petition 5B4464 by reference to support the safety of high-purity furnace black as a colorant for polymers in food-contact applications. D&C Black No. 4 is manufactured in the same manner as the referenced high-purity furnace black.

The petitioner also submitted data from an extraction study testing the migration of D&C Black No. 4 from UHMWPE sutures and provided data from two studies demonstrating biocompatibility of UHMWPE sutures along with other information. The petitioner's data from the extraction study indicated that D&C Black No. 4, when added to UHMWPE non-absorbable sutures at the maximum level of 1 percent, remains physically embedded in the suture matrix resulting in the color additive not being detected in the extracts at the limit of quantitation. This study evaluated the amount of non-volatile residue (NVR) and any extractables that could migrate from the suture. The study was performed with water, hexane, and ethanol at 50 °C for 24 hours and demonstrated that D&C Black No. 4 does not migrate from the suture following exposure to solvents with varying polarities and exposure to heat. The study also yielded NVRs not able to be analyzed. To estimate potential exposure from D&C Black No. 4, the petitioner used data from the extraction study and the conservative assumption that all of the NVR that was extracted and not able to be analyzed was D&C Black No. 4. The petitioner derived an estimate for the mass amount of D&C Black No. 4 expected to migrate over a lifetime, expressed as the mean daily exposure, based on its proposed use level in surgical sutures, and using data for the maximum NVR extracted and the surface area of the tested sutures.

While FDA agrees with using the conservative assumption that all NVR extracted was D&C Black No. 4, the petitioner's exposure estimate represents the scenario where D&C Black No. 4 would migrate from the sutures 1 day post-implantation. However, since non-absorbable sutures are intended to be left in the body indefinitely post-implantation, it is necessary to average the petitioner's exposure estimate over an individual's lifetime post-implantation (assumed to be 70 years) to estimate the lifetime average exposure to D&C Black No. 4. In this manner, we estimated the lifetime average exposure to D&C Black No. 4 to

be 15.3 nanograms per person per day (ng/p/d). However, as carbon black is known to be thermally stable, inert, and insoluble in water and common solvents, we agree with the petitioner's conclusion that D&C Black No. 4 is firmly embedded and does not migrate from the suture matrix, resulting in no potential exposure to D&C Black No. 4 from sutures that are in contact with the body (Ref. 1).

As discussed in section II, D&C Black No. 4 has been shown to contain low levels of PAH impurities, some of which are carcinogenic. We have previously considered the safe use of high-purity carbon black as a color additive in cosmetics (D&C Black No. 2; § 74.2052) and as a colorant in food-contact polymers (high-purity furnace black; § 178.3297) and set limits for PAHs in these high-purity carbon blacks to minimize exposure. We are setting similar limits for PAHs in D&C Black No. 4 as those established for D&C Black No. 2: Total PAHs (not more than 0.5 milligrams per kilogram (mg/kg) (500 parts per billion)); B[*a*]P (not more than 0.005 mg/kg (5 parts per billion)); and dibenz[*a,h*]anthracene (not more than 0.005 mg/kg (5 parts per billion)).

There were no detectable PAHs at the limit of quantitation resulting from the petitioner's extraction study. The petitioner stated that the trace levels of PAHs in the color additive, as limited by specifications, are strongly bound to the surface of D&C Black No. 4 carbon particles due to the powerful adsorption capabilities of the color additive. FDA concurs that any PAH impurities are not expected to migrate under the proposed specifications and conditions of use (Ref. 1). In calculating the lifetime average exposure to PAHs from the use of D&C Black No. 4 in sutures, we used the conservative assumption that total PAHs, B[*a*]P, and dibenz[*a,h*]anthracene are present in the color additive at their specification limits. These assumptions, along with the assumption that all NVR extracted from the sutures is D&C Black No. 4, calculated over a 70-year lifespan, results in a conservative estimated lifetime average exposure of total PAHs of 7.7×10^{-6} ng/p/d, B[*a*]P of 7.7×10^{-8} ng/p/d, and dibenz[*a,h*]anthracene of 7.7×10^{-8} ng/p/d (Ref. 1).

Current data have shown B[*a*]P to be a high contributor to the total carcinogenic potential for the PAH family (Ref. 2). To assess the risk from exposure to PAHs, FDA has used a worst-case assumption that all PAHs are present in D&C Black No. 4 as B[*a*]P. We used data from a carcinogenesis bioassay on B[*a*]P, conducted by H. Brune, et al., to estimate the upper-bound limit of lifetime human risk from exposure to B[*a*]P equivalents resulting from the petitioned use of the color additive (Ref. 3). The authors reported treatment-related benign forestomach tumors or esophageal tumors in male rats exposed to B[*a*]P. Using a linear-at-low-dose extrapolation method and tumor incidence data from the H. Brune, et al. study, we estimated the unit cancer risk (UCR) for B[*a*]P to be 1.75 (milligrams per kilogram bodyweight per day (mg/kg bw/day))$^{-1}$ (Ref. 4). The UCR represents the derived cancer risk calculated per unit dose of the additive. This same UCR was used to assess the risk from exposure to PAHs for D&C Black No. 2 (69 FR 44927, July 28, 2004) and high-purity furnace black (Ref. 5). The lifetime cancer risk (LCR) was calculated by multiplying the UCR for B[*a*]P by the estimated lifetime average exposures. This results in LCRs of 2.24×10^{-15} and 2.24×10^{-13} for B[*a*]P and total PAHs, respectively. Because of the conservative assumptions we used to calculate the exposure estimate and the carcinogenic potency of PAHs in the color additive, and the fact that PAHs bind tightly to carbon black and are not expected to migrate, the lifetime-averaged individual exposure to PAHs is likely to be substantially less than our worst-case exposure estimate. Thus, the probable lifetime human risk would be less than the estimated LCR. Therefore, we conclude that there is reasonable certainty that no harm from exposure to PAHs will result from the petitioned use of the additive (Refs. 1 and 3).

IV. Conclusion

Based on the data and information in the petition and other available relevant material, FDA concludes that the petitioned use of D&C Black No. 4 for coloring UHMWPE non-absorbable sutures for use in general surgery is safe. We further conclude that the additive will achieve its intended technical effect and is suitable for the petitioned uses. Based on the available information, we are amending the color additive regulations in part 74 as set forth in this document. In addition, in accordance with 21 CFR 71.20(b), we conclude that batch certification of D&C Black No. 4 is necessary for the protection of public health because of the need to limit the levels of PAHs, some of which have been shown to be carcinogenic. Therefore, part 74 should be amended as set forth in this document.

V. Public Disclosure

In accordance with § 71.15 (21 CFR 71.15), the petition and the documents that we considered and relied upon in reaching our decision to approve the petition will be made available for public disclosure (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**). As provided in § 71.15, we will delete from the documents any materials that are not available for public disclosure.

VI. Analysis of Environmental Impact

We previously considered the environmental effects of this rule, as stated in the notice of petition published in the **Federal Register** of March 6, 2017. We stated that we had determined, under 21 CFR 25.32(*l*), that this action ''is of a type that does not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment'' such that neither an environmental assessment nor an environmental impact statement is required. We have not received any new information or comments that would affect our previous determination.

VII. Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995

This final rule contains no collection of information. Therefore, clearance by the Office of Management and Budget under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 is not required.

VIII. Objections

This rule is effective as shown in the **DATES** section, except as to any provisions that may be stayed by the filing of proper objections. If you will be adversely affected by one or more provisions of this regulation, you may file with the Dockets Management Staff (see **ADDRESSES**) either electronic or written objections. You must separately number each objection, and within each numbered objection you must specify with particularity the provision(s) to which you object, and the grounds for your objection. Within each numbered objection, you must specifically state whether you are requesting a hearing on the particular provision that you specify in that numbered objection. If you do not request a hearing for any particular objection, you waive the right to a hearing on that objection. If you request a hearing, your objection must include a detailed description and analysis of the specific factual information you intend to present in support of the objection in the event that a hearing is held. If you do not include such a description and analysis for any particular objection, you waive the right to a hearing on the objection.

Any objections received in response to the regulation may be seen in the Dockets Management Staff between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, and will be posted to the docket at *https://www.regulations.gov*. We will publish notice of the objections that we

have received or lack thereof in the **Federal Register**.

IX. References

The following references are on display with the Dockets Management Staff (see **ADDRESSES**) and are available for viewing by interested persons between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday; they also are available electronically at *https://www.regulations.gov*. References that are published articles and books are not on display.

1. Memorandum from H. Lee, Division of Petition Review, Office of Food Additive Safety (OFAS), CFSAN, FDA to J. Thomas, Division of Petition Review, OFAS, CFSAN, FDA, dated April 27, 2018.
2. Choi H, R. Harrison, H. Komulainen, et al., ''Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons.'' *WHO Guidelines for Indoor Air Quality: Selected Pollutants*. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2010.
3. Brune H., R. P. Deutsch-Wenzel, M. Habs, et al., ''Investigation of the Tumorigenic Response to Benzo(a)pyrene in Aqueous Caffeine Solution Applied Orally to Sprague-Dawley Rats,'' *Journal of Cancer Research and Clinical Oncology,* 102(2):153–157, 1981.
4. Memorandum from N. Anyangwe, Division of Petition Review, OFAS, CFSAN, FDA to J. Thomas, Division of Petition Review, OFAS, CFSAN, FDA, dated April 27, 2018.
5. Memorandum from the Indirect Additives Branch, FDA, to the Executive Secretary, Quantitative Risk Assessment Committee, FDA, concerning ''Estimation of the Upper-bound Lifetime Risk from Polynuclear Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAH's) in High-Purity Furnace Black (HPFB): subject of Food Additive Petition No. 5B4464 (Cabot Corp.),'' dated May 9, 1996.

List of Subjects in 21 CFR Part 74

Color additives, Cosmetics, Drugs.

Therefore, under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act and under authority delegated to the Commissioner of Food and Drugs, 21 CFR part 74 is amended as follows:

PART 74—LISTING OF COLOR ADDITIVES SUBJECT TO CERTIFICATION

■ 1. The authority citation for part 74 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 21 U.S.C. 321, 341, 342, 343, 348, 351, 352, 355, 361, 362, 371, 379e.

■ 2. Section 74.3054 is added to subpart D to read as follows:

§ 74.3054 D&C Black No. 4.

(a) *Identity.* The color additive D&C Black No. 4 is a high-purity carbon black prepared by the oil furnace process. It is manufactured by the combustion of aromatic petroleum oil feedstock and consists essentially of pure carbon, formed as aggregated fine particles with a surface area range of 50 to 260 meters $(m)^2$/gram.

(b) *Specifications.* D&C Black No. 4 must conform to the following specifications and must be free from impurities other than those named to the extent that such other impurities may be avoided by good manufacturing practice:

(1) Surface area by nitrogen BET (Brunauer, Emmett, Teller) method, 50 to 260 m^2/gram.

(2) Weight loss on heating at 950 °C for 7 minutes (predried for 1 hour at 125 °C), not more than 2 percent.

(3) Ash content, not more than 0.15 percent.

(4) Arsenic (total), not more than 3 milligrams per kilogram (mg/kg) (3 parts per million).

(5) Lead (total), not more than 10 mg/kg (10 parts per million).

(6) Mercury (total), not more than 1 mg/kg (1 part per million).

(7) Total sulfur, not more than 0.65 percent.

(8) Total polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), not more than 0.5 mg/kg (500 parts per billion).

(9) Benzo[*a*]pyrene, not more than 0.005 mg/kg (5 parts per billion).

(10) Dibenz[*a,h*]anthracene, not more than 0.005 mg/kg (5 parts per billion).

(11) Total color (as carbon), not less than 95 percent.

(c) *Uses and restrictions.* (1) D&C Black No. 4 may be safely used at a level not to exceed 1.0 percent by weight of the suture material for coloring ultra-high molecular weight polyethylene non-absorbable sutures for general surgical use.

(2) Authorization and compliance with this use must not be construed as waiving any of the requirements of sections 510(k), 515, and 520(g) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to the ultra-high molecular weight polyethylene surgical sutures in which D&C Black No. 4 is used.

(d) *Labeling.* The label of the color additive must conform to the requirements of § 70.25 of this chapter.

(e) *Certification.* All batches of D&C Black No. 4 must be certified in accordance with regulations in part 80 of this chapter.

Dated: June 1, 2018.

Leslie Kux,

Associate Commissioner for Policy.

[FR Doc. 2018–12218 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4164–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

24 CFR Parts 1, 8, 16, and 40

[Docket No. FR–6102–F–01]

RIN 2501–AD88

Removal of Cross References to Previously Removed Appendices and Subpart

AGENCY: Office of General Counsel, HUD.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: This final rule corrects HUD's regulations by removing cross references to appendices and a subpart that were removed by earlier rulemakings. In 1995, HUD removed several appendices throughout HUD's regulations deemed unnecessary or obsolete. In 1996, HUD consolidated its hearing procedures for nondiscrimination and equal opportunity matters in a new CFR part and removed the subpart of another. Cross-references to the removed appendices and subpart were not removed, however. This final rule corrects HUD's regulations by removing cross references to these nonexistent appendices and subpart.

DATES: *Effective* July 9, 2018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ariel Pereira, Associate General Counsel, Office of Legislation and Regulations, Department of Housing and Urban Development, 451 7th Street SW, Room 10282, Washington, DC 20410; telephone number 202–402–5138 (this is not a toll-free number). Persons with hearing or speech impairments may access this number through TTY by calling the Federal Relay Service at 800–877–8339 (this is a toll-free number).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

On September 11, 1995 (60 FR 47260), HUD published a final rule entitled, ''Elimination of Obsolete Parts'' which removed from 24 CFR several appendices deemed obsolete and unnecessary. HUD undertook the regulation consistent with the ''Regulatory Reinvention Initiative,'' which required federal agencies to eliminate outdated regulations and modify others to reduce regulatory burden. Among the provisions removed were appendix A in 24 CFR part 1, appendices A and B in 24 CFR part 8, appendix A in 24 CFR part 16, and appendix A in 24 CFR part 40.

On October 4, 1996 (61 FR 52216), HUD published a final rule entitled, ''Consolidated HUD Hearing Procedures for Civil Rights Matters,'' which revised

HUD's regulations by removing descriptions of nondiscrimination and equal opportunity hearing procedures from individual sections and consolidating those descriptions in a new part, 24 CFR part 180. As part of the 1996 final rule, HUD removed subpart E of 24 CFR part 8.

HUD has determined that while these 1995 and 1996 rules removed the above-mentioned appendices and subpart, cross references to these nonexistent appendices and subpart remain in title 24.

II. This Final Rule

This final rule removes cross references in title 24 to the nonexistent appendices and subpart. In 24 CFR part 16, however, removing the references to the nonexistent appendices requires that HUD revise § 16.3 to keep the meaning of the regulation the same. The deleted appendix in 24 CFR part 16 contained the address for Privacy Act inquiries, and this rule replaces the reference to the removed appendix with the current contact address for HUD's Privacy Act Officer. In removing 24 CFR part 40, appendix A, HUD decided to no longer provide a copy of the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards text in its regulation, given that the information is publicly available and HUD's appendix would be outdated every time the United States Access Board updated the standards. HUD is not providing an updated cross-reference in 24 CFR part 40 but notes in this final rule that the public may access the most current Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards by visiting the website for the United States Access Board at *www.access-board.gov*.

III. Justification for Final Rulemaking

HUD generally publishes a rule for public comment before issuing a rule for effect, in accordance with its own regulations on rulemaking at 24 CFR part 10. Part 10 provides for exceptions to the general rule if the agency finds good cause to omit advance notice and public participation. The good cause requirement is satisfied when prior public procedure is ''impracticable, unnecessary, or contrary to the public interest'' (24 CFR 10.1; *see also* 5 U.S.C. 553(b)). HUD finds that public notice and comment are unnecessary for this rulemaking because this rule removes cross references to appendices and to a subpart which have already been removed by previous rulemaking, and, as such, this rule does not establish or affect substantive policy. This rule corrects HUD's regulations and eliminates confusion resulting from having cross references to appendices and to a subpart that no longer exist. For these reasons, HUD has determined that it is unnecessary to delay the effectiveness of this rule to solicit prior public comment.

IV. Findings and Certification

Regulatory Flexibility Act

The Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA) (5 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.*) generally requires an agency to conduct a regulatory flexibility analysis of any rule subject to notice and comment rulemaking requirements, unless the agency certifies that the rule will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities. Because HUD has determined that good cause exists to issue this rule without prior public comment, this rule is not subject to the requirement to publish an initial or final regulatory flexibility analysis under the RFA as part of such action.

Unfunded Mandates Reform

Section 202 of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (UMRA) [1] requires that an agency prepare a budgetary impact statement before promulgating a rule that includes a Federal mandate that may result in the expenditure by State, local, and tribal governments, in the aggregate, or by the private sector, of $100 million or more in any one year. If a budgetary impact statement is required, section 205 of UMRA also requires an agency to identity and consider a reasonable number of regulatory alternatives before promulgating a rule.[2] However, the UMRA applies only to rules for which an agency publishes a general notice of proposed rulemaking. As discussed above, HUD has determined, for good cause, that prior notice and public comment is not required on this rule and, therefore, the UMRA does not apply to this final rule.

Executive Order 13132, Federalism

Executive Order 13132 (entitled ''Federalism'') prohibits an agency from publishing any rule that has federalism implications if the rule either imposes substantial direct compliance costs on State and local governments and is not required by statute, or the rule preempts State law, unless the agency meets the consultation and funding requirements of section 6 of the Executive order. This rule will not have federalism implications and would not impose substantial direct compliance costs on State and local governments or preempt State law within the meaning of the Executive order.

[1] 2 U.S.C. 1532.

[2] 2 U.S.C. 1534.

Environmental Review

This final rule does not direct, provide for assistance or loan and mortgage insurance for, or otherwise govern or regulate, real property acquisition, disposition, leasing, rehabilitation, alteration, demolition, or new construction, or establish, revise or provide for standards for construction or construction materials, manufactured housing, or occupancy. Accordingly, under 24 CFR 50.19(c)(1), this final rule is categorically excluded from environmental review under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321).

List of Subjects

24 CFR Part 1

Administrative practice and procedure, Civil rights, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

24 CFR Part 8

Administrative practice and procedure, Civil rights, Equal employment opportunity, Grant programs—housing and community development, Individuals with disabilities, Loan programs—housing and community development, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

24 CFR Part 16

Privacy.

24 CFR Part 40

Individuals with disabilities, Public housing, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

Accordingly, for the reasons discussed in this preamble, HUD amends 24 CFR parts 1, 8, 16, and 40 as follows:

PART 1—NONDISCRIMINATION IN FEDERALLY ASSISTED PROGRAMS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT—EFFECTUATION OF TITLE VI OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964

■ 1. The authority citation for part 1 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 42 U.S.C. 2000d–1 and 3535(d).

§ 1.3 [Amended]

■ 2. Amend § 1.3 by removing '', including any program or activity assisted under the statutes listed in appendix A of this part 1'' from the first sentence and by removing the last two sentences of the section.

PART 8—NONDISCRIMINATION BASED ON HANDICAP IN FEDERALLY ASSISTED PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

■ 3. The authority citation for part 8 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 29 U.S.C. 794; 42 U.S.C. 3535(d) and 5309.

§ 8.1 [Amended]

■ 4. In § 8.1, amend paragraph (b) by removing the reference ''subparts D and E'' and adding in its place ''subpart D''.

§ 8.2 [Amended]

■ 5. Amend § 8.2 by removing the last sentence of the section.

§ 8.4 [Amended]

■ 6. In § 8.4, amend paragraph (c)(2) by removing the parenthetical ''(see appendix B)''.

PART 16—IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PRIVACY ACT OF 1974

■ 7. The authority citation for part 16 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 5 U.S.C. 552(a); 42 U.S.C. 3535(d).

§ 16.2 [Amended]

■ 8. In § 16.2, amend paragraph (b)(2) by removing the phrase '', identified in Appendix A to this part,''.

§ 16.3 [Amended]

■ 9. In § 16.3, amend paragraph (a) by removing the phrase ''first address listed in Appendix A to this part'' and adding in its place ''following address: Privacy Act Officer, Department of Housing and Urban Development, 451 7th St. SW, Room 10139, Washington, DC 20410''.

§ 16.4 [Amended]

■ 10. In § 16.4, amend paragraph (a) by removing the phrase ''identified in Appendix A to this part''.

PART 40—ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION, AND ALTERATION OF PUBLICLY OWNED RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURES

■ 11. The authority citation for part 40 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 42 U.S.C. 3535(d), 4153.

§ 40.2 [Amended]

■ 12. In § 40.2, amend paragraph (b)(3) by removing ''contained in appendix A to this part''.

§ 40.4 [Amended]

■ 13. Amend § 40.4 by removing ''the specifications contained in appendix A to this part,''.

Dated: May 30, 2018.

J. Paul Compton, Jr.,

General Counsel.

[FR Doc. 2018–12274 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4210–67–P

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Air Force

32 CFR Part 806

[Docket ID: USAF–2017–HQ–0001]

RIN 0701–AA76

Air Force Freedom of Information Act Program

AGENCY: Department of the Air Force, DoD.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: This final rule removes the Department of the Air Force's regulation concerning the Freedom of Information Act program. On February 6, 2018, the DoD published a revised FOIA program rule as a result of the FOIA Improvement Act of 2016. When the DoD FOIA program rule was revised, it included DoD component information and removed the requirement for component supplementary rules. The DoD now has one DoD-level rule for the FOIA program at 32 CFR part 286 that contains all the codified information required for the Department. Therefore, this part can be removed from the CFR.

DATES: This rule is effective on June 7, 2018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Bao-Anh Trinh at 703–614–8500.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: It has been determined that publication of this CFR part removal for public comment is impracticable, unnecessary, and contrary to public interest since it is based on removing the Air Force's internal policies and procedures that are publically available on the Air Force's website.

The Department of the Air Force's internal guidance concerning the implementation of the FOIA within the Department of the Air Force will continue to be published in Air Force Manual 33–302 (available at *http://static.e-publishing.af.mil/production/1/saf_cio_a6/publication/dodm5400.07_afman33-302/dodm5400.07_afman33-302.pdf*).

This rule is one of 14 separate DoD FOIA rules. With the finalization of the DoD-level FOIA rule at 32 CFR part 286, the Department is eliminating the need for this separate FOIA rule and reducing costs to the public as explained in the preamble of the DoD-level FOIA rule published at 83 FR 5196–5197.

This rule is not significant under Executive Order (E.O.) 12866, ''Regulatory Planning and Review,'' therefore, E.O. 13771, ''Reducing Regulation and Controlling Regulatory Costs'' does not apply.

List of Subjects in 32 CFR Part 806

Freedom of information.

PART 806—[REMOVED]

■ Accordingly, by the authority of 5 U.S.C. 301, 32 CFR part 806 is removed.

Bao-Anh Trinh,

Air Force Federal Register Liaison Officer.

[FR Doc. 2018–12237 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 5001–10–P

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Coast Guard

33 CFR Part 100

[Docket Number USCG–2018–0088]

RIN 1625–AA08

Special Local Regulation; Tred Avon River, Between Bellevue, MD and Oxford, MD

AGENCY: Coast Guard, DHS.

ACTION: Temporary final rule.

SUMMARY: The Coast Guard is establishing special local regulations for certain waters of the Tred Avon River. This action is necessary to provide for the safety of life on these navigable waters located between Bellevue, MD, and Oxford, MD, during a swim event on June 9, 2018. If necessary, due to inclement weather, the event will be rescheduled to June 10, 2018. This action will prohibit persons and vessels from being in the regulated area unless authorized by the Captain of the Port Maryland—National Capital Region or Coast Guard Patrol Commander.

DATES: This rule is effective from 8:30 a.m. on June 9, 2018 through 11 a.m. on June 10, 2018.

ADDRESSES: To view documents mentioned in this preamble as being available in the docket, go to *http://www.regulations.gov,* type USCG–2018–0088 in the ''SEARCH'' box and click ''SEARCH.'' Click on Open Docket Folder on the line associated with this rule.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: If you have questions on this rule, call or email Mr. Ronald Houck, U.S. Coast Guard Sector Maryland—National Capital Region; telephone 410–576–2674, email *Ronald.L.Houck@uscg.mil.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Table of Abbreviations

CFR Code of Federal Regulations
DHS Department of Homeland Security
FR Federal Register
NPRM Notice of proposed rulemaking
§ Section
U.S.C. United States Code

II. Background Information and Regulatory History

On June 13, 2017, Charcot-Marie-Tooth Association of Trappe, MD, notified the Coast Guard that from 9:15 a.m. until 10:15 a.m. on June 9, 2018, and if necessary, due to inclement weather, from 9:15 a.m. until 10:15 a.m. on June 10, 2018, it will be conducting the swim portion of the Oxford Biathlon in the Tred Avon River that starts at Bellevue, MD and finishes at Oxford, MD. In response, on April 4, 2018, the Coast Guard published a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) entitled ''Special Local Regulation; Tred Avon River, between Bellevue, MD and Oxford, MD'' (83 FR 14381). There we stated why we issued the NPRM, and invited comments on our proposed regulatory action related to this fireworks display. During the comment period that ended May 4, 2018, we received one comment.

Under 5 U.S.C. 553(d)(3), the Coast Guard finds that good cause exists for making this rule effective less than 30 days after publication in the **Federal Register**. Due to the date of the event, it would be impracticable and contrary to the public interest to make the regulation effective 30 days after publication in the **Federal Register**. The regulation must be in place by June 9th in order to protect the public from the hazards associated with this swim event.

III. Legal Authority and Need for Rule

The Coast Guard is issuing this rule under authority in 33 U.S.C. 1233, which authorizes the Coast Guard to establish and define special local regulations. The Captain of the Port (COTP) Maryland—National Capital Region has determined that potential hazards associated with the swim would be a safety concern for anyone intending to operate within certain waters of the Tred Avon River between Bellevue, MD, and Oxford, MD. The purpose of this rulemaking is to protect event participants, spectators and transiting vessels on specified waters of the Tred Avon River before, during, and after the scheduled event.

IV. Discussion of Comments, Changes, and the Rule

As noted above, we received one comment on our NPRM published April 4, 2018. The comment addressed issues not related to this rulemaking. Therefore, there are no substantive changes in the regulatory text of this rule from the proposed rule in the NPRM.

This rule establishes a special local regulation to be enforced from 8:30 a.m. until 11 a.m. on June 9, 2018, and if necessary, due to inclement weather, from 8:30 a.m. until 11 a.m. on June 10, 2018. The regulated area covers all navigable waters of the Tred Avon River, from shoreline to shoreline, within an area bounded on the east by a line drawn from latitude 38°42′25″ N, longitude 076°10′45″ W, thence south to latitude 38°41′37″ N, longitude 076°10′26″ W, and bounded on the west by a line drawn from latitude 38°41′58″ N, longitude 076°11′04″ W, thence south to latitude 38°41′25″ N, longitude 076°10′49″ W, thence east to latitude 38°41′25″ N, longitude 076°10′30″ W, located at Oxford, MD. The enforcement and duration of the regulated area is intended to ensure the safety of event participants and vessels within the specified navigable waters before, during, and after the 9:15 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. swim. Except for Oxford Biathlon participants, no vessel or person will be permitted to enter the regulated area without obtaining permission from the COTP Maryland—National Capital Region or Coast Guard Patrol Commander.

V. Regulatory Analyses

We developed this rule after considering numerous statutes and Executive orders related to rulemaking. Below we summarize our analyses based on a number of these statutes and Executive orders, and we discuss First Amendment rights of protestors.

A. Regulatory Planning and Review

Executive Orders 12866 and 13563 direct agencies to assess the costs and benefits of available regulatory alternatives and, if regulation is necessary, to select regulatory approaches that maximize net benefits. Executive Order 13771 directs agencies to control regulatory costs through a budgeting process. This rule has not been designated a ''significant regulatory action,'' under Executive Order 12866. Accordingly, this rule has not been reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and pursuant to OMB guidance it is exempt from the requirements of Executive Order 13771.

This regulatory action determination is based on the size and duration of the regulated area, which would impact a small designated area of the Tred Avon River for 2½ hours. The Coast Guard will issue a Broadcast Notice to Mariners via VHF–FM marine channel 16 about the status of the regulated area. Moreover, the rule will allow vessels to request permission to enter the regulated area, and vessel traffic will be able to safely transit the regulated area once the Coast Guard Patrol Commander deems it safe to do so.

B. Impact on Small Entities

The Regulatory Flexibility Act of 1980, 5 U.S.C. 601–612, as amended, requires Federal agencies to consider the potential impact of regulations on small entities during rulemaking. The term ''small entities'' comprises small businesses, not-for-profit organizations that are independently owned and operated and are not dominant in their fields, and governmental jurisdictions with populations of less than 50,000. The Coast Guard certifies under 5 U.S.C. 605(b) that this rule will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities.

While some owners or operators of vessels intending to transit the regulated area may be small entities, for the reasons stated in section V.A above, this rule will not have a significant economic impact on any vessel owner or operator.

Under section 213(a) of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996 (Pub. L. 104–121), we want to assist small entities in understanding this rule. If the rule would affect your small business, organization, or governmental jurisdiction and you have questions concerning its provisions or options for compliance, please contact the person listed in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section.

Small businesses may send comments on the actions of Federal employees who enforce, or otherwise determine compliance with, Federal regulations to the Small Business and Agriculture Regulatory Enforcement Ombudsman and the Regional Small Business Regulatory Fairness Boards. The Ombudsman evaluates these actions annually and rates each agency's responsiveness to small business. If you wish to comment on actions by employees of the Coast Guard, call 1–888–REG–FAIR (1–888–734–3247). The Coast Guard will not retaliate against

small entities that question or complain about this rule or any policy or action of the Coast Guard.

C. Collection of Information

This rule will not call for a new collection of information under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501–3520).

D. Federalism and Indian Tribal Governments

A rule has implications for federalism under Executive Order 13132, Federalism, if it has a substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the national government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government. We have analyzed this rule under that Order and have determined that it is consistent with the fundamental federalism principles and preemption requirements described in Executive Order 13132.

Also, this rule does not have tribal implications under Executive Order 13175, Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments, because it does not have a substantial direct effect on one or more Indian tribes, on the relationship between the Federal Government and Indian tribes, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities between the Federal Government and Indian tribes. If you believe this rule has implications for federalism or Indian tribes, please contact the person listed in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section above.

E. Unfunded Mandates Reform Act

The Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1531–1538) requires Federal agencies to assess the effects of their discretionary regulatory actions. In particular, the Act addresses actions that may result in the expenditure by a State, local, or tribal government, in the aggregate, or by the private sector of $100,000,000 (adjusted for inflation) or more in any one year. Though this rule will not result in such an expenditure, we do discuss the effects of this rule elsewhere in this preamble.

F. Environment

We have analyzed this rule under Department of Homeland Security Directive 023–01, which guides the Coast Guard in complying with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321–4370f), and have determined that this action is one of a category of actions that do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment. This rule involves implementation of regulations within 33 CFR part 100 applicable to organized marine events on the navigable waters of the United States that could negatively impact the safety of waterway users and shore side activities in the event area lasting 2½ hours. It is categorically excluded from further review under paragraph L[61] of Appendix A, Table 1 of DHS Instruction Manual 023–01–001–01, Rev. 01. A Memorandum For Record for Categorically Excluded Actions supporting this determination is available in the docket where indicated under **ADDRESSES**.

G. Protest Activities

The Coast Guard respects the First Amendment rights of protesters. Protesters are asked to contact the person listed in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section to coordinate protest activities so that your message can be received without jeopardizing the safety or security of people, places or vessels.

List of Subjects in 33 CFR Part 100

Marine safety, Navigation (water), Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Waterways.

For the reasons discussed in the preamble, the Coast Guard amends 33 CFR part 100 as follows:

PART 100—SAFETY OF LIFE ON NAVIGABLE WATERS

■ 1. The authority citation for part 100 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 33 U.S.C. 1233; 33 CFR 1.05–1.

■ 2. Add § 100.501T05–0088 to read as follows:

§ 100.501T05–0088 Special Local Regulation; Tred Avon River, between Bellevue, MD and Oxford, MD.

(a) *Definitions*—(1) *Captain of the Port (COTP) Maryland—National Capital Region* means the Commander, U.S. Coast Guard Sector Maryland—National Capital Region or any Coast Guard commissioned, warrant or petty officer who has been authorized by the COTP to act on his behalf.

(2) *Coast Guard Patrol Commander* means a commissioned, warrant, or petty officer of the U.S. Coast Guard who has been designated by the Commander, Coast Guard Sector Maryland—National Capital Region.

(3) *Official Patrol* means any vessel assigned or approved by Commander, Coast Guard Sector Maryland—National Capital Region with a commissioned, warrant, or petty officer on board and displaying a Coast Guard ensign.

(4) *Participant* means all persons and vessels registered with the event sponsor as participating in the Oxford Biathlon event or otherwise designated by event sponsor as having a function tied to the event.

(b) *Location.* The following location is a regulated area: All navigable waters of the Tred Avon River, from shoreline to shoreline, within an area bounded on the east by a line drawn from latitude 38°42′25″ N, longitude 076°10′45″ W, thence south to latitude 38°41′37″ N, longitude 076°10′26″ W, and bounded on the west by a line drawn from latitude 38°41′58″ N, longitude 076°11′04″ W, thence south to latitude 38°41′25″ N, longitude 076°10′49″ W, thence east to latitude 38°41′25″ N, longitude 076°10′30″ W, located at Oxford, MD. All coordinates reference Datum NAD 1983.

(c) *Special local regulations.* (1) The COTP or Coast Guard Patrol Commander may forbid and control the movement of all vessels and persons, including event participants, in the regulated area. When hailed or signaled by an official patrol, a vessel or person in the regulated area shall immediately comply with the directions given. Failure to do so may result in expulsion from the area, citation for failure to comply, or both. The Coast Guard Patrol Commander may terminate the event, or the operation of any support vessel participating in the event, at any time it is deemed necessary for the protection of life or property.

(2) Except for participants and vessels already at berth, all persons and vessels within the regulated area at the time it is activated are to depart the regulated area.

(3) Persons and vessels desiring to transit, moor, or anchor within the regulated area must obtain authorization from the COTP Maryland—National Capital Region or Coast Guard Patrol Commander. During the enforcement period, persons or vessel operators may request permission to transit, moor, or anchor within the regulated area from the Coast Guard Patrol Commander on Marine Band Radio, VHF–FM channel 16 (156.8 MHz). The Coast Guard Patrol Commander and official patrol vessels enforcing this regulated area can be contacted on marine band radio VHF–FM channel 16 (156.8 MHz) and channel 22A (157.1 MHz).

(4) The Coast Guard will publish a notice in the Fifth Coast Guard District Local Notice to Mariners and issue a marine information broadcast on VHF–FM marine band radio.

(d) *Enforcement officials.* The Coast Guard may be assisted with the marine event patrol and enforcement of the

regulated area by other Federal, State, and local agencies.

(e) *Enforcement period.* This section will be enforced from 8:30 a.m. until 11 a.m. on June 9, 2018, and if necessary, due to inclement weather, from 8:30 a.m. until 11 a.m. on June 10, 2018.

Dated: June 4, 2018.

Joseph B. Loring,

Captain, U.S. Coast Guard, Captain of the Port Maryland—National Capital Region.

[FR Doc. 2018–12281 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 9110–04–P

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Coast Guard

33 CFR Part 117

[Docket No. USCG–2018–0300]

Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Willamette River at Portland, OR

AGENCY: Coast Guard, DHS.

ACTION: Notice of deviation from drawbridge regulation.

SUMMARY: The Coast Guard has issued a temporary deviation from the operating schedule that governs the Burnside Bridge across the Willamette River, mile 12.4, at Portland, OR. The deviation is necessary to accommodate bridge repairs and upgrades. This deviation allows the double bascule bridge to operate one side only in single leaf mode.

DATES: This deviation is effective from 7 a.m. on July 1, 2018 to 4 p.m. on October 13, 2018.

ADDRESSES: The docket for this deviation, USCG–2018–0300 is available at *http://www.regulations.gov*. Type the docket number in the ''SEARCH'' box and click ''SEARCH.'' Click on Open Docket Folder on the line associated with this deviation.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: If you have questions on this temporary deviation, call or email Mr. Steven Fischer, Bridge Administrator, Thirteenth Coast Guard District; telephone 206–220–7282, email *d13-pf-d13bridges@uscg.mil*.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Multnomah County, Oregon owns the Burnside Bridge, crossing the Willamette River, mile 12.4, at Portland, OR, and has requested a temporary deviation from the operating schedule. The requested deviation is to accommodate bridge repairs and upgrades. To facilitate this maintenance, the draw of the subject bridge will be authorized to operate in single leaf and open the east leaf of the span only. The bridge is also authorized to maintain the west leaf in the closed-to-navigation position to marine traffic, and reduce the vertical clearance up to ten feet. This deviation period is from 7 a.m. on July 1, 2018 to 4 p.m. on October 13, 2018.

The Burnside Bridge provides a vertical clearance of 41 feet in the closed-to-navigation position referenced to Columbia River Datum 0.0, and the west leaf will be reduced to 31 feet with scaffolding installed. The horizontal clearance for an east leaf opening will be 100 feet. The normal operating schedule is in 33 CFR 117.897. Waterway usage on this part of the Willamette River includes vessels ranging from commercial tug and barge to small pleasure craft. The Coast Guard contacted all known users of the Willamette River for comment, and we received no objections for this deviation.

Vessels able to pass through the bridge in the closed-to-navigation position may do so at any time. The bridge will be able to open the east side of the span only for emergencies, and there is no immediate alternate route for vessels to pass. The Coast Guard will inform the users of the waterway, through our Local and Broadcast Notices to Mariners, of the change in operating schedule for the bridges so that vessels can arrange their transits to minimize any impact caused by the temporary deviation.

In accordance with 33 CFR 117.35(e), the drawbridge must return to its regular operating schedules immediately at the end of the effective period of this temporary deviation. This deviation from the operating regulations is authorized under 33 CFR 117.35.

Dated: May 23, 2018.

Steven M. Fischer,

Bridge Administrator, Thirteenth Coast Guard District.

[FR Doc. 2018–12282 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 9110–04–P

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Coast Guard

33 CFR Part 117

[Docket No. USCG–2018–0440]

Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Hutchinson River, New York, NY

AGENCY: Coast Guard, DHS.

ACTION: Notice of deviation from drawbridge regulation.

SUMMARY: The Coast Guard has issued a temporary deviation from the operating schedule that governs the Hutchinson River Parkway Bridge across the Hutchinson River, mile 0.9 at New York, New York. This deviation is necessary to allow the bridge to remain in the closed-to-navigation position to facilitate structural repairs.

DATES: This deviation is effective from 12:01 a.m. on July 16, 2018 to 11:59 p.m. on September 16, 2018.

ADDRESSES: The docket for this deviation, USCG–2018–0440 is available at *http://www.regulations.gov*. Type the docket number in the ''SEARCH'' box and click ''SEARCH''. Click on Open Docket Folder on the line associated with this deviation.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: If you have questions on this temporary deviation, call or email Judy Leung-Yee, Bridge Management Specialist, First District Bridge Branch, U.S. Coast Guard; telephone 212–514–4336, email *Judy.K.Leung-Yee@uscg.mil*.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The New York City Department of Transportation, the bridge owner, requested a temporary deviation from the normal operating schedule to facilitate structural repairs. The Hutchinson River Parkway Bridge, across the Hutchinson River, mile 0.9 at New York, New York has a vertical clearance of 30 feet at mean high water and 38 feet at mean low water in the closed position. The existing drawbridge operating regulations are listed at 33 CFR 117.793(b).

Under this temporary deviation, from 12:01 a.m. on July 16, 2018 to 11:59 p.m. on September 16, 2018 the draw of the Hutchinson River Parkway Bridge will be closed to navigation for a period not to exceed 14 days; the draw will then open for vessels in accordance with established operating regulations for a period not to exceed another 7 days, after which the cycle will repeat.

The waterway is transited by commercial and recreational traffic. The bridge owner notified known commercial vessel operators that transit the waterway and there were no objections to this temporary deviation. Vessels able to pass under the bridge in the closed position may do so at any time. The bridge will not be able to open for emergencies and there is no immediate alternate route for vessels to pass.

The Coast Guard will also inform the users of the waterways through our Local and Broadcast Notices to Mariners of the change in operating schedule for the bridge so that vessel operators can arrange their transits to minimize any

impact caused by the temporary deviation.

In accordance with 33 CFR 117.35(e), the drawbridge must return to its regular operating schedule immediately at the end of the effective period of this temporary deviation. This deviation from the operating regulations is authorized under 33 CFR 117.35.

Dated: May 24, 2018.

C.J. Bisignano,

Supervisory Bridge Management Specialist, First Coast Guard District.

[FR Doc. 2018–12287 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 9110–04–P

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Coast Guard

33 CFR Part 117

[Docket No. USCG–2018–0428]

Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Snohomish River and Steamboat Slough, Everett and Marysville, WA

AGENCY: Coast Guard, DHS.

ACTION: Notice of deviation from drawbridge regulation.

SUMMARY: The Coast Guard has issued a temporary deviation from the operating schedule that governs the twin, SR 529 Highway Bridge, north bound, across Steamboat Slough, mile 1.2, near Marysville, WA. The deviation is necessary to accommodate painting and preservation. This deviation allows the bridge to remain in the closed-to-navigation position during the maintenance period to allow safe movement of the work crew.

DATES: This deviation is effective from 12:01 a.m. on July 2, 2018 to 11:59 p.m. on September 30, 2018.

ADDRESSES: The docket for this deviation, USCG–2018–0428 is available at *http://www.regulations.gov*. Type the docket number in the ''SEARCH'' box and click ''SEARCH.'' Click on Open Docket Folder on the line associated with this deviation.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: If you have questions on this temporary deviation, call or email Mr. Steven Fischer, Bridge Administrator, Thirteenth Coast Guard District; telephone 206–220–7282, email *d13-pf-d13bridges@uscg.mil*.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Washington State Department of Transportation, the bridge owner, has requested that the twin, SR 529, Highway Bridge, north bound, across Steamboat Slough, mile 1.2, near Marysville, WA, remain in the closed-to-navigation position, which will reduce the lift span's vertical clearance by three feet. This request is to facilitate safe, uninterrupted bridge work for painting and preservation. The SR 529 highway bridge across Steamboat Slough, mile 1.2, provides 10 feet of vertical clearance above mean high water elevation while in the closed-to-navigation position; and this bridge operates in accordance with 33 CFR 117.1059(g).

The twin, SR 529, Highway Bridge, north bound, across Steamboat Slough, mile 1.2, is authorized to remain in the closed-to navigation position, and need not open for maritime traffic from 12:01 a.m. on July 2, 2018 to 11:59 p.m. on September 30, 2018. The subject bridge's lift span vertical clearance is also authorized to be reduced from ten feet to seven feet except for a 50 foot wide section that shall not be reduced for maritime passage. The bridge shall operate in accordance to 33 CFR 117.1059(g) at all other times.

Waterway usage on this part of the Snohomish River and Steamboat Slough includes vessels ranging from commercial tug and barge to small pleasure craft. Vessels able to pass under the subject bridge in the closed-to-navigation position may do so at any time. The subject bridge will not be able to open for vessels engaged in emergency response during the closure period. An alternate route for vessels to pass is available through Ebey Slough and Union Slough near the entrance of Steamboat Slough at high tide. The Coast Guard will also inform the users of the waterways through our Local and Broadcast Notices to Mariners of the change in operating schedule for the bridges so that vessels can arrange their transits to minimize any impact caused by the temporary deviation.

In accordance with 33 CFR 117.35(e), the drawbridge must return to the regular operating schedule immediately at the end of the effective period of this temporary deviation. This deviation from the operating regulations is authorized under 33 CFR 117.35.

Dated: May 23, 2018.

Steven M. Fischer,

Bridge Administrator, Thirteenth Coast Guard District.

[FR Doc. 2018–12284 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 9110–04–P

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Coast Guard

33 CFR Part 165

[Docket Number USCG–2018–0308]

RIN 1625–AA00

Safety Zone; Ohio River, Mile Marker 27.8 to Mile Marker 28.2, Vanport, PA

AGENCY: Coast Guard, DHS.

ACTION: Temporary final rule.

SUMMARY: The Coast Guard is establishing a temporary safety zone for the navigable waters of the Ohio River from mile marker 27.8 to mile marker 28.2 near the Vanport Highway Bridge. The safety zone is necessary to protect personnel, vessels, and the marine environment from potential hazards created by a cargo movement near the Vanport Highway Bridge in Vanport, PA. Entry of vessels or persons into this zone is prohibited unless authorized by the Captain of the Port Marine Safety Unit Pittsburgh or a designated representative.

DATES: This rule is effective without actual notice from June 7, 2018 through 6 p.m. on June 16, 2018. For the purposes of enforcement, actual notice will be used from 8 a.m. on June 2, 2018 through June 7, 2018.

ADDRESSES: To view documents mentioned in this preamble as being available in the docket, go to *http://www.regulations.gov,* type USCG–2018–0308 in the ''SEARCH'' box and click ''SEARCH.'' Click on Open Docket Folder on the line associated with this rule.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: If you have questions on this rule, call or email Petty Officer Jennifer Haggins, Marine Safety Unit Pittsburgh, U.S. Coast Guard, at telephone 412–221–0807, email *Jennifer.L.Haggins@uscg.mil*.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Table of Abbreviations

CFR Code of Federal Regulations
COTP Captain of the Port Marine Safety Unit Pittsburgh
DHS Department of Homeland Security
FR Federal Register
NPRM Notice of proposed rulemaking
§ Section
U.S.C. United States Code

II. Background Information and Regulatory History

The Coast Guard is issuing this temporary rule without prior notice and opportunity to comment pursuant to

authority under section 4(a) of the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) (5 U.S.C. 553(b)). This provision authorizes an agency to issue a rule without prior notice and opportunity to comment when the agency for good cause finds that those procedures are ''impracticable, unnecessary, or contrary to the public interest.'' Under 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(3)(B), the Coast Guard finds that good cause exists for not publishing a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) with respect to this rule because it is impracticable. We must establish this safety zone by June 2, 2018, and we lack sufficient time to provide a reasonable comment period and then consider those comments before issuing this rule. The NPRM process would delay the establishment of the safety zone until after the date of the cargo operation and compromise public safety.

Under 5 U.S.C. 553(d)(3), the Coast Guard finds that good cause exists for making this rule effective less than 30 days after publication in the **Federal Register**. Delaying the effective date of this rule would be impracticable and contrary to the public interest because immediate action is needed to respond to the potential safety hazards associated with the cargo movement.

III. Legal Authority and Need for Rule

The Coast Guard is issuing this rule under authority in 33 U.S.C. 1231. The Captain of the Port Marine Safety Unit Pittsburgh (COTP) has determined that potential hazards associated with a cargo movement operation on a day between June 2, 2018 and June 16, 2018 will be a safety concern for anyone within a half-mile stretch of the Ohio River. This rule is necessary to protect personnel, vessels, and the marine environment in the navigable waters before, during, and after the cargo movement.

IV. Discussion of the Rule

This rule establishes a temporary safety zone from 8 a.m. on June 2, 2018 through 6 p.m. on June 16, 2018 for all navigable waters of the Ohio River from mile marker 27.8 to mile marker 28.2. Entry into this safety zone during the enforcement period is prohibited, unless authorized by the COTP or a designated representative. Subject to the cargo delivery intervals and potential inclement weather, the enforcement period will be 30 minutes prior to, during, and 1 hour after any cargo movement near the Vanport Highway Bridge. The Coast Guard was informed that the operation would take place during daylight hours only and last approximately 4 hours. A safety vessel will coordinate all vessel traffic during the enforcement period. The COTP or a designated representative will inform the public through Broadcast Notices to Mariners (BNMs), Local Notices to Mariners (LNMs), and/or Marine Safety Information Bulletins (MSIBs), or through other means of public notice as appropriate at least 3 hours in advance of the enforcement period.

The duration of the zone is intended to protect personnel, vessels, and the marine environment in these navigable waters during cargo movement operations. No vessel or person will be permitted to enter the safety zone without obtaining permission from the COTP or a designated representative. A designated representative is a commissioned, warrant, or petty officer of the U.S. Coast Guard assigned to units under the operational control of Marine Safety Unit Pittsburgh. They may be contacted on VHF–FM Channel 16 or 67. Persons and vessels permitted to enter this regulated area must transit at their slowest safe speed and comply with all lawful directions issued by the COTP or the designated representative. The COTP or a designated representative will inform the public of the effective period for the safety zone as well as any changes in the dates and times of enforcement through Local Notice to Mariners (LNMs), Broadcast Notices to Mariners (BNMs), and/or Marine Safety Information Bulletins (MSIBs) as appropriate.

V. Regulatory Analyses

We developed this rule after considering numerous statutes and Executive orders related to rulemaking. Below we summarize our analyses based on a number of these statutes and Executive orders, and we discuss First Amendment rights of protestors.

A. Regulatory Planning and Review

Executive Orders 12866 and 13563 direct agencies to assess the costs and benefits of available regulatory alternatives and, if regulation is necessary, to select regulatory approaches that maximize net benefits. Executive Order 13771 directs agencies to control regulatory costs through a budgeting process. This rule has not been designated a ''significant regulatory action,'' under Executive Order 12866. Accordingly, this rule has not been reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and pursuant to OMB guidance it is exempt from the requirements of Executive Order 13771.

This regulatory action determination is based on the size, location, duration, and time-of-year of the safety zone. This safety zone will be enforced for a period of four hours on one day on less than a half mile of the Ohio River. The Coast Guard will issue LNMs and BNMs via VHF–FM marine channel 16 about the temporary safety zone, and the rule allows vessels to seek permission from the COTP or a designated representative to enter the safety zone.

B. Impact on Small Entities

The Regulatory Flexibility Act of 1980, 5 U.S.C. 601–612, as amended, requires Federal agencies to consider the potential impact of regulations on small entities during rulemaking. The term ''small entities'' comprises small businesses, not-for-profit organizations that are independently owned and operated and are not dominant in their fields, and governmental jurisdictions with populations of less than 50,000. The Coast Guard certifies under 5 U.S.C. 605(b) that this rule will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities.

While some owners or operators of vessels intending to transit the safety zone may be small entities, for the reasons stated in section V.A above, this rule will not have a significant economic impact on any vessel owner or operator.

Under section 213(a) of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996 (Pub. L. 104–121), we want to assist small entities in understanding this rule. If the rule would affect your small business, organization, or governmental jurisdiction and you have questions concerning its provisions or options for compliance, please contact the person listed in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section.

Small businesses may send comments on the actions of Federal employees who enforce, or otherwise determine compliance with, Federal regulations to the Small Business and Agriculture Regulatory Enforcement Ombudsman and the Regional Small Business Regulatory Fairness Boards. The Ombudsman evaluates these actions annually and rates each agency's responsiveness to small business. If you wish to comment on actions by employees of the Coast Guard, call 1–888–REG–FAIR (1–888–734–3247). The Coast Guard will not retaliate against small entities that question or complain about this rule or any policy or action of the Coast Guard.

C. Collection of Information

This rule will not call for a new collection of information under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501–3520).

D. Federalism and Indian Tribal Governments

A rule has implications for federalism under Executive Order 13132, Federalism, if it has a substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the national government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government. We have analyzed this rule under that Order and have determined that it is consistent with the fundamental federalism principles and preemption requirements described in Executive Order 13132.

Also, this rule does not have tribal implications under Executive Order 13175, Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments, because it does not have a substantial direct effect on one or more Indian tribes, on the relationship between the Federal Government and Indian tribes, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities between the Federal Government and Indian tribes. If you believe this rule has implications for federalism or Indian tribes, please contact the person listed in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section above.

E. Unfunded Mandates Reform Act

The Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1531–1538) requires Federal agencies to assess the effects of their discretionary regulatory actions. In particular, the Act addresses actions that may result in the expenditure by a State, local, or tribal government, in the aggregate, or by the private sector of $100,000,000 (adjusted for inflation) or more in any one year. Though this rule will not result in such an expenditure, we do discuss the effects of this rule elsewhere in this preamble.

F. Environment

We have analyzed this rule under Department of Homeland Security Directive 023–01 and Commandant Instruction M16475.1D, which guide the Coast Guard in complying with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321–4370f), and have determined that this action is one of a category of actions that do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment. This rule involves a temporary safety zone lasting only 4 hours that prohibits entry on a half-mile stretch of the Ohio River for 4 hours on one day from June 2, 2016 through June 16, 2018. It is categorically excluded from further review under paragraph L60(a) of Appendix A, Table 1 of DHS Instruction Manual 023–01–001–01, Rev. 01. A Record of Environmental Consideration supporting this determination is available in the docket where indicated under **ADDRESSES**.

G. Protest Activities

The Coast Guard respects the First Amendment rights of protesters. Protesters are asked to contact the person listed in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section to coordinate protest activities so that your message can be received without jeopardizing the safety or security of people, places or vessels.

List of Subjects in 33 CFR Part 165

Marine safety, Navigation (water), Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Security measures, Waterways.

For the reasons discussed in the preamble, the Coast Guard amends 33 CFR part 165 as follows:

PART 165—REGULATED NAVIGATION AREAS AND LIMITED ACCESS AREAS

■ 1. The authority citation for part 165 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 33 U.S.C. 1231; 50 U.S.C. 191; 33 CFR 1.05–1, 6.04–1, 6.04–6, and 160.5; Department of Homeland Security Delegation No. 0170.1.

■ 2. Add § 165.T08–0308 to read as follows:

§ 165.T08–0308 Safety Zone; Ohio River, mile marker 27.8 to mile marker 28.2, Vanport, PA.

(a) *Location.* The following area is a safety zone: All navigable waters of the Ohio River from mile marker 27.8 to mile marker 28.2.

(b) *Effective period.* This section is effective from 8 a.m. on June 2, 2018 through 6 p.m. on June 16, 2018.

(c) *Enforcement period.* This section will be enforced from June 2, 2018 through June 16, 2018, subject to cargo delivery intervals and potential inclement weather, 30 minutes prior to, during, and 1 hour after any cargo movement in the vicinity of the Vanport Highway Bridge. The Captain of the Port Marine Safety Unit Pittsburgh (COTP) or a designated representative will inform the public of the enforcement period through BNMs, LNMs, and/or Marine Safety Information Bulletins (MSIBs) or through other means of public notice at least 3 hours in advance of the enforcement period. A safety vessel will coordinate all vessel traffic during the enforcement of this safety zone.

(d) *Regulations.* (1) In accordance with the general regulations in § 165.23, entry into this zone is prohibited unless authorized by the COTP or designated representative. A designated representative is a commissioned, warrant, or petty officer of the U.S. Coast Guard assigned to units under the operational control of USCG Marine Safety Unit Pittsburgh.

(2) Vessels requiring entry into this safety zone must request permission from the COTP or a designated representative. They may be contacted on VHF–FM Channel 16 or 67.

(3) All persons and vessels permitted to enter this safety zone must transit at the slowest safe speed and comply with all lawful directions issued by the COTP or the designated representative.

(e) *Informational broadcasts.* The COTP or a designated representative will inform the public of the effective period for the safety zone as well as any changes in the dates and times of enforcement through Local Notices to Mariners (LNMs), Broadcast Notices to Mariners (BNMs), and/or Marine Safety Information Bulletins (MSIBs) as appropriate.

Dated: June 1, 2018.

L. McClain, Jr.,

Commander, U.S. Coast Guard, Captain of the Port Marine Safety Unit Pittsburgh.

[FR Doc. 2018–12283 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 9110–04–P

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Coast Guard

33 CFR Part 165

[Docket Number USCG–2018–0242]

RIN 1625–AA00

Safety Zone; Blazing Paddles 2018 SUP Race; Cuyahoga River, Cleveland, OH&

AGENCY: Coast Guard, DHS.

ACTION: Temporary final rule.

SUMMARY: The Coast Guard is establishing a temporary safety zone for certain waters of the Cuyahoga River during the Blazing Paddles Stand Up Paddleboard Race. This safety zone is intended to restrict vessels from a portion of the Cuyahoga River during the Blazing Paddles Stand Up Paddleboard Race. This temporary safety zone is necessary to protect mariners and racers from the navigational hazards associated with the Stand Up Paddleboard Race.

DATES: This rule is effective from 8:30 a.m. through 11:30 a.m. on June 23, 2018.

ADDRESSES: To view documents mentioned in this preamble as being

available in the docket, go to *http://www.regulations.gov,* type USCG–2018–0242 in the ''SEARCH'' box and click ''SEARCH.'' Click on Open Docket Folder on the line associated with this rule.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: If you have questions on this rule, call or email LT Michael Collet, Chief of Waterways Management, U.S. Coast Guard Sector Buffalo; telephone 716–843–9322, email *SectorBuffaloMarineSafety@uscg.mil.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Table of Abbreviations

CFR Code of Federal Regulations
COTP Captain of the Port
DHS Department of Homeland Security
FR Federal Register
NPRM Notice of proposed rulemaking
§ Section
U.S.C. United States Code

II. Background Information and Regulatory History

On April 20, 2018 the Coast Guard published a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) titled Blazing Paddles 2018 SUP Race; Cuyahoga River, Cleveland, OH § 165.T09–0242. In that we discussed why we issued the NPRM and invited comments on our proposed regulatory action related to this Standup Paddleboard race. The comment period ended May 30, 2018; we received one comment relating to the event. The comment makes note of a Memorandum of Understanding that had been agreed upon by the Lake Carriers' Association and Share the River. The Lake Carriers Association have no objection to the proposed rule. There was nothing further that needed to be addressed regarding the Temporary Final Rule.

Under 5 U.S.C. 553(d)(3), the Coast Guard finds that good cause exists for making this rule effective less than 30 days after publication in the **Federal Register** because doing so would be impracticable and contrary to the public interest. Delaying the effective date would be contrary to the rule's objectives of ensuring safety of life on the navigable waters and protection of persons and vessels near the event.

III. Legal Authority and Need for Rule

The Coast Guard is issuing this rule under authority in 33 U.S.C. 1231. The Captain of the Port Buffalo (COTP) has determined that a large-scale paddle craft event on a navigable waterway will pose a significant risk to participants and the boating public. This rule is needed to protect personnel, vessels, and the marine environment in the navigable waters within the safety zone while the Blazing Paddles Race is happening.

IV. Discussion of Comments, Changes, and the Rule

As noted above, we received one comment on our NPRM published April 30, 2018, and there was no objection to the proposed rule. There are no changes in the regulatory text of this rule from the proposed rule in the NPRM.

This rule establishes a safety zone from 8:30 a.m. through 11:30 a.m. on June 23, 2018. The safety zone will cover all navigable waters at the start point at position 41°29′36″ N and 081°42′13″ W to the turnaround point at position 41°28′52″ N and 081°40′33″ W on the Cuyahoga River in Cleveland, OH. The duration of the zone is intended to ensure the safety of vessels and these navigable waters before, during, and after the scheduled 9 to 11 a.m. Paddleboard Race.

Entry into, transiting, or anchoring within the safety zone is prohibited unless authorized by the COTP Buffalo or his designated on-scene representative. The COTP or his designated on-scene representative may be contacted via VHF Channel 16.

V. Regulatory Analyses

We developed this rule after considering numerous statutes and Executive Orders related to rulemaking. Below we summarize our analyses based on a number of these statutes and Executive Orders, and we discuss First Amendment rights of protestors.

A. Regulatory Planning and Review

Executive Orders 12866 and 13563 direct agencies to assess the costs and benefits of available regulatory alternatives and, if regulation is necessary, to select regulatory approaches that maximize net benefits. Executive Order 13771 directs agencies to control regulatory costs through a budgeting process. This rule has not been designated a ''significant regulatory action,'' under Executive Order 12866. Accordingly, this rule has not been reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and pursuant to OMB guidance it is exempt from the requirements of Executive Order 13771.

This regulatory action determination is based on the characteristics of the safety zone. The safety zone created by this rule will be relatively small and is designed to minimize its impact on navigable waters. Furthermore, the safety zone has been designed to allow vessels to transit around it. In addition, the safety zone will designate times when races are not occurring; allowing vessels to travel through the safety zone. Thus, restrictions on vessel movement within that particular area are expected to be minimal. Under certain conditions, moreover, vessels may still transit through the safety zone when permitted by the COTP.

B. Impact on Small Entities

The Regulatory Flexibility Act of 1980, 5 U.S.C. 601–612, as amended, requires Federal agencies to consider the potential impact of regulations on small entities during rulemaking. The term ''small entities'' comprises small businesses, not-for-profit organizations that are independently owned and operated and are not dominant in their fields, and governmental jurisdictions with populations of less than 50,000. The Coast Guard received 00 comments from the Small Business Administration on this rulemaking. The Coast Guard certifies under 5 U.S.C. 605(b) that this rule will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities.

While some owners or operators of vessels intending to transit the safety zone may be small entities, for the reasons stated in section V.A above, this rule will not have a significant economic impact on any vessel owner or operator.

Under section 213(a) of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996 (Pub. L. 104–121), we want to assist small entities in understanding this rule. If the rule would affect your small business, organization, or governmental jurisdiction and you have questions concerning its provisions or options for compliance, please contact the person listed in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section.

Small businesses may send comments on the actions of Federal employees who enforce, or otherwise determine compliance with, Federal regulations to the Small Business and Agriculture Regulatory Enforcement Ombudsman and the Regional Small Business Regulatory Fairness Boards. The Ombudsman evaluates these actions annually and rates each agency's responsiveness to small business. If you wish to comment on actions by employees of the Coast Guard, call 1–888–REG–FAIR (1–888–734–3247). The Coast Guard will not retaliate against small entities that question or complain about this rule or any policy or action of the Coast Guard.

C. Collection of Information

This rule will not call for a new collection of information under the

Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501–3520).

D. Federalism and Indian Tribal Governments

A rule has implications for federalism under Executive Order 13132, Federalism, if it has a substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the national government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government. We have analyzed this rule under that Order and have determined that it is consistent with the fundamental federalism principles and preemption requirements described in Executive Order 13132.

Also, this rule does not have tribal implications under Executive Order 13175, Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments, because it does not have a substantial direct effect on one or more Indian tribes, on the relationship between the Federal Government and Indian tribes, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities between the Federal Government and Indian tribes. If you believe this rule has implications for federalism or Indian tribes, please contact the person listed in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section.

E. Unfunded Mandates Reform Act

The Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1531–1538) requires Federal agencies to assess the effects of their discretionary regulatory actions. In particular, the Act addresses actions that may result in the expenditure by a State, local, or tribal government, in the aggregate, or by the private sector of $100,000,000 (adjusted for inflation) or more in any one year. Though this rule will not result in such an expenditure, we do discuss the effects of this rule elsewhere in this preamble.

F. Environment

We have analyzed this rule under Department of Homeland Security Management Directive 023–01 and Commandant Instruction M16475.lD, which guide the Coast Guard in complying with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321–4370f), and have determined that this action is one of a category of actions that do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment. This rule involves establishment of a safety zone. It is categorically excluded from further review under paragraph L60(a) of Appendix A, Table 1 of DHS Instruction Manual 023–01–001–01, Rev. 01. A Record of Environmental Consideration supporting this determination is available in the docket where indicated under **ADDRESSES**.

G. Protest Activities

The Coast Guard respects the First Amendment rights of protesters. Protesters are asked to contact the person listed in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section to coordinate protest activities so that your message can be received without jeopardizing the safety or security of people, places or vessels.

List of Subjects in 33 CFR Part 165

Harbors, Marine safety, Navigation (water), Reporting and record keeping requirements, Security measures, Waterways.

For the reasons discussed in the preamble, the Coast Guard amends 33 CFR part 165 as follows:

PART 165—REGULATED NAVIGATION AREAS AND LIMITED ACCESS AREAS

■ 1. The authority citation for part 165 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 33 U.S.C. 1231; 50 U.S.C. 191; 33 CFR 1.05–1, 6.04–1, 6.04–6, and 160.5; Department of Homeland Security Delegation No. 0170.1.

■ 2. Add § 165.T09–0242 to read as follows:

§ 165.T09–0242 Safety Zone; Blazing Paddles 2018 SUP Race; Cuyahoga River, Cleveland, OH.

(a) *Location.* The safety zone will encompass all waters of the Cuyahoga River in Cleveland OH, beginning at position 41°29′36″ N and 081°42′13″ W to the turnaround point at position 41°28′52″ N and 081°40′33″ (NAD 83).

(b) *Enforcement period.* This rule will be enforced from 8:30 a.m. through 11:30 a.m. on June 23, 2018.

(c) *Regulations.* (1) In accordance with the general regulations in § 165.23, entry into, transiting, or anchoring within this safety zone is prohibited unless authorized by the Captain of the Port Buffalo (COTP) or his designated on-scene representative.

(2) This safety zone is closed to all vessel traffic, except as may be permitted by the COTP or his designated on-scene representative.

(3) The ''on-scene representative'' of the COTP is any Coast Guard commissioned, warrant or petty officer who has been designated by the COTP to act on his behalf.

(4) Vessel operators desiring to enter or operate within the safety zone must contact the COTP Buffalo or his on-scene representative to obtain permission to do so. The COTP or his on-scene representative may be contacted via VHF Channel 16 or at (716) 843–9322. Vessel operators given permission to enter or operate in the safety zone must comply with all directions given to them by the COTP or his on-scene representative.

Dated: June 4, 2018.

Joseph S. Dufresne,

Captain, U.S. Coast Guard, Captain of the Port Buffalo.

[FR Doc. 2018–12301 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 9110–04–P

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

40 CFR Part 180

[EPA–HQ–OPP–2017–0376; FRL–9978–20]

Acequinocyl; Pesticide Tolerances

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: This regulation establishes tolerances for residues of acequinocyl in or on guava and the tropical and subtropical, small fruit, inedible peel, subgroup 24A. Interregional Research Project Number 4 (IR–4) requested these tolerances under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FFDCA).

DATES: This regulation is effective June 7, 2018. Objections and requests for hearings must be received on or before August 6, 2018, and must be filed in accordance with the instructions provided in 40 CFR part 178 (see also Unit I.C. of the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**).

ADDRESSES: The docket for this action, identified by docket identification (ID) number EPA–HQ–OPP–2017–0376, is available at *http://www.regulations.gov* or at the Office of Pesticide Programs Regulatory Public Docket (OPP Docket) in the Environmental Protection Agency Docket Center (EPA/DC), West William Jefferson Clinton Bldg., Rm. 3334, 1301 Constitution Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20460–0001. The Public Reading Room is open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding legal holidays. The telephone number for the Public Reading Room is (202) 566–1744, and the telephone number for the OPP Docket is (703) 305–5805. Please review the visitor instructions and additional information about the docket available at *http://www.epa.gov/dockets.*

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Michael Goodis, Registration Division (7505P), Office of Pesticide Programs, Environmental Protection Agency, 1200

Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20460–0001; main telephone number: (703) 305–7090; email address: *RDFRNotices@epa.gov*.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. General Information

A. Does this action apply to me?

You may be potentially affected by this action if you are an agricultural producer, food manufacturer, or pesticide manufacturer. The following list of North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) codes is not intended to be exhaustive, but rather provides a guide to help readers determine whether this document applies to them. Potentially affected entities may include:

- Crop production (NAICS code 111).
- Animal production (NAICS code 112).
- Food manufacturing (NAICS code 311).
- Pesticide manufacturing (NAICS code 32532).

B. How can I get electronic access to other related information?

You may access a frequently updated electronic version of EPA's tolerance regulations at 40 CFR part 180 through the Government Printing Office's e-CFR site at *http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?&c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title40/40tab_02.tpl*.

C. How can I file an objection or hearing request?

Under FFDCA section 408(g), 21 U.S.C. 346a, any person may file an objection to any aspect of this regulation and may also request a hearing on those objections. You must file your objection or request a hearing on this regulation in accordance with the instructions provided in 40 CFR part 178. To ensure proper receipt by EPA, you must identify docket ID number EPA–HQ–OPP–2017–0376 in the subject line on the first page of your submission. All objections and requests for a hearing must be in writing, and must be received by the Hearing Clerk on or before August 6, 2018. Addresses for mail and hand delivery of objections and hearing requests are provided in 40 CFR 178.25(b).

In addition to filing an objection or hearing request with the Hearing Clerk as described in 40 CFR part 178, please submit a copy of the filing (excluding any Confidential Business Information (CBI)) for inclusion in the public docket. Information not marked confidential pursuant to 40 CFR part 2 may be disclosed publicly by EPA without prior notice. Submit the non-CBI copy of your objection or hearing request, identified by docket ID number EPA–HQ–OPP–2017–0376, by one of the following methods:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal: http://www.regulations.gov*. Follow the online instructions for submitting comments. Do not submit electronically any information you consider to be CBI or other information whose disclosure is restricted by statute.
- *Mail:* OPP Docket, Environmental Protection Agency Docket Center (EPA/DC), (28221T), 1200 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20460–0001.
- *Hand Delivery:* To make special arrangements for hand delivery or delivery of boxed information, please follow the instructions at *http://www.epa.gov/dockets/contacts.html*.

Additional instructions on commenting or visiting the docket, along with more information about dockets generally, is available at *http://www.epa.gov/dockets*.

II. Summary of Petitioned-For Tolerance

In the **Federal Register** of October 23, 2017 (82 FR 49020) (FRL–9967–37), EPA issued a document pursuant to FFDCA section 408(d)(3), 21 U.S.C. 346a(d)(3), announcing the filing of a pesticide petition (PP 7E8579) by IR–4, 500 College Road East, Suite 201 W, Princeton, NJ 08540. The petition requested that 40 CFR part 180 be amended by establishing tolerances for residues of the insecticide acequinocyl, 2-(acetyloxy)-3-dodecyl-1,4-naphthalenedione, and its metabolite, 2-dodecyl-3-hydroxy-1,4-naphthoquinone (acequinocyl-OH), expressed as acequinocyl equivalents in or on guava at 0.9 ppm and the tropical and subtropical, small fruit, inedible peel, subgroup 24A at 2 ppm. That document referenced a summary of the petition prepared by Arysta LifeScience, the registrant, which is available in the docket, *http://www.regulations.gov.* A comment expressing concern about the effects of wind turbines on bats was received on the notice of filing, but it is not relevant to this action.

EPA is establishing the requested tolerances with additional significant figures in conformity with Agency policy.

III. Aggregate Risk Assessment and Determination of Safety

Section 408(b)(2)(A)(i) of FFDCA allows EPA to establish a tolerance (the legal limit for a pesticide chemical residue in or on a food) only if EPA determines that the tolerance is ''safe.'' Section 408(b)(2)(A)(ii) of FFDCA defines ''safe'' to mean that ''there is a reasonable certainty that no harm will result from aggregate exposure to the pesticide chemical residue, including all anticipated dietary exposures and all other exposures for which there is reliable information.'' This includes exposure through drinking water and in residential settings, but does not include occupational exposure. Section 408(b)(2)(C) of FFDCA requires EPA to give special consideration to exposure of infants and children to the pesticide chemical residue in establishing a tolerance and to ''ensure that there is a reasonable certainty that no harm will result to infants and children from aggregate exposure to the pesticide chemical residue. . . .''

Consistent with FFDCA section 408(b)(2)(D), and the factors specified in FFDCA section 408(b)(2)(D), EPA has reviewed the available scientific data and other relevant information in support of this action. EPA has sufficient data to assess the hazards of and to make a determination on aggregate exposure for acequinocyl including exposure resulting from the tolerances established by this action. EPA's assessment of exposures and risks associated with acequinocyl follows.

A. Toxicological Profile

EPA has evaluated the available toxicity data and considered its validity, completeness, and reliability as well as the relationship of the results of the studies to human risk. EPA has also considered available information concerning the variability of the sensitivities of major identifiable subgroups of consumers, including infants and children.

The target organs of acequinocyl are the liver (hepatocyte vacuolization, brown pigmented cells and perivascular inflammatory cells in liver) and hematopoietic system (hemorrhage, increased clotting factor times and increased platelet counts). There was no evidence of neurotoxicity or immunotoxicity. There was no evidence of carcinogenic potential in either the rat or mouse and there was no concern for genotoxicity or mutagenicity.

In rats and rabbits, there was no evidence of increased quantitative or qualitative fetal susceptibility. For both species, maternal effects (clinical signs and gross necropsy findings) were observed at similar or lower doses than those producing fetal effects. In rabbits, there were increased incidences of late resorptions at the highest dose tested. Since it is unknown whether resorptions occurred from toxicity to maternal animals or the fetuses, the resorptions are considered maternal and developmental adverse effects. In the rat

two-generation reproduction toxicity study, there was increased quantitative offspring susceptibility. Offspring effects consisted of hemorrhagic effects, swollen body parts (head and extremities), protruding eyes, clinical signs (bloody encrusted nose, cold to touch, red urine, blue colored eyes and extremities, paleness), delays in pupil development, and increased mortality occurring mainly after weaning. The increased incidences of hemorrhagic effects post-weaning indicate toxicity to the hematopoietic system. While there were no parental effects up to the highest dose tested, hematological effects (changes in partial and activated partial thromboplastin times) were observed in adult animals in other studies at the same dose causing the offspring effects, but were not measured in the two-generation reproduction toxicity study. As a result, using a weight-of-evidence approach that considers the findings from the two-generation reproduction toxicity study in context of the full toxicological database, parental toxicity would be anticipated at the same doses as offspring effects if additional evaluations had been performed, particularly hematological measurements. There were no effects on reproductive parameters.

Specific information on the studies received and the nature of the adverse effects caused by acequinocyl as well as the no-observed-adverse-effect-level (NOAEL) and the lowest-observed-adverse-effect-level (LOAEL) from the toxicity studies can be found at *http://www.regulations.gov* in the document titled ''*Acequinocyl. Human Health Risk Assessment to Support the Petition for Tolerance for Residues in/on Guava and Tropical and Subtropical, Small Fruit, Inedible Peel, Subgroup 24A*'' on page numbers 29–31 in docket ID number EPA–HQ–OPP–2017–0376.

B. Toxicological Points of Departure/ Levels of Concern

Once a pesticide's toxicological profile is determined, EPA identifies toxicological points of departure (POD) and levels of concern to use in evaluating the risk posed by human exposure to the pesticide. For hazards that have a threshold below which there is no appreciable risk, the toxicological POD is used as the basis for derivation of reference values for risk assessment. PODs are developed based on a careful analysis of the doses in each toxicological study to determine the dose at which no adverse effects are observed (the NOAEL) and the lowest dose at which adverse effects of concern are identified (the LOAEL). Uncertainty/safety factors are used in conjunction with the POD to calculate a safe exposure level—generally referred to as a population-adjusted dose (PAD) or a reference dose (RfD)—and a safe margin of exposure (MOE). For non-threshold risks, the Agency assumes that any amount of exposure will lead to some degree of risk. Thus, the Agency estimates risk in terms of the probability of an occurrence of the adverse effect expected in a lifetime. For more information on the general principles EPA uses in risk characterization and a complete description of the risk assessment process, see *http://www2.epa.gov/pesticide-science-and-assessing-pesticide-risks/assessing-human-health-risk-pesticides*.

A summary of the toxicological endpoints for acequinocyl used for human risk assessment is discussed in Unit III.B. of the final rule published in the **Federal Register** of January 18, 2017 (82 FR 5409) (FRL–9956–85).

C. Exposure Assessment

1. *Dietary exposure from food and feed uses.* In evaluating dietary exposure to acequinocyl, EPA considered exposure under the petitioned-for tolerances as well as all existing acequinocyl tolerances in 40 CFR 180.599. EPA assessed dietary exposures from acequinocyl in food as follows:

i. *Acute exposure.* Quantitative acute dietary exposure and risk assessments are performed for a food-use pesticide, if a toxicological study has indicated the possibility of an effect of concern occurring as a result of a 1-day or single exposure.

Such effects were identified for acequinocyl. In estimating acute dietary exposure, EPA used food consumption information from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) 2003–2008 National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, What We Eat in America, (NHANES/WWEIA). As to residue levels in food, EPA assumed tolerance-level residues and 100 percent crop treated (PCT) for all proposed and registered uses.

ii. *Chronic exposure.* In conducting the chronic dietary exposure assessment EPA used the food consumption data from the USDA 2003–2008 NHANES/WWEIA. As to residue levels in food, EPA assumed tolerance-level residues and 100 PCT for all proposed and registered uses.

iii. *Cancer.* Based on the data summarized in Unit III.A., EPA has concluded that acequinocyl does not pose a cancer risk to humans. Therefore, a dietary exposure assessment for the purpose of assessing cancer risk is unnecessary.

iv. *Anticipated residue and PCT information.* EPA did not use anticipated residue or PCT information in the dietary assessment for acequinocyl. Tolerance-level residues and 100 PCT were assumed for all food commodities.

2. *Dietary exposure from drinking water.* The Agency used screening-level water exposure models in the dietary exposure analysis and risk assessment for acequinocyl in drinking water. These simulation models take into account data on the physical, chemical, and fate/transport characteristics of acequinocyl. Further information regarding EPA drinking water models used in pesticide exposure assessment can be found at *http://www2.epa.gov/pesticide-science-and-assessing-pesticide-risks/about-water-exposure-models-used-pesticide.*

Based on the Pesticide Root Zone Model/Exposure Analysis Modeling System (PRZM/EXAMS), Provisional Cranberry Model, and Screening Concentration in Ground Water (SCI–GROW) Model, the estimated drinking water concentrations (EDWCs) of acequinocyl for acute exposures are estimated to be 6.69 parts per billion (ppb) for surface water and 3.6×10^{-3} ppb for ground water, and for chronic exposures are estimated to be 6.69 ppb for surface water and 3.6×10^{-3} ppb for ground water.

Modeled estimates of drinking water concentrations were directly entered into the dietary exposure model. For both the acute and chronic dietary risk assessments, the water concentration value of 6.69 ppb was used to assess the contribution to drinking water.

3. *From non-dietary exposure.* The term ''residential exposure'' is used in this document to refer to non-occupational, non-dietary exposure (*e.g.,* for lawn and garden pest control, indoor pest control, termiticides, and flea and tick control on pets).

Acequinocyl is currently registered for the following uses that could result in residential exposures: Use on ornamentals for landscapes, gardens, and trees. EPA assessed residential exposure using the following assumptions: Residential handler exposures are not expected since all registered acequinocyl product labels with residential use sites (*e.g.,* ornamentals for landscapes, gardens, and trees) require that handlers wear specific clothing (*e.g.,* long-sleeve shirt/long pants) and/or use personal protective equipment (PPE). As a result, a residential handler assessment was not conducted.

Only short-term post-application dermal exposure is anticipated for the registered residential uses. The quantitative exposure/risk assessment for residential post-application exposures assessed dermal exposures to adults for activities associated with gardening, dermal exposures to children (6 to <11 years old) for activities associated with playing in and around gardens and gardening, dermal exposures to adults associated with handling trees and retail plants, and dermal exposures to children (6 to <11 years old) for activities associated with playing in and around trees and retail plants.

Further information regarding EPA standard assumptions and generic inputs for residential exposures may be found at *http://www2.epa.gov/pesticide-science-and-assessing-pesticide-risks/standard-operating-procedures-residential-pesticide.*

4. *Cumulative effects from substances with a common mechanism of toxicity.* Section 408(b)(2)(D)(v) of FFDCA requires that, when considering whether to establish, modify, or revoke a tolerance, the Agency consider ''available information'' concerning the cumulative effects of a particular pesticide's residues and ''other substances that have a common mechanism of toxicity.''

EPA has not found acequinocyl to share a common mechanism of toxicity with any other substances, and acequinocyl does not appear to produce a toxic metabolite produced by other substances. For the purposes of this tolerance action, therefore, EPA has assumed that acequinocyl does not have a common mechanism of toxicity with other substances. For information regarding EPA's efforts to determine which chemicals have a common mechanism of toxicity and to evaluate the cumulative effects of such chemicals, see EPA's website at *http://www2.epa.gov/pesticide-science-and-assessing-pesticide-risks/cumulative-assessment-risk-pesticides.*

D. Safety Factor for Infants and Children

1. *In general.* Section 408(b)(2)(C) of FFDCA provides that EPA shall apply an additional tenfold (10X) margin of safety for infants and children in the case of threshold effects to account for prenatal and postnatal toxicity and the completeness of the database on toxicity and exposure unless EPA determines based on reliable data that a different margin of safety will be safe for infants and children. This additional margin of safety is commonly referred to as the Food Quality Protection Act Safety Factor (FQPA SF). In applying this provision, EPA either retains the default value of 10X, or uses a different additional safety factor when reliable data available to EPA support the choice of a different factor.

2. *Prenatal and postnatal sensitivity.* There is no evidence of an increased quantitative or qualitative fetal susceptibility in rats or rabbits. In isolation, there was evidence of increased quantitative offspring susceptibility in the two-generation reproductive study; however, the concern is low since:

i. The effects in pups are well characterized with a clear NOAEL and

ii. The effects are protected for by the selected endpoints.

Therefore, there are no residual uncertainties for pre-/post-natal toxicity. Additionally, hematological parameters were not measured for the parental animals in the two-generation reproductive study; however, hematological effects were observed in adult animals in other oral rat studies at the same doses eliciting offspring effects. Therefore, considering the offspring findings in the two-generation reproductive toxicity study in context with the full toxicological database, there is no concern for offspring susceptibility since parental toxicity would be anticipated at the same dose as offspring effects.

3. *Conclusion.* EPA has determined that reliable data show the safety of infants and children would be adequately protected if the FQPA SF were reduced to 1x. That decision is based on the following findings:

i. The toxicity database for acequinocyl is complete.

ii. There is no indication that acequinocyl is a neurotoxic chemical and there is no need for a developmental neurotoxicity study or additional UFs to account for neurotoxicity.

iii. There is no evidence of an increased quantitative or qualitative fetal susceptibility in rats or rabbits, but in isolation there was evidence of increased quantitative offspring susceptibility in the two-generation reproductive study. However, the concern is low for the reasons outlined above in section III.D.2.

iv. There are no residual uncertainties identified in the exposure databases. The dietary food exposure assessments were performed based on 100 PCT and tolerance-level residues. EPA made conservative (protective) assumptions in the ground and surface water modeling used to assess exposure to acequinocyl in drinking water. EPA used similarly conservative assumptions to assess post-application exposure of children. These assessments will not underestimate the exposure and risks posed by acequinocyl.

E. Aggregate Risks and Determination of Safety

EPA determines whether acute and chronic dietary pesticide exposures are safe by comparing aggregate exposure estimates to the acute PAD (aPAD) and chronic PAD (cPAD). For linear cancer risks, EPA calculates the lifetime probability of acquiring cancer given the estimated aggregate exposure. Short-, intermediate-, and chronic-term risks are evaluated by comparing the estimated aggregate food, water, and residential exposure to the appropriate PODs to ensure that an adequate MOE exists.

1. *Acute risk.* Using the exposure assumptions discussed in this unit for acute exposure, the acute dietary exposure from food and water to acequinocyl will occupy 71% of the aPAD for children 1–2 years old, the population group receiving the greatest exposure.

2. *Chronic risk.* Using the exposure assumptions described in this unit for chronic exposure, EPA has concluded that chronic exposure to acequinocyl from food and water will utilize 71% of the cPAD for children 1–2 years old, the population group receiving the greatest exposure. Based on the explanation in Unit III.C.3., regarding residential use patterns, chronic residential exposure to residues of acequinocyl is not expected.

3. *Short-term risk.* Short-term aggregate exposure takes into account short-term residential exposure plus chronic exposure to food and water (considered to be a background exposure level). Acequinocyl is currently registered for uses that could result in short-term residential exposure, and the Agency has determined that it is appropriate to aggregate chronic exposure through food and water with short-term residential exposures to acequinocyl.

Using the exposure assumptions described in this unit for short-term exposures, EPA has concluded the combined short-term food, water, and residential exposures result in aggregate MOEs of 1140 for adults and 910 for children 6–11 years old. Because EPA's level of concern for acequinocyl is a MOE of 100 or below, these MOEs are not of concern.

4. *Intermediate-term risk.* Intermediate-term aggregate exposure takes into account intermediate-term residential exposure plus chronic exposure to food and water (considered to be a background exposure level).

An intermediate-term adverse effect was identified; however, acequinocyl is not registered for any use patterns that would result in intermediate-term residential exposure. Intermediate-term risk is assessed based on intermediate-term residential exposure plus chronic dietary exposure. Because there is no intermediate-term residential exposure and chronic dietary exposure has already been assessed under the appropriately protective cPAD (which is at least as protective as the POD used to assess intermediate-term risk), no further assessment of intermediate-term risk is necessary, and EPA relies on the chronic dietary risk assessment for evaluating intermediate-term risk for acequinocyl.

5. *Aggregate cancer risk for U.S. population.* Based on the lack of evidence of carcinogenicity in two adequate rodent carcinogenicity studies, acequinocyl is not expected to pose a cancer risk to humans.

6. *Determination of safety.* Based on these risk assessments, EPA concludes that there is a reasonable certainty that no harm will result to the general population, or to infants and children from aggregate exposure to acequinocyl residues.

IV. Other Considerations

A. Analytical Enforcement Methodology

Adequate enforcement methodology (two high-performance liquid chromatography methods with tandem mass-spectroscopy detection (HPLC/MS/MS) for determining residues in/on fruit and nut commodities (Morse Methods Meth-133, Revision #4 and Meth-135, Revision #3)) is available to enforce the tolerance expression.

The method may be requested from: Chief, Analytical Chemistry Branch, Environmental Science Center, 701 Mapes Rd., Ft. Meade, MD 20755–5350; telephone number: (410) 305–2905; email address: *residuemethods@epa.gov.*

B. International Residue Limits

In making its tolerance decisions, EPA seeks to harmonize U.S. tolerances with international standards whenever possible, consistent with U.S. food safety standards and agricultural practices. EPA considers the international maximum residue limits (MRLs) established by the Codex Alimentarius Commission (Codex), as required by FFDCA section 408(b)(4). The Codex Alimentarius is a joint United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization/World Health Organization food standards program, and it is recognized as an international food safety standards-setting organization in trade agreements to which the United States is a party. EPA may establish a tolerance that is different from a Codex MRL; however, FFDCA section 408(b)(4) requires that EPA explain the reasons for departing from the Codex level.

The Codex has not established any MRLs for acequinocyl on the crops cited in this document.

V. Conclusion

Therefore, tolerances are established for residues of acequinocyl, including its metabolites and degradates, in or on guava at 0.90 ppm and the tropical and subtropical, small fruit, inedible peel, subgroup 24A at 2.0 ppm.

VI. Statutory and Executive Order Reviews

This action establishes tolerances under FFDCA section 408(d) in response to a petition submitted to the Agency. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has exempted these types of actions from review under Executive Order 12866, entitled ''Regulatory Planning and Review'' (58 FR 51735, October 4, 1993). Because this action has been exempted from review under Executive Order 12866, this action is not subject to Executive Order 13211, entitled ''Actions Concerning Regulations That Significantly Affect Energy Supply, Distribution, or Use'' (66 FR 28355, May 22, 2001) or Executive Order 13045, entitled ''Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks'' (62 FR 19885, April 23, 1997), nor is it considered a regulatory action under Executive Order 13771, entitled ''Reducing Regulations and Controlling Regulatory Costs'' (82 FR 9339, February 3, 2017). This action does not contain any information collections subject to OMB approval under the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*), nor does it require any special considerations under Executive Order 12898, entitled ''Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations'' (59 FR 7629, February 16, 1994).

Since tolerances and exemptions that are established on the basis of a petition under FFDCA section 408(d), such as the tolerance in this final rule, do not require the issuance of a proposed rule, the requirements of the Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA) (5 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.*), do not apply.

This action directly regulates growers, food processors, food handlers, and food retailers, not States or tribes, nor does this action alter the relationships or distribution of power and responsibilities established by Congress in the preemption provisions of FFDCA section 408(n)(4). As such, the Agency has determined that this action will not have a substantial direct effect on States or tribal governments, on the relationship between the national government and the States or tribal governments, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government or between the Federal Government and Indian tribes. Thus, the Agency has determined that Executive Order 13132, entitled ''Federalism'' (64 FR 43255, August 10, 1999) and Executive Order 13175, entitled ''Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments'' (65 FR 67249, November 9, 2000) do not apply to this action. In addition, this action does not impose any enforceable duty or contain any unfunded mandate as described under Title II of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) (2 U.S.C. 1501 *et seq.*).

This action does not involve any technical standards that would require Agency consideration of voluntary consensus standards pursuant to section 12(d) of the National Technology Transfer and Advancement Act (NTTAA) (15 U.S.C. 272 note).

VII. Congressional Review Act

Pursuant to the Congressional Review Act (5 U.S.C. 801 *et seq.*), EPA will submit a report containing this rule and other required information to the U.S. Senate, the U.S. House of Representatives, and the Comptroller General of the United States prior to publication of the rule in the **Federal Register**. This action is not a ''major rule'' as defined by 5 U.S.C. 804(2).

List of Subjects in 40 CFR Part 180

Environmental protection, Administrative practice and procedure, Agricultural commodities, Pesticides and pests, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

Dated: May 25, 2018.

Michael Goodis,

Director, Registration Division, Office of Pesticide Programs.

Therefore, 40 CFR chapter I is amended as follows:

PART 180—[AMENDED]

■ 1. The authority citation for part 180 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 21 U.S.C. 321(q), 346a and 371.

■ 2. In § 180.599, add alphabetically the entries ''Guava'' and ''Tropical and subtropical, small fruit, inedible peel,

subgroup 24A'' to the table in paragraph (a) to read as follows:

§ 180.599 Acequinocyl; tolerances for residues.

(a) * * *

Commodity	Parts per million
* * * * *	
Guava	0.90
* * * * *	
Tropical and subtropical, small fruit, inedible peel, subgroup 24A	2.0
* * * * *	

* * * * *

[FR Doc. 2018–12297 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6560–50–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

49 CFR Part 373

RIN 2126–AC06

General Technical, Organizational, Conforming, and Correcting Amendments to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations; Correction

AGENCY: Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), DOT.

ACTION: Final rule; correction.

SUMMARY: FMCSA corrects the technical corrections final rule published on May 17, 2018, that amended FMCSA regulations to make minor changes to correct inadvertent errors and omissions, remove or update obsolete references, ensure conformity with Office of the Federal Register style guidelines, and improve the clarity and consistency of certain regulatory provisions. This document corrects an amendatory instruction.

DATES: Effective June 18, 2018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. David Miller, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, Regulatory Development Division, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590–0001, by telephone at (202) 366–5370 or via email at *david.miller@dot.gov.* Office hours are from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. e.t., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In FR Doc. 2018–10437, appearing on page 22873 in the **Federal Register** of Thursday, May 17, 2018, the following correction is made:

§ 373.103 [Corrected]

■ 1. On page 22873, in the third column, in amendment 10a., the instruction ''Withdraw the amendments to § 373.103 published April 16, 2018, at 83 FR 16224'' is withdrawn.

Issued under the authority delegated in 49 CFR 1.87 on: May 30, 2018.

Larry W. Minor,

Associate Administrator for Policy.

[FR Doc. 2018–12032 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–EX–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

49 CFR Part 395

[Docket No. FMCSA–2017–0360]

Hours of Service of Drivers of Commercial Motor Vehicles; Regulatory Guidance Concerning the Transportation of Agricultural Commodities

AGENCY: Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), DOT

ACTION: Announcement of regulatory guidance

SUMMARY: FMCSA announces regulatory guidance to clarify the applicability of the ''Agricultural commodity'' exception in the ''Hours of Service (HOS) of Drivers'' regulations. This regulatory guidance clarifies the exception with regard to: drivers operating unladen vehicles traveling either to pick up an agricultural commodity or returning from a delivery point; drivers engaged in trips beyond 150 air-miles from the source of the agricultural commodity; determining the ''source'' of agricultural commodities under the exemptions; and how the exception applies when agricultural commodities are loaded at multiple sources during a trip. This regulatory guidance is issued to ensure consistent understanding and application of the exception by motor carriers and State officials enforcing HOS rules identical to or compatible with FMCSA's requirements.

DATES: This guidance is applicable on June 7, 2018 and expires June 7, 2023.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Thomas Yager, Chief, Driver and Carrier Operations Division, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590, phone (202) 366–4325, email *MCPSD@dot.gov*.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Public Participation

Viewing Comments and Documents

To view comments, as well as documents mentioned in this preamble as being available in the docket, go to *www.regulations.gov* and insert the docket number, ''FMCSA–2017–0360'' in the ''Keyword'' box and click ''Search.'' Next, click the ''Open Docket Folder'' button and choose the document to review. If you do not have access to the internet, you may view the docket online by visiting the Docket Management Facility in Room W12–140 on the ground floor of the DOT West Building, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., e.t., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

II. Legal Basis

The National Highway System Designation Act of 1995, Public Law 104–59, sec. 345, 109 Stat. 568. 613 (Nov. 28, 1995) (the Act), provided the initial exception for drivers transporting agricultural commodities or farm supplies for agricultural purposes. The Act limited the exception to a 100 air-mile radius from the source of the commodities or distribution point for the farm supplies and during the planting and harvesting seasons as determined by the applicable State.

The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA–LU) revised this provision, redesignated it as new section 229 of Title II of the Motor Carrier Safety Improvement Act of 1999, and defined the terms ''agricultural commodity'' and ''farm supplies for agricultural purposes.'' Public Law 109–59, sections 4115 and 4130, 119 Stat. 1144, 1726, 1743 (Aug. 10, 2005). These terms are now defined in 49 CFR 395.2.

Most recently, the statute was amended by section 32101(d) of the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP–21), Public Law 112–141, 126 Stat. 405, 778 (July 6, 2012). This provision revised the description of the exception's scope and extended the applicable distance from 100 air-miles to 150 air-miles from the source.

III. Background

The focus of today's guidance is limited to the application of the 150 air-mile exception for the transportation of ''agricultural commodities,'' 49 CFR 395.1(k)(1). It does not address ''farm supplies for agricultural purposes''

under § 395.1(k)(2) or (3), since few questions have been raised about their applicability, nor does it address the specifics of the definition of an agricultural commodity as defined in § 395.2. While the regulatory provision governing the agricultural commodity exception closely tracks the statutory provisions discussed above, the language is susceptible to multiple interpretations, and the Agency acknowledges that various stakeholders and enforcement officials in different States have expressed inconsistent understandings of the exception from time to time.

IV. Public Comments and Responses

On December 20, 2017, FMCSA published a **Federal Register** notice proposing regulatory guidance concerning the transportation of agricultural commodities and requested public comment on the proposals (82 FR 60360). The comment period ended on January 19, 2018, but was extended to February 20, 2018 (83 FR 2765, Jan. 19, 2018). There were 566 comments submitted to the docket. Approximately one-half of them addressed issues other than this regulatory guidance, such as electronic logging devices (ELDs), other aspects of the HOS rules, and other provisions of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs). Some commenters suggested specific revisions to the FMCSRs, which are beyond the scope of regulatory guidance. Of the remaining comments, most were supportive of the proposed guidance and suggested only minor revisions. Many were from umbrella agricultural associations, some representing as many as 15 other associations. Additional details regarding the public comments are provided under the topical headings below.

1. Unladen Vehicles (Question 34)

Interpreted literally, the agricultural commodity exception could be read as applicable only during the period during which the commodity is being transported, and not to movements of an unladen commercial motor vehicle (CMV) either traveling to pick up a load or returning after a delivery. The Agency does not consider that view consistent with the de-regulatory purpose of the exception since applying HOS rules on these unladen trips would limit the relief that Congress intended to grant, while needlessly complicating the regulatory monitoring task that enforcement officials are asked to perform. It is unreasonable to assume that the 1995 statute intended to exempt, for example, farmers hauling soy beans from the field to an elevator, while subjecting them to the full extent of the HOS regulations during the empty return trip to the field to pick up the next load. The Agency has therefore informally advised stakeholders that both legs of a trip are covered. In the proposed guidance (Question 34), FMCSA sought to clarify how the agricultural commodity exception applies to someone driving an unladen CMV either to a source to pick up an agricultural commodity or on a return trip following delivery of an agricultural commodity. The proposed Guidance to Question 34 stated that the agricultural commodity exception (§ 395.1(k)(1)) does apply while driving unloaded to a source where an agricultural commodity will be loaded, and to an unloaded return trip after delivering an agricultural commodity, provided that the trip does not involve transporting other cargo and the sole purpose of the trip is to complete the delivery or pick up of of agricultural commodities, as defined in § 395.2.

Comments: All comments on this issue were supportive. The American Farm Bureau Federation (Farm Bureau) agrees with the Agency's interpretation that unladen vehicles traveling to and from a source of an agricultural commodity should be able to take advantage of the agricultural commodity exception. The Oregon Cattleman's Association supports FMCSA's view that time spent driving an unladen or empty vehicle to or from a source of an agricultural commodity should be exempt from the hours-of-service (HOS) provisions. The New Mexico Farm and Livestock Bureau agrees, commenting that unladen vehicles hauling to and from an agricultural source or multiple sources should fall under the exception. A number of multiple-group filers commented that the Agency must clearly define that unladen trucks are covered under the agricultural exception. The Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association (OOIDA) supports the revised guidance that would allow the exception for drivers while driving unloaded to a source where an agricultural commodity will be loaded, and to an unloaded return trip after delivering an agricultural commodity. The Agricultural and Food Transporters Conference, an affiliate of the American Trucking Associations (ATA), commented that the Question 34 guidance is crucial for the movement of agricultural commodities and farm supplies. When a carrier is delivering an agricultural commodity, it must have the ability to unload and travel back to reload, all while under the exception. Not only does this minimize confusion for the carrier in having to travel exempt and non-exempt over and over, but it also significantly minimizes confusion for enforcement officials who are working with the carriers.

FMCSA Response: The Agency agrees that the § 395.1(k)(1) exception should apply to all portions of a round-trip involving agricultural commodities that occur within the 150 air-mile radius of the source, regardless of whether the CMV is loaded or empty or whether the destination is outside the 150 air-mile radius. The Guidance in Question 34 to § 395.1 is revised to this effect.

2. Loads Beyond a 150 Air-Mile Radius (Question 35)

The Agency recognizes that some enforcement personnel and other stakeholders have interpreted the agricultural commodity exception as inapplicable to any portion of a trip if the destination exceeds 150 air-miles from the source. Under that reading, the word ''location'' in § 395.1(k)(1) is interpreted as reflecting only the final destination of the load. FMCSA considers the statutory language, as amended,[1] and the implementing regulation [2] to be ambiguous, given the legislative intent to create an exempt zone with a radius of 150 air miles. The Agency believes that a narrow interpretation is unwarranted. In the proposed regulatory guidance (Question 35), the Agency stated that ''location'' means the outer limit of the exception distance, *i.e.,* 150 air-miles from the source. Thus, the Agency proposed to interpret the exception as available to a driver transporting agricultural commodities for a distance up to 150 air-miles from the source, regardless of the distance between the source and final destination or place of delivery.

[1] As amended by MAP–21, Public Law 112–141, 32101(d), 126 Stat. 778 (July 6, 2012), this statute reads:

(1) Transportation of agricultural commodities and farm supplies.—Regulations prescribed by the Secretary under sections 31136 and 31502 regarding maximum driving and on-duty time for drivers used by motor carriers shall not apply during planting and harvest periods, as determined by each State, to—

(A) Drivers transporting agricultural commodities from the source of the agricultural commodities to a location within a 150-air-mile radius from the source; . . .

[2] The regulatory exception reads:

Agricultural operations. The provisions of this part shall not apply during planting and harvesting periods, as determined by each State, to drivers transporting

(1) Agricultural commodities from the source of the agricultural commodities to a location within a 150 air-mile radius from the source;

. . . 49 CFR 395.1(k)(1). The term ''agricultural commodity'' is defined in 49 CFR 395.2.

Upon crossing the 150 air-mile point, however, the driver would be subject to the HOS rules for the remainder of the trip to the destination. The hours accumulated within the 150-mile radius are not counted toward the driver's hours of service. Returning empty, the driver would be subject to the HOS rules until returning within the 150 air-mile radius in which the trip began.

Comments: Most commenters supported Question 35 as proposed, and one commenter was completely opposed. The Farm Bureau requested the Agency to modify Question 35 to simply state: ''The exception applies to transportation during the initial 150-air miles from the source of the commodity. Starting at zero from that point, the driver must then begin recording his or her duty time, and the limits under the 11-hour, 14-hour, and 60/70-hour rules apply.'' The Florida Fruit and Vegetable Association commented that the agricultural exception is unclear on how it is to be applied beyond the 150 air-miles, and does not encompass trucks returning once they have been assigned a specific pick-up. Additionally, it is not clear how hours would be recorded if multiple pickup points are involved. An individual commenter stated that the proposed guidance is unreasonable and is likely to create unsafe conditions where fatigued drivers are operating on the highway. According to him, the term ''location'' in the phrase, ''from the source of the agricultural commodities to a location within a 150 air-mile radius from the source,'' can only mean the delivery location. He states that under the proposed guidance, if a person is stopped outside the 150 air-mile radius of the source, neither the motor carrier nor an enforcement officer will be able to determine compliance with the law. If a driver is exempt from part 395 some of the time, but has to comply with all of part 395 at other times, it would be impossible to determine compliance with HOS when the driver is not exempt. The National Grain and Feed Association asked FMCSA to apply the HOS regulations only to situations in which a driver operates beyond the 150-air mile radius. Therefore, starting at the time and location where the vehicle goes past the 150-air mile distance, the driver must maintain logs.

FMCSA Response: FMCSA believes it would be contrary to the purpose of the exception to apply it to only one portion of the trip within the 150 air-mile radius. The Agency disagrees that it would be impossible to determine HOS compliance outside the 150 air-mile radius. Transporters are required to maintain records of duty status (paper or AOBRD/ELD) and supporting documents when not operating under an exception. Commercial vehicle inspectors are trained to ascertain compliance with the HOS regulations, and would be able to do so as with any other transporters who are not under an HOS exception at the time of inspection.

3. Sources (Question 36)

Several agricultural transporters have requested guidance on the extent to which grain elevators or livestock sale barns, for example, should be considered a ''source'' of agricultural commodities under § 395.1(k)(1). Historically, the nature of the commodities included in the definition led to an informal conclusion that the ''source'' was the location where the crops were grown or the animals raised. That concept does not adequately address the aggregation and interim storage of commodities. The identification of the source is more reasonably defined by factors that include more than a farm or ranch.

As long as the commodity retains its original form, a place where the commodity is aggregated and stored may be treated as a ''source'' from which the 150 air-mile radius is measured.

Comments: Those persons who commented on the issue agreed that elevators and livestock markets are examples of ''sources'' other than the original farm or field. Many suggested other broad examples that they believe should be included. No one specifically objected to the proposal. The Farm Bureau believes that logic and common sense dictate that grain elevators and livestock markets are ''sources'' of agricultural commodities. The Oregon Cattleman's Association agrees with this position, and cites the dictionary definition of ''source'' as ''a point of origin'' and describes the challenges of loading at such locations as virtually identical to loading at a farm or ranch. Other commenters point out that feed mills and barns, as well as processing plants that produce bulk animal feed, are often legitimately viewed as sources. The Midwest Shipper's Association states that grain elevators are often a source, and that other facilities are closely related to elevators. These include facilities that clean and process grain, soybeans and oilseed, as well as ethanol plants that ship distiller grains.

FMCSA Response: While an agricultural commodity may have several ''sources'' under Question 36 (*e.g.,* for grain, both a field and an elevator), the ''source'' necessarily excludes the point at which the commodity is processed to such an extent that it is no longer in its original form or does not otherwise meet the definition of an agricultural commodity in 49 CFR 395.2. Question 36 to § 395.1 has been added to clarify that the source of an agricultural commodity includes more than just the original location at the farm or field. The Agency recognizes that further regulatory guidance may be necessary as the industry and enforcement communities adjust to these clarifications of § 395.1.

4. Multiple Sources (Question 37)

Many transporters have also asked how the agricultural commodity exception would apply if the driver were to pick up partial loads at two or more locations. Specifically, they asked whether a pick-up at a subsequent source has the effect of extending the 150 air-mile radius, *i.e.,* restarting the calculation of the 150 air-mile distance. Previous informal guidance has been that the 150 air-mile radius is based on the first source of an agricultural commodity on a particular trip, and that additional stops to load additional agricultural commodities do not extend the 150-mile radius.

Comments: Most commenters agreed that multiple pick-ups and deliveries should be allowed, but that the 150 air-mile radius should be measured from the last pick-up point, not the first point as proposed. Other than the disagreement with that part of the proposal, no one objected to allowing multiple pick-ups and deliveries. The Farm Bureau believes that the exception should not be limited to one ''use'' each day, and all locations at which agricultural commodities are loaded for shipment should qualify as a source. The Oregon Cattleman's Association agrees, and points out that the alternative—limiting a vehicle or driver to a single ''trip''—adds unnecessary complexity to the analysis. Each of several loading stops during the duty day takes place at what the industry views as a ''source''—the industry does not think in terms of a single daily ''trip.'' The New Mexico Farm and Livestock Bureau concurs that livestock markets and elevators are properly viewed as the source of the commodity. The Colorado Farm Bureau states that Congress did not intend to limit a driver or vehicle to a single ''source'' each calendar day. The Iowa Cattlemen's Association supports the Farm Bureau position.

Commenters explained that drivers often must pick up agricultural commodities at several locations to fill their vehicle. This is the only reasonable approach to making a living hauling

agricultural products. It would be inefficient to operate below capacity, and one stop may not have enough product to fill a truck.

CVSA applauded efforts to update Agency guidance. It believes greater clarity is needed regarding the loading of agricultural commodities at multiple sources. It states that the exception should begin with the first source, and that stopping after that initial source should not restart the exception. In its view, the exception and the 150 air-mile radius should be applied from the original source only.

FMCSA Response: Question 37 to § 395.1 has been added to clarify that multiple pick-ups are permissible but that the 150 air-mile radius continues to be measured from the first pick-up point regardless of the number of times commodities are loaded or offloaded. The Agency agrees with CVSA's position that the exception should begin with the first source only. FMCSA notes in the interest of safety that, under a contrary interpretation that restarts the 150-mile exception with each new source, a motor carrier could effectively extend the exception indefinitely. The Agency did not intend to imply that a carrier would be limited to one ''trip'' per day. A trip terminates when all of the commodity has been offloaded or non-exempt freight or products are added to the load. Thereafter, a new trip under the agricultural exception could be started the same day by loading a shipment of agricultural commodities at a different source. The 150 air-mile radius would then be measured from this new trip initiation point.

V. Regulatory Guidance

FMCSA issues Regulatory Guidance, Questions 34, 35, 36, and 37 to 49 CFR 395.1 as follows:

PART 395—Hours of Service of Drivers

§ 395.1 Scope of the rules in this part

Question 34: Does the agricultural commodity exception (§ 395.1(k)(1)) apply to drivers while driving unloaded within 150 air-miles of the place where an agricultural commodity will be loaded, and to that portion of an unloaded return trip which occurs within a 150 air-mile radius of the place where the agricultural commodity was loaded?

Guidance: Yes, provided that the trip does not involve transporting any non-agricultural cargo and the sole purpose of the trip is to make a pick-up or delivery of agricultural commodities, as defined in § 395.2. In that case, driving and on-duty time are not limited, nor do other requirements of 49 CFR part 395 apply.

Question 35: Does the agricultural commodity exception (§ 395.1(k)(1)) apply if the destination for the commodity is beyond the 150 air-mile radius from the source?

Guidance: Yes, the exception applies to transportation during the initial 150 air-miles from the source of the commodity, regardless of the distance to the final destination. Once a driver operates beyond the 150 air-mile radius of the source, 49 CFR part 395 applies. The driver is then subject to the limits under the hours-of-service rules and must record those hours. Once the hours-of-service rules begin to apply on a given trip, they continue to apply for the duration of that trip, until the driver crosses back into the area within 150 air-miles of the original source of the commodities.

Question 36: How is the ''source'' of the agricultural commodities in § 395.1(k)(1) determined?

Guidance: The ''source'' of an agricultural commodity, as the term is used in § 395.1(k)(1), is the point at which an agricultural commodity is loaded onto an unladen commercial motor vehicle. The location may be any intermediate storage or handling location away from the original source at the farm or field, provided the commodity retains its original form and is not significantly changed by any processing or packing. If a driver is making multiple trips, the first trip, and the 150 air-mile exception around that source, terminate once all agricultural products are offloaded at a delivery point. A new source for a new trip may then be identified, and the 150 air-mile radius for the exception will be around that source.

For example, a sales barn where cattle are loaded may be treated as a ''source,'' in addition to the location at which they were raised, since cattle remain livestock. As another example, a place where heads of lettuce are stored may become a ''source,'' provided they retain their original form. An elevator where grain is collected and dried may be a new ''source,'' again assuming that the grain is not milled or similarly processed at the elevator.

Question 37: How is the ''source of the agricultural commodities'' determined if the driver makes multiple pick-ups of the commodity en route to the final destination?

Guidance: When a driver loads some of an agricultural commodity at a ''source'' and then loads more of that commodity at additional stops, the first place where the commodity was loaded is the measuring point for the 150 air-mile radius.

VI. Review Date for the Regulatory Guidance

In accordance with section 5203(a)(2)(A) and (a)(3) of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, Public Law 114–94, 129 Stat. 1312, 1535 (Dec. 4, 2015), this regulatory guidance will be posted on FMCSA's website, *www.fmcsa.dot.gov.* It expires June 7, 2023. The Agency will consider whether the guidance should be withdrawn, reissued for another period up to five years, or incorporated into the safety regulations.

Issued on: May 31, 2018.

Raymond P. Martinez,

Administrator.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

49 CFR Part 395

[Docket No. FMCSA–2017–0108]

Hours of Service of Drivers of Commercial Motor Vehicles: Regulatory Guidance Concerning the Use of a Commercial Motor Vehicle for Personal Conveyance

AGENCY: Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), DOT.

ACTION: Regulatory guidance.

SUMMARY: On December 19, 2017, FMCSA proposed revisions to the regulatory guidance concerning driving a commercial motor vehicle (CMV) for personal use while off-duty, referred to as ''personal conveyance.'' Over 380 comments were received in response to the draft guidance. This document provides revised guidance and addresses issues raised by commenters. This guidance applies to all CMV drivers required to record their hours of service (HOS) who are permitted by their carrier to use the vehicle for personal use.

DATES: This guidance is applicable on June 7, 2018 and expires June 7, 2023.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For information concerning this notice contact Ms. LaTonya Mimms, Transportation Specialist, Enforcement Division, FMCSA. Ms. Mimms may be reached at 202–366–0991 and by email at *LaTonya.Mimms@dot.gov*. If you have questions on viewing or submitting material to the docket, contact Docket Services, telephone (202) 366–9826.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs) require drivers to document their HOS on records of duty status (RODS), identifying one of four duty status options: (1) On-duty not driving, (2) driving, (3) sleeper berth, and (4) off-duty (49 CFR 395.8). The use of personal conveyance is a tool used to account for the movement of a CMV while the driver is off-duty.

Motor carriers are responsible for ensuring that drivers are not operating while ill or fatigued. However, motor carriers, at their discretion, may authorize their drivers to use a CMV while off-duty for personal conveyance. When this occurs, drivers are required to document such use as off-duty on their RODS, irrespective of the method used to record the driver's HOS (*e.g.,* paper logs, automatic on-board recording device, electronic logging devices (ELDs), etc.)

The minimum performance and design standards for ELDs in the Agency's final rule on ''Implementation of Electronic Logging Devices and Hours of Service Supporting Documents'' (ELD rule) (80 FR 78292, December 15, 2015) include the automatic recording of data related to the off-duty movement and location of the CMV. As part of the ELD rule, ELD manufacturers are required to include a special driving category for personal conveyance. This may be used by drivers at the motor carriers' discretion.

The previous guidance on personal conveyance (49 CFR 395.8, Question 26) was issued by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), FMCSA's predecessor agency, in a memorandum dated November 18, 1996, and later published in a compilation of guidance (62 FR 16370, 16426, April 4, 1997). The guidance reiterated the basic principle that a driver in off-duty status must be relieved from work and all responsibility for performing work. It highlighted the use of the CMV as a personal conveyance in traveling to and from the place of employment (*e.g.,* the normal work reporting location). The 1997 guidance included discussion of CMVs used to travel short distances from a driver's en route lodgings to restaurants in the vicinity of such lodgings. In addition, the 1997 guidance explicitly excluded the use of laden vehicles as personal conveyance and the operation of the CMV as personal conveyance by drivers who have been placed out of service for HOS violations. The guidance has remained unchanged since 1997.

On December 19, 2017. FMCSA issued revised guidance and requested comments. (82 FR 60269) In changing the guidance, the Agency focused on the reason the driver is operating a CMV while off-duty, without regard to whether the CMV is laden.

This notice clarifies issues raised such as using personal conveyance to leave a shipper or receiver and travel to a safe location for rest, the fact that the use of personal conveyance does not impact on-duty time, and provides additional scenarios in the guidance as to when the use of personal conveyance is allowable, and, includes passenger carrier specific scenarios.

Comments on the Proposed Guidance

FMCSA received over 380 comments on the proposed guidance. Over 300 of the comments were from individuals, with approximately 240 representing drivers of property-carrying CMVs. The remaining comments came from companies, associations, safety organizations, and two States. Companies included Cowboy Up Transport, Boyle Transportation, Crete Carrier, C.H. Robinson, and Schneider National. The associations included the American Bus Association, the American Trucking Associations, the Owner Operator Independent Drivers Association, the Truckload Carriers Association, and Western States Trucking Association. The safety organizations included the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance, Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety (AHAS), the Truck Safety Coalition and Road Safe America.

The majority of commenters supported expanding the definition to include laden vehicles. However, the Truck Safety Coalition and Road Safe America opposed this change, expressing concern that FMCSA was proposing to replace an objective standard with a subjective standard and that it would be difficult for law enforcement to assess a driver's intent to determine if the CMV is being used for personal conveyance. In addition, the Truck Safety Coalition and Road Safe America noted studies conducted by the FMCSA, National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, Federal Highway Administration and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, relating to the incidence of fatigue reported by long haul truck drivers and impact of pressures from the shipping community on fatigue.

AHAS also opposed this change for similar reasons and questioned the disparate impact on drivers of single unit trucks that FMCSA noted in the December 2017 notice.

Also, several motor carriers reiterated that the decision to allow the use of personal conveyance should remain with the company.

FMCSA Response

The purpose of the guidance is to provide additional clarity on the use of personal conveyance as a type of off-duty status. The guidance provides additional details to determine if a movement of the CMV is an appropriate off-duty use. The new guidance will improve uniformity for the industry and the enforcement communities. The clarity provided in this notice will lead to greater uniformity in the enforcement of the HOS rules.

In response to concerns that this guidance will somehow increase fatigue, FMCSA notes that there are no changes to the HOS rules in this document. In fact, because the current requirement to record HOS using ELDs makes the time spent driving a CMV as personal conveyance transparent to the motor carrier and enforcement, the Agency believes that consistency and uniformity in the application of the guidance by both the industry and enforcement will be increased. FMCSA recognizes that much of the pressure on drivers referenced in the comments results from delays during the loading or unloading process causing a driver to run out of hours. This guidance will have a positive impact on the concerns expressed by the Truck Safety Coalition, Road Safe America, and AHAS by giving drivers the flexibility to locate and obtain adequate rest as this would be off-duty time in personal conveyance status. In addition, as described above, this guidance, used in conjunction with the ELD rule will lead to greater uniformity in enforcement.

According to the FMCSA's records in the Motor Carrier Management Information System, there are approximately 2.3 million straight trucks that operate in interstate commerce. Under the previous guidance, the drivers of many straight trucks were not permitted to operate in an off-duty status for personal conveyance because they were laden. The revised guidance allows these vehicles, under the circumstances described in the guidance to be driven as a personal conveyance.

Other recurring issues or questions raised are discussed individually below.

Some commenters provided suggestions or requests that are outside of the scope of guidance. Those included modifying the HOS regulations so that there is a definition of personal conveyance consistent with the Canadian HOS regulation and establishing mileage or time limits for the use of personal conveyance.

In addition, some motor carriers and drivers questioned who would be liable in a crash when the driver is operating in the personal conveyance mode. FMCSA notes that this issue is outside of its authority and would be determined based on the contract or agreement between the motor carrier or owner of the commercial motor vehicle and the liability insurance provider as well as principles of State tort law.

Clarification of Impact to On-Duty Hours

Numerous commenters asked for clarification on how the use of personal conveyance impacts on-duty hours.

FMCSA Response

Personal conveyance is an off-duty status. Therefore, there are no impacts to the 11- or 14-hour limitations for truck drivers, the 10- or 15-hour limitations for bus drivers, the 60/70-hour limitations, the 34-hour restart provisions, or any other on-duty status.

Leaving a Shipper or Receiver to go to a Safe Place for Required Rest

Crete Carrier, Vilma Kuprescenko, Desiree Wood, Paul Tyler and many others suggested that a driver should be allowed to identify movement from a receiver or shipper, after exhausting his or her HOS, as personal conveyance, if that movement is to allow the driver to arrive at a safe location to obtain the required rest. Crete Carrier believes that not allowing the driver to identify such a movement as personal conveyance would be contrary to the coercion rule (49 CFR 390.6), as the shipper is forcing a driver to leave the premises even after exhausting his or her hours of service limits. Schneider National also asked for clarification on this issue.

FMCSA Response

The movement from a shipper or receiver to the nearest safe resting area may be identified as personal conveyance, regardless of whether the driver exhausted his or her HOS, as long as the CMV is being moved solely to enable the driver to obtain the required rest at a safe location. The Agency recognizes that the driver may not be aware of the direction of the next dispatch and that in some instances the nearest safe resting location may be in the direction of that dispatch. If the driver proceeds to the nearest reasonable and safe location and takes the required rest, this would qualify as personal conveyance. FMCSA recommends that the driver annotate on the log if he/she cannot park at the nearest location and must proceed to another location.

FMCSA also notes that the Coercion Rule is intended to protect drivers from motor carriers, shippers, receivers, or transportation intermediaries who threaten to withhold work from, take employment action against, or punish a driver for refusing to operate in violation the FMCSRs, Hazardous Materials Regulations, and the Federal Motor Carrier Commercial Regulations. Crete Carrier's reference to the coercion rule in the context of having to leave a shipper's/receiver's property is not accurate, provided that the shipper or receiver does not threaten to retaliate or take adverse action against the driver in violation of the rule.

Movement Required by Safety Officials

Jeff Muzik asked about the impacts to the 10-hour break if a safety official requires the driver to move the CMV.

FMCSA Response

If a Federal, State or local law enforcement official requires a driver to relocate the CMV during the 10-hour break period for truck drivers or the 8-hour break period for bus drivers, personal conveyance may be used to document the movement. Again, as this is off-duty time, this does not require a restart of the rest period. However, the CMV must be moved no farther than the nearest reasonable and safe area to complete the rest period.

Returning to the Last On-Duty Location

Schneider National noted that the draft scenarios in section (a) of the guidance to Question 26 implied that the driver must return to the last on-duty location but that other scenarios in the same section indicate otherwise. Allen England and Billy Barnes Enterprises expressed disagreement with any requirement to return to the last on-duty location.

FMCSA Response

The driver is not required to return to the previous on-duty location. A driver may resume on-duty status immediately after an off-duty status regardless of the location of the CMV.

Enhancing Operational Readiness

Danny Schnautz, Brian Ausloos, and Doug Pope questioned FMCSA's description of ''enhancing operational readiness.'' Other carriers also provided examples of movements that they believed are personal conveyance but enhance operational readiness.

FMCSA Response

Enhancing operational readiness includes on-duty movement of a CMV that provides a commercial benefit to the motor carrier. For example, if the movement places the load closer to the destination, it may not be considered personal conveyance, except under circumstances outlined specifically in the examples provided in the guidance. Additionally, if a driver who is under dispatch stops at a location such as his/her home, because the driver's home is closer to the next destination or pick up location, then this would not be personal conveyance.

Application of Guidance to Passenger Carrying Vehicles

The American Bus Association (ABA) stated that the proposed guidance did not mention motorcoaches. ABA and others requested examples that specifically reference motorcoach operations. The United Motorcoach Association provided examples of personal conveyance, including use of a motorcoach to reach restaurants or pursue personal activities after dropping off passengers at a hotel or when a driver is using a motorcoach to transport drivers who are off-duty to pursue personal activities.

In addition, Michael Letlow requested confirmation that motorcoaches with luggage only are not considered laden.

FMCSA Response

Examples have been added to the final guidance that make clear that drivers of passenger-carrying operations may also use their vehicles for personal conveyance in appropriate circumstances. In addition, FMCSA reminds commenters that this guidance now applies regardless of whether the vehicle is laden. However, the requirement for the driver to be off-duty still exists. Therefore, if a driver is taking luggage to a hotel and is on-duty, personal conveyance would not apply. However, if the driver is off-duty and using a motorcoach with luggage on board to get lunch, personal conveyance would be appropriate.

New Guidance Language

FMCSA replaces Question 26 as noted below. In accordance with the requirement in Section 5203(a)(2)(A) of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, Public Law 114–94, 129 Stat. 1312, 1535, Dec. 4, 2015, the guidance above will be posted on FMCSA's website, *http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov* and expires no later than June 7, 2023. The Agency will then consider whether the guidance should be withdrawn, reissued for another period of up to five years, or incorporated into the safety regulations at that time.

FMCSA reminds motor carriers and drivers that additional information about ELDs is available at *www.fmcsa.dot.gov/eld.*

FMCSA updates the guidance for § 395.8 Driver's Record of Duty Status to read as follows:

Question 26: Under what circumstances may a driver operate a commercial motor vehicle (CMV) as a personal conveyance?

Guidance: A driver may record time operating a CMV for personal conveyance (*i.e.,* for personal use or reasons) as off-duty only when the driver is relieved from work and all responsibility for performing work by the motor carrier. The CMV may be used for personal conveyance even if it is laden, since the load is not being transported for the commercial benefit of the carrier at that time. Personal conveyance does not reduce a driver's or motor carrier's responsibility to operate a CMV safely. Motor carriers can establish personal conveyance limitations either within the scope of, or more restrictive than, this guidance, such as banning use of a CMV for personal conveyance purposes, imposing a distance limitation on personal conveyance, or prohibiting personal conveyance while the CMV is laden.

(a) Examples of appropriate uses of a CMV while off-duty for personal conveyance include, but are not limited to:

1. Time spent traveling from a driver's en route lodging (such as a motel or truck stop) to restaurants and entertainment facilities.

2. Commuting between the driver's terminal and his or her residence, between trailer-drop lots and the driver's residence, and between work sites and his or her residence. In these scenarios, the commuting distance combined with the release from work and start to work times must allow the driver enough time to obtain the required restorative rest as to ensure the driver is not fatigued.

3. Time spent traveling to a nearby, reasonable, safe location to obtain required rest after loading or unloading. The time driving under personal conveyance must allow the driver adequate time to obtain the required rest in accordance with minimum off-duty periods under 49 CFR 395.3(a)(1) (property-carrying vehicles) or 395.5(a) (passenger-carrying vehicles) before returning to on-duty driving, and the resting location must be the first such location reasonably available.

4. Moving a CMV at the request of a safety official during the driver's off-duty time

5. Time spent traveling in a motorcoach without passengers to en route lodging (such as motel or truck stop), or to restaurants and entertainment facilities and back to the lodging. In this scenario, the driver of the motorcoach can claim personal conveyance provided the driver is off-duty. Other off-duty drivers may be on board the vehicle, and are not considered passengers.

6. Time spent transporting personal property while off-duty.

7. Authorized use of a CMV to travel home after working at an offsite location.

(b) Examples of uses of a CMV that would not qualify as personal conveyance include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. The movement of a CMV in order to enhance the operational readiness of a motor carrier. For example, bypassing available resting locations in order to get closer to the next loading or unloading point or other scheduled motor carrier destination.

2. After delivering a towed unit, and the towing unit no longer meets the definition of a CMV, the driver returns to the point of origin under the direction of the motor carrier to pick up another towed unit.

3. Continuation of a CMV trip in interstate commerce in order to fulfill a business purpose, including bobtailing or operating with an empty trailer in order to retrieve another load or repositioning a CMV (tractor or trailer) at the direction of the motor carrier.

4. Time spent driving a passenger-carrying CMV while passenger(s) are on board. Off-duty drivers are not considered passengers when traveling to a common destination of their own choice within the scope of this guidance.

5. Time spent transporting a CMV to a facility to have vehicle maintenance performed.

6. After being placed out of service for exceeding the maximum periods permitted under part 395, time spent driving to a location to obtain required rest, unless so directed by an enforcement officer at the scene.

7. Time spent traveling to a motor carrier's terminal after loading or unloading from a shipper or a receiver.

8. Time spent operating a motorcoach when luggage is stowed, the passengers have disembarked and the driver has been directed to deliver the luggage.

Issued on: May 31, 2018.

Raymond P. Martinez,

Administrator.

[FR Doc. 2018–12256 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–EX–P

Proposed Rules

Federal Register
Vol. 83, No. 110
Thursday, June 7, 2018

This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains notices to the public of the proposed issuance of rules and regulations. The purpose of these notices is to give interested persons an opportunity to participate in the rule making prior to the adoption of the final rules.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA–2018–0513; Product Identifier 2018–CE–013–AD]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Honda Aircraft Company LLC

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: We propose to supersede Airworthiness Directive (AD) 2018–11–05, which applies to certain Honda Aircraft Company (Honda) LLC Model HA–420 airplanes. AD 2018–11–05 requires incorporating a temporary revision into the airplane flight manual and replacing the faulty power brake valve (PBV) upon condition. Since AD 2018–11–05 was issued as an interim action in order to address the need for the immediate detection of a faulty PBV, we are issuing this proposed AD to address the long-term corrective action. This proposed AD would retain the actions required in AD 2018–11–05, would require replacing the faulty PBV with an improved design part at a specified time, and would prohibit future installations of the faulty PBVs on all Honda Model HA–420 airplanes. We are proposing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: We must receive comments on this proposed AD by July 23, 2018.

ADDRESSES: You may send comments, using the procedures found in 14 CFR 11.43 and 11.45, by any of the following methods:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* Go to *http://www.regulations.gov*. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.
- *Fax:* 202–493–2251.
- *Mail:* U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M–30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12–140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590.
- *Hand Delivery:* Deliver to Mail address above between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

For service information identified in this NPRM, contact Honda Aircraft Company LLC, 6430 Ballinger Road, Greensboro, North Carolina 27410; telephone (336) 662–0246; internet: *http://www.hondajet.com*. You may view this service information at the FAA, Policy and Innovation Division, 901 Locust, Kansas City, Missouri 64106. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call (816) 329–4148.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the internet at *http://www.regulations.gov* by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA–2018–0513; or in person at Docket Operations between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this NPRM, the regulatory evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The street address for Docket Operations (phone: 800–647–5527) is listed above. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after receipt.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Samuel Kovitch, Aerospace Engineer, Atlanta ACO Branch, FAA, 1701 Columbia Avenue, College Park, Georgia 30337; phone: (404) 474–5570; fax: (404) 474–5605; email: *samuel.kovitch@faa.gov*.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

We invite you to send any written relevant data, views, or arguments about this proposed AD. Send your comments to an address listed under the **ADDRESSES** section. Include ''Docket No. FAA–2018–0513; Product Identifier 2018–CE–013–AD'' at the beginning of your comments. We specifically invite comments on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of this NPRM. We will consider all comments received by the closing date and may amend this NPRM because of those comments.

We will post all comments we receive, without change, to *http://www.regulations.gov,* including any personal information you provide. We will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact we receive about this proposed AD.

Discussion

We issued AD 2018–11–05, Amendment 39–19293 (83 FR 24016, May 24, 2018), (''AD 2018–11–05), for certain Honda Aircraft Company LLC (Honda) Model HA–420 airplanes. AD 2018–11–05 requires inserting a temporary revision into the airplane flight manual (AFM), which may be performed by the owner/operator (pilot) holding at least a private pilot certificate and must be entered into the airplane records showing compliance with the AD in accordance with 14 CFR 43.9 (a)(1)–(4) and 14 CFR 91.417(a)(2)(v). AD 2018–11–05 also requires a conditional replacement of the installed power brake valve (PBV), P/N HJ1–13243–101–005 or P/N HJ1–13243–101–007, with an improved PBV, P/N HJ1–13243–101–009, if any of the procedures listed in the AFM temporary revision reveals a leaking PBV. In addition, AD 2018–11–05 provides an optional terminating action for inserting the temporary revision into the AFM by replacing the installed P/N HJ1–13243–101–005 or P/N HJ1–13243–101–007 with the improved P/N HJ1–13243–101–009. AD 2018–11–05 resulted from reports of unannunciated asymmetric braking during ground operations and landing deceleration.

We issued AD 2018–11–05 to prevent failure of the PBV, which could cause degraded braking performance and reduced directional control during ground operations and landing deceleration.

Actions Since AD 2018–11–05 Was Issued

Since AD 2018–11–05 was issued as an interim action in order to address the need for the immediate detection of a faulty PBV (the short-term action of inserting the temporary revision into the AFM), we are issuing this proposed AD to address the long-term corrective action (replacing the PBV).

Related Service Information Under 1 CFR Part 51

We reviewed Honda Aircraft Company Temporary Revision TR 01.1, dated February 16, 2018, to the Honda Aircraft Company HA–420 Airplane Flight Manual and Service Bulletin SB–420–32–001, dated January 8, 2018, and

Revision B, dated April 16, 2018. Temporary Revision TR 01.1, dated February 16, 2018, to the HA–420 Airplane Flight Manual (AFM) describes procedures for performing pilot checks of the braking system during ground operations before every flight and before every landing and includes instructions for corrective actions if any indication of a leaking PBV is found. Service Bulletin SB–420–32–001, dated January 8, 2018, and Revision B, dated April 16, 2018, describes procedures for replacing a defective PBV with an improved design PBV. This service information is reasonably available because the interested parties have access to it through their normal course of business or by the means identified in the **ADDRESSES** section.

FAA's Determination

We are proposing this AD because we evaluated all the relevant information and determined the unsafe condition described previously is likely to exist or develop in other products of the same type design.

Proposed AD Requirements

This proposed AD would retain the requirements of AD 2018–11–05. This proposed AD would also require replacing the installed PBV, P/N HJ1–13243–101–005 or P/N HJ1–13243–101–007, with the improved design PBV, P/N HJ1–13243–101–009, at a specified time.

Differences Between This Proposed AD and the Service Information

Honda Service Bulletin SB–420–32–001, dated January 8, 2018, and Revision B, dated April 16, 2018, specify submitting certain information to the manufacturer. This AD does not require that action.

Costs of Compliance

We estimate that this proposed AD affects 72 airplanes of U.S. registry.

We estimate the following costs to comply with this proposed AD:

ESTIMATED COSTS

Action	Labor cost	Parts cost	Cost per product	Cost on U.S. operators
Insert temporary revision into the airplane flight manual.	1 work-hour × $85 per hour = $85	Not applicable	$85	$6,120
Replace the power brake valve (PBV).	20 work-hours × $85 per hour = $1,700.	$21,878	23,578	1,697,616

Replacing the PBV was provided as an on-condition cost and an optional terminating action in AD 2018–11–05. We have no way of determining how many owner/operators of the affected airplanes may have already done this proposed replacement. Therefore, we have included a total cost for all affected airplanes.

The difference in the Cost of Compliance between AD 2018–11–05 and this proposed AD is the proposed requirement to replace the power brake valve at a specified time.

Authority for This Rulemaking

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA's authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, Section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. Subtitle VII, Aviation Programs, describes in more detail the scope of the Agency's authority.

We are issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, section 44701, ''General requirements.'' Under that section, Congress charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on products identified in this rulemaking action.

This AD is issued in accordance with authority delegated by the Executive Director, Aircraft Certification Service, as authorized by FAA Order 8000.51C. In accordance with that order, issuance of ADs is normally a function of the Compliance and Airworthiness Division, but during this transition period, the Executive Director has delegated the authority to issue ADs applicable to small airplanes, gliders, balloons, airships, domestic business jet transport airplanes, and associated appliances to the Director of the Policy and Innovation Division.

Regulatory Findings

We have determined that this proposed AD would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This proposed AD would not have a substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the national Government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that the proposed regulation:

(1) Is not a ''significant regulatory action'' under Executive Order 12866,

(2) Is not a ''significant rule'' under the DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979),

(3) Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska, and

(4) Will not have a significant economic impact, positive or negative, on a substantial number of small entities under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

The Proposed Amendment

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA proposes to amend 14 CFR part 39 as follows:

PART 39—AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVES

■ 1. The authority citation for part 39 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(g), 40113, 44701.

§ 39.13 [Amended]

■ 2. The FAA amends § 39.13 by removing Airworthiness Directive (AD) 2018–11–05, Amendment 39–19293 (83 FR 24016, May 24, 2018), and adding the following new AD:

Honda Aircraft Company LLC: Docket No. FAA–2018–0513; Product Identifier 2018–CE–013–AD.

(a) Comments Due Date

The FAA must receive comments on this AD action by July 23, 2018.

(b) Affected ADs

This AD replaces AD 2018–11–05, Amendment 39–19293 (83 FR 24016, May 24, 2018).

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to Honda Aircraft Company LLC Model HA–420 airplanes, all serial numbers, that:

(1) Have power brake valve, part number (P/N) HJ1–13243–101–005 or HJ1–13243–101–007, installed; and

(2) are certificated in any category.

(d) Subject

Joint Aircraft System Component (JASC)/Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 32, Landing Gear.

(e) Unsafe Condition

This AD was prompted by reports of unannunciated asymmetric braking during ground operations and landing deceleration. We are issuing this AD to detect failure of the power brake valve (PBV). The unsafe condition, if not addressed, could result in degraded braking performance and reduced directional control during ground operations and landing deceleration.

(f) Compliance

Comply with this AD within the compliance times specified, unless already done.

(g) Insert Temporary Revision Into the Airplane Flight Manual (AFM)

Before further flight after May 29, 2018 (the effective date retained from AD 2018–11–05) insert Honda Aircraft Company Temporary Revision TR 01.1, dated February 16, 2018, into the Honda Aircraft Company (Honda) HA–420 Airplane Flight Manual (AFM) (''the temporary revision''). The procedures listed in the temporary revision are required while operating with PBV P/N HJ1–13243–101–005 or P/N HJ1–13243–101–007 installed. This insertion and the steps therein may be performed by the owner/operator (pilot) holding at least a private pilot certificate and must be entered into the airplane records showing compliance with this AD in accordance with 14 CFR 43.9(a)(1)–(4) and 14 CFR 91.417(a)(2)(v). The record must be maintained as required by 14 CFR 91.417, 121.380, or 135.439.

(h) No Reporting Requirement

Although Honda Service Bulletin SB–420–32–001, dated January 8, 2018, and Revision B, dated April 16, 2018, specify submitting certain information to the manufacturer, this AD does not require that action.

(i) Replace the Power Brake Valve

As of and at any time after May 29, 2018 (the effective date retained from AD 2018–11–05), if any of the procedures listed in the temporary revision referenced in paragraph (g) of this AD reveal a leaking PBV, before further flight, replace the installed PBV, P/N HJ1–13243–101–005 or P/N HJ1–13243–101–007, with the improved design PBV, P/N HJ1–13243–101–009. The replacement must be done using the Accomplishment Instructions in either Honda Service Bulletin SB–420–32–001, dated January 8, 2018, or Revision B, dated April 16, 2018. Before further flight after installing P/N HJ1–13243–101–009, remove the temporary revision from the Honda HA–420 AFM.

(j) Optional Terminating Action for Inserting the AFM Temporary Revision/Pilot Checks

(1) Instead of inserting the temporary revision or at any time after inserting the temporary revision required by paragraph (g) of this AD and before the mandatory replacement required in paragraph (j) of this AD, you may replace the installed PBV, P/N HJ1–13243–101–005 or P/N HJ1–13243–101–007, with the improved design PBV, P/N HJ1–13243–101–009. The replacement must be done using the Accomplishment Instructions in either Honda Service Bulletin SB–420–32–001, dated January 8, 2018, or Revision B, dated April 16, 2018. Before further flight after installing P/N HJ1–13243–101–009, remove the temporary revision from the Honda HA–420 AFM.

(2) The on-condition replacement required by paragraph (h) of this AD is still required before further flight.

(k) Mandatory Replacement

Within the next 12 months after the effective date of this AD, replace the installed PBV, P/N HJ1–13243–101–005 or P/N HJ1–13243–101–007, with the improved design PBV, P/N HJ1–13243–101–009. The replacement must be done using the Accomplishment Instructions in either Honda Service Bulletin SB–420–32–001, dated January 8, 2018, or Revision B, dated April 16, 2018. Before further flight after installing P/N HJ1–13243–101–009, remove the temporary revision from the Honda HA–420 AFM.

(l) Special Flight Permit

Special flight permits for the AFM Limitations portion of this AD are prohibited. Special flight permits for the PBV replacement required in this AD are permitted with the following limitations: One ferry flight, including fuel stops, to service center with Honda Aircraft Company Temporary Revision TR 01.1, dated February 16, 2018, incorporated into the Honda HA–420 AFM.

(m) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)

(1) The Manager, Atlanta ACO Branch, FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested using the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19. In accordance with 14 CFR 39.19, send your request to your principal inspector or local Flight Standards District Office, as appropriate. If sending information directly to the manager of the certification office, send it to the attention of the person identified in paragraph (n) of this AD.

(2) Before using any approved AMOC, notify your appropriate principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the local flight standards district office/certificate holding district office.

(3) For service information that contains steps that are labeled as Required for Compliance (RC), the provisions of paragraphs (h) through (j) of this AD apply.

(i) The steps labeled as RC, including substeps under an RC step and any figures identified in an RC step, must be done to comply with the AD. An AMOC is required for any deviations to RC steps, including substeps and identified figures.

(ii) Steps not labeled as RC may be deviated from using accepted methods in accordance with the operator's maintenance or inspection program without obtaining approval of an AMOC, provided the RC steps, including substeps and identified figures, can still be done as specified, and the airplane can be put back in an airworthy condition.

(n) Related Information

(1) For more information about this AD, contact Samuel Kovitch, Aerospace Engineer, Atlanta ACO Branch, FAA, 1701 Columbia Avenue, College Park, Georgia 30337; phone: (404) 474–5570; fax: (404) 474–5605; email: *samuel.kovitch@faa.gov.*

(2) For service information identified in this AD, contact Honda Aircraft Company LLC, 6430 Ballinger Road, Greensboro, North Carolina 27410; telephone (336) 662–0246; internet: *http://www.hondajet.com.* FAA, Policy and Innovation Division, 901 Locust, Kansas City, Missouri 64106. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call (816) 329–4148.

Issued in Kansas City, Missouri, on May 29, 2018.

Melvin J. Johnson,

Aircraft Certification Service, Deputy Director, Policy and Innovation Division, AIR–601.

[FR Doc. 2018–12127 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA–2018–0504; Product Identifier 2018–NM–046–AD]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: We propose to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) for all The Boeing Company Model 707 series airplanes and Model 720 and 720B series airplanes. This proposed AD was prompted by a report indicating that a fracture of the midspar fitting resulted in the separation of the inboard strut and engine from the airplane, and a determination that existing inspections are not sufficient for timely detection of cracking. This proposed AD would require repetitive inspections of certain nacelle strut spar and overwing fittings, and diagonal braces and associated fittings; replacement of the diagonal brace assembly on certain airplanes; and applicable related investigative and corrective actions. We are proposing

this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: We must receive comments on this proposed AD by July 23, 2018.

ADDRESSES: You may send comments, using the procedures found in 14 CFR 11.43 and 11.45, by any of the following methods:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* Go to *http://www.regulations.gov.* Follow the instructions for submitting comments.
- *Fax:* 202–493–2251.
- *Mail:* U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M–30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12–140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590.
- *Hand Delivery:* Deliver to Mail address above between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

For service information identified in this NPRM, contact Boeing Commercial Airplanes, Attention: Contractual & Data Services (C&DS), 2600 Westminster Blvd., MC 110–SK57, Seal Beach, CA 90740–5600; telephone 562–797–1717; internet *https://www.myboeingfleet.com.* You may view this service information at the FAA, Transport Standards Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 206–231–3195. It is also available on the internet at *http://www.regulations.gov* by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA–2018–0504.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the internet at *http://www.regulations.gov* by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA–2018–0504; or in person at Docket Operations between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this NPRM, the regulatory evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The street address for Docket Operations (phone: 800–647–5527) is in the **ADDRESSES** section. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after receipt.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jeffrey Chang, Aerospace Engineer, Propulsion Section, FAA, Los Angeles ACO Branch, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, CA 90712–4137; phone: 562–627–5263; fax: 562–627–5210; email: *jeffrey.chang@faa.gov* or George Garrido, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Section, FAA, Los Angeles ACO Branch, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, CA 90712–4137; phone: 562–627–5232; fax: 562–627–5210; email *george.garrido@faa.gov*.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

We invite you to send any written relevant data, views, or arguments about this proposal. Send your comments to an address listed under the **ADDRESSES** section. Include ''Docket No. FAA–2018–0504; Product Identifier 2018–NM–046–AD'' at the beginning of your comments. We specifically invite comments on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of this NPRM. We will consider all comments received by the closing date and may amend this NPRM because of those comments.

We will post all comments we receive, without change, to *http://www.regulations.gov,* including any personal information you provide. We will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact we receive about this NPRM.

Discussion

We have received reports of cracking of the midspar fittings and of the engine and nacelle strut separating from the airplane. We issued AD 2012–16–12, Amendment 39–16159 (77 FR 49708, August 17, 2012) to require inspection of the inboard and outboard strut midspar fittings and AD 2015–11–04, Amendment 39–18167 (80 FR 30605, May 29, 2015) to require replacement of all engine strut midspar fittings and to initiate a life limit program. Since that time, we have determined that inspections of other strut fittings are needed for timely detection of cracking. Cracks have been reported in the diagonal brace end fittings, forward mating fittings, aft mating fittings, overwing support fittings, and the upper surface and the aft lug(s) of the front spar fittings on the nacelle struts, numbers 1, 2, 3 and 4. This cracking is attributed to fatigue in the end fittings and stress corrosion or fatigue in the mating fittings. This condition, if not addressed, could result in cracks that grow beyond a critical length, allowing strut fittings to fail and reducing the structural integrity of the nacelle. This, in combination with damage to adjacent attachment structure, could result in the loss of an engine from the airplane.

Related Service Information Under 1 CFR Part 51

We reviewed the following service information.

- Boeing 707 Alert Service Bulletin A3364, Revision 4, dated February 21, 2017. The service information describes procedures for repetitive detailed inspections of the diagonal brace tube for any crack; repetitive detailed inspections and high frequency eddy current (HFEC) inspections of the nacelle strut diagonal brace end fittings, forward mating fitting, and aft mating fitting for any crack; an alternative dye penetrant inspection of vertical webs on aft mating fitting for any crack; an HFEC inspection of the diagonal brace tube for any crack; and corrective actions.
- Boeing 707 Alert Service Bulletin A3365, Revision 3, dated March 9, 2017. The service information describes procedures for repetitive detailed, HFEC, and ultrasonic inspections of the overwing support fittings for any crack at the bolt hole forward of the wing front spar and at the holes for the four fasteners attaching the fitting to the spar, and related investigative and corrective actions.
- Boeing 707 Alert Service Bulletin A3514, Revision 1, dated November 9, 2016. The service information describes procedures for repetitive detailed and surface HFEC inspections of the front spar fittings at nacelle struts numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4 for cracks, and replacement of cracked front spar fittings.

This service information is reasonably available because the interested parties have access to it through their normal course of business or by the means identified in the **ADDRESSES** section.

FAA's Determination

We are proposing this AD because we evaluated all the relevant information and determined the unsafe condition described previously is likely to exist or develop in other products of these same type designs.

Proposed AD Requirements

This proposed AD would require accomplishing the actions specified in the service information described previously, except as discussed under ''Differences Between this Proposed AD and the Service Information.'' For information on the procedures and compliance times, see this service information at *http://www.regulations.gov* by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA–2018–0504.

The phrase ''related investigative actions'' is used in this proposed AD. Related investigative actions are follow-on actions that (1) are related to the primary action, and (2) further investigate the nature of any condition found. Related investigative actions in an AD could include, for example, inspections.

The phrase ''corrective actions'' is used in this proposed AD. Corrective actions correct or address any condition found. Corrective actions in an AD could include, for example, repairs.

Differences Between This Proposed AD and the Service Information

Boeing 707 Alert Service Bulletin A3364, Revision 4, dated February 21, 2017; Boeing 707 Alert Service Bulletin A3365, Revision 3, dated March 9, 2017; and Boeing 707 Alert Service Bulletin A3514, Revision 1, dated November 9, 2016; specify to contact the manufacturer for certain instructions, but this proposed AD would require using repair methods, modification deviations, replacement deviations, and alteration deviations in one of the following ways:

- In accordance with a method that we approve; or
- Using data that meet the certification basis of the airplane, and that have been approved by the Boeing Commercial Airplanes Organization Designation Authorization (ODA) whom we have authorized to make those findings.

Costs of Compliance

We estimate that this proposed AD affects 65 airplanes of U.S. registry. We estimate the following costs to comply with this proposed AD:

ESTIMATED COSTS

Action	Labor cost	Parts cost	Cost per product	Cost on U.S. operators
Detailed inspections per Service Bulletin A3364, Revision 4.	36 work-hours × $85 per hour = $3,060 per inspection cycle.	$0	$3,060 per inspection cycle.	$198,900 per inspection cycle.
HFEC inspections per Service Bulletin A3364, Revision 4.	128 work-hours × $85 per hour = $10,880 per inspection cycle.	0	$10,880 per inspection cycle.	$707,200 per inspection cycle.
Inspections per Service Bulletin A3365, Revision 3.	20 work-hours × $85 per hour = $1,700 per inspection cycle.	0	$1,700 per inspection cycle.	$110,500 per inspection cycle.
Detailed inspections per Service Bulletin A3514, Revision 1.	12 work-hours × $85 per hour = $1,020 per inspection cycle.	0	$1,020 per inspection cycle.	$66,300 per inspection cycle.
HFEC inspections per Service Bulletin A3514, Revision 1.	32 work-hours × $85 per hour = $2,720 per inspection cycle.	0	$2,720 per inspection cycle.	$176,800 per inspection cycle.

We have received no definitive data that would enable us to provide cost estimates for the on-condition actions specified in this proposed AD.

We estimate that any necessary proposed replacement of affected fittings would take about 96 work-hours for a cost of $8,160 per fitting. We have received no definitive data on the parts costs of the affected fittings. We have no way of determining the number of aircraft that might need this replacement.

Authority for This Rulemaking

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA's authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs, describes in more detail the scope of the Agency's authority.

We are issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701: ''General requirements.'' Under that section, Congress charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on products identified in this rulemaking action.

This proposed AD is issued in accordance with authority delegated by the Executive Director, Aircraft Certification Service, as authorized by FAA Order 8000.51C. In accordance with that order, issuance of ADs is normally a function of the Compliance and Airworthiness Division, but during this transition period, the Executive Director has delegated the authority to issue ADs applicable to transport category airplanes and associated appliances to the Director of the System Oversight Division.

Regulatory Findings

We determined that this proposed AD would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This proposed AD would not have a substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the national Government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify this proposed regulation:

(1) Is not a ''significant regulatory action'' under Executive Order 12866,

(2) Is not a ''significant rule'' under the DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979),

(3) Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska, and

(4) Will not have a significant economic impact, positive or negative, on a substantial number of small entities under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

The Proposed Amendment

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA proposes to amend 14 CFR part 39 as follows:

PART 39—AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVES

■ 1. The authority citation for part 39 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(g), 40113, 44701.

§ 39.13 [Amended]

■ 2. The FAA amends § 39.13 by adding the following new airworthiness directive (AD):

The Boeing Company: Docket No. FAA–2018–0504; Product Identifier 2018–NM–046–AD.

(a) Comments Due Date

We must receive comments by July 23, 2018.

(b) Affected ADs

This AD affects AD 82–24–03, Amendment 39–4496 (47 FR 51099, November 12, 1982) (''AD 82–24–03'') and AD 2005–08–15, Amendment 39–14067 (70 FR 21136, April 25, 2005) (''AD 2005–08–15'').

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to all The Boeing Company Model 707–100 Long Body, –200, –100B Long Body, and –100B Short Body series airplanes; Model 707–300, –300B, –300C, and –400 series airplanes; and Model 720 and 720B series airplanes; certificated in any category.

(d) Subject

Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 54, Nacelles/pylons.

(e) Unsafe Condition

This AD was prompted by a report indicating that a fracture of the midspar fitting resulted in the separation of the inboard strut and engine from the airplane, and a determination that existing inspections for other nacelle strut fittings are not sufficient for timely detection of cracking. We are issuing this AD to address cracks, which if not detected and corrected, could grow beyond a critical length, allowing the strut fitting to fail and reducing the structural integrity of the nacelle. This, in combination with damage to adjacent attachment structure, could result in the loss of an engine from the airplane.

(f) Compliance

Comply with this AD within the compliance times specified, unless already done.

(g) Repetitive Detailed Inspections of the Front Spar Fittings at Nacelle Struts Numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4

Prior to the accumulation of 3,500 total flight hours; within 700 flight hours after the most recent inspection specified in Boeing 707 Alert Service Bulletin A3514, dated July 29, 2004, was done; or within three months after the effective date of this AD; whichever occurs later: Do a detailed inspection for cracking of the front spar fittings at nacelle struts numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of Boeing 707 Alert Service Bulletin A3514, Revision 1, dated November 9, 2016. If any cracking is found, before further flight, replace the affected fitting, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of Boeing 707 Alert Service Bulletin A3514, Revision 1, dated November 9, 2016. Repeat the inspections thereafter at intervals not to exceed 700 flight hours.

(h) Repetitive Surface High Frequency Eddy Current (HFEC) Inspections of the Aft Lugs on the Front Spar Fittings at Nacelle Struts Numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4

Within 1,500 flight cycles or 48 months after the most recent detailed inspection required by paragraph (g) of this AD was done, whichever occurs first, do a surface HFEC inspection for cracking of the aft lugs on the front spar fittings at nacelle struts numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4, and do all applicable corrective actions, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of Boeing 707 Alert Service Bulletin A3514, Revision 1, dated November 9, 2016, except as required by paragraph (l)(4) of this AD. Do all applicable corrective actions before further flight. Repeat the inspection thereafter at intervals not to exceed 1,500 flight cycles or 48 months, whichever occurs first.

(i) Repetitive Inspections of the Overwing Support Fitting at Nacelle Struts Numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4

At the times specified in paragraph 1.E., ''Compliance,'' of Boeing 707 Alert Service Bulletin A3365, Revision 3, dated March 9, 2017, except as required by paragraph (l)(1) of this AD: Do the inspections specified in paragraphs (i)(1) through (i)(3) of this AD and do all applicable related investigative and corrective actions, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of Boeing 707 Alert Service Bulletin A3365, Revision 3, dated March 9, 2017, except as required by paragraph (l)(3) of this AD. Do all applicable related investigative and corrective actions before further flight. Repeat the inspections thereafter at the applicable time specified in paragraph 1.E., ''Compliance,'' of Boeing 707 Alert Service Bulletin A3365, Revision 3, dated March 9, 2017.

(1) Do a detailed inspection for any crack at all five holes in the overwing support fitting, and at the flange radii.

(2) Do the inspection specified in paragraph (i)(2)(i) or (i)(2)(ii) of this AD.

(i) Do a surface HFEC inspection for any crack in the overwing support fitting around the hole immediately forward of the spar chord, with the bolt in place, and at the flange radii.

(ii) Do an open hole HFEC inspection for any crack in the overwing support fitting at the hole immediately forward of the spar chord.

(3) Do the inspection specified in paragraph (i)(3)(i) or (i)(3)(ii) of this AD.

(i) Do an ultrasonic inspection for any crack in the overwing support fitting around the four holes common to the fitting and the spar chord, with the bolts in place.

(ii) Do a surface HFEC inspection for any crack in the overwing support fitting around the four holes common to the fitting and the spar chord, with the bolts in place.

(j) Inspections of the Nacelle Strut Diagonal Braces and Associated Fittings

For airplanes with nacelle strut diagonal braces and associated fittings which have accumulated 7,500 flight cycles or more: At the applicable times specified in paragraph 1.E., ''Compliance'' of Boeing 707 Alert Service Bulletin A3364, Revision 4, dated February 21, 2017, except as required by paragraph (l)(2) of this AD, do the inspections specified in paragraphs (j)(1) through (j)(3) of this AD. Repeat the inspections thereafter at the applicable intervals specified in tables 1, 2, 3, and 4 of paragraph 1.E., ''Compliance,'' of Boeing 707 Alert Service Bulletin A3364, Revision 4, dated February 21, 2017. If any crack is found during any inspection required by this paragraph, before further flight, do all applicable corrective actions, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of Boeing 707 Alert Service Bulletin A3364, Revision 4, dated February 21, 2017, except as required by paragraph (l)(3) of this AD.

(1) Do a detailed inspection of the nacelle strut diagonal brace end fittings, diagonal brace tube, forward mating fitting, and aft mating fitting for any crack.

(2) Do HFEC inspections of the nacelle strut diagonal brace end fittings, forward mating fitting, and aft mating fitting for any crack. As an alternative for the aft mating fitting, do a dye penetrant inspection of vertical webs on aft mating fitting for any crack.

(3) Do an HFEC inspection of the diagonal brace tube for any crack.

(k) Replacement

For Group 3, 4, and 6 airplanes as identified in Boeing 707 Alert Service Bulletin A3364, Revision 4, dated February 21, 2017, on which the outboard diagonal brace end fitting (forward or aft) attach holes have been oversized as specified in Boeing 707 Alert Service Bulletin A3364, Revision 4, dated February 21, 2017: Within 1,000 flight cycles after the effective date of this AD, replace the diagonal brace assembly, in accordance with Figure 3 of Boeing 707 Alert Service Bulletin A3364, Revision 4, dated February 21, 2017.

(l) Exceptions to Service Information Specifications

(1) For purposes of determining compliance with the requirements of this AD: Where Boeing 707 Alert Service Bulletin A3365, Revision 3, dated March 9, 2017, uses the phrase ''the Revision 3 date of this service bulletin,'' this AD requires using ''the effective date of this AD.''

(2) For purposes of determining compliance with the requirements of this AD: Where Boeing 707 Alert Service Bulletin A3364, Revision 4, dated February 21, 2017, uses the phrase ''the Revision 4 date of this service bulletin,'' this AD requires using ''the effective date of this AD.''

(3) Where Boeing 707 Alert Service Bulletin A3364, Revision 4, dated February 21, 2017; and Boeing 707 Alert Service Bulletin A3365, Revision 3, dated March 9, 2017; specify contacting Boeing: This AD requires repair using a method approved in accordance with the procedures specified in paragraph (o) of this AD.

(4) Where Boeing 707 Alert Service Bulletin A3514, Revision 1, dated November 9, 2016, specifies contacting Boeing: This AD requires replacement using a method approved in accordance with the procedures specified in paragraph (o) of this AD.

(m) Terminating Action for Other ADs

(1) Accomplishing the initial inspections required by paragraph (j) of this AD terminates all requirements of AD 82–24–03.

(2) Accomplishing the initial inspections required by paragraph (g) of this AD, terminates all requirements of AD 2005–08–15.

(n) Parts Installation Prohibition

As of the effective date of this AD, no person may install, on any airplane, a front spar fitting having a part number other than the part numbers specified in paragraph 2.C.2. of Boeing 707 Alert Service Bulletin A3514, Revision 1, dated November 9, 2016.

(o) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)

(1) The Manager, Los Angeles ACO Branch, FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested using the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19. In accordance with 14 CFR 39.19, send your request to your principal inspector or local Flight Standards District Office, as appropriate. If sending information directly to the manager of the certification office, send it to the attention of the person(s) identified in paragraph (p)(1) of this AD. Information may be emailed to: *9-ANM-LAACO-AMOC-Requests@faa.gov*.

(2) Before using any approved AMOC, notify your appropriate principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager

of the local flight standards district office/certificate holding district office.

(3) An AMOC that provides an acceptable level of safety may be used for any repair, modification, replacement, or alteration required by this AD if it is approved by the Boeing Commercial Airplanes Organization Designation Authorization (ODA) that has been authorized by the Manager, Los Angeles ACO Branch, to make those findings. To be approved, the repair method, modification deviation, replacement deviation, or alteration deviation must meet the certification basis of the airplane, and the approval must specifically refer to this AD.

(p) Related Information

(1) For more information about this AD, contact Jeffrey Chang, Aerospace Engineer, Propulsion Section, FAA, Los Angeles ACO Branch, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, CA 90712–4137; phone: 562–627–5263; fax: 562–627–5210; email: *jeffrey.chang@faa.gov* or George Garrido, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Section, FAA, Los Angeles ACO Branch, 3960 Paramount Boulevard, Lakewood, CA 90712–4137; phone: 562–627–5232; fax: 562–627–5210; email *george.garrido@faa.gov*.

(2) For service information identified in this AD, contact Boeing Commercial Airplanes, Attention: Contractual & Data Services (C&DS), 2600 Westminster Blvd., MC 110–SK57, Seal Beach, CA 90740–5600; telephone 562–797–1717; internet *https://www.myboeingfleet.com*. You may view this service information at the FAA, Transport Standards Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 206–231–3195.

Issued in Des Moines, Washington, on May 24, 2018.

James Cashdollar,

Acting Director, System Oversight Division, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 2018–12128 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA–2018–0517; Product Identifier 2017–SW–098–AD]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Helicopters Deutschland GmbH Helicopters

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: We propose to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) for Airbus Helicopters Deutschland GmbH (Airbus Helicopters) Model MBB–BK 117 C–2 and MBB–BK 117 D–2 helicopters. This proposed AD would require altering and re-identifying the overhead panel shock mount assembly (shock mount). This proposed AD is prompted by the manufacturer's stress recalculations. The actions of this proposed AD are intended to correct an unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: We must receive comments on this proposed AD by August 6, 2018.

ADDRESSES: You may send comments by any of the following methods:

- *Federal eRulemaking Docket:* Go to *http://www.regulations.gov*. Follow the online instructions for sending your comments electronically.
- *Fax:* 202–493–2251.
- *Mail:* Send comments to the U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M–30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12–140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590–0001.
- *Hand Delivery:* Deliver to the ''Mail'' address between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the internet at *http://www.regulations.gov* by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA–2018–0517; or in person at Docket Operations between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this proposed AD, the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD, the economic evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The street address for Docket Operations (telephone 800–647–5527) is in the **ADDRESSES** section. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after receipt.

For service information identified in this proposed rule, contact Airbus Helicopters, 2701 N. Forum Drive, Grand Prairie, TX 75052; telephone (972) 641–0000 or (800) 232–0323; fax (972) 641–3775; or at *http://www.helicopters.airbus.com/website/en/ref/Technical-Support_73.html*. You may review the referenced service information at the FAA, Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, 10101 Hillwood Pkwy, Room 6N–321, Fort Worth, TX 76177.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Matt Fuller, Senior Aviation Safety Engineer, Safety Management Section, Rotorcraft Standards Branch, FAA, 10101 Hillwood Pkwy., Fort Worth, TX 76177; telephone (817) 222–5110; email *matthew.fuller@faa.gov*.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

We invite you to participate in this rulemaking by submitting written comments, data, or views. We also invite comments relating to the economic, environmental, energy, or federalism impacts that might result from adopting the proposals in this document. The most helpful comments reference a specific portion of the proposal, explain the reason for any recommended change, and include supporting data. To ensure the docket does not contain duplicate comments, commenters should send only one copy of written comments, or if comments are filed electronically, commenters should submit only one time.

We will file in the docket all comments that we receive, as well as a report summarizing each substantive public contact with FAA personnel concerning this proposed rulemaking. Before acting on this proposal, we will consider all comments we receive on or before the closing date for comments. We will consider comments filed after the comment period has closed if it is possible to do so without incurring expense or delay. We may change this proposal in light of the comments we receive.

Discussion

EASA, which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued EASA AD No. 2017–0026, dated February 14, 2017, to correct an unsafe condition for Airbus Helicopters Model MBB–BK 117 C–2, MBB–BK117 C–2e, MBB–BK 117 D–2, and MBB–BK117 D–2m helicopters. EASA advises that a recent stress calculation identified that the shock mount may not withstand certification crash loads. EASA states that this condition, if not corrected, could lead to the overhead panel disconnecting during an emergency landing and injuring occupants. Accordingly, the EASA AD requires modifying and re-identifying the shock mounts.

FAA's Determination

These helicopters have been approved by the aviation authority of Germany and are approved for operation in the United States. Pursuant to our bilateral agreement with Germany, EASA, its technical representative, has notified us of the unsafe condition described in its AD. We are proposing this AD because we evaluated all known relevant information and determined that an unsafe condition is likely to exist or develop on other products of the same type design.

Related Service Information Under 1 CFR Part 51

We reviewed Airbus Helicopters Alert Service Bulletin (ASB) MBB–BK117 C–2–24A–015 for Model MBB–BK117 C–2 helicopters and ASB MBB–BK117 D–2–24A–004 for Model MBB–BK117 D-2 helicopters, both Revision 0 and dated September 14, 2016. This service information contains procedures for altering the shock mounts by installing retaining plates and re-identifying the shock mounts by changing the last three digits of the part number (P/N) to –966.

This service information is reasonably available because the interested parties have access to it through their normal course of business or by the means identified in the **ADDRESSES** section.

Proposed AD Requirements

This proposed AD would require installing a retaining plate on the shock mount and re-identifying the shock mount by changing the last three digits of the P/N to –966.

This proposed AD would also prohibit installing shock mount P/N B246M2035102 and P/N B246M2036101 on any helicopter.

Differences Between This Proposed AD and the EASA AD

The EASA AD applies to Model MBB–BK117 D–2m helicopters, whereas this proposed AD would not since the Model MBB–BK117 D–2m is not FAA type-certificated. This proposed AD would also not include the Model MBB–BK117 C–2(e) in the applicability section because it is a marketing designation and not an FAA type-certificated model. However, this proposed AD would apply to those helicopters, as they are Model MBB–BK117 C–2 helicopters. The EASA AD specifies particular helicopter serial numbers (S/Ns) that may not be required to complete some of the requirements of the AD since the specified S/Ns were manufactured with shock mounts not affected by the unsafe condition. This proposed AD does not specify particular S/Ns.

Costs of Compliance

We estimate that this proposed AD would affect 144 helicopters of U.S. Registry. We estimate that operators may incur the following costs in order to comply with this AD. Labor costs are estimated at $85 per work-hour.

Installing retaining plates and re-identifying the four shock mounts would take about 3 work-hours and parts would cost about $184 for a total estimated cost of $439 per helicopter and $63,216 for the U.S. fleet.

According to Airbus Helicopter's service information, some of the costs of this proposed AD may be covered under warranty, thereby reducing the cost impact on affected individuals. We do not control warranty coverage by Airbus. Accordingly, we have included all costs in our cost estimate.

Authority for This Rulemaking

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA's authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. ''Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs,'' describes in more detail the scope of the Agency's authority.

We are issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in ''Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701: General requirements.'' Under that section, Congress charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on products identified in this rulemaking action.

Regulatory Findings

We determined that this proposed AD would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This proposed AD would not have a substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the national Government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government.

For the reasons discussed, I certify this proposed regulation:

1. Is not a ''significant regulatory action'' under Executive Order 12866;

2. Is not a ''significant rule'' under the DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979);

3. Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska to the extent that it justifies making a regulatory distinction; and

4. Will not have a significant economic impact, positive or negative, on a substantial number of small entities under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

We prepared an economic evaluation of the estimated costs to comply with this proposed AD and placed it in the AD docket.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

The Proposed Amendment

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA proposes to amend 14 CFR part 39 as follows:

PART 39—AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVES

■ 1. The authority citation for part 39 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(g), 40113, 44701.

§ 39.13 [Amended]

■ 2. The FAA amends § 39.13 by adding the following new airworthiness directive (AD):

Airbus Helicopters Deutschland GmbH: Docket No. FAA–2018–0517; Product Identifier 2017–SW–098–AD.

(a) Applicability

This AD applies to Model MBB–BK 117 C–2 and Model MBB–BK 117 D–2 helicopters, certificated in any category, with an overhead panel shock mount assembly part number (P/N) B246M2035102 or P/N B246M2036101 installed.

Note 1 to paragraph (a) of this AD: Helicopters with an MBB–BK117 C–2e designation are Model MBB–BK117 C–2 helicopters.

(b) Unsafe Condition

This AD defines the unsafe condition as failure of an overhead panel shock mount assembly (shock mount). This condition could result in detachment of the overhead panel and injury to occupants during an emergency landing.

(c) Comments Due Date

We must receive comments by August 6, 2018.

(d) Compliance

You are responsible for performing each action required by this AD within the specified compliance time unless it has already been accomplished prior to that time.

(e) Required Actions

(1) Within 300 hours time-in-service:

(i) Install a retaining plate on each shock mount by following the Accomplishment Instructions, paragraphs 3.B.2.1. through 3.B.2.4, of Airbus Helicopters Alert Service Bulletin (ASB) MBB–BK117 C–2–24A–015, Revision 0, dated September 14, 2016 (ASB MBB–BK117 C–2–24A–015), or ASB MBB–BK117 D–2–24A–004, Revision 0, dated September 14, 2016 (ASB MBB–BK117 D–2–24A–004), as applicable to your model helicopter.

(ii) Re-identify shock mount P/N B246M2035102 as P/N B246M2035966 and shock mount P/N B246M2036101 as P/N B246M2036966 using permanent ink. When the ink is dry, apply varnish over the P/N.

(iii) Re-install each shock mount.

(2) After the effective date of this AD, do not install a shock mount P/N B246M2035102 or P/N B246M2036101 on any helicopter.

(f) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)

(1) The Manager, Safety Management Section, Rotorcraft Standards Branch, FAA, may approve AMOCs for this AD. Send your proposal to: Matt Fuller, Senior Aviation Safety Engineer, Safety Management Section, Rotorcraft Standards Branch, FAA, 10101 Hillwood Pkwy., Fort Worth, TX 76177; telephone (817) 222–5110; email *9-ASW-FTW-AMOC-Requests@faa.gov*.

(2) For operations conducted under a 14 CFR part 119 operating certificate or under 14 CFR part 91, subpart K, we suggest that you notify your principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the local flight standards district office or certificate holding district office before operating any aircraft complying with this AD through an AMOC.

(g) Additional Information

The subject of this AD is addressed in European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD No. 2017–0026, dated February 14, 2017. You may view the EASA AD on the internet at *http://www.regulations.gov* in the AD Docket.

(h) Subject

Joint Aircraft Service Component (JASC) Code: 2400, Electrical Power System.

Issued in Fort Worth, Texas, on May 31, 2018.

James A. Grigg,

Acting Director, Compliance & Airworthiness Division, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 2018–12227 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA–2018–0503; Product Identifier 2018–NM–048–AD]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; 328 Support Services GmbH (Type Certificate Previously Held by AvCraft Aerospace GmbH; Fairchild Dornier GmbH; Dornier Luftfahrt GmbH) Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: We propose to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) for all 328 Support Services GmbH Model 328–100 and –300 airplanes. This proposed AD was prompted by reports indicating corrosion on the horizontal stabilizer bearing supports at the contact surface to the horizontal stabilizer rear spar. This proposed AD would require inspections for corrosion and any other damage (*i.e.,* cracking and chafing) of the horizontal stabilizer rear bearing supports, replacement of the affected horizontal stabilizer rear bearing supports if necessary, and modification of the horizontal stabilizer rear spar. We are proposing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: We must receive comments on this proposed AD by July 23, 2018.

ADDRESSES: You may send comments, using the procedures found in 14 CFR 11.43 and 11.45, by any of the following methods:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* Go to *http://www.regulations.gov*. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.
- *Fax:* 202–493–2251.
- *Mail:* U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M–30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12–140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590.
- *Hand Delivery:* Deliver to Mail address above between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

For service information identified in this NPRM, contact 328 Support Services GmbH, Global Support Center, P.O. Box 1252, D–82231 Wessling, Federal Republic of Germany; telephone +49 8153 88111 6666; fax +49 8153 88111 6565; email *gsc.op@328support.de;* internet *http://www.328support.de.* You may view this service information at the FAA, Transport Standards Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 206–231–3195.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the internet at *http://www.regulations.gov* by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA–2018–0503; or in person at the Docket Management Facility between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this NPRM, the regulatory evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The street address for the Docket Operations office (telephone 800–647–5527) is in the **ADDRESSES** section. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after receipt.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Todd Thompson, Aerospace Engineer, International Section, Transport Standards Branch, FAA, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; telephone and fax 206–231–3228.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

We invite you to send any written relevant data, views, or arguments about this proposal. Send your comments to an address listed under the **ADDRESSES** section. Include ''Docket No. FAA–2018–0503; Product Identifier 2018–NM–048–AD'' at the beginning of your comments. We specifically invite comments on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of this NPRM. We will consider all comments received by the closing date and may amend this NPRM based on those comments.

We will post all comments we receive, without change, to *http://www.regulations.gov,* including any personal information you provide. We will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact we receive about this NPRM.

Discussion

The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued EASA Airworthiness Directive 2017–0239, dated November 30, 2017 (referred to after this as the Mandatory Continuing Airworthiness Information, or ''the MCAI''), to correct an unsafe condition for all 328 Support Services GmbH Model 328–100 and –300 airplanes. The MCAI states:

> Occurrences were reported on horizontal stabilizer bearing supports being found corroded at the contact surface to the horizontal stabilizer rear spar. The corroded area was at the lower flange position, which is connected to the stabilizer rear spar and not visible without detachment of the fitting. Investigation determined that the corrosion is triggered by galvanic effect, due to a direct contact between the horizontal stabilizer rear spar, made from CFRP (carbon fibre reinforced plastic), and the aluminium rear attachment fitting.
>
> This condition, if not detected and corrected, could lead to failure of the fitting and loss of one load path of the horizontal stabilizer attachment, possibly resulting in reduced control of the aeroplane.
>
> To address this potential unsafe condition, 328 Support Services GmbH (328 SSG) issued Service Bulletin (SB) SB–328–55–557 and SB–328J–55–324 to provide instructions for inspection of the affected area, replacement of the parts, and modification to improve corrosion behaviour by incorporating of glass fibre layer.
>
> For the reasons described above, this [EASA] AD requires a one-time inspection [detailed visual inspection and an eddy current inspection for chafing and corrosion] of the horizontal stabilizer rear bearing supports, and, depending on findings, accomplishment of applicable corrective action(s) [replacement of the affected horizontal stabilizer rear bearing supports]. This [EASA] AD also requires a modification of the horizontal stabilizer rear spar, irrespective of findings.

You may examine the MCAI in the AD docket on the internet at *http://*

www.regulations.gov by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA–2018–0503.

Related Service Information Under 1 CFR Part 51

328 Support Services GmbH has issued Service Bulletin SB–328–55–557, Revision 1, dated February 1, 2018; and Service Bulletin SB–328J–55–324, Revision 1, dated February 1, 2018. This service information describes a detailed visual inspection and an eddy current inspection for corrosion and any other damage (*i.e.,* cracking and chafing) of the horizontal stabilizer rear bearing supports, modification of the horizontal stabilizer rear spar, and replacement of the affected horizontal stabilizer rear bearing supports if necessary. These documents are distinct since they apply to different airplane models. This service information is reasonably available because the interested parties have access to it through their normal course of business or by the means identified in the **ADDRESSES** section.

FAA's Determination and Requirements of This Proposed AD

This product has been approved by the aviation authority of another country, and is approved for operation in the United States. Pursuant to our bilateral agreement with the State of Design Authority, we have been notified of the unsafe condition described in the MCAI and service information referenced above. We are proposing this AD because we evaluated all pertinent information and determined an unsafe condition exists and is likely to exist or develop on other products of the same type design.

Costs of Compliance

We estimate that this proposed AD affects 27 airplanes of U.S. registry.

We estimate the following costs to comply with this proposed AD:

ESTIMATED COSTS

Action	Labor cost	Parts cost	Cost per product	Cost on U.S. operators
Detailed visual inspection and eddy current inspection.	4 work-hours × $85 per hour = $340	$0	$340	$9,180
Modification	16 work-hours × $85 per hour = $1,360	0	1,360	36,720

We estimate the following costs to do any necessary replacement that would be required based on the results of the proposed inspection. We have no way of determining the number of aircraft that might need this replacement:

ON-CONDITION COSTS

Action	Labor cost	Parts cost	Cost per product
Replacement	24 work-hours × $85 per hour = $2,040	(*)	$2,040

*We have received no definitive data that would enable us to provide part cost estimates for the on-condition action specified in this proposed AD.

Authority for This Rulemaking

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA's authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs, describes in more detail the scope of the Agency's authority.

We are issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701: ''General requirements.'' Under that section, Congress charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on products identified in this rulemaking action.

This proposed AD is issued in accordance with authority delegated by the Executive Director, Aircraft Certification Service, as authorized by FAA Order 8000.51C. In accordance with that order, issuance of ADs is normally a function of the Compliance and Airworthiness Division, but during this transition period, the Executive Director has delegated the authority to issue ADs applicable to transport category airplanes to the Director of the System Oversight Division.

Regulatory Findings

We determined that this proposed AD would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This proposed AD would not have a substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the national Government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify this proposed regulation:

1. Is not a ''significant regulatory action'' under Executive Order 12866;

2. Is not a ''significant rule'' under the DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979);

3. Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska; and

4. Will not have a significant economic impact, positive or negative, on a substantial number of small entities under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

The Proposed Amendment

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA proposes to amend 14 CFR part 39 as follows:

PART 39—AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVES

1. The authority citation for part 39 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(g), 40113, 44701.

39.13 [Amended]

2. The FAA amends § 39.13 by adding the following new airworthiness directive (AD):

328 Support Services GmbH (Type Certificate Previously Held by AvCraft Aerospace GmbH; Fairchild Dornier GmbH; Dornier Luftfahrt GmbH): Docket No. FAA–2018–0503; Product Identifier 2018–NM–048–AD.

(a) Comments Due Date

We must receive comments by July 23, 2018.

(b) Affected ADs

None.

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to all 328 Support Services GmbH (Type Certificate previously held by AvCraft Aerospace GmbH; Fairchild Dornier GmbH; Dornier Luftfahrt GmbH) Model 328–100 and –300 airplanes, certificated in any category.

(d) Subject

Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 55, Stabilizers.

(e) Reason

This AD was prompted by reports indicating corrosion on the horizontal stabilizer bearing supports at the contact surface to the horizontal stabilizer rear spar. We are issuing this AD to address corrosion on the horizontal stabilizer bearing supports and rear spar, which could lead to failure of the fitting and loss of one load path of the horizontal stabilizer attachment, and possibly result in reduced controllability of the airplane.

(f) Compliance

Comply with this AD within the compliance times specified, unless already done.

(g) Inspection and Modification

(1) At the applicable time specified in paragraph (g)(3)(i) or (g)(3)(ii) of this AD, do a detailed visual inspection and an eddy current inspection for corrosion and any other damage (*i.e.,* cracking and chafing) of the horizontal stabilizer rear bearing supports in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of 328 Support Services GmbH Service Bulletin SB–328–55–557, Revision 1, dated February 1, 2018 (for Model 328–100 airplanes); or 328 Support Services GmbH Service Bulletin SB–328J–55–324, Revision 1, dated February 1, 2018 (for Model 328–300 airplanes); as applicable.

(2) At the applicable time specified in paragraph (g)(3)(i) or (g)(3)(ii) of this AD, modify the horizontal stabilizer rear spar in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of 328 Support Services GmbH Service Bulletin SB–328–55–557, Revision 1, dated February 1, 2018 (for Model 328–100 airplanes); or 328 Support Services GmbH Service Bulletin SB–328J–55–324, Revision 1, dated February 1, 2018 (for Model 328–300 airplanes); as applicable.

(3) Do the actions in paragraphs (g)(1) and (g)(2) at the applicable compliance time specified in paragraph (g)(3)(i) or (g)(3)(ii) of this AD.

(i) For Group 1 airplanes as identified in 328 Support Services GmbH Service Bulletin SB–328–55–557, Revision 1, dated February 1, 2018 (for Model 328–100 airplanes); or 328 Support Services GmbH Service Bulletin SB–328J–55–324, Revision 1, dated February 1, 2018 (for Model 328–300 airplanes); as applicable: Within 1,000 flight cycles or 8 months, whichever occurs first after the effective date of this AD.

(ii) For Group 2 airplanes as identified in 328 Support Services GmbH Service Bulletin SB–328–55–557, Revision 1, dated February 1, 2018 (for Model 328–100 airplanes); or 328 Support Services GmbH Service Bulletin SB–328J–55–324, Revision 1, dated February 1, 2018 (for Model 328–300 airplanes); as applicable: Within 5,000 flight hours or 30 months, whichever occurs first after the effective date of this AD.

(h) Corrective Action

If, during the inspections required by paragraph (g) of this AD, corrosion or any other damage (*i.e.,* cracking and chafing) is detected, before further flight, replace the affected horizontal stabilizer rear bearing supports in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of 328 Support Services GmbH Service Bulletin SB–328–55–557, Revision 1, dated February 1, 2018 (for Model 328–100 airplanes); or 328 Support Services GmbH Service Bulletin SB–328J–55–324, Revision 1, dated February 1, 2018 (for Model 328–300 airplanes); as applicable.

(i) Parts Installation Prohibition

As of the applicable time specified in paragraph (i)(1) or (i)(2) of this AD, no person may install a horizontal stabilizer rear bearing support, part number 001B551A1441000, on any airplane.

(1) For Group 1 airplanes as identified in 328 Support Services GmbH Service Bulletin SB–328–55–557, Revision 1, dated February 1, 2018 (for Model 328–100 airplanes); or 328 Support Services GmbH Service Bulletin SB–328J–55–324, Revision 1, dated February 1, 2018 (for Model 328–300 airplanes); as applicable: After replacement of the horizontal stabilizer rear bearing supports as required by paragraph (h) of this AD.

(2) For Group 2 airplanes as identified in 328 Support Services GmbH Service Bulletin SB–328–55–557, Revision 1, dated February 1, 2018 (for Model 328–100 airplanes); or 328 Support Services GmbH Service Bulletin SB–328J–55–324, Revision 1, dated February 1, 2018 (for Model 328–300 airplanes); as applicable: As of the effective date of this AD.

(j) Credit for Previous Actions

This paragraph provides credit for actions required by paragraph (g) of this AD, if those actions were performed before the effective date of this AD using 328 Support Services GmbH Service Bulletin SB–328–55–557, dated September 1, 2017 (for Model 328–100 airplanes); or 328 Support Services GmbH Service Bulletin SB–328J–55–324, dated September 1, 2017 (for Model 328–300 airplanes).

(k) Other FAA AD Provisions

The following provisions also apply to this AD:

(1) *Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs):* The Manager, International Section, Transport Standards Branch, FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested using the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19. In accordance with 14 CFR 39.19, send your request to your principal inspector or local Flight Standards District Office, as appropriate. If sending information directly to the International Section, send it to the attention of the person identified in paragraph (l)(2) of this AD. Information may be emailed to: *9-ANM-116-AMOC-REQUESTS@faa.gov.* Before using any approved AMOC, notify your appropriate principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the local flight standards district office/certificate holding district office.

(2) *Contacting the Manufacturer:* For any requirement in this AD to obtain corrective actions from a manufacturer, the action must be accomplished using a method approved by the Manager, International Section, Transport Standards Branch, FAA; or the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA); or 328 Support Services GmbH's EASA Design Organization Approval (DOA). If approved by the DOA, the approval must include the DOA-authorized signature.

(l) Related Information

(1) Refer to Mandatory Continuing Airworthiness Information (MCAI) EASA Airworthiness Directive 2017–0239, dated November 30, 2017, for related information. This MCAI may be found in the AD docket on the internet at *http://www.regulations.gov* by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA–2018–0503.

(2) For more information about this AD, contact Todd Thompson, Aerospace Engineer, International Section, Transport Standards Branch, FAA, 2200 South 216th Street, Des Moines, WA 98198; telephone and fax 206–231–3228.

(3) For service information identified in this AD, contact 328 Support Services GmbH, Global Support Center, P.O. Box 1252, D–82231 Wessling, Federal Republic of Germany; telephone +49 8153 88111 6666; fax +49 8153 88111 6565; email *gsc.op@328support.de;* internet *http://www.328support.de.* You may view this service information at the FAA, Transport Standards Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 206–231–3195.

Issued in Des Moines, Washington, on May 24, 2018.

James Cashdollar,

Acting Director, System Oversight Division, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 2018–12135 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–P

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Food and Drug Administration

21 CFR Part 3

[Docket No. FDA–2004–N–0191]

Product Jurisdiction; Correction

AGENCY: Food and Drug Administration, HHS.

ACTION: Proposed rule; correction.

SUMMARY: The Food and Drug Administration is correcting a proposed rule to amend its regulations concerning the classification of products as biological products, devices, drugs, or combination products, and their assignment to Agency components for premarket review and regulation that appeared in the **Federal Register** of May 15, 2018. The document was published with an error in the discussion of the preliminary economic analysis impact. This document corrects that error.

DATES: Submit either electronic or written comments on the proposed rule by July 16, 2018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Melissa Burns, Office of Combination Products, Food and Drug Administration, 10903 New Hampshire Ave., Bldg. 32, Rm. 5129, Silver Spring, MD 20933, 301–796–8930, *melissa.burns@fda.hhs.gov.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In the **Federal Register** of Tuesday, May 15, 2018, beginning on page 22428 for FR Doc. 2018–10321, table 1 on page 22433 is corrected to read:

TABLE 1—BENEFITS, COSTS, AND DISTRIBUTIONAL EFFECTS OF THE PROPOSED RULE [1] [2]

Category	Primary estimate	Low estimate	High estimate	Units			Notes
				Year dollars	Discount rate (%)	Period covered (years)	
Costs:							
Annualized	$17,000	$12,000	$27,000	2016	7	10	
Monetized $/year	15,000	10,000	23,000	2016	3	10	
Annualized					7		
Quantified					3		
Qualitative							
Benefits:							
Annualized	28,000	25,000	89,000	2016	7	10	
Monetized $/year	28,000	25,000	89,000	2016	3	10	
Annualized					7		
Quantified					3		
Qualitative	Firms and FDA may realize savings from sponsors choosing to submit electronic RFDs						
Transfers:							
Federal					7		
Annualized Monetized $millions/year					3		
From/To	From:			To:			
Other					7		
Annualized. Monetized $millions/year					3		
From/To	From:			To:			

Effects:
State, Local or Tribal Government:
Small Business: Will not have a significant impact on a substantial number of small entities.
Wages:
Growth:

[1] We use a 10-year time horizon for this rule with payments occurring at the end of each period.
[2] All dollar values are rounded to the nearest $1,000.

Dated: June 1, 2018.

Leslie Kux,

Associate Commissioner for Policy.

[FR Doc. 2018–12201 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4164–01–P

POSTAL REGULATORY COMMISSION

39 CFR Part 3050

[Docket No. RM2018–5; Order No. 4630]

Periodic Reporting

AGENCY: Postal Regulatory Commission.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking.

SUMMARY: The Commission is noticing a recent filing requesting that the Commission initiate an informal rulemaking proceeding to consider changes to an analytical method for use in periodic reporting (Proposal Two). This document informs the public of the filing, invites public comment, and takes other administrative steps.

DATES: *Comments are due:* July 16, 2018.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments electronically via the Commission's Filing Online system at *http://www.prc.gov.* Those who cannot submit comments electronically should contact the person identified in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section by telephone for advice on filing alternatives.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: David A. Trissell, General Counsel, at 202–789–6820.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

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I. Introduction

On May 25, 2018, the Postal Service filed a petition pursuant to 39 CFR 3050.11 requesting that the Commission initiate a rulemaking proceeding to consider changes to analytical principles relating to periodic reports.[1] The Petition identifies the proposed analytical changes filed in this docket as Proposal Two.

II. Proposal Two

Background. Proposal Two relates to new sampling and weighting procedures for the city carrier portion of the In-Office Cost System (IOCS).[2] The current IOCS design uses a multi-stage probability sample to randomly select city carriers, then an interval of work time from the city carrier's tour, resulting in an observation (''reading'') that represents a ''snapshot'' of work activity in a sampled interval.[3] Under the current IOCS design, data collection for city carriers is widely dispersed in both time and location, so the Postal Service conducts most city carrier readings by telephone. The Postal Service states that the availability of detailed clock ring data from the Time and Attendance Collection System (TACS) and Delivery Operations Information System (DOIS) data now allows for a change to the current IOCS sampling design for city carriers. *Id.* at 1–2.

Proposal. The Postal Service proposes to change the current IOCS sample design for city carriers to a cluster sampling approach that would include using TACS workhours to weight the sampling data. *Id.* at 3–4. In the morning, on-site clustered city carrier readings would be conducted by an IOCS data collector, rather than with telephone respondents in sampled delivery zones.[4] In zones with six or more routes (sampling mode 1), a maximum of six carriers would be randomly selected to represent the zone and morning readings would be taken on-site by the IOCS data collector once every 30 minutes.[5] In zones with fewer than six city carriers working the selected zone (sampling mode 2), morning readings would be taken on-site by the IOCS data collector on all carriers once every 15 minutes.[6] In the afternoon (sampling mode 3), all city carrier readings would be conducted by telephone and clustered into one-hour intervals.[7]

Under the cluster sampling design, the Postal Service proposes to use TACS workhours to weight sampling data by zone, and to provide cost controls for city carriers by time-of-day (morning and afternoon) and day-of-week group (weekday/Saturday group and Sunday/Holiday group). *Id.* at 4–5. Additionally, the Postal Service states that it will use DOIS and TACS data for the sampled zone to weight the readings for each test relative to other tests within the same Cost Ascertainment Group (CAG) strata, and to post-stratify readings by route group and city carrier craft group. *Id.* at 4, 7. However, the Postal Service states that all afternoon readings are scaled to the total hours in the afternoon and not estimated by CAG separately because it asserts that ''there are insufficient afternoon tallies'' and ''no significant difference [for in-office cost] is expected'' because carriers would be on the street. *Id.* at 7.

The Postal Service asserts that the proposal adopts the approach suggested by the Commission in Order No. 4399 for developing route group weighting factors when there were ''empty cells'' within the combination of route group and carrier group. *Id.* at 12.

Proposal Two would also ''[u]se TACS data to provide control totals for the portion of supervisor costs incurred by employees whose base craft is carrier, but who have clocked as supervisor.'' *Id.* at 4. Additionally, unlike the current IOCS methodology, under the Proposal Two methodology, no IOCS readings would be conducted on Sundays and Holidays.[8] However, for purposes of evaluating and presenting the estimated impact on FY 2017 costs, the Postal Service ''shows the effects of attributing all Sunday/Holiday costs'' to Parcel Select. *Id.* at 9.

Rationale and impact. The Postal Service states that the primary objective of Proposal Two is to replace telephone readings with on-site readings, particularly while carriers are on the premises and handling mail. *Id.* at 10.

The Postal Service projects that the IOCS-Cluster system will obtain twice as much on-premises data as the current system, but ''due to the improvement in sampling efficiency, will not require additional data collection resources.'' *Id.* at 8. Further, the Postal Service asserts that ''[t]he new design improves data quality by obtaining far more data from on-site rather than telephone readings, while simultaneously improving data collection efficiency.'' *Id.* at 1.

The Postal Service lists several benefits of the proposal including the ability to scan barcodes, providing feedback at the time of the reading for less-common products and assisting with ''back-end processing of tallies.'' *Id.* at 10. Additionally, the Postal Service states that on-site data collectors may do a better job than a telephone respondent of recognizing some of the mailpiece markings that are less common and more obscure. *Id.* Further, unlike city carrier telephone respondents, under Proposal Two, on-site IOCS data collectors would not have other duties that may affect and constrain participating in a reading under the current IOCS sampling system. *Id.*

The Postal Service states that the proposal will result in a significant increase in the percentage of direct tallies where the carrier is handling the mailpiece, and decreases in tallies for support and administrative activities, training, and mixed mail. *Id.* at 12. The Postal Service also anticipates a

[1] Petition of the United States Postal Service for the Initiation of a Proceeding to Consider Proposed Changes in Analytical Principles (Proposal Two), May 25, 2018 (Petition).

[2] Petition at 1. The IOCS ''is a continuous, ongoing probability sample of work time to estimate costs of various activities performed by clerks, mail handlers, city carriers, and supervisors.'' *See* Docket No. ACR2017, Library Reference USPS–FY17–37, file ''USPS–FY17–37.Preface.pdf,'' at 2.

[3] Petition, Proposal Two at 1. The Postal Service currently uses cost estimates from the IOCS to develop total accrued costs for both city carrier in-office and street time. *Id.*

[4] *Id.* at 2, 4. ''Zone is defined by both ZIP Code and finance number.'' *Id.* at 4 n.5.

[5] *Id.* at 5. All morning readings would begin when carriers start their workday and would continue until 11 a.m. *Id.* at 6.

[6] The Postal Service plans to synchronize IOCS-Cluster readings with City Carrier Cost System (CCCS) tests when a data collector is already scheduled to be at a delivery unit.

[7] All afternoon readings would be conducted between 11:00 and 19:00 hours. *Id.* at 6.

[8] *Id.* at 5. Instead, the Postal Service states that it will develop control total costs for Sunday/Holiday from TACS hours and distribute costs using scanning data from Product Tracking and Reporting (PTR). *Id.* at 5, 9. The Postal Service explains that it intends to file a separate proposal outlining the use of the PTR data for Sunday/Holiday costs. *Id.* at 5.

significant increase in tallies in the parking area, potentially making it possible to distribute mixed mail tallies separately from in-facility. *Id.* at 13.

The Postal Service states that the pilot data indicate some significant shifts in product costs, including a decrease in costs for First-Class letters, and increases in costs for a number of products including parcel-shaped products, carrier route bundled products, Periodicals, and International Mail. *Id.* at 14–15. The Postal Service asserts that the shifts in product costs are most likely due to the use of on-site data collectors rather than telephone respondents. *Id.* at 15. The proposal would also impact costs associated with supervising city carriers.[9]

The Postal Service's estimate of the effect on product unit costs is presented in Table 5 of Proposal Two, which is reproduced here. *Id.* at 16.

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[9] *Id.* at 14. The pilot data showed a 9.1-percent increase in supervisor city carrier costs, which resulted in a slight increase in piggyback factors on city carrier costs. *Id.*

CLASS, SUBCLASS, OR SPECIAL SERVICE	CRA Class	OFFICE AND STREET WITH PIGGYBACKS No Cluster	OFFICE AND STREET WITH PIGGYBACKS IOCSClusterV2	% CHANGE OFFICE AND STREET COSTS	FY17 VOL VAR UNIT COST, FY17 ACR	FY17 UNIT COST WITH IOCSClusterV2	% CHANGE	DIFF UNIT COST
COLUMN NUMBER		(8)	(9)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)
UNITS		$ in thousands	$ in thousands	%	$	$	%	$
MARKET DOMINANT								
First-Class Mail								
Single-Piece Letters	3	817,238	671,148	-18%	$ 0.287	$ 0.270	-5.7%	$ (0.016)
Single-Piece Cards	4	35,606	32,138	-10%	$ 0.316	$ 0.306	-3.1%	$ (0.010)
Presort Letters	8	687,197	619,572	-10%	$ 0.118	$ 0.114	-3.2%	$ (0.004)
Presort Cards	9	29,185	34,300	18%	$ 0.075	$ 0.079	6.2%	$ 0.005
Flats	0	138,910	140,550	1%	$ 1.055	$ 1.058	0.2%	$ 0.002
Parcels	19	14,010	17,042	22%	$ 2.502	$ 2.590	3.5%	$ 0.087
Total First-Class Mail	80	1,722,144	1,514,750	-12%	$ 0.200	$ 0.193	-3.6%	$ (0.007)
USPS Marketing Mail								
High Density and Sat Letters	21	135,284	151,716	12%	$ 0.072	$ 0.076	6.3%	$ 0.005
High Density and Sat Flats/Parc	22	339,937	375,967	11%	$ 0.110	$ 0.116	5.7%	$ 0.006
Every Door Direct Mail-Retail	24	18,871	21,095	12%	$ 0.066	$ 0.072	9.7%	$ 0.006
Carrier Route	23	410,167	456,803	11%	$ 0.209	$ 0.220	5.5%	$ 0.012
Letters	25	882,440	892,506	1%	$ 0.102	$ 0.102	0.4%	$ 0.000
Flats	26	411,899	364,309	-12%	$ 0.518	$ 0.496	-4.2%	$ (0.022)
Parcels	27	8,250	7,561	-8%	$ 1.793	$ 1.755	-2.1%	$ (0.037)
Total USPS Marketing Mail	81	2,206,847	2,269,958	3%	$ 0.137	$ 0.139	1.2%	$ 0.002
Total Periodicals	82	278,824	325,916	17%	$ 0.373	$ 0.391	4.9%	$ 0.018
Package Services								
Bound Printed Matter Flats	42	13,826	23,717	72%	$ 0.500	$ 0.568	13.7%	$ 0.068
Bound Printed Matter Parcels	43	40,340	55,973	39%	$ 0.971	$ 1.075	10.7%	$ 0.104
Media/Library Mail	44	13,216	15,459	17%	$ 4.600	$ 4.656	1.2%	$ 0.056
Total Package Services	83	67,383	95,149	41%	$ 1.244	$ 1.327	6.7%	$ 0.083
US Postal Service	85	30,123	25,887	-14%				
Free Mail	86	1,879	2,738	46%	$ 0.910	$ 0.950	4.4%	$ 0.040
Total Domestic MD Mail	90	4,307,200	4,234,398	-2%				
Ancillary Services								
Certified Mail	51	78,708	86,421	10%	$ 2.759	$ 2.842	3.0%	$ 0.083
COD	52	234	261	12%	$ 6.642	$ 6.764	1.9%	$ 0.123
Insurance	54	1,456	1,769	21%	$ 3.173	$ 3.204	1.0%	$ 0.031
Registered Mail	55	1,022	776	-24%	$ 11.029	$ 10.778	-2.3%	$ (0.251)
Other Ancillary Services	58	41,921	39,701	-5%				
Total Domestic MD Svcs	91	123,340	128,927	5%				
Total Domestic MD Mail/Svcs	92	4,430,540	4,363,325	-2%				
Total Domestic Cmp Mail/Svcs	192	813,998	1,132,533	39%	$ 2.430	$ 2.548	4.8%	$ 0.117
INTERNATIONAL	185	79,785	86,334	8%				
Total Volume Variable	198	5,324,323	5,582,192	5%				

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III. Notice and Comment

The Commission establishes Docket No. RM2018–5 for consideration of matters raised by the Petition. More information on the Petition may be accessed via the Commission's website at *http://www.prc.gov*. Interested persons may submit comments on the Petition and Proposal Two no later than July 16, 2018. Pursuant to 39 U.S.C. 505, Lyudmila Y. Bzhilyanskaya is designated as an officer of the Commission (Public Representative) to represent the interests of the general public in this proceeding.

IV. Ordering Paragraphs

It is ordered:

1. The Commission establishes Docket No. RM2018–5 for consideration of the matters raised by the Petition of the

United States Postal Service for the Initiation of a Proceeding to Consider Proposed Changes in Analytical Principles (Proposal Two), filed May 25, 2018.

2. Comments by interested persons in this proceeding are due no later than July 16, 2018.

3. Pursuant to 39 U.S.C. 505, the Commission appoints Lyudmila Y. Bzhilyanskaya to serve as an officer of the Commission (Public Representative) to represent the interests of the general public in this docket.

4. The Secretary shall arrange for publication of this order in the **Federal Register**.

By the Commission.

Ruth Ann Abrams,

Acting Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2018–12200 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7710–FW–P

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

47 CFR Parts 1 and 27

[WT Docket No. 18–120; FCC 18–59]

Transforming the 2.5 GHz Band

AGENCY: Federal Communications Commission.

ACTION: Proposed rule.

SUMMARY: In this document, the Federal Communications Commission (Commission or FCC) seeks comment on proposed service rules on the 2.5 GHz band and on refinements to the adopted rules in this document.

DATES: Comments are due on or before July 9, 2018; reply comments are due on or before August 6, 2018.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments, identified by WT Docket No. 18–120, by any of the following methods:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal: http://www.regulations.gov.* Follow the instructions for submitting comments.
- *Federal Communications Commission's Website: https://www.fcc.gov/ecfs/filings.* Follow the instructions for submitting comments.
- *People With Disabilities:* Contact the FCC to request reasonable accommodations (accessible format documents, sign language interpreters, CART, etc.) by email: *FCC504@fcc.gov,* phone: 202–418–0530 or TTY: 202–418–0432.

For detailed instructions for submitting comments and additional information on the rulemaking process, see the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section of this document.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: John J. Schauble of the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, Broadband Division, at 202–418–0797 or by email to *John.Schauble@fcc.gov.* For information regarding the PRA information collection requirements contained in this PRA, contact Cathy Williams, Office of Managing Director, at (202) 418–2918 or *Cathy.Williams@fcc.gov.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This is a summary of the Commission's *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, WT Docket No. 18–120, FCC 18–59,* adopted and released on May 10, 2018. The complete text of this document is available for public inspection and copying from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Eastern Time (ET) Monday through Thursday or from 8 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. ET on Fridays in the FCC Reference Information Center, 445 12th Street SW, Room CY–A257, Washington, DC 20554. The complete text is available on the Commission's website at *http://wireless.fcc.gov,* or by using the search function on the ECFS web page at *http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/ecfs/.* Alternative formats are available to persons with disabilities by sending an email to *fcc504@fcc.gov* or by calling the Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau at (202) 418–0530 (voice), (202) 418–0432 (tty).

Comment Filing Procedures

Pursuant to §§ 1.415 and 1.419 of the Commission's rules, 47 CFR 1.415, 1.419, interested parties may file comments and reply comments on or before the dates indicated on the first page of this document. Comments may be filed using the Commission's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS). See Electronic Filing of Documents in Rulemaking Proceedings, 63 FR 24121 (1998).

- *Electronic Filers:* Comments may be filed electronically using the internet by accessing the ECFS: *https://www.fcc.gov/ecfs/filings.* Filers should follow the instructions provided on the website for submitting comments. In completing the transmittal screen, filers should include their full name, U.S. Postal Service mailing address, and the applicable docket number, WT Docket No. 18–120.
- *Paper Filers:* Parties who choose to file by paper must file an original and one copy of each filing. If more than one docket or rulemaking number appears in the caption of this proceeding, filers must submit two additional copies for each additional docket or rulemaking number.

Filings can be sent by hand or messenger delivery, by commercial overnight courier, or by first-class or overnight U.S. Postal Service mail. All filings must be addressed to the Commission's Secretary, Office of the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission.

- All hand-delivered or messenger-delivered paper filings for the Commission's Secretary must be delivered to FCC Headquarters at 445 12th St. SW, Room TW–A325, Washington, DC 20554. The filing hours are 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. All hand deliveries must be held together with rubber bands or fasteners. Any envelopes and boxes must be disposed of before entering the building.
- Commercial overnight mail (other than U.S. Postal Service Express Mail and Priority Mail) must be sent to 9050 Junction Dr., Annapolis Junction, Annapolis, MD 20701.
- U.S. Postal Service first-class, Express, and Priority mail must be addressed to 445 12th Street SW, Washington, DC 20554.

People With Disabilities: To request materials in accessible formats for people with disabilities (braille, large print, electronic files, audio format), send an email to *fcc504@fcc.gov* or call the Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau at 202–418–0530 (voice), 888–835–5322 (tty).

Ex Parte Rules—Permit-But-Disclose

Pursuant to § 1.1200(a) of the Commission's rules, this *NPRM* shall be treated as a ''permit-but-disclose'' proceeding in accordance with the Commission's *ex parte* rules. Persons making *ex parte* presentations must file a copy of any written presentation or a memorandum summarizing any oral presentation within two business days after the presentation (unless a different deadline applicable to the Sunshine period applies). Persons making oral *ex parte* presentations are reminded that memoranda summarizing the presentation must (1) list all persons attending or otherwise participating in the meeting at which the *ex parte* presentation was made, and (2) summarize all data presented and arguments made during the presentation. If the presentation consisted in whole or in part of the presentation of data or arguments already reflected in the presenter's written comments, memoranda or other filings in the proceeding, the presenter may provide citations to such data or arguments in his or her prior comments, memoranda, or other filings (specifying the relevant page and/or paragraph numbers where such data or arguments can be found) in lieu of summarizing them in the memorandum. Documents

shown or given to Commission staff during *ex parte* meetings are deemed to be written *ex parte* presentations and must be filed consistent with § 1.1206(b). In proceedings governed by § 1.49(f) or for which the Commission has made available a method of electronic filing, written *ex parte* presentations and memoranda summarizing oral *ex parte* presentations, and all attachments thereto, must be filed through the electronic comment filing system available for that proceeding, and must be filed in their native format (*e.g.,* .doc, .xml, .ppt, searchable .pdf). Participants in this proceeding should familiarize themselves with the Commission's *ex parte* rules.

Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis

As required by the Regulatory Flexibility Act of 1980 (''RFA''), the Commission has prepared an Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis (''IRFA'') of the possible significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities of the policies and rules proposed in the *NPRM.* The Commission requests written public comment on the analysis. Comments must be filed in accordance with the same deadlines as comments filed in response to the *NRPM* and must have a separate and distinct heading designating them as responses to the IRFA.

Paperwork Reduction Act

This document contains proposed new or modified information collection requirements. The Commission, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork burdens, invites the general public and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to comment on the information collection requirements contained in this document, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104–13. In addition, pursuant to the Small Business Paperwork Relief Act of 2002, Public Law 107–198, see 44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(4), the Commission seeks specific comment on how it might further reduce the information collection burden for small business concerns with fewer than 25 employees.

Synopsis

I. Introduction

1. The 2.5 GHz band (2496–2690 MHz) constitutes the single largest band of contiguous spectrum below 3 gigahertz and has been identified as prime spectrum for next generation mobile operations, including 5G uses. Significant portions of this band, however, currently lie fallow across approximately one-half of the United States, primarily in rural areas. Moreover, access to the Educational Broadband Service (EBS) has been strictly limited since 1995, and current licensees are subject to a regulatory regime largely unchanged from the days when educational TV was the only use envisioned for this spectrum. The Commission proposes to allow more efficient and effective use of this spectrum band by providing greater flexibility to current EBS licensees as well as providing new opportunities for additional entities to obtain unused 2.5 GHz spectrum to facilitate improved access to next generation wireless broadband, including 5G. The Commission also seeks comment on additional approaches for transforming the 2.5 GHz band, including by moving directly to an auction for some or all of the spectrum.

II. Background

2. EBS, formerly known as ITFS (Instructional Television Fixed Service), permits the transmission of instructional material for the formal education of students by accredited public and private schools, colleges, and universities.

3. Currently, eligibility to hold an EBS license is limited to (1) accredited public and private educational institutions, (2) governmental organizations engaged in the formal education of enrolled students, and (3) nonprofit organizations whose purposes are educational and include providing educational and instructional television materials to accredited institutions and governmental organizations. EBS licenses generally are held by state government agencies, state universities and university systems, public community and technical colleges, private universities and colleges, public elementary and secondary school districts, private schools (including Catholic school systems and other religious schools), public television and radio stations, hospitals and hospital associations, and other non-profit educational entities.

4. EBS licensees operate in 114 megahertz of the 2.5 GHz band; the remaining 80 megahertz is assigned to the Broadband Radio Service (BRS). EBS licensees are authorized to operate on the A, B, C, D, and G channel groups, with each group comprised of three 5.5 MHz channels in the lower or upper band segment and one 6 MHz channel in the mid-band segment. Since 1983 the Commission has allowed EBS licensees to lease their excess capacity to commercial providers, but it has required EBS licensees to retain five percent of their capacity for educational use, and it further has required that they use each channel at least 20 hours per week for educational purposes.

5. Currently, there are 1,300 EBS licensees holding over 2,190 licenses. EBS licenses generally are based on a 35-mile radius circular Geographic Service Area (GSA) (with an area of 1934 square miles), although due to a historical license modification process the Commission adopted in 2005, many EBS licenses have much smaller, irregular GSAs. Incumbent EBS licenses cover only about one half of the geographic area of the United States in any given channel. In the rest of the country, mostly rural areas west of the Mississippi River, the 2.5 GHz spectrum remains unassigned. There is some EBS spectrum unassigned in urban areas as well, but such spectrum generally is only available in small, irregularly shaped areas between GSAs that are considerably smaller than the area of a 35-mile radius circle.

6. The Commission suspended the processing of EBS applications in 1993. Only twice since then has the Commission opened filing windows for EBS applications. In 1995, the Commission provided a five-day window for the filing of applications for new construction permits and for major changes to existing EBS facilities. And in 1996, the Mass Media Bureau announced a sixty-day window for the filing of a limited class of applications, but during that window, it only permitted the filing of EBS modification applications and amendments to pending EBS applications proposing to co-locate with an authorized wireless cable facility.

7. During the past 20 years, the Commission, on several occasions, has considered assigning EBS spectrum licenses by auction. Most recently, the Commission in 2008 decided to use competitive bidding to license unassigned BRS spectrum but held that a ''broader record should be developed on how to distribute licenses for unassigned EBS spectrum,'' and it sought further comment on how to license unassigned EBS spectrum in the *BRS/EBS Second FNPRM.*

8. In response to the *BRS/EBS Second FNPRM,* commenters proposed various alternative licensing schemes, including awarding licenses through a comparative point system; permitting only consortia to apply for a Basic Trading Area (BTA) license (an area consisting of several counties surrounding a common commercial center); permitting existing licensees to expand their respective GSAs to the borders of the BTA, which would

eliminate all white space and in turn, eliminate the need to file applications for new licenses (''GSA maximization''); and permitting licensees to expand their respective GSAs to the borders of the BTA after accepting applications for new stations (reverse GSA maximization). Subsequently, on June 6, 2014, the Catholic Technology Network, the National EBS Association, the Wireless Communications Association International, and the Hispanic Information and Telecommunications Network, Inc. proposed a multi-step process for licensing unassigned EBS spectrum. Unused EBS spectrum, however, has remained generally unavailable since 1995.

III. Discussion

9. In accordance with the Commission's goal of making additional spectrum available for flexible use, and to promote use of 2.5 GHz frequencies that have been unassigned for far too long, the Commission proposes and seeks comment on a number of steps to encourage and facilitate more efficient use of this spectrum. First, given the irregularity of current EBS geographic service areas (as well as outdated regulatory requirements), the Commission proposes to rationalize existing EBS holdings so that existing licensees have new opportunities to put 2.5 GHz spectrum to its highest and best use. Second, the Commission seeks comment on whether to open one or more local priority filing windows so that existing licensees, Tribal Nations, and educational entities could get access to unassigned spectrum in the 2.5 GHz band. Third, the Commission proposes to use geographic area licensing to assign any remaining spectrum, which may result in the auction of any licenses for 2.5 GHz spectrum still unassigned after rationalizing holdings and any new filing windows. Finally, the Commission seeks comment on additional approaches for transforming the 2.5 GHz band, including by moving directly to an auction for some or all of the spectrum. The Commission believes the proposed changes discussed herein will reduce unnecessary regulatory burdens on licensees, promote greater spectrum efficiency, and facilitate the full use of EBS spectrum to provide advanced mobile broadband services, particularly in rural areas where this spectrum sits idle today.

A. Rationalizing Existing 2.5 GHz Holdings

10. Ensuring that the radio spectrum is used efficiently and intensively is an important public interest goal—a goal that also serves the interests of the existing licensees. The Commission traditionally has recognized that a spectrum policy based on flexible use in regular geographic areas has several advantages. Such flexible use licensing can promote broadband deployment, ensure the spectrum is put to its most beneficial use, allow licensees to respond to consumer demand for new services, and maximize the probability of success for new services.

1. Regular Geographic License Areas

11. As an initial step, the Commission proposes to rationalize the GSAs of existing EBS licensees, except grandfathered licensees in the E and F Channel groups, to a defined geographic area, namely, the sum of census tracts that are covered by, or that intersect, a licensee's existing GSA. The Commission proposes that such rationalization should occur automatically (*i.e.,* the Commission would update our licensing records to reflect the change), so existing licensees would not be required to file applications with the Commission or otherwise notify the Commission to effectuate this change.[1]

12. The Commission seeks comment on whether such expansion should include every census tract that is covered by or that intersects the licensee's existing GSA. Alternatively, should a census tract be included only if a minimum percentage of that census tract overlaps the GSA, and, if so, what should that minimum percentage threshold be (*e.g.,* 10 percent, 25 percent, 50 percent)? The Commission also seeks comment on whether, if the Commission adopts a minimum percentage overlap threshold, that minimum percentage should be a percentage of the census tract's geography or of the census tract's population.

13. Second, the Commission proposes that, in this rationalization process, each current EBS GSA will be converted to a single license made up of all the census tracts it covers or intersects, rather than converted to a collection of separate licenses, each the size of a single census tract. The Commission seeks comment on this proposal.

14. Finally, the Commission seeks comment on how to resolve situations in which two or more co-channel GSAs overlap the same census tract(s), and whether simply setting the threshold for required overlap at 50 percent in order to include the census tract in the GSA is the best way to address such a situation. Are there other ways to address situations in which co-channel GSAs overlap the same census tracts?

15. Modifying EBS licenses to GSAs based on census tracts should generate two particular benefits. First, since census tract boundaries are pre-determined and follow regular geographic separation patterns (*e.g.,* divisions based on streets), the boundaries of census tract-based GSAs should be easier to determine than a circular GSA that cuts across regular geographic boundaries.

16. Second, rationalizing incumbent EBS licenses based on census tracts would yield white spaces that also are based on the boundaries of census tracts and/or counties (since census tracts nest into counties), rather than irregular shapes and slivers. This regularity in the shape and size of white spaces would facilitate new entry into the 2.5 GHz band. The Commission seeks comment on these views. Commenters should discuss the costs and benefits of such a license area change.

17. As an alternative to basing GSAs on census tracts, the Commission seeks comment on whether the Commission should expand existing GSAs to include the counties covered by or that intersect the GSA. Under this alternative, the Commission seeks comment on whether to include a county only if a minimum percentage of the county overlaps the GSA and, if so, what that minimum percentage should be (*e.g.,* 50 percent, 75 percent). The Commission also seeks comment on whether, if it adopts a minimum percentage overlap threshold, that the minimum percentage should be a percentage of the county's geography or of the county's population. In addition, the Commission seeks comment on how to resolve situations where more than one EBS licensee is in the same county, and whether and to what extent automatic expansion on a county basis will result in inefficient use of spectrum.

18. The Commission also seeks comment on any other issue that may arise from rationalizing existing EBS

[1] The Commission notes that it followed a similar automatic process when ITFS licensees were awarded a protected service area (''PSA''), the precursor to a GSA, and when the PSA was expanded from 15 miles to 35 miles. The Commission also notes that pursuant to our existing rules, grandfathered EBS licensees on the E and F channel groups would not be permitted to expand their GSAs. 47 CFR 27.1216. Pursuant to 47 CFR 27.1216, because there may be both EBS and BRS stations on the same channels in the same market, grandfathered E and F group EBS channels have previously been limited in their ability to expand their GSAs. This may still be the case. The Commission seeks comment on whether rationalizing the holdings of grandfathered EBS licensees on the E and F channel groups would be feasible, whether the Commission could use a similar rationalization scheme as proposed herein for EBS generally, and whether doing so would facilitate more intensive use of 2.5 GHz spectrum.

holdings and allowing EBS licensees to apply to expand their GSA boundaries. In addition to the criteria stated above, are there any other requirements that existing licensees should satisfy in order to be permitted to expand into the vacant area of a county? For instance, should the right to expand to county boundaries be limited to licensees that provide service to a given percentage of that county? If so, what should the minimum percentage be? Should the minimum percentage be a percentage of the county's geography or of the county's population? Should the Commission establish a requirement that the incumbent licensee's GSA cover a minimum percentage of the area in a county before it is allowed to expand into the remainder of the county? In the alternative, should the Commission simply have existing licensees maintain their current contours, rather than rationalizing existing holdings? Commenters should discuss cost and benefits of any advocated approach and support their position with quantitative and qualitative data.

2. Additional Flexibility for EBS Licenses

19. Granting additional flexibility to EBS licensees has been an effective means of allowing better use of the 2.5 GHz band. In 1983, when the Commission allowed 2.5 GHz licensees to lease excess capacity, it provided educators with another means of acquiring the resources needed to operate Instructional Television Fixed Source (ITFS) facilities for education. In 2004, when the Commission created BRS and EBS, the more flexible technical rules allowed the bands to be used for broadband services. Now, significant amounts of commercial broadband data flow through the 2.5 GHz band. The Commission believes subsequent events have confirmed the Commission's prediction that ''consumer benefits will be maximized if BRS/EBS licensees are able to take advantage of the flexible use standard in Part 27.'' The Commission now seeks comment on granting additional flexibility to EBS licensees in order to promote more intensive and efficient spectrum use.

20. First, the Commission proposes to provide EBS licensees with the flexibility to assign or transfer control of their licenses to entities that are not EBS-eligible. Specifically, the Commission proposes to eliminate the limit on what entities can hold EBS licenses (rule 27.1201) and make clear that licensees may assign or transfer control of their licenses to other entities. The Commission notes that the existing licensees have built out their systems since 2011 and understand how they use their EBS licenses as well as the availability of wireless broadband in their area. Under this proposal, the decision whether to lease or transfer a license would rest with the EBS licensee.[2] There is little reason to think that, at this point in time, the Commission is better positioned than licensees themselves to determine how to maximize the use of 2.5 GHz spectrum for licensees and their communities. And there is little reason to think that licensees should not be allowed to decide for themselves whether to continue to hold their licenses or to transfer their licenses to a third party in the secondary market. The Commission seeks comment on this proposal.

21. EBS licensees whose licenses were granted via waiver since the EBS filing freeze was instituted are currently prohibited from leasing the spectrum. Consistent with our consideration of providing additional secondary-markets flexibility to existing EBS licensees, the Commission proposes to eliminate any special restrictions on such licensees; accordingly, those whose licenses were granted via waiver would have the same flexibility to lease their spectrum or to transfer or assign their licenses as the Commission proposes for other EBS licensees. The Commission seeks comment on this proposal.

22. The Commission also seeks comment on eliminating the educational use requirements for EBS licensees. The educational use requirements, which have not been updated since 1998 were based on the use of analog video and permitted many administrative uses to fulfill the educational requirement. However, most EBS licensees or their commercial lessees are providing digital broadband service, offered 24/7, at the school itself, at home, or anywhere within the licensee's GSA. It appears the existing educational use requirements are out of date and do not fit the actual use of the spectrum. Given the additional flexibility the Commission is granting EBS licensees, the Commission seeks comment on whether there is value in attempting to update the educational use requirements—who is better positioned to determine the highest and best use of 2.5 GHz spectrum, the Commission or licensees? Commenters should explain and quantify the benefits and costs of these regulatory requirements, including whether to update them (and if so, how).

23. The Commission also proposes to eliminate the current restrictions on EBS lease terms. Under existing rules, EBS licensees are prohibited from leasing their facilities for a term longer than 30 years and lessees are required to provide EBS lessors with the opportunity to revisit their lease terms at years 15, 20, and 25 to review their ''educational use requirements in light of changes in educational needs, technology, and other relevant factors and to obtain access to such additional services, capacity, support, and/or equipment as the parties shall agree upon in the spectrum leasing arrangement to advance the EBS licensee's educational mission.'' To that end, the Commission proposes to eliminate these lease restrictions on a going-forward basis.[3] The Commission also seeks comment on any other revisions needed to fully rationalize our rules for the transferability, leasing, and use of EBS spectrum. Are there other restrictions that unnecessarily reduce the ability of licensees to put this spectrum to its highest and best use?

24. Finally, the Commission asks whether, in light of the actions the Commission takes in this proceeding, it should modify our treatment of EBS in the spectrum screen. In the *Mobile Spectrum Holdings Report and Order,* the Commission concluded that it was necessary to include most EBS spectrum into the spectrum screen ''to reflect today's marketplace realities.'' While the Commission found that EBS spectrum generally was suitable and available for the provision of mobile telephony/mobile broadband services, it did apply a discount. Specifically, the Commission first excluded the five percent of the EBS capacity that is reserved for educational uses because it remains committed to EBS spectrum serving educational purposes. Second, it excluded the EBS white space. After taking these discounts into consideration, the Commission, in 2014, included 89 megahertz of EBS spectrum in the screen. Are any changes to this treatment warranted? Should the Commission reconsider the spectrum aggregation screen?

B. Opportunities To Acquire New 2.5 GHz Licenses

25. Once the Commission has rationalized the holdings of existing

[2] If the EBS licensee's lease provides for an option or right or right of first refusal with respect to a license, the provisions of the contract would apply, subject to the requirement that all assignments and transfers of Commissions licenses are subject to Commission consent.

[3] While the Commission proposes to eliminate EBS-specific term-related restrictions for leases, the Commission does not propose to eliminate the requirement that lease notifications must be refiled for each new license term.

EBS licensees, unassigned portions of the 2.5 GHz band will be ready for new assignment—bringing new opportunities to rural communities that have lacked access to this spectrum before. The Commission proposes to use geographic area licensing to assign any remaining spectrum, which should result in the auction of licenses for unassigned portions of the 2.5 GHz band and seek comment on whether it should first open up to three new local priority filing windows to give existing licensees, Tribal Nations, and educational entities an opening to access 2.5 GHz spectrum to serve their local communities. The Commission also proposes build-out requirements for these new licenses to ensure that all Americans have the opportunity to benefit from the 2.5 GHz band.

1. New Local Priority Filing Windows

26. When the Commission reopened applications for the 2.5 GHz band in 1985, it expressed a ''strong preference'' for local applicants in the licensing process. The Commission found then that local applicants were ''convincingly demonstrated . . . to be the best authorities for evaluating their educational needs and the needs of others they propose to serve in their communities,'' to ''best understand the educational needs . . . of their communities,'' and to ''act most responsibly in designing and developing [2.5 GHz] systems.'' It thus opened a ''local priority period'' to give ''more local entities . . . the opportunity to fill more channels as financial support from non-[instructional] use becomes more widespread.''

27. Now that the Commission is again opening the 2.5 GHz band for additional licensing, the Commission starts by seeking comment on whether the Commission should open up to three new filing windows for qualifying applicants that want to use currently unassigned 2.5 GHz spectrum to serve their local communities. In each filing window, qualifying applicants would have the opportunity to apply for one or more vacant channels of EBS spectrum in areas where the applicant can show it has a local presence. The first filing window would be for existing EBS licensees, the second for Tribal Nations, and the third for other educational entities. The Commission seeks comment on whether the Commission should open any new local priority filing windows, if any, as well as the details of such windows in turn.

28. In responding, commenters should discuss whether such priority filing windows to assign licenses is consistent with our statutory authority to assign licenses that could be used for telecommunications, and Commission policy and precedent regarding use of competitive bidding. Also, should these entities be given preference over others, in light of other benefits provided to these entities, such as various Universal Service programs, including E-Rate and the Connect America Fund? The Commission also seeks comment on whether such filing windows can be misused and result in unjust enrichment, with licenses being sold or leased to ineligible entities for profit. What effect might these priority windows have on the attractiveness of the remaining spectrum for other applicants? Should the Commission have one combined priority window for these entities, or the three the Commission seeks comment on below?

29. *Local Presence.* When the Commission previously created a local priority period, it defined as ''local'' those ''institutions and organizations that are physically located in the community, or metropolitan area, where service is proposed.'' The Commission proposes for any new local priority filing window, should the Commission choose to implement this approach, to similarly require an applicant to demonstrate, as part of the application process, that it is physically located within the license area applied for. The Commission seeks comment on this requirement and what it would mean in practice. For example, should a college or university be considered to be physically located in any area in which it has a campus? Should an entity created by a state or local government for the purpose of serving formal educational needs, such as a public school or a school district, be considered to be physically located in every area where it has a school building? Should having a physical or mailing address within a particular area, be sufficient to demonstrate that the applicant has a local presence within that area? Are there any situations in which simply having some sort of physical address is not indicative of the local presence of an applicant? Commenters should discuss whether the proposed definition of local presence would serve the public interest and provide any relevant qualitative and quantitative data to support their positions.

30. Commenters also should address what documentation applicants must provide to make such a demonstration. Should the determination of whether an applicant is considered to have a local presence be based solely on an applicant's physical location(s) and/or physical address(es)? Commenters should discuss other factors that should be considered and explain how any factors that they suggest will ensure that the local priority filing window is available only to local applicants. The Commission also seeks comment any other issues that it may need to address to implement a local presence requirement.

31. The Commission notes that the majority of current EBS licensees, such as school districts, schools, colleges and universities, appear to have a local presence where they have licenses. It also appears that the entities most likely to be affected by a local presence requirement are the ''national'' licensees. Although national licensees serve a purpose in providing educational services to educational institutions and students, educational entities with a local presence have a closer understanding of the needs of their local communities and are more likely to use 2.5 GHz spectrum to meet such needs, especially in rural areas. Entities with a local presence are part of the communities they wish to serve, and requiring local presence would increase the likelihood that the EBS spectrum would be put to beneficial use for local communities. The Commission seeks comment on these views.

32. *Local Priority Filing Window 1: Existing Licensees.* If the Commission decides to use priority filing windows, the Commission seeks comment on whether it should open a window for existing EBS licensees. Opening such a window would allow existing licensees that are already providing service in a significant portion of a county (and have a local presence in that county) to expand their service to the county border.[4] Existing licensees have already deployed service throughout a portion may be best positioned to quickly put the white-spaces in their local area to use through an edging-out strategy. In addition, since a number of school districts are based on county boundaries, allowing county expansion could allow county-based school districts to better provide services to the students within their districts, and in many cases, to provide services to those students at home, as well as on school premises. Alternatively, such a window would preclude other applicants from accessing 2.5 GHz white spaces, including new entrants long excluded from the band. The Commission seeks

[4] To be clear, should another licensee already hold licenses for census tracts in that county, the Commission would not intend the county-expansion to encompass those areas.

comment on opening such a local priority filing window.

33. Were the Commission to open such a window, it would propose to limit participation to existing licensees as of the adoption of this *NPRM.*[5] Setting a firm, fixed date allows all commenters and the Commission to easily discern what entities would be potential applicants for this window should the Commission adopt it. Furthermore, applicants in this window would be limited to seeking county-based licenses only in counties where they have a local presence. And finally, applicants in this window would be limited to seeking county-based licenses only where they hold, after the rationalization of existing license areas, licenses on a particular channel that cover at least 25 percent of census tracts in a county. The Commission seeks comment on these conditions. In particular, what adjustments to these conditions, if any, would be appropriate to ensure that the goals of such a window would be met? For example, should the Commission require licensees to hold licenses covering even more of a county (say 50 percent of census tracts)? Or should the Commission require that a local presence of the licensee lie inside the county but outside the already-licensed area of the licensee (under a theory that licensees should be permitted to expand to cover areas where they have a physical presence but otherwise restricted so that new licensees have the opportunity to participate in the 2.5 GHz band)?

34. What other conditions, if any, should the Commission adopt on participants in such a window? For example, should the Commission exclude channels in counties in which more than one existing licensee would qualify for expansion on a single channel? If so, how would the Commission determine all counties in which existing licensees meet the local presence requirement? Alternatively, should the Commission only exclude channels in counties in which more than one licensee holds licenses covering at least 25 percent of the census tracts in the county? Should the Commission exclude tribal areas that are contained within a county that would be subject to the Tribal Nations window discussed below? The Commission seeks comment on these and any other issues related to opening a new local priority filing window for existing licensees.

35. *Local Priority Filing Window 2: Rural Tribal Nations.* The Commission seeks comment on whether the Commission, if it decides to pursue this approach, should open a new local priority filing window for rural Tribal Nations. The Commission has recognized that ''members of federally-recognized American Indian Tribes and Alaska Native Villages and other residents of Tribal lands have lacked meaningful access to wired and wireless communications services.'' Opening such a window would allow rural Tribal Nations an opportunity to access 2.5 GHz spectrum to address educational and communications needs of their communities and residents on rural Tribal lands, including the deployment of advanced wireless services to areas that have too long been without. Alternatively, such a window would preclude other applicants from accessing 2.5 GHz white spaces. The Commission seeks comment on opening such a local priority filing window.

36. Were the Commission to open such a window, it would propose to limit participation to federally-recognized American Indian Tribes and Alaska Native Villages located in rural areas.[6] Such a request would appear to comport with Native Public Media's request to open the 2.5 GHz band to Indian Tribes and Tribal Governments to account for the special trust relationship between Tribal Nations and the Federal Government and the fact that Native Americans are acutely underrepresented in communications media. Furthermore, applicants in this window would be limited to seeking new licenses only in rural areas where they have a local presence—that would include rural Tribal lands associated with the Tribal Nation itself. The Commission seeks comment on how much of the license area would need to be Tribal lands to qualify. Would 25 percent be sufficient? 50 percent? The Commission further seeks comment on how to define rural Tribal lands for these purposes. Should the Commission use the definition of rural Tribal lands used for E-rate program and Lifeline; *i.e.,* Tribal Lands that are not part of ''an urbanized area or urban cluster area with a population equal to or greater than 25,000''? The Commission asks commenters to discuss any issues that may arise out of a particular definition of Tribal Lands. The Commission seeks comment on whether to exclude lands that currently are not inhabited by members of the Tribal Nations and/or are held as private property from the definition. To this end, the Commission requests comment on how to ensure that the only entities eligible to participate in this filing window are entities that meet our definition of a Tribal Nation, and whose Tribal lands are lands where tribal members reside as a group and are not used for purely commercial purposes. The Commission seeks comment on these conditions. In particular, what adjustments to these conditions, if any, would be appropriate to ensure that the goals of such a window would be met?

37. The Commission next seeks comment on whether licenses granted for white spaces in such a local priority window should be at the county level or on a census-tract-by-census-tract basis. Commenters should discuss why a particular geographic area size would be appropriate taking into account all relevant information, including border interference coordination needs, propagation characteristics of the band, and the services that will be offered. The Commission notes that using a smaller license area (census tracts) would increase the fit between areas licensed to Tribal Nations and Tribal lands, but may have offsetting efficiency losses. Commenters should discuss the costs and benefits of any advocated approach and support their position with quantitative and qualitative data.

38. The Commission also proposes that, if it were to adopt such a local priority filing window, it would not limit the number of channels that a Tribal Nation could acquire. Given the state of wireless technologies (including the use of progressively wider channels), the Commission believes that allowing access to contiguous spectrum on any number of available channels would more efficiently accommodate varying business models and spectrum needs for wireless broadband. The Commission seeks comment on this proposal.

39. Finally, the Commission seeks comment on any other ways by which it could encourage the use of 2.5 GHz spectrum on Tribal Lands. Should the Commission impose any additional obligations to ensure that Tribal Nations hold 2.5 GHz licenses for the benefit of their Tribal community? The Commission seeks comment on these and any other issues related to opening a new local priority filing window for

[5] The Commission seeks comment on whether holders of special temporary authority (an STA) who are not full-fledged licensees should qualify for such a window. Should the Commission expect them to have the permanent facilities in place to quickly expand service to the county edge?

[6] Alternatively, should the Commission authorize any ''Native American Tribal entity'' to participate, including any entity that is listed on the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's currently published list of Indian Tribes recognized to be eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians? *See The Federally Recognized Indian Tribe List Act of 1994* (Indian Tribe Act, Pub. L. 103–154, 108 Stat. 4791 (1994)) *(Indian Tribe Act).*

Tribal Nations, and in particular it seeks government-to-government consultation and coordination with federally recognized Tribes on these issues and the input of inter-Tribal government associations and Native representative organizations.

40. *Local Priority Filing Window 3: New Educational Entities.* To the extent that the Commission implements any filing windows, it seeks comment on whether the Commission should open a new local priority filing window for educational entities that do not currently hold any 2.5 GHz licenses. Opening such a window would allow new educational entities that have never had the opportunity to benefit from holding and using 2.5 GHz spectrum (and that have a local presence in a particular area) the opportunity to access this spectrum for the first time. The Commission notes that the majority of requests for waiver of the current filing freeze have come from educators with a local presence in the communities that they wish to serve. Alternatively, such a window would preclude the auction of any licenses for remaining 2.5 GHz white spaces. The Commission seeks comment on opening such a local priority filing window.

41. Were the Commission to open such a window, it would propose to limit participation to accredited institutions as well as governmental organizations engaged in the formal education of enrolled students who are not 2.5 GHz licensees as of the adoption of this *NPRM*.[7] Setting a firm, fixed date allows all commenters and the Commission to easily discern what entities would be potential applicants for this window should it adopt it. Furthermore, applicants in this window would be limited to seeking licenses only in areas where they have a local presence. The Commission seeks comment on these conditions. In particular, what adjustments to these conditions, if any, would be appropriate to ensure that the goals of such a window would be met?

42. The Commission next seeks comment on whether licenses granted for white spaces in such a local priority window should be at the county level or on a census-tract-by-census-tract basis. Commenters should discuss why a particular geographic area size would be appropriate taking into account all relevant information, including border interference coordination needs, propagation characteristics of the band, and the services that will be offered. Since a number of school districts are based on county boundaries, would allowing county-based licenses allow county-based school districts to better provide services to the students within their districts, and in many cases, to provide services to those students at home, as well as on school premises? Commenters should discuss the costs and benefits of any advocated approach and support their position with quantitative and qualitative data.

43. The Commission also proposes that, if it were to adopt such a local priority filing window, it would not limit the number of channels that a new educational entity could acquire. Given the state of wireless technologies (including the use of progressively wider channels), the Commission believes that allowing access to contiguous spectrum on any number of available channels would more efficiently accommodate varying business models and spectrum needs for wireless broadband. The Commission seeks comment on this proposal.

44. *Local Priority Filing Process.* The Commission seeks comment on the appropriate time frame for any new local priority filing windows. How long should the Commission keep this window open, and how much notice should be given to applicants before the filing window opens? For example, should each such filing window last 30 days with at least 90 days' notice to potential applicants of the licenses available? The Commission asks entities that are interested in participating in the application window and obtaining 2.5 GHz licenses to indicate their interests and the difficulties that they may face to help us evaluate any possible technical and process issues that may arise in implementing one or more new local priority filing windows for applicants and processing such applications. Given technical limitations of the Universal Licensing System (ULS), the Commission notes that it may not be able to accept applications for all available EBS licenses in one general filing window. If that is the case, and the Commission divides the available licenses among multiple filing windows, how should such division be implemented: by region; by population, with the most populous States first or last; alphabetically; or by some other method? The Commission seeks comment on these and related issues.

45. *Resolving Mutually Exclusive Applications.* The Act requires that, if the Commission accepts mutually exclusive applications for initial spectrum licenses, the Commission ''shall grant the license . . . through a system of competitive bidding.'' The Commission assigns licenses for commercial and private internal use through competitive bidding in order to place the licenses in the hands of the parties that value them most highly and that are able to use them most effectively. If the Commission decides to create one or more local priority filing windows, as discussed here, it would result in relatively few mutually exclusive applications, but such a result is not precluded. Therefore, should the Commission receive mutually exclusive applications, it must use competitive bidding to assign initial licenses subject to mutually exclusive applications. The Commission seeks comment on limiting such competitive bidding to the mutually exclusive applicants in that particular filing window, however. In addition, the Commission proposes to employ the part 1 rules governing competitive bidding design, unjust enrichment, application and payment procedures, reporting requirements, and the prohibition on certain communications between auction applicants. The Commission does not propose to adopt designated entity provisions. Under this proposal, such rules would be subject to any further modifications that the Commission may adopt for its part 1 general competitive bidding rules in the future. The Commission seeks comment on this proposal.

46. The also seeks comment on whether to allow a settlement window for the filers to resolve any mutual exclusivity before the Commission accept any application for a 2.5 GHz license. The Commission also seeks comment on any alternative ''engineering solutions, negotiation, threshold qualifications, service regulations, and other means'' [8] of avoiding mutually exclusive applications for new licenses that might further the public interest and comply with the Act.

47. *Holding Periods for Licenses Acquired through a Local Priority Filing Window.* The Commission seeks comment on whether to impose a special holding period on any license acquired through a local priority filing window, if any. Although the Commission generally seeks to facilitate the free transfer of licenses among parties, granting certain entities local priority filing windows is premised on the idea that such entities are uniquely qualified to hold spectrum licenses and ensures that the licenses are put to their highest and best use—something that

[7] As before, the Commission seeks comment on whether holders of special temporary authority (an STA) who are not full-fledged licensees should qualify for such a window.

[8] 47 U.S.C. 309(j)(6)(E).

could not occur if such an entity quickly flipped that license to another, nonqualifying entity. Should the Commission expect that these licenses are likely to be used by the licensee, or that they ultimately will be leased or sold to others who are not eligible for the priority preference? Should the Commission implement a holding period that deters the lease or sale of spectrum to ineligible entities? What factors should the Commission consider in establishing a holding period? What is the most appropriate length for a holding period so as to alleviate concerns involving any potential for speculative behavior or acquisition of 2.5 GHz licenses by entities that do not have a *bona fide* interest in providing service? Would a three, five, or seven-year or more holding period be most appropriate for these circumstances? In determining the appropriate length of holding period, should the Commission consider the chances for and mitigate the potential unjust enrichment by those receiving a priority preference? Are there additional steps that should be taken to ensure that entities are not unjustly enriched? Should the Commission require the licensee to demonstrate completion of certain buildout requirements before allowing a transfer of control? Should the Commission prohibit an EBS licensee that is granted a license during one of the local priority windows proposed herein from leasing 100 percent or some other percentage of their capacity to a commercial entity during the holding period? The Commission seeks comment on these issues.

48. For EBS licenses granted via the local priority windows proposed above, the Commission proposes to require that licensees must reserve a minimum of 20 percent of the capacity of their channels for educational uses that ''further the educational mission of accredited public and private schools'' consistent with paragraphs (b) and (c) of § 27.1203 of the Commission's rules and may not enter into spectrum leasing arrangements involving this reserved capacity. For EBS licensees that choose to provide a broadcast-type service, the Commission proposes to require such licensees to offer 20 hours per channel, per week of educational programming. The Commission seeks comment on these proposals.

2. Licensing White Spaces

49. The Commission proposes, after any new licenses have been assigned through one or more local priority filing windows should the Commission choose to implement that approach, that any remaining 2.5 GHz spectrum [9] be made available for commercial use via competitive bidding. The Commission proposes that it would conduct an auction for licenses of EBS spectrum in conformity with the general competitive bidding rules set forth in part 1, subpart Q, of the Commission's rules. As proposed above for mutually exclusive applications filed in the three EBS filing windows, the Commission proposes to employ the part 1 rules governing competitive bidding design, unjust enrichment, application and payment procedures, reporting requirements, and the prohibition on certain communications between auction applicants. The Commission also proposes not to apply designated entity preferences in this auction. The Commission seeks comment on this proposal.

50. The Commission seeks comment on the appropriate geographic size of new 2.5 GHz white space licenses (*e.g.,* county, census tract, or something else) and the size of the channel blocks (*e.g.,* existing channels or the entire available band). Commenters should discuss the costs and benefits of adopting their proposed geographic area size and channel block size and why such area and channel block sizes would serve the public interest taking into account all the characteristics of this band.

51. Consistent with our longstanding approach, the Commission would initiate a public notice process to solicit public input on certain details of auction design and the auction procedures. This public notice process would address auction-specific matters such as the competitive bidding design and mechanisms, minimum opening bids and/or reserve prices, caps on bidding credits, and payment procedures. In advance of the auction, another public notice would announce the auction procedures and provide detailed instructions for potential auction participants. The Commission also seeks comment on whether any of our part 1 rules should be modified for an auction of licenses in these frequency bands.

3. Requirements for New 2.5 GHz Licenses

52. The current performance requirements for licensees in the 2.5 GHz band were set forth in 2006, as part of the ongoing efforts to transition the band to the new band plan established in 2004. The *2006 BRS/EBS Second Report and Order* established a substantial service regime for BRS and EBS licensees and required licensees to demonstrate compliance by May 1, 2011. The *2006 BRS/EBS Second Report and Order* also established specific safe harbors, including 30 percent population coverage for mobile or point-to-multipoint use, or six permanent links per million for fixed point-to-point services. The *2006 BRS/EBS Second Report and Order* also established an educational safe harbor for EBS licensees, consisting of 20 hours of educational use per channel, per week. In 2010, the Commission established a new requirement for new BRS licenses issued after November 6, 2009: The licensee must make a showing of substantial service within four years from the date of issue of the license. The Commission seeks comment on how effective these performance requirements have been.

53. Last year, the Commission adopted a unified regulatory framework for the Wireless Radio Services (WRS) that replaced the existing patchwork of service-specific rules regarding renewal, comparative renewal, continuity of service, and partitioning and disaggregation, with clear, consistent rules of the road for WRS licensees. The Commission included BRS in the new WRS framework, but excluded EBS from the WRS framework on the ground that ''this service presents unique issues that are under consideration in'' this present proceeding.

54. *Performance Requirements for New 2.5 GHz Licenses.* The Commission proposes more robust performance requirements for any new 2.5 GHz licenses granted through a local priority filing window or a system of competitive bidding. For mobile and fixed point-to-multipoint services, the Commission proposes an interim benchmark of 50 percent population coverage and a final benchmark of 80 percent population coverage. For fixed point-to-point services, the Commission proposes an interim benchmark of 20 point-to-point links per million persons (one link per 50,000 persons) in a license area, and a final benchmark of 40 point-to-point links per million persons (one link per 25,000 persons) in a licensed area. These benchmarks are slightly higher than those for the AWS–3 and WCS bands (which have similar propagation characteristics) given the maturity of technologies already developed and deployed in the 2.5 GHz band. For educational broadcast

[9] In the *BRS/EBS Second FNPRM,* the Commission sought comment on a variety of issues related to licensing EBS spectrum in the Gulf of Mexico. The Commission need not address whether to eliminate restrictions on EBS spectrum in the Gulf of Mexico because, as explained herein, the Commission proposes to eliminate restrictions on all remaining ''white space'' EBS spectrum and make it available for commercial use via competitive bidding.

services, the Commission seeks comment on an interim benchmark of 50 percent population coverage and a final benchmark of 80 percent population coverage. The Commission seeks comment on these performance benchmarks and on any other requirements that may be more appropriate for this band. Are there considerations specific to this band that would warrant a different approach? Are there new technological developments, or issues specific to the 2.5 GHz band, that render a usage-based approach or any other approach suitable here? When should the interim benchmark showing be required? What penalty should apply to licensees that do not meet it? In addition, because the Commission seeks comment on whether to adopt a licensing framework based on census tracts, the Commission also seeks comment on how such a framework would affect performance requirements. Is there some other method of evaluating meaningful service, beyond traditional metrics, that might be more appropriate considering the size of license areas? The Commission also seeks comment on whether there are other more appropriate construction requirements for educational services.

55. *Renewal Standards.* The Commission also proposes to bring any new 2.5 GHz licenses granted through a local priority filing window or a system of competitive bidding into the unified regulatory renewal framework for WRS. The Commission believes that updating the renewal standards in this manner will encourage rapid deployment of next generation wireless services, including 5G. The Commission also seeks comment on bringing existing EBS licensees, once their licenses have been rationalized as discussed earlier, into the WRS framework for license renewal. What are the costs and benefits of each approach?

C. Cleaning Up the 2.5 GHz Rules

56. The process for transitioning BRS and EBS licensees to the new band plan was completed in 2011. While a few Multichannel Video Programming Distributors have received waivers to opt out of the transition so that they can continue providing service, all other licensees have transitioned to the new band plan. It therefore appears that the transition rules are no longer necessary.[10] The Commission believes it is in the public interest to eliminate regulations that are out of date and no longer necessary. The Commission therefore proposes to eliminate the BRS/EBS transition rules.

57. The Commission also proposes to make various non-substantive, clarifying amendments to § 27.1206. The proposed changes are contained in the Proposed Rules. The changes are designed to make the rules easier to understand without changing the substantive requirements for BRS. The Commission seeks comment on these proposed changes.

D. Additional Approaches for Transforming the 2.5 GHz Band

58. The Commission seeks comment on other approaches to rationalizing and opening up the 2.5 GHz band for more productive and intensive use. Generally, are there better ways to restructure the 2.5 GHz band that will ensure that it is put to its highest and best use? In particular, the Commission seeks comment on other licensing and auction ideas and alternatives to the local priority filing window approach. Commenters should provide information about the costs and benefits of any approach suggested.

59. For instance, should the Commission, regardless of the scope of incumbent operations, create new geographic area licenses? If so, what types of geographic area licenses should the FCC create? Should the Commission license the spectrum based on census tracts or counties or some other size? Commenters should discuss whether their view of the appropriate geographic area size changes if the Commission is considering licenses that encompass more than the white spaces previously discussed, and if so why. Additionally, what channel size or sizes should the Commission use in licensing this spectrum?

60. If the FCC were to adopt this approach, how would the Commission account for reasonable investment-backed expectations and incumbent operations? Would a different approach than those considered in section III.A. above be preferable, and if so why? For example, should the Commission convert incumbent licenses into new, flexible use spectrum licenses that would be subject to its secondary market rules? If so, how? Should our approach to incumbent licensees depend on or consider the existing and/or historic use of the spectrum by those incumbent licensees, including, for instance, the construction of facilities or degree to which the spectrum has consistently been put to use?

61. Should the Commission consider moving directly to auction for this spectrum, rather than open priority filing windows for certain entities? In section III.B.2, the Commission seeks comment on auctioning the white spaces, but, instead, should the Commission consider other auction options, such as an incentive auction of this spectrum in order to provide incentives for incumbents to make underutilized spectrum available for commercial use? In particular, should the Commission rely on § 6402 of the Spectrum Act, now codified at 47 U.S.C. 309(j)(8)(G) (or some other source of authority) to encourage incumbent licensees to relinquish voluntarily some or all of their spectrum usage rights to permit the assignment of new initial licenses subject to flexible-use service rules? Are there other means of assigning licenses and promoting more efficient uses that the Commission should consider, such as an overlay auction[11] or other auction mechanisms? The Commission seeks comment on the implications of moving directly to auction.

62. Regardless of the particular approach the Commission takes to facilitate more intensive use of the 2.5 GHz spectrum, should the Commission allow all entities that are interested in using this spectrum the same opportunity to acquire licenses in this band? In other words, should the Commission not adopt local priority filing windows or otherwise grant preferential treatment to potential licensees based on their identity or other criteria?

IV. Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis

63. As required by the Regulatory Flexibility Act of 1980, as amended (RFA), the Commission has prepared this Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis (IRFA) of the possible significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities by the policies and rules proposed in the *NPRM.* Written public comments are requested on this IRFA. Comments must be identified as responses to the IRFA and must be filed by the deadlines for comments provided on the first page of the *NPRM.* The Commission will send a copy of this *NPRM,* including this IRFA,

[10] Should an MVPD operator decide that it wishes to discontinue video service and transition to the new band plan, it can follow the process established by the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau in *Antilles Wireless, LLC d/b/a USA Digital, et al.,* Order on Reconsideration, 25 FCC Rcd 8052, 8058, paras. 13–14 (WTB 2010).

[11] In an overlay auction, the auction winner acquires spectrum rights ''subject to the exclusion of overlapping, co-channel incumbent'' licensees. Typically, if an incumbent license cancels or is forfeited, the overlay licensee automatically acquires the right to operate in the area formerly covered by the incumbent license.

to the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration (SBA). In addition, the *NPRM* and IRFA (or summaries thereof) will be published in the **Federal Register**.

A. A. Need for, and Objectives of, the Proposed Rules

64. In the *NPRM,* the Commission take steps to permit more flexible use of the 2496–2690 MHz (2.5 GHz) band by current EBS licensees and to provide new opportunities for EBS eligible entities, Tribal Nations, and commercial entities to obtain unused 2.5 GHz spectrum to facilitate improved access to next generation wireless broadband, including 5G, for both educational and commercial uses. As mentioned in the *NPRM,* roughly half of EBS spectrum currently is unassigned, while the other half is assigned in geographic areas of various sizes and shapes and is subject to unique use and transfer restrictions. The irregularity in the current geographic service areas, combined in some cases with outdated regulatory requirements has impeded the efficient deployment of services, such as mobile broadband, in this spectrum band. Consistent with the Commission's goal of making additional spectrum available for flexible use, and to promote use of EBS frequencies that have been unassigned for far too long, the Commission proposes and seeks comment on a number of steps to encourage and facilitate more efficient use of the 2.5 GHz band. Additionally, since the process for transitioning BRS and EBS licensees to the new band plan was completed in 2011, the Commission proposes to eliminate the BRS/EBS transition rules. The Commission believes it is in the public interest to eliminate these regulations that are out of date and no longer necessary.

B. B. Legal Basis

65. The proposed actions are authorized pursuant to Sections 1, 2, 3, 4(i), 7, 201, 301, 302, 303, 304, 307, 308, 309, and 310 of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, 47 U.S.C. 151, 152, 154(i), 157, 201, 301, 302, 303, 304, 307, 308, 309, 310 and Section 706 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, as amended, 47 U.S.C. 1302.

C. C. Description and Estimate of the Number of Small Entities to Which the Proposed Rules Will Apply

66. The RFA directs agencies to provide a description of, and, where feasible, an estimate of the number of small entities that may be affected by the proposed rules and policies, if adopted. The RFA generally defines the term ''small entity'' as having the same meaning as the terms ''small business,'' ''small organization,'' and ''small governmental jurisdiction.'' In addition, the term ''small business'' has the same meaning as the term ''small business concern'' under the Small Business Act. A ''small business concern'' is one which: (1) Is independently owned and operated; (2) is not dominant in its field of operation; and (3) satisfies any additional criteria established by the SBA.

67. *Small Businesses, Small Organizations, Small Governmental Jurisdictions.* Our actions, over time, may affect small entities that are not easily categorized at present. The Commission therefore describes here, at the outset, three broad groups of small entities that could be directly affected herein. First, while there are industry specific size standards for small businesses that are used in the regulatory flexibility analysis, according to data from the SBA's Office of Advocacy, in general a small business is an independent business having fewer than 500 employees. These types of small businesses represent 99.9 percent of all businesses in the United States which translates to 28.8 million businesses.

68. Next, the type of small entity described as a ''small organization'' is generally ''any not-for-profit enterprise which is independently owned and operated and is not dominant in its field.'' Nationwide, as of August 2016, there were approximately 356,494 small organizations based on registration and tax data filed by nonprofits with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

69. Finally, the small entity described as a ''small governmental jurisdiction'' is defined generally as ''governments of cities, counties, towns, townships, villages, school districts, or special districts, with a population of less than fifty thousand.'' U.S. Census Bureau data from the 2012 Census of Governments indicate that there were 90,056 local governmental jurisdictions consisting of general purpose governments and special purpose governments in the United States. Of this number there were 37,132 General purpose governments (county, municipal and town or township) with populations of less than 50,000 and 12,184 Special purpose governments (independent school districts and special districts) with populations of less than 50,000. The 2012 U.S. Census Bureau data for most types of governments in the local government category show that the majority of these governments have populations of less than 50,000. Based on this data the Commission estimates that at least 49,316 local government jurisdictions fall in the category of ''small governmental jurisdictions.''

70. *Wireless Telecommunications Carriers (except Satellite).* This industry comprises establishments engaged in operating and maintaining switching and transmission facilities to provide communications via the airwaves. Establishments in this industry have spectrum licenses and provide services using that spectrum, such as cellular services, paging services, wireless internet access, and wireless video services. The appropriate size standard under SBA rules is that such a business is small if it has 1,500 or fewer employees. For this industry, U.S. Census Bureau data for 2012 show that there were 967 firms that operated for the entire year. Of this total, 955 firms had employment of 999 or fewer employees and 12 had employment of 1,000 employees or more. Thus under this category and the associated size standard, the Commission estimates that the majority of wireless telecommunications carriers (except satellite) are small entities.

71. *Broadband Radio Service and Educational Broadband Service.* Broadband Radio Service systems, previously referred to as Multipoint Distribution Service (MDS) and Multichannel Multipoint Distribution Service (MMDS) systems, and ''wireless cable,'' transmit video programming to subscribers and provide two-way high-speed data operations using the microwave frequencies of the BRS and EBS (previously referred to as the Instructional Television Fixed Service (ITFS)).

72. *BRS*—In connection with the 1996 BRS auction, the Commission established a small business size standard as an entity that had annual average gross revenues of no more than $40 million in the previous three calendar years. The BRS auctions resulted in 67 successful bidders obtaining licensing opportunities for 493 Basic Trading Areas (BTAs). Of the 67 auction winners, 61 met the definition of a small business. BRS also includes licensees of stations authorized prior to the auction. At this time, based on our review of licensing records, the Commission estimates that of the 61-small business BRS auction winners, based on our review of licensing records, 48 remain small business licensees. In addition to the 48 small businesses that hold BTA authorizations, there are approximately 86 incumbent BRS licensees that are considered small entities (18 incumbent BRS licensees do not meet the small business size standard). After adding the

number of small business auction licensees to the number of incumbent licensees not already counted, there are currently approximately 133 BRS licensees that are defined as small businesses under either the SBA or the Commission's rules.

73. In 2009, the Commission conducted Auction 86, the sale of 78 licenses in the BRS areas. The Commission offered three levels of bidding credits: (i) A bidder with attributed average annual gross revenues that exceed $15 million and do not exceed $40 million for the preceding three years (small business) received a 15 percent discount on its winning bid; (ii) a bidder with attributed average annual gross revenues that exceed $3 million and do not exceed $15 million for the preceding three years (very small business) received a 25 percent discount on its winning bid; and (iii) a bidder with attributed average annual gross revenues that do not exceed $3 million for the preceding three years (entrepreneur) received a 35 percent discount on its winning bid. Auction 86 concluded in 2009 with the sale of 61 licenses. Of the ten winning bidders, two bidders that claimed small business status won 4 licenses; one bidder that claimed very small business status won three licenses; and two bidders that claimed entrepreneur status won six licenses.

74. *EBS*—Educational Broadband Service has been included within the broad economic census category and SBA size standard for Wired Telecommunications Carriers since 2007. Wired Telecommunications Carriers are comprised of establishments primarily engaged in operating and/or providing access to transmission facilities and infrastructure that they own and/or lease for the transmission of voice, data, text, sound, and video using wired telecommunications networks. Transmission facilities may be based on a single technology or a combination of technologies.'' The SBA's small business size standard for this category is all such firms having 1,500 or fewer employees. U.S. Census Bureau data for 2012 show that there were 3,117 firms that operated that year. Of this total, 3,083 operated with fewer than 1,000 employees. Thus, under this size standard, the majority of firms in this industry can be considered small.

75. In addition to Census data, the Commission's Universal Licensing System indicates that as of March 2018 there are 1,300 licensees holding over 2,190 active EBS licenses. The Commission estimates that of these 2,190 licenses, the majority are held by non-profit educational institutions and school districts, which are by statute defined as small businesses.

D. D. Description of Projected Reporting, Recordkeeping, and Other Compliance Requirements

76. The Commission expects the rules proposed in the *NPRM* will impose new or additional reporting or recordkeeping and/or other compliance obligations on small entities as well as other EBS licensees and EBS eligible entities. The Commission discusses it proposals and the obligations that would result below, and seeks comment on these matters, including cost and benefit analyses supported by quantitative and qualitative data from the parties in the proceeding.

77. *Rationalizing the GSAs of incumbent EBS Licensees.* The Commission proposes to rationalize the GSAs of incumbent EBS licensees, except grandfathered licensees in the E and F Channel groups, to a defined geographic area, namely, the sum of census tracts that are covered by, or that intersect with, a licensee's existing GSA. The Commission proposes that, in this rationalization process, each current EBS GSA will be converted to a single license made up of all the census tracts it covers, rather than converted to a collection of separate census tract-sized licenses. The Commission also proposes that EBS licensees with a local presence in a county be given the opportunity to apply to expand their GSA to the boundaries of a county where they have a local presence. Licensees who take advantage of that option would be subject to new performance requirements. As an alternative to basing GSAs on census tracts, the Commission seeks comment on whether it should expand existing GSAs to include the county (or counties) covered by or that intersect the GSA.

78. *Additional Flexibility for EBS Licenses.* The Commission proposes to provide EBS licensees with the flexibility to assign or transfer control of their licenses to entities that are not EBS-eligible. To provide additional flexibility and to facilitate the most efficient use of the EBS spectrum through a market-based mechanism, the Commission proposes to allow an incumbent EBS licensee, in addition to leasing a portion of its license, to assign or transfer control of its entire license to entities that do not meet the eligibility criteria contained in § 27.1201 of the Commission's rules. If the incumbent EBS licensee were to choose to assign or transfer its license, the new licensee would not be required to comply with the educational use requirements in § 27.1203 of the Commission's rules. The Commission seeks comment on whether licensees whose license were granted via waiver, should be given additional flexibility to lease their spectrum or to transfer or assign their licenses freely. Given this flexibility to transfer or assign an entire EBS license to non-eligible entities, free of educational use requirements, the Commission also proposes to eliminate the educational use requirements in § 27.1203 for all EBS licensees. The Commission also proposes to eliminate restrictions on EBS lease terms on a going forward basis and ask whether additional revisions are necessary to fully rationalize our rules for the transferability, leasing and use of EBS spectrum.

79. *Opportunities to Acquire New 2.5 GHz Licenses.* The Commission proposes to auction off licenses for unassigned portions of the 2.5 GHZ band and seek comment on whether it should first open up to three new local priority filing windows to give existing licensees, Tribal Nations and educational entities an opportunity to access 2.5 GHz spectrum to serve their local communities. The Commission also proposes build-out requirements for these new licenses to ensure that all Americans have the opportunity to benefit from the 2.5 GHz band.

80. *New Local Priority Filing Window—Local Presence.* The Commission proposes to require an applicant to demonstrate as part of the application process that it has a local presence, and that an EBS-eligible entity should be considered to have a ''local presence'' when it is physically located within the license area where service is proposed. The Commission seeks comment on what documentation applicants must provide to demonstrate that they have a local presence.

81. *Local Priority Filing Window 1: Existing Licensees.* The Commission seeks comment on opening a window that would permit existing 2.5 GHz licensees to expand their service to the county border if they were able to demonstrate that they had a local presence in that county, and if they covered at least 25 percent of census tracts in that county. Such a window would allow existing licensees to quickly put white space to use, but it would also preclude new entrants.

82. *Local Priority Filing Window 2: Tribal Nations.* The Commission seeks comment on opening a new filing priority filing window for Tribal Nations. The Commission proposes to limit participation to federally-recognized American Indian Tribes and Alaska Native Villages that also have a local presence. The Commission also

proposes not to limit the number of channels that a Tribal Nations could apply for as EBS-eligible entities for the purposes of participating in the Native National entity filing window. The Commission asks commenters to propose other ways by which it could encourage the use of EBS spectrum on Tribal Lands and in Native communities.

83. *Local Priority Filing Window 3: New Educational Entities.* The Commission seeks comment on opening a new local priority filing window for educational entities that do not hold any 2.5 GHz spectrum. The Commission would propose to limit participation in such a window to accredited institutions as well as governmental organizations engaged in the formal education of enrolled students who are not 2.5 GHz licensees as of the adoption of this NPRM and only in areas in which they have a local presence. The Commission seeks comment on whether to assign new EBS licenses on a county-wide or census tract basis.

84. *Local Priority Filing Process.* The Commission seeks comment on the appropriate time frame for any of the new local priority filing windows, how long the windows should be open, and how much notice to give. The Commission asks entities that are interested in participating in the application window and obtaining 2.5 GHz licenses to indicate their interests and the difficulties that they may face to help us evaluate any possible technical and process issues that may arise in implementing one or more new local priority filing windows for applicants and processing such applications.

85. *Resolving Mutually Exclusive Applications.* While the Commission does not anticipate many mutually exclusive applications based on the local priority filing windows, it notes that the Communications Act requires that assign initial licenses subject to mutually exclusive applications through competitive bidding. The Commission proposes to limit such competitive bidding to the mutually exclusive applications filed during a particular window, and ask for comment on that. The Commission asks for comment on whether the Commission should permit a settlement window to resolve such mutual exclusivity. The Commission also proposes to employ the part 1 rules governing competitive bidding design, unjust enrichment, application and payment procedures, reporting requirements, and the prohibition on certain communications between auction applicants, and seeks comment on this proposal.

86. *Holding Periods for Licenses Acquired Through a Local Priority Filing Window.* The Commission seeks comment on whether to impose a special holding period, and for how long, on any license acquired through a local priority filing window in order to ensure that licenses are not immediately flipped to a nonqualifying entity. The Commission asks whether a three, five, or seven-year holding period would be most appropriate for these circumstances. The Commission also asks whether licensees should be required to meet certain buildout requirements before allowing a transfer.

87. *Licensing White Spaces.* The Commission proposes that after any new licenses have been assigned through one or more local priority filing windows, any remaining 2.5 GHz spectrum would be made available for commercial use via competitive bidding using our general part 1 competitive bidding rules. The Commission seeks comment on this proposal and on the appropriate size of such licenses and the size of channel blocks. The Commission also proposes to apply designated entity preferences in this auction, and to eliminate the EBS eligibility criteria contained in § 27.1201 of the rules with respect to unassigned spectrum and ask for comment on these proposals.

88. *Requirements for New 2.5 GHz Licenses.* The Commission proposes more robust construction requirements for new 2.5 GHz licenses granted based on the proposed local priority filing window in the *NPRM* or a system of competitive bidding. For mobile and fixed point-to-multipoint services, the Commission proposes an interim benchmark of 50 percent population coverage and a final benchmark of 80 percent population coverage. For fixed point-to-point services, the Commission proposes an interim benchmark of 20 point-to-point links per million persons (one link per 50,000 persons) in a license area, and 40 point-to-point links per million persons (one link per 25,000 persons) in a licensed area. For educational broadcast services that provide least 20 hours of educational use per channel per week, the Commission seeks comment on an interim benchmark of 50 percent population coverage and a final benchmark of 80 percent population coverage. The Commission also proposes to bring any new 2.5 GHz licenses granted through a local priority filing window or a system of competitive bidding into the unified regulatory renewal framework for WRS. The Commission seeks comment on bringing existing EBS licensees into the WRS framework for license renewal once their licenses have been rationalized.

89. *Cleaning Up the 2.5 GHz Rules.* The Commission proposes to eliminate the BRS/EBS transition rules since the process for transitioning BRS and EBS licensees to the new band plan was completed in 2011 and the rules no longer appear necessary. The Commission also proposes to make various non-substantive, clarifying amendments to § 27.1206 to make the rules easier to understand without changing the substantive requirements for BRS. The proposed changes are contained in the Proposed Rules of the *NRPM,* and the Commission seeks comment on these proposed changes.

E. E. Steps Taken To Minimize Significant Economic Impact on Small Entities, and Significant Alternatives Considered

90. The RFA requires an agency to describe any significant, specifically small business, alternatives that it has considered in reaching its proposed approach, which may include the following four alternatives (among others): ''(1) the establishment of differing compliance or reporting requirements or timetables that take into account the resources available to small entities; (2) the clarification, consolidation, or simplification of compliance and reporting requirements under the rule for such small entities; (3) the use or performance rather than design standards; and (4) an exemption from coverage of the rules, or any part thereof, for such small entities.''

91. The Commission does not believe that its proposed changes will have a significant economic impact on small entities however, to get a better understanding costs and benefits associated with proposals and any alternatives raised in this proceeding as mentioned above in the previous section, the Commission has requested that commenters discuss the costs and benefits supported by quantitative and qualitative data of any approach advocated. The proposed changes expanding the use of the 2.5 GHz band will benefit small entities as well as entities of other sizes by reducing unnecessary regulatory burdens on licensees, promoting greater spectrum efficiency, and facilitating the full use of EBS spectrum to provide advanced mobile broadband services, particularly in rural areas where this spectrum sits idle today. Moreover, the proposed reforms will permit more flexible use of this spectrum by small and other sized entities that currently hold EBS licenses and will provide new opportunities for EBS eligible entities, Tribal Nations, and

commercial entities to obtain unused 2.5 GHz spectrum to facilitate improved access to next generation wireless broadband, including 5G, for both educational and commercial uses.

92. More specifically, the Commission's proposed rationalization process for incumbent EBS licensees that would occur automatically allowing incumbent licensees to avoid a requirement to file applications with the Commission or to otherwise notify the Commission to effectuate this change would minimize some costs and/or administrative burdens on small entities associated with the rule, if adopted. Small entities should also benefit from removal of the filing freeze for new EBS licenses and the requirement that EBS eligible entities applying for a new license must have a local presence in the areas in which they wish to provide service, which will provide them greater opportunity to obtain EBS spectrum to meet the needs of their communities. In addition, small entities should benefit from the increased flexibility of our proposal to allow EBS licensees with the flexibility to assign or transfer control of their licenses to entities that are not EBS-eligible. The Commission believes that, at this point in time, licensees are in the best position to determine how to use their licenses, or, alternatively, whether to transfer their licenses to a third party in the secondary market.

93. For existing EBS licenses the Commission's action declining to issue proposals creating new performance or renewal requirements will spare small entities and other existing EBS licensees the costs of new compliance requirements in these areas. With respect to performance requirements adopted for all new EBS licenses, the Commission believes such requirements are necessary to ensure that spectrum is being put into use and has proposed a variety of metrics to provide small entities as well as other licensees with a variety of means by which they may demonstrate compliance. The Commission anticipates that updating the performance requirements in this manner will encourage rapid deployment of next generation wireless services, including 5G, which will benefit small entities and the industry as a whole.

F. F. Federal Rules That May Duplicate, Overlap, or Conflict With the Proposed Rules

94. None.

V. Ordering Clauses

95. *It is ordered,* pursuant to the authority found in Sections 1, 2, 3, 4(i), 7, 201, 301, 302, 303, 304, 307, 308, 309, and 310 of the Communications Act of 1934, 47 U.S.C. 151, 152, 153, 154(i), 157, 201, 301, 302, 303, 304, 307, 308, 309, 310, and Section 706 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, as amended, 47 U.S.C. 1302, and Section 1.411 of the Commission's Rules, 47 CFR 1.411, that this *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking is hereby adopted.*

96. *It is further ordered* that *notice is hereby given* of the proposed regulatory changes described in this *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking,* and that comment is sought on these proposals.

97. *It is further ordered* that the Commission's Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau, Reference Information Center, *shall send* a copy of this *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking,* including the Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis, to the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration.

List of Subjects in 47 CFR Parts 1 and 27

Communications common carriers, Communications equipment, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

Federal Communications Commission.

Marlene H. Dortch,

Secretary, Office of the Secretary.

Proposed Rules

For the reasons discussed in the preamble, the Federal Communications Commission proposes to amend 47 CFR parts 1 and 27 as follows:

PART 1—PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE

■ 1. The authority citation for part 1 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 47 U.S.C. 151, 154(i), 155, 157, 160, 201, 225, 227, 303, 309, 332, 1403, 1404, 1451, 1452, and 1455, unless otherwise noted.

■ 2. Amend § 1.949 by revising paragraph (c) to read as follows:

§ 1.949 Application for renewal of authorization.

* * * * *

(c) *Implementation.* Covered Site-based Licenses, except Common Carrier Fixed Point-to-Point Microwave Service (part 101, subpart I of this chapter), and Covered Geographic Licenses in the 600 MHz Service (part 27, subpart N); 700 MHz Commercial Services (part 27, subpart F); Advanced Wireless Services (part 27, subpart L) (AWS–3 (1695–1710 MHz, 1755–1780 MHz, and 2155–2180 MHz) and AWS–4 (2000–2020 MHz and 2180–2200 MHz) only); and H Block Service (part 27, subpart K) must comply with paragraphs (d) through (h) of this section. Broadband Radio Service and Educational Broadband Service licenses (part 27, subpart M) initially issued after [effective date of final rule] must comply with paragraphs (d) through (h) of this section. All other Covered Geographic Licenses must comply with paragraphs (d) through (h) of this section beginning on January 1, 2023. Common Carrier Fixed Point-to-Point Microwave Service (part 101, subpart I) must comply with paragraphs (d) through (h) of this section beginning on October 1, 2018.

* * * * *

PART 27—MISCELLANEOUS WIRELESS COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES

■ 3. The authority citation for part 27 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 47 U.S.C. 154, 301, 302a, 303, 307, 309, 332, 336, 337, 1403, 1404, 1451, and 1452, unless otherwise noted.

■ 4. Amend § 27.14 by revising paragraph (o) to read as follows:

§ 27.14 Construction Requirements.

* * * * *

(o)(1) All BRS and EBS licensees issued after [effective date of final rule], must demonstrate compliance with the performance requirements described in this paragraph. All equipment used to demonstrate compliance must be in use and actually providing service, either for internal use or to unaffiliated customers, as of the interim deadline or the end of the license term, whichever is applicable.

(2) Licensees relying on mobile service must demonstrate reliable signal coverage of 50% of the population of the geographic service area by the interim deadline, and 80% of the population of the geographic service area by the end of the license term.

(3) Licensees relying on fixed service must demonstrate operation of one link for each 50,000 persons in the geographic service area by the interim deadline, and one link for each 25,000 persons in the geographic service area by the end of the license term.

* * * * *

§ 27.1201 [Removed and Reserved]

■ 5. Remove and reserve § 27.1201.

■ 6. Revise § 27.1206 to read as follows:

§ 27.1206 Geographic Service Area.

(a) BRS:

(1) For BRS incumbent licenses granted before September 15, 1995, the GSA for a channel is the GSA as created on January 10, 2005.

(2) For BRS BTA authorization holders, the GSA for a channel is the

BTA, subject to the exclusion of overlapping, co-channel incumbent GSAs created on January 10, 2005.

(3) If an incumbent BRS license is cancelled or is forfeited, the GSA area of the incumbent station shall dissolve and the right to operate in that area automatically reverts to the GSA licensee that held the corresponding BTA.

(b) For EBS:

(1) *Incumbent EBS licensees.* (i) The GSA of EBS licenses on the E and F channel groups is defined in § 27.1216. EBS licensees on the E and F channel groups are prohibited from expanding their GSAs.

(ii) For EBS licenses not in the E and F channel groups in effect as of [effective date of final rule], the GSA for a channel consists of all census tracts which are covered by or intersect its GSA existing as of [effective date of final rule].

(2) *New initial EBS licenses.* The GSA for a channel for new initial licenses issued after [effective date of final rule], is the county [census tract] for which the license is issued, subject to the exclusion of overlapping, co-channel incumbent GSAs.

■ 7. Revise § 27.1214 to read as follows:

§ 27.1214 EBS spectrum leasing arrangements and grandfathered leases.

(a) All leases of current EBS spectrum entered into prior to January 10, 2005 and in compliance with leasing rules formerly contained in part 74 of this chapter may continue in force and effect, notwithstanding any inconsistency between such leases and the rules applicable to spectrum leasing arrangements set forth in this chapter. Such leases entered into pursuant to the former part 74 rules of this chapter may be renewed and assigned in accordance with the terms of such lease. All spectrum leasing arrangements leases entered into after January 10, 2005, pursuant to the rules set forth in part 1 and part 27 of this chapter, must comply with the rules in those parts.

(b) For leasing arrangements entered into between July 19, 2006 and [effective date of final rule], the maximum permissible term of an EBS spectrum leasing arrangement (including the initial term and all renewal terms that commence automatically or at the sole option of the lessee) shall be 30 years. Any spectrum leasing arrangement in excess of 15 years that is entered into on or after July 19, 2006 and before [effective date of final rule] must include terms which provide the EBS licensee on the 15th year and every 5 years thereafter, with an opportunity to review its educational use requirements in light of changes in educational needs, technology, and other relevant factors and to obtain access to such additional services, capacity, support, and/or equipment as the parties shall agree upon in the spectrum leasing arrangement to advance the EBS licensee's educational mission.

■ 8. Revise § 27.1217 to read as follows:

§ 27.1217 Competitive bidding procedures for the Broadband Radio Service and the Educational Broadband Service.

Mutually exclusive initial applications for BRS and EBS licenses are subject to competitive bidding. The designated entity provisions in § 27.1218 shall not apply to auctions held after [effective date of final rule]. The general competitive bidding procedures set forth in part 1, subpart Q of this chapter will apply unless otherwise provided in this subpart.

§ § 27.1230 through 27.1239 [Removed]

■ 9. Remove §§ 27.1230 through 27.1239.

[FR Doc. 2018–12183 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6712–01–P

Notices

Federal Register
Vol. 83, No. 110
Thursday, June 7, 2018

This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains documents other than rules or proposed rules that are applicable to the public. Notices of hearings and investigations, committee meetings, agency decisions and rulings, delegations of authority, filing of petitions and applications and agency statements of organization and functions are examples of documents appearing in this section.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. APHIS–2017–0098]

Notice of a Determination Regarding the Classical Swine Fever and Swine Vesicular Disease Status of Japan

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: We are advising the public of our determination that Japan is free of classical swine fever (CSF) and swine vesicular disease (SVD). Based on an evaluation of the CSF and SVD status of Japan, which we made available to the public for review and comment through a previous notice, the Administrator has determined that CSF and SVD are not present in Japan and that live swine, pork, and pork products may safely be imported into the United States from Japan subject to conditions in the regulations.

DATES: This change in Japan's CSF and SVD status will be recognized on July 9, 2018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Kelly Rhodes, Senior Staff Veterinarian, Regionalization Evaluation Services, National Import Export Services, VS, APHIS, USDA, 4700 River Road Unit 38, Riverdale, MD 20737–1231; email: *Kelly.Rhodes@aphis.usda.gov;* (301) 851–3315.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

The regulations in 9 CFR part 94 (referred to below as the regulations) govern the importation of certain animals and animal products into the United States in order to prevent the introduction of various animal diseases, including classical swine fever (CSF) and swine vesicular disease (SVD). These are dangerous and communicable diseases of swine.

Within part 94, § 94.9 contains requirements governing the importation of pork and pork products from regions where CSF exists. Section 94.10 contains importation requirements for swine from regions where CSF is considered to exist. Section 94.12 contains requirements governing the importation of pork or pork products from regions where SVD exists. Section 94.14 prohibits the importation of domestic swine which are moved from or transit any region in which SVD is known to exist.

In accordance with §§ 94.9(a)(1) and 94.10(a)(1), the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) maintains a web-based list of regions which the Agency considers free of CSF. Sections 94.9(a)(2) and 94.10(a)(2) state that APHIS will add a region to this list after it conducts an evaluation of the region and finds that CSF is not present.

Similarly, in accordance with § 94.12(a)(1), APHIS maintains a web-based list of regions which the Agency considers free of SVD. Paragraph (a)(2) of this section states that APHIS will add a region to this list after it conducts an evaluation of the region and finds that SVD is not present.

The regulations in § 92.2 contain requirements for requesting the recognition of the animal health status of a region (as well as for the approval of the export of a particular type of animal or animal product to the United States from a foreign region). If, after review and evaluation of the information submitted in support of the request, APHIS believes the request can be safely granted, APHIS will make its evaluation available for public comment through a document published in the **Federal Register**. Following the close of the comment period, APHIS will review all comments received and will make a final determination regarding the request that will be detailed in another document published in the **Federal Register**.

In accordance with that process, Japan requested that APHIS evaluate the CSF and SVD disease status of the country. Based on our evaluation, we determined that Japan is free of both CSF and SVD and that the surveillance, prevention, and control measures implemented by Japan are sufficient to minimize the likelihood of introducing CSF and SVD into the United States via imports of species or products susceptible to these diseases.

On February 20, 2018, we published in the **Federal Register** (83 FR 7138, Docket No. APHIS–2017–0098) a notice [1] in which we announced the availability for review and comment of our evaluation of the CSF and SVD status of Japan. We solicited comments on the notice for 30 days ending on March 22, 2018. We received no comments on our evaluation.

Therefore, based on the findings of our evaluation and the absence of comments that would lead us to reconsider those findings, we are announcing our determination to add Japan to the list of regions declared free of CSF and the list of regions declared free of SVD. These lists are available on the APHIS website at *https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-and-animal-product-import-information/ct_animal_disease_status.*

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 450, 7701–7772, 7781–7786, and 8301–8317; 21 U.S.C. 136 and 136a; 31 U.S.C. 9701; 7 CFR 2.22, 2.80, and 371.4.

Done in Washington, DC, this 1st day of June 2018.

Kevin Shea,

Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 2018–12186 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–34–P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. APHIS–2017–0073]

Bayer CropScience LP; Availability of a Preliminary Plant Pest Risk Assessment, Draft Environmental Assessment, Preliminary Finding of No Significant Impact, and Preliminary Determination of Nonregulated Status for Cotton Genetically Engineered For Resistance to HPPD-Inhibitor Herbicides (e.g., Isoxaflutole) and Glyphosate

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

[1] To view the notice and the supporting documents, go to *https://www.regulations.gov/docket?D=APHIS20170098.*

SUMMARY: We are advising the public that the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service has prepared a preliminary determination regarding a request from Bayer CropScience LP seeking a determination of nonregulated status for cotton designated as event GHB811, which has been genetically engineered for dual resistance to HPPD-inhibitor herbicides (*e.g.,* isoxaflutole) and the herbicide glyphosate. We are also making available for public review and comment our preliminary plant pest risk assessment, draft environmental assessment, and preliminary finding of no significant impact for the preliminary determination of nonregulated status.

DATES: We will consider all comments that we receive on or before July 9, 2018.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments by either of the following methods:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* Go to *http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=APHIS-2017-0073*.
- *Postal Mail/Commercial Delivery:* Send your comment to Docket No. APHIS–2017–0073, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, Station 3A–03.8, 4700 River Road Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737–1238.

The draft environmental assessment, preliminary regulatory determination, preliminary finding of no significant impact, preliminary plant pest risk assessment, and any comments we receive on this docket may be viewed at *http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=APHIS-2017-0073* or in our reading room, which is located in room 1141 of the USDA South Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC. Normal reading room hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. To be sure someone is there to help you, please call (202) 799–7039 before coming.

Supporting documents for this petition are also available on the APHIS website at *http://www.aphis.usda.gov/biotechnology/petitions_table_pending.shtml* under APHIS Petition Number 17–138–01p.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. John Turner, Director, Environmental Risk Analysis Programs, Biotechnology Regulatory Services, APHIS, 4700 River Road, Unit 147, Riverdale, MD 20737–1236; (301) 851–3954, email: *john.t.turner@aphis.usda.gov*. To obtain copies of the petition, contact Ms. Cindy Eck at (301) 851–3892, email: *cynthia.a.eck@aphis.usda.gov*.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Under the authority of the plant pest provisions of the Plant Protection Act (7 U.S.C. 7701 *et seq.*), the regulations in 7 CFR part 340, ''Introduction of Organisms and Products Altered or Produced Through Genetic Engineering Which Are Plant Pests or Which There Is Reason to Believe Are Plant Pests,'' regulate, among other things, the introduction (importation, interstate movement, or release into the environment) of organisms and products altered or produced through genetic engineering that are plant pests or that there is reason to believe are plant pests. Such genetically engineered (GE) organisms and products are considered ''regulated articles.''

The regulations in § 340.6(a) provide that any person may submit a petition to the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) seeking a determination that an article should not be regulated under 7 CFR part 340. APHIS received a petition (APHIS Petition Number 17–138–01p) from Bayer CropScience LP (Bayer) of Research Triangle Park, NC, seeking a determination of nonregulated status of cotton (*Gossypium* spp.) designated as event GHB811, which has been genetically engineered for dual resistance to HPPD-inhibitor herbicides (*e.g.,* isoxaflutole) and the herbicide glyphosate. The Bayer petition states that information collected during field trials and laboratory analyses indicates that GHB811 cotton is not likely to be a plant pest and therefore should not be a regulated article under APHIS' regulations in 7 CFR part 340.

According to our process [1] for soliciting public comment when considering petitions for determinations of nonregulated status of GE organisms, APHIS accepts written comments regarding a petition once APHIS deems it complete. In a notice [2] published in the **Federal Register** on October 27, 2017 (82 FR 49782–49783, Docket No. APHIS–2017–0073), APHIS announced the availability of the Bayer petition for public comment. APHIS solicited comments on the petition for 60 days ending on December 26, 2017, in order to help identify potential environmental and interrelated economic issues and impacts that APHIS may determine should be considered in our evaluation of the petition. APHIS received eight comments on the petition. One submission was in favor of the GHB811 cotton determination. Seven of the comments expressed a general disapproval of the planting and use of GE crops. Of the seven comments in opposition, two submissions contained attached comments by organizations. APHIS has evaluated the issues raised during the comment period and, where appropriate, has provided a discussion of these issues in our draft environmental assessment (EA).

After public comments are received on a completed petition, APHIS evaluates those comments and then provides a second opportunity for public involvement in our decisionmaking process. According to our public review process (see footnote 1), the second opportunity for public involvement follows one of two approaches, as described below.

If APHIS decides, based on its review of the petition and its evaluation and analysis of comments received during the 60-day public comment period on the petition, that the petition involves a GE organism that raises no substantive new issues, APHIS will follow Approach 1 for public involvement. Under Approach 1, APHIS announces in the **Federal Register** the availability of APHIS' preliminary regulatory determination along with its draft EA, preliminary finding of no significant impact (FONSI), and its preliminary plant pest risk assessment (PPRA) for a 30-day public review period. APHIS will evaluate any information received related to the petition and its supporting documents during the 30-day public review period. For this petition, we are using Approach 1.

Had APHIS decided, based on its review of the petition and its evaluation and analysis of comments received during the 60-day public comment period on the petition, that the petition involves a GE organism that raises substantive new issues, APHIS would follow Approach 2. Under Approach 2, APHIS first solicits written comments from the public on a draft EA and preliminary PPRA for a 30-day comment period through the publication of a **Federal Register** notice. Then, after reviewing and evaluating the comments on the draft EA and preliminary PPRA and other information, APHIS would revise the preliminary PPRA as necessary and prepare a final EA and, based on the final EA, a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) decision document (either a FONSI or a notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement).

[1] On March 6, 2012, APHIS published in the **Federal Register** (77 FR 13258–13260, Docket No. APHIS–2011–0129) a notice describing our public review process for soliciting public comments and information when considering petitions for determinations of nonregulated status for GE organisms. To view the notice, go to *http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=APHIS-2011-0129*.

[2] To view the notice, the petition, and the comments we received, go to *http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=APHIS-2017-0073*.

As part of our decisionmaking process regarding a GE organism's regulatory status, APHIS prepares a PPRA to assess the plant pest risk of the article. APHIS also prepares the appropriate environmental documentation—either an EA or an environmental impact statement—in accordance with NEPA, to provide the Agency and the public with a review and analysis of any potential environmental impacts that may result if the petition request is approved.

APHIS has prepared a preliminary PPRA and has concluded that cotton designated as event GHB811, which has been genetically engineered for dual herbicides resistance, is unlikely to pose a plant pest risk. In section 403 of the Plant Protection Act, ''plant pest'' is defined as any living stage of any of the following that can directly or indirectly injure, cause damage to, or cause disease in any plant or plant product: A protozoan, a nonhuman animal, a parasitic plant, a bacterium, a fungus, a virus or viroid, an infectious agent or other pathogen, or any article similar to or allied with any of the foregoing.

APHIS has also prepared a draft EA in which we present two alternatives based on our analysis of data submitted by Bayer, a review of other scientific data, field tests conducted under APHIS oversight, and comments received on the petition. APHIS is considering the following alternatives: (1) Take no action, *i.e.,* APHIS would not change the regulatory status of cotton designated as event GHB811, or (2) make a determination of nonregulated status of cotton designated as event GHB811.

The draft EA was prepared in accordance with (1) NEPA, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), (2) regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality for implementing the procedural provisions of NEPA (40 CFR parts 1500–1508), (3) USDA regulations implementing NEPA (7 CFR part 1b), and (4) APHIS' NEPA Implementing Procedures (7 CFR part 372). Based on our draft EA and other pertinent scientific data, APHIS has prepared a preliminary FONSI with regard to the preferred alternative identified in the draft EA.

Based on APHIS' analysis of field and laboratory data submitted by Bayer, references provided in the petition, peer-reviewed publications, information analyzed in the draft EA, the preliminary PPRA, comments provided by the public on the petition, and discussion of issues in the draft EA, APHIS has determined that cotton designated as event GHB811 is unlikely to pose a plant pest risk. We have therefore reached a decision to make a preliminary determination of nonregulated status of cotton designated as event GHB811, whereby cotton designated as event GHB811 would no longer be subject to our regulations governing the introduction of certain GE organisms.

We are making available for a 30-day review period APHIS' preliminary regulatory determination of cotton designated as event GHB811, along with our preliminary PPRA, draft EA, and preliminary FONSI for the preliminary determination of nonregulated status. The draft EA, preliminary FONSI, preliminary PPRA, and our preliminary determination for cotton designated as event GHB811, as well as the Bayer petition and the comments received on the petition, are available as indicated under **ADDRESSES** and **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** above. Copies of these documents may also be obtained from the person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

After the 30-day review period closes, APHIS will review and evaluate any information received during the 30-day review period. If, after evaluating the information received, APHIS determines that we have not received substantive new information that would warrant APHIS altering our preliminary regulatory determination or preliminary FONSI, substantially changing the proposed action identified in the draft EA, or substantially changing the analysis of impacts in the draft EA, APHIS will notify the public through an announcement on our website of our final regulatory determination. If, however, APHIS determines that we have received substantive new information that would warrant APHIS altering our preliminary regulatory determination or preliminary FONSI, substantially changing the proposed action identified in the draft EA, or substantially changing the analysis of impacts in the draft EA, then APHIS will conduct the additional analysis and prepare an amended EA, a new FONSI, and/or a revised PPRA, which would be made available for public review in a subsequent notice in the **Federal Register**, similar to an Approach 2 petition. APHIS will also notify the petitioner.

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 7701–7772 and 7781–7786; 31 U.S.C. 9701; 7 CFR 2.22, 2.80, and 371.3.

Done in Washington, DC, this 1st day of June 2018.

Kevin Shea,

Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 2018–12187 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–34–P

COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

Notice of Public Meeting of the Idaho Advisory Committee

AGENCY: U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.

ACTION: Announcement of meeting.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given, pursuant to the provisions of the rules and regulations of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (Commission) and the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) that a meeting of the Idaho Advisory Committee (Committee) to the Commission will be held at 1:00 p.m. (Mountain Time) Wednesday, June 20, 2018, for the purpose of discussing potential civil rights topics of study.

DATES: The meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 20, 2018, at 1:00 p.m. MT.

Public Call Information:
Dial: 877–675–4751.
Conference ID: 5522721.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Angelica Trevino at *atrevino@usccr.gov* or (213) 894–3437.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This meeting is available to the public through the following toll-free call-in number: 877–675–4751, conference ID number: 5522721. Any interested member of the public may call this number and listen to the meeting. Callers can expect to incur charges for calls they initiate over wireless lines, and the Commission will not refund any incurred charges. Callers will incur no charge for calls they initiate over land-line connections to the toll-free telephone number. Persons with hearing impairments may also follow the proceedings by first calling the Federal Relay Service at 1–800–877–8339 and providing the Service with the conference call number and conference ID number.

Members of the public are entitled to make comments during the open period at the end of the meeting. Members of the public may also submit written comments; the comments must be received in the Regional Programs Unit within 30 days following the meeting. Written comments may be mailed to the Western Regional Office, U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 300 North Los Angeles Street, Suite 2010, Los Angeles, CA 90012. They may be faxed to the Commission at (213) 894–0508, or emailed Angelica Trevino at *atrevino@usccr.gov.* Persons who desire additional information may contact the Regional Programs Unit at (213) 894–3437.

Records and documents discussed during the meeting will be available for

public viewing prior to and after the meeting at *http://facadatabase.gov/committee/meetings.aspx?cid=245.* Please click on the ''Meeting Details'' and ''Documents'' links. Records generated from this meeting may also be inspected and reproduced at the Regional Programs Unit, as they become available, both before and after the meeting. Persons interested in the work of this Committee are directed to the Commission's website, *http://www.usccr.gov,* or may contact the Regional Programs Unit at the above email or street address.

Agenda

I. Welcome
II. Discuss Civil Rights Issues in Idaho
III. Public Comment
IV. Adjournment

Dated: June 1, 2018.

David Mussatt,

Supervisory Chief, Regional Programs Unit.

[FR Doc. 2018–12199 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6335–01–P

COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

Agenda and Notice of Public Meeting of the Massachusetts Advisory Committee

AGENCY: Commission on Civil Rights.

ACTION: Announcement of monthly planning meetings.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given, pursuant to the provisions of the rules and regulations of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (Commission), and the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), that a planning meeting of the Massachusetts Advisory Committee to the Commission will convene on Thursday, June 28, 2017 at 1:00 p.m. (EDT) at McCarter & English, LLP, 265 Franklin Street, Boston, MA 02110. The purpose of the meeting is project planning so that members can begin discussing potential topics for its civil rights project.

DATES: Thursday, June 28, 2018 (EDT) at 1:00 p.m. (EDT).

ADDRESSES: McCarter & English, LLP, 265 Franklin Street, Boston, MA 02110.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Evelyn Bohor, at *ero@usccr.gov* or by phone at 303–866–1040.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: If other persons who plan to attend the meeting require other accommodations, please contact Evelyn Bohor at *ebohor@usccr.gov* at the Eastern Regional Office at least ten (10) working days before the scheduled date of the meeting. Time will be set aside at the end of the meeting so that members of the public may address the Committee after the planning meeting. Persons interested in the issue are also invited to submit written comments; the comments must be received in the regional office by Monday, July 30, 2018. Written comments may be mailed to the Eastern Regional Office, U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1331 Pennsylvania Avenue, Suite 1150, Washington, DC 20425, faxed to (202) 376–7548, or emailed to Evelyn Bohor at *ero@usccr.gov*. Persons who desire additional information may contact the Eastern Regional Office at (202) 376–7533.

Records and documents discussed during the meeting will be available for public viewing as they become available at *https://facadatabase.gov/committee/meetings.aspx?cid=254* and clicking on the ''Meeting Details'' and ''Documents'' links. Records generated from this meeting may also be inspected and reproduced at the Eastern Regional Office, as they become available, both before and after the meeting. Persons interested in the work of this advisory committee are advised to go to the Commission's website, *www.usccr.gov,* or to contact the Eastern Regional Office at the above phone number, email or street address.

Agenda

Thursday, June 28, 2018 at 1:00 p.m. (EDT)

I. Roll Call
II. Planning to Discussion Potential Civil Rights Topics
III. Other Business
IV. Open Comment
V. Adjournment

Dated: June 1, 2018.

David Mussatt,

Supervisory Chief, Regional Programs Unit.

[FR Doc. 2018–12213 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE P

COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

Agenda and Notice of Public Meetings of the South Dakota Advisory Committee

AGENCY: Commission on Civil Rights.

ACTION: Announcement of meetings.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given, pursuant to the provisions of the rules and regulations of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (Commission), and the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), that planning meetings of the South Dakota Advisory Committee to the Commission will convene at 5:00 p.m. (MDT) on Tuesday, June 26, 2018 via teleconference. The purpose of the meeting is to review logistics and possible presenters at two community briefings to be held in Pine Ridge and Pierre, South Dakota in July 2018.

DATES: Tuesday, June 26, 2018, at 5:00 p.m. (MDT).

ADDRESSES: To be held via teleconference:

Conference Call Toll-Free Number for Both Meetings: 1–800–310–7032, Conference ID: 3590626.

TDD: Dial Federal Relay Service 1–800–877–8339 and give the operator the above conference call number and conference ID.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Evelyn Bohor, *ebohor@usccr.gov,* 303–866–1040.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Members of the public may listen to the discussion by dialing the following Conference Call Toll-Free Number: 1–800–310–7032; Conference ID: 3590626. Please be advised that before being placed into the conference call, the operator will ask callers to provide their names, their organizational affiliations (if any), and an email address (if available) prior to placing callers into the conference room. Callers can expect to incur charges for calls they initiate over wireless lines, and the Commission will not refund any incurred charges. Callers will incur no charge for calls they initiate over land-line connections to the toll-free phone number.

Persons with hearing impairments may also follow the discussion by first calling the Federal Relay Service (FRS) at 1–800–877–8339 and provide the FRS operator with Conference Call Toll-Free Number: 1–800–310–7032; Conference ID: 3590626. Members of the public are invited to submit written comments; the comments must be received in the regional office by Thursday, July 26, 2018. Written comments may be mailed to the Rocky Mountain Regional Office, U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1961 Stout Street, Suite 13–201, Denver, CO 80294, faxed to (303) 866–1050, or emailed to Evelyn Bohor at *ebohor@usccr.gov*. Persons who desire additional information may contact the Rocky Mountain Regional Office at (303) 866–1040.

Records and documents discussed during the meeting will be available for public viewing as they become available at *https://database.faca.gov/committee/meetings.aspx?cid=274* and clicking on the ''Meeting Details'' and ''Documents'' links. Records generated from this meeting may also be inspected and reproduced at the Rocky Mountain Regional Office, as they become

available, both before and after the meeting. Persons interested in the work of this advisory committee are advised to go to the Commission's website, *www.usccr.gov,* or to contact the Rocky Mountain Regional Office at the above phone number, email or street address.

Tuesday, June 26, 2018 (5:00 p.m.–MDT) Agenda

- Welcome and Roll-call
- Review and Discuss Logistics and Possible Presenters at Two Upcoming Briefings
- Public Comment
- Adjourn

Dated: June 4, 2018.

David Mussatt,

Supervisory Chief, Regional Programs Unit.

[FR Doc. 2018–12266 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

International Trade Administration

[A–570–866]

Certain Folding Gift Boxes From the People's Republic of China: Final Results of Expedited Third Sunset Review and Continuation of the Antidumping Duty Order

AGENCY: Enforcement and Compliance, International Trade Administration, Department of Commerce.

SUMMARY: The Department of Commerce (Commerce) finds that revocation of the antidumping duty (AD) order on certain folding gift boxes from the People's Republic of China (China) would likely lead to continuation or recurrence of dumping at the dumping margins identified in the ''Final Results of Review'' section of this notice.

DATES: Applicable June 7, 2018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Keith Haynes, AD/CVD Operations, Office III, Enforcement and Compliance, International Trade Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, 1401 Constitution Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20230; telephone: (202) 482–5139.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

On February 1, 2018, Commerce published the notice of initiation of the third sunset review of the antidumping duty order [1] on certain folding gift boxes from China, pursuant to section 751(c) of the Tariff Act of 1930, as amended (the Act).[2] On February 16, 2018, Commerce received a notice of intent to participate from Harvard Folding Box Company, Inc. (Harvard) and P.S. Greetings, Inc. doing business as (d.b.a.) Fantus Paper Products (P.S. Greetings), hereinafter referred to as Domestic Interested Parties, within the deadline specified in 19 CFR 351.218(d)(1)(i).[3] Domestic Interested Parties claimed interested party status under section 771(9)(C) of the Act, as producers of the domestic like product.[4] On November 3, 2017, Commerce received complete substantive responses from Domestic Interested Parties within the 30-day deadline specified in 19 CFR 351.218(d)(3)(i).[5] We received no substantive response from any other domestic or respondent interested parties in this proceeding, nor was a hearing requested. As a result, pursuant to 19 CFR 351.218(e)(1)(ii)(C), Commerce conducted an expedited (120-day) sunset review of the *Order.*

Scope of the Order

The products covered by the *Order* are certain folding gift boxes. Folding gift boxes are a type of folding or knock-down carton manufactured from paper or paperboard. Folding gift boxes are produced from a variety of recycled and virgin paper or paperboard materials, including, but not limited to, clay-coated paper or paperboard and kraft (bleached or unbleached) paper or paperboard. The scope of the *Order* excludes gift boxes manufactured from paper or paperboard of a thickness of more than 0.8 millimeters, corrugated paperboard, or paper mache. The scope also excludes those gift boxes for which no side of the box, when assembled, is at least nine inches in length.

Folding gift boxes included in the scope are typically decorated with a holiday motif using various processes, including printing, embossing, debossing, and foil stamping, but may also be plain white or printed with a single color. The subject merchandise includes folding gift boxes, with or without handles, whether finished or unfinished, and whether in one-piece or multi-piece configuration. One-piece gift boxes are die-cut or otherwise formed so that the top, bottom, and sides form a single, contiguous unit. Two-piece gift boxes are those with a folded bottom and a folded top as separate pieces. Folding gift boxes are generally packaged in shrink-wrap, cellophane, or other packaging materials, in single or multi-box packs for sale to the retail customer. The scope excludes folding gift boxes that have a retailer's name, logo, trademark or similar company information printed prominently on the box's top exterior (such folding gift boxes are often known as ''not-for-resale'' gift boxes or ''give-away'' gift boxes and may be provided by department and specialty stores at no charge to their retail customers). The scope of the *Order* also excludes folding gift boxes where both the outside of the box is a single color and the box is not packaged in shrink-wrap, cellophane, other resin-based packaging films, or paperboard.

Imports of the subject merchandise are classified under Harmonized Tariff Schedules of the United States (HTSUS) subheadings 4819.20.0040 and 4819.50.4060. These subheadings also cover products that are outside the scope of the *Order.* Furthermore, although the HTSUS subheadings are provided for convenience and customs purposes, our written description of the scope of the *Order* is dispositive.

Analysis of Comments Received

All issues raised in this sunset review, including the likelihood of continuation or recurrence of dumping and the magnitude of the margins likely to prevail if the *Order* were revoked, are addressed in the Issues and Decision Memorandum,[6] dated concurrently with, and hereby adopted by this notice. The Issues and Decision Memorandum is a public document and is on file electronically via Enforcement and Compliance's Antidumping and Countervailing Duty Centralized Electronic Service System (ACCESS). ACCESS is available to registered users at *https://access.trade.gov* and to all parties in the Central Records Unit,

[1] *See Notice of Antidumping Duty Order: Certain Folding Gift Boxes from the People's Republic of China,* 67 FR 864 (January 8, 2002) (*Order*).

[2] *See Initiation of Five-Year (Sunset) Reviews,* 83 FR 4641 (February 1, 2018).

[3] *See* Domestic Interested Parties' letter, ''Third Five-Year (Sunset) Review of Antidumping Duty Order on Folding Gift Boxes from the People's Republic of China/The Domestic Industry's Notice of Intent to Participate,'' dated February 16, 2018.

[4] *Id.* at 2. Harvard was a petitioner in the underlying investigation of this proceeding. *See Notice of Preliminary Determination of Sales at Less Than Fair Value: Certain Folding Gift Boxes from the People's Republic of China,* 66 FR 40973 (August 6, 2001); unchanged in *Notice of Final Determination of Sales at Less Than Fair Value: Certain Folding Gift Boxes from the People's Republic of China,* 66 FR 58115 (November 20, 2001) (*Final Determination*).

[5] *See* Domestic Interested Parties' letter, ''Third Five-Year (Sunset) Review of the Antidumping Duty Order on Folding Gift Boxes from the People's Republic of China/Substantive Response to the Notice of Initiation,'' dated March 5, 2018 (Substantive Response).

[6] *See* Memorandum, ''Issues and Decision Memorandum for the Final Results of the Expedited Third Sunset Review of the Antidumping Duty Order on Certain Folding Gift Boxes from the People's Republic of China'' dated concurrently with this notice (Issues and Decision Memorandum).

room B8024 of the main Department of Commerce building. In addition, a complete version of the Issues and Decision Memorandum can be accessed at *http://enforcement.trade.gov/frn/.* The signed Issues and Decision Memorandum and the electronic version of the Issues and Decision Memorandum are identical in content.

Final Results of Review

Pursuant to sections 751(c)(1) and 752(c)(1) and (3) of the Act, we determine that revocation of the *Order* on folding gift boxes from China would be likely to lead to continuation or recurrence of dumping, and that the magnitude of the dumping margins likely to prevail would be weighted-average dumping margins above *de minimis.*

Manufacturers, Producers, and Exporters	Weighted-Average Margin (percent)
All Manufacturers, Producers, and Exporters [7].	Above *de minimis*.

Notification Regarding Administrative Protective Order

This notice also serves as the only reminder to parties subject to an administrative protective order (APO) of their responsibility concerning the return or destruction of proprietary information disclosed under APO in accordance with 19 CFR 351.305. Timely notification of the return or destruction of APO materials or conversion to judicial protective order is hereby requested. Failure to comply with the regulations and terms of an APO is a violation which is subject to sanction.

We are issuing and publishing these results and notice in accordance with sections 751(c), 752(c), and 777(i)(1) of the Act and 19 CR 351.218.

Dated: June 1, 2018.

Gary Taverman,

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Antidumping and Countervailing Duty Operations, performing the non-exclusive functions and duties of the Assistant Secretary for Enforcement and Compliance.

[FR Doc. 2018–12271 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–DS–P

[7] Max Fortune Industrial Ltd. was excluded from the order. *See Order,* 67 FR at 865.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

International Trade Administration

[C–533–884, C–570–081, C–549–838]

Glycine From India, the People's Republic of China, and Thailand: Postponement of Preliminary Determinations of Countervailing Duty Investigations

AGENCY: Enforcement and Compliance, International Trade Administration, Department of Commerce.

DATES: Applicable June 7, 2018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Chelsey Simonovich at 202–482–1979 (India); Tyler Weinhold at 202–482–1121 (the People's Republic of China (China)); George Ayache at 202–482–2623 (Thailand), AD/CVD Operations, Enforcement and Compliance, International Trade Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, 1401 Constitution Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20230.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

On April 25, 2018, the Department of Commerce (Commerce) initiated countervailing duty (CVD) investigations on glycine from India, China, and Thailand.[1] Currently, the preliminary determinations of these investigations are due no later than June 21, 2018.

Postponement of Preliminary Determination

Section 703(b)(1) of the Tariff Act of 1930, as amended (the Act), requires Commerce to issue the preliminary determination in a CVD investigation within 65 days after the date on which Commerce initiated the investigation. However, if the petitioner makes a timely request for a postponement, section 703(c)(1)(A) of the Act allows Commerce to postpone making the preliminary determination until no later than 130 days after the date on which Commerce initiated the investigation. Under 19 CFR 351.205(e), a petitioner must submit a request for postponement 25 days or more before the scheduled date of the preliminary determination and must state the reason for the request. Commerce will grant the request unless it finds compelling reasons to deny the request.

On May 22, 2018, GEO Specialty Chemicals, Inc. and Chattem Chemicals, Inc. (collectively, the petitioners) submitted timely requests, pursuant to section 703(c)(1)(A) of the Act and 19 CFR 351.205(e), to postpone the preliminary determinations.[2] The petitioners state that the current investigation schedule does not provide adequate time to develop the record prior to the preliminary determination. The petitioners, therefore, request postponement of the preliminary determination to allow parties sufficient time to develop the record, including analyzing questionnaire responses and permit the issuance of supplemental questionnaires, if necessary. According to petitioners, postponement of the preliminary determination by the maximum extension of 65 additional days in this case would allow sufficient time for Commerce to develop the record in this investigation.

In accordance with 19 CFR 351.205(e), the petitioners have stated the reasons for requesting a postponement of the preliminary determination, and Commerce finds there are no compelling reasons to deny the requests. Therefore, in accordance with section 703(c)(1)(A) of the Act, Commerce is postponing the deadline for the preliminary determinations to no later than 130 days after the day on which the investigations were initiated, *i.e.,* April 17, 2018. Accordingly, Commerce will issue the preliminary determinations no later than August 27, 2018.[3] In accordance with section 705(a)(1) of the Act and 19 CFR 351.210(b)(1), the deadline for the final determinations of these investigations will continue to be 75 days after the date of the preliminary determinations, unless postponed at a later date.

This notice is issued and published pursuant to section 703(c)(2) of the Act and 19 CFR 351.205(f)(1).

[1] *See Glycine from India, the People's Republic of China, and Thailand: Initiation of Countervailing Duty Investigations,* 83 FR 18002 (April 25, 2018) (*Initiation Notice*).

[2] *See* the petitioners' letter re: Glycine from the People's Republic of China, India and Thailand: Request to Extend Deadline for Preliminary Determinations, dated May 22, 2018.

[3] *See* 19 CFR 351.303(b)(1) and (2). Postponing the preliminary determination to 130 days after initiation would place the deadline on Saturday, August 25, 2018. Commerce's practice dictates that where a deadline falls on a weekend or a federal holiday, the appropriate deadline is the next business day. This date reflects the next business day after the deadline of August 25, 2018. *See Notice of Clarification: Application of ''Next Business Day'' Rule for Administrative Determination Deadlines Pursuant to the Tariff Act of 1930, As Amended,* 70 FR 24533 (May 10, 2005).

Dated: June 1, 2018.

Gary Taverman,

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Antidumping and Countervailing Duty Operations, performing the non-exclusive functions and duties of the Assistant Secretary for Enforcement and Compliance.

[FR Doc. 2018–12272 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–DS–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648–XG258

Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee Meeting

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of open public meeting.

SUMMARY: This notice sets forth the proposed schedule and agenda of a forthcoming meeting of the Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee (MAFAC). The members will discuss and provide advice on issues outlined under **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** below.

DATES: The meeting will be held June 26, 2018, from 8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 2 p.m. to 5:15 p.m., and June 27, from 8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Port of Portland, 7200 NE Airport Way, Portland, OR 97218; 503–415–6000.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Heidi Lovett, MAFAC Assistant Director; 301–427–8034; email: *Heidi.Lovett@noaa.gov.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: As required by section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. App. 2, notice is hereby given of a meeting of MAFAC. The MAFAC was established by the Secretary of Commerce (Secretary), and, since 1971, advises the Secretary on all living marine resource matters that are the responsibility of the Department of Commerce. The complete charter and summaries of prior meetings are located online at *https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/topic/partners#marine-fisheries-advisory-committee*.

Matters To Be Considered

This meeting time and agenda are subject to change.

The meeting is convened to hear presentations and updates and to discuss policies and guidance on the following topics: Columbia Basin Partnership Task Force efforts on the conservation and restoration of salmon and steelhead; NMFS communications and outreach in support of U.S. seafood competitiveness; outcomes of the recreational fisheries summit; and the budget outlook for FY2018 and FY2019. MAFAC will discuss various administrative and organizational matters, Federal Advisory Committee Act ethics and general law, and meetings of subcommittees and working groups may be convened.

Special Accommodations

The meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Heidi Lovett; 301–427–8034 by June 15, 2018.

Dated: June 1, 2018.

Jennifer L. Lukens,

Federal Program Officer, Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2018–12197 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–22–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648–XG259

Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee; Charter Renewal

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of renewed charter.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given of the 2-year renewed charter for the Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee (MAFAC), signed on April 12, 2018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Heidi Lovett, Assistant Federal Program Officer, MAFAC, 301–427–8034.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: As required by section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. App. (1982), notice is hereby given of the renewed charter for MAFAC. MAFAC was established by the Secretary of Commerce (Secretary) on February 17, 1972, to advise the Secretary on all living marine resource matters that are the responsibility of the Department of Commerce. This Committee advises and reviews the adequacy of living marine resources policies and programs to meet the needs of commercial and recreational fisheries, aquaculture, and environmental, consumer, academic, tribal, governmental, and other national interests. The Committee's charter must be renewed every 2 years from the date of the last renewal. The charter can be accessed online at *https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/partners/marine-fisheries-advisory-committee-charter*.

Dated: June 1, 2018.

Jennifer L. Lukens,

Federal Program Officer, Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2018–12198 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–22–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648–XF991

Takes of Marine Mammals Incidental to Specified Activities; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to Marine Site Characterization Surveys off of Delaware

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice; Issuance of an Incidental Harassment Authorization.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the regulations implementing the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) as amended, notification is hereby given that NMFS has issued an incidental harassment authorization (IHA) to Garden State Offshore Energy, LLC (GSOE), to incidentally harass, by Level B harassment only, marine mammals during marine site characterization surveys off the coast of Delaware as part of the Skipjack Wind Project in the area of the Commercial Lease of Submerged Lands for Renewable Energy Development on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS–A 0482) and along potential submarine cable routes to a landfall location in Maryland or Delaware.

DATES: This Authorization is valid for one year from the date of issuance.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jordan Carduner, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, (301) 427–8401. Electronic copies of the applications and supporting documents, as well as a list of the references cited in this document, may be obtained by visiting the internet at: *www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/marine-mammal-protection/*

incidental-take-authorizations-other-energy-activities-renewable. In case of problems accessing these documents, please call the contact listed above.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Sections 101(a)(5)(A) and (D) of the MMPA (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*) direct the Secretary of Commerce (as delegated to NMFS) to allow, upon request, the incidental, but not intentional, taking of small numbers of marine mammals by U.S. citizens who engage in a specified activity (other than commercial fishing) within a specified geographical region if certain findings are made and either regulations are issued or, if the taking is limited to harassment, a notice of a proposed authorization is provided to the public for review.

An authorization for incidental takings shall be granted if NMFS finds that the taking will have a negligible impact on the species or stock(s), will not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of the species or stock(s) for subsistence uses (where relevant), and if the permissible methods of taking and requirements pertaining to the mitigation, monitoring and reporting of such takings are set forth.

NMFS has defined ''negligible impact'' in 50 CFR 216.103 as an impact resulting from the specified activity that cannot be reasonably expected to, and is not reasonably likely to, adversely affect the species or stock through effects on annual rates of recruitment or survival.

The MMPA states that the term ''take'' means to harass, hunt, capture, or kill, or attempt to harass, hunt, capture, or kill any marine mammal.

Except with respect to certain activities not pertinent here, the MMPA defines ''harassment'' as: Any act of pursuit, torment, or annoyance which (i) has the potential to injure a marine mammal or marine mammal stock in the wild (Level A harassment); or (ii) has the potential to disturb a marine mammal or marine mammal stock in the wild by causing disruption of behavioral patterns, including, but not limited to, migration, breathing, nursing, breeding, feeding, or sheltering (Level B harassment).

Summary of Request

On November 22, 2017, NMFS received a request from GSOE for an IHA to take marine mammals incidental to marine site characterization surveys off the coast of Delaware in the area of the Commercial Lease of Submerged Lands for Renewable Energy Development on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS–A 0482) (Lease Area) and along potential submarine cable routes to a landfall location in Maryland or Delaware. GSOE has designated Skipjack Offshore Energy, LLC (Skipjack), a wholly-owned indirect subsidiary of Deepwater Wind Holdings, LLC (Deepwater Wind), and an affiliate of GSOE, to perform the activities described in the IHA application. A revised application was received on March 19, 2018. NMFS deemed that request to be adequate and complete. GSOE's request is for take of 14 marine mammal species by Level B harassment. Neither GSOE nor NMFS expects serious injury or mortality to result from this activity, and the activity is expected to last no more than one year Therefore, an IHA is appropriate.

Description of the Activity

Overview

GSOE plans to conduct marine site characterization surveys, including high-resolution geophysical (HRG) and geotechnical surveys, in the Lease Area and along potential submarine cable routes to landfall locations in either the state of Maryland or Delaware. Surveys would occur from approximately May 2018 through December 2018.

The purpose of the marine site characterization surveys is to obtain a baseline assessment of seabed/sub-surface soil conditions in the Lease Area and cable route corridors to support the siting of the proposed Skipjack wind farm. Underwater sound resulting from GSOE's site characterization surveys have the potential to result in incidental take of marine mammals in the form of behavioral harassment. Geophysical surveys would be conducted for up to 183 days and geotechnical surveys would be conducted for up to 72 days. This schedule is based on 24-hour operations and includes potential down time due to inclement weather.

Geotechnical surveys would entail the use of core penetration testing, deep boring cores and vibracores. Geotechnical surveys are not expected to result in the take of marine mammals and are not analyzed further in this document. Geophysical surveys would entail the use of a multibeam depth sounder, shallow penetration sub-bottom profiler (chirp), medium penetration sub-bottom profiler (boomer and sparker or bubble gun), sidescan sonar and marine magnetometer. The deployment of geophysical survey equipment, including the equipment planned for use during GSOE's planned activity, produces sound in the marine environment that has the potential to result in harassment of marine mammals.

A detailed description of the planned survey activities, including types of survey equipment planned for use, is provided in the **Federal Register** notice of the proposed IHA (83 FR 14417; April 4, 2018). Since that time, no changes have been made to the planned activities. Therefore, a detailed description is not repeated here. Please refer to that **Federal Register** notice for the description of the specific activity.

Comments and Responses

NMFS published a notice of proposed IHA in the **Federal Register** on April 4, 2018 (83 FR 14417). During the 30-day public comment period, NMFS received comment letters from the Marine Mammal Commission (Commission), from a group of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) including Natural Resources Defense Council, National Wildlife Federation, Conservation Law Foundation, Defenders of Wildlife, Southern Environmental Law Center, Surfrider Foundation, Sierra Club, International Fund for Animal Welfare, and Wildlife Conservation Society, and from a member of the general public. NMFS has posted the comments online at: *www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/marine-mammal-protection/incidental-take-authorizations-other-energy-activities-renewable.* The following is a summary of the public comments received and NMFS' responses.

Comment 1: The Commission expressed concern that the method used to estimate the numbers of takes, which summed fractions of takes for each species across project days, does not account for and negates the intent of NMFS' 24-hour reset policy and recommended that NMFS share the rounding criteria with the Commission in an expeditious manner.

NMFS Response: NMFS appreciates the Commission's ongoing concern in this matter. Calculating predicted takes is not an exact science and there are arguments for taking different mathematical approaches in different situations, and for making qualitative adjustments in other situations. We believe, however, that the methodology used for take calculation in this IHA remains appropriate and is not at odds with the 24-hour reset policy the Commission references. We look forward to continued discussion with the Commission on this matter and will share the rounding guidance as soon as it is ready for public review.

Comment 2: The Commission recommended that, until behavioral thresholds are updated, NMFS require applicants to use the 120-decibel (dB) re 1 micropascal (μPa), rather than 160- dB re 1μPa, threshold for acoustic, non-

impulsive sources (*e.g.,* sub-bottom profilers/chirps, echosounders, and other sonars including side-scan and fish-finding).

NMFS Response: Certain sub-bottom profiling systems are appropriately considered to be impulsive sources (*e.g.,* boomers, sparkers); therefore, the threshold of 160 dB re 1µPa will continue to be used for those sources. Other source types referenced by the Commission (*e.g.,* chirp sub-bottom profilers, echosounders, and other sonars including side-scan and fish-finding) produce signals that are not necessarily strictly impulsive; however, NMFS finds that the 160-dB rms threshold is most appropriate for use in evaluating potential behavioral impacts to marine mammals because the temporal characteristics (*i.e.,* intermittency) of these sources are better captured by this threshold. The 120-dB threshold is associated with continuous sources and was derived based on studies examining behavioral responses to drilling and dredging. Continuous sounds are those whose sound pressure level remains above that of the ambient sound, with negligibly small fluctuations in level (NIOSH, 1998; ANSI, 2005). Examples of sounds that NMFS would categorize as continuous are those associated with drilling or vibratory pile driving activities. Intermittent sounds are defined as sounds with interrupted levels of low or no sound (NIOSH, 1998). Thus, signals produced by these source types are not continuous but rather intermittent sounds. With regard to behavioral thresholds, we consider the temporal and spectral characteristics of signals produced by these source types to more closely resemble those of an impulse sound rather than a continuous sound. The threshold of 160 dB re 1µPa is typically associated with impulsive sources, which are inherently intermittent. Therefore, the 160 dB threshold (typically associated with impulsive sources) is more appropriate than the 120 dB threshold (typically associated with continuous sources) for estimating takes by behavioral harassment incidental to use of such sources.

Comment 3: The Commission requested clarification regarding certain issues associated with NMFS' notice that one-year renewals could be issued in certain limited circumstances and expressed concern that the process would bypass the public notice and comment requirements. The Commission also suggested that NMFS should discuss the possibility of renewals through a more general route, such as a rulemaking, instead of notice in a specific authorization. The Commission further recommended that if NMFS did not pursue a more general route, that the agency provide the Commission and the public with a legal analysis supporting our conclusion that this process is consistent with the requirements of section 101(a)(5)(D) of the MMPA.

NMFS Response: The process of issuing a renewal IHA does not bypass the public notice and comment requirements of the MMPA. The notice of the proposed IHA expressly notifies the public that under certain, limited conditions an applicant could seek a renewal IHA for an additional year. The notice describes the conditions under which such a renewal request could be considered and expressly seeks public comment in the event such a renewal is sought. Importantly, such renewals would be limited to circumstances where: the activities are identical or nearly identical to those analyzed in the proposed IHA; monitoring does not indicate impacts that were not previously analyzed and authorized; and, the mitigation and monitoring requirements remain the same, all of which allow the public to comment on the appropriateness and effects of a renewal at the same time the public provides comments on the initial IHA. NMFS has, however, modified the language for future proposed IHAs to clarify that all IHAs, including renewal IHAs, are valid for no more than one year and that the agency would consider only one renewal for a project at this time. In addition, notice of issuance or denial of a renewal IHA would be published in the **Federal Register**, as they are for all IHAs. Last, NMFS will publish on our website a description of the renewal process before any renewal is issued utilizing the new process.

Comment 4: The NGOs expressed concern regarding the marine mammal density estimates used to calculate take. Specifically, the commenters stated the estimates derived from models presented in Roberts *et al.* (2016) may underrepresent density and seasonal presence of large whales in the survey area, and recommended that NMFS consider additional data sources in density modeling for future analyses of estimated take, including initial data from state monitoring efforts, existing passive acoustic monitoring data, opportunistic marine mammal sightings data, and other data sources.

NMFS Response: NMFS has determined that the data provided by Roberts *et al.* (2016) represents the best available information concerning marine mammal density in the survey area and has used it accordingly. NMFS has considered other available information, including that cited by the commenters, and determined that it does not contradict the information provided by Roberts *et al.* (2016). The information discussed by the commenters does not provide data in a format that is directly usable in an acoustic exposure analysis and the commenters make no useful recommendation regarding how to do so. We will review the data sources recommended by the commenters and will consider their suitability for inclusion in future analyses, as requested by the commenters.

Comment 5: The NGOs recommended that NMFS should analyze levels of take for the entire duration of the activities specified in the proposed IHA (*i.e.,* May 15th to December 31st, 2018).

NMFS Response: We agree with the commenters. As noted in the IHA application, density data for the months May through December (*i.e.,* the entire duration of the survey including May 15th to December 31st, 2018) were, in fact, analyzed in the take estimate. The statement in the **Federal Register** notice of the proposed IHA (83 FR 14417; April 4, 2018) that the NGOs refer to in this comment, that density data for the months of May and December were not included in the take analysis, was incorrect, and has been corrected in this document. The potential for analyzing only certain months of density data, based on anticipated months that the survey would most likely be active, had been discussed previously but this approach was not ultimately followed, thus this statement should not have appeared in the **Federal Register** notice of the proposed IHA. We regret any confusion this may have caused.

Comment 6: Regarding mitigation measures, the NGOs recommended NMFS impose a restriction on site assessment and characterization activities that have the potential to injure or harass the North Atlantic right whale from November 1st to April 30th.

NMFS Response: In evaluating how mitigation may or may not be appropriate to ensure the least practicable adverse impact on species or stocks and their habitat, we carefully consider two primary factors: (1) The manner in which, and the degree to which, the successful implementation of the measure(s) is expected to reduce impacts to marine mammals, marine mammal species or stocks, and their habitat; and (2) the practicability of the measures for applicant implementation, which may consider such things as relative cost and impact on operations.

GSOE determined the planned duration of the survey based on their

data acquisition needs, which are largely driven by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management's (BOEM) data acquisition requirements prior to required submission of a construction and operations plan (COP). Any effort on the part of NMFS to restrict the months during which the survey could operate would likely have the effect of forcing the applicant to conduct additional months of surveys the following year, resulting in increased costs incurred by the applicant and additional time on the water with associated additional production of underwater noise which could have further potential impacts to marine mammals. Thus the time and area restrictions recommended by the commenters would not be practicable for the applicant to implement and would to some degree offset the benefit of the recommended measure. In addition, our analysis of the potential impacts of the survey on right whales does not indicate that such closures are warranted, as potential impacts to right whales from the survey activities would be limited to short-term behavioral responses; no marine mammal injury is expected as a result of the survey, nor is injury authorized in the IHA. Thus, in consideration of the limited potential benefits of time and area restrictions, in concert with the impracticability and increased cost on the part of the applicant that would result from such restrictions, NMFS has determined that time and area restrictions are not warranted in this case. Existing mitigation measures, including exclusion zones, ramp-up of survey equipment, and vessel strike avoidance measures, are sufficiently protective to ensure the least practicable adverse impact on species or stocks and their habitat.

Comment 7: Regarding mitigation measures, the NGOs recommended that NMFS require that geophysical surveys commence, with ramp-up, during daylight hours only to maximize the probability that North Atlantic right whales are detected and confirmed clear of the exclusion zone, and that, if a right whale were detected in the exclusion zone during nighttime hours and the survey is shut down, developers should be required to wait until daylight hours for ramp-up to commence.

NMFS Response: We acknowledge the limitations inherent in detection of marine mammals at night. However, similar to the discussion above regarding time and area closures, restricting the ability of the applicant to ramp-up surveys only during daylight hours would have the potential to result in lengthy shutdowns of the survey equipment, which could result in the applicant failing to collect the data they have determined is necessary, which could result in the need to conduct additional surveys the following year. This would result in significantly increased costs incurred by the applicant. Thus the restriction suggested by the commenters would not be practicable for the applicant to implement. In addition, as described above, potential impacts to marine mammals from the survey activities would be limited to short-term behavioral responses. Restricting surveys in the manner suggested by the commenters may reduce marine mammal exposures by some degree in the short term, but would not result in any significant reduction in either intensity or duration of noise exposure. No injury is expected to result even in the absence of mitigation, given the very small estimated Level A harassment zones. In the event that NMFS imposed the restriction suggested by the commenters, potentially resulting in a second survey season of surveys required for the applicant, vessels would be on the water introducing noise into the marine environment for an extended period of time. Therefore, in addition to practicability concerns for the applicant, the restrictions recommended by the commenters could result in the surveys spending increased time on the water, which may result in greater overall exposure to sound for marine mammals; thus the commenters have failed to demonstrate that such a requirement would result in a net benefit for affected marine mammals. Therefore, in consideration of potential effectiveness of the recommended measure and its practicability for the applicant, NMFS has determined that restricting survey start-ups to daylight hours is not warranted in this case.

However, in recognition of the concerns raised by the commenters, we have added a mitigation requirement to the IHA that shutdown of geophysical survey equipment is required upon confirmed passive acoustic monitoring (PAM) detection of a North Atlantic right whale at night, even in the absence of visual confirmation, except in cases where the acoustic detection can be localized and the right whale can be confirmed as being beyond the 500 m exclusion zone (EZ); equipment may be re-started no sooner than 30 minutes after the last confirmed acoustic detection.

Comment 8: The NGOs recommended that NMFS require a 500 m EZ for marine mammals and sea turtles (with the exception of dolphins that voluntarily approach the vessel). Additionally, the NGOs recommended that protected species observers (PSOs) monitor to an extended 1,000 m EZ for North Atlantic right whales.

NMFS Response: Regarding the recommendation for a 1,000 m EZ specifically for North Atlantic right whales, we have determined that the 500 m EZ, as required in the IHA, is sufficiently protective. We note that the 500 m EZ exceeds the modeled distance to the Level B harassment isopleth (447 m) thus for North Atlantic right whales detected by PSOs this EZ would be expected to effectively minimize potential instances of injury and harassment.

Regarding the commenters' recommendation to require a 500 m EZ for all marine mammals (except dolphins that approach the vessel) we have determined the EZs as currently required in the IHA (described in Mitigation Measures, below) are sufficient to ensure the least practicable adverse impact on species or stocks and their habitat. The EZs would prevent all potential instances of marine mammal injury (though in this instance, injury would not be an expected outcome even in the absence of mitigation due to very small predicted isopleths corresponding to the Level A harassment threshold (Table 5) and would further prevent some instances of behavioral harassment, as well as limiting the intensity and/or duration of behavioral harassment that does occur. As NMFS has determined the EZs currently required in the IHA to be sufficiently protective, we do not think expanded EZs, beyond what is required in the IHA, are warranted. With respect to EZs for sea turtles, we do not have the statutory authority under the MMPA to require mitigation measures specific to sea turtles.

Comment 9: The NGOs recommended that NMFS should not allow modifications of the radii of the EZs based on sound source validation data, except in the event that sound source validation data support the extension of the EZs.

NMFS Response: While NMFS disagrees that modifications should not be made on the basis of empirical data, this comment is not relevant to this action. The potential for modification of the radii of the EZs has not been proposed by NMFS in this IHA and is not included in the issued IHA.

Comment 10: The NGOs recommended that a combination of visual monitoring by PSOs and PAM should be required 24 hours per day, and that a combination of PAM and continual visual monitoring using night

vision and infra-red should be required at night.

NMFS Response: The PAM requirement has been included in the IHA because PAM was proposed by the applicant, and PAM is required in BOEM lease stipulations. We do not think the use of PAM is necessarily warranted for surveys using the sound sources proposed for use by GSOE, due to relatively small areas that are expected to be ensonified to the Level A harassment threshold (Table 5). As we are not convinced that PAM is necessarily warranted for this type of survey, we do not think a requirement to expand the use of PAM to 24 hours a day during the planned survey is warranted. Expanding the PAM requirement to 24 hours a day may also result in increased costs on the part of the applicant. When the potential benefits of a 24 hour PAM requirement are considered in concert with the potential increased costs on the part of the applicant that would result from such a requirement, we determined a requirement for 24 hour PAM operation is not warranted in this case. We have determined the current requirements for visual and acoustic monitoring are sufficient to ensure the EZs and Watch Zone are adequately monitored.

Comment 11: The NGOs recommended that NMFS require a 10 knot speed restriction on all project-related vessels transiting to/from the survey area from November 1st through April 30th and that all project vessels operating within the survey area should be required to maintain a speed of 10 knots or less during the entire survey period.

NMFS Response: NMFS has analyzed the potential for ship strike resulting from GSOE's activity and has determined that the mitigation measures specific to ship strike avoidance are sufficient to avoid the potential for ship strike. These include: A requirement that all vessel operators comply with 10 knot (18.5 kilometer (km)/hr) or less speed restrictions in any Seasonal Management Area (SMA) or Dynamic Management Area (DMA); a requirement that all vessel operators reduce vessel speed to 10 knots (18.5 km/hr) or less when any large whale, any mother/calf pairs, pods, or large assemblages of non-delphinoid cetaceans are observed within 100 m of an underway vessel; a requirement that all survey vessels maintain a separation distance of 500 m or greater from any sighted North Atlantic right whale; a requirement that, if underway, vessels must steer a course away from any sighted North Atlantic right whale at 10 knots or less until the 500 m minimum separation distance has been established; and a requirement that, if a North Atlantic right whale is sighted in a vessel's path, or within 500 m of an underway vessel, the underway vessel must reduce speed and shift the engine to neutral. Additional measures to prevent the potential for ship strike are discussed in more detail below (see the Mitigation section). We have determined that the ship strike avoidance measures are sufficient to ensure the least practicable adverse impact on species or stocks and their habitat. We also note that vessel strike during surveys is extremely unlikely based on the low vessel speed; the survey vessel would maintain a speed of approximately 4 knots (7.4 kilometers per hour) while transiting survey lines.

Comment 12: The NGOs recommended that NMFS account for the potential for indirect ship strike risk resulting from habitat displacement in our analyses.

NMFS Response: NMFS determined that habitat displacement was not an expected outcome of the specified activity, therefore an analysis of potential impacts to marine mammals from habitat displacement is not warranted in this case.

Comment 13: The NGOs recommended that NMFS fund analyses of recently collected marine mammal sighting and acoustic data from 2016 and continue to fund and expand surveys and studies to (i) improve our understanding of distribution and habitat use of marine mammals off Delaware and the broader mid-Atlantic region, and (ii) enhance the resolution of population genetic structure for humpback and fin whales. The NGOs also recommended that NMFS support an expert workshop to consider any existing data and any new information necessary to inform seasonal restrictions and mitigation measures in time for the November 2018 North Atlantic right whale migration period.

NMFS Response: We agree with the NGOs that analyses of recently collected sighting and acoustic data, as well as continued marine mammal surveys, are warranted, and we welcome the opportunity to participate in fora where implications of such data for potential mitigation measures would be discussed; however, we have no statutory authority or ability to require funding of such analyses and surveys, nor do we have the ability to fund such a workshop. We note that NMFS is undertaking numerous efforts relative to recovering right whales; these include expert working groups focused on specific aspects of recovery such as ship strike mitigation and entanglement mitigation, including two subgroups under the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan which both met within the last two months, with a further full team meeting planned for fall 2018.

Comment 14: The NGOs recommended that NMFS incentivize offshore wind developers to partner with scientists to collect data that would increase the understanding of the effectiveness of night vision and infra-red technologies off Delaware and the broader region, with a view towards greater reliance on these technologies to commence surveys during nighttime hours in the future.

NMFS Response: NMFS agrees with the NGOs that improved data on relative effectiveness of night vision and infra-red technologies would be beneficial and could help to inform future efforts at detection of marine mammals during nighttime activities. We have no authority to incentivize such partnerships under the MMPA and the commenters have not provided us with any specific recommendations to evaluate beyond a broad recommendation. However, we will encourage coordination and communication between offshore wind developers and researchers on effectiveness of night vision and infra-red technologies, to the extent possible. In recognition of the commenters' concerns, we have also added a requirement that the final report submitted to NMFS must include an assessment of the effectiveness of night vision equipment used during nighttime surveys, including comparisons of relative effectiveness among the different types of night vision equipment used.

Comment 15: The comment letter from a member of the general public recommended the IHA be issued to GSOE.

NMFS Response: We have issued the IHA to GSOE.

Description of Marine Mammals in the Area of Specified Activity

Sections 3 and 4 of GSOE's IHA application summarize available information regarding status and trends, distribution and habitat preferences, and behavior and life history, of the potentially affected species. Additional information regarding population trends and threats may be found in NMFS' Stock Assessment Reports (SAR; *www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/marine-mammal-protection/marine-mammal-stock-assessment-reports-region*) and more general information about these species (*e.g.,* physical and behavioral descriptions) may be found on NMFS' website (*www.fisheries.noaa.gov/species-*

directory). All species that could potentially occur in the proposed survey area are included in Table 5 of the IHA application. However, the temporal and/or spatial occurrence of several species listed in Table 5 of the IHA application is such that take of these species is not expected to occur, and they are not discussed further beyond the explanation provided here. Take of these species is not anticipated either because they have very low densities in the project area, are known to occur further offshore than the project area, or are considered very unlikely to occur in the project area during the survey due to the species' seasonal occurrence in the area.

Table 1 lists all species with expected potential for occurrence in the survey area and with the potential to be taken as a result of the survey and summarizes information related to the population or stock, including regulatory status under the MMPA and ESA and potential biological removal (PBR), where known. For taxonomy, we follow Committee on Taxonomy (2017). PBR is defined by the MMPA as the maximum number of animals, not including natural mortalities, that may be removed from a marine mammal stock while allowing that stock to reach or maintain its optimum sustainable population (as described in NMFS' SARs). While no mortality is anticipated or authorized here, PBR is included here as a gross indicator of the status of the species and other threats.

Marine mammal abundance estimates presented in this document represent the total number of individuals that make up a given stock or the total number estimated within a particular study or survey area. NMFS' stock abundance estimates for most species represent the total estimate of individuals within the geographic area, if known, that comprises that stock. For some species, this geographic area may extend beyond U.S. waters. All managed stocks in this region are assessed in NMFS' U.S. 2017 draft SARs (*e.g.,* Hayes *et al.,* 2018). All values presented in Table 1 are the most recent available at the time of publication and are available in the 2017 draft Atlantic SARs (Hayes *et al.,* 2018).

TABLE 1—MARINE MAMMALS KNOWN TO OCCUR IN THE SURVEY AREA

Common name	Stock	NMFS MMPA and ESA status; strategic (Y/N) [1]	Stock Abundance (CV,N_{min}, most recent abundance survey) [2]	Predicted abundance (CV) [3]	PBR [4]	Occurrence and seasonality in the survey area
Toothed whales (Odontoceti)						
Sperm whale (*Physeter macrocephalus*).	North Atlantic	E; Y	2,288 (0.28; 1,815; n/a)	5,353 (0.12)	3.6	Rare.
Long-finned pilot whale (*Globicephala melas*).	W. North Atlantic	-; Y	5,636 (0.63; 3,464; n/a)	18,977 (0.11) [6]	35	Rare.
Atlantic white-sided dolphin (*Lagenorhynchus acutus*).	W. North Atlantic	-; N	48,819 (0.61; 30,403; n/a)	37,180 (0.07)	304	Rare.
Atlantic spotted dolphin (*Stenella frontalis*).	W. North Atlantic	-; N	44,715 (0.43; 31,610; n/a)	55,436 (0.32)	316	Rare.
Bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*).	W. North Atlantic, Offshore.	-; N	77,532 (0.40; 56,053; 2011).	97,476 (0.06) [5]	561	Common year round.
	W. North Atlantic, Northern Migratory Coastal.	-; N	6,639 (0.41; 4,759; 2015)		48	Common in summer; rare in winter.
Common dolphin [6] (*Delphinus delphis*).	W. North Atlantic	-; N	173,486 (0.28; 55,690; 2011).	86,098 (0.12)	557	Common year round.
Harbor porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*).	Gulf of Maine/Bay of Fundy.	-; N	79,833 (0.32; 61,415; 2011).	45,089 (0.12)*	706	Common year round.
Baleen whales (Mysticeti)						
North Atlantic right whale (*Eubalaena glacialis*).	W. North Atlantic	E; Y	458 (0; 455; n/a)	535 (0.45)*	1.4	Year round in continental shelf and slope waters, occur seasonally to forage.
Humpback whale [7] *Megaptera novaeangliae*).	Gulf of Maine	-; N	335 (0.42; 239; n/a)	1,637 (0.07)*	3.7	Common year round.
Fin whale (*Balaenoptera physalus*).	W. North Atlantic	E; Y	1,618 (0.33; 1,234; n/a)	4,633 (0.08)	2.5	Year round in continental shelf and slope waters, occur seasonally to forage.
Sei whale (*Balaenoptera borealis*).	Nova Scotia	E; Y	357 (0.52; 236; n/a)	717 (0.3)	0.5	Year round in continental shelf and slope waters, occur seasonally to forage.
Minke whale [6] (*Balaenoptera acutorostrata*).	Canadian East Coast	-; N	20,741 (0.81; 1,425; n/a)	2,112 (0.05)*	162	Year round in continental shelf and slope waters, occur seasonally to forage.
Earless seals (Phocidae)						
Gray seal [8] (*Halichoerus grypus*).	W. North Atlantic	-; N	27,131 (0.10; 25,908; n/a)		1,554	Rare.

TABLE 1—MARINE MAMMALS KNOWN TO OCCUR IN THE SURVEY AREA—Continued

Common name	Stock	NMFS MMPA and ESA status; strategic (Y/N) [1]	Stock Abundance (CV,N_{min}, most recent abundance survey) [2]	Predicted abundance (CV) [3]	PBR [4]	Occurrence and seasonality in the survey area
Harbor seal (*Phoca vitulina).*	W. North Atlantic	-; N	75,834 (0.15; 66,884; 2012).	.....	2,006	Common year round.

[1] ESA status: Endangered (E), Threatened (T)/MMPA status: Depleted (D). A dash (-) indicates that the species is not listed under the ESA or designated as depleted under the MMPA. Under the MMPA, a strategic stock is one for which the level of direct human-caused mortality exceeds PBR (see footnote 3) or which is determined to be declining and likely to be listed under the ESA within the foreseeable future. Any species or stock listed under the ESA is automatically designated under the MMPA as depleted and as a strategic stock.

[2] Based on NMFS SARs except where noted otherwise. NMFS SARs online at: *www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/sars*. CV is coefficient of variation; N_{min} is the minimum estimate of stock abundance. In some cases, CV is not applicable. For certain stocks, abundance estimates are actual counts of animals and there is no associated CV. The most recent abundance survey that is reflected in the abundance estimate is presented; there may be more recent surveys that have not yet been incorporated into the estimate. All values presented here are from the 2017 draft Atlantic SARs (Hayes *et al.,* 2018).

[3] This information represents species- or guild-specific abundance predicted by recent habitat-based cetacean density models (Roberts *et al.,* 2016). These models provide the best available scientific information regarding predicted density patterns of cetaceans in the U.S. Atlantic Ocean, and we provide the corresponding abundance predictions as a point of reference. Total abundance estimates were produced by computing the mean density of all pixels in the modeled area and multiplying by its area. For those species marked with an asterisk, the available information supported development of either two or four seasonal models; each model has an associated abundance prediction. Here, we report the maximum predicted abundance.

[4] Potential biological removal, defined by the MMPA as the maximum number of animals, not including natural mortalities, that may be removed from a marine mammal stock while allowing that stock to reach or maintain its optimum sustainable population size (OSP).

[5] Abundance estimates are in some cases reported for a guild or group of species when those species are difficult to differentiate at sea. Similarly, the habitat-based cetacean density models produced by Roberts *et al.* (2016) are based in part on available observational data which, in some cases, is limited to genus or guild in terms of taxonomic definition. Roberts *et al.* (2016) produced density models to genus level for *Globicephala* spp. and produced a density model for bottlenose dolphins that does not differentiate between offshore and coastal stocks.

[6] Abundance as reported in the 2007 Canadian Trans-North Atlantic Sighting Survey (TNASS), which provided full coverage of the Atlantic Canadian coast (Lawson and Gosselin, 2009). Abundance estimates from TNASS were corrected for perception and availability bias, when possible. In general, where the TNASS survey effort provided superior coverage of a stock's range (as compared with NOAA shipboard survey effort), the resulting abundance estimate is considered more accurate than the current NMFS abundance estimate (derived from survey effort with inferior coverage of the stock range). NMFS stock abundance estimate for the common dolphin is 70,184. NMFS stock abundance estimate for the sei whale is 356.

[7] NMFS stock abundance estimate applies to Gulf of Maine feeding population. Actual humpback whale population in survey area is likely to be larger and to include humpback whales from additional feeding populations in unknown numbers.

[8] NMFS stock abundance estimate applies to U.S. population only, actual abundance is believed to be much larger.

Four marine mammal species that are listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) may be present in the survey area and are included in the take request: North Atlantic right whale, fin whale, sei whale and sperm whale.

Though other marine mammal species are known to occur in the Northwest Atlantic Ocean, the temporal and/or spatial occurrence of several of these species is such that take of these species is not expected to occur, and they are therefore not discussed further beyond the explanation provided here. Take of these species is not anticipated either because they have very low densities in the project area (*e.g.,* blue whale, Clymene dolphin, pantropical spotted dolphin, striped dolphin, spinner dolphin, killer whale, false killer whale, pygmy killer whale,), or, are known to occur further offshore than the project area (*e.g.,* beaked whales, short-finned pilot whale, rough toothed dolphin, Kogia *spp.*).

For the majority of species potentially present in the specific geographic region, NMFS has designated only a single generic stock (*e.g.,* ''western North Atlantic'') for management purposes. This includes the ''Canadian east coast'' stock of minke whales, which includes all minke whales found in U.S. waters. For humpback and sei whales, NMFS defines stocks on the basis of feeding locations, *i.e.,* Gulf of Maine and Nova Scotia, respectively. However, our reference to humpback whales and sei whales in this document refers to any individuals of the species that are found in the specific geographic region.

A detailed description of the species likely to be affected by GSOE's survey, including brief introductions to the species and relevant stocks as well as available information regarding population trends and threats, and information regarding local occurrence, were provided in the **Federal Register** notice of the proposed IHA (83 FR 14417; April 4, 2018); since that time, we are not aware of any changes in the status of these species and stocks; therefore, detailed descriptions are not repeated here. Please refer to that **Federal Register** notice for these descriptions. Please also refer to NMFS' website (*www.fisheries.noaa.gov/species-directory*) for generalized species accounts.

Information concerning marine mammal hearing, including marine mammal functional hearing groups, was provided in the **Federal Register** notice of the proposed IHA (83 FR 14417; April 4, 2018), therefore that information is not repeated here; please refer to that **Federal Register** notice for this information. For further information about marine mammal functional hearing groups and associated frequency ranges, please see NMFS (2016) for a review of available information. Fourteen marine mammal species (twelve cetacean and two pinniped (both phocid) species) have the reasonable potential to co-occur with the survey activities. Please refer to Table 1. Of the cetacean species that may be present, five are classified as low-frequency cetaceans (*i.e.,* all mysticete species), six are classified as mid-frequency cetaceans (*i.e.,* all delphinid species and the sperm whale), and one is classified as a high-frequency cetacean (*i.e.,* harbor porpoise).

Potential Effects of Specified Activities on Marine Mammals and Their Habitat

The effects of underwater noise from GSOE's survey activities have the potential to result in behavioral harassment of marine mammals in the vicinity of the survey area. The **Federal Register** notice of the proposed IHA (83 FR 14417; April 4, 2018) included a discussion of the effects of anthropogenic noise on marine mammals and their habitat, therefore that information is not repeated here; please refer to that **Federal Register** notice for that information. No instances of hearing threshold shifts, injury, serious injury, or mortality are expected as a result of the planned activities.

Estimated Take

This section provides an estimate of the number of incidental takes authorized through this IHA, which will inform both NMFS' consideration of ''small numbers'' and the negligible impact determination.

Harassment is the only type of take expected to result from these activities. Except with respect to certain activities not pertinent here, the MMPA defines ''harassment'' as any act of pursuit, torment, or annoyance which (i) has the potential to injure a marine mammal or marine mammal stock in the wild (Level A harassment); or (ii) has the potential to disturb a marine mammal or marine mammal stock in the wild by causing disruption of behavioral patterns, including, but not limited to, migration, breathing, nursing, breeding, feeding, or sheltering (Level B harassment).

Authorized takes are by Level B harassment, as use of the survey equipment has the potential to result in disruption of behavioral patterns for individual marine mammals. NMFS has determined take by Level A harassment is not an expected outcome of the activity and thus we do not authorize the take of any marine mammals by Level A harassment. This is discussed in greater detail below. As described previously, no mortality or serious injury is anticipated or authorized for this activity. Below we describe how the take is estimated for this project.

Described in the most basic way, we estimate take by considering: (1) Acoustic thresholds above which NMFS believes the best available science indicates marine mammals will be behaviorally harassed or incur some degree of permanent hearing impairment; (2) the area or volume of water that will be ensonified above these levels in a day; (3) the density or occurrence of marine mammals within these ensonified areas; and (4) and the number of days of activities. Below, we describe these components in more detail and present the take estimate.

Acoustic Thresholds

NMFS uses acoustic thresholds that identify the received level of underwater sound above which exposed marine mammals would be reasonably expected to be behaviorally harassed (equated to Level B harassment) or to incur PTS of some degree (equated to Level A harassment).

Level B Harassment—Though significantly driven by received level, the onset of behavioral disturbance from anthropogenic noise exposure is also informed to varying degrees by other factors related to the sound source (*e.g.,* frequency, predictability, duty cycle); the environment (*e.g.,* bathymetry); and the receiving animals (hearing, motivation, experience, demography, behavioral context) and therefore can be difficult to predict (Southall *et al.,* 2007, Ellison *et al.* 2011). NMFS uses a generalized acoustic threshold based on received level to estimate the onset of Level B (behavioral) harassment. NMFS predicts that marine mammals may be behaviorally harassed when exposed to underwater anthropogenic noise above received levels 160 dB re 1 µPa (rms) for non-explosive impulsive (*e.g.,* seismic HRG equipment) or intermittent (*e.g.,* scientific sonar) sources. GSOE's activity includes the use of impulsive sources. Therefore, the 160 dB re 1 µPa (rms) criteria is applicable for analysis of Level B harassment.

Level A harassment—NMFS' Technical Guidance for Assessing the Effects of Anthropogenic Sound on Marine Mammal Hearing (NMFS 2016) identifies dual criteria to assess auditory injury (Level A harassment) to five different marine mammal groups (based on hearing sensitivity) as a result of exposure to noise from two different types of sources (impulsive or non-impulsive). The Technical Guidance identifies the received levels, or thresholds, above which individual marine mammals are predicted to experience changes in their hearing sensitivity for all underwater anthropogenic sound sources, reflects the best available science, and better predicts the potential for auditory injury than does NMFS' historical criteria.

These thresholds were developed by compiling and synthesizing the best available science and soliciting input multiple times from both the public and peer reviewers to inform the final product, and are provided in Table 2 below. The references, analysis, and methodology used in the development of the thresholds are described in NMFS 2016 Technical Guidance, which may be accessed at: *www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/acoustics/guidelines.htm.* As described above, GSOE's activity includes the use of intermittent and impulsive sources

TABLE 2—THRESHOLDS IDENTIFYING THE ONSET OF PERMANENT THRESHOLD SHIFT IN MARINE MAMMALS

Hearing group	PTS onset thresholds	
	Impulsive*	Non-impulsive
Low-Frequency (LF) Cetaceans	$L_{pk,flat}$: 219 dB; $L_{E,LF,24h}$: 183 dB	$L_{E,LF,24h}$: 199 dB.
Mid-Frequency (MF) Cetaceans	$L_{pk,flat}$: 230 dB; $L_{E,MF,24h}$: 185 dB	$L_{E,MF,24h}$: 198 dB.
High-Frequency (HF) Cetaceans	$L_{pk,flat}$: 202 dB; $L_{E,HF,24h}$: 155 dB	$L_{E,HF,24h}$: 173 dB.
Phocid Pinnipeds (PW) (Underwater)	$L_{pk,flat}$: 218 dB; $L_{E,PW,24h}$: 185 dB	$L_{E,PW,24h}$: 201 dB.
Otariid Pinnipeds (OW) (Underwater)	$L_{pk,flat}$: 232 dB; $L_{E,OW,24h}$: 203 dB	$L_{E,OW,24h}$: 219 dB.

Note: *Dual metric acoustic thresholds for impulsive sounds: Use whichever results in the largest isopleth for calculating PTS onset. If a non-impulsive sound has the potential of exceeding the peak sound pressure level thresholds associated with impulsive sounds, these thresholds should also be considered.

Note: Peak sound pressure (Lpk) has a reference value of 1 µPa, and cumulative sound exposure level (LE) has a reference value of 1µPa2s. In this Table, thresholds are abbreviated to reflect American National Standards Institute standards (ANSI 2013). However, peak sound pressure is defined by ANSI as incorporating frequency weighting, which is not the intent for this Technical Guidance. Hence, the subscript ''flat'' is being included to indicate peak sound pressure should be flat weighted or unweighted within the generalized hearing range. The subscript associated with cumulative sound exposure level thresholds indicates the designated marine mammal auditory weighting function (LF, MF, and HF cetaceans, and PW and OW pinnipeds) and that the recommended accumulation period is 24 hours. The cumulative sound exposure level thresholds could be exceeded in a multitude of ways (*i.e.,* varying exposure levels and durations, duty cycle). When possible, it is valuable for action proponents to indicate the conditions under which these acoustic thresholds will be exceeded.

Ensonified Area

Here, we describe operational and environmental parameters of the activity that will feed into estimating the area ensonified above the acoustic thresholds.

The survey would entail the use of HRG survey equipment. The distance to the isopleth corresponding to the threshold for Level B harassment was calculated for all HRG survey equipment with the potential to result in harassment of marine mammals using the spherical transmission loss (TL) equation: $TL=20\log_{10}$. Results of acoustic modeling indicated that, of the

HRG survey equipment planned for use that has the potential to result in harassment of marine mammals, the AA Dura Spark would be expected to produce sound that would propagate the furthest in the water (Table 3); therefore, for the purposes of the take calculation, it was assumed the AA Dura Spark would be active during the entirety of the survey. Thus the distance to the isopleth corresponding to the threshold for Level B harassment for the AA Dura Spark (estimated at 447 m; Table 3) was used as the basis of the Level B take calculation for all marine mammals.

TABLE 3—MODELED RADIAL DISTANCES FROM HRG SURVEY EQUIPMENT TO ISOPLETH CORRESPONDING TO LEVEL B HARASSMENT THRESHOLD

HRG system	Radial distance (m) to level B harassment threshold (160 dB re 1 μPa)
TB Chirp	70.79
EdgeTech Chirp	6.31
AA Boomer	5.62
AA S-Boom	141.25
Bubble Gun	63.1
800J Spark	141.25
AA Dura Spark	446.69

Predicted distances to Level A harassment isopleths, which vary based on marine mammal functional hearing groups (Table 2), were also calculated. The updated acoustic thresholds for impulsive sounds (such as HRG survey equipment) contained in the Technical Guidance (NMFS, 2016) were presented as dual metric acoustic thresholds using both SEL_{cum} and peak sound pressure level metrics. As dual metrics, NMFS considers onset of PTS (Level A harassment) to have occurred when either one of the two metrics is exceeded (*i.e.,* metric resulting in the largest isopleth). The SEL_{cum} metric considers both level and duration of exposure, as well as auditory weighting functions by marine mammal hearing group. In recognition of the fact that calculating Level A harassment ensonified areas could be more technically challenging to predict due to the duration component and the use of weighting functions in the new SEL_{cum} thresholds, NMFS developed an optional User Spreadsheet that includes tools to help predict a simple isopleth that can be used in conjunction with marine mammal density or occurrence to facilitate the estimation of take numbers. GSOE used the NMFS optional User Spreadsheet to calculate distances to Level A harassment isopleths based on SEL_{cum} and used the spherical spreading loss model (similar to the method used to calculate Level B isopleths as described above) to calculate distances to Level A harassment isopleths based on peak pressure.

Modeling of distances to isopleths corresponding to Level A harassment was performed for all types of HRG equipment planned for use with the potential to result in harassment of marine mammals. Of the HRG equipment types modeled, the AA Dura Spark resulted in the largest distances to isopleths corresponding to Level A harassment for all marine mammal functional hearing groups; therefore, to be conservative, the isopleths modeled for the AA Dura Spark were used to estimate potential Level A take. Based on a conservative assumption that the AA Dura Spark would be operated at 1,000 joules during the survey, a peak source level of 223 dB re 1μPa was used for modeling Level A harassment isopleths based on peak pressure (Crocker & Fratantonio, 2016). Inputs to the NMFS optional User Spreadsheet for the AA Dura Spark are shown in Table 4. Modeled distances to isopleths corresponding to Level A harassment thresholds for the AA Dura Spark are shown in Table 5 (modeled distances to Level A harassment isopleths for all other types of HRG equipment planned for use are shown in Table 6 of the IHA application). As described above, NMFS considers onset of PTS (Level A harassment) to have occurred when either one of the two metrics is exceeded (*i.e.,* metric resulting in the largest isopleth). In this case, modeled distances to isopleths corresponding to the Level A harassment threshold were greater based on the peak SPL metric than the SEL_{cum} metric for all marine mammal functional hearing groups (Table 5). We note that Table 5 in the **Federal Register** notice of the proposed IHA (83 FR 14417; April 4, 2018) contained errors that reflected errors in Table 6 of the IHA application (an incorrect weighting factor adjustment was used in the optional User Spreadsheet which resulted in incorrect Level A isopleths for the SEL_{cum} metric). The correct inputs are shown in Table 4 below and the correct distances to Level A isopleths are shown in Table 5 below. Note that where distances to isopleths corresponding to the Level A harassment threshold have changed in comparison to those shown and analyzed in the proposed IHA, they are less than those that were presented in the proposed IHA.

TABLE 4—INPUTS TO THE NMFS OPTIONAL USER SPREADSHEET FOR THE AA DURA SPARK

Source Level (RMS SPL) [1]	213 dB re 1μPa
Source Level (peak) [1]	223 dB re 1μPa
Weighting Factor Adjustment (kHz) [1]	3.2
Source Velocity (meters/second)	2.07
Pulse Duration (seconds)	0.0021
1/Repetition rate (seconds)	2.42
Duty Cycle	0.00

[1] Derived from Crocker & Fratantonio (2016), based on operation at 1,000 joules.

TABLE 5—MODELED RADIAL DISTANCES TO ISOPLETHS CORRESPONDING TO LEVEL A HARASSMENT THRESHOLDS

Functional hearing group (Level A harassment thresholds)	Radial distance (m) to Level A harassment threshold (SEL_{cum})	Radial distance (m) to Level A harassment threshold (Peak SPL_{flat})
Low frequency cetaceans ($L_{pk,flat}$: 219 dB; $L_{E,LF,24h}$: 183 dB)	1.3	1.6
Mid frequency cetaceans ($L_{pk,flat}$: 230 dB; $L_{E,MF,24h}$: 185 dB)	0.0	0.0
High frequency cetaceans ($L_{pk,flat}$: 202 dB; $L_{E,HF,24h}$: 155 dB)	8.6	11.2
Phocid Pinnipeds (Underwater) ($L_{pk,flat}$: 218 dB; $L_{E,HF,24h}$: 185 dB)	0.7	1.8

Due to the small estimated distances to Level A harassment thresholds for all marine mammal functional hearing groups, based on both SEL_{cum} and peak SPL (Table 5), and in consideration of the mitigation measures (see the Mitigation section for more detail), NMFS has determined that the likelihood of Level A take of marine mammals occurring as a result of the survey is so low as to be discountable.

We note that because of some of the assumptions included in the methods used, isopleths produced may be overestimates to some degree. Most of the acoustic sources planned for use in GSOE's survey (including the AA Dura Spark) do not radiate sound equally in all directions but were designed instead to focus acoustic energy directly toward the sea floor. Therefore, the acoustic energy produced by these sources is not received equally in all directions around the source but is instead concentrated along some narrower plane depending on the beamwidth of the source. However, the calculated distances to isopleths do not account for this directionality of the sound source and are therefore conservative. Two types of geophysical survey equipment planned for use in the planned survey are omni-directional, however the modeled distances to isopleths corresponding to the Level B harassment threshold for these sources are smaller than that for the Dura Spark, and the Dura Spark was used to conservatively estimate take for the duration of the survey. For mobile sources, such as the planned survey, the User Spreadsheet predicts the closest distance at which a stationary animal would not incur PTS if the sound source traveled by the animal in a straight line at a constant speed.

Marine Mammal Occurrence

In this section we provide the information about the presence, density, or group dynamics of marine mammals that will inform the take calculations.

The best available scientific information was considered in calculating marine mammal exposure estimates (the basis for estimating take). For cetacean species, densities calculated by Roberts *et al.* (2016) were used. The density data presented by Roberts *et al.* (2016) incorporates aerial and shipboard line-transect survey data from NMFS and from other organizations collected over the period 1992–2014. Roberts *et al.* (2016) modeled density from 8 physiographic and 16 dynamic oceanographic and biological covariates, and controlled for the influence of sea state, group size, availability bias, and perception bias on the probability of making a sighting. NMFS considers the models produced by Roberts *et al.* (2016) to be the best available source of data regarding cetacean densities for this project. More information, including the model results and supplementary information for each model, is available online at: *seamap.env.duke.edu/models/Duke-EC-GOM-2015/*.

For the purposes of the take calculations, density data from Roberts *et al.* (2016) were mapped using a geographic information system (GIS), using density data for the months May through December. Mean density per month for each species within the survey area was calculated by selecting 11 random raster cells selected from 100 km^2 grid cells that were inside the Delaware Wind Energy Area (WEA) and an additional buffer of 10 km outside the WEA boundary (see Figure 1 in the IHA application). Estimates provided by the models are based on a grid cell size of 100 km^2; therefore, model grid cell values were then divided by 100 to determine animals per square km. We note that the **Federal Register** notice of the proposed IHA (83 FR 14417; April 4, 2018) contained an incorrect statement that density data for the months of May and December were not included in the take estimates, however, this statement was incorrect; density data for all months during which the survey may occur (*i.e.,* May through December) were included in the take analysis.

Systematic, offshore, at-sea survey data for pinnipeds are more limited than those for cetaceans. The best available information concerning pinniped densities in the survey area is the U.S. Navy's Operating Area (OPAREA) Density Estimates (NODEs) (DoN, 2007). These density models utilized vessel-based and aerial survey data collected by NMFS from 1998–2005 during broad-scale abundance studies. Modeling methodology is detailed in DoN (2007). For the purposes of the take calculations, NODEs Density Estimates (DoN, 2007) as reported for the summer and fall seasons in the ''Mid Atlantic'' area were used to estimate harbor seal densities. NODEs reports a density value of 0 for gray seals throughout the year in the ''Mid Atlantic'' area; however, the survey data used to develop the OPAREA Density Estimates for gray seal are nearly 20 years old; and, based on the best available information (Hayes *et al.,* 2018), gray seals are expected to occur in the survey area, especially during the fall months. Therefore, density data for harbor seals for the summer and fall seasons in the ''Mid Atlantic'' area were used to estimate gray seal density in the survey area. We acknowledge that this probably represents a conservative approach to estimating gray seal density in the survey area, however this approach is based on the best available information.

Take Calculation and Estimation

Here we describe how the information provided above is brought together to produce a quantitative take estimate.

In order to estimate the number of marine mammals predicted to be exposed to sound levels that would result in harassment, radial distances to predicted isopleths corresponding to harassment thresholds are calculated, as described above. Those distances are then used to calculate the area(s) around the HRG survey equipment predicted to be ensonified to sound levels that exceed harassment thresholds. The area estimated to be ensonified to relevant thresholds in a single day of the survey is then calculated, based on areas predicted to be ensonified around the HRG survey equipment and the estimated trackline distance traveled per day by the survey vessel. GSOE estimates a daily track line distance of

110 km per day during HRG surveys. Based on the maximum estimated distance to the Level B harassment threshold of 447 m (Table 3) and the estimated daily track line distance of 110 km, an area of 98.9 km^2 would be ensonified to the Level B harassment threshold per day during HRG surveys.

The number of marine mammals expected to be incidentally taken per day is then calculated by estimating the number of each species predicted to occur within the daily ensonified area, using estimated marine mammal densities as described above. Estimated numbers of each species taken per day are then multiplied by the number of survey days, and the product is then rounded, to generate an estimate of the total number of each species expected to be taken over the duration of the survey (Table 6).

Takes of bottlenose dolphins could be from either the Western North Atlantic Offshore or Western North Atlantic Northern Migratory Coastal stocks. For purposes of calculating takes as a percentage of population, we assume 50 percent of bottlenose dolphins taken will be from the Western North Atlantic Offshore stock and 50 percent will be from the Western North Atlantic Northern Migratory Coastal stock.

The applicant estimated a total of 4 takes by Level A harassment of harbor porpoises and 3 takes each by Level A harassment for harbor seals and gray seals would occur, in the absence of mitigation. However, as described above, due to the very small estimated distances to Level A harassment thresholds (Table 5), and in consideration of the planned mitigation measures, the likelihood of the planned survey resulting in take in the form of Level A harassment is considered so low as to be discountable; therefore, we do not authorize take of any marine mammals by Level A harassment. Take numbers are shown in Table 6.

TABLE 6—TOTAL NUMBERS OF POTENTIAL INCIDENTAL TAKE OF MARINE MAMMALS AUTHORIZED AND TAKES AS A PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION

Species	Density (#/100 km^2)	Level A takes authorized	Estimated Level B takes	Level B takes authorized	Total takes authorized	Total takes authorized as a percentage of population [1]
North Atlantic right whale	0.0078	0	1	1	1	0.2
Humpback whale	0.0344	0	6	6	6	0.4
Fin whale	0.1004	0	18	18	18	0.4
Sei whale [2]	0.0036	0	1	2	2	<0.1
Minke whale [3]	0.0244	0	4	4	4	<0.1
Sperm whale	0.0053	0	1	1	1	<0.1
Long-finned pilot whale [2]	0.0507	0	9	32	32	0.2
Bottlenose dolphin [4]	6.3438	0	1148	1148	1148	1.18 (W. North Atlantic Offshore stock) [3] 17.3 (W. North Atlantic Northern Migratory Coastal stock)
Atlantic Spotted dolphin	0.1323	0	24	24	24	<0.1
Common dolphin [3]	2.9574	0	535	535	535	0.3
Atlantic white-sided dolphin	0.4342	0	79	79	79	0.2
Harbor porpoise	0.5625	0	102	102	102	0.2
Harbor seal	6.4933	0	1175	1175	1175	1.6
Gray seal	6.4933	0	1175	1175	1175	4.3

[1] Estimates of total takes as a percentage of population are based on marine mammal abundance estimates provided by Roberts *et al.* (2016), when available, to maintain consistency with density estimates which are derived from data provided by Roberts *et al.* (2016). In cases where abundances are not provided by Roberts *et al.* (2016), total takes as a percentage of population are based on abundance estimates in the NMFS Atlantic SARs (Hayes *et al.,* 2018).

[2] The number of authorized takes (Level B harassment only) for these species has been increased from the estimated take to mean group size. Source for sei whale group size estimate is: Schilling *et al.* (1992). Source for long-finned pilot whale group size estimate is: Augusto *et al.* (2017).

[3] Estimates of total authorized takes as a percentage of population are based on marine mammal abundance estimates as reported in the 2007 TNASS (Lawson and Gosselin, 2009) (Table 1). Abundance estimates from TNASS were corrected for perception and availability bias, when possible. In general, where the TNASS survey effort provided superior coverage of a stock's range (as compared with NOAA shipboard survey effort), the resulting abundance estimate is considered more accurate than abundance estimates based on NMFS surveys.

[4] A total of 1,148 takes of bottlenose dolphins are authorized. Takes could be from either the Western North Atlantic Offshore or Western North Atlantic Northern Migratory Coastal stocks. For purposes of calculating takes as a percentage of population we assume 50 percent of bottlenose dolphins taken will be from the Western North Atlantic Offshore stock and 50 percent will be from the Western North Atlantic Northern Migratory Coastal stock.

Species with Take Estimates Less than Mean Group Size: Using the approach described above to estimate take, the take estimates for the sei whale and long-finned pilot whale were less than the average group sizes estimated for these species (Table 6). However, information on the social structures and life histories of these species indicates these species are often encountered in groups. The results of take calculations support the likelihood that the planned survey is expected to encounter and to incidentally take these species, and we believe it is likely that these species may be encountered in groups. Therefore it is reasonable to conservatively assume that one group of each of these species will be taken during the planned survey. We authorize the take of the average group size for these species and stocks to account for the possibility that the planned survey encounters a group of any of these species or stocks (Table 6). We note that the average group size estimate for sei whales in the **Federal Register** notice of the proposed IHA was incorrectly stated as 6 when in fact Schilling *et al.* (1992) report an average

group size of 2; therefore, the number of authorized takes of sei whales has been revised downward from the number of takes proposed in the proposed IHA (from 6 takes proposed to 2 takes authorized). Note that the take estimate for the North Atlantic right whale was not increased to average group size because the exclusion zone for right whales (500 m) (see the Mitigation section), which exceeds the estimated isopleth corresponding to the Level B harassment threshold, is expected to avoid the potential for takes that exceed the take estimate. Also, the take estimate for the sperm whale was not increased to average group size because, based on water depths in the survey area (16 to 28 m (52 to 92 ft)), it is very unlikely that groups of sperm whales, which tend to prefer deeper depths, would be encountered by the planned survey.

Mitigation

In order to issue an IHA under section 101(a)(5)(D) of the MMPA, NMFS must set forth the permissible methods of taking pursuant to such activity, and other means of effecting the least practicable impact on such species or stock and its habitat, paying particular attention to rookeries, mating grounds, and areas of similar significance, and on the availability of such species or stock for taking for certain subsistence uses (latter not applicable for this action). NMFS regulations require applicants for incidental take authorizations to include information about the availability and feasibility (economic and technological) of equipment, methods, and manner of conducting such activity or other means of effecting the least practicable adverse impact upon the affected species or stocks and their habitat (50 CFR 216.104(a)(11)).

In evaluating how mitigation may or may not be appropriate to ensure the least practicable adverse impact on species or stocks and their habitat, as well as subsistence uses where applicable, we carefully consider two primary factors:

(1) The manner in which, and the degree to which, the successful implementation of the measure(s) is expected to reduce impacts to marine mammals, marine mammal species or stocks, and their habitat. This considers the nature of the potential adverse impact being mitigated (likelihood, scope, range). It further considers the likelihood that the measure will be effective if implemented (probability of accomplishing the mitigating result if implemented as planned) the likelihood of effective implementation (probability implemented as planned); and

(2) The practicability of the measures for applicant implementation, which may consider such things as relative cost and impact on operations.

Mitigation Measures

Based on the applicant's request, which includes requirements relating to the BOEM Lease stipulations associated with ESA-listed marine mammals, and specific information regarding the zones ensonified above NMFS thresholds, NMFS is requiring the following mitigation measures during the marine site characterization surveys.

Marine Mammal Exclusion Zones and Watch Zone

Marine mammal EZs would be established around the HRG survey equipment and monitored by protected species observers (PSO) during HRG surveys, as follows:

- 500 m EZ for North Atlantic right whales;
- 200 m EZ for all other ESA-listed cetaceans (including fin whale, sei whale and sperm whale); and
- 25 m EZ for harbor porpoises.

The applicant proposed a 500 m EZ for North Atlantic right whales and 200 m EZ for all other marine mammals; however, for non-ESA-listed marine mammals, based on estimated distances to isopleths corresponding with Level A harassment thresholds (Table 5), we determined EZs for species other than those described above were not warranted. If HRG survey equipment is shut down (as described below) due to a marine mammal being observed within or approaching the relevant EZs, ramp up of survey equipment may not commence until the animal(s) has been observed exiting the relevant EZ, or until an additional time period has elapsed with no further sighting of the animal (*e.g.,* 15 minutes for harbor porpoises and 30 minutes for all large whale species). In addition to the EZs described above, PSOs will visually monitor and record the presence of all marine mammals within 500 m. Marine mammals observed by PSOs within 447 m of geophysical survey equipment will be documented as takes by Level B harassment.

Visual Monitoring

As per the BOEM lease, visual and acoustic monitoring of the established exclusion and monitoring zones will be performed by qualified and NMFS-approved PSOs. It will be the responsibility of the Lead PSO on duty to communicate the presence of marine mammals as well as to communicate the action(s) that are necessary to ensure mitigation and monitoring requirements are implemented as appropriate. PSOs will be equipped with binoculars and would estimate distances to marine mammals located in proximity to the vessel and/or exclusion zone using range finders. Reticulated binoculars will also be available to PSOs for use as appropriate based on conditions and visibility to support the siting and monitoring of marine species. Position data will be recorded using hand-held or vessel global positioning system (GPS) units for each sighting. Observations will take place from the highest available vantage point on the survey vessel. During surveys conducted at night, night-vision equipment with infrared light-emitting diodes spotlights and/or infrared video monitoring will be available for PSO use, and passive acoustic monitoring (described below) will be used.

Pre-Clearance of the Exclusion Zone

Prior to initiating HRG survey activities, GSOE will implement a 30-minute pre-clearance period. During this period, the PSOs will ensure that no North Atlantic right whales are observed within 500 m of geophysical survey equipment, and that no other marine mammal species are observed within 200 m of geophysical survey equipment. Surveys may not begin until these zones have been clear of the relevant marine mammal species for 30 minutes. This pre-clearance requirement would include small delphinoids that approach the vessel (*e.g.,* bow ride). PSOs would also continue to monitor the zone for 30 minutes after survey equipment is shut down or survey activity has concluded.

Passive Acoustic Monitoring

As proposed by the applicant and required by BOEM lease stipulations, PAM will be used to support monitoring during night time operations to provide for optimal acquisition of species detections at night. The PAM system will consist of an array of hydrophones with both broadband (sampling mid-range frequencies of 2 kHz to 200 kHz) and at least one low-frequency hydrophone (sampling range frequencies of 75 Hz to 30 kHz). The PAM operator(s) will monitor acoustic signals in real time both aurally (using headphones) and visually (via sound analysis software). PAM operators will communicate nighttime detections to the lead PSO on duty who will ensure the implementation of the appropriate mitigation measure.

Shutdown of geophysical survey equipment is required upon confirmed PAM detection of a North Atlantic right whale at night, even in the absence of

visual confirmation, except in cases where the acoustic detection can be localized and the right whale can be confirmed as being beyond the 500 m EZ; equipment may be re-started no sooner than 30 minutes after the last confirmed acoustic detection. However, aside from the required shutdown for right whales as described above, PAM detection alone would not trigger a requirement for any mitigation action to be taken upon acoustic detection of marine mammals.

Ramp-Up of Survey Equipment

As proposed by the applicant, where technically feasible, a ramp-up procedure will be used for geophysical survey equipment capable of adjusting energy levels at the start or re-start of survey activities. The ramp-up procedure will be used at the beginning of HRG survey activities in order to provide additional protection to marine mammals near the survey area by allowing them to detect the presence of the survey and vacate the area prior to the commencement of survey equipment use at full energy. Ramp-up of the survey equipment will not begin until the relevant EZs have been cleared by the PSOs, as described above. Systems will be initiated at their lowest power output and will be incrementally increased to full power. If any marine mammals are detected within the EZ prior to or during the ramp-up, HRG equipment will be shut down (as described below).

Shutdown Procedures

If a marine mammal is observed within or approaching the relevant EZ (as described above) an immediate shutdown of the survey equipment is required. Subsequent restart of the survey equipment may only occur after the animal(s) has either been observed exiting the relevant EZ or until an additional time period has elapsed with no further sighting of the animal (*e.g.,* 15 minutes for delphinoid cetaceans and pinnipeds and 30 minutes for all other species).

In addition, shutdown of geophysical survey equipment is required upon confirmed PAM detection of a North Atlantic right whale at night, even in the absence of visual confirmation, except in cases where the acoustic detection can be localized and the right whale can be confirmed as being beyond the 500 m EZ; equipment may be re-started no sooner than 30 minutes after the last confirmed acoustic detection.

As required in the BOEM lease, if the HRG equipment shuts down for reasons other than mitigation (*i.e.,* mechanical or electronic failure) resulting in the cessation of the survey equipment for a period greater than 20 minutes, a 30 minute pre-clearance period (as described above) will precede the restart of the HRG survey equipment. If the pause is less than 20 minutes, the equipment may be restarted as soon as practicable at its full operational level only if visual surveys were continued diligently throughout the silent period and the EZs remained clear of marine mammals during that entire period. If visual surveys were not continued diligently during the pause of 20 minutes or less, a 30-minute pre-clearance period (as described above) will precede the re-start of the HRG survey equipment. Following a shutdown, HRG survey equipment may be restarted following pre-clearance of the zones as described above.

If a species for which authorization has not been granted, or, a species for which authorization has been granted but the authorized number of takes have been met, approaches or is observed within an EZ or within the watch zone, shutdown will occur.

Vessel Strike Avoidance

Vessel strike avoidance measures will include, but are not limited to, the following, as required in the BOEM lease, except under circumstances when complying with these requirements would put the safety of the vessel or crew at risk:

- All vessel operators and crew will maintain vigilant watch for cetaceans and pinnipeds, and slow down or stop their vessel to avoid striking these protected species;
- All survey vessels greater than or equal to 65 ft (19.8 m) in overall length will comply with 10 knot (18.5 km/hr) or less speed restriction in any SMAper the NOAA ship strike reduction rule (73 FR 60173; October 10, 2008);
- All vessel operators will reduce vessel speed to 10 knots (18.5 km/hr) or less when any large whale, any mother/calf pairs, pods, or large assemblages of non-delphinoid cetaceans are observed near (within 100 m (330 ft)) an underway vessel;
- All survey vessels will maintain a separation distance of 500 m (1640 ft) or greater from any sighted North Atlantic right whale;
- If underway, vessels must steer a course away from any sighted North Atlantic right whale at 10 knots (18.5 km/hr) or less until the 500 m (1640 ft) minimum separation distance has been established. If a North Atlantic right whale is sighted in a vessel's path, or within 500 m (330 ft) to an underway vessel, the underway vessel must reduce speed and shift the engine to neutral. Engines will not be engaged until the North Atlantic right whale has moved outside of the vessel's path and beyond 500 m. If stationary, the vessel must not engage engines until the North Atlantic right whale has moved beyond 500 m;
- All vessels will maintain a separation distance of 100 m (330 ft) or greater from any sighted non-delphinoid cetacean. If sighted, the vessel underway must reduce speed and shift the engine to neutral, and must not engage the engines until the non-delphinoid cetacean has moved outside of the vessel's path and beyond 100 m. If a survey vessel is stationary, the vessel will not engage engines until the non-delphinoid cetacean has moved out of the vessel's path and beyond 100 m;
- All vessels will maintain a separation distance of 50 m (164 ft) or greater from any sighted delphinoid cetacean. Any vessel underway remain parallel to a sighted delphinoid cetacean's course whenever possible, and avoid excessive speed or abrupt changes in direction. Any vessel underway reduces vessel speed to 10 knots (18.5 km/hr) or less when pods (including mother/calf pairs) or large assemblages of delphinoid cetaceans are observed. Vessels may not adjust course and speed until the delphinoid cetaceans have moved beyond 50 m and/or the abeam of the underway vessel;
- All vessels will maintain a separation distance of 50 m (164 ft) or greater from any sighted pinniped; and
- All vessels underway will not divert or alter course in order to approach any whale, delphinoid cetacean, or pinniped. Any vessel underway will avoid excessive speed or abrupt changes in direction to avoid injury to the sighted cetacean or pinniped.

GSOE will ensure that vessel operators and crew maintain a vigilant watch for cetaceans and pinnipeds by slowing down or stopping the vessel to avoid striking marine mammals. Project-specific training will be conducted for all vessel crew prior to the start of the site characterization survey activities. Confirmation of the training and understanding of the requirements will be documented on a training course log sheet. Signing the log sheet will certify that the crew members understand and will comply with the necessary requirements throughout the survey activities.

Seasonal Operating Requirements

As described above, the northern section of the survey area partially overlaps with a portion of one North Atlantic right whale SMA which occurs

off the mouth of the Delaware Bay. This SMA is active from November 1 through April 30 of each year. Survey vessels that are 65 ft (19.8 m) or greater in overall length will be required to adhere to the mandatory vessel speed restrictions (<10 kn) when operating within the SMA during times when the SMA is active. In addition, between watch shifts, members of the monitoring team will consult NMFS' North Atlantic right whale reporting systems for the presence of North Atlantic right whales throughout survey operations. Members of the monitoring team will monitor the NMFS North Atlantic right whale reporting systems for the establishment of a Dynamic Management Area (DMA). If NMFS should establish a DMA in the survey area, within 24 hours of the establishment of the DMA, GSOE will coordinate with NMFS to alter the survey activities as needed to avoid right whales to the extent possible.

The mitigation measures are designed to avoid the already low potential for injury in addition to some Level B harassment, and to minimize the potential for vessel strikes. There are no known marine mammal feeding areas, rookeries, or mating grounds in the survey area that would otherwise potentially warrant increased mitigation measures for marine mammals or their habitat (or both). The survey would occur in an area that has been identified as a biologically important area for migration for North Atlantic right whales. However, given the small spatial extent of the survey area relative to the substantially larger spatial extent of the right whale migratory area, and the relatively limited temporal overlap of the survey with the months that the migratory area is considered biologically important (March, April, November and December), the survey is not expected to appreciably reduce migratory habitat nor to negatively impact the migration of North Atlantic right whales. Thus additional mitigation to address the survey's occurrence in North Atlantic right whale migratory habitat is not warranted. Further, we believe the mitigation measures are practicable for the applicant to implement.

Based on our evaluation of the applicant's measures, NMFS has determined that the mitigation measures provide the means of effecting the least practicable impact on the affected species or stocks and their habitat, paying particular attention to rookeries, mating grounds, and areas of similar significance.

Monitoring and Reporting

In order to issue an IHA for an activity, section 101(a)(5)(D) of the MMPA states that NMFS must set forth, requirements pertaining to the monitoring and reporting of such taking. The MMPA implementing regulations at 50 CFR 216.104 (a)(13) indicate that requests for authorizations must include the suggested means of accomplishing the necessary monitoring and reporting that will result in increased knowledge of the species and of the level of taking or impacts on populations of marine mammals that are expected to be present in the action area. Effective reporting is critical both to compliance as well as ensuring that the most value is obtained from the required monitoring.

Monitoring and reporting requirements prescribed by NMFS should contribute to improved understanding of one or more of the following:

- Occurrence of marine mammal species or stocks in the area in which take is anticipated (*e.g.,* presence, abundance, distribution, density);
- Nature, scope, or context of likely marine mammal exposure to potential stressors/impacts (individual or cumulative, acute or chronic), through better understanding of: (1) Action or environment (*e.g.,* source characterization, propagation, ambient noise); (2) affected species (*e.g.,* life history, dive patterns); (3) co-occurrence of marine mammal species with the action; or (4) biological or behavioral context of exposure (*e.g.,* age, calving or feeding areas);
- Individual marine mammal responses (behavioral or physiological) to acoustic stressors (acute, chronic, or cumulative), other stressors, or cumulative impacts from multiple stressors;
- How anticipated responses to stressors impact either: (1) Long-term fitness and survival of individual marine mammals; or (2) populations, species, or stocks;
- Effects on marine mammal habitat (*e.g.,* marine mammal prey species, acoustic habitat, or other important physical components of marine mammal habitat); and
- Mitigation and monitoring effectiveness.

Monitoring Measures

As described above, visual monitoring of the EZs and monitoring zone will be performed by qualified and NMFS-approved PSOs. Per the applicant's proposal, PSO qualifications will include completion of a PSO training course and documented field experience conducting similar surveys. As proposed by the applicant and required by BOEM, an observer team comprising a minimum of four NMFS-approved PSOs and a minimum of two certified PAM operator(s), operating in shifts, will be employed by GSOE during the planned surveys. PSOs and PAM operators would work in shifts such that no one monitor will work more than 4 consecutive hours without a 2-hour break or longer than 12 hours during any 24-hour period. During daylight hours the PSOs will rotate in shifts of one on and three off, while during nighttime operations PSOs will work in pairs. The PAM operators will also be on call as necessary during daytime operations should visual observations become impaired. Each PSO will monitor 360 degrees of the field of vision.

Also as described above, PSOs will be equipped with binoculars and have the ability to estimate distances to marine mammals located in proximity to the vessel and/or exclusion zone using range finders. Reticulated binoculars will also be available to PSOs for use as appropriate based on conditions and visibility to support the siting and monitoring of marine species. During night operations, PAM and night-vision equipment with infrared light-emitting diode spotlights and/or infrared video monitoring will be used to increase the ability to detect marine mammals. Position data will be recorded using hand-held or vessel global positioning system (GPS) units for each sighting. Observations will take place from the highest available vantage point on the survey vessel. General 360-degree scanning will occur during the monitoring periods, and target scanning by the PSO will occur when alerted of a marine mammal presence.

Data on all PAM/PSO observations will be recorded, including dates, times, and locations of survey operations; time of observation, location and weather; details of marine mammal sightings (*e.g.,* species, numbers, behavior); and details of any observed taking (*e.g.,* behavioral disturbances or injury/mortality).

Reporting Measures

Within 90 days after completion of survey activities, a final technical report will be provided to NMFS that fully documents the methods and monitoring protocols, summarizes the data recorded during monitoring, summarizes the number of marine mammals estimated to have been taken during survey activities (by species, when known), summarizes the mitigation actions taken during surveys (including what type of mitigation and the species and number of animals that prompted the mitigation action, when known), includes an

assessment of the effectiveness of night vision equipment used during nighttime surveys (including comparisons of relative effectiveness among the different types of night vision equipment used), and provides an interpretation of the results and effectiveness of all mitigation and monitoring. Any recommendations made by NMFS must be addressed in the final report prior to acceptance by NMFS.

In addition to the final technical report, GSOE will provide the reports described below as necessary during survey activities. In the unanticipated event that GSOE's survey activities lead to an injury (Level A harassment) or mortality (*e.g.,* ship-strike, gear interaction, and/or entanglement) of a marine mammal, DWW would immediately cease the specified activities and report the incident to the Chief of the Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources and the NMFS Greater Atlantic Stranding Coordinator. The report would include the following information:

Time, date, and location (latitude/longitude) of the incident;

- Name and type of vessel involved;
- Vessel's speed during and leading up to the incident;
- Description of the incident;
- Status of all sound source use in the 24 hours preceding the incident;
- Water depth;
- Environmental conditions (*e.g.,* wind speed and direction, Beaufort sea state, cloud cover, and visibility);
- Description of all marine mammal observations in the 24 hours preceding the incident;
- Species identification or description of the animal(s) involved;
- Fate of the animal(s); and
- Photographs or video footage of the animal(s) (if equipment is available).

Activities would not resume until NMFS is able to review the circumstances of the event. NMFS would work with GSOE to minimize reoccurrence of such an event in the future. GSOE would not resume activities until notified by NMFS.

In the event that GSOE discovers an injured or dead marine mammal and determines that the cause of the injury or death is unknown and the death is relatively recent (*i.e.,* in less than a moderate state of decomposition), GSOE would immediately report the incident to the Chief of the Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources and the NMFS Greater Atlantic Stranding Coordinator. The report would include the same information identified in the paragraph above. Activities would be able to continue while NMFS reviews the circumstances of the incident. NMFS would work with GSOE to determine if modifications in the activities are appropriate.

In the event that GSOE discovers an injured or dead marine mammal and determines that the injury or death is not associated with or related to the activities authorized in the IHA (*e.g.,* previously wounded animal, carcass with moderate to advanced decomposition, or scavenger damage), GSOE would report the incident to the Chief of the Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, and the NMFS Greater Atlantic Regional Stranding Coordinator, within 24 hours of the discovery. GSOE would provide photographs or video footage (if available) or other documentation of the stranded animal sighting to NMFS. GSOE may continue its operations under such a case.

Negligible Impact Analysis and Determination

NMFS has defined negligible impact as an impact resulting from the specified activity that cannot be reasonably expected to, and is not reasonably likely to, adversely affect the species or stock through effects on annual rates of recruitment or survival. A negligible impact finding is based on the lack of likely adverse effects on annual rates of recruitment or survival (*i.e.,* population-level effects). An estimate of the number of takes alone is not enough information on which to base an impact determination. In addition to considering estimates of the number of marine mammals that might be ''taken'' through harassment, NMFS considers other factors, such as the likely nature of any responses (*e.g.,* intensity, duration), the context of any responses (*e.g.,* critical reproductive time or location, migration), as well as effects on habitat, and the likely effectiveness of the mitigation. We also assess the number, intensity, and context of estimated takes by evaluating this information relative to population status. Consistent with the 1989 preamble for NMFS' implementing regulations (54 FR 40338; September 29, 1989), the impacts from other past and ongoing anthropogenic activities are incorporated into this analysis via their impacts on the environmental baseline (*e.g.,* as reflected in the regulatory status of the species, population size and growth rate where known, ongoing sources of human-caused mortality, or ambient noise levels).

To avoid repetition, our analysis applies to all the species listed in Table 6, given that NMFS expects the anticipated effects of the planned survey to be similar in nature.

NMFS does not anticipate that serious injury or mortality would occur as a result of GSOE's planned survey, even in the absence of mitigation. Thus this authorization does not authorize any serious injury or mortality. As discussed in the *Potential Effects* section, non-auditory physical effects and vessel strike are not expected to occur.

We expect that all potential takes would be in the form of short-term Level B behavioral harassment in the form of temporary avoidance of the area, a reaction that is considered to be of low severity and with no lasting biological consequences (*e.g.,* Ellison *et al.,* 2007). Potential impacts to marine mammal habitat were discussed in the **Federal Register** notice of the proposed IHA (83 FR 14417; April 4, 2018) (see *Potential Effects of the Specified Activity on Marine Mammals and their Habitat*). Marine mammal habitat may be impacted by elevated sound levels, but these impacts would be temporary. In addition to being temporary and short in overall duration, the acoustic footprint of the planned survey is small relative to the overall distribution of the animals in the area and their use of the area. Feeding behavior is not likely to be significantly impacted, as no areas of biological significance for marine mammal feeding are known to exist in the survey area. Prey species are mobile and are broadly distributed throughout the project area; therefore, marine mammals that may be temporarily displaced during survey activities are expected to be able to resume foraging once they have moved away from areas with disturbing levels of underwater noise. Because of the temporary nature of the disturbance and the availability of similar habitat and resources in the surrounding area, the impacts to marine mammals and the food sources that they utilize are not expected to cause significant or long-term consequences for individual marine mammals or their populations. In addition, there are no rookeries or mating or calving areas known to be biologically important to marine mammals within the project area. The planned survey area is within a biologically important migratory area for North Atlantic right whales (effective March-April and November-December) that extends from Massachusetts to Florida (LaBrecque, *et al.,* 2015). Off the coast of Delaware, this biologically important migratory area extends from the coast to beyond the shelf break. Due to the fact that the planned survey is temporary and short in overall duration, the majority of the survey would occur

outside the months when the BIA is considered important for right whale migration, and the acoustic footprint of the planned survey is very small relative to the spatial extent of the available migratory habitat in the area, right whale migration is not expected to be impacted by the planned survey.

The mitigation measures are expected to reduce the number and/or severity of takes by (1) giving animals the opportunity to move away from the sound source before HRG survey equipment reaches full energy; and (2) preventing animals from being exposed to sound levels that may otherwise result in injury. Additional vessel strike avoidance requirements will further mitigate potential impacts to marine mammals during vessel transit to and within the survey area.

NMFS concludes that exposures to marine mammal species and stocks due to GSOE's planned survey would result in only short-term (temporary and short in duration) effects to individuals exposed. Marine mammals may temporarily avoid the immediate area but are not expected to permanently abandon the area. Impacts to breeding, feeding, sheltering, resting, or migration are not expected, nor are shifts in habitat use, distribution, or foraging success. NMFS does not anticipate the marine mammal takes that would result from the planned survey would impact annual rates of recruitment or survival.

In summary and as described above, the following factors primarily support our determination that the impacts resulting from this activity are not expected to adversely affect the species or stock through effects on annual rates of recruitment or survival:

- No mortality, serious injury, or Level A harassment is anticipated or authorized;
- The anticipated impacts of the activity on marine mammals would be temporary behavioral changes due to avoidance of the area around the survey vessel;
- The availability of alternate areas of similar habitat value for marine mammals to temporarily vacate the survey area during the planned survey to avoid exposure to sounds from the activity;
- The project area does not contain areas of significance for feeding, mating or calving;
- Effects on species that serve as prey species for marine mammals from the survey are not expected;
- The mitigation measures, including visual and acoustic monitoring, exclusion zones, and shutdown measures, are expected to minimize potential impacts to marine mammals.

Based on the analysis contained herein of the likely effects of the specified activity on marine mammals and their habitat and taking into consideration the implementation of the monitoring and mitigation measures, NMFS finds that the total marine mammal take from the activity will have a negligible impact on all affected marine mammal species or stocks.

Small Numbers

As noted above, only small numbers of incidental take may be authorized under section 101(a)(5)(D) of the MMPA for specified activities other than military readiness activities. The MMPA does not define small numbers and so, in practice, where estimated numbers are available, NMFS compares the number of individuals taken to the most appropriate estimation of abundance of the relevant species or stock in our determination of whether an authorization is limited to small numbers of marine mammals. Additionally, other qualitative factors may be considered in the analysis, such as the temporal or spatial scale of the activities.

The numbers of marine mammals that we authorize to be taken, for all species and stocks, would be considered small relative to the relevant stocks or populations (less than 17 percent for the Western North Atlantic Northern Migratory Coastal stock of bottlenose dolphins, and less than 5 percent for all other species and stocks) (Table 6). Bottlenose dolphins taken by the survey could originate from either the Western North Atlantic Offshore or Western North Atlantic Northern Migratory Coastal stocks, based on water depths and distances to shore in the survey area. For purposes of calculating takes as a percentage of population we assume 50 percent of bottlenose dolphins taken will originate from the Western North Atlantic Offshore stock and 50 percent will originate from the Western North Atlantic Northern Migratory Coastal stock. Based on the analysis contained herein of the activity (including the mitigation and monitoring measures) and the anticipated take of marine mammals, NMFS finds that small numbers of marine mammals will be taken relative to the population size of the affected species or stocks.

Unmitigable Adverse Impact Analysis and Determination

There are no relevant subsistence uses of the affected marine mammal stocks or species implicated by this action. Therefore, NMFS has determined that the total taking of affected species or stocks would not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of such species or stocks for taking for subsistence purposes.

Endangered Species Act

Section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) requires that each Federal agency insure that any action it authorizes, funds, or carries out is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of any endangered or threatened species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of designated critical habitat. To ensure ESA compliance for the issuance of IHAs, NMFS consults internally, in this case with the NMFS Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office (GARFO), whenever we propose to authorize take for endangered or threatened species.

The NMFS Office of Protected Resources Permits and Conservation Division is authorizing the incidental take of four species of marine mammals which are listed under the ESA: The North Atlantic right, fin, sei and sperm whale. Under Section 7 of the ESA, we requested initiation of consultation with the NMFS Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office (GARFO) on March 19, 2018, for the issuance of this IHA. In May, 2018, NMFS GARFO determined our issuance of the IHA to GSOE was not likely to adversely affect the North Atlantic right, fin, sei and sperm whale or the critical habitat of any ESA-listed species.

National Environmental Policy Act

To comply with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA; 42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*) and NOAA Administrative Order (NAO) 216–6A, NMFS must review our proposed action (*i.e.,* the issuance of an incidental harassment authorization) with respect to potential impacts on the human environment.

Accordingly, NMFS prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) and analyzed the potential impacts to marine mammals that would result from the project, as well as from a similar project proposed by Deepwater Wind New England LLC off the coasts of Rhode Island and Massachusetts. A Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) was signed on May 15, 2018. A copy of the EA and FONSI is available on the internet at: *www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/marine-mammal-protection/incidental-take-authorizations-other-energy-activities-renewable.*

Authorization

NMFS has issued an IHA to GSOE for conducting marine site characterization surveys offshore of Delaware and along potential submarine cable routes for a period of one year, provided the previously mentioned mitigation, monitoring, and reporting requirements are incorporated.

Dated: June 1, 2018.

Donna S. Wieting,

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

[FR Doc. 2018–12225 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–22–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648–XG278

Pacific Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of public meetings.

SUMMARY: The Pacific Fishery Management Council's (Pacific Council) Salmon Technical Team (STT) will hold a series of meetings to initiate the development of salmon rebuilding plans for Klamath River fall Chinook, Sacramento River fall Chinook, Strait of Juan de Fuca natural coho, Queets River natural coho, and Snohomish River natural coho. These meetings are open to the public.

DATES: The meetings will be held June 20, 2018 through June 28, 2018. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for specific dates and times.

ADDRESSES: The STT meetings for Klamath River fall Chinook and Sacramento River fall Chinook will be held in the Siskiyou Room at the Red Lion Hotel, 1830 Hilltop Drive, Redding, CA 96002; telephone: (530) 221–8700.

The STT meeting for Strait of Juan de Fuca natural coho will be held in Room 261 at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration West Coast Region Office, 510 Desmond Drive SE, Lacy, WA 98503; telephone: (360) 753–9530. Please check-in at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife's reception desk for security clearance.

The STT meetings for Queets River natural coho and Snohomish River natural coho will be held in the large conference room at the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission, 6730 Martin Way East, Olympia, WA 98516; telephone: (360) 438–1180.

Council address: Pacific Fishery Management Council, 7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101, Portland, OR 97220–1384.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Robin Ehlke, Pacific Council; telephone: (503) 820–2410.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

The STT meeting for Klamath River fall Chinook will be held Wednesday, June 20, 2018, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., or until business for the day has been completed.

The STT meeting for Sacramento River fall Chinook will be held Thursday, June 21, 2018, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., or until business for the day has been completed.

The STT meeting for Strait of Juan de Fuca natural coho will be held Tuesday, June 26, 2018, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., or until business for the day has been completed.

The STT meeting for Queets River natural coho will be held Wednesday, June 27, 2018, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., or until business for the day has been completed.

The STT meeting for Snohomish River natural coho will be held Thursday, June 28, 2018, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., or until business for the day has been completed.

Three natural coho stocks (Queets coho, Strait of Juan de Fuca coho, and Snohomish coho) and two Chinook stocks (Sacramento River fall Chinook and Klamath River fall Chinook) were found to meet the criteria for being classified as overfished in the PFMC Review of 2017 Ocean Salmon Fisheries. Under the tenets of the Salmon Fishery Management Plan (FMP), the STT is required to develop a salmon rebuilding plan for each of these stocks and propose them to the Council within one year.

The STT will meet with tribal, state, and other management entities who will work with the STT to provide data and expertise on pertinent topics to be included in each rebuilding plan, consistent with the FMP. Discussions may include, but are not limited to, work flow, document structure, and timeline. One meeting will occur for each of the five stocks; additional meetings will be scheduled as needed. These work sessions are open to the public.

Although non-emergency issues not contained in the meeting agenda may be discussed, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during this meeting. Action will be restricted to those issues specifically listed in this document and any issues arising after publication of this document that require emergency action under section 305(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, provided the public has been notified of the intent to take final action to address the emergency.

Special Accommodations

The meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Mr. Kris Kleinschmidt at *kris.kleinschmidt@noaa.gov* or (503) 820–2411 at least 10 days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: June 4, 2018.

Tracey L. Thompson,

Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2018–12289 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–22–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648–XG217

Schedules for Atlantic Shark Identification Workshops and Safe Handling, Release, and Identification Workshops

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of public workshops.

SUMMARY: Free Atlantic Shark Identification Workshops and Safe Handling, Release, and Identification Workshops will be held in July, August, and September of 2018. Certain fishermen and shark dealers are required to attend a workshop to meet regulatory requirements and to maintain valid permits. Specifically, the Atlantic Shark Identification Workshop is mandatory for all federally permitted Atlantic shark dealers. The Safe Handling, Release, and Identification Workshop is mandatory for vessel owners and operators who use bottom longline, pelagic longline, or gillnet gear, and who have also been issued shark or swordfish limited access permits. Additional free workshops will be conducted during 2018 and will be announced in a future notice.

DATES: The Atlantic Shark Identification Workshops will be held on July 26, August 23, and September 20, 2018. The Safe Handling, Release, and

Identification Workshops will be held on July 3, July 23, August 14, August 21, September 5, and September 19, 2018. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for further details.

ADDRESSES: The Atlantic Shark Identification Workshops will be held in Wilmington, NC; Ronkonkoma, NY; and Panama City Beach, FL. The Safe Handling, Release, and Identification Workshops will be held in Port St. Lucie, FL; Ocean City, MD; Ronkonkoma, NY; Galveston, TX; Panama City, FL; and Warwick, RI. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for further details on workshop locations.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Rick Pearson by phone: (727) 824–5399.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The workshop schedules, registration information, and a list of frequently asked questions regarding the Atlantic Shark ID and Safe Handling, Release, and ID workshops are posted on the internet at: *https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/atlantic-highly-migratory-species/atlantic-shark-identification-workshops,* and *https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/atlantic-highly-migratory-species/atlantic-protected-species-safe-handling-release-and.*

Atlantic Shark Identification Workshops

Since January 1, 2008, Atlantic shark dealers have been prohibited from receiving, purchasing, trading, or bartering for Atlantic sharks unless a valid Atlantic Shark Identification Workshop certificate is on the premises of each business listed under the shark dealer permit that first receives Atlantic sharks (71 FR 58057; October 2, 2006). Dealers who attend and successfully complete a workshop are issued a certificate for each place of business that is permitted to receive sharks. These certificate(s) are valid for 3 years. Thus, certificates that were initially issued in 2015 will be expiring in 2018. Approximately 145 free Atlantic Shark Identification Workshops have been conducted since January 2008.

Currently, permitted dealers may send a proxy to an Atlantic Shark Identification Workshop. However, if a dealer opts to send a proxy, the dealer must designate a proxy for each place of business covered by the dealer's permit which first receives Atlantic sharks. Only one certificate will be issued to each proxy. A proxy must be a person who is currently employed by a place of business covered by the dealer's permit; is a primary participant in the identification, weighing, and/or first receipt of fish as they are offloaded from a vessel; and who fills out dealer reports. Atlantic shark dealers are prohibited from renewing a Federal shark dealer permit unless a valid Atlantic Shark Identification Workshop certificate for each business location that first receives Atlantic sharks has been submitted with the permit renewal application. Additionally, trucks or other conveyances that are extensions of a dealer's place of business must possess a copy of a valid dealer or proxy Atlantic Shark Identification Workshop certificate.

Workshop Dates, Times, and Locations

1. July 26, 2018, 12 p.m.–4 p.m., Hampton Inn, 124 Old Eastwood Road, Wilmington, NC 28403.

2. August 23, 2018, 12 p.m.–4 p.m., Hilton Garden Inn, 3485 Veterans Memorial Highway, Ronkonkoma, NY 11779.

3. September 20, 2018, 12 p.m.–4 p.m., Hampton Inn, 13505 Panama City Beach Parkway, Panama City Beach, FL 32407.

Registration

To register for a scheduled Atlantic Shark Identification Workshop, please contact Eric Sander at *ericssharkguide@yahoo.com* or at (386) 852–8588. Pre-registration is highly recommended, but not required.

Registration Materials

To ensure that workshop certificates are linked to the correct permits, participants will need to bring the following specific items to the workshop:

- Atlantic shark dealer permit holders must bring proof that the attendee is an owner or agent of the business (such as articles of incorporation), a copy of the applicable permit, and proof of identification.
- Atlantic shark dealer proxies must bring documentation from the permitted dealer acknowledging that the proxy is attending the workshop on behalf of the permitted Atlantic shark dealer for a specific business location, a copy of the appropriate valid permit, and proof of identification.

Workshop Objectives

The Atlantic Shark Identification Workshops are designed to reduce the number of unknown and improperly identified sharks reported in the dealer reporting form and increase the accuracy of species-specific dealer-reported information. Reducing the number of unknown and improperly identified sharks will improve quota monitoring and the data used in stock assessments. These workshops will train shark dealer permit holders or their proxies to properly identify Atlantic shark carcasses.

Safe Handling, Release, and Identification Workshops

Since January 1, 2007, shark limited-access and swordfish limited-access permit holders who fish with longline or gillnet gear have been required to submit a copy of their Safe Handling, Release, and Identification Workshop certificate in order to renew either permit (71 FR 58057; October 2, 2006). These certificate(s) are valid for 3 years. Certificates issued in 2015 will be expiring in 2018. As such, vessel owners who have not already attended a workshop and received a NMFS certificate, or vessel owners whose certificate(s) will expire prior to the next permit renewal, must attend a workshop to fish with, or renew, their swordfish and shark limited-access permits. Additionally, new shark and swordfish limited-access permit applicants who intend to fish with longline or gillnet gear must attend a Safe Handling, Release, and Identification Workshop and submit a copy of their workshop certificate before either of the permits will be issued. Approximately 280 free Safe Handling, Release, and Identification Workshops have been conducted since 2006.

In addition to certifying vessel owners, at least one operator on board vessels issued a limited-access swordfish or shark permit that uses longline or gillnet gear is required to attend a Safe Handling, Release, and Identification Workshop and receive a certificate. Vessels that have been issued a limited-access swordfish or shark permit and that use longline or gillnet gear may not fish unless both the vessel owner and operator have valid workshop certificates onboard at all times. Vessel operators who have not already attended a workshop and received a NMFS certificate, or vessel operators whose certificate(s) will expire prior to their next fishing trip, must attend a workshop to operate a vessel with swordfish and shark limited-access permits that uses longline or gillnet gear.

Workshop Dates, Times, and Locations

1. July 3, 2018, 9 a.m.–5 p.m., Holiday Inn, 10120 South US Highway 1, Port St Lucie, FL 34952.

2. July 23, 2018, 9 a.m.–5 p.m., Marriott Courtyard, 2 15th Street, Ocean City, MD 21842.

3. August 14, 2018, 9 a.m.–5 p.m., Marriott Courtyard, 5000 Express Drive South, Ronkonkoma, NY 11779.

4. August 21, 2018, 9 a.m.–5 p.m., DoubleTree Hotel, 1702 Seawall Boulevard, Galveston, TX 77550.

5. September 5, 2018, 9 a.m.–5 p.m., Hilton Garden Inn, 1101 US Highway 231, Panama City, FL 32405.

6. September 19, 2018, 9 a.m.–5 p.m., Hilton Garden Inn, 1 Thurber Street, Warwick, RI 02886.

Registration

To register for a scheduled Safe Handling, Release, and Identification Workshop, please contact Angler Conservation Education at (386) 682–0158. Pre-registration is highly recommended, but not required.

Registration Materials

To ensure that workshop certificates are linked to the correct permits, participants will need to bring the following specific items with them to the workshop:

- Individual vessel owners must bring a copy of the appropriate swordfish and/or shark permit(s), a copy of the vessel registration or documentation, and proof of identification.
- Representatives of a business-owned or co-owned vessel must bring proof that the individual is an agent of the business (such as articles of incorporation), a copy of the applicable swordfish and/or shark permit(s), and proof of identification.
- Vessel operators must bring proof of identification.

Workshop Objectives

The Safe Handling, Release, and Identification Workshops are designed to teach longline and gillnet fishermen the required techniques for the safe handling and release of entangled and/or hooked protected species, such as sea turtles, marine mammals, and smalltooth sawfish, and prohibited sharks. In an effort to improve reporting, the proper identification of protected species and prohibited sharks will also be taught at these workshops. Additionally, individuals attending these workshops will gain a better understanding of the requirements for participating in these fisheries. The overall goal of these workshops is to provide participants with the skills needed to reduce the mortality of protected species and prohibited sharks, which may prevent additional regulations on these fisheries in the future.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: June 4, 2018.

Jennifer M. Wallace,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2018–12275 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–22–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Telecommunications and Information Administration

Multistakeholder Process on Promoting Software Component Transparency

AGENCY: National Telecommunications and Information Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of Open Meeting.

SUMMARY: The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) will convene meetings of a multistakeholder process on promoting software component transparency. This Notice announces the first meeting, which is scheduled for July 19, 2018.

DATES: The meeting will be held on July 19, 2018, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Eastern Daylight Time.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the American Institute of Architects, 1735 New York Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20006.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Allan Friedman, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, 1401 Constitution Avenue NW, Room 4725, Washington, DC 20230; telephone: (202) 482–4281; email: *afriedman@ntia.doc.gov.* Please direct media inquiries to NTIA's Office of Public Affairs: (202) 482–7002; email: *press@ntia.doc.gov.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background: Since 2015, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration has sought public comment on several matters around information and cyber policy and security, the Internet of Things (IoT), and the health of the digital ecosystem. In 2015, NTIA issued a Request for Comment to ''identify substantive cybersecurity issues that affect the digital ecosystem and digital economic growth where broad consensus, coordinated action, and the development of best practices could substantially improve security for organizations and consumers.'' [1] In a separate but related matter in April 2016, NTIA, along with the Department's internet Policy Task Force, sought comments on the ''benefits, challenges, and potential roles for the government in fostering the advancement of the Internet of Things.'' [2] Lastly, as part of Executive Order 13800, NTIA requested comments on ''Promoting Stakeholder Action Against Botnets and Other Automated Threats.'' [3]

Several themes emerged from these three public consultations. Many stakeholders emphasized the importance of community-led, consensus-driven, and risk-based solutions to address information security challenges, highlighting the role NTIA should play in convening multistakeholder processes. In the digital ecosystem, particular challenges were identified: Understanding and handling vulnerability information, addressing the insecurities in the growing IoT marketplace, and fostering a secure development lifecycle. NTIA has convened two multistakeholder processes to address these policy and market challenges. The first focused on how to promote collaboration around communicating vulnerability information, and the second helped vendors and consumers understand policy and market concerns related to patching vulnerabilities.

The next initiative will focus on promoting software component transparency. Stakeholders will engage in an open and transparent process to explore the benefits and any potential risks of greater transparency. They may focus on incentives and barriers to adoption of transparency practices. The scope could include policy and international components. Transparency-driven solutions need not be prescriptive or regulatory, and can accommodate an ecosystem without a one-size-fits-all approach. The goal of this initiative is to foster a market that

[1] U.S. Department of Commerce, internet Policy Task Force, Request for Public Comment, Stakeholder Engagement on Cybersecurity in the Digital Ecosystem, 80 FR 14360, Docket No. 150312253–5253–01 (Mar. 19, 2015), *available at: https://www.ntia.doc.gov/files/ntia/publications/cybersecurity_rfc_03192015.pdf.*

[2] U.S. Department of Commerce, internet Policy Task Force, Request for Public Comment, Benefits, Challenges, and Potential Roles for the Government in Fostering the Advancement of the Internet of Things, 81 FR 19956, Docket No 160331306–6306–01 (Apr. 5, 2016), *available at: https://www.ntia.doc.gov/federal-register-notice/2016/rfc-potential-roles-government-fostering-advancement-internet-of-things.*

[3] U.S. Department of Commerce, internet Policy Task Force, Request for Public Comment, Promoting Stakeholder Action Against Botnets and Other Automated Threats, 82 FR 27042, Docket No. 170602536–7536–01 (Mar. 19, 2015), *available at: https://www.ntia.doc.gov/files/ntia/publications/fr-ntia-cyber-eo-rfc-06132017.pdf.*

offers greater transparency on software components.

Most modern software is not written completely from scratch, but includes existing components, modules, and libraries from the open source and commercial software world. Modern development practices such as code reuse, and a dynamic IT marketplace with acquisitions and mergers, make it challenging to track the use of software components. The Internet of Things compounds this phenomenon, as new organizations, enterprises and innovators take on the role of software developer to add ''smart'' features or connectivity to their products. While the majority of libraries and components do not have known vulnerabilities, many do, and the sheer quantity of software means that some software products ship with vulnerable or out-of-date components. Many technical solutions to aid in this have already been developed by industry and the standards community.

Vendors and developers also would find software component data useful. Cataloging the inputs to a software product is recognized as an important part of a secure development life cycle.[4] Indeed, many organizations have developed internal processes to capture and manage this data for security purposes. Many others do so to manage licensing issues around third-party software components and intellectual property rights. Communicating information about the underlying components can be a strong security signifier, while still protecting the valuable intellectual property and source code in software and devices.

The importance of transparency in information security is widely recognized, and the notion of transparency around components of software and connected devices is not new. Academics identified the potential value of a ''software bill of materials'' as far back as 1995,[5] and there are a growing number of commercial solutions for security, licensing, and asset management. The International Standards Organization (ISO) first standardized software identification (SWID) tags in 2009.[6] In 2015, NIST published Guidelines for the Creation of Interoperable Software Identification (SWID) Tags,[7] and their use has been slowly increasing. The open source community has also developed the Software Package Data Exchange.[8] This process will explore successful examples of use, and market barriers to increased adoption. From the perspective of the enterprise customer, it is hard to defend what one does not know. Transparency itself is not sufficient; the data must be useful and actionable. Understanding what is on an enterprise network is a key part of a security program. Having data about software components allows the enterprise customer to better understand the risks of potentially vulnerable software and devices.

Any conversation around transparency must include a discussion of the needs of the diverse set of enterprise software users. Data about the underlying code can help both the customer and the vendor. It should be incorporated into a security-mature organization's existing vulnerability management solutions, and can help foster further innovation. Having access to this data can help organizations mitigate concerns around orphaned devices and products, and lower the risks of investing in new products by increasing capabilities to deal with future security issues.

NTIA will act as the convener, but stakeholders will drive the outcomes. Stakeholders will determine how to scope and organize the work through subgroups or other means. Success of the process will be evaluated by the extent to which broader findings on software component transparency are implemented across the ecosystem.

This multistakeholder process is not a standards development process and will not supplant ongoing standards efforts or discussions. NTIA will frame the initial conversation around the policy and market considerations for greater software component transparency. NTIA encourages cross-sector participation as this will help to prevent sector-specific solutions that could fragment the marketplace. NTIA encourages discussion of approaches and considerations from diverse sectors such as the medical device community, where the applicability of a ''bill of materials'' has garnered increased discussion and interest.[9] This approach can promote a more efficient and adaptive marketplace for new products.

Matters to Be Considered: The July 19, 2018, meeting will be the first in a series of NTIA-convened multistakeholder discussions on promoting software component transparency. Subsequent meetings will follow on a schedule determined by those participating in the first meeting. Stakeholders will engage in an open, transparent, and consensus-driven process to understand the range of issues involved. The multistakeholder process will involve hearing and understanding the perspectives of diverse stakeholders, explicitly sharing the perspectives of a range of software and IoT vendors and enterprise customers from across the digital economy.

The July 19, 2018, meeting is intended to bring stakeholders together to share the range of views on software component transparency, and to establish more concrete goals and structure of the process. The objectives of this first meeting are to: (1) Share the perspectives and concerns of both the vendor and enterprise customer communities; (2) discuss and acknowledge what is already working; (3) explore obstacles and challenges for greater transparency and better risk decisions; (4) identify promising areas of potential collaboration; (5) engage stakeholders in a discussion of logistical issues, including internal structures such as a small drafting committee or various working groups, and the location and frequency of future meetings; and (6) identify concrete goals and stakeholder work following the first meeting. These topics could include, but are in no way limited to, an inventory of existing statutory, policy, regulatory, and market efforts to increase software component transparency; identification of incentives and disincentives for market adoption of approaches for software component transparency; exploration of statutory, policy, and regulatory activities that may inhibit adoption; accessible high-level guidance for strategic decision-makers; and review of international approaches to understand statutory, policy, and regulatory environments to understand effects on market adoption.

The main objective of further meetings will be to encourage and facilitate continued discussion among stakeholders to map the range of issues, and develop a consensus view for some

[4] The Software Assurance Forum for Excellence in Code (SAFECode), an industry consortium, has released a report on third party components that cites a range of standards. *Managing Security Risks Inherent in the Use of Third-party Components,* SAFECode (May 2017), *available at https://www.safecode.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/SAFECode_TPC_Whitepaper.pdf.*

[5] Leblang D.B., Levine P.H., Software configuration management: Why is it needed and what should it do? In: Estublier J. (eds) Software Configuration Management Lecture Notes in Computer Science, vol. 1005, Springer, Berlin, Heidelberg (1995).

[6] ISO/IEC 19770 ''Software Identification Tag,'' originally published in 2009, updated in 2015, *https://www.iso.org/standard/65666.html.*

[7] U.S. Department of Commerce, Guidelines for the Creation of Interoperable Software Identification (SWID) Tags, National Institute of Standards and Technology Internal Report 8060 (Dec. 2015), *available at: https://csrc.nist.gov/csrc/media/publications/nistir/8060/final/documents/nistir_8060_draft_fourth.pdf.*

[8] More information on the Software Package Data Exchange project is available at *https://spdx.org.*

determined aspects of transparency. This discussion may include the appropriate scope of the initiative and circulation of stakeholder-developed drafts. Stakeholders may also agree on procedural work plans for the group, including additional meetings or modified logistics for future meetings. NTIA suggests that stakeholders consider setting clear deadlines for working drafts and a phase for external review of such drafts, before reconvening to take account of external feedback.

More information about stakeholders' work will be available at: *https://www.ntia.doc.gov/other-publication/2018/SoftwareTransparency.*

Time and Date: NTIA will convene the first meeting of the multistakeholder process on Software Component Transparency on July 19, 2018, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time. Please refer to NTIA's website, *https://www.ntia.doc.gov/other-publication/2018/Software Transparency,* for the most current information.

Place: The meeting will be held at the American Institute of Architects, 1735 New York Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20006. The location of the meeting is subject to change. Please refer to NTIA's website, *https://www.ntia.doc.gov/other-publication/2018/Software Transparency,* for the most current information.

Other Information: The meeting is open to the public and the press on a first-come, first-served basis. Space is limited.

The meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Allan Friedman at (202) 482–4281 or *afriedman@ntia.doc.gov* at least seven (7) business days prior to each meeting. The meetings will also be webcast. Requests for real-time captioning of the webcast or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Allan Friedman at (202) 482–4281 or *afriedman@ntia.doc.gov* at least seven (7) business days prior to each meeting. There will be an opportunity for stakeholders viewing the webcast to participate remotely in the meetings through a moderated conference bridge, including polling functionality. Access details for the meetings are subject to change. Please refer to NTIA's website, *https://www.ntia.doc.gov/other-publication/2018/SoftwareTransparency,* for the most current information.

Dated: June 4, 2018.

David J. Redl,

Assistant Secretary for Communication and Information, National Telecommunications and Information Administration.

[FR Doc. 2018–12261 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–60–P

COMMODITY FUTURES TRADING COMMISSION

Agency Information Collection Activities: Notice of Intent To Renew Collection 3038–0093, Part 40, Provisions Common to Registered Entities

AGENCY: Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Commodity Futures Trading Commission (''Commission'' or ''CFTC'') is announcing an opportunity for public comment on the proposed collection of certain information by the agency. Under the Paperwork Reduction Act (''PRA''), Federal agencies are required to publish notice in the **Federal Register** concerning each proposed collection of information, including each proposed extension of an existing collection, and to allow 60 days for public comment. This notice solicits comments on collections of information provided for by Part 40, Provisions Common to Registered Entities.

DATES: Comments must be submitted on or before August 6, 2018.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments, identified by OMB Control No. 3038–0093 by any of the following methods:

- The Agency's website, at *http://comments.cftc.gov/.* Follow the instructions for submitting comments through the website.
- *Mail:* Christopher Kirkpatrick, Secretary of the Commission, Commodity Futures Trading Commission, Three Lafayette Centre, 1155 21st Street NW, Washington, DC 20581.
- *Hand Delivery/Courier:* Same as Mail above.

Please submit your comments using only one method and identify that it is for the renewal of Collection Number 3038–0093.

All comments must be submitted in English, or if not, accompanied by an English translation. Comments will be posted as received to *http://www.cftc.gov.* You should submit only information that you wish to make available publicly. If you wish the Commission to consider information that you believe is exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, a petition for confidential treatment of the exempt information may be submitted according to the procedures established in § 145.9 of the Commission's regulations.[1]

The Commission reserves the right, but shall have no obligation, to review, pre-screen, filter, redact, refuse or remove any or all of your submission from *http://www.cftc.gov* that it may deem to be inappropriate for publication, such as obscene language. All submissions that have been redacted or removed that contain comments on the merits of the Information Collection Request will be retained in the public comment file and will be considered as required under the Administrative Procedure Act and other applicable laws, and may be accessible under the Freedom of Information Act.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Lois J. Gregory, Associate Director, Division of Market Oversight, Commodity Futures Trading Commission, (202) 418–5092; email: *lgregory@cftc.gov.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Under the PRA, 44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.,* Federal agencies must obtain approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for each collection of information they conduct or sponsor. ''Collection of Information'' is defined in 44 U.S.C. 3502(3) and 5 CFR 1320.3 and includes agency requests or requirements that members of the public submit reports, keep records, or provide information to a third party. Section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the PRA, 44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A), requires Federal agencies to provide a 60-day notice in the **Federal Register** concerning each proposed collection of information before submitting the collection to OMB for approval. To comply with this requirement, the CFTC is publishing notice of the proposed collection of information listed below.

Title: Part 40, Provisions Common to Registered Entities (OMB Control No. 3038–0093). This is a request for extension of a currently approved information collection.

Abstract: This collection of information involves the collection and submission to the Commission of information from registered entities concerning new products, rules, and rule amendments pursuant to the procedures outlined in §§ 40.2, 40.3, 40.5, 40.6, and 40.10 found in 17 CFR part 40.

With respect to the collection of information, the CFTC invites comments on:

- Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper

[1] 17 CFR 145.9.

performance of the functions of the Commission, including whether the information will have a practical use;

• The accuracy of the Commission's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;

• Ways to enhance the quality, usefulness, and clarity of the information to be collected; and

• Ways to minimize the burden of collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology; *e.g.,* permitting electronic submission of responses.

Burden Statement: Registered entities must comply with certification and approval requirements which include an explanation and analysis when seeking to implement new products, rules, and rule amendments, including changes to product terms and conditions. The Commission's regulations §§ 40.2, 40.3, 40.5, 40.6 and 40.10 provide procedures for the submission of rules and rule amendments by designated contract markets, swap execution facilities, derivatives clearing organizations, and swap data repositories. They establish the procedures for submitting the ''written certification'' required by Section 5c of the Act. In connection with a product or rule certification, the registered entity must provide a concise explanation and analysis of the submission and its compliance with statutory provisions of the Act. Accordingly, new rules or rule amendments must be accompanied by concise explanations and analyses of the purposes, operations, and effects of the submissions. This information may be submitted as part of the same submission containing the required ''written certification.'' The Commission estimates the average burden of this collection of information as follows:

• Rules 40.2, 40.3, 40.5, and 40.6

Estimated Number of Respondents: 70.

Annual Responses by each Respondent: 100.

Estimated Hours per Response: 2.

Estimated Total Hours per Year: 14,000.

• Rule 40.10

Estimated Number of Respondents: 3.

Annual Responses by each Respondent: 2.

Estimated Hours per Response: 5.

Estimated Total Hours per Year: 30.

(Authority: 44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*)

Dated: June 4, 2018.

Robert Sidman,

Deputy Secretary of the Commission.

[FR Doc. 2018–12278 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6351–01–P

COMMODITY FUTURES TRADING COMMISSION

Agency Information Collection Activities: Notice of Intent To Renew Collection Number 3038–0007, Regulation of Domestic Exchange-Traded Options

AGENCY: Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

ACTION: Notice; Extension of an Existing Collection.

SUMMARY: The Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) is announcing an opportunity for public comment on the proposed extension of a collection of certain information by the agency. Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA), Federal agencies are required to publish notice in the **Federal Register** concerning each proposed collection of information, including each proposed extension of an existing collection of information, and to allow 60 days for public comment in response to the notice. This notice solicits comments on rules related to risk disclosure concerning exchange-traded commodity options.

DATES: Comments must be submitted on or before August 6, 2018.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments, identified by OMB Control No. 3038–0007 by any of the following methods:

• *The Agency's website, via its Comments Online process: http://comments.cftc.gov.* Follow the instructions for submitting comments through the website.

• *Mail:* Chris Kirkpatrick, Secretary of the Commission, Commodity Futures Trading Commission, Three Lafayette Centre, 1155 21st Street NW, Washington, DC 20581.

• *Delivery/Courier:* Same as Mail above.

Please submit your comments using only one method and identify that it is for the renewal of Collection Number 3038–0007.

All comments must be submitted in English, or if not, accompanied by an English translation. Comments will be posted as received to *http://www.cftc.gov.* You should submit only information that you wish to make available publicly. If you wish the Commission to consider information that you believe is exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, a petition for confidential treatment of the exempt information may be submitted according to the procedures established in § 145.9 of the Commission's regulations.[1]

The Commission reserves the right, but shall have no obligation, to review, pre-screen, filter, redact, refuse or remove any or all of your submission from *http://www.cftc.gov* that it may deem to be inappropriate for publication, such as obscene language. All submissions that have been redacted or removed that contain comments on the merits of the ICR will be retained in the public comment file and will be considered as required under the Administrative Procedure Act and other applicable laws, and may be accessible under the Freedom of Information Act.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Commodity Futures Trading Commission, Three Lafayette Center, 1155 21st Street NW, Washington, DC 20581; Jacob Chachkin, Division of Swap Dealer and Intermediary Oversight, telephone: (202) 418–5496 and email: *jchachkin@cftc.gov.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Under the PRA, 44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.,* Federal agencies must obtain approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for each collection of information they conduct or sponsor. ''Collection of information'' is defined in 44 U.S.C. 3502(3) and 5 CFR 1320.3(c) and includes agency requests or requirements that members of the public submit reports, keep records, or provide information to a third party. Section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the PRA, 44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A), requires Federal agencies to provide a 60-day notice in the **Federal Register** concerning each proposed collection of information, including each proposed extension of an existing collection of information, before submitting the collection to OMB for approval. To comply with this requirement, the CFTC is publishing notice of the proposed collection of information listed below. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB control numbers for the Commission's regulations were published on December 30, 1981.[2]

Title: Rules Relating to Regulation of Domestic Exchange-Traded Options, OMB Control Number 3038–0007—Extension.

Abstract: The rules require futures commission merchants and introducing

[1] 17 CFR 145.9, 74 FR 17395, (Apr. 15, 2009).

[2] 46 FR 63035 (dec. 30, 1981).

brokers: (1) To provide their customers with standard risk disclosure statements concerning the risk of trading commodity interests; and (2) to retain all promotional material and the source of authority for information contained therein. The purpose of these rules is to ensure that customers are advised of the risks of trading commodity interests and to avoid fraud and misrepresentation. This information collection contains the recordkeeping and reporting requirements needed to ensure regulatory compliance with Commission rules relating to this issue. The disclosure and recordkeeping requirements are necessary to monitor and to verify compliance by futures commission merchants (FCMs) and introducing brokers (IBs) with their obligations concerning disclosure and promotional material.

With respect to the above collection of information, the CFTC invites comments on:

- Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Commission, including whether the information will have a practical use;
- The accuracy of the Commission's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;
- Ways to enhance the quality, usefulness, and clarity of the information to be collected; and
- Ways to minimize the burden of collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology; *e.g.,* permitting electronic submission of responses.

Burden Statement: The Commission estimates the burden of this collection of information as follows:

ESTIMATED ANNUAL REPORTING BURDEN

Regulation	Estimated number of respondents or recordkeepers per year	Reports annually by each respondent	Total annual responses	Estimated average number of hours per response	Estimated total number of hours of annual burden in fiscal year
Reporting:					
33.7—(Risk disclosure)	1,272.00	115.00	146,280.00	0.08	11,702.40
Recordkeeping:					
33.8—(Retention of promotional material)	1,272.00	1.00	1,272.00	25.00	31,800.00
Grand total (reporting and recordkeeping)			147,552.00		43,502.40

There are no capital costs or operating and maintenance costs associated with this collection.

(Authority: 44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*)

Dated: June 4, 2018

Robert Sidman,

Deputy Secretary of the Commission.

[FR Doc. 2018–12277 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6351–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Applications for New Awards; Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (Partnership Grants)

AGENCY: Office of Postsecondary Education, Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Education is issuing a notice inviting applications for new awards for fiscal year (FY) 2018 for the Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) Partnership Grants, Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number 84.334A.

DATES:

Applications Available: June 7, 2018.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: July 13, 2018.

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: September 11, 2018.

ADDRESSES: For the addresses for obtaining and submitting an application, please refer to our Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the **Federal Register**on February 12, 2018 (83 FR 6003) and available at *www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2018-02-12/pdf/2018-02558.pdf.*

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Karmon Simms-Coates, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, room 278–54, Washington, DC 20202–6450. Telephone: (202) 453–7917. Email: *Karmon.Simms-Coates@ed.gov*.

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) or a text telephone (TTY), call the Federal Relay Service (FRS), toll free, at 1–800–877–8339.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: The GEAR UP program is a discretionary grant program that encourages eligible entities to provide support, and maintain a commitment, to eligible low-income students, including students with disabilities, to assist the students in obtaining a secondary school diploma (or its recognized equivalent) and to prepare for and succeed in postsecondary education. Under the GEAR UP program, the Department awards grants to two types of entities: (1) States and (2) partnerships consisting of at least one institution of higher education (IHE) and at least one local educational agency (LEA).

In this notice, the Department invites applications for partnership grants only. We will invite applications for State grants in another notice published in the **Federal Register**. Required services under the GEAR UP program are specified in sections 404D(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA) (20 U.S.C. 1070a–24(a)), and permissible services under the GEAR UP program are specified in section 404D(b) of the HEA (20 U.S.C. 1070a–24(b)). For partnership grantees, activities must include providing financial aid information for postsecondary education, encouraging enrollment in rigorous and challenging coursework in order to reduce the need for remediation at the postsecondary level, implementing activities to improve the number of participating students who obtain a secondary school diploma and who complete applications for and enroll in a program of postsecondary education. Activities may also include mentoring, tutoring, supporting dual or concurrent enrollment programs that support participating students in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM), academic and career counseling, financial and economic

literacy education, and exposure to college campuses.

Background: On March 2, 2018, the Secretary published in the **Federal Register** the Final Supplemental Priorities and Definitions for Discretionary Grant Programs (83 FR 9096) (Supplemental Priorities). In order to advance many of these priorities, this notice contains an absolute priority that encompasses several of the supplemental priorities. Because the absolute priority includes many categories from which an applicant may choose, and because projects occur over a period of many years, we believe applicants have ample opportunity to address these priorities in their projects.

Priority: This notice contains one absolute priority with several categories. The absolute priority is from the Supplemental Priorities.

Absolute Priority: For FY 2018 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, this priority is an absolute priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3), we consider only applications that meet this priority. Applicants must address at least one priority area in at least three of the following four categories. Addressing additional activities or addressing all four categories will not increase an applicant's score, but applicants may choose to do so. Applicants must clearly indicate on their application the specific priority area and categories their project addresses.

The four categories under this priority are:

Category 1: Fostering Flexible and Affordable Paths To Obtaining Knowledge and Skills

Projects that are designed to address one or more of the following priority areas:

(a) Developing or implementing pathways to recognized postsecondary credentials (as defined in section 3(52) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA)) focused on career and technical skills that align with in-demand industry sectors or occupations (as defined in section 3(23) of WIOA). Students may obtain such credentials through a wide variety of education providers, such as: IHEs eligible for Federal student financial aid programs, nontraditional education providers (*e.g.,* apprenticeship programs or computer coding boot camps), and providers of self-guided learning;

(b) Providing work-based learning experiences (such as internships, apprenticeships, and fellowships) that align with in-demand industry sectors or occupations (as defined in section 3(23) of WIOA);

(c) Creating or expanding innovative paths to a recognized postsecondary credential or obtainment of job-ready skills that align with in-demand industry sectors or occupations (as defined in section 3(23) of WIOA), such as through career pathways (as defined in section 3(7) of WIOA). Such credentials may be offered to students through a wide variety of education providers, such as providers eligible for Federal student financial aid programs, nontraditional education providers, and providers of self-guided learning; or

(d) Creating or expanding opportunities for students to obtain recognized postsecondary credentials in science, technology, engineering, mathematics, or computer science (as defined in this notice).

Category 2: Promoting Science, Technology, Engineering, or Math (STEM) Education, With a Particular Focus on Computer Science

Projects designed to improve student achievement or other educational outcomes in one or more of the following areas: Science, technology, engineering, math, or computer science (as defined in this notice). These projects may address one or more of the following priority areas:

(a) Supporting student mastery of key prerequisites (*e.g.,* Algebra I) to ensure success in all STEM fields, including computer science (as defined in this notice); exposing children or students to building-block skills (such as critical thinking and problem-solving, gained through hands-on, inquiry-based learning); or supporting the development of proficiency in the use of computer applications necessary to transition from a user of technologies, particularly computer technologies, to a developer of them;

(b) Increasing access to STEM coursework, including computer science (as defined in this notice), and hands-on learning opportunities, such as through expanded course offerings, dual-enrollment, high-quality online coursework, or other innovative delivery mechanisms;

(c) Creating or expanding partnerships between schools, LEAs, State educational agencies, businesses, not-for-profit organizations, or IHEs to give students access to internships, apprenticeships, or other work-based learning experiences in STEM fields, including computer science (as defined in this notice);

(d) Other evidence-based (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1 and in this notice) and innovative approaches to expanding access to high-quality STEM education, including computer science (as defined in this notice); or

(e) Utilizing technology for educational purposes in communities served by rural local educational agencies (as defined in this notice) or other areas identified as lacking sufficient access to such tools and resources.

Category 3: Protecting Freedom of Speech and Encouraging Respectful Interactions in a Safe Educational Environment, or Fostering Knowledge and Promoting the Development of Skills That Prepare Students To Be Informed, Thoughtful, and Productive Individuals and Citizens

Projects that are designed to address one or more of the following priority areas:

(a) Protecting free speech in order to allow for the discussion of diverse ideas or viewpoints; or

(b) Fostering knowledge of the common rights and responsibilities of American citizenship and civic participation, such as through civics education consistent with section 203(12) of WIOA.

Category 4: Fostering Knowledge and Promoting the Development of Skills That Prepare Students To Be Informed, Thoughtful, and Productive Individuals and Citizens

Projects that are designed to address supporting instruction in personal financial literacy, knowledge of markets and economics, knowledge of higher education financing and repayment (*e.g.,* college savings and student loans), or other skills aimed at building personal financial understanding and responsibility.

Definitions: These definitions are from the Supplemental Priorities and 34 CFR 77.1(c).

Computer Science means the study of computers and algorithmic processes and includes the study of computing principles and theories, computational thinking, computer hardware, software design, coding, analytics, and computer applications.

Computer science often includes computer programming or coding as a tool to create software, including applications, games, websites, and tools to manage or manipulate data; or development and management of computer hardware and the other electronics related to sharing, securing, and using digital information.

In addition to coding, the expanding field of computer science emphasizes computational thinking and interdisciplinary problem-solving to

equip students with the skills and abilities necessary to apply computation in our digital world.

Computer science does not include using a computer for everyday activities, such as browsing the internet; use of tools like word processing, spreadsheets, or presentation software; or using computers in the study and exploration of unrelated subjects.

Demonstrates a rationale means a key project component included in the project's logic model is informed by research or evaluation findings that suggest the project component is likely to improve relevant outcomes.

Evidence-based means the proposed project component is supported by one or more of strong evidence, moderate evidence, promising evidence, or evidence that demonstrates a rationale.

Experimental study means a study that is designed to compare outcomes between two groups of individuals (such as students) that are otherwise equivalent except for their assignment to either a treatment group receiving a project component or a control group that does not. Randomized controlled trials, regression discontinuity design studies, and single-case design studies are the specific types of experimental studies that, depending on their design and implementation (*e.g.,* sample attrition in randomized controlled trials and regression discontinuity design studies), can meet What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) standards without reservations as described in the WWC Handbook:

(i) A randomized controlled trial employs random assignment of, for example, students, teachers, classrooms, or schools to receive the project component being evaluated (the treatment group) or not to receive the project component (the control group).

(ii) A regression discontinuity design study assigns the project component being evaluated using a measured variable (*e.g.,* assigning students reading below a cutoff score to tutoring or developmental education classes) and controls for that variable in the analysis of outcomes.

(iii) A single-case design study uses observations of a single case (*e.g.,* a student eligible for a behavioral intervention) over time in the absence and presence of a controlled treatment manipulation to determine whether the outcome is systematically related to the treatment.

Logic model (also referred to as a theory of action) means a framework that identifies key project components of the proposed project (*i.e.,* the active ''ingredients'' that are hypothesized to be critical to achieving the relevant outcomes) and describes the theoretical and operational relationships among the key project components and relevant outcomes.

Moderate evidence means that there is evidence of effectiveness of a key project component in improving a relevant outcome for a sample that overlaps with the populations or settings proposed to receive that component, based on a relevant finding from one of the following:

(i) A practice guide prepared by the WWC using version 2.1 or 3.0 of the WWC Handbook reporting a ''strong evidence base'' or ''moderate evidence base'' for the corresponding practice guide recommendation;

(ii) An intervention report prepared by the WWC using version 2.1 or 3.0 of the WWC Handbook reporting a ''positive effect'' or ''potentially positive effect'' on a relevant outcome based on a ''medium to large'' extent of evidence, with no reporting of a ''negative effect'' or ''potentially negative effect'' on a relevant outcome; or

(iii) A single experimental study or quasi-experimental design study reviewed and reported by the WWC using version 2.1 or 3.0 of the WWC Handbook, or otherwise assessed by the Department using version 3.0 of the WWC Handbook, as appropriate, and that—

(A) Meets WWC standards with or without reservations;

(B) Includes at least one statistically significant and positive (*i.e.,* favorable) effect on a relevant outcome;

(C) Includes no overriding statistically significant and negative effects on relevant outcomes reported in the study or in a corresponding WWC intervention report prepared under version 2.1 or 3.0 of the WWC Handbook; and

(D) Is based on a sample from more than one site (*e.g.,* State, county, city, school district, or postsecondary campus) and includes at least 350 students or other individuals across sites. Multiple studies of the same project component that each meet requirements in paragraphs (iii)(A), (B), and (C) of this definition may together satisfy this requirement.

Project component means an activity, strategy, intervention, process, product, practice, or policy included in a project. Evidence may pertain to an individual project component or to a combination of project components (*e.g.,* training teachers on instructional practices for English learners and follow-on coaching for these teachers).

Promising evidence means that there is evidence of the effectiveness of a key project component in improving a relevant outcome, based on a relevant finding from one of the following:

(i) A practice guide prepared by WWC reporting a ''strong evidence base'' or ''moderate evidence base'' for the corresponding practice guide recommendation;

(ii) An intervention report prepared by the WWC reporting a ''positive effect'' or ''potentially positive effect'' on a relevant outcome with no reporting of a ''negative effect'' or ''potentially negative effect'' on a relevant outcome; or

(iii) A single study assessed by the Department, as appropriate, that—

(A) Is an experimental study, a quasi-experimental design study, or a well-designed and well-implemented correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias (*e.g.,* a study using regression methods to account for differences between a treatment group and a comparison group); and

(B) Includes at least one statistically significant and positive (*i.e.,* favorable) effect on a relevant outcome.

Quasi-experimental design study means a study using a design that attempts to approximate an experimental study by identifying a comparison group that is similar to the treatment group in important respects. This type of study, depending on design and implementation (*e.g.,* establishment of baseline equivalence of the groups being compared), can meet WWC standards with reservations, but cannot meet WWC standards without reservations, as described in the WWC Handbook.

Relevant outcome means the student outcome(s) or other outcome(s) the key project component is designed to improve, consistent with the specific goals of the program.

Rural local educational agency means a local educational agency that is eligible under the Small Rural School Achievement (SRSA) program or the Rural and Low-Income School (RLIS) program authorized under Title V, Part B of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended. Eligible applicants may determine whether a particular district is eligible for these programs by referring to information on the Department's website at *www2.ed.gov/nclb/freedom/local/reap.html.*

Strong evidence means that there is evidence of the effectiveness of a key project component in improving a relevant outcome for a sample that overlaps with the populations and settings proposed to receive that component, based on a relevant finding from one of the following:

(i) A practice guide prepared by the WWC using version 2.1 or 3.0 of the WWC Handbook reporting a ''strong evidence base'' for the corresponding practice guide recommendation;

(ii) An intervention report prepared by the WWC using version 2.1 or 3.0 of the WWC Handbook reporting a ''positive effect'' on a relevant outcome based on a ''medium to large'' extent of evidence, with no reporting of a ''negative effect'' or ''potentially negative effect'' on a relevant outcome; or

(iii) A single experimental study reviewed and reported by the WWC using version 2.1 or 3.0 of the WWC Handbook, or otherwise assessed by the Department using version 3.0 of the WWC Handbook, as appropriate, and that—

(A) Meets WWC standards without reservations;

(B) Includes at least one statistically significant and positive (*i.e.,* favorable) effect on a relevant outcome;

(C) Includes no overriding statistically significant and negative effects on relevant outcomes reported in the study or in a corresponding WWC intervention report prepared under version 2.1 or 3.0 of the WWC Handbook; and

(D) Is based on a sample from more than one site (*e.g.,* State, county, city, school district, or postsecondary campus) and includes at least 350 students or other individuals across sites. Multiple studies of the same project component that each meet requirements in paragraphs (iii)(A), (B), and (C) of this definition may together satisfy this requirement.

What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (WWC Handbook) means the standards and procedures set forth in the WWC Procedures and Standards Handbook, Version 3.0 or Version 2.1 (incorporated by reference, see 34 CFR 77.2). Study findings eligible for review under WWC standards can meet WWC standards without reservations, meet WWC standards with reservations, or not meet WWC standards. WWC practice guides and intervention reports include findings from systematic reviews of evidence as described in the Handbook documentation.

Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1070a–21—1070a–28.

Applicable Regulations: (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 75, 77, 79, 81, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98, and 99. (b) The Office of Management and Budget Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) in 2 CFR part 180, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3485. (c) The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards in 2 CFR part 200, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3474. (d) The regulations for this program in 34 CFR part 694.

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 86 apply to IHEs only.

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Discretionary grants.

Estimated Available Funds: The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018 provided $350,000,000 for the GEAR UP program for FY 2018, of which we intend to use an estimated $129,666,000 for new GEAR UP awards. The estimated funding available for the new GEAR UP Partnership awards is $64,833,000.

Contingent upon the availability of funds and the quality of applications, we may make additional awards in subsequent years from the list of unfunded applications from this competition.

Estimated Range of Awards: $100,000–$7,000,000.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: $1,200,000.

Maximum Award: We will not fund any application for a partnership grant above the maximum award of $800 per student for a single budget period of 12 months. Applications that request more than the maximum amount, except in the case of minimal technical or rounding errors, may be penalized. Additionally, no funding will be awarded for increases in an approved budget after the first 12-month budget period. As described in 34 CFR 694.1, the Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education may change the maximum amount through a notice published in the **Federal Register**.

Estimated Number of Awards: 54.

Note: The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

Project Period: Either 72 months or 84 months.

Note: An applicant that wishes to seek funding for a seventh project year (*i.e.,* for a project period greater than 72 months), in order to provide project services to GEAR UP students through their first year of attendance at an IHE, must propose to do so in the application provided in response to this notice.

III. Eligibility Information

1. *Eligible Applicants:* Partnerships consisting of (a) at least one LEA and (b) at least one degree-granting IHE. Partnerships may include not less than two other community organizations or entities, such as businesses, professional organizations, State agencies, institutions or agencies sponsoring programs authorized under the Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership Program authorized in part A, subpart 4, of title IV of the HEA (20 U.S.C. 1070c *et seq.*), or other public or private agencies or organizations (20 U.S.C. 1070a–21(c)(2)).

2. a. *Cost Sharing or Matching:* Section 404C(b)(1) of the HEA requires grantees under this program to provide from State, local, institutional, or private funds, not less than 50 percent of the cost of the program (or one dollar of non-Federal funds for every one dollar of Federal funds awarded), which may be provided in cash or in-kind. The provision also specifies that the match may be accrued over the full duration of the grant award period, except that the grantee must make substantial progress towards meeting the matching requirement in each year of the grant award period. Section 404C(c) of the HEA provides that in-kind contributions may include (1) the amount of the financial assistance obligated under GEAR UP to students from State, local, institutional, or private funds, (2) the amount of tuition, fees, room or board waived or reduced for recipients of financial assistance under GEAR UP, (3) the amount expended on documented, targeted, long-term mentoring and counseling provided by volunteers or paid staff of non-school organizations, including businesses, religious organizations, community groups, postsecondary educational institutions, nonprofit and philanthropic organizations, and other organizations, and (4) equipment and supplies, cash contributions from non-Federal sources, transportation expenses, in-kind or discounted program services, indirect costs, and facility usage.

Section 404C(b)(2) further provides that the Secretary may approve a partnership's request for a reduced match percentage at the time of application if the partnership demonstrates significant economic hardship that precludes the partnership from meeting the matching requirement, or if the partnership requests that contributions to the scholarship fund be matched on the basis of two non-Federal dollars for every one Federal dollar of GEAR UP funds. GEAR UP program regulations in 34 CFR 694.8(a)–(c) address the content of an applicant's request for such a reduced match, and the maximum percentage match that the Secretary may waive. In addition, the Secretary may approve a reduction in

match of up to 70 percent upon request from a partnership that (a) includes three or fewer IHEs as members (b) has a fiscal agent identified in 34 CFR 694.8(d)(1), and (c) serves students in schools and LEAs that meet the poverty criteria identified in 34 CFR 694.8(d)(2) and (3).

b. *Supplement-Not-Supplant:* This program involves supplement, not supplant funding requirements. Under section 404B(e) of the HEA (20 U.S.C. 1070a–22(e)), grant funds awarded under this program must be used to supplement, and not supplant, other Federal, State, and local funds that would otherwise be expended to carry out activities assisted under this program.

3. *Other: General Application Requirements:* All applicants must meet the following application requirements in order to be considered for funding. The application requirements are from section 404C(a) of the HEA (20 U.S.C. 1070a–23(a)).

In order for an eligible entity to qualify for a grant under the GEAR UP program, the eligible entity shall submit to the Secretary an application for carrying out a GEAR UP program that—

(a) Describes the activities for which assistance under this program is sought, including how the eligible entity will carry out the required activities described in section 404D(a) of the HEA;

(b) Describes, in the case of an eligible entity described in section 404A(c)(2) of the HEA that chooses to provide scholarships, or an eligible entity described in section 404A(c)(1) of the HEA, how the eligible entity will meet the requirements of section 404E of the HEA;

(c) Describes, in the case of an eligible entity described in section 404A(c)(2) of the HEA that requests a reduced match percentage under subsection (b)(2), how such reduction will assist the entity to provide the scholarships described in subsection (b)(2)(A)(ii);

(d) Provides assurances that adequate administrative and support staff will be responsible for coordinating the activities described in section 404D of the HEA;

(e) Provides assurances that activities assisted under this program will not displace an employee or eliminate a position at a school assisted under this program, including a partial displacement such as a reduction in hours, wages, or employment benefits;

(f) Describes, in the case of an eligible entity described in section 404A(c)(1) of the HEA that chooses to use a cohort approach, or an eligible entity described in section 404A(c)(2) of the HEA, how the eligible entity will define the cohorts of the students served by the eligible entity pursuant to section 404B(d) of the HEA, and how the eligible entity will serve the cohorts through grade 12, including—

(i) How vacancies in the program under this program will be filled; and

(ii) How the eligible entity will serve students attending different secondary schools;

(g) Describes how the eligible entity will coordinate programs under this program with other existing Federal, State, or local programs to avoid duplication and maximize the number of students served;

(h) Provides such additional assurances as the Secretary determines necessary to ensure compliance with the requirements of this program;

(i) Provides information about the activities that will be carried out by the eligible entity to support systemic changes from which future cohorts of students will benefit; and

(j) Describes the sources of matching funds that will enable the eligible entity to meet the matching requirement described in subsection (b).

4. *Subgrantees:* A grantee under this competition may not award subgrants to entities to directly carry out project activities described in its application.

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. *Application Submission Instructions:* For information on how to submit an application, please refer to our Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the **Federal Register** on February 12, 2018 (83 FR 6003) and available at *www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg.FR-2018-02-12/pdf/2018-02558.pdf.*

2. *Intergovernmental Review:* This program is subject to Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79. Information about Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs under Executive Order 12372 is in the application package for this program.

3. *Funding Restrictions:* We reference regulations outlining funding restrictions in the *Applicable Regulations* section of this notice.

4. *Content and Form of Application Submission:* You must include your complete response to the selection criteria and absolute priority in the application narrative. Other requirements concerning the content of an application, together with the forms you must submit, are in the application package for this program.

5. *Recommended Page Limit:* The application narrative is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use to assess your application. There is no page limit for the application narrative; however, we recommend that you present your information clearly and concisely.

Note: Applications that do not follow the formatting recommendations will not be penalized.

We recommend the following standards:

- A ''page'' is 8.5″ x 11″, on one side only, with 1″ margins.
- Double-space all text in the application project narrative, and single-space titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions.
- Use a 12-point font.
- Use an easily readable font such as Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial.

V. Application Review Information

1. *Selection Criteria:* The selection criteria for this competition are from 34 CFR 75.210.

a. *Need for the project (15 points).*

(1) The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project.

(2) In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The magnitude or severity of the problem to be addressed by the proposed project; and

(ii) The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses.

b. *Quality of project design (15 points).*

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the project design.

(2) In determining the quality of project design, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable;

(ii) The extent to which the project design reflects up-to-date research and the replication of effective practices; and

(iii) The extent to which the project supports systemic changes from which future cohorts of students will benefit.

(3) The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c) and in this notice.

c. *Quality of project services (15 points).*

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of project services provided by the proposed project, the Secretary considers the quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

(3) In addition, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the project services are likely to provide comprehensive mentoring, outreach, and supportive services to students, including the following activities: Information regarding financial aid for postsecondary education to participating students, encouraging student enrollment in rigorous and challenging curricula and coursework in order to reduce the need for remedial coursework at the postsecondary level, and improving the number of participating students who obtain a secondary school diploma and complete applications for and enroll in a program of postsecondary education; and

(ii) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project involve the collaboration of appropriate partners for maximizing the effectiveness of project services.

d. *Quality of project personnel (10 points).*

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age or disability.

(2) In addition, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director or principal investigator; and

(ii) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key personnel.

e. *Quality of the management plan (10 points).*

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks;

(ii) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project;

(iii) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project; and

(iv) How the applicant will ensure that a diversity of perspectives are brought to bear in the operation of the proposed project, including those of parents, teachers, the business community, a variety of disciplinary and professional fields, recipients or beneficiaries of services, or others, as appropriate.

f. *Quality of the project evaluation (20 points).*

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of the project evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project;

(ii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible;

(iii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes;

(iv) The extent to which the evaluation will provide guidance about effective strategies suitable for replication or testing in other settings; and

(v) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well-implemented, produce promising evidence (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)) about the projects effectiveness.

g. *Adequacy of resources (15 points).*

(1) The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project.

(2) In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies and other resources from the applicant organization or the lead applicant organization;

(ii) The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project;

(iii) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the number of persons to be served and to the anticipated results and benefits; and

(iv) The potential for continued support of the project after Federal funding ends, including, as appropriate, the demonstrated commitment of appropriate entities to such support.

2. *Review and Selection Process:* We remind potential applicants that in reviewing applications in any discretionary grant competition, the Secretary may consider, under 34 CFR 75.217(d)(3), the past performance of the applicant in carrying out a previous award, such as the applicant's use of funds, achievement of project objectives, and compliance with grant conditions. The Secretary may also consider whether the applicant failed to submit a timely performance report or submitted a report of unacceptable quality.

In addition, in making a competitive grant award, the Secretary requires various assurances including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department of Education (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23) as well as all applicable requirements of all other Federal laws, executive orders, regulations, and policies governing this program.

For this competition, a panel of non-Federal reviewers will review each application in accordance with the selection criteria in 34 CFR 75.217(d)(3) as required by 20 U.S.C. 1070–a23(d). The individual scores of the reviewers will be added and the sum divided by the number of reviewers to determine the peer review score received in the review process.

If there are insufficient funds for all applications with the same total scores, to the extent practicable the Secretary will consider the distribution of grant awards based on the geographic distribution of such grant awards and the distribution between urban and rural applicants for the GEAR UP program consistent with 20 U.S.C. 1070a–22(a)(3).

3. *Risk Assessment and Special Conditions:* Consistent with 2 CFR 200.205, before awarding grants under this competition the Department conducts a review of the risks posed by applicants. Under 2 CFR 3474.10, the

Secretary may impose special conditions and, in appropriate circumstances, high-risk conditions on a grant if the applicant or grantee is not financially stable; has a history of unsatisfactory performance; has a financial or other management system that does not meet the standards in 2 CFR part 200, subpart D; has not fulfilled the conditions of a prior grant; or is otherwise not responsible.

4. *Integrity and Performance System:* If you are selected under this competition to receive an award that over the course of the project period may exceed the simplified acquisition threshold (currently $150,000), under 2 CFR 200.205(a)(2) we must make a judgment about your integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards—that is, the risk posed by you as an applicant—before we make an award. In doing so, we must consider any information about you that is in the integrity and performance system (currently referred to as the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)), accessible through the System for Award Management. You may review and comment on any information about yourself that a Federal agency previously entered and that is currently in FAPIIS.

Please note that, if the total value of your currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from the Federal Government exceeds $10,000,000, the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 200, Appendix XII, require you to report certain integrity information to FAPIIS semiannually. Please review the requirements in 2 CFR part 200, Appendix XII, if this grant plus all the other Federal funds you receive exceed $10,000,000.

VI. Award Administration Information

1. *Award Notices:* If your application is successful, we notify your U.S. Representative and U.S. Senators and send you a Grant Award Notification (GAN), or we may send you an email containing a link to access an electronic version of your GAN. We may notify you informally, also.

If your application is not evaluated or not selected for funding, we will notify you.

2. *Administrative and National Policy Requirements:* We identify administrative and national policy requirements in the application package and reference these and other requirements in the *Applicable Regulations* section of this notice.

We reference the regulations outlining the terms and conditions of an award in the *Applicable Regulations* section of this notice and include these and other specific conditions in the GAN. The GAN also incorporates your approved application as part of your binding commitments under the grant.

3. *Open Licensing Requirements:* Unless an exception applies, if you are awarded a grant under this competition, you will be required to openly license to the public grant deliverables created in whole, or in part, with Department grant funds. When the deliverable consists of modifications to pre-existing works, the license extends only to those modifications that can be separately identified and only to the extent that open licensing is permitted under the terms of any licenses or other legal restrictions on the use of pre-existing works. For additional information on the open licensing requirements please refer to 2 CFR 3474.20(c).

4. *Reporting:* (a) If you apply for a grant under this competition, you must ensure that you have in place the necessary processes and systems to comply with the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 170 should you receive funding under the competition. This does not apply if you have an exception under 2 CFR 170.110(b).

(b) At the end of your project period, you must submit a final performance report, including financial information, as directed by the Secretary. If you receive a multiyear award, you must submit an annual performance report that provides the most current performance and financial expenditure information as directed by the Secretary under 34 CFR 75.118. The Secretary may also require more frequent performance reports under 34 CFR 75.720(c). For specific requirements on reporting, please go to *www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html.*

(c) Under 34 CFR 75.250(b), the Secretary may provide a grantee with additional funding for data collection analysis and reporting. In this case the Secretary establishes a data collection period.

5. *Performance Measures:* The objectives of the GEAR UP program are (1) to increase the academic performance and preparation for postsecondary education of participating students; (2) to increase the rate of high school graduation and participation in postsecondary education of participating students; and (3) to increase educational expectations for participating students and increase student and family knowledge of postsecondary education options, preparation, and financing.

The effectiveness of this program depends on the rate at which program participants complete high school and enroll in and complete a postsecondary education. Under the Government Performance and Results Modernization Act, we developed the following performance measures to track progress toward achieving the program's goals:

1. The percentage of GEAR UP students who pass Pre-Algebra by the end of 8th grade.

2. The percentage of GEAR UP students who pass Algebra 1 by the end of 9th grade.

3. The percentage of GEAR UP students who take two years of mathematics beyond Algebra 1 by 12th grade.

4. The percentage of GEAR UP students who are on track for graduation at the end of each grade.

5. The percentage of GEAR UP students who are on track to apply for college as measured by completion of the SAT or ACT by the end of 11th grade.

6. The percentage of GEAR UP students who graduate from high school.

7. The percentage of GEAR UP students who complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

8. The percentage of GEAR UP students and former GEAR UP students who are enrolled at an IHE.

9. The percentage of GEAR UP students who place into college-level math and English without need for remediation.

10. The percentage of current GEAR UP students and former GEAR UP students who are on track to graduate from an IHE one year after enrolling in an IHE.

In addition, to assess the efficiency of the program, we track the average cost, in Federal funds, of achieving a successful outcome, where success is defined as enrollment in a program of undergraduate instruction at an IHE of GEAR UP students immediately after high school graduation. These performance measures constitute GEAR UP's indicators of the success of the program. Accordingly, we request that applicants include these performance measures in conceptualizing the design, implementation, and evaluation of their proposed projects.

6. *Continuation Awards:* In making a continuation award under 34 CFR 75.253, the Secretary considers, among other things: Whether a grantee has made substantial progress in achieving the goals and objectives of the project; whether the grantee has expended funds in a manner that is consistent with its approved application and budget; and, if the Secretary has established performance measurement

requirements, the performance targets in the grantee's approved application.

In making a continuation grant, the Secretary also considers whether the grantee is operating in compliance with the assurances in its approved application, including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23) as well as all applicable requirements of all other Federal laws, executive orders, regulations, and policies governing this program.

VII. Other Information

Accessible Format: Individuals with disabilities can obtain this document and a copy of the application package in an accessible format (*e.g.,* braille, large print, audiotape, or compact disc) on request to one of the program contact persons listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

Electronic Access to This Document: The official version of this document is the document published in the **Federal Register**. You may access the official edition of the **Federal Register** and the Code of Federal Regulations via the Federal Digital System at: *www.gpo.gov/fdsys.* At this site you can view this document, as well as all other documents of this Department published in the **Federal Register**, in text or Portal Document Format (PDF). To use PDF you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at the site.

You may also access documents of the Department published in the **Federal Register** by using the article search feature at *www.federalregister.gov.* Specifically, through the advanced feature at this site, you can limit your search to documents published by the Department.

Dated: June 4, 2018.

Frank T. Brogan,

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary and Delegated the duties of the Assistant Secretary, Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development, Delegated the duties of the Assistant Secretary, Office of Postsecondary Education.

[FR Doc. 2018–12294 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Applications for New Awards; Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (State Grants)

AGENCY: Office of Postsecondary Education, Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Education is issuing a notice inviting applications for new awards for fiscal year (FY) 2018 for the Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) State Grants, Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number 84.334S.

DATES: *Applications Available:* June 7, 2018.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: July 13, 2018.

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: September 11, 2018.

ADDRESSES: For the addresses for obtaining and submitting an application, please refer to our Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the **Federal Register** on February 12, 2018 (83 FR 6003) and available at *www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2018-02-12/pdf/2018-02558.pdf.*

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Karmon Simms-Coates, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, room 278–54, Washington, DC 20202–6450. Telephone: (202) 453–7917. Email: *Karmon.Simms-Coates@ed.gov.*

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) or a text telephone (TTY), call the Federal Relay Service (FRS), toll free, at 1–800–877–8339.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: The GEAR UP program is a discretionary grant program that encourages eligible entities to provide support, and maintain a commitment to eligible low-income students, including students with disabilities, to assist the students in obtaining a secondary school diploma (or its recognized equivalent) and to prepare for and succeed in postsecondary education. Under the GEAR UP program, the Department awards grants to two types of entities: (1) States and (2) eligible partnerships.

In this notice, the Department invites applications for State grants only. We will invite applications for partnership grants in another notice published in the **Federal Register**. Required services under the GEAR UP program are specified in sections 404D(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA) (20 U.S.C. 1070a–24(a)), and permissible services under the GEAR UP Program are specified in section 404D(b) and (c) of the HEA (20 U.S.C. 1070a–24(b) and (c)). For State grantees, activities must include providing financial aid information for postsecondary education, encouraging enrollment in rigorous and challenging coursework in order to reduce the need for remediation at the postsecondary level, implementing activities to improve the number of participating students who obtain a secondary school diploma and who complete applications for and enroll in a program of postsecondary education, and provision of scholarships as specified in section 404E of the HEA. Activities may also include mentoring, tutoring, supporting dual or concurrent enrollment programs that support participating students in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM), academic and career counseling, financial and economic literacy education, and exposure to college campuses.

Background:

On March 2, 2018, the Secretary published in the **Federal Register** the Final Supplemental Priorities and Definitions for Discretionary Grant Programs (83 FR 9096) (Supplemental Priorities). In order to advance many of these priorities, this notice contains an absolute priority that encompasses several of the supplemental priorities. Because the absolute priority includes many categories from which an applicant may choose, and because projects occur over a period of many years, we believe applicants have ample opportunity to address these priorities in their projects.

Priorities: This notice contains one absolute priority and one competitive preference priority. The absolute priority has several categories. The absolute priority is from the Supplemental Priorities. This notice also contains one competitive preference priority. In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2)(ii) and 34 CFR 75.105(b)(iv), the competitive preference priority is from section 404A(b)(3) of the HEA (20 U.S.C. 1070a–21(b)(3)) and the GEAR UP Program regulations (34 CFR 694.19).

Absolute Priority: For FY 2018, and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, this priority is an absolute priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3), we consider only

applications that meet this priority. Applicants must address at least one priority area in at least three of the following four categories. Addressing additional activities or addressing all four categories will not increase an applicant's score, but applicants may choose to do so.

The four categories under this priority are:

Category 1: Fostering Flexible and Affordable Paths To Obtaining Knowledge and Skills

Projects that are designed to address one or more of the following priority areas:

(a) Developing or implementing pathways to recognized postsecondary credentials (as defined in section 3(52) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA)) focused on career and technical skills that align with in-demand industry sectors or occupations (as defined in section 3(23) of WIOA). Students may obtain such credentials through a wide variety of education providers, such as: IHEs eligible for Federal student financial aid programs, nontraditional education providers (*e.g.,* apprenticeship programs or computer coding boot camps), and providers of self-guided learning;

(b) Providing work-based learning experiences (such as internships, apprenticeships, and fellowships) that align with in-demand industry sectors or occupations (as defined in section 3(23) of WIOA);

(c) Creating or expanding innovative paths to a recognized postsecondary credential or obtainment of job-ready skills that align with in-demand industry sectors or occupations (as defined in section 3(23) of WIOA), such as through career pathways (as defined in section 3(7) of WIOA). Such credentials may be offered to students through a wide variety of education providers, such as providers eligible for Federal student financial aid programs, nontraditional education providers, and providers of self-guided learning; or

(d) Creating or expanding opportunities for students to obtain recognized postsecondary credentials in science, technology, engineering, mathematics, or computer science (as defined in this notice).

Category 2: Promoting Science, Technology, Engineering, or Math (STEM) Education, With a Particular Focus on Computer Science

Projects designed to improve student achievement or other educational outcomes in one or more of the following areas: Science, technology, engineering, math, or computer science (as defined in this notice). These projects may address one or more of the following priority areas:

(a) Supporting student mastery of key prerequisites (*e.g.,* Algebra I) to ensure success in all STEM fields, including computer science (as defined in this notice); exposing children or students to building-block skills (such as critical thinking and problem-solving, gained through hands-on, inquiry-based learning); or supporting the development of proficiency in the use of computer applications necessary to transition from a user of technologies, particularly computer technologies, to a developer of them;

(b) Increasing access to STEM coursework, including computer science (as defined in this notice), and hands-on learning opportunities, such as through expanded course offerings, dual-enrollment, high-quality online coursework, or other innovative delivery mechanisms;

(c) Creating or expanding partnerships between schools, LEAs, State educational agencies, businesses, not-for-profit organizations, or IHEs to give students access to internships, apprenticeships, or other work-based learning experiences in STEM fields, including computer science (as defined in this notice);

(d) Other evidence-based (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1 and in this notice) and innovative approaches to expanding access to high-quality STEM education, including computer science (as defined in this notice); or

(e) Utilizing technology for educational purposes in communities served by rural local educational agencies (as defined in this notice) or other areas identified as lacking sufficient access to such tools and resources.

Category 3: Protecting Freedom of Speech and Encouraging Respectful Interactions in a Safe Educational Environment, or Fostering Knowledge and Promoting the Development of Skills That Prepare Students To Be Informed, Thoughtful, and Productive Individuals and Citizens

Projects that are designed to address one or more of the following priority areas:

(a) Protecting free speech in order to allow for the discussion of diverse ideas or viewpoints; or

(b) Fostering knowledge of the common rights and responsibilities of American citizenship and civic participation, such as through civics education consistent with section 203(12) of WIOA.

Category 4: Fostering Knowledge and Promoting the Development of Skills That Prepare Students To Be Informed, Thoughtful, and Productive Individuals and Citizens.

Projects that are designed to address supporting instruction in personal financial literacy, knowledge of markets and economics, knowledge of higher education financing and repayment (*e.g.,* college savings and student loans), or other skills aimed at building personal financial understanding and responsibility.

Competitive Preference Priority: For FY 2018, and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, this priority is a competitive preference priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i), we award up to an additional two points, depending on how well the application meets this priority.

This priority is:

We give priority to an eligible applicant for a State GEAR UP grant that has: (a) Carried out a successful State GEAR UP grant prior to August 14, 2008, determined on the basis of data (including outcome data) submitted by the applicant as part of its annual and final performance reports from prior GEAR UP State grants administered by the applicant and the applicant's history of compliance with applicable statutory and regulatory requirements; and (b) a prior, demonstrated commitment to early intervention leading to college access through collaboration and replication of successful strategies.

Definitions: These definitions are from the Supplemental Priorities and 34 CFR 77.1(c).

Computer Science means the study of computers and algorithmic processes and includes the study of computing principles and theories, computational thinking, computer hardware, software design, coding, analytics, and computer applications.

Computer science often includes computer programming or coding as a tool to create software, including applications, games, websites, and tools to manage or manipulate data; or development and management of computer hardware and the other electronics related to sharing, securing, and using digital information.

In addition to coding, the expanding field of computer science emphasizes computational thinking and interdisciplinary problem-solving to equip students with the skills and abilities necessary to apply computation in our digital world.

Computer science does not include using a computer for everyday activities,

such as browsing the internet; use of tools like word processing, spreadsheets, or presentation software; or using computers in the study and exploration of unrelated subjects.

Demonstrates a rationale means a key project component included in the project's logic model is informed by research or evaluation findings that suggest the project component is likely to improve relevant outcomes.

Evidence-based means the proposed project component is supported by one or more of strong evidence, moderate evidence, promising evidence, or evidence that demonstrates a rationale.

Experimental study means a study that is designed to compare outcomes between two groups of individuals (such as students) that are otherwise equivalent except for their assignment to either a treatment group receiving a project component or a control group that does not. Randomized controlled trials, regression discontinuity design studies, and single-case design studies are the specific types of experimental studies that, depending on their design and implementation (*e.g.,* sample attrition in randomized controlled trials and regression discontinuity design studies), can meet What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) standards without reservations as described in the WWC Handbook:

(i) A randomized controlled trial employs random assignment of, for example, students, teachers, classrooms, or schools to receive the project component being evaluated (the treatment group) or not to receive the project component (the control group).

(ii) A regression discontinuity design study assigns the project component being evaluated using a measured variable (*e.g.,* assigning students reading below a cutoff score to tutoring or developmental education classes) and controls for that variable in the analysis of outcomes.

(iii) A single-case design study uses observations of a single case (*e.g.,* a student eligible for a behavioral intervention) over time in the absence and presence of a controlled treatment manipulation to determine whether the outcome is systematically related to the treatment.

Logic model (also referred to as a theory of action) means a framework that identifies key project components of the proposed project (*i.e.,* the active ''ingredients'' that are hypothesized to be critical to achieving the relevant outcomes) and describes the theoretical and operational relationships among the key project components and relevant outcomes.

Moderate evidence means that there is evidence of effectiveness of a key project component in improving a relevant outcome for a sample that overlaps with the populations or settings proposed to receive that component, based on a relevant finding from one of the following:

(i) A practice guide prepared by the WWC using version 2.1 or 3.0 of the WWC Handbook reporting a ''strong evidence base'' or ''moderate evidence base'' for the corresponding practice guide recommendation;

(ii) An intervention report prepared by the WWC using version 2.1 or 3.0 of the WWC Handbook reporting a ''positive effect'' or ''potentially positive effect'' on a relevant outcome based on a ''medium to large'' extent of evidence, with no reporting of a ''negative effect'' or ''potentially negative effect'' on a relevant outcome; or

(iii) A single experimental study or quasi-experimental design study reviewed and reported by the WWC using version 2.1 or 3.0 of the WWC Handbook, or otherwise assessed by the Department using version 3.0 of the WWC Handbook, as appropriate, and that—

(A) Meets WWC standards with or without reservations;

(B) Includes at least one statistically significant and positive (*i.e.,* favorable) effect on a relevant outcome;

(C) Includes no overriding statistically significant and negative effects on relevant outcomes reported in the study or in a corresponding WWC intervention report prepared under version 2.1 or 3.0 of the WWC Handbook; and

(D) Is based on a sample from more than one site (*e.g.,* State, county, city, school district, or postsecondary campus) and includes at least 350 students or other individuals across sites. Multiple studies of the same project component that each meet requirements in paragraphs (iii)(A), (B), and (C) of this definition may together satisfy this requirement.

Project component means an activity, strategy, intervention, process, product, practice, or policy included in a project. Evidence may pertain to an individual project component or to a combination of project components (*e.g.,* training teachers on instructional practices for English learners and follow-on coaching for these teachers).

Promising evidence means that there is evidence of the effectiveness of a key project component in improving a relevant outcome, based on a relevant finding from one of the following:

(i) A practice guide prepared by WWC reporting a ''strong evidence base'' or ''moderate evidence base'' for the corresponding practice guide recommendation;

(ii) An intervention report prepared by the WWC reporting a ''positive effect'' or ''potentially positive effect'' on a relevant outcome with no reporting of a ''negative effect'' or ''potentially negative effect'' on a relevant outcome; or

(iii) A single study assessed by the Department, as appropriate, that—

(A) Is an experimental study, a quasi-experimental design study, or a well-designed and well-implemented correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias (*e.g.,* a study using regression methods to account for differences between a treatment group and a comparison group); and

(B) Includes at least one statistically significant and positive (*i.e.,* favorable) effect on a relevant outcome.

Quasi-experimental design study means a study using a design that attempts to approximate an experimental study by identifying a comparison group that is similar to the treatment group in important respects. This type of study, depending on design and implementation (*e.g.,* establishment of baseline equivalence of the groups being compared), can meet WWC standards with reservations, but cannot meet WWC standards without reservations, as described in the WWC Handbook.

Relevant outcome means the student outcome(s) or other outcome(s) the key project component is designed to improve, consistent with the specific goals of the program.

Rural local educational agency means a local educational agency that is eligible under the Small Rural School Achievement (SRSA) program or the Rural and Low-Income School (RLIS) program authorized under Title V, Part B of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended. Eligible applicants may determine whether a particular district is eligible for these programs by referring to information on the Department's website at *www2.ed.gov/nclb/freedom/local/reap.html.*

Strong evidence means that there is evidence of the effectiveness of a key project component in improving a relevant outcome for a sample that overlaps with the populations and settings proposed to receive that component, based on a relevant finding from one of the following:

(i) A practice guide prepared by the WWC using version 2.1 or 3.0 of the WWC Handbook reporting a ''strong evidence base'' for the corresponding practice guide recommendation;

(ii) An intervention report prepared by the WWC using version 2.1 or 3.0 of the WWC Handbook reporting a ''positive effect'' on a relevant outcome based on a ''medium to large'' extent of evidence, with no reporting of a ''negative effect'' or ''potentially negative effect'' on a relevant outcome; or

(iii) A single experimental study reviewed and reported by the WWC using version 2.1 or 3.0 of the WWC Handbook, or otherwise assessed by the Department using version 3.0 of the WWC Handbook, as appropriate, and that—

(A) Meets WWC standards without reservations;

(B) Includes at least one statistically significant and positive (*i.e.,* favorable) effect on a relevant outcome;

(C) Includes no overriding statistically significant and negative effects on relevant outcomes reported in the study or in a corresponding WWC intervention report prepared under version 2.1 or 3.0 of the WWC Handbook; and

(D) Is based on a sample from more than one site (*e.g.,* State, county, city, school district, or postsecondary campus) and includes at least 350 students or other individuals across sites. Multiple studies of the same project component that each meet requirements in paragraphs (iii)(A), (B), and (C) of this definition may together satisfy this requirement.

What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (WWC Handbook) means the standards and procedures set forth in the WWC Procedures and Standards Handbook, Version 3.0 or Version 2.1 (incorporated by reference, see 34 CFR 77.2). Study findings eligible for review under WWC standards can meet WWC standards without reservations, meet WWC standards with reservations, or not meet WWC standards. WWC practice guides and intervention reports include findings from systematic reviews of evidence as described in the Handbook documentation.

Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1070a–21—1070a–28.

Applicable Regulations: (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 75, 77, 79, 81, 82, 84, 97, 98, and 99. (b) The Office of Management and Budget Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) in 2 CFR part 180, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3485. (c) The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards in 2 CFR part 200, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3474. (d) The regulations for this program in 34 CFR part 694.

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Discretionary grants.

Estimated Available Funds: The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018 provided $350,000,000 for the GEAR UP program for FY 2018, of which we intend to use an estimated $129,666,000 for new GEAR UP awards. The estimated funding available for the new GEAR UP State awards is $54,833,000.

Contingent upon the availability of funds and the quality of applications, we may make additional awards in subsequent years from the list of unfunded applications from this competition.

Estimated Range of Awards: $2,500,000–$3,500,000.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: $3,000,000.

Maximum Award: We will not fund any application for a State grant above the maximum award of $3,500,000 for a single budget period of 12 months. Applications that request more than the maximum amount, except in the case of minimal technical or rounding errors, may be penalized. Additionally, no funding will be awarded for increases in budget after the first 12-month budget period. As described in 34 CFR 694.1, the Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education may change the maximum amount through a notice published in the **Federal Register**.

Estimated Number of Awards: 18.

Note: The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

Project Period: Either 72 months or 84 months.

Note: An applicant that wishes to seek funding for a seventh project year (*i.e.,* for a project period of greater than 72 months), in order to provide project services to GEAR UP students through their first year of attendance at an IHE, must propose to do so in the application provided in response to this notice.

III. Eligibility Information

1. *Eligible Applicants:* States as defined by section 103(21) of the HEA (20 U.S.C. 1003(21)), which includes in addition to the several States of the United States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia, Guam, American Samoa, the United States Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the Freely Associated States. Per Congressional direction in the Explanatory Statement to the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018 (Pub. L. 115–141), States may only administer one active State GEAR UP grant at a time. Therefore, only States without an active State GEAR UP grant, or States that have an active State GEAR UP grant that is scheduled to end prior to October 1, 2018, are eligible to receive a new State GEAR UP award in this competition.

2.a. *Cost Sharing or Matching:* Section 404C(b)(1) of the HEA requires grantees under this program to provide from State, local, institutional, or private funds, not less than 50 percent of the cost of the program (or one dollar of non-Federal funds for every one dollar of Federal funds awarded), which may be provided in cash or in-kind. The provision also specifies that the match may be accrued over the full duration of the grant award period, except that the grantee must make substantial progress towards meeting the matching requirement in each year of the grant award period. Section 404C(c) of the HEA provides that in-kind contributions may include (1) the amount of the financial assistance obligated under GEAR UP to students from State, local, institutional, or private funds, (2) the amount of tuition, fees, room or board waived or reduced for recipients of financial assistance under GEAR UP, (3) the amount expended on documented, targeted, long-term mentoring and counseling provided by volunteers or paid staff of non-school organizations, including businesses, religious organizations, community groups, postsecondary educational institutions, nonprofit and philanthropic organizations, and other organizations, and (4) equipment and supplies, cash contributions from non-Federal sources, transportation expenses, in-kind or discounted program services, indirect costs, and facility usage.

b. *Supplement-Not-Supplant:* This program involves supplement, not supplant funding requirements. Under section 404B(e) of the HEA (20 U.S.C. 1070a–22(e)), grant funds awarded under this program must be used to supplement, and not supplant, other Federal, State, and local funds that would otherwise be expended to carry out activities assisted under this program.

3. *Other: General Application Requirements:* All applicants must meet the following application requirements in order to be considered for funding. The application requirements are from section 404C(a) of the HEA (20 U.S.C. 1070a–23(a)).

In order for an eligible entity to qualify for a grant under the GEAR UP program, the eligible entity shall submit

to the Secretary an application for carrying out a GEAR UP program that—

(a) Describes the activities for which assistance under this program is sought, including how the eligible entity will carry out the required activities described in section 404D(a) of the HEA;

(b) Describes, in the case of an eligible entity described in section 404A(c)(2) of the HEA that chooses to provide scholarships, or an eligible entity described in section 404A(c)(1) of the HEA, how the eligible entity will meet the requirements of section 404E of the HEA;

(c) Describes, in the case of an eligible entity described in section 404A(c)(2) of the HEA that requests a reduced match percentage under subsection (b)(2), how such reduction will assist the entity to provide the scholarships described in subsection (b)(2)(A)(ii);

(d) Provides assurances that adequate administrative and support staff will be responsible for coordinating the activities described in section 404D of the HEA;

(e) Provides assurances that activities assisted under this program will not displace an employee or eliminate a position at a school assisted under this program, including a partial displacement such as a reduction in hours, wages, or employment benefits;

(f) Describes, in the case of an eligible entity described in section 404A(c)(1) of the HEA that chooses to use a cohort approach, or an eligible entity described in section 404A(c)(2) of the HEA, how the eligible entity will define the cohorts of the students served by the eligible entity pursuant to section 404B(d) of the HEA, and how the eligible entity will serve the cohorts through grade 12, including—

(i) How vacancies in the program under this program will be filled; and

(ii) How the eligible entity will serve students attending different secondary schools;

(g) Describes how the eligible entity will coordinate programs under this program with other existing Federal, State, or local programs to avoid duplication and maximize the number of students served;

(h) Provides such additional assurances as the Secretary determines necessary to ensure compliance with the requirements of this program;

(i) Provides information about the activities that will be carried out by the eligible entity to support systemic changes from which future cohorts of students will benefit; and

(j) Describes the sources of matching funds that will enable the eligible entity to meet the matching requirement described in subsection (b).

4. *Subgrantees:* A grantee under this competition may not award subgrants to entities to directly carry out project activities described in its application.

5. *Other:* Under Section 404E(b)(1) of the HEA (20 U.S.C. 1070a–25)(b)(1)), a State must use not less than 25 percent and not more than 50 percent of the grant funds for activities targeted at the school and LEA level as described in section 404D (20 U.S.C. 1070a–24) (excluding the provision of funds for postsecondary scholarships required by section 404D(a)(4) and with the remainder of grant funds spent on postsecondary scholarships to eligible GEAR UP students as described in section 404E). However, section 404E(b)(2) of the HEA permits the Secretary to allow a State to use more than 50 percent of grant funds received under this program for activities targeted at the LEA level if the State demonstrates in its grant application that it has another means of providing the students with the financial assistance described in HEA section 404E.

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. *Application Submission Instructions:* For information on how to submit an application, please refer to our Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the **Federal Register** on February 12, 2018 (83 FR 6003) and available at *www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg.FR-2018-02-12/pdf/2018-02558.pdf.*

2. *Intergovernmental Review:* This program is subject to Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79. Information about Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs under Executive Order 12372 is in the application package for this program.

3. *Funding Restrictions:* We reference regulations outlining funding restrictions in the *Applicable Regulations* section of this notice.

4. *Content and Form of Application Submission:* You must include your complete response to the selection criteria, absolute priorities and competitive preference priority in the application narrative. Other requirements concerning the content of an application, together with the forms you must submit, are in the application package for this program.

5. *Recommended Page Limit and Format:* The application narrative is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use to assess your application. There is no page limit for the application narrative; however, we recommend that you present your information clearly and concisely.

Note: Applications that do not follow the formatting recommendations will not be penalized.

We recommend the following standards:

- A ''page'' is 8.5″ x 11″, on one side only, with 1″ margins.
- Double-space all text in the application narrative and single-space titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions.
- Use a 12 point font.
- Use an easily readable font such as Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial.

V. Application Review Information

1. *Selection Criteria:* The selection criteria for this competition are from 34 CFR 75.210.

a. *Need for the project (15 points).*

(1) The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project.

(2) In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The magnitude or severity of the problem to be addressed by the proposed project; and

(ii) The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses.

b. *Quality of project design (15 points).*

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the project design.

(2) In determining the quality of project design, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable;

(ii) The extent to which the project design reflects up-to-date research and the replication of effective practices; and

(iii) The extent to which the project supports systemic changes from which future cohorts of students will benefit.

(3) The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c) and in this Notice).

c. *Quality of project services (15 points).*

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of project services provided by the

proposed project, the Secretary considers the quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

(3) In addition, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the project services are likely to provide comprehensive mentoring, outreach, and supportive services to students, including the following activities: Information regarding financial aid for postsecondary education to participating students, encouraging student enrollment in rigorous and challenging curricula and coursework in order to reduce the need for remedial coursework at the postsecondary level, and improving the number of participating students who obtain a secondary school diploma and complete applications for and enroll in a program of postsecondary education; and

(ii) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project involve the collaboration of appropriate partners for maximizing the effectiveness of project services.

d. *Quality of project personnel (10 points).*

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age or disability.

(3) In addition, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director or principal investigator; and

(ii) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key personnel.

e. *Quality of the management plan (10 points).*

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks;

(ii) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project;

(iii) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project; and

(iv) How the applicant will ensure that a diversity of perspectives are brought to bear in the operation of the proposed project, including those of parents, teachers, the business community, a variety of disciplinary and professional fields, recipients or beneficiaries of services, or others, as appropriate.

f. *Quality of the project evaluation (20 points).*

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of the project evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project;

(ii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible;

(iii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes;

(iv) The extent to which the evaluation will provide guidance about effective strategies suitable for replication or testing in other settings; and

(v) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well-implemented, produce promising evidence (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)) about the project's effectiveness.

g. *Adequacy of resources (15 points).*

(1) The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project.

(2) In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies and other resources from the applicant organization or the lead applicant organization;

(ii) The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project;

(iii) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the number of persons to be served and to the anticipated results and benefits; and

(iv) The potential for continued support of the project after Federal funding ends, including, as appropriate, the demonstrated commitment of appropriate entities to such support.

2. *Review and Selection Process:* We remind potential applicants that in reviewing applications in any discretionary grant competition, the Secretary may consider, under 34 CFR 75.217(d)(3), the past performance of the applicant in carrying out a previous award, such as the applicant's use of funds, achievement of project objectives, and compliance with grant conditions. The Secretary may also consider whether the applicant failed to submit a timely performance report or submitted a report of unacceptable quality.

In addition, in making a competitive grant award, the Secretary requires various assurances including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department of Education (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23) as well as all applicable requirements of all other Federal laws, executive orders, regulations, and policies governing this program.

For this competition, a panel of non-Federal reviewers will review each application in accordance with the selection criteria in 34 CFR 75.217(d)(3), as required by 20 U.S.C. 1070–a23(d). The individual scores of the reviewers will be added and the sum divided by the number of reviewers to determine the peer review score received in the review process.

If there are insufficient funds for all applications with the same total scores, to the extent practicable the Secretary will consider the distribution of grant awards based on the geographic distribution of such grant awards and the distribution between urban and rural applicants for the GEAR UP program consistent with 20 U.S.C. 1070a–22(a)(3).

3. *Risk Assessment and Special Conditions:* Consistent with 2 CFR 200.205, before awarding grants under this competition the Department conducts a review of the risks posed by applicants. Under 2 CFR 3474.10, the Secretary may impose special conditions and, in appropriate circumstances, high-risk conditions on a grant if the applicant or grantee is not

financially stable; has a history of unsatisfactory performance; has a financial or other management system that does not meet the standards in 2 CFR part 200, subpart D; has not fulfilled the conditions of a prior grant; or is otherwise not responsible.

4. *Integrity and Performance System:* If you are selected under this competition to receive an award that over the course of the project period may exceed the simplified acquisition threshold (currently $150,000), under 2 CFR 200.205(a)(2) we must make a judgment about your integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards—that is, the risk posed by you as an applicant—before we make an award. In doing so, we must consider any information about you that is in the integrity and performance system (currently referred to as the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)), accessible through the System for Award Management. You may review and comment on any information about yourself that a Federal agency previously entered and that is currently in FAPIIS.

Please note that, if the total value of your currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from the Federal Government exceeds $10,000,000, the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 200, Appendix XII, require you to report certain integrity information to FAPIIS semiannually. Please review the requirements in 2 CFR part 200, Appendix XII, if this grant plus all the other Federal funds you receive exceed $10,000,000.

VI. Award Administration Information

1. *Award Notices:* If your application is successful, we notify your U.S. Representative and U.S. Senators and send you a Grant Award Notification (GAN), or we may send you an email containing a link to access an electronic version of your GAN. We may notify you informally, also.

If your application is not evaluated or not selected for funding, we will notify you.

2. *Administrative and National Policy Requirements:* We identify administrative and national policy requirements in the application package and reference these and other requirements in the *Applicable Regulations* section of this notice.

We reference the regulations outlining the terms and conditions of an award in the *Applicable Regulations* section of this notice and include these and other specific conditions in the GAN. The GAN also incorporates your approved application as part of your binding commitments under the grant.

3. *Open Licensing Requirements:* Unless an exception applies, if you are awarded a grant under this competition, you will be required to openly license to the public grant deliverables created in whole, or in part, with Department grant funds. When the deliverable consists of modifications to pre-existing works, the license extends only to those modifications that can be separately identified and only to the extent that open licensing is permitted under the terms of any licenses or other legal restrictions on the use of pre-existing works. For additional information on the open licensing requirements please refer to 2 CFR 3474.20(c).

4. *Reporting:* (a) If you apply for a grant under this competition, you must ensure that you have in place the necessary processes and systems to comply with the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 170 should you receive funding under the competition. This does not apply if you have an exception under 2 CFR 170.110(b).

(b) At the end of your project period, you must submit a final performance report, including financial information, as directed by the Secretary. If you receive a multiyear award, you must submit an annual performance report that provides the most current performance and financial expenditure information as directed by the Secretary under 34 CFR 75.118. The Secretary may also require more frequent performance reports under 34 CFR 75.720(c). For specific requirements on reporting, please go to *www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html.*

(c) Under 34 CFR 75.250(b), the Secretary may provide a grantee with additional funding for data collection analysis and reporting. In this case the Secretary establishes a data collection period.

5. *Performance Measures:* The objectives of the GEAR UP program are (1) to increase the academic performance and preparation for postsecondary education of participating students; (2) to increase the rate of high school graduation and participation in postsecondary education of participating students; and (3) to increase educational expectations for participating students and increase student and family knowledge of postsecondary education options, preparation, and financing.

The effectiveness of this program depends on the rate at which program participants complete high school and enroll in and complete a postsecondary education. Under the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA), we developed the following performance measures to track progress toward achieving the program's goals:

1. The percentage of GEAR UP students who pass Pre-Algebra by the end of 8th grade.

2. The percentage of GEAR UP students who pass Algebra 1 by the end of 9th grade.

3. The percentage of GEAR UP students who take two years of mathematics beyond Algebra 1 by 12th grade.

4. The percentage of GEAR UP students who are on track for graduation at the end of each grade.

5. The percentage of GEAR UP students who are on track to apply for college as measured by completion of the SAT or ACT by the end of 11th grade.

6. The percentage of GEAR UP students who graduate from high school.

7. The percentage of GEAR UP students who complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

8. The percentage of GEAR UP students and former GEAR UP students who are enrolled at an IHE.

9. The percentage of GEAR UP students who place into college-level math and English without need for remediation.

10. The percentage of current GEAR UP students and former GEAR UP students who are on track to graduate from an IHE one year after enrolling in an IHE.

In addition, to assess the efficiency of the program, we track the average cost, in Federal funds, of achieving a successful outcome, where success is defined as enrollment in a program of undergraduate instruction at an IHE of GEAR UP students immediately after high school graduation. These performance measures constitute GEAR UP's indicators of the success of the program. Accordingly, we request that applicants include these performance measures in conceptualizing the design, implementation, and evaluation of their proposed projects.

6. *Continuation Awards:* In making a continuation award under 34 CFR 75.253, the Secretary considers, among other things: Whether a grantee has made substantial progress in achieving the goals and objectives of the project; whether the grantee has expended funds in a manner that is consistent with its approved application and budget; and, if the Secretary has established performance measurement requirements, the performance targets in the grantee's approved application.

In making a continuation grant, the Secretary also considers whether the grantee is operating in compliance with the assurances in its approved application, including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23) as well as all applicable requirements, and policies governing this program.

VII. Other Information

Accessible Format: Individuals with disabilities can obtain this document and a copy of the application package in an accessible format (*e.g.,* braille, large print, audiotape, or compact disc) on request to one of the program contact persons listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

Electronic Access to This Document: The official version of this document is the document published in the **Federal Register**. You may access the official edition of the **Federal Register** and the Code of Federal Regulations via the Federal Digital System at: *www.gpo.gov/fdsys.* At this site you can view this document, as well as all other documents of this Department published in the **Federal Register**, in text or Portable Document Format (PDF). To use PDF you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at the site. You may also access documents of the Department published in the **Federal Register** by using the article search feature at *www.federalregister.gov.* Specifically, through the advanced search feature at this site, you can limit your search to documents published by the Department.

Dated: June 4, 2018.

Frank T. Brogan,

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary and Delegated the duties of the Assistant Secretary, Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development, Delegated the duties of the Assistant Secretary, Office of Postsecondary Education.

[FR Doc. 2018–12291 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

[OE Docket No. EA–196–E]

Application To Export Electric Energy; ALLETE, Inc., d/b/a Minnesota Power

AGENCY: Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability, DOE.

ACTION: Notice of Application.

SUMMARY: ALLETE, Inc., d/b/a Minnesota Power (Applicant or Minnesota Power) has applied to renew its authority to transmit electric energy from the United States to Canada pursuant to the Federal Power Act.

DATES: Comments, protests, or motions to intervene must be submitted on or before July 9, 2018.

ADDRESSES: Comments, protests, motions to intervene, or requests for more information should be addressed to: Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability, Mail Code: OE–20, U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20585–0350. Because of delays in handling conventional mail, it is recommended that documents be transmitted by overnight mail, by electronic mail to *Electricity.Exports@hq.doe.gov,* or by facsimile to 202–586–8008.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Exports of electricity from the United States to a foreign country are regulated by the Department of Energy (DOE) pursuant to sections 301(b) and 402(f) of the Department of Energy Organization Act (42 U.S.C. 7151(b), 7172(f)) and require authorization under section 202(e) of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 824a(e)).

On June 10, 2013, DOE issued Order No. EA–196–D to Minnesota Power, which authorized the Applicant to transmit electric energy from the United States to Canada as a power marketer for a five-year term using existing international transmission facilities. That authority expires on June 4, 2018. On April 23, 2018, Minnesota Power filed an application with DOE for renewal of the export authority contained in Order No. EA–196 for an additional five-year term.

In its application, Minnesota Power states that it owns electric generation and transmission facilities and sells and distributes electricity within its northern Minnesota service territory. The electric energy that Minnesota Power proposes to export to Canada would be surplus energy purchased from third parties such as electric utilities and Federal power marketing agencies pursuant to voluntary agreements. The existing international transmission facilities to be utilized by Shell Energy have previously been authorized by Presidential Permits issued pursuant to Executive Order 10485, as amended, and are appropriate for open access transmission by third parties.

Procedural Matters: Any person desiring to be heard in this proceeding should file a comment or protest to the application at the address provided above. Protests should be filed in accordance with Rule 211 of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's (FERC) Rules of Practice and Procedures (18 CFR 385.211). Any person desiring to become a party to these proceedings should file a motion to intervene at the above address in accordance with FERC Rule 214 (18 CFR 385.214). Five copies of such comments, protests, or motions to intervene should be sent to the address provided above on or before the date listed above.

Comments and other filings concerning Minnesota Power's application to export electric energy to Canada should be clearly marked with OE Docket No. EA–196–E. An additional copy is to be provided directly to Christopher D. Anderson, ALLETE, Inc., 30 West Superior Street, Duluth, MN 55802.

A final decision will be made on this application after the environmental impacts have been evaluated pursuant to DOE's National Environmental Policy Act Implementing Procedures (10 CFR part 1021) and after a determination is made by DOE that the proposed action will not have an adverse impact on the sufficiency of supply or reliability of the U.S. electric power supply system.

Copies of this application will be made available, upon request, for public inspection and copying at the address provided above, by accessing the program website at *http://energy.gov/node/11845,* or by emailing Angela Troy at *Angela.Troy@hq.doe.gov.*

Issued in Washington, DC, on May 31, 2018.

Brian Mills,

Electricity Policy Analyst, Office of Electricity.

[FR Doc. 2018–12264 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6450–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Certification Notice—253; Notice of Filing of Self-Certification of Coal Capability Under the Powerplant and Industrial Fuel Use Act

AGENCY: Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability, DOE.

ACTION: Notice of Filing.

SUMMARY: On May 17, 2018, Clean Energy Future—Lordstown, LLC, as owner and operator of a new baseload electric generating powerplant, submitted a coal capability self-certification to the Department of Energy (DOE). The FUA and regulations thereunder require DOE to publish a notice of filing of self-certification in the **Federal Register**.

ADDRESSES: Copies of coal capability self-certification filings are available for

public inspection, upon request, in the Office of Electricity, Mail Code OE–20, Room 8G–024, Forrestal Building, 1000 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20585.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Christopher Lawrence at (202) 586–5260.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On May 17, 2018, Clean Energy Future—Lordstown, LLC, as owner and operator of a new baseload electric generating powerplant, submitted a coal capability self-certification to the Department of Energy (DOE) pursuant to § 201(d) of the Powerplant and Industrial Fuel Use Act of 1978 (FUA), as amended, and DOE regulations in 10 CFR 501.60, 61. The FUA and regulations thereunder require DOE to publish a notice of filing of self-certification in the **Federal Register**. 42 U.S.C. 8311(d)(1) and 10 CFR 501.61(c). Title II of FUA, as amended (42 U.S.C. 8301 *et seq.*), provides that no new baseload powerplant may be constructed or operated without the capability to use coal or another alternate fuel as a primary energy source. Pursuant to the FUA, in order to meet the requirement of coal capability, the owner or operator of such a facility proposing to use natural gas or petroleum as its primary energy source shall certify to the Secretary of Energy (Secretary), prior to construction or prior to operation as a baseload powerplant, that such powerplant has the capability to use coal or another alternate fuel. Such certification establishes compliance with FUA section 201(a) as of the date it is filed with the Secretary. 42 U.S.C. 8311.

The following owner of a proposed new baseload electric generating powerplant has filed a self-certification of coal-capability with DOE pursuant to FUA section 201(d) and in accordance with DOE regulations in 10 CFR 501.60, 61:

Owner: Clean Energy Future—Lordstown, LLC.

Capacity: 962 megawatts (MW).

Plant Location: Lordstown, OH 44481.

In-Service Date: June 1, 2018.

Issued in Washington, DC, on May 31, 2018.

Brian Mills,

Electricity Policy Analyst, Office of Electricity.

[FR Doc. 2018–12263 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6450–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Notice of Intent To Grant an Exclusive Copyright License

AGENCY: National Energy Technology Laboratory, Department of Energy.

ACTION: Notice of intent to grant an exclusive copyright license.

SUMMARY: The National Energy Technology Laboratory (NETL) hereby gives notice that the Department of Energy (DOE) intends to grant an exclusive license to practice the copyrighted software titled ''The Variable Grid Tool V.1,'' to VariGrid Explorations, Inc., having its principal place of business in Missouri City, Texas. The copyright is owned by the United States of America, as represented by DOE, via copyright assignment.

DATES: Written comments, objections, or nonexclusive license applications must be received at the **ADDRESSES** listed no later than June 22, 2018. Objections submitted in response to this notice will not be made available to the public for inspection and, to the extent permitted by law, will not be released under the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552.

ADDRESSES: Comments, applications for nonexclusive licenses, or objections relating to the prospective exclusive license should be submitted to Jessica Lamp, Technology Transfer Program Manager, U.S. Department of Energy, National Energy Technology Laboratory, P.O. Box 10940, Pittsburgh, PA 15236–0940 or via facsimile to (412) 386–4183.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jessica Lamp, Technology Transfer Program Manager, U.S. Department of Energy, National Energy Technology Laboratory, P.O. Box 10940, Pittsburgh, PA 15236; Telephone (412) 386–7417; Email: *jessica.lamp@netl.doe.gov.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: VariGrid Explorations, Inc., has applied for an exclusive license to practice the copyrighted software and has a plan for commercialization of the software. DOE intends to grant the license, unless within 15 days of publication of this notice, NETL's Technology Transfer Program Manager (contact information listed) receives in writing any of the following, together with supporting documents:

(i) A statement from any person setting forth reasons why it would not be in the best interest of the United States to grant the proposed license; or

(ii) An application for a nonexclusive license to the copyrighted software, in which applicant states that it already has brought the software to practical application or is likely to bring the software to practical application expeditiously.

The proposed license would be exclusive, subject to a license and other rights retained by the United States. DOE will review all timely written responses to this notice, and will grant the license if, after expiration of the 15-day notice period, and after consideration of any written responses to this notice, a determination is made that the license is in the public interest.

Dated: May 18, 2018.

Sean I. Plasynski,

Director (Acting), National Energy Technology Laboratory.

[FR Doc. 2018–12262 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6450–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. ER18–1709–000]

Stoneray Power Partners, LLC; Supplemental Notice That Initial Market-Based Rate Filing Includes Request for Blanket Section 204 Authorization

This is a supplemental notice in the above-referenced proceeding of Stoneray Power Partners, LLC's application for market-based rate authority, with an accompanying rate tariff, noting that such application includes a request for blanket authorization, under 18 CFR part 34, of future issuances of securities and assumptions of liability.

Any person desiring to intervene or to protest should file with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street NE, Washington, DC 20426, in accordance with Rules 211 and 214 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure (18 CFR 385.211 and 385.214). Anyone filing a motion to intervene or protest must serve a copy of that document on the Applicant.

Notice is hereby given that the deadline for filing protests with regard to the applicant's request for blanket authorization, under 18 CFR part 34, of future issuances of securities and assumptions of liability, is June 21, 2018.

The Commission encourages electronic submission of protests and interventions in lieu of paper, using the FERC Online links at *http://www.ferc.gov.* To facilitate electronic service, persons with internet access who will eFile a document and/or be listed as a contact for an intervenor must create and validate an

eRegistration account using the eRegistration link. Select the eFiling link to log on and submit the intervention or protests.

Persons unable to file electronically should submit an original and 5 copies of the intervention or protest to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street NE, Washington, DC 20426.

The filings in the above-referenced proceeding are accessible in the Commission's eLibrary system by clicking on the appropriate link in the above list. They are also available for electronic review in the Commission's Public Reference Room in Washington, DC. There is an eSubscription link on the website that enables subscribers to receive email notification when a document is added to a subscribed docket(s). For assistance with any FERC Online service, please email *FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov.* or call (866) 208–3676 (toll free). For TTY, call (202) 502–8659.

Dated: June 1, 2018.

Nathaniel J. Davis, Sr.,

Deputy Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2018–12244 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6717–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. ER18–1708–000]

Copenhagen Wind Farm, LLC; Supplemental Notice That Initial Market-Based Rate Filing Includes Request for Blanket Section 204 Authorization

This is a supplemental notice in the above-referenced proceeding of Copenhagen Wind Farm, LLC's application for market-based rate authority, with an accompanying rate tariff, noting that such application includes a request for blanket authorization, under 18 CFR part 34, of future issuances of securities and assumptions of liability.

Any person desiring to intervene or to protest should file with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street NE, Washington, DC 20426, in accordance with Rules 211 and 214 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure (18 CFR 385.211 and 385.214). Anyone filing a motion to intervene or protest must serve a copy of that document on the Applicant.

Notice is hereby given that the deadline for filing protests with regard to the applicant's request for blanket authorization, under 18 CFR part 34, of future issuances of securities and assumptions of liability, is June 21, 2018.

The Commission encourages electronic submission of protests and interventions in lieu of paper, using the FERC Online links at *http://www.ferc.gov.* To facilitate electronic service, persons with internet access who will eFile a document and/or be listed as a contact for an intervenor must create and validate an eRegistration account using the eRegistration link. Select the eFiling link to log on and submit the intervention or protests.

Persons unable to file electronically should submit an original and 5 copies of the intervention or protest to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street NE, Washington, DC 20426.

The filings in the above-referenced proceeding are accessible in the Commission's eLibrary system by clicking on the appropriate link in the above list. They are also available for electronic review in the Commission's Public Reference Room in Washington, DC. There is an eSubscription link on the website that enables subscribers to receive email notification when a document is added to a subscribed docket(s). For assistance with any FERC Online service, please email *FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov.* or call (866) 208–3676 (toll free). For TTY, call (202) 502–8659.

Dated: June 1, 2018.

Nathaniel J. Davis, Sr.,

Deputy Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2018–12243 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6717–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. ER18–1534–000]

East Hampton Energy Storage Center, LLC; Supplemental Notice That Initial Market-Based Rate Filing Includes Request for Blanket Section 204 Authorization

This is a supplemental notice in the above-referenced proceeding of East Hampton Energy Storage Center, LLC's application for market-based rate authority, with an accompanying rate tariff, noting that such application includes a request for blanket authorization, under 18 CFR part 34, of future issuances of securities and assumptions of liability.

Any person desiring to intervene or to protest should file with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street NE, Washington, DC 20426, in accordance with Rules 211 and 214 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure (18 CFR 385.211 and 385.214). Anyone filing a motion to intervene or protest must serve a copy of that document on the Applicant.

Notice is hereby given that the deadline for filing protests with regard to the applicant's request for blanket authorization, under 18 CFR part 34, of future issuances of securities and assumptions of liability, is June 21, 2018.

The Commission encourages electronic submission of protests and interventions in lieu of paper, using the FERC Online links at *http://www.ferc.gov.* To facilitate electronic service, persons with internet access who will eFile a document and/or be listed as a contact for an intervenor must create and validate an eRegistration account using the eRegistration link. Select the eFiling link to log on and submit the intervention or protests.

Persons unable to file electronically should submit an original and 5 copies of the intervention or protest to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street NE, Washington, DC 20426.

The filings in the above-referenced proceeding are accessible in the Commission's eLibrary system by clicking on the appropriate link in the above list. They are also available for electronic review in the Commission's Public Reference Room in Washington, DC. There is an eSubscription link on the website that enables subscribers to receive email notification when a document is added to a subscribed docket(s). For assistance with any FERC Online service, please email *FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov.* or call (866) 208–3676 (toll free). For TTY, call (202) 502–8659.

Dated: June 1, 2018.

Nathaniel J. Davis, Sr.,

Deputy Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2018–12241 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6717–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

Combined Notice of Filings #1

Take notice that the Commission received the following electric rate filings:

Docket Numbers: ER18–137–003.
Applicants: PJM Interconnection, L.L.C.
Description: Tariff Amendment: Amendment to ER18–137 re:MISO–PJM JOA and Overlapping Congestion Charges to be effective 8/1/2018.
Filed Date: 5/31/18.
Accession Number: 20180531–5371.
Comments Due: 5 p.m. ET 6/21/18.
Docket Numbers: ER18–1711–000.
Applicants: Indiana Michigan Power Company, PJM Interconnection, L.L.C.
Description: § 205(d) Rate Filing: AEP submits ILDSA, Service Agreement No. 1262 and Meridan Facilities Agreement to be effective 5/1/2018.
Filed Date: 5/31/18.
Accession Number: 20180531–5366.
Comments Due: 5 p.m. ET 6/21/18.
Docket Numbers: ER18–1712–000.
Applicants: Pacific Gas and Electric Company.
Description: § 205(d) Rate Filing: May 2018 Western Interconnection Agreement Biannual Filing to be effective 8/1/2018.
Filed Date: 5/31/18.
Accession Number: 20180531–5379.
Comments Due: 5 p.m. ET 6/21/18.
Docket Numbers: ER18–1713–000.
Applicants: Pacific Gas and Electric Company.
Description: § 205(d) Rate Filing: May 2018 Western WDT Service Agreement Biannual Filing to be effective 8/1/2018.
Filed Date: 5/31/18.
Accession Number: 20180531–5384.
Comments Due: 5 p.m. ET 6/21/18.
Docket Numbers: ER18–1714–000.
Applicants: New England Power Pool Participants Committee.
Description: § 205(d) Rate Filing: June 2018 Membership Filing to be effective 5/1/2018.
Filed Date: 6/1/18.
Accession Number: 20180601–5002.
Comments Due: 5 p.m. ET 6/22/18.
Docket Numbers: ER18–1715–000.
Applicants: NorthWestern Corporation.
Description: § 205(d) Rate Filing: SA 296 4th Rev—Unexecuted NITSA with Exxon Mobil Corporation to be effective 8/1/2018.
Filed Date: 6/1/18.
Accession Number: 20180601–5003.
Comments Due: 5 p.m. ET 6/22/18.
Docket Numbers: ER18–1717–000.
Applicants: PJM Interconnection, L.L.C.
Description: § 205(d) Rate Filing: Original WMPA SA No. 5090; Queue No. AC1–209 to be effective 5/2/2018.
Filed Date: 6/1/18.
Accession Number: 20180601–5025.
Comments Due: 5 p.m. ET 6/22/18.
Docket Numbers: ER18–1718–000.
Applicants: The United Illuminating Company.
Description: Petition of The United Illuminating Company for Waiver of Tariff Provisions, et al.
Filed Date: 5/31/18.
Accession Number: 20180531–5406.
Comments Due: 5 p.m. ET 6/7/18.
Docket Numbers: ER18–1719–000.
Applicants: Central Maine Power Company.
Description: Petition of Central Maine Power Company for Waiver of Tariff Provisions, et al.
Filed Date: 5/31/18.
Accession Number: 20180531–5410.
Comments Due: 5 p.m. ET 6/7/18.
Docket Numbers: ER18–1720–000.
Applicants: Midcontinent Independent System Operator, Inc.
Description: Notification of Tariff Discrepancy and Request for Limited Tariff Waiver of Midcontinent Independent System Operator, Inc.
Filed Date: 5/31/18.
Accession Number: 20180531–5418.
Comments Due: 5 p.m. ET 6/21/18.
Docket Numbers: ER18–1721–000.
Applicants: Entergy Arkansas, Inc., Entergy Louisiana, LLC, Entergy New Orleans, LLC, Entergy Mississippi, Inc., Entergy Texas, Inc.
Description: Request for Temporary and Limited Waiver of Tariff Provisions of Entergy Arkansas, Inc., et al.
Filed Date: 5/31/18.
Accession Number: 20180531–5419.
Comments Due: 5 p.m. ET 6/21/18.
Docket Numbers: ER18–1722–000.
Applicants: Emera Maine, Central Maine Power Company, Maine Electric Power Company, New Hampshire Transmission, LLC, New England Power Company, The Connecticut Light and Power Company, NSTAR Electric Company, Public Service Company of New Hampshire, The United Illuminating Company, Unitil Energy Systems, Inc., Fitchburg Gas and Electric Light Company, Vermont Transco, LLC.
Description: Petition of the Indentified Participating Transmission Owners for Limited Waiver of Tariff Provisions, et al.
Filed Date: 5/31/18.
Accession Number: 20180531–5420.
Comments Due: 5 p.m. ET 6/7/18.
Docket Numbers: ER18–1723–000.
Applicants: New Hampshire Transmission, LLC.
Description: Petition of New Hampshire Transmission, LLC for Waiver of Tariff Provisions, et al.
Filed Date: 5/31/18.
Accession Number: 20180531–5425.
Comments Due: 5 p.m. ET 6/7/18.
Docket Numbers: ER18–1724–000.
Applicants: Midcontinent Independent System Operator, Inc.
Description: § 205(d) Rate Filing: 2018–06–01_SA 3116 ATC-Wisconsin Power and Light PCA (Hawk) to be effective 8/1/2018.
Filed Date: 6/1/18.
Accession Number: 20180601–5146.
Comments Due: 5 p.m. ET 6/22/18.
Docket Numbers: ER18–1725–000.
Applicants: Midcontinent Independent System Operator, Inc.
Description: § 205(d) Rate Filing: 2018–06–01_SA 3117 ATC-Wisconsin Power and Light PCA (Schofield) to be effective 8/1/2018.
Filed Date: 6/1/18.
Accession Number: 20180601–5148.
Comments Due: 5 p.m. ET 6/22/18.
Docket Numbers: ER18–1726–000.
Applicants: Mineral Point Energy LLC.
Description: Tariff Cancellation: Mineral Point Energy LLC Cancellation of MBR Tariff to be effective 6/1/2018.
Filed Date: 6/1/18.
Accession Number: 20180601–5152.
Comments Due: 5 p.m. ET 6/22/18.
Docket Numbers: ER18–1727–000.
Applicants: Niles Valley Energy LLC.
Description: Tariff Cancellation: Niles Valley Energy LLC Cancellation of MBR Tariff to be effective 6/1/2018.
Filed Date: 6/1/18.
Accession Number: 20180601–5153.
Comments Due: 5 p.m. ET 6/22/18.
Docket Numbers: ER18–1730–000.
Applicants: PJM Interconnection, L.L.C.
Description: § 205(d) Rate Filing: Revisions to the OATT and OA re: Overlapping Congestion Filing Phase II to be effective 8/1/2018.
Filed Date: 6/1/18.
Accession Number: 20180601–5216.
Comments Due: 5 p.m. ET 6/22/18.

The filings are accessible in the Commission's eLibrary system by clicking on the links or querying the docket number.

Any person desiring to intervene or protest in any of the above proceedings must file in accordance with Rules 211 and 214 of the Commission's Regulations (18 CFR 385.211 and 385.214) on or before 5:00 p.m. Eastern time on the specified comment date. Protests may be considered, but intervention is necessary to become a party to the proceeding.

eFiling is encouraged. More detailed information relating to filing requirements, interventions, protests, service, and qualifying facilities filings can be found at: *http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/efiling/filing-req.pdf*. For other information, call (866) 208–3676 (toll free). For TTY, call (202) 502–8659.

Dated: June 1, 2018.

Nathaniel J. Davis, Sr.,

Deputy Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2018–12240 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6717–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. ER18–1535–000]

Montauk Energy Storage Center, LLC; Supplemental Notice That Initial Market-Based Rate Filing Includes Request for Blanket Section 204 Authorization

This is a supplemental notice in the above-referenced proceeding of Montauk Energy Storage Center, LLC's application for market-based rate authority, with an accompanying rate tariff, noting that such application includes a request for blanket authorization, under 18 CFR part 34, of future issuances of securities and assumptions of liability.

Any person desiring to intervene or to protest should file with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street NE, Washington, DC 20426, in accordance with Rules 211 and 214 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure (18 CFR 385.211 and 385.214). Anyone filing a motion to intervene or protest must serve a copy of that document on the Applicant.

Notice is hereby given that the deadline for filing protests with regard to the applicant's request for blanket authorization, under 18 CFR part 34, of future issuances of securities and assumptions of liability, is June 21, 2018.

The Commission encourages electronic submission of protests and interventions in lieu of paper, using the FERC Online links at *http://www.ferc.gov.* To facilitate electronic service, persons with internet access who will eFile a document and/or be listed as a contact for an intervenor must create and validate an eRegistration account using the eRegistration link. Select the eFiling link to log on and submit the intervention or protests.

Persons unable to file electronically should submit an original and 5 copies of the intervention or protest to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street NE, Washington, DC 20426.

The filings in the above-referenced proceeding are accessible in the Commission's eLibrary system by clicking on the appropriate link in the above list. They are also available for electronic review in the Commission's Public Reference Room in Washington, DC. There is an eSubscription link on the website that enables subscribers to receive email notification when a document is added to a subscribed docket(s). For assistance with any FERC Online service, please email *FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov.* or call (866) 208–3676 (toll free). For TTY, call (202) 502–8659.

Dated: June 1, 2018.

Nathaniel J. Davis, Sr.,

Deputy Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2018–12242 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6717–01–P

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[FRL–9978–84—Region 9]

Public Water System Supervision Program Revision for the State of Nevada

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Notice of tentative approval.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the State of Nevada revised its approved Public Water System Supervision Program (PWSSP) under the federal Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) by adopting the Ground Water Rule, the Long Term 2 Enhanced Surface Water Treatment Rule, the Revised Total Coliform Rule, and the Stage 2 Disinfectants and Disinfection Byproducts Rule. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has determined that these revisions by the State of Nevada are no less stringent than the corresponding Federal regulations and otherwise meet applicable SDWA primacy requirements. Therefore, EPA intends to approve these revisions to the State of Nevada's PWSSP.

DATES: Request for a public hearing must be received on or before July 9, 2018.

ADDRESSES: All documents relating to this determination are available for inspection between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except official State holidays and official Federal holidays, at the following offices: Nevada Department of Environmental Protection, Admin Office, 901 South Stewart Street, Suite 4001, Carson City, NV 89701; and United States Environmental Protection Agency, Region 9, Drinking Water Management Section, 75 Hawthorne Street (WTR–3–1), San Francisco, California 94105. Documents relating to this determination are also available online at *https://ndep.nv.gov/posts/category/public-notices* for inspection.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jacob Jenzen, EPA Region 9, Drinking Water Management Section, at the address given above; telephone number: (415) 972–3570; email address: *Jenzen.Jacob@epa.gov.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

EPA approved the State of Nevada's original application for PWSSP primary enforcement authority which, following the public notice period, became effective on February 27, 1978 (43 FR 8030). EPA has approved various revisions to Nevada's primacy program since then.

Public Process

Any interested party may request a public hearing on this determination. A request for a public hearing must be submitted by July 9, 2018, to the Regional Administrator at the EPA Region 9 address shown above. Any request for a public hearing shall include the following information: 1. The name, address, and telephone number of the individual, organization, or other entity requesting a hearing; 2. A brief statement of the requesting person's interest in the Regional Administrator's determination and a brief statement of the information that the requesting person intends to submit at such hearing; and 3. The signature of the individual making the request, or, if the request is made on behalf of an organization or other entity, the signature of a responsible official of the organization or other entity. The Regional Administrator may deny frivolous or insubstantial requests for a hearing. If a valid request for a public hearing is made within the requested timeframe, a public hearing will be held and a notice of such hearing will be given in the **Federal Register** and a newspaper of general circulation.

If EPA Region 9 does not receive a timely and appropriate request for a hearing and the Regional Administrator does not elect to hold a hearing, this determination shall become final and effective on July 9, 2018, and no further public notice will be issued.

Authority: Section 1413 of the Safe Drinking Water Act, 42 U.S.C. 300g–2 (1996), and 40 CFR part 142 of the National Primary Drinking Water Regulations.

Dated: May 18, 2018.

Deborah Jordan,

Acting Regional Administrator, EPA, Region 9.

[FR Doc. 2018–12376 Filed 6–5–18; 4:15 pm]

BILLING CODE 6560–50–P

FARM CREDIT ADMINISTRATION

Sunshine Act Meeting; Farm Credit Administration Board

AGENCY: Farm Credit Administration.

ACTION: Notice, regular meeting.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given, pursuant to the Government in the Sunshine Act, of the regular meeting of the Farm Credit Administration Board (Board).

DATES: The regular meeting of the Board will be held at the offices of the Farm Credit Administration in McLean, Virginia, on June 14, 2018, from 9:00 a.m. until such time as the Board concludes its business.

ADDRESSES: Farm Credit Administration, 1501 Farm Credit Drive, McLean, Virginia 22102–5090. Submit attendance requests via email to *VisitorRequest@FCA.gov.* See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for further information about attendance requests.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dale L. Aultman, Secretary to the Farm Credit Administration Board, (703) 883–4009, TTY (703) 883–4056, *aultmand@fca.gov.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Parts of this meeting of the Board will be open to the public (limited space available) and parts will be closed to the public. Please send an email to *VisitorRequest@FCA.gov* at least 24 hours before the meeting. In your email include: Name, postal address, entity you are representing (if applicable), and telephone number. You will receive an email confirmation from us. Please be prepared to show a photo identification when you arrive. If you need assistance for accessibility reasons, or if you have any questions, contact Dale L. Aultman, Secretary to the Farm Credit Administration Board, at (703) 883–4009. The matters to be considered at the meeting are:

Open Session

A. *Approval of Minutes*

- May 10, 2018

B. *Reports*

- Quarterly Report on Economic Conditions and FCS Conditions
- Semi-Annual Report on Office of Examination Operations

Closed Session *

- Office of Examination Quarterly Report

Dated: June 5, 2018.

Dale L. Aultman,

Secretary, Farm Credit Administration Board.

[FR Doc. 2018–12352 Filed 6–5–18; 11:15 am]

BILLING CODE 6705–01–P

FEDERAL ACCOUNTING STANDARDS ADVISORY BOARD

Notice of Issuance of Statement of Federal Financial Accounting Standards 55, Amending Inter-Entity Cost Provisions

AGENCY: Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board.

ACTION: Notice.

Pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 3511(d), the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92–463), as amended, and the FASAB Rules Of Procedure, as amended in October 2010, notice is hereby given that the Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board (FASAB) has issued Statement of Federal Financial Accounting Standards 55, *Amending Inter-entity Cost Provisions.*

The Statement is available on the FASAB website at *http://www.fasab.gov/accounting-standards/.* Copies can be obtained by contacting FASAB at (202) 512–7350.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Wendy M. Payne, Executive Director, 441 G Street NW, Suite 1155, Washington, DC 20548, or call (202) 512–7350.

Authority: Federal Advisory Committee Act, Pub. L. 92–463.

Dated: May 31, 2018.

Wendy M. Payne,

Executive Director.

[FR Doc. 2018–12265 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 1610–02–P

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

[OMB 3060–1003]

Information Collection Being Submitted for Review and Approval to the Office of Management and Budget

AGENCY: Federal Communications Commission.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: As part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork burdens, and as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC or the Commission) invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on the following information collection. Comments are requested concerning: Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Commission, including whether the information shall have practical utility; the accuracy of the Commission's burden estimate; ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information collected; ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on the respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology; and ways to further reduce the information collection burden on small business concerns with fewer than 25 employees.

The Commission may not conduct or sponsor a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number. No person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information subject to the PRA that does not display a valid OMB control number.

DATES: Written comments should be submitted on or before July 9, 2018. If you anticipate that you will be submitting comments, but find it difficult to do so within the period of time allowed by this notice, you should advise the contacts listed below as soon as possible.

ADDRESSES: Direct all PRA comments to Nicholas A. Fraser, OMB, via email *Nicholas_A._Fraser@omb.eop.gov;* and to Nicole Ongele, FCC, via email *PRA@fcc.gov* and to *Nicole.Ongele@fcc.gov.* Include in the comments the OMB control number as shown in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** below.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For additional information or copies of the information collection, contact Nicole Ongele at (202) 418–2991. To view a copy of this information collection request (ICR) submitted to OMB: (1) Go to the web page <*http://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain*>, (2) look for the section of the web page called ''Currently Under Review,'' (3) click on the downward-pointing arrow in the ''Select Agency'' box below the ''Currently Under Review'' heading, (4) select ''Federal Communications Commission'' from the list of agencies presented in the ''Select Agency'' box,

*Session Closed-Exempt pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552b(c)(8) and (9).

(5) click the ''Submit'' button to the right of the ''Select Agency'' box, (6) when the list of FCC ICRs currently under review appears, look for the OMB control number of this ICR and then click on the ICR Reference Number. A copy of the FCC submission to OMB will be displayed.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: As part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork burdens, and as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501–3520), the Federal Communications Commission (FCC or the Commission) invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on the following information collection.

Comments are requested concerning: Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Commission, including whether the information shall have practical utility; the accuracy of the Commission's burden estimate; ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information collected; ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on the respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology; and ways to further reduce the information collection burden on small business concerns with fewer than 25 employees.

OMB Control Number: 3060–1003.

Title: Communications Disaster Information Reporting System (DIRS).

Form Number: N/A.

Type of Review: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Respondents: Business or other for-profit entities; Not-for-profit institutions; Federal Government; and/or State, Local or Tribal governments.

Number of Respondents and Responses: 5,000 respondents; 40,900 responses.

Estimated Time per Response: 0.10–0.50 hours.

Frequency of Response: On occasion reporting requirement.

Obligation to Respond: Voluntary. Statutory authority for this collection of information is contained in 47 U.S.C. 154(i), 218, 303(r) and 47 CFR Section 0.181(h).

Total Annual Burden: 6,950 hours.

Total Annual Cost: No Cost.

Privacy Act Impact Assessment: No impact(s).

Nature and Extent of Confidentiality: DIRS filings consists of sensitive information that for national security and/or commercial reasons, the Commission will treat the filings at the time of receipt as non-public and presumptively confidential. However, DIRS filings will be shared with the Department of Homeland Security and the other Federal agencies authorized to participate in the National Response Framework Emergency Support Function-2 (ESF–2)(Communications). The Commission may publish or otherwise share anonymized summaries of DIRS filings at its discretion.

Needs and Uses: In response to the events of September 11, 2001, the Federal Communications Commission (Commission or FCC) created an Emergency Contact Information System to assist the Commission in ensuring rapid restoration of communications capabilities after disruption by a terrorist threat or attack, and to ensure that public safety, public health, and other emergency and defense personnel have effective communications services available to them in the immediate aftermath of any terrorist attack within the United States. The Commission submitted, and OMB approved, a collection through which key communications providers could voluntarily provide contact information.

The Commission's Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau (PSHSB) developed the Disaster Information Reporting System (DIRS) that uses electronic forms to collect Emergency Contact Information forms and through which participants may inform the Commission of damage to communications infrastructure and facilities due to major emergencies and may request resources for restoration. The Commission updated the process by increasing the number of reporting entities to ensure inclusion of wireless, wireline, broadcast, cable, VoIP, and broadband internet access communications providers. The Commission is requesting a renewal of the currently approved collection. It is imperative that the Disaster Information Reporting System be in place so that the Commission has an accurate picture of the communications landscape during disasters.

Federal Communications Commission.

Marlene Dortch,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2018–12181 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6712–01–P

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

[OMB 3060–XXXX]

Information Collection Being Submitted for Review and Approval to the Office of Management and Budget

AGENCY: Federal Communications Commission.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: As part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork burdens, and as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC or the Commission) invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on the following information collection. Comments are requested concerning: Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Commission, including whether the information shall have practical utility; the accuracy of the Commission's burden estimate; ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information collected; ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on the respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology; and ways to further reduce the information collection burden on small business concerns with fewer than 25 employees.

The Commission may not conduct or sponsor a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number. No person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information subject to the PRA that does not display a valid OMB control number.

DATES: Written comments should be submitted on or before July 9, 2018. If you anticipate that you will be submitting comments, but find it difficult to do so within the period of time allowed by this notice, you should advise the contacts listed below as soon as possible.

ADDRESSES: Direct all PRA comments to Nicholas A. Fraser, OMB, via email *Nicholas_A._Fraser@omb.eop.gov;* and to Nicole Ongele, FCC, via email *PRA@fcc.gov* and to *Nicole.Ongele@fcc.gov.* Include in the comments the OMB control number as shown in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** below.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For additional information or copies of the information collection, contact Nicole

Ongele at (202) 418–2991. To view a copy of this information collection request (ICR) submitted to OMB: (1) Go to the web page *http://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain*, (2) look for the section of the web page called ''Currently Under Review,'' (3) click on the downward-pointing arrow in the ''Select Agency'' box below the ''Currently Under Review'' heading, (4) select ''Federal Communications Commission'' from the list of agencies presented in the ''Select Agency'' box, (5) click the ''Submit'' button to the right of the ''Select Agency'' box, (6) when the list of FCC ICRs currently under review appears, look for the OMB control number of this ICR and then click on the ICR Reference Number. A copy of the FCC submission to OMB will be displayed.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: As part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork burdens, and as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501–3520), the Federal Communications Commission (FCC or the Commission) invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on the following information collection.

Comments are requested concerning: Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Commission, including whether the information shall have practical utility; the accuracy of the Commission's burden estimate; ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information collected; ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on the respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology; and ways to further reduce the information collection burden on small business concerns with fewer than 25 employees.

OMB Control Number: 3060–XXXX.

Title: Application for Connect America Fund Phase II Auction Support—FCC Form 683.

Form Number: FCC Form 683.

Type of Review: New information collection.

Respondents: Business or other for-Profit entities, Not-for-Profit institutions, and State, Local or Tribal Governments.

Number of Respondents and Responses: 400 respondents; 800 responses.

Estimated Time per Response: 2–12 hours (on average).

Frequency of Response: Annual reporting requirements, on occasion reporting requirement.

Obligation to Respond: Required to obtain or retain benefits. Statutory authority for this information collection 47 U.S.C. 154, 254 and 303(r) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended.

Total Annual Burden: 5,600 hours.

Total Annual Cost(s): No Cost.

Nature and Extent of Confidentiality: Although most information collected in FCC Form 683 will be made available for public inspection, the Commission will withhold certain information collected in FCC Form 683 from routine public inspection. Specifically, the Commission will treat certain financial and technical information submitted in FCC Form 683 as confidential. In addition, an applicant may use the abbreviated process under 47 CFR 0.459(a)(4) to request confidential treatment of the audited financial statements that are submitted during the post-selection review process. However, if a request for public inspection for this technical or financial information is made under 47 CFR 0.461, and the applicant has any objections to disclosure, the applicant will be notified and will be required to justify continued confidential treatment. To the extent that an applicant seeks to have other information collected in FCC Form 683 or during the post-selection review process withheld from public inspection, the applicant may request confidential treatment pursuant to 47 CFR 0.459.

Privacy Act Impact Assessment: No impact(s).

Needs and Uses: In 2011, the Commission released the USF/ICC Transformation Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, WC Docket No. 10–90 et al., FCC 11–161 (USF/ICC Transformation Order and/or FNPRM), which comprehensively reformed and modernized the high-cost program within the universal service fund to focus support on networks capable of providing voice and broadband services. Among other things, the Commission created the Connect America Fund (CAF) and concluded that support in price cap areas would be provided through a combination of ''a new forward-looking model of the cost of constructing modern multi-purpose networks'' and a competitive bidding process (the Connect America Fund Phase II auction or Phase II auction or Auction 903). The Commission also sought comment in the accompanying USF/ICC Transformation FNPRM on proposed rules governing the Phase II auction, including basic auction design and the application process.

In the Phase II auction, service providers will compete to receive support of up to $1.98 billion over 10 years to offer voice and broadband service in unserved high-cost areas. The information collection requirements reported under this new collection are the result of several Commission decisions to implement reform adopted in the USF/ICC Transformation Order and move forward with conducting the Phase II auction. In the April 2014 Connect America Order, WC Docket No. 10–90 et al., FCC 14–54, the Commission adopted various rules regarding participation in the Phase II auction, the term of support, and the eligible telecommunications carrier (ETC) designation process. In the Phase II Auction Order, WC Docket No. 10–90 et al., FCC 16–64, the Commission adopted rules to govern the Phase II auction, including the adoption of a two-stage application process, which includes a pre-auction short-form application to be submitted by parties interested in bidding in the Phase II auction and a post-auction long-form application that must be submitted by winning bidders seeking to become authorized to receive Phase II auction support. The Commission concluded, based on its experience with auctions and consistent with the record, that this two-stage application process balances the need to collect information essential to conducting a successful auction and authorizing Phase II support with administrative efficiency.

On January 30, 2018, the Commission adopted a public notice that established the final procedures for the Phase II auction, including the long-form application disclosure and certification requirements for winning bidders seeking to become authorized to receive Phase II auction support. See Phase II Auction Procedures Public Notice, WC Docket No. 17–182 et al., FCC 18–6. The Commission also adopted the Phase II Auction Order on Reconsideration, WC Docket No. 10–90 et al., FCC 18–5, which modified the Commission's letter of credit rules to provide some additional relief for Phase II auction support recipients by reducing the costs of maintaining a letter of credit.

Under this information collection, the Commission will collect information from winning bidders to determine the recipients of Phase II auction support. To aid in collecting this information, the Commission has created FCC Form 683, which the public will use to provide the disclosures and certifications that must be made by Phase II auction winning bidders in the Connect America Fund Phase II auction seeking to become authorized for Phase II support.

Federal Communications Commission.

Marlene Dortch,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2018–12280 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6712–01–P

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

[OMB 3060–0463]

Information Collection Being Submitted for Review and Approval to the Office of Management and Budget

AGENCY: Federal Communications Commission.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: As part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork burdens, and as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC or the Commission) invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on the following information collection. Comments are requested concerning: Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Commission, including whether the information shall have practical utility; the accuracy of the Commission's burden estimate; ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information collected; ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on the respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology; and ways to further reduce the information collection burden on small business concerns with fewer than 25 employees.

The Commission may not conduct or sponsor a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number. No person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information subject to the PRA that does not display a valid OMB control number.

DATES: Written comments should be submitted on or before July 9, 2018. If you anticipate that you will be submitting comments, but find it difficult to do so within the period of time allowed by this notice, you should advise the contacts listed below as soon as possible.

ADDRESSES: Direct all PRA comments to Nicholas A. Fraser, OMB, via email *Nicholas_A._Fraser@omb.eop.gov;* and to Cathy Williams, FCC, via email *PRA@fcc.gov* and to *Cathy.Williams@fcc.gov.* Include in the comments the OMB control number as shown in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** below.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For additional information or copies of the information collection, contact Cathy Williams at (202) 418–2918. To view a copy of this information collection request (ICR) submitted to OMB: (1) Go to the web page *http://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain*, (2) look for the section of the web page called ''Currently Under Review,'' (3) click on the downward-pointing arrow in the ''Select Agency'' box below the ''Currently Under Review'' heading, (4) select ''Federal Communications Commission'' from the list of agencies presented in the ''Select Agency'' box, (5) click the ''Submit'' button to the right of the ''Select Agency'' box, (6) when the list of FCC ICRs currently under review appears, look for the OMB control number of this ICR and then click on the ICR Reference Number. A copy of the FCC submission to OMB will be displayed.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: As part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork burdens, and as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501–3520), the Federal Communications Commission (FCC or the Commission) invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on the following information collection. Comments are requested concerning: Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Commission, including whether the information shall have practical utility; the accuracy of the Commission's burden estimate; ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information collected; ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on the respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology; and ways to further reduce the information collection burden on small business concerns with fewer than 25 employees.

OMB Control Number: 3060–0463.

Title: Telecommunications Relay Services and Speech-to-Speech Services for Individuals with Hearing and Speech Disabilities, CG Docket No. 03–123, FCC 03–112, FCC 07–110, FCC 07–186.

Form Number: N/A.

Type of Review: Revision of a currently approved collection.

Respondents: Business or other for-profit; Individuals or household; State, Local and Tribal Government.

Number of Respondents and Responses: 5,072 respondents; 7,299 responses.

Estimated Time per Response: 0.5 hours (30 minutes) to 50 hours.

Frequency of Response: Annually, monthly, on occasion, and one-time reporting requirements; Recordkeeping and Third-Party Disclosure requirements.

Obligation To Respond: Required to obtain or retain benefit. The statutory authority for the information collection requirements is found at section 225 of the Communications Act, 47 U.S.C. 225. The law was enacted on July 26, 1990, as Title IV of the ADA, Public Law 101–336, 104 Stat. 327, 366–69.

Total Annual Burden: 10,822 hours.

Total Annual Cost: $10,800.

Nature and Extent of Confidentiality: Confidentiality is an issue to the extent that individuals and households provide personally identifiable information, which is covered under the FCC's updated system of records notice (SORN), FCC/CGB–1, ''Informal Complaints, Inquiries, and Requests for Dispute Assistance.'' As required by the Privacy Act, 5 U.S.C. 552a, the Commission also published a SORN, FCC/CGB–1 ''Informal Complaints, Inquiries, and Requests for Dispute Assistance,'' in the **Federal Register** on August 15, 2014 (79 FR 48152) which became effective on September 24, 2014.

Privacy Impact Assessment: The FCC completed a Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) on June 28, 2007. It may be reviewed at *http://www.fcc.gov/omd/privacyact/Privacy-Impact-Assessment.html.* The Commission is in the process of updating the PIA to incorporate various revisions to it as a result of revisions to the SORN.

Needs and Uses: The Commission is submitting this modified information collection to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to transfer burden hours and costs associated with regulations under section 225 of the Communications Act (Act), which is currently approved under OMB control number 3060–1249, to this information collection. The Commission intends to discontinue information collection 3060–1249 once this information collection is approved.

On December 21, 2001, the Commission released the 2001 TRS Cost Recovery Order, document FCC 01–371, published at 67 FR 4203, January 29, 2002, in which the Commission:

(a) Directed the Interstate Telecommunications Relay Services (TRS) Fund (TRS Fund) administrator to

continue to use the average cost per minute compensation methodology for the traditional TRS compensation rate;

(b) required TRS providers to submit certain projected TRS-related cost and demand data to the TRS Fund administrator to be used to calculate the rate; and

(c) directed the TRS Fund administrator to expand its form for providers to itemize their actual and projected costs and demand data, to include specific sections to capture speech-to-speech (STS) and video relay service (VRS) costs and minutes of use.

In 2003, the Commission released the 2003 Second Improved TRS Order, published at 68 FR 50973, August 25, 2003, which among other things required that TRS providers offer certain local exchange carrier (LEC)-based improved services and features where technologically feasible, including a speed dialing requirement which may entail voluntary recordkeeping for TRS providers to maintain a list of telephone numbers. See also 47 CFR 64.604(a)(3)(vi)(B). In 2007, the Commission released the Section 225/255 VoIP Report and Order, published at 72 FR 43546, August 6, 2007, extending the disability access requirements that apply to telecommunications service providers and equipment manufacturers under 47 U.S.C. 225, 255 to interconnected voice over internet protocol (VoIP) service providers and equipment manufacturers. As a result, under rules implementing section 225 of the Act, interconnected VoIP service providers are required to publicize information about telecommunications relay services (TRS) and 711 abbreviated dialing access to TRS. See also 47 CFR 64.604(c)(3).

In 2007, the Commission also released the 2007 Cost Recovery Report and Order and Declaratory Ruling, published at 73 FR 3197, January 17, 2008, in which the Commission:

(a) Adopted a new cost recovery methodology for interstate traditional TRS and interstate STS based on the Multi-state Average Rate Structure (MARS) plan, under which interstate TRS compensation rates are determined by weighted average of the states' intrastate compensation rates, and which includes for STS additional compensation approved by the Commission for STS outreach;

(b) requires STS providers to file a report annually with the TRS Fund administrator and the Commission on their specific outreach efforts directly attributable to the additional compensation approved by the Commission for STS outreach.

(c) adopted a new cost recovery methodology for interstate captioned telephone service (CTS), as well as internet Protocol captioned telephone service (IP CTS), based on the MARS plan;

(d) adopted a cost recovery methodology for internet Protocol (IP) Relay based on price caps;

(e) adopted a cost recovery methodology for VRS that adopted tiered rates based on call volume;

(f) clarified the nature and extent that certain categories of costs are compensable from the Fund; and

(g) addressed certain issues concerning the management and oversight of the Fund, including prohibiting financial incentives offered to consumers to make relay calls.

Federal Communications Commission.

Marlene Dortch,

Secretary, Office of the Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2018–12180 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6712–01–P

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Open Commission Meeting, Thursday, June 7, 2018

May 31, 2018.

The Federal Communications Commission will hold an Open Meeting on the subjects listed below on Thursday, June 7, 2018. Please note the meeting is scheduled to commence at 11:30 a.m. in Room TW–C305, at 445 12th Street SW, Washington, DC. This is a change from the usual 10:30 a.m. Open Meeting start time.

Item No.	Bureau	Subject
1	WIRELESS TELE-COMMUNICATIONS, INTERNATIONAL AND OFFICE OF ENGINEERING & TECHNOLOGY.	Title: Use of Spectrum Bands Above 24 GHz For Mobile Radio Services (GN Docket No. 14–177); Amendment of Parts 1, 22, 24, 27, 74, 80, 90, 95, and 101 To Establish Uniform License Renewal, Discontinuance of Operation, and Geographic Partitioning and Spectrum Disaggregation Rules and Policies for Certain Wireless Radio Services (WT Docket No. 10–112). Summary: The Commission will consider a Third Report and Order, Memorandum Opinion and Order, and Third Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking that would continue efforts to make available millimeter wave spectrum, in bands at or above 24 GHz, for fifth-generation wireless, Internet of Things, and other advanced spectrum-based services. It would finalize rules for certain of these bands and seek comment on making additional spectrum available in the 26 GHz and 42 GHz bands for flexible terrestrial wireless use, sharing mechanisms in the Lower 37 GHz band, and earth station siting criteria for the 50 GHz band.
2	WIRELINE COMPETITION	Title: Accelerating Wireline Broadband Deployment by Removing Barriers to Infrastructure Investment (WC Docket No. 17–84). Summary: The Commission will consider a Second Report and Order that will revise the Commission's section 214(a) discontinuance processes, network change disclosure processes, and Part 68 customer notification process to remove barriers to infrastructure investment and promote broadband deployment.
3	WIRELINE COMPETITION	Title: Petition of NTCA—The Rural Broadband Association and the United States Telecom Association for Forbearance Pursuant to 47 U.S.C. § 160(c) from Application of Contribution Obligations on Broadband Internet Access Transmission Services (WC Docket No. 17–206). Summary: The Commission will consider an Order granting forbearance from applying Universal Service Fund contribution requirements to rural carriers' broadband Internet access transmission services.
4	INTERNATIONAL	Title: Audacy Corporation Application for Authority to Launch and Operate a Non-Geostationary Medium Earth Orbit Satellite System in the Fixed-and Inter-Satellite Services (IBFS File No. SAT–LOA–20161115–00117).

Item No.	Bureau	Subject
		Summary: The Commission will consider an Order and Authorization that recommends granting Audacy's request to construct, deploy, and operate a proposed non-geostationary satellite (NGSO) constellation to provide continuous, high-speed, low-latency relay services to other NGSO spacecraft operators through Audacy's proposed satellites and gateway earth stations.
5	INTERNATIONAL	Title: O3b Limited Request for Modification of U.S. Market Access for O3b Limited's Non-Geostationary Satellite Orbit System in the Fixed-Satellite Service and in the Mobile-Satellite Service (IBFS File Nos. SAT–MOD–20160624–00060, SAT–AMD–20161115–00116, SAT–AMD–20170301–00026, SAT–AMD–20171109–00154).
		Summary: The Commission will consider an Order and Declaratory Ruling that recommends granting a request to modify O3b's existing U.S. market access grant by adding new non-geostationary satellites and new frequency bands in order to provide broadband communication services in the United States.
6	WIRELINE COMPETITION	Title: Updating the Intercarrier Compensation Regime to Eliminate Access Arbitrage (WC Docket No. 18–155).
		Summary: The Commission will consider a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking that proposes measures to eliminate access arbitrage in the intercarrier compensation regime.
7	WIRELINE COMPETITION	Title: 8YY Access Charge Reform (WC Docket No. 18–156).
		Summary: The Commission will consider a Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking that proposes taking further steps in reforming intercarrier compensation by transitioning interstate and intrastate originating 8YY end office and tandem switching and transport charges to bill-and-keep and capping and limiting 8YY database query rates.
8	WIRELINE COMPETITION	Title: Text-Enabled Toll-Free Numbers (WC Docket No. 18–28); Toll Free Service Access Codes (CC Docket No. 95–155).
		Summary: The Commission will consider a Declaratory Ruling and Notice of Proposed Rulemaking that will clarify the Commission's rules regarding the authorization required to text-enable a toll-free number, and propose further safeguards to promote the innovative use of toll- free numbers while protecting the integrity of the toll-free numbering system.
9	CONSUMER & GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS.	Title: Protecting Consumers from Unauthorized Carrier Changes and Related Unauthorized Charges (CG Docket No. 17–169).
		Summary: The Commission will consider a Report and Order to protect consumers from slamming (the unauthorized change of a consumer's telephone provider) and cramming (the placement of unauthorized charges on a consumer's telephone bill), including rules to address sales call misrepresentations and abuses of the third-party verification procedures.
10	CONSUMER & GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS.	Title: Misuse of Internet Protocol (IP) Captioned Telephone Service (CG Docket No. 13–24); Telecommunications Relay Services and Speech-to-Speech Services for Individuals with Hearing and Speech Disabilities (CG Docket No. 03–123).
		Summary: The Commission will consider a Report and Order, Declaratory Ruling, Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, and Notice of Inquiry to adopt measures, and seek comment on others, to ensure that Internet Protocol Captioned Telephone Service (IP CTS) remains sustainable for people with hearing loss who need it.
11	MEDIA	Title: Leased Commercial Access (MB Docket No. 07–42); Modernization of Media Regulation Initiative (MB Docket No. 17–105).
		Summary: The Commission will consider a Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking that tentatively concludes that the Commission should vacate its 2008 Leased Access Order, and invites comment on ways to modernize the existing leased access rules.
12	ENFORCEMENT	Title: Enforcement Bureau Action.
		Summary: The Commission will consider an enforcement action.

* * * * *

The meeting site is fully accessible to people using wheelchairs or other mobility aids. Sign language interpreters, open captioning, and assistive listening devices will be provided on site. Other reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities are available upon request. In your request, include a description of the accommodation you will need and a way we can contact you if we need more information. Last minute requests will be accepted, but may be impossible to fill. Send an email to: *fcc504@fcc.gov* or call the Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau at 202–418–0530 (voice), 202–418–0432 (TTY).

Additional information concerning this meeting may be obtained from the Office of Media Relations, (202) 418–0500; TTY 1–888–835–5322. Audio/Video coverage of the meeting will be broadcast live with open captioning over the internet from the FCC Live web page at *www.fcc.gov/live.*

For a fee this meeting can be viewed live over George Mason University's Capitol Connection. The Capitol Connection also will carry the meeting live via the internet. To purchase these services, call (703) 993–3100 or go to *www.capitolconnection.gmu.edu.*

Federal Communications Commission.

Marlene Dortch,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2018–12184 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6712–01–P

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

[OMB 3060–XXXX]

Information Collection Being Reviewed by the Federal Communications Commission

AGENCY: Federal Communications Commission.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: As part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork burdens, and as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC or the Commission) invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on the following information collection. Comments are requested concerning: Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Commission, including whether the information shall have practical utility; the accuracy of the Commission's burden estimate; ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information collected; ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on the respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology; and ways to further reduce the information collection burden on small business concerns with fewer than 25 employees. The FCC may not conduct or sponsor a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid control number. No person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information subject to the PRA that does not display a valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number.

DATES: Written PRA comments should be submitted on or before August 6, 2018. If you anticipate that you will be submitting comments, but find it difficult to do so within the period of time allowed by this notice, you should advise the contact listed below as soon as possible.

ADDRESSES: Direct all PRA comments to Nicole Ongele, FCC, via email *PRA@fcc.gov* and to *Nicole.Ongele@fcc.gov.*

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For additional information about the information collection, contact Nicole Ongele at (202) 418–2991.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: As part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork burdens, and as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501–3520), the Federal Communications Commission (FCC or Commission) invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on the following information collections. Comments are requested concerning: Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Commission, including whether the information shall have practical utility; the accuracy of the Commission's burden estimate; ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information collected; ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on the respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology; and ways to further reduce the information collection burden on small business concerns with fewer than 25 employees.

OMB Control Number: 3060–XXXX.

Title: Alternative Dispute Resolution Form Requests, FCC Form 5628.

Form Number: FCC Form 5628.

Type of Review: New information collection.

Respondents: Individuals or Households.

Number of Respondents and Responses: 5 respondents and 5 responses.

Estimated Time per Response: 3 hours.

Frequency of Response: One-time reporting requirement.

Obligation to Respond: Voluntary. Statutory authority for these collections are contained in the *Administrative Dispute Resolution Act,* 5 U.S.C. 571 *et seq.; Civil Justice Reform,* Executive Order 12988; 29 CFR 1614.102(b)(2), 1614.105(f), 1614.108(b), and 1614.603.

Total Annual Burden: 18 hours.

Total Annual Cost: $3,750.

Privacy Act Impact Assessment: The FCC is drafting a Privacy Impact Assessment to cover the personally identifiable information (PIA) that will be collected, used, and stored.

Nature and Extent of Confidentiality: There is no need for confidentiality with this collection of information.

Needs and Uses: FCC employees who experience workplace conflict may explore dispute resolution alternatives by completing FCC Form 5628.

Federal Communications Commission.

Marlene Dortch,

Secretary, Office of the Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2018–12182 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6712–01–P

FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM

Formations of, Acquisitions by, and Mergers of Bank Holding Companies

The companies listed in this notice have applied to the Board for approval, pursuant to the Bank Holding Company Act of 1956 (12 U.S.C. 1841 *et seq.*) (BHC Act), Regulation Y (12 CFR part 225), and all other applicable statutes and regulations to become a bank holding company and/or to acquire the assets or the ownership of, control of, or the power to vote shares of a bank or bank holding company and all of the banks and nonbanking companies owned by the bank holding company, including the companies listed below.

The applications listed below, as well as other related filings required by the Board, are available for immediate inspection at the Federal Reserve Bank indicated. The applications will also be available for inspection at the offices of the Board of Governors. Interested persons may express their views in writing on the standards enumerated in the BHC Act (12 U.S.C. 1842(c)). If the proposal also involves the acquisition of a nonbanking company, the review also includes whether the acquisition of the nonbanking company complies with the standards in section 4 of the BHC Act (12 U.S.C. 1843). Unless otherwise noted, nonbanking activities will be conducted throughout the United States.

Unless otherwise noted, comments regarding each of these applications must be received at the Reserve Bank indicated or the offices of the Board of Governors not later than July 2, 2018.

A. Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis (David L. Hubbard, Senior Manager) P.O. Box 442, St. Louis, Missouri 63166–2034. Comments can also be sent electronically to *Comments.applications@stls.frb.org:*

1. *Stifel Financial Corp., St. Louis, Missouri;* to acquire 100 percent of the voting shares of Business Bancshares, Inc., St. Louis, Missouri, and thereby indirectly acquire The Business Bank, Clayton, Missouri.

Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, June 4, 2018.

Ann Misback,

Secretary of the Board.

[FR Doc. 2018–12302 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE P

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

[60Day–18–18AFX; Docket No. CDC–2018–0052]

Proposed Data Collection Submitted for Public Comment and Recommendations

AGENCY: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

ACTION: Notice with comment period.

SUMMARY: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), as part of its continuing effort to reduce public burden and maximize the utility of government information, invites the general public and other Federal agencies the opportunity to comment on a proposed and/or continuing information collection, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. This notice invites comment on a proposed information collection project titled Traumatic Brain Injury Disparities in Rural Areas (TBIDRA). This study will conduct a formative research to understand the challenges that rural healthcare providers face when diagnosing, treating, and managing traumatic brain injury (TBI) and develop a knowledge base to address gaps in services to improve clinical care and TBI outcomes in rural communities.

DATES: CDC must receive written comments on or before August 6, 2018.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments, identified by Docket No. CDC–2018–0052 by any of the following methods:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal: Regulations.gov*. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.
- *Mail:* Jeffrey M. Zirger, Information Collection Review Office, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1600 Clifton Road NE, MS–D74, Atlanta, Georgia 30329.

Instructions: All submissions received must include the agency name and Docket Number. CDC will post, without change, all relevant comments to *Regulations.gov*.

Please note: Submit all comments through the Federal eRulemaking portal (*regulations.gov*) or by U.S. mail to the address listed above.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: To request more information on the proposed project or to obtain a copy of the information collection plan and instruments, contact Jeffery M. Zirger, Information Collection Review Office, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1600 Clifton Road NE, MS–D74, Atlanta, Georgia 30329; phone: 404–639–7570; Email: *omb@cdc.gov*.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA) (44 U.S.C. 3501–3520), Federal agencies must obtain approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for each collection of information they conduct or sponsor. In addition, the PRA also requires Federal agencies to provide a 60-day notice in the **Federal Register** concerning each proposed collection of information, including each new proposed collection, each proposed extension of existing collection of information, and each reinstatement of previously approved information collection before submitting the collection to the OMB for approval. To comply with this requirement, we are publishing this notice of a proposed data collection as described below.

The OMB is particularly interested in comments that will help:

1. Evaluate whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility;

2. Evaluate the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;

3. Enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and

4. Minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, *e.g.,* permitting electronic submissions of responses.

5. Assess information collection costs.

Proposed Project

Traumatic Brain Injury Disparities in Rural Areas (TBIDRA)—New—National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (NCIPC), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Background and Brief Description

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) is a significant public health concern in the United States, research indicates that residents of rural areas have both higher incidence and higher mortality rates from TBI than do residents of urban areas, and that the prevalence of TBI-related disability in rural geographical areas is higher than in urban and suburban areas. The obstacles healthcare providers and patients face in rural areas are vastly different than those in urban areas. There is little published research specifically related to the challenges rural providers face in TBI diagnosis and treatment, and even less examination into effective ways to address gaps in service and improve TBI outcomes. The National Center for Injury Prevention and Control at the CDC, in a 2015 ''Report to Congress on TBI in the United States,'' determined that certain population groups, including residents of rural geographic areas, require special consideration when it comes to researching TBI.

This is a new Information Collection Request for 2 years to collect information on challenges that rural healthcare providers face in diagnosing, treating, and managing TBI of all severities and develop a knowledge base upon which we can begin to address gaps in services to improve clinical care and TBI outcomes in rural communities. The target population for the data collection effort includes physicians, nurse practitioners (NPs), and physician assistants (PAs) in selected specialties (general or family practice, emergency medicine, pediatrics) working in direct patient care in rural and urban areas. The focus of the study is rural healthcare providers; urban healthcare providers will be included in this study to allow for comparison in identifying the distinct challenges and opportunities for rural healthcare providers. This study has two data collection methods. A web survey to gather quantitative data on the unique challenges faced by rural clinicians, and focus groups to gain deeper insight into the context supporting and/or inhibiting access to comprehensive TBI evaluation and treatment, the study will collect qualitative data through focus groups with rural clinicians.

The proposed information collection is authorized by the Public Health Services Act (PHS Act) which provides the legislative means for states to advance public health across the lifespan and to reduce health disparities.

The total estimated annualized burden hours is 200. There are no costs to respondents other than their time.

ESTIMATED ANNUALIZED BURDEN HOURS

Type of respondent	Form name	Number of respondents	Number of responses per respondent	Average burden per response (in hours)	Total burden (in hours)
Health care providers (Primary Care Physician, Emergency Physician, Nurse Practitioner and Physician Assistant).	TBI Provider Survey	600	1	15/60	150
	Focus group screener	36	1	5/60	3
	Focus group questionnaire	31	1	5/60	3
	Focus group discussion guide	31	1	85/60	44
Total					200

Jeffrey M. Zirger,

Acting Chief, Information Collection Review Office, Office of Scientific Integrity, Office of the Associate Director for Science, Office of the Director, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

[FR Doc. 2018–12251 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4163–18–P

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Food and Drug Administration

[Docket No. FDA–2004–N–0451]

Food and Drug Administration Modernization Act of 1997: Modifications to the List of Recognized Standards, Recognition List Number: 049

AGENCY: Food and Drug Administration, HHS.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Food and Drug Administration (FDA or Agency) is announcing a publication containing modifications the Agency is making to the list of standards FDA recognizes for use in premarket reviews (FDA Recognized Consensus Standards). This publication, entitled ''Modifications to the List of Recognized Standards, Recognition List Number: 049'' (Recognition List Number: 049), will assist manufacturers who elect to declare conformity with consensus standards to meet certain requirements for medical devices.

DATES: These modifications to the list of recognized standards are applicable June 7, 2018.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments as follows:

Electronic Submissions

Submit electronic comments in the following way:

• *Federal eRulemaking Portal: https://www.regulations.gov.* Follow the instructions for submitting comments. Comments submitted electronically, including attachments, to *https://www.regulations.gov* will be posted to the docket unchanged. Because your comment will be made public, you are solely responsible for ensuring that your comment does not include any confidential information that you or a third party may not wish to be posted, such as medical information, your or anyone else's Social Security number, or confidential business information, such as a manufacturing process. Please note that if you include your name, contact information, or other information that identifies you in the body of your comments, that information will be posted on *https://www.regulations.gov.*

• If you want to submit a comment with confidential information that you do not wish to be made available to the public, submit the comment as a written/paper submission and in the manner detailed (see ''Written/Paper Submissions'' and ''Instructions'').

Written/Paper Submissions

Submit written/paper submissions as follows:

• *Mail/Hand delivery/Courier (for written/paper submissions):* Dockets Management Staff (HFA–305), Food and Drug Administration, 5630 Fishers Lane, Rm. 1061, Rockville, MD 20852.

• For written/paper comments submitted to the Dockets Management Staff, FDA will post your comment, as well as any attachments, except for information submitted, marked and identified, as confidential, if submitted as detailed in ''Instructions.''

Instructions: All submissions received must include the Docket No. FDA–2004–N–0451 for ''Food and Drug Administration Modernization Act of 1997: Modifications to the List of Recognized Standards, Recognition List Number: 049.'' Received comments will be placed in the docket and, except for those submitted as ''Confidential Submissions,'' publicly viewable at *https://www.regulations.gov* or at the Dockets Management Staff between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. FDA will consider any comments received in determining whether to amend the current listing of modifications to the list of recognized standards, Recognition List Number: 049.

• Confidential Submissions—To submit a comment with confidential information that you do not wish to be made publicly available, submit your comments only as a written/paper submission. You should submit two copies total. One copy will include the information you claim to be confidential with a heading or cover note that states ''THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION''. The Agency will review this copy, including the claimed confidential information, in its consideration of comments. The second copy, which will have the claimed confidential information redacted/blacked out, will be available for public viewing and posted on *https://www.regulations.gov.* Submit both copies to the Dockets Management Staff. If you do not wish your name and contact information to be made publicly available, you can provide this information on the cover sheet and not in the body of your comments and you must identify this information as ''confidential.'' Any information marked as ''confidential'' will not be disclosed except in accordance with 21 CFR 10.20 and other applicable disclosure law. For more information about FDA's posting of comments to public dockets, see 80 FR 56469, September 18, 2015, or access the information at: *https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2015-09-18/pdf/2015-23389.pdf.*

Docket: For access to the docket to read background documents or the electronic and written/paper comments received, go to *https://www.regulations.gov* and insert the docket number, found in brackets in the heading of this document, into the

''Search'' box and follow the prompts and/or go to the Dockets Management Staff, 5630 Fishers Lane, Rm. 1061, Rockville, MD 20852.

An electronic copy of Recognition List Number: 049 is available on the internet at *https://www.fda.gov/MedicalDevices/DeviceRegulationandGuidance/Standards/ucm123792.htm.*

See section IV for electronic access to the searchable database for the current list of FDA recognized consensus standards, including Recognition List Number: 049 modifications and other standards related information. Submit written requests for a single hard copy of the document entitled ''Modifications to the List of Recognized Standards, Recognition List Number: 049'' to Scott Colburn, Center for Devices and Radiological Health, Food and Drug Administration, 10903 New Hampshire Ave., Bldg. 66, Rm. 5514, Silver Spring, MD 20993. Send one self-addressed adhesive label to assist that office in processing your request, or fax your request to 301–847–8144.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Scott Colburn, Center for Devices and Radiological Health, Food and Drug Administration, 10903 New Hampshire Ave., Bldg. 66, Rm. 5514, Silver Spring, MD 20993, 301–796–6287, *CDRHStandardsStaff@fda.hhs.gov.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

Section 204 of the Food and Drug Administration Modernization Act of 1997 (FDAMA) (Pub. L. 105–115) amended section 514 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FD&C Act) (21 U.S.C. 360d). Amended section 514 allows FDA to recognize consensus standards developed by international and national organizations for use in satisfying portions of device premarket review submissions or other requirements.

In the **Federal Register** notice of February 25, 1998 (63 FR 9561), FDA announced the availability of a guidance entitled ''Recognition and Use of Consensus Standards.'' The notice described how FDA would implement its standard recognition program and provided the initial list of recognized standards. The guidance was updated in September 2007 and is available at *https://www.fda.gov/MedicalDevices/DeviceRegulationandGuidance/GuidanceDocuments/ucm077274.htm.*

Modifications to the initial list of recognized standards, as published in the **Federal Register**, can be accessed at *https://www.fda.gov/MedicalDevices/DeviceRegulationandGuidance/Standards/ucm123792.htm.*

These notices describe the addition, withdrawal, and revision of certain standards recognized by FDA. The Agency maintains hypertext markup language (HTML) and portable document format (PDF) versions of the list of FDA Recognized Consensus Standards. Additional information on the Agency's standards program is available at *https://www.fda.gov/MedicalDevices/DeviceRegulationandGuidance/Standards/default.htm.*

II. Modifications to the List of Recognized Standards, Recognition List Number: 049

FDA is announcing the addition, withdrawal, correction, and revision of certain consensus standards the Agency is recognizing for use in premarket submissions and other requirements for devices. FDA is incorporating these modifications to the list of FDA Recognized Consensus Standards in the Agency's searchable database. FDA is using the term ''Recognition List Number: 049'' to identify the current modifications.

In table 1, FDA describes the following modifications: (1) The withdrawal of standards and their replacement by others, if applicable; (2) the correction of errors made by FDA in listing previously recognized standards; and (3) the changes to the supplementary information sheets of recognized standards that describe revisions to the applicability of the standards.

In section III, FDA lists modifications the Agency is making that involve the initial addition of standards not previously recognized by FDA.

TABLE 1—MODIFICATIONS TO THE LIST OF RECOGNIZED STANDARDS

Old recognition No.	Replacement recognition No.	Title of standard [1]	Change
A. Anesthesiology			
1–86		ISO 8185 Third edition 2008–06–15 (Corrected version), Respiratory tract humidifiers for medical use—Particular requirements for respiratory humidification systems.	Withdrawn. See 1–138.
1–95		ISO 5366–3 Second edition 2001–08–15 Anaesthetic and Respiratory Equipment—Tracheostomy Tubes—Part 3: Paediatric Tracheostomy Tubes [Including TECHNICAL CORRIGENDUM 1 (2003)].	Withdrawn. See 1–117.
1–107		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 5356–1:2004 Anaesthetic and respiratory equipment—Conical connectors—Part 1: Cones and sockets.	Transferred. See 1–62.
1–109		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 5362:2006 Anaesthetic reservoir bags	Transferred. See 1–75.
1–121	1–129	ISO 5359 Fourth edition 2014–10–01 Anaesthetic and respiratory equipment—Low-pressure hose assemblies for use with medical gases [Including AMENDMENT 1 (2017)].	Withdrawn and replaced with newer version including amendment.
1–128	1–130	ISO 18082 First edition 2014–06–15 Anaesthetic and respiratory equipment—Dimensions of noninterchangeable screw-threaded (NIST) low-pressure connectors for medical gases [Including AMENDMENT 1 (2017)].	Withdrawn and replaced with newer version including amendment.
B. Biocompatibility			
2–118		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 10993–11:2006/(R)2010 Biological evaluation of medical devices—Part 11: Tests for systemic toxicity.	Transferred. See 2–176.
2–120		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 10993–6:2007/(R)2014 Biological evaluation of medical devices—Part 6: Tests for local effects after implantation.	Withdrawn.
2–153		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 10993–5:2009/(R)2014 Biological evaluation of medical devices—Part 5: Tests for in vitro cytotoxicity.	Transferred. See 2–245.

TABLE 1—MODIFICATIONS TO THE LIST OF RECOGNIZED STANDARDS—Continued

Old recognition No.	Replacement recognition No.	Title of standard [1]	Change
2–156		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 10993–1:2009/(R)2013 Biological evaluation of medical devices—Part 1: Evaluation and testing within a risk management process.	Transferred. See 2–220.
2–163		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 10993–9:2009/(R)2014 Biological evaluation of medical devices—Part 9: Framework for identification and quantification of potential degradation products.	Transferred. See 2–168.
2–165		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 10993–14:2001/(R) 2011 Biological evaluation of medical devices—Part 14: Identification and quantification of degradation products form ceramics.	Transferred. See 2–170.
2–171	2–249	ISO 10993–16 Third edition 2017–05 Biological evaluation of medical devices—Part 16: Toxicokinetic study design for degradation products and leachables.	Withdrawn and replaced with newer version.
2–172		ANSI/AAMI/TIR 10993–19:2006 Biological evaluation of medical devices—Part 19: Physicochemical, morphological, and topographical characterization of materials.	Transferred. See 2–167.
2–173		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 10993–10:2010/(R)2014 Biological evaluation of medical devices—Part 10: Tests for irritation and skin sensitization.	Transferred. See 2–174.
2–180		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 10993–16:2010/(R)2014 Biological evaluation of medical devices—Part 16: Toxicokinetic study design for degradation products and leachables from medical devices.	Withdrawn.
2–181		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 14155:2011 Clinical investigation of medical devices for human subjects—Good clinical practice [Including: Technical Corrigendum 1 (2011)].	Transferred. See 2–205.
2–190		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 10993–13:2010/(R)2014 Biological evaluation of medical devices—Part 13: Identification and quantification of degradation products from polymeric medical devices.	Transferred. See 2–169.
2–198		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 10993–12:2012 Biological evaluation of medical devices—Part 12: Sample preparation and reference materials.	Transferred. See 2–191.
2–207	2–250	ASTM F756–17 Standard Practice for Assessment of Hemolytic Properties of Materials.	Withdrawn and replaced with newer version.
2–221		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 10993–2:2006 (R2014) Biological evaluation of medical devices—Part 2: Animal welfare requirements.	Transferred. See 2–222.
2–226		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 10993–3:2014 Biological evaluation of medical devices—Part 3: Tests for genotoxicity, carcinogenicity, and reproductive toxicity.	Transferred. See 2–228.
2–229	2–251	USP 40–NF35:2017 <87> Biological Reactivity Test, In Vitro—Direct Contact Test.	Withdrawn and replaced with newer version.
2–230	2–252	USP 40–NF35:2017 <87> Biological Reactivity Test, In Vitro—Elution Test.	Withdrawn and replaced with newer version.
2–231	2–253	USP 40–NF35:2017 <88> Biological Reactivity Tests, In Vivo	Withdrawn and replaced with newer version.
2–232	2–254	USP 40–NF35:2017 <151> Pyrogen Test (USP Rabbit Test)	Withdrawn and replaced with newer version. Extent of Recognition.
2–234		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 10993–4:2002/(R) 2013 & A1:2006/(R)2013 Biological evaluation of medical devices—Part 4: Selection of tests for interaction with blood [Including AMENDMENT 1 (2006)].	Withdrawn.
2–236		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 10993–17:2002(R) 2012 Biological evaluation of medical devices—Part 17: Establishment of allowable limits for leachable substances.	Transferred. See 2–237.
2–239		ANSI/AAMI/ISO TIR 10993–20:2006 Biological Evaluation of Medical Devices—Part 20: Principles and methods for immunotoxicology testing of medical devices.	Transferred. See 2–240.
2–242		ANSI/AAMI/ISO TIR 37137:2014 Cardiovascular biological evaluation of medical devices—Guidance for absorbable implants.	Transferred. See 2–241.
		C. Cardiovascular	
3–80		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 81060–1:2007/(R)2013 Non-invasive sphygmomanometers—Part 1: Requirements and test methods for non-automated measurement type.	Transferred. See 3–96.
3–83		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 14708–5:2010 Implants for surgery—Active implantable medical devices—Part 5: Circulatory support devices.	Transferred. See 3–92.
3–101		ANSI/AAMI/IEC 60601–2–27:2011 Medical electrical equipment—Part 2–27: Particular requirements for the basic safety and essential performance of electrocardiographic monitoring equipment.	Transferred. See 3–126.
3–106		ANSI/AAMI/IEC 60601–2–25:2011/(R)2016 Medical electrical equipment—Part 2–25: Particular requirements for the basic safety and essential performance of electrocardiographs.	Transferred. See 3–105.

TABLE 1—MODIFICATIONS TO THE LIST OF RECOGNIZED STANDARDS—Continued

Old recognition No.	Replacement recognition No.	Title of standard [1]	Change
3–109		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 27186:2010 Active implantable medical devices—Four-pole connector system for implantable cardiac rhythm management devices—Dimensional and test requirements.	Transferred. See 3–89.
3–111		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 25539–3:2011 Cardiovascular implants—Endovascular devices—Part 3: Vena cava filters.	Transferred. See 3–103.
3–112		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 7199:2009 Cardiovascular implants and artificial organs—Blood gas exchangers (oxygenators).	Transferred. See 3–124.
3–117		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 81060–2 Second edition 2013–05–01 Non-invasive sphygmomanometers—Part 2: Clinical validation of automated measurement type.	Transferred. See 3–122.
3–120		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 25539–2:2012 Cardiovascular implants—Endovascular devices—Part 2: Vascular stents.	Transferred. See 3–116.
3–124	3–150	ISO 7199 Third edition 2016–11–15 Cardiovascular implants and artificial organs—Blood-gas exchangers (oxygenators).	Withdrawn and replaced with newer version.
3–128		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 14117:2012 Active implantable medical devices—Electromagnetic compatibility—EMC test protocols for implantable cardiac pacemakers, implantable cardioverter defibrillators, and cardiac resynchronization devices.	Transferred. See 3–139.
3–130	3–151	ANSI/AAMI/IEC 80601–2–30:2009 & A1:2013/(R2016) Medical electrical equipment—Part 2–30: Particular requirements for the basic safety and essential performance of automated non-invasive sphygmomanometers.	Reaffirmation. Extent of Recognition. Transferred. See 3–123.
3–131		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 27185:2012 Cardiac rhythm management devices—Symbols to be used with cardiac rhythm management device labels, and information to be supplied—General requirements.	Transferred. See 3–132.
3–140		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 5840–3:2013 Cardiovascular implants—Cardiac valve prostheses—Part 3: Heart valve substitutes implanted by transcatheter techniques.	Transferred. See 3–133.
3–141		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 5841–3:2013 Implants for surgery—Cardiac pacemakers—Part 3: Low-profile connectors (IS–1) for implantable pacemakers.	Transferred. See 3–125.
3–146		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 5840–1:2015 Cardiovascular implants—Cardiac valve prostheses—Part 1: General requirements.	Transferred. See 3–145.
3–148		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 5840–2:2015 Cardiovascular implants—Cardiac valve prostheses—Part 2: Surgically implanted heart valve substitutes.	Transferred. See 3–147.
		D. Dental/Ear, Nose, and Throat (ENT)	
4–50		ADA Specification No. 18: 1992 Alginate Impression Materials	Withdrawn. See 4–240.
4–89		ANSI/ADA Specification No. 53 Reaffirmed by ANSI: August 2013 Polymer-Based Crown and Bridge Materials.	Reaffirmation.
4–91		ANSI/ADA Standard No. 80/ISO 7491:2000 Reaffirmed by ANSI: May 2013 Dental Materials—Determination of Color Stability.	Transferred. See 4–241.
4–119		ANSI/ADA Specification No. 82:1998/ISO 13716:1999 Reaffirmed by ANSI: January 2009 Dental Reversible/Irreversible Hydrocolloid Impression Material Systems.	Withdrawn. See 4–240.
4–193		ANSI/ADA Standard No. 15–2008/ISO 22112:2005 Reaffirmed by ANSI: May 2013 Artificial Teeth for Dental Prostheses.	Transferred. See 4–151.
4–230		ANSI/ADA Standard No. 30/ISO 3107:2011 Approved by ANSI: February 2013 Dental Zinc Oxide/Eugenol & Zinc Oxide/Non-Eugenol Cements.	Transferred. See 4–198.
4–235		ANSI/ADA Standard No. 100/ISO 27020:2010 Approved by ANSI: November 2012 Orthodontic Brackets and Tubes.	Transferred. See 4–218.
4–237		ANSI/ADA Standard No.120–2009/ISO 20127:2005 Reaffirmed by ANSI: September 8, 2014 Powered Toothbrushes.	Transferred. See 4–238.
		E. General I (Quality Systems/Risk Management) (QS/RM)	
5–65		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 80369–1:2010 Small bore connectors for liquids and gases in healthcare applications—Part 1: General requirements.	Transferred. See 5–63.
5–70		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 14971:2007/(R)2010 (Corrected 4 October 2007) Medical devices—Application of risk management to medical devices.	Transferred. See 5–40.
5–92		ANSI/AAMI/IEC 60601–1–8:2006 and A1:2012 Medical Electrical Equipment—Part 1–8: General requirements for basic safety and essential performance—Collateral Standard: General requirements, tests and guidance for alarm systems in medical electrical equipment and medical electrical systems.	Transferred. See 5–76.
5–96		ANSI/AAMI/IEC 62366–1:2015 Medical devices—Part 1: Application of usability engineering to medical devices.	Transferred. See 5–114.

TABLE 1—MODIFICATIONS TO THE LIST OF RECOGNIZED STANDARDS—Continued

Old recognition No.	Replacement recognition No.	Title of standard [1]	Change
5–100		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 80369–20:2015 Small-bore connectors for liquids and gases in healthcare applications—Part 20: Common test methods.	Transferred. See 5–97.
5–118		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 15223–1:2016 Medical devices—Symbols to be used with medical device labels, labelling and information to be supplied—Part 1: General requirements.	Transferred. See 5–117.
5–119		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 80369–5:2016 Small-bore connectors for liquids and gases in healthcare applications—Part 5: Connectors for limb cuff inflation applications.	Transferred. See 5–107.
F. General II (Electrical Safety/Electromagnetic Compatibility) (ES/EMC)			
19–2		ANSI/AAMI/IEC 60601–1–2:2007 (R2012) Medical electrical equipment—Part 1–2: General requirements for basic safety and essential performance—Collateral standard: Electromagnetic compatibility—Requirements and tests.	Transferred. See 19–1.
19–12		ANSI/AAMI/IEC 60601–1–2:2014 Medical electrical equipment—Part 1–2: General requirements for basic safety and essential performance—Collateral Standard: Electromagnetic disturbances—Requirements and tests.	Transferred. See 19–8.
G. General Hospital/General Plastic Surgery (GH/GPS)			
6–149	6–401	ASTM D7160–16 Standard Practice for Determination of Expiration Dating for Medical Gloves.	Withdrawn and replaced with newer version.
6–178		ASTM D6124–06 (Reapproved 2017) Standard Test Method for Residual Powder on Medical Gloves.	Reaffirmation.
6–214		ASTM D6355–07 (Reapproved 2017) Standard Test Method for Human Repeat Insult Patch Testing of Medical Glove.	Reaffirmation.
6–217	6–402	ASTM F1670/F1670M–17 Standard Test Method for Resistance of Materials Used in Protective Clothing to Penetration by Synthetic Blood.	Withdrawn and replaced with newer version.
6–227		ANSI/AAMI/IEC 60601–2–21:2009 Medical electrical equipment—Part 2–21: Particular requirements for the basic safety and essential performance of infant radiant warmers.	Transferred. See 6–388.
6–229		ANSI/AAMI/IEC 60601–2–2:2009 Medical electrical equipment—Part 2–2: Particular requirements for the basic safety and essential performance of high frequency surgical equipment.	Transferred. See 6–389.
6–232	6–403	ISO 80601–2–56 Second edition 2017–03 Medical electrical equipment—Part 2–56: Particular requirements for basic safety and essential performance of clinical thermometers for body temperature measurement.	Withdrawn and replaced with newer version.
6–230		ANSI/AAMI/IEC 60601–2–19:2009 Medical electrical equipment—Part 2–19: Particular requirements for the basic safety and essential performance of infant incubators.	Transferred. See 6–385.
6–235		ANSI/AAMI/IEC 60601–2–50:2009 Medical electrical equipment—Part 2–50: Particular requirements for the basic safety and essential performance of infant phototherapy equipment.	Transferred. See 6–387.
6–270		ASTM F1840–10 (Reapproved 2016) Standard Terminology for Surgical Suture Needles.	Reaffirmation.
6–304	6–404	ISO 7886–1 Second edition 2017–05 Sterile hypodermic syringes for single use—Part 1: Syringes for manual use.	Withdrawn and replaced with newer version.
6–307	6–405	IEC 80601–2–59 Edition 2.0 2017–09 Medical electrical equipment—Part 2–59: Particular requirements for the basic safety and essential performance of screening thermographs for human febrile temperature screening.	Withdrawn and replaced with newer version.
6–323	6–406	ASTM F1862/F1862M–17 Standard Test Method for Resistance of Medical Face Masks to Penetration by Synthetic Blood (Horizontal Projection of Fixed Volume at a Known Velocity).	Withdrawn and replaced with newer version.
6–337		ANSI/AAMI/IEC 60601–2–20:2009 Medical electrical equipment—Part 2–20: Particular requirements for the basic safety and essential performance of transport incubators [Including AMENDMENT 1 (2016)].	Transferred. See 6–386.
H. In Vitro Diagnostics (IVD)			
7–271		CLSI M100 27th Edition Performance Standards for Antimicrobial Susceptibility Testing.	Extent of recognition.

TABLE 1—MODIFICATIONS TO THE LIST OF RECOGNIZED STANDARDS—Continued

Old recognition No.	Replacement recognition No.	Title of standard [1]	Change
		I. Materials	
8–113		ASTM F1147–05 (Reapproved 2017) ε[1] Standard Test Method for Tension Testing of Calcium Phosphate and Metallic Coatings.	Reaffirmation.
8–337		ASTM F621–12 (Reapproved 2017) Standard Specification for Stainless Steel Forgings for Surgical Implants.	Reaffirmation.
8–356		ASTM F67–13 (Reapproved 2017) Standard Specification for Unalloyed Titanium, for Surgical Implant Applications (UNS R50250, UNS R50400, UNS R50550, UNS R50700).	Reaffirmation.
8–446	8–460	ASTM F2848–17 Standard Specification for Medical-Grade Ultra-High Molecular Weight Polyethylene Yarns.	Withdrawn and replaced with newer version. Extent of recognition.
		J. Nanotechnology	
		No new entries at this time	
		K. Neurology	
17–1		ANSI/AAMI NS28:1988/(R)2015 Intracranial pressure monitoring devices.	Reaffirmation. Extent of recognition.
17–8	17–15	ISO 14708–3 Second edition 2017–04 Implants for surgery—Active implantable medical devices—Part 3: Implantable neurostimulators.	Withdrawn and replaced with newer version.
17–10		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 14708–3:2008/(R)2011 Implants for surgery—Active implantable medical devices—Part 3: Implantable neurostimulators.	Withdrawn.
17–11	17–16	IEC 60601–2–10 Edition 2.1 2016–04 Medical electrical equipment—Part 2–10: Particular requirements for the basic safety and essential performance of nerve and muscle stimulators.	Withdrawn and replaced with newer version.
		L. Obstetrics-Gynecology/Gastroenterology/Urology (OB-Gyn/G/Urology)	
9–64		ANSI/AAMI/IEC 60601–2–2:2009 Medical electrical equipment—Part 2–2: Particular requirements for the basic safety and essential performance of high frequency surgery equipment and high frequency surgical accessories.	Withdrawn. Duplicate recognition. See 6–229.
9–66		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 8638:2010 Cardiovascular implants and extracorporeal blood circuit for hemodialyzers, hemodiafilters, and hemofilters.	Transferred. See 9–89.
9–81		ANSI/AAMI/IEC 60601–2–16:2012 Medical electrical equipment—Part 2–16: Particular requirements for basic safety and essential performance of hemodialysis, hemodiafiltration and hemofiltration equipment.	Transferred. See 9–80
9–91		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 8637:2010 Cardiovascular implants and extracorporeal systems—Hemodialyzers, hemodiafilters, hemofilters, and hemoconcentrators [Including AMENDMENT 1 (2013)].	Transferred. See 9–92.
9–91	9–114	IEC 60601–2–18: Edition 3.0 2009–08, medical electrical equipment—part 2–18: particular requirements for the basic safety and essential performance of endoscopic equipment.	Withdrawn and replaced with new recognition number.
9–93	9–115	ISO 25841 Third edition 2017–08 Female condoms—Requirements and test methods.	Withdrawn and replaced with newer version.
9–103		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 26722:2014 Water treatment equipment for haemodialysis applications and related therapies.	Transferred. See 9–101.
9–104		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 13958:2014 Concentrates for hemodialysis and related therapies.	Transferred. See 9–97.
9–105		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 13959:2014 Water for hemodialysis and related therapies.	Transferred. See 9–98.
9–106		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 11663:2014 Quality of dialysis fluid for hemodialysis and related therapies.	Transferred. See 9–100.
9–107		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 23500:2014 Guidance for the preparation and quality management of fluids for hemodialysis and related therapies.	Transferred. See 9–99.
		M. Ophthalmic	
10–43	10–105	ISO 11979–8 Third edition 2017–04 Ophthalmic Implants—Intraocular lenses—Part 8: Fundamental requirements.	Withdrawn and replaced with newer version.
10–46	10–106	ISO 18369–3 Second edition 2017–08 Ophthalmic optics—Contact lenses—Part 3: Measurement methods.	Withdrawn and replaced with newer version.
10–54	10–107	ISO 18369–4 Second edition 2017–08 Ophthalmic optics—Contact lenses—Part 4: Physicochemical properties of contact lens materials.	Withdrawn and replaced with newer version.
10–80	10–108	ISO 18369–2 Third edition 2017–08 Ophthalmic optics—Contact lenses—Part 2: Tolerances.	Withdrawn and replaced with newer version.

TABLE 1—MODIFICATIONS TO THE LIST OF RECOGNIZED STANDARDS—Continued

Old recognition No.	Replacement recognition No.	Title of standard [1]	Change
10–83	10–109	ISO 18369–1 Second edition 2017–08 Ophthalmic optics—Contact lenses—Part 1: Vocabulary, classification system and recommendations for labelling specifications.	Withdrawn and replaced with newer version.
		N. Orthopedic	
11–259		ASTM F2887—12 Standard Specification for Total Elbow Prostheses ..	Withdrawn. See 11–321.
		O. Physical Medicine	
16–200	16–201	ISO 7176–19 Second edition 2008–07–15 AMENDMENT 1 2015–11–15. Wheelchairs—Part 19: Wheeled mobility devices for use as seats in motor vehicles [Including AMENDMENT 1 (2015)].	Withdrawn and replaced with a newer version including amendment.
		P. Radiology	
12–139		NEMA UD 2–2004 (R2009) Acoustic Output Measurement Standard for Diagnostic Ultrasound Equipment, Revision 3.	Withdrawn. Duplicate recognition. See 12–105.
12–202	12–308	IEC 60601–2–43 Edition 2.1 2017–05 CONSOLIDATED VERSION Medical electrical equipment—Part 2–43: Particular requirements for the safety and essential performance of X-Ray Equipment for interventional procedures.	Withdrawn and replaced with newer version.
12–204	12–309	IEC 60601–2–28 Edition 3.0 2017–06 Medical electrical equipment—Part 2–28: Particular requirements for the basic safety and essential performance of X-ray tube assemblies for medical diagnosis.	Withdrawn and replaced with newer version.
12–251	12–310	IEC 60601–2–63 Edition 1.1 2017–07 CONSOLIDATED VERSION Medical electrical equipment—Part 2–63: Particular requirements for the basic safety and essential performance of dental extra-oral X-Ray equipment.	Withdrawn and replaced with newer version.
12–252	12–311	IEC 60601–2–65 Edition 1.1 2017–05 CONSOLIDATED VERSION Medical electrical equipment—Part 2–65: Particular requirements for the basic safety and essential performance of dental intra-oral X-Ray equipment.	Withdrawn and replaced with newer version.
12–227	12–312	IEC 61391–1 Edition 1.1 2017–07 CONSOLIDATED VERSION Ultrasonics—Pulse-echo scanners—Part 1: Techniques for calibrating spatial measurement systems and measurement of system point-spread function response.	Withdrawn and replaced with newer version.
12–276	12–313	IEC TS 62462 Edition 2.0 2017–07 Ultrasonics—Output test—Guidance for the maintenance of ultrasound physiotherapy systems.	Withdrawn and replaced with newer version.
12–155	12–314	ISO 11554 Fourth edition 2017–07 Optics and photonics—Lasers and laser-related equipment—Test methods for laser beam power, energy and temporal characteristics.	Withdrawn and replaced with newer version.
12–192	12–315	NEMA Standards Publication MS 8–2016 Characterization of the Specific Absorption Rate (SAR) for Magnetic Resonance Imaging Systems.	Withdrawn and replaced with newer version.
12–258	12–316	IEC 62359 Edition 2.1 2017–09 CONSOLIDATED VERSION Ultrasonics—Field characterization—Test methods for the determination of thermal and mechanical indices related to medical diagnostic ultrasonic fields.	Withdrawn and replaced with newer version.
		Q. Software/Informatics	
13–39		ANSI/AAMI/IEC 80001–1:2010 Application of risk management for IT Networks incorporating medical devices—Part 1: Roles, responsibilities and activities.	Transferred. See 13–38.
13–41		ANSI/AAMI/IEC TIR80001–2–1:2012 Application of risk management for IT-networks incorporating medical devices—Part 2–1: Step by step risk management of medical IT-networks; Practical applications and examples.	Transferred. See 13–40.
13–43		ANSI/AAMI/IEC TIR80001–2–2:2012 Technical Information Report Application of risk management for IT-networks incorporating medical devices—Part 2–2: Guidance for the disclosure and communication of medical device security needs, risks and controls.	Transferred. See 13–42.
13–45		ANSI/AAMI/IEC TIR80001–2–3:2012 Technical Information Report Application of risk management for IT-networks incorporating medical devices—Part 2–3: Guidance for wireless networks.	Transferred. See 13–44.

TABLE 1—MODIFICATIONS TO THE LIST OF RECOGNIZED STANDARDS—Continued

Old recognition No.	Replacement recognition No.	Title of standard [1]	Change
13–64		ANSI/AAMI/IEC TIR80001–2–4:2012 Technical Information Report Application of risk management for IT-networks incorporating medical devices—Part 2–4: General implementation guidance for healthcare delivery organizations.	Transferred. See 13–63.
		R. Sterility	
14–221		ANSI/AAMI/ISO TIR 11139:2006 Sterilization of health care products—Vocabulary.	Transferred. See 14–325.
14–222		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 18472:2006/(R)2010 Sterilization of health care products—Biological and chemical indicators—Test equipment.	Transferred. See 14–354.
14–227		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 11737–1:2006 (R)2011 Sterilization of health care products—Microbiological methods—Part 1: Determination of the population of microorganisms on product.	Transferred. See 14–407.
14–238		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 11140–5:2007/(R)2012 Sterilization of health care products—Chemical indicators—Part 5: Class 2 indicators for Bowie and Dick air removal test sheets and packs.	Transferred. See 14–332.
14–261		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 17665–1:2006/(R)2013 Sterilization of health care products—Moist heat—Part 1: Requirements for the development, validation, and routine control of a sterilization process for medical devices.	Transferred. See 14–333.
14–274		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 15882:2008/(R)2013 Sterilization of health care products—Chemical indicators—Guidance for selection, use and interpretation of results.	Transferred. See 14–334.
14–278		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 10993–7:2008(R)2012 Biological evaluation of medical devices—Part 7: Ethylene oxide sterilization residuals.	Transferred. See 14–408.
14–285		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 14161:2009/(R)2014 Sterilization of health care products—Biological indicators—Guidance for the selection, use and interpretation of results.	Transferred. See 14–336.
14–287		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 11737–2:2009/(R)2014 Sterilization of medical devices—Microbiological methods—Part 2: Tests of sterility performed in the definition, validation and maintenance of a sterilization process.	Transferred. See 14–327.
14–291		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 14937:2009/(R)2013 Sterilization of health care products—General requirements for characterization of a sterilizing agent and the development, validation and routine control of a sterilization process for medical devices.	Transferred. See 14–337.
14–295		ANSI/AAMI ST81:2004/(R)2016 Sterilization of medical devices—Information to be provided by the manufacturer for the processing of resterilizable medical devices.	Reaffirmation.
14–298		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 11137–3:2006/(R)2010 Sterilization of health care products—Radiation—Part 3: Guidance on dosimetric aspects.	Withdrawn. See 14–510.
14–330	14–510	ISO 11137–3 Second edition 2017–06 Sterilization of health care products—Radiation—Part 3: Guidance on dosimetric aspects of development, validation and routine control.	Withdrawn and replaced with newer version.
14–339		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 20857:2010/(R)2015 Sterilization of health care products—Dry heat—Requirements for the development, validation and routine control of a sterilization process for medical devices.	Transferred. See 14–340.
14–348		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 13408–2:2003/(R)2013 Aseptic processing of health care products—Part 2: Filtration.	Transferred. See 14–138.
14–349		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 13408–3:2006/(R)2015 Aseptic processing of health care products—Part 3: Lyophilization.	Transferred. See 14–239.
14–350		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 13408–4:2005/(R)2014 Aseptic processing of health care products—Part 4: Clean-in-place technologies.	Transferred. See 14–191.
14–351		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 13408–5:2006/(R)2015 Aseptic processing of health care products—Part 5: Sterilization in place.	Transferred. See 14–240.
14–358		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 14160:2011/(R)2016 Sterilization of health care products—Liquid chemical sterilizing agents for single-use medical devices utilizing animal tissues and their derivatives—Requirements for characterization, development, validation and routine control of a sterilization process for medical devices.	Transferred. See 14–361.
14–376		ANSI/AAMI/ISO TIR 17665–2:2009 Sterilization of health care products—Moist heat—Part 2: Guidance on the application of ANSI/AAMI/ISO 17665–1.	Transferred. See 14–277.
14–387		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 13408–7:2012 Aseptic processing of health care products—Part 7: Alternative processes for medical devices and combination products.	Transferred. See 14–388.
14–425		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 13408–6:2005/(R) 2013 & A1:2013 Aseptic processing of health care products—Part 6: Isolator systems [Including AMENDMENT1 (2013)].	Transferred. See 14–424.

TABLE 1—MODIFICATIONS TO THE LIST OF RECOGNIZED STANDARDS—Continued

Old recognition No.	Replacement recognition No.	Title of standard [1]	Change
14–426		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 13408–1:2008 (R2011) Aseptic processing of health care products—Part 1: General requirements [Including AMENDMENT1 (2013)].	Transferred. See 14–427.
14–438		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 11137–2:2013 Sterilization of health care products—Radiation—Part 2: Establishing the sterilization dose.	Transferred. See 14–409.
14–439	14–511	ANSI/AAMI ST79:2017 Comprehensive guide to steam sterilization and sterility assurance in health care facilities.	Withdrawn and replaced with newer version.
14–457		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 11607–1:2006/(R)2010 Packaging for terminally sterilized medical devices—Part 1: Requirements for materials, sterile barrier systems and packaging [Including AMENDMENT 1 (2013)].	Transferred. See 14–454.
14–458		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 11607–2:2006/(R)2010 Packaging for terminally sterilized medical devices—Part 2: Validation requirements for forming, sealing and assembly processes [Including AMENDMENT 1 (2013)].	Transferred. See 14–455.
14–459		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 11140–1:2014 Sterilization of health care products—Chemical indicators—Part 1: General requirements.	Transferred. See 14–460.
14–461		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 11137–1:2006/(R)2010 Sterilization of health care products—Radiation—Part 1: Requirements for development, validation and routine control of a sterilization process for medical devices [Including AMENDMENT 1 (2013)].	Transferred. See 14–428.
14–479		ANSI/AAMI/ISO 11135:2014 Sterilization of health care products—Ethylene oxide—Requirements for development, validation and routine control of a sterilization process for medical devices.	Transferred. See 14–452.
		S. Tissue Engineering	
15–17		ASTM F2311–08 Standard Guide for Classification of Therapeutic Skin Substitutes.	Withdrawn.
15–23		ASTM F2739–08 Standard Guide for Quantitating Cell Viability within Biomaterial Scaffolds.	Withdrawn. See 15–50.
15–37	15–51	ASTM F2347–15 Standard Guide for Characterization and Testing of Hyaluronan as Starting Materials Intended for Use in Biomedical and Tissue Engineered Medical Product Applications.	Withdrawn and replaced with newer version.
15–42	15–52	ASTM F2064–17 Standard Guide for Characterization and Testing of Alginates as Starting Materials Intended for Use in Biomedical and Tissue Engineered Medical Product Applications.	Withdrawn and replaced with newer version.

[1] All standard titles in this table conform to the style requirements of the respective organizations.

III. Listing of New Entries

In table 2, FDA provides the listing of new entries and consensus standards added as modifications to the list of recognized standards under Recognition List Number: 049.

TABLE 2—NEW ENTRIES TO THE LIST OF RECOGNIZED STANDARDS

Recognition No.	Title of standard [1]	Reference No. and Date
	A. Anesthesiology	
1–131	Medical suction equipment—Part 1: Electrically powered suction equipment	ISO 10079–1 Third Edition 2015–11–01.
1–132	Medical suction equipment—Part 2: Manually powered suction equipment	ISO 10079–2 Third Edition 2014–05–01.
1–133	Medical suction equipment—Part 3: Suction equipment powered from a vacuum or positive pressure gas source.	ISO 10079–3 Third Edition 2014–05–01.
1–134	Biocompatibility evaluation of breathing gas pathways in healthcare applications—Part 1: Evaluation and testing within a risk management process.	ISO 18562–1 First edition 2017–03.
1–135	Biocompatibility evaluation of breathing gas pathways in healthcare applications—Part 2: Tests for emissions of particulate matter.	ISO 18562–2 First edition 2017–03.
1–136	Biocompatibility evaluation of breathing gas pathways in healthcare applications—Part 3: Tests for emissions of volatile organic compounds.	ISO 18562–3 First edition 2017–03.
1–137	Biocompatibility evaluation of breathing gas pathways in healthcare applications—Part 4: Tests for leachables in condensate.	ISO 18562–4 First edition 2017–03.
1–138	Medical electrical equipment—Part 2–74: Particular requirements for basic safety and essential performance of respiratory humidifying equipment.	ISO 80601–2–74 First edition 2017–05.

TABLE 2—NEW ENTRIES TO THE LIST OF RECOGNIZED STANDARDS—Continued

Recognition No.	Title of standard [1]	Reference No. and Date
	B. Biocompatibility	
	No new entries at this time	
	C. Cardiovascular	
	No new entries at this time	
	D. Dental/Ear, Nose, and Throat (ENT)	
4–240	Dentistry—Hydrocolloid impression materials	ISO 21563 First edition 2013–08–15.
4–241	Dental materials—Determination of colour stability	ISO 7491 Second edition 2000–09–01.
	E. General I (Quality Systems/Risk Management) (QS/RM)	
	No new entries at this time	
	F. General II (Electrical Safety/Electromagnetic Compatibility) (ES/EMC)	
	No new entries at this time	
	G. General Hospital/General Plastic Surgery (GH/GPS)	
6–407	Standard Specification for Adult Portable Bed Rails and Related Products	ASTM F3186–17.
	H. In Vitro Diagnostics (IVD)	
7–274	Verification and Validation of Multiplex Nucleic Acid Assays; Approved Guideline	CLSI MM17–A Vol. 28 No. 9 (Replaces MM17–P Vol. 27 No. 21).
	I. Materials	
8–461	Standard Guide for Selecting Test Soils for Validation of Cleaning Methods for Reusable Medical Devices.	ASTM F3208–17.
8–462	Standard Test Method for Determining the Flexural Stiffness of Medical Textiles	ASTM F3260–17.
8–463	Standard Guide for Additive Manufacturing—General Principles—Requirements for Purchased AM Parts.	ISO/ASTM 52901 First edition 2017–08.
8–464	Assessment of the safety of magnetic resonance imaging for patients with an active implantable medical device.	ISO 10974 Second edition 2018.
	J. Nanotechnology	
18–9	Nanotechnologies—Guidance on physico-chemical characterization of engineered nanoscale materials for toxicologic assessment [Including CORRIGENDUM 1 (2012)].	ISO/TR 13014 First edition 2012–05–15.
18–10	Nanotechnologies—Endotoxin test on nanomaterial samples for in vitro systems—Limulus amebocyte lysate (LAL) test.	ISO 29701 First edition 2010–09–15.
	K. Neurology	
	No new entries at this time	
	L. Obstetrics-Gynecology/Gastroenterology/Urology (OB-Gyn/G/Urology)	
9–115	Condoms—Guidance on clinical studies—Part 1: Male condoms, clinical function studies based on self-reports.	ISO 29943–1 First edition 2017–07.
9–116	Condoms—Guidance on clinical studies—Part 2: Female condoms, clinical function studies based on self-reports.	ISO 29943–2 First edition 2017–07.
	M. Ophthalmic	
10–110	Ophthalmic implants—Ophthalmic viscosurgical devices [Including AMENDMENT 1 (2017)]	ISO 15798 Third edition 2013–09–15 AMENDMENT 1 2017–05.
	N. Orthopedic	
	No new entries at this time	

TABLE 2—NEW ENTRIES TO THE LIST OF RECOGNIZED STANDARDS—Continued

Recognition No.	Title of standard [1]	Reference No. and Date
	O. Physical Medicine	
16–202	RESNA Standard for Wheelchairs Volume 4: Wheelchairs and Transportation	RESNA WC–4:2017.
	P. Radiology	
	No new entries at this time	
	Q. Software/Informatics	
13–104	Software Cybersecurity for Network-Connectable Products, Part 2–1: Particular Requirements for Network Connectable Components of Healthcare and Wellness Systems.	ANSI/UL 2900–2–1, First Edition September 1, 2017.
	R. Sterility	
	No new entries at this time	
	S. Tissue Engineering	
15–53	Standard Guide for Assessing Medical Device Cytocompatibility with Delivered Cellular Therapies.	ASTM F3206 –17.
15–54	Standard Guide for in vivo Evaluation of Rabbit Lumbar Intertransverse Process Spinal Fusion Model.	ASTM F3207–17.

[1] All standard titles in this table conform to the style requirements of the respective organizations.

IV. List of Recognized Standards

FDA maintains the current list of FDA Recognized Consensus Standards in a searchable database that may be accessed at *https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/cdrh/cfdocs/cfStandards/search.cfm.* FDA will be incorporating the modifications and revisions described in this notice into the database and, upon publication in the **Federal Register**, this recognition of consensus standards will be effective. FDA will be announcing additional modifications and revisions to the list of recognized consensus standards, as needed, in the **Federal Register** once a year, or more often if necessary. Beginning with recognition list 049, FDA will no longer include in the database the CDRH Office and Division associated with recognized standards, Devices Affected, and Processes Affected. Beginning with recognition list 049 FDA will automatically incorporate, upon publication, a U.S. parallel adoption of an existing recognized international standard.

V. Recommendation of Standards for Recognition by FDA

Any person may recommend consensus standards as candidates for recognition under section 514 of the FD&C Act by submitting such recommendations, with reasons for the recommendation, to *CDRHStandardsStaff@fda.hhs.gov.* To be considered, such recommendations should contain, at a minimum, the following information available at *https://www.fda.gov/MedicalDevices/DeviceRegulationandGuidance/Standards/ucm123739.htm.*

Dated: May 31, 2018.

Leslie Kux,

Associate Commissioner for Policy.

[FR Doc. 2018–12222 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4164–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Food and Drug Administration

[Docket No. FDA–2018–D–1635]

Prescription Drug User Fee Act Waivers for Fixed-Combination Antiretroviral Drugs for the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief; Draft Guidance for Industry; Availability

AGENCY: Food and Drug Administration, HHS.

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: The Food and Drug Administration (FDA or Agency) is announcing the availability of a draft guidance for industry entitled ''Prescription Drug User Fee Act Waivers for Fixed-Combination Antiretroviral Drugs for the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief.'' This draft guidance describes circumstances under which an applicant may be eligible for a barrier-to-innovation waiver for some new drug applications (NDAs) for fixed-combination versions and single-entity versions of previously approved antiretroviral therapies for the treatment of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

DATES: Submit either electronic or written comments on the guidance August 6, 2018 to ensure that the Agency considers your comment on this draft guidance before it begins work on the final version of the guidance.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments on any guidance at any time as follows:

Electronic Submissions

Submit electronic comments in the following way:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal: https://www.regulations.gov.* Follow the instructions for submitting comments. Comments submitted electronically, including attachments, to *https://www.regulations.gov* will be posted to the docket unchanged. Because your comment will be made public, you are solely responsible for ensuring that your comment does not include any confidential information that you or a third party may not wish to be posted, such as medical information, your or anyone else's Social Security number, or confidential business information, such as a manufacturing process. Please note that if you include your name, contact information, or other information that identifies you in the body of your comments, that information will be posted on *https://www.regulations.gov.*
- If you want to submit a comment with confidential information that you do not wish to be made available to the public, submit the comment as a written/paper submission and in the

manner detailed (see ''Written/Paper Submissions'' and ''Instructions'').

Written/Paper Submissions

Submit written/paper submissions as follows:

- *Mail/Hand delivery/Courier (for written/paper submissions):* Dockets Management Staff (HFA–305), Food and Drug Administration, 5630 Fishers Lane, Rm. 1061, Rockville, MD 20852.
- For written/paper comments submitted to the Dockets Management Staff, FDA will post your comment, as well as any attachments, except for information submitted, marked and identified, as confidential, if submitted as detailed in ''Instructions.''

Instructions: All submissions received must include the Docket No. FDA–2018–D–1635 for ''Prescription Drug User Fee Act Waivers for Fixed-Combination Antiretroviral Drugs for the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief.'' Received comments will be placed in the docket and, except for those submitted as ''Confidential Submissions,'' publicly viewable at *https://www.regulations.gov* or at the Dockets Management Staff between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

- Confidential Submissions—To submit a comment with confidential information that you do not wish to be made publicly available, submit your comments only as a written/paper submission. You should submit two copies total. One copy will include the information you claim to be confidential with a heading or cover note that states ''THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION.'' The Agency will review this copy, including the claimed confidential information, in its consideration of comments. The second copy, which will have the claimed confidential information redacted/blacked out, will be available for public viewing and posted on *https://www.regulations.gov.* Submit both copies to the Dockets Management Staff. If you do not wish your name and contact information to be made publicly available, you can provide this information on the cover sheet and not in the body of your comments and you must identify this information as ''confidential.'' Any information marked as ''confidential'' will not be disclosed except in accordance with 21 CFR 10.20 and other applicable disclosure law. For more information about FDA's posting of comments to public dockets, see 80 FR 56469, September 18, 2015, or access the information at: *https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2015-09-18/pdf/2015-23389.pdf.*

Docket: For access to the docket to read background documents or the electronic and written/paper comments received, go to *https://www.regulations.gov* and insert the docket number, found in brackets in the heading of this document, into the ''Search'' box and follow the prompts and/or go to the Dockets Management Staff, 5630 Fishers Lane, Rm. 1061, Rockville, MD 20852.

You may submit comments on any guidance at any time (see 21 CFR 10.115(g)(5)).

Submit written requests for single copies of the draft guidance to the Division of Drug Information, Center for Drug Evaluation and Research, Food and Drug Administration, 10001 New Hampshire Ave., Hillandale Building, 4th Floor, Silver Spring, MD 20993–0002. Send one self-addressed adhesive label to assist that office in processing your requests. See the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section for electronic access to the draft guidance document.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ted Palat, Center for Drug Evaluation and Research, Food and Drug Administration, 10001 New Hampshire Ave., Rm. 2185, Silver Spring, MD 20993, 240–402–8739, *Ted.Palat@fda.hhs.gov.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

FDA is announcing the availability of a draft guidance for industry entitled ''Prescription Drug User Fee Act Waivers for Fixed-Combination Antiretroviral Drugs for the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief.'' The draft guidance describes the circumstances under which certain applications for fixed-combination and single-entity versions of previously approved antiretroviral therapies for the treatment of HIV under the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) may be eligible for a barrier-to-innovation waiver.

In October 2006, to encourage applicants to submit applications for HIV combination therapies that can be used in PEPFAR, FDA issued a final guidance entitled ''Fixed Dose Combinations, Co-Packaged Drug Products, and Single-Entity Versions of Previously Approved Antiretrovirals for the Treatment of HIV'' (fixed-combination guidance). Attachments to the fixed-combination guidance describe some scenarios for approval of fixed-combination for the treatment of HIV and provide examples of drug combinations considered acceptable as fixed combinations and examples of those not considered acceptable as fixed combinations. Although the 2006 fixed-combination guidance focuses on fixed combinations, the scientific principles outlined in the guidance also apply to single ingredient versions of antiretroviral drugs that are components of regimens listed in Attachment B. The guidance also explains that the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FD&C Act) provides for certain circumstances in which FDA may grant a waiver or reduction in user fees.

This draft guidance is a revision of the guidance for industry entitled ''User Fee Waivers for FDC and Co-Packaged HIV Drugs for PEPFAR,'' issued February 2007. In this guidance, FDA provides information about the circumstances under which certain applications for fixed-combination and single-entity versions of previously approved antiretroviral therapies for the treatment of HIV under PEPFAR may be eligible for a barrier-to-innovation waiver.

This draft guidance is being issued consistent with FDA's good guidance practices regulation (21 CFR 10.115). The draft guidance, when finalized, will represent the current thinking of FDA on ''Prescription Drug User Fee Act Waivers for Fixed-Combination Antiretroviral Drugs for the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief.'' It does not establish any rights for any person and is not binding on FDA or the public. You can use an alternative approach if it satisfies the requirements of the applicable statutes and regulations. This guidance is not subject to Executive Order 12866.

II. Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995

This draft guidance contains information collection provisions that are subject to review by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501–3520). The burden of information collection associated with requesting waivers of user fees (including PEPFAR waivers) was previously approved under OMB control number 0910–0693. The burden for completing and submitting Form FDA 3397 (Prescription Drug User Fee Coversheet) is not included in this analysis as the burden is already approved under OMB control number 0910–0297. The collections of information associated with submission of a new drug application or biologics license application are approved under OMB control numbers 0910–0001 and 0910–0338, respectively.

III. Electronic Access

Persons with access to the internet may obtain the draft guidance at either *https://www.fda.gov/Drugs/*

GuidanceComplianceRegulatory Information/Guidances/default.htm or *https://www.regulations.gov*.

Dated: June 1, 2018.

Leslie Kux,

Associate Commissioner for Policy.

[FR Doc. 2018–12217 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4164–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Food and Drug Administration

[Docket No. FDA–2011–N–0781]

Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission for Office of Management and Budget Review; Comment Request; Record Retention Requirements for the Soy Protein and Risk of Coronary Heart Disease Health Claim

AGENCY: Food and Drug Administration, HHS.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is announcing that a proposed collection of information has been submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and clearance under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA).

DATES: Fax written comments on the collection of information by July 9, 2018.

ADDRESSES: To ensure that comments on the information collection are received, OMB recommends that written comments be faxed to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, OMB, Attn: FDA Desk Officer, Fax: 202–395–7285, or emailed to *oira_submission@omb.eop.gov*. All comments should be identified with the OMB control number 0910–0428. Also include the FDA docket number found in brackets in the heading of this document.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: JonnaLynn Capezzuto, Office of Operations, Food and Drug Administration, Three White Flint North, 10A–12M, 11601 Landsdown St., North Bethesda, MD 20852, 301–796–3794, *PRAStaff@fda.hhs.gov*.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In compliance with 44 U.S.C. 3507, FDA has submitted the following proposed collection of information to OMB for review and clearance.

Record Retention Requirements for the Soy Protein and Risk of Coronary Heart Disease Health Claim—21 CFR 101.82

OMB Control Number 0910–0428—Extension

Section 403(r)(3)(A) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 343(r)(3)(A)) provides for the use of food label statements characterizing a relationship of any nutrient of the type required to be in the label or labeling of the food to a disease or a health-related condition only where that statement meets the requirements of the regulations issued by the Secretary of Health and Human Services to authorize the use of such a health claim. Section 101.82 (21 CFR 101.82) of our regulations authorizes a health claim for food labels about soy protein and the risk of coronary heart disease. Accordingly, FDA established the previously referenced information collection in support of the regulation. In the **Federal Register** of October 31, 2017 (82 FR 50324), we published a proposed rule to revoke the underlying regulation found at § 101.82. We are taking this action based on our review of the totality of publicly available scientific evidence currently available and our tentative conclusion that such evidence does not support our previous determination that there is significant scientific agreement among qualified experts for a health claim regarding the relationship between soy protein and reduced risk of coronary heart disease. Upon finalization of the proposed rule, the associated information collection requirements under this OMB control number will be revoked. Until such time and in accordance with the PRA, we retain our currently approved burden estimate for the information collection displayed in table 1 of this notice.

In the **Federal Register** of March 8, 2018 (83 FR 9856), FDA published a 60-day notice requesting public comment on the proposed collection of information. No comments were received.

FDA estimates the burden of this collection of information as follows:

TABLE 1—ESTIMATED ANNUAL RECORDKEEPING BURDEN [1]

21 CFR section	Number of recordkeepers	Number of records per recordkeeper	Total annual records	Average burden per recordkeeping	Total hours
101.82(c)(2)(ii)(B)	25	1	25	1	25

[1] There are no capital costs or operating and maintenance costs associated with this collection of information.

Based on our current experience with the use of health claims, we estimate 25 firms market products bearing a soy protein/coronary heart disease health claim and that perhaps one of each firm's products might contain non-soy sources of protein along with soy protein. The records currently required to be retained under § 101.82(c)(2)(ii)(B) are the records, *e.g.,* the formulation or recipe, that a manufacturer has and maintains as a normal course of its doing business. Thus, the burden to the food manufacturer is limited to assembling and retaining the records, which we estimate will take 1 hour annually.

Dated: May 30, 2018.

Leslie Kux,

Associate Commissioner for Policy.

[FR Doc. 2018–12216 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4164–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Food and Drug Administration

[Docket No. FDA–2012–N–0961]

Agency Information Collection Activities; Proposed Collection; Comment Request; Environmental Impact Considerations

AGENCY: Food and Drug Administration, HHS.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Food and Drug Administration (FDA or Agency) is announcing an opportunity for public

comment on the proposed collection of certain information by the Agency. Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA), Federal Agencies are required to publish notice in the **Federal Register** concerning each proposed collection of information, including each proposed extension of an existing collection of information, and to allow 60 days for public comment in response to the notice. This notice solicits comments on the reporting requirements contained in the FDA collection of information ''Environmental Impact Considerations.''

DATES: Submit either electronic or written comments on the collection of information by August 6, 2018.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments as follows. Please note that late, untimely filed comments will not be considered. Electronic comments must be submitted on or before August 6, 2018. The *https://www.regulations.gov* electronic filing system will accept comments until midnight Eastern Time at the end of August 6, 2018. Comments received by mail/hand delivery/courier (for written/paper submissions) will be considered timely if they are postmarked or the delivery service acceptance receipt is on or before that date.

Electronic Submissions

Submit electronic comments in the following way:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal: https://www.regulations.gov.* Follow the instructions for submitting comments. Comments submitted electronically, including attachments, to *https://www.regulations.gov* will be posted to the docket unchanged. Because your comment will be made public, you are solely responsible for ensuring that your comment does not include any confidential information that you or a third party may not wish to be posted, such as medical information, your or anyone else's Social Security number, or confidential business information, such as a manufacturing process. Please note that if you include your name, contact information, or other information that identifies you in the body of your comments, that information will be posted on *https://www.regulations.gov.*

- If you want to submit a comment with confidential information that you do not wish to be made available to the public, submit the comment as a written/paper submission and in the manner detailed (see ''Written/Paper Submissions'' and ''Instructions'').

Written/Paper Submissions

Submit written/paper submissions as follows:

- *Mail/Hand delivery/Courier (for written/paper submissions):* Dockets Management Staff (HFA–305), Food and Drug Administration, 5630 Fishers Lane, Rm. 1061, Rockville, MD 20852.

- For written/paper comments submitted to the Dockets Management Staff, FDA will post your comment, as well as any attachments, except for information submitted, marked and identified, as confidential, if submitted as detailed in ''Instructions.''

Instructions: All submissions received must include the Docket No. FDA–2012–N–0961 for ''Environmental Impact Considerations.'' Received comments, those filed in a timely manner (see **ADDRESSES**), will be placed in the docket and, except for those submitted as ''Confidential Submissions,'' publicly viewable at *https://www.regulations.gov* or at the Dockets Management Staff between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

- Confidential Submissions—To submit a comment with confidential information that you do not wish to be made publicly available, submit your comments only as a written/paper submission. You should submit two copies total. One copy will include the information you claim to be confidential with a heading or cover note that states ''THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION.'' The Agency will review this copy, including the claimed confidential information, in its consideration of comments. The second copy, which will have the claimed confidential information redacted/blacked out, will be available for public viewing and posted on *https://www.regulations.gov.* Submit both copies to the Dockets Management Staff. If you do not wish your name and contact information to be made publicly available, you can provide this information on the cover sheet and not in the body of your comments and you must identify this information as ''confidential.'' Any information marked as ''confidential'' will not be disclosed except in accordance with 21 CFR 10.20 and other applicable disclosure law. For more information about FDA's posting of comments to public dockets, see 80 FR 56469, September 18, 2015, or access the information at: *https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2015-09-18/pdf/2015-23389.pdf.*

Docket: For access to the docket to read background documents or the electronic and written/paper comments received, go to *https://www.regulations.gov* and insert the docket number, found in brackets in the heading of this document, into the ''Search'' box and follow the prompts and/or go to the Dockets Management Staff, 5630 Fishers Lane, Rm. 1061, Rockville, MD 20852.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Amber Sanford, Office of Operations, Food and Drug Administration, Three White Flint North, 10A–12M, 11601 Landsdown St., North Bethesda, MD 20852, 301–796–8867, *PRAStaff@fda.hhs.gov.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Under the PRA (44 U.S.C. 3501–3520), Federal Agencies must obtain approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for each collection of information they conduct or sponsor. ''Collection of information'' is defined in 44 U.S.C. 3502(3) and 5 CFR 1320.3(c) and includes Agency requests or requirements that members of the public submit reports, keep records, or provide information to a third party. Section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the PRA (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)) requires Federal Agencies to provide a 60-day notice in the **Federal Register** concerning each proposed collection of information, including each proposed extension of an existing collection of information, before submitting the collection to OMB for approval. To comply with this requirement, FDA is publishing notice of the proposed collection of information set forth in this document.

With respect to the following collection of information, FDA invites comments on these topics: (1) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of FDA's functions, including whether the information will have practical utility; (2) the accuracy of FDA's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (4) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques, when appropriate, and other forms of information technology.

Environmental Impact Considerations—21 CFR Part 25

OMB Control Number 0910–0322—Extension

I. Background

FDA is requesting OMB approval for the reporting requirements contained in the FDA collection of information

''Environmental Impact Considerations.'' The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. 4321–4347) states national environmental objectives and imposes upon each Federal Agency the duty to consider the environmental effects of its actions. Section 102(2)(C) of NEPA requires the preparation of an environmental impact statement (EIS) for every major Federal action that will significantly affect the quality of the human environment.

FDA's NEPA regulations are in part 25 (21 CFR part 25). All applications or petitions requesting Agency action require the submission of a claim for categorical exclusion or an environmental assessment (EA). A categorical exclusion applies to certain classes of FDA-regulated actions that usually have little or no potential to cause significant environmental effects and are excluded from the requirements to prepare an EA or EIS. Section 25.15(a) and (d) specifies the procedures for submitting to FDA a claim for a categorical exclusion. Extraordinary circumstances (§ 25.21), which may result in significant environmental impacts, may exist for some actions that are usually categorically excluded. An EA provides information that is used to determine whether an FDA action could result in a significant environmental impact. Section 25.40(a) and (c) specifies the content requirements for EAs for non-excluded actions.

This collection of information is used by FDA to assess the environmental impact of Agency actions and to ensure that the public is informed of environmental analyses. Firms wishing to manufacture and market substances regulated under statutes for which FDA is responsible must, in most instances, submit applications requesting approval. Environmental information must be included in such applications for the purpose of determining whether the proposed action may have a significant impact on the environment. Where significant adverse events cannot be avoided, the Agency uses the submitted information as the basis for preparing and circulating to the public an EIS, made available through a **Federal Register** document also filed for comment at the Environmental Protection Agency. The final EIS, including the comments received, is reviewed by the Agency to weigh environmental costs and benefits in determining whether to pursue the proposed action or some alternative that would reduce expected environmental impact.

Any final EIS would contain additional information gathered by the Agency after the publication of the draft EIS, a copy or a summary of the comments received on the draft EIS, and the Agency's responses to the comments, including any revisions resulting from the comments or other information. When the Agency finds that no significant environmental effects are expected, the Agency prepares a finding of no significant impact.

FDA estimates the burden of this collection of information as follows:

II. Estimated Annual Reporting Burden for Human Drugs (Including Biologics in the Center for Drug Evaluation and Research)

Under §§ 312.23(a)(7)(iv)(e), 314.50(d)(1)(iii), and 314.94(a)(9)(i) (21 CFR 312.23(a)(7)(iv)(e), 314.50(d)(1)(iii), and 314.94(a)(9)(i)), each investigational new drug application (IND), new drug application (NDA), and abbreviated new drug application (ANDA) must contain a claim for categorical exclusion under § 25.30 or § 25.31, or an EA under § 25.40. Annually, FDA receives approximately 3,687 INDs from 2,456 sponsors; 140 NDAs from 116 applicants; 3,192 supplements to NDAs from 443 applicants; 28 biologic license applications (BLAs) from 22 applicants; 464 supplements to BLAs from 52 applicants; 1,152 ANDAs from 248 applicants; and 6,774 supplements to ANDAs from 384 applicants. FDA estimates that it receives approximately 15,437 claims for categorical exclusions as required under § 25.15(a) and (d) and 10 EAs as required under § 25.40(a) and (c). Based on information provided by the pharmaceutical industry, FDA estimates that it takes sponsors or applicants approximately 8 hours to prepare a claim for a categorical exclusion and approximately 3,400 hours to prepare an EA.

TABLE 1—ESTIMATED ANNUAL REPORTING BURDEN FOR HUMAN DRUGS [1]

21 CFR section	Number of respondents	Number of responses per respondent	Total annual responses	Average burden per response	Total hours
25.15(a) and (d)	3,724	4.1453	15,437	8	123,496
25.40(a) and (c)	10	1	10	3,400	34,000
Total					157,496

[1] There are no capital costs or operating and maintenance costs associated with this collection of information.

III. Estimated Annual Reporting Burden for Medical Devices

Under § 814.20(b)(11) (21 CFR 814.20(b)(11)), premarket approvals (PMAs) (original PMAs and supplements) must contain a claim for categorical exclusion under § 25.30 or § 25.34 or an EA under § 25.40. In 2017, FDA received an average of 50 claims (original PMAs and supplements) for categorical exclusions as required under § 25.15(a) and (d), and 0 EAs as required under § 25.40(a) and (c). FDA estimates that approximately 50 respondents will submit an average of 1 application for categorical exclusion annually. Based on information provided by sponsors, FDA estimates that it takes approximately 6 hours to prepare a claim for a categorical exclusion.

TABLE 2—ESTIMATED ANNUAL REPORTING BURDEN FOR MEDICAL DEVICES [1]

21 CFR section	Number of respondents	Number of responses per respondent	Total annual responses	Average burden per response	Total hours
25.15(a) and (d)	50	1	50	6	300

[1] There are no capital costs or operating and maintenance costs associated with this collection of information.

IV. Estimated Annual Reporting Burden for Biological Products, Drugs, and Medical Devices in the Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research

Under 21 CFR 601.2(a), BLAs as well as INDs (§ 312.23), NDAs (§ 314.50), ANDAs (§ 314.94), and PMAs (§ 814.20) must contain either a claim of categorical exclusion under § 25.30 or § 25.32 or an EA under § 25.40. Annually, FDA receives approximately 34 BLAs from 18 applicants, 801 BLA supplements to license applications from 156 applicants, 345 INDs from 256 sponsors, 1 NDA from 1 applicant, 26 supplements to NDAs from 8 applicants, 1 ANDA from 1 applicant, 1 supplement to ANDAs from 1 applicant, 8 PMAs from 3 applicants, and 33 PMA supplements from 16 applicants. FDA estimates that approximately 10 percent of these supplements would be submitted with a claim for categorical exclusion or an EA.

FDA has received approximately 481 claims for categorical exclusion as required under § 25.15(a) and (d) annually and 2 EAs as required under § 25.40(a) and (c) annually. Therefore, FDA estimates that approximately 247 respondents will submit an average of 2 applications for categorical exclusion and 2 respondents will submit an average of 1 EA. Based on information provided by industry, FDA estimates that it takes sponsors and applicants approximately 8 hours to prepare a claim of categorical exclusion and approximately 3,400 hours to prepare an EA for a biological product.

TABLE 3—ESTIMATED ANNUAL REPORTING BURDEN FOR BIOLOGICAL PRODUCTS [1]

21 CFR section	Number of respondents	Number of responses per respondent	Total annual responses	Average burden per response	Total hours
25.15(a) and (d)	247	2	494	8	3,952
25.40(a) and (c)	2	1	2	3,400	6,800
Total					10,752

[1] There are no capital costs or operating and maintenance costs associated with this collection of information.

V. Estimated Annual Reporting Burden for Animal Drugs

Under 21 CFR 514.1(b)(14), new animal drug applications (NADAs) and abbreviated new animal drug applications (ANADAs); 21 CFR 514.8(a)(1) supplemental NADAs and ANADAs; 21 CFR 511.1(b)(10) investigational new animal drug applications (INADs) and generic investigational new animal drug applications (JINADs), and 21 CFR 571.1(c) food additive petitions must contain a claim for categorical exclusion under § 25.30 or § 25.32 or an EA under § 25.40. Annually, FDA's Center for Veterinary Medicine has received approximately 810 claims for categorical exclusion as required under § 25.15(a) and (d) and 22 EAs as required under § 25.40(a) and (c). Assuming an average of 10 claims per respondent, FDA estimates that approximately 81 respondents will submit an average of 10 claims for categorical exclusion. FDA further estimates that 22 respondents will submit an average of 1 EA. FDA estimates that it takes sponsors/applicants approximately 3 hours to prepare a claim of categorical exclusion and an average of 2,160 hours to prepare an EA.

TABLE 4—ESTIMATED ANNUAL REPORTING BURDEN FOR ANIMAL DRUGS [1]

21 CFR section	Number of respondents	Number of responses per respondent	Total annual responses	Average burden per response	Total hours
25.15(a) and (d)	81	10	810	3	2,430
25.40(a) and (c)	22	1	22	2,160	47,520
Total					49,950

[1] There are no capital costs or operating and maintenance costs associated with this collection of information.

VI. Estimated Annual Reporting Burden for Tobacco Products

Under sections 905, 910, and 911 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 387e, 387j, and 387k), product applications and supplements (PMTAs), SEs, Exemption from SEs, and modified risk tobacco products must contain a claim for categorical exclusion or an EA. FDA's estimates are based on actual report data from fiscal year (FY) 2015 to FY 2017, on average FDA estimated it received approximately 260 premarket review of new tobacco PMTAs from 260 respondents, 3,601 provisional reports intended to demonstrate the substantial equivalence of a new tobacco product (SEs) from 3,601 respondents, 2,375 regular SE reports from 2,375 respondents, 101 exemption from substantial equivalence requirements applications (SE Exemptions) from 101 respondents, and 27 modified risk tobacco product applications (MRTPAs) from 27 respondents. Based on updated data FDA estimates 5,832 EAs from 5,832 respondents as required under § 25.40(a) and (c). A total of 5,832 respondents will submit an average of 1 application for environmental assessment. Part of the information in the EA will be developed while writing other parts of a PMTA, SE, Exemption from SE, or MRTPA. Based on FDA's experience, previous information provided by potential sponsors and knowledge that part of the EA information has already been produced in one of the tobacco product applications, FDA estimates that it takes approximately 80 hours to prepare an EA.

TABLE 5—ESTIMATED ANNUAL REPORTING BURDEN FOR TOBACCO PRODUCTS [1]

21 CFR section	Number of respondents	Number of responses per respondent	Total annual responses	Average burden per response	Total hours
25.40(a) and (c)	5,832	1	5,832	80	466,560

[1] There are no capital costs or operating and maintenance costs associated with this collection of information.

The Estimated Annual Reporting Burden for Human Foods is no longer a part of this information collection. The burden has now been incorporated into OMB control number 0910–0541.

Our estimated burden for the information collection reflects an overall increase of 453,834 hours (currently approved 231,224) and a corresponding increase of 7,108 annual responses (currently approved 15,527). The new estimated totals are 685,058 hours and 22,635 annual responses. We attribute this adjustment to an increase in the number of EA submissions we received since the last extension.

Dated: June 1, 2018.

Leslie Kux,

Associate Commissioner for Policy.

[FR Doc. 2018–12221 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4164–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Food and Drug Administration

[Docket No. FDA–2018–N–1860]

Advisory Committee; Pulmonary-Allergy Drugs Advisory Committee, Renewal

AGENCY: Food and Drug Administration, HHS.

ACTION: Notice; renewal of advisory committee.

SUMMARY: The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is announcing the renewal of the Pulmonary-Allergy Drugs Advisory Committee by the Commissioner of Food and Drugs (the Commissioner). The Commissioner has determined that it is in the public interest to renew the Pulmonary-Allergy Drugs Advisory Committee for an additional 2 years beyond the charter expiration date. The new charter will be in effect until May 30, 2020.

DATES: Authority for the Pulmonary-Allergy Drugs Advisory Committee will expire on May 30, 2020, unless the Commissioner formally determines that renewal is in the public interest.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Cindy Chee, Center for Drug Evaluation and Research, Food and Drug Administration, 10903 New Hampshire Ave., Bldg. 31, Rm. 2417, Silver Spring, MD 20993–0002; 301–796–9001, email: *PADAC@fda.hhs.gov*.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Pursuant to 41 CFR 102–3.65 and approval by the Department of Health and Human Services pursuant to 45 CFR part 11 and by the General Services Administration, FDA is announcing the renewal of the Pulmonary-Allergy Drugs Advisory Committee (the Committee). The Committee is a discretionary Federal advisory committee established to provide advice to the Commissioner.

The Committee advises the Commissioner or designee in discharging responsibilities as they relate to helping to ensure safe and effective drugs for human use and, as required, any other product for which FDA has regulatory responsibility.

The Committee reviews and evaluates available data concerning the safety and effectiveness of marketed and investigational human drug products for use in the treatment of pulmonary disease and diseases with allergic and/or immunologic mechanisms and makes appropriate recommendations to the Commissioner of Food and Drugs.

The Committee shall consist of a core of 11 voting members including the Chair. Members and the Chair are selected by the Commissioner or designee from among authorities knowledgeable in the fields of pulmonary medicine, allergy, clinical immunology, and epidemiology or statistics. Members will be invited to serve for overlapping terms of up to 4 years. Almost all non-Federal members of this committee serve as Special Government Employees. The core of voting members may include one technically qualified member, selected by the Commissioner or designee, who is identified with consumer interests and is recommended by either a consortium of consumer-oriented organizations or other interested persons. In addition to the voting members, the Committee may include one non-voting member who is identified with industry interests.

Further information regarding the most recent charter and other information can be found at *https://www.fda.gov/AdvisoryCommittees/CommitteesMeetingMaterials/Drugs/Pulmonary-AllergyDrugsAdvisoryCommittee/ucm107567.htm* or by contacting the Designated Federal Officer (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**). In light of the fact that no change has been made to the committee name or description of duties, no amendment will be made to 21 CFR 14.100.

This document is issued under the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. app.). For general information related to FDA advisory committees, please check *https://www.fda.gov/AdvisoryCommittees/default.htm*.

Dated: June 1, 2018.

Leslie Kux,

Associate Commissioner for Policy.

[FR Doc. 2018–12219 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4164–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Food and Drug Administration

[Docket No. FDA–2018–N–0478]

Sebela Ireland, Ltd. et al.; Withdrawal of Approval of 24 Abbreviated New Drug Applications; Correction

AGENCY: Food and Drug Administration, HHS.

ACTION: Notice; correction.

SUMMARY: The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is correcting a notice that appeared in the **Federal Register** on February 23, 2018. The notice announced the voluntary withdrawal of approval of 24 abbreviated new drug applications (ANDAs) from multiple applicants, effective March 26, 2018. The notice indicated that FDA was withdrawing approval of the following ANDA after receiving a withdrawal request from Sun Pharmaceutical Industries, Ltd., c/o Sun Pharmaceutical Industries, Inc. (Sun Pharmaceutical), 2 Independence Way, Princeton, NJ 08540: ANDA 077483, Benazepril Hydrochloride and Hydrochlorothiazide Tablets, 5 milligrams (mg)/6.25 mg, 10 mg/12.5 mg, 20 mg/12.5 mg, and 20 mg/25 mg. Before withdrawal of this ANDA became effective, however, Sun

Pharmaceutical informed FDA that it did not want approval of the ANDA withdrawn. Because Sun Pharmaceutical timely requested that approval of this ANDA not be withdrawn, the approval of ANDA 077483 is still in effect.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Trang Tran, Center for Drug Evaluation and Research, Food and Drug Administration, 10903 New Hampshire Ave., Bldg. 75, Rm. 1671, Silver Spring, MD 20993–0002, 240–402–7945.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In the **Federal Register** of Friday, February 23, 2018 (83 FR 8089), appearing on page 8089 in FR Doc. 2018–03700, the following correction is made:

1. On page 8090, the entry for ANDA 077483 in the table is removed.

Dated: June 1, 2018.

Leslie Kux,

Associate Commissioner for Policy.

[FR Doc. 2018–12220 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4164–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Food and Drug Administration

[Docket No. FDA–2018–D–1774]

Requests for Feedback and Meetings for Medical Device Submissions: The Q-Submission Program; Draft Guidance for Industry and Food and Drug Administration Staff; Availability

AGENCY: Food and Drug Administration, HHS.

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: The Food and Drug Administration (FDA or Agency) is announcing the availability of a draft document entitled ''Requests for Feedback and Meetings for Medical Device Submissions: The Q-Submission Program; Draft Guidance for Industry and Food and Drug Administration Staff.'' This draft guidance document provides an overview of the mechanisms available to applicants through which they can request feedback from or a meeting with FDA regarding potential or planned medical device investigational device exemption (IDE) applications, premarket approval (PMA) applications, humanitarian device exemption (HDE) applications, evaluation of automatic class III designations (de novo requests), premarket notification (510(k)) submissions, Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA) Waiver by Application, Accessory Classification Requests, and certain investigational new drug (IND) applications and biologics license applications (BLAs). This draft guidance, when finalized, is intended to supersede the document entitled ''Requests for Feedback on Medical Device Submissions: The Pre-Submission Program and Meetings with Food and Drug Administration Staff'' issued on September 29, 2017. This draft guidance is not final nor is it in effect at this time.

DATES: Submit either electronic or written comments on the draft guidance by August 6, 2018 to ensure that the Agency considers your comment on this draft guidance before it begins work on the final version of the guidance.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments on any guidance at any time as follows:

Electronic Submissions

Submit electronic comments in the following way:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal: https://www.regulations.gov.* Follow the instructions for submitting comments. Comments submitted electronically, including attachments, to *https://www.regulations.gov* will be posted to the docket unchanged. Because your comment will be made public, you are solely responsible for ensuring that your comment does not include any confidential information that you or a third party may not wish to be posted, such as medical information, your or anyone else's Social Security number, or confidential business information, such as a manufacturing process. Please note that if you include your name, contact information, or other information that identifies you in the body of your comments, that information will be posted on *https://www.regulations.gov.*
- If you want to submit a comment with confidential information that you do not wish to be made available to the public, submit the comment as a written/paper submission and in the manner detailed (see ''Written/Paper Submissions'' and ''Instructions'').

Written/Paper Submissions

Submit written/paper submissions as follows:

- *Mail/Hand delivery/Courier (for written/paper submissions):* Dockets Management Staff (HFA–305), Food and Drug Administration, 5630 Fishers Lane, Rm. 1061, Rockville, MD 20852.
- For written/paper comments submitted to the Dockets Management Staff, FDA will post your comment, as well as any attachments, except for information submitted, marked and identified, as confidential, if submitted as detailed in ''Instructions.''

Instructions: All submissions received must include the Docket No. FDA–2018–D–1774 for ''Requests for Feedback and Meetings for Medical Device Submissions: The Q-Submission Program; Draft Guidance for Industry and Food and Drug Administration Staff.'' Received comments will be placed in the docket and, except for those submitted as ''Confidential Submissions,'' publicly viewable at *https://www.regulations.gov* or at the Dockets Management Staff between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

- Confidential Submissions—To submit a comment with confidential information that you do not wish to be made publicly available, submit your comments only as a written/paper submission. You should submit two copies total. One copy will include the information you claim to be confidential with a heading or cover note that states ''THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION.'' The Agency will review this copy, including the claimed confidential information, in its consideration of comments. The second copy, which will have the claimed confidential information redacted/blacked out, will be available for public viewing and posted on *https://www.regulations.gov.* Submit both copies to the Dockets Management Staff. If you do not wish your name and contact information to be made publicly available, you can provide this information on the cover sheet and not in the body of your comments and you must identify this information as ''confidential.'' Any information marked as ''confidential'' will not be disclosed except in accordance with 21 CFR 10.20 and other applicable disclosure law. For more information about FDA's posting of comments to public dockets, see 80 FR 56469, September 18, 2015, or access the information at: *https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2015-09-18/pdf/2015-23389.pdf.*

Docket: For access to the docket to read background documents or the electronic and written/paper comments received, go to *https://www.regulations.gov* and insert the docket number, found in brackets in the heading of this document, into the ''Search'' box and follow the prompts and/or go to the Dockets Management Staff, 5630 Fishers Lane, Rm. 1061, Rockville, MD 20852.

You may submit comments on any guidance at any time (see 21 CFR 10.115(g)(5)).

An electronic copy of the guidance document is available for download from the internet. See the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section for

information on electronic access to the guidance. Submit written requests for a single hard copy of the draft guidance document entitled ''Requests for Feedback and Meetings for Medical Device Submissions: The Q-Submission Program; Draft Guidance for Industry and Food and Drug Administration Staff'' to the Office of the Center Director, Guidance and Policy Development, Center for Devices and Radiological Health, Food and Drug Administration, 10903 New Hampshire Ave., Bldg. 66, Rm. 5431, Silver Spring, MD 20993–0002 or the Office of Communication, Outreach, and Development, Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research, Food and Drug Administration, 10903 New Hampshire Ave., Bldg. 71, Rm. 3128, Silver Spring, MD 20993–0002. Send one self-addressed adhesive label to assist that office in processing your request.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: J. Allen Hill, Center for Devices and Radiological Health, Food and Drug Administration, 10903 New Hampshire Ave., Bldg. 66, Rm. 5627, Silver Spring, MD 20993–0002, 301–796–7086; or Stephen Ripley, Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research, Food and Drug Administration, 10903 New Hampshire Ave., Bldg. 71, Rm. 7301, Silver Spring, MD 20993, 240–402–7911.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

The pre-IDE program was established in 1995, to provide applicants a mechanism to obtain FDA feedback on future IDE applications prior to their submission. Over time, the pre-IDE program evolved to include feedback on PMA applications, HDE applications, de novo requests, and 510(k) submissions, as well as to address whether a clinical study requires submission of an IDE.

To capture this evolution, the Secretary of Health and Human Services' 2012 Commitment Letter to Congress regarding the Medical Device User Fee Amendments of 2012 (MDUFA III) included FDA's commitment to institute a structured process for managing these interactions, referring to them as ''Pre-Submissions.'' The Pre-Submission Guidance, published February 18, 2014, implemented the broader Q-Submission (Q-Sub) Program, which includes Pre-Submissions (Pre-Subs), as well as additional opportunities to engage with FDA.

As part of the Medical Device User Fee Amendments of 2017 (MDUFA IV), industry and the Agency agreed to refine the Q-Sub Program with changes related to the scheduling of Pre-Sub meetings and a new performance goal on the timing of FDA feedback on Pre-Subs. This guidance reflects those changes and clarifies other elements of the Q-Sub program.

This draft guidance document provides an overview of the mechanisms available to applicants through which they can request feedback from or a meeting with FDA regarding potential or planned medical device IDE applications, PMA applications, HDE applications, de novo requests, 510(k) Submissions, CLIA Waiver by Application, Accessory Classification Requests, and certain INDs and BLAs.

II. Significance of Guidance

This draft guidance is being issued consistent with FDA's good guidance practices regulation (21 CFR 10.115). The draft guidance, when finalized, will represent the current thinking of FDA on ''Requests for Feedback and Meetings for Medical Device Submissions: The Q-Submission Program; Draft Guidance for Industry and Food and Drug Administration Staff.'' It does not establish any rights for any person and is not binding on FDA or the public. You can use an alternative approach if it satisfies the requirements of the applicable statutes and regulations. This guidance is not subject to Executive Order 12866.

III. Electronic Access

Persons interested in obtaining a copy of the draft guidance may do so by downloading an electronic copy from the internet. A search capability for all Center for Devices and Radiological Health guidance documents is available at *https://www.fda.gov/MedicalDevices/DeviceRegulationandGuidance/GuidanceDocuments/default.htm.* This draft guidance is also available at *https://www.fda.gov/BiologicsBloodVaccines/GuidanceComplianceRegulatoryInformation/default.htm* or *https://www.regulations.gov.* Persons unable to download an electronic copy of ''Requests for Feedback and Meetings for Medical Device Submissions: The Q-Submission Program; Draft Guidance for Industry and Food and Drug Administration Staff'' may send an email request to *CDRH-Guidance@fda.hhs.gov* to receive an electronic copy of the document. Please use the document number 1677 to identify the guidance you are requesting.

IV. Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995

This draft guidance also refers to previously approved information collections found in FDA regulations. These collections of information are subject to review by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501–3520). The collections of information in 21 CFR part 803 are approved under OMB control number 0910–0437; the collections of information in 21 CFR part 807, subpart E are approved under OMB control number 0910–0120; the collections of information in 21 CFR part 812 are approved under OMB control number 0910–0078; the collections of information in 21 CFR part 814 are approved under OMB control number 0910–0231; and the collections of information for ''Request for Feedback on Medical Device Submissions'' are approved under OMB control number 0910–0756.

Dated: June 1, 2018.

Leslie Kux,

Associate Commissioner for Policy.

[FR Doc. 2018–12223 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4164–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Food and Drug Administration

[Docket No. FDA–2018–N–1823]

Pulmonary-Allergy Drugs Advisory Committee; Notice of Meeting; Establishment of a Public Docket; Request for Comments

AGENCY: Food and Drug Administration, HHS.

ACTION: Notice, establishment of a public docket; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announces a forthcoming public advisory committee meeting of the Pulmonary-Allergy Drugs Advisory Committee. The general function of the committee is to provide advice and recommendations to FDA on regulatory issues. The meeting will be open to the public. FDA is establishing a docket for public comment on this document.

DATES: The meeting will be held on July 25, 2018, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

ADDRESSES: FDA White Oak Campus, 10903 New Hampshire Ave., Bldg. 31 Conference Center, the Great Room (Rm. 1503), Silver Spring, MD 20993–0002. Answers to commonly asked questions including information regarding special accommodations due to a disability, visitor parking, and transportation may be accessed at: *https://www.fda.gov/AdvisoryCommittees/AboutAdvisoryCommittees/ucm408555.htm.*

FDA is establishing a docket for public comment on this meeting. The docket number is FDA–2018–N–1823. The docket will close on July 24, 2018. Submit either electronic or written comments on this public meeting by July 24, 2018. Please note that late, untimely filed comments will not be considered. Electronic comments must be submitted on or before July 24, 2018. The *https://www.regulations.gov* electronic filing system will accept comments until midnight Eastern Time at the end of July 24, 2018. Comments received by mail/hand delivery/courier (for written/paper submissions) will be considered timely if they are postmarked or the delivery service acceptance receipt is on or before that date.

Comments received on or before July 11, 2018, will be provided to the committee. Comments received after that date will be taken into consideration by FDA.

You may submit comments as follows:

Electronic Submissions

Submit electronic comments in the following way:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal: https://www.regulations.gov.* Follow the instructions for submitting comments. Comments submitted electronically, including attachments, to *https://www.regulations.gov* will be posted to the docket unchanged. Because your comment will be made public, you are solely responsible for ensuring that your comment does not include any confidential information that you or a third party may not wish to be posted, such as medical information, your or anyone else's Social Security number, or confidential business information, such as a manufacturing process. Please note that if you include your name, contact information, or other information that identifies you in the body of your comments, that information will be posted on *https://www.regulations.gov.*
- If you want to submit a comment with confidential information that you do not wish to be made available to the public, submit the comment as a written/paper submission and in the manner detailed (see ''Written/Paper Submissions'' and ''Instructions'').

Written/Paper Submissions

Submit written/paper submissions as follows:

- *Mail/Hand delivery/Courier (for written/paper submissions):* Dockets Management Staff (HFA–305), Food and Drug Administration, 5630 Fishers Lane, Rm. 1061, Rockville, MD 20852.
- For written/paper comments submitted to the Dockets Management Staff, FDA will post your comment, as well as any attachments, except for information submitted, marked and identified, as confidential, if submitted as detailed in ''Instructions.''

Instructions: All submissions received must include the Docket No. FDA–2018–N–1823, for ''Pulmonary-Allergy Drugs Advisory Committee; Notice of Meeting; Establishment of a Public Docket; Request for Comments.'' Received comments, those filed in a timely manner (see **ADDRESSSES**), will be placed in the docket and, except for those submitted as ''Confidential Submissions,'' publicly viewable at *https://www.regulations.gov* or at the Dockets Management Staff between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

- Confidential Submissions—To submit a comment with confidential information that you do not wish to be made publicly available, submit your comments only as a written/paper submission. You should submit two copies total. One copy will include the information you claim to be confidential with a heading or cover note that states ''THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION.'' FDA will review this copy, including the claimed confidential information, in its consideration of comments. The second copy, which will have the claimed confidential information redacted/blacked out, will be available for public viewing and posted on *https://www.regulations.gov.* Submit both copies to the Dockets Management Staff. If you do not wish your name and contact information be made publicly available, you can provide this information on the cover sheet and not in the body of your comments and you must identify the information as ''confidential.'' Any information marked as ''confidential'' will not be disclosed except in accordance with 21 CFR 10.20 and other applicable disclosure law. For more information about FDA's posting of comments to public dockets, see 80 FR 56469, September 18, 2015, or access the information at: *https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2015-09-18/pdf/2015-23389.pdf.*

Docket: For access to the docket to read background documents or the electronic and written/paper comments received, go to *https://www.regulations.gov* and insert the docket number, found in brackets in the heading of this document, into the ''Search'' box and follow the prompts and/or go to the Dockets Management Staff, 5630 Fishers Lane, Rm. 1061, Rockville, MD 20852.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jennifer Shepherd, Center for Drug Evaluation and Research, Food and Drug Administration, 10903 New Hampshire Ave., Bldg. 31, Rm. 2417, Silver Spring, MD 20993–0002, 301–796–9001, Fax: 301–847–8533, email: *PADAC@fda.hhs.gov,* or FDA Advisory Committee Information Line, 1–800–741–8138 (301–443–0572 in the Washington, DC area). A notice in the **Federal Register** about last minute modifications that impact a previously announced advisory committee meeting cannot always be published quickly enough to provide timely notice. Therefore, you should always check the FDA's website at *https://www.fda.gov/AdvisoryCommittees/default.htm* and scroll down to the appropriate advisory committee meeting link, or call the advisory committee information line to learn about possible modifications before coming to the meeting.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Agenda: The committee will discuss supplemental biologics license application (sBLA) 125526 for mepolizumab for injection, submitted by GlaxoSmithKline for add-on treatment to inhaled corticosteroid-based maintenance treatment for the reduction of exacerbations in patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) guided by blood eosinophil counts.

FDA intends to make background material available to the public no later than 2 business days before the meeting. If FDA is unable to post the background material on its website prior to the meeting, the background material will be made publicly available at the location of the advisory committee meeting, and the background material will be posted on FDA's website after the meeting. Background material is available at *https://www.fda.gov/AdvisoryCommittees/Calendar/default.htm.* Scroll down to the appropriate advisory committee meeting link.

Procedure: Interested persons may present data, information, or views, orally or in writing, on issues pending before the committee. Written submissions may be made to the contact person on or before July 11, 2018. Oral presentations from the public will be scheduled between approximately 1 p.m. and 2 p.m. Those individuals interested in making formal oral presentations should notify the contact person and submit a brief statement of the general nature of the evidence or arguments they wish to present, the names and addresses of proposed participants, and an indication of the

approximate time requested to make their presentation on or before July 2, 2018. Time allotted for each presentation may be limited. If the number of registrants requesting to speak is greater than can be reasonably accommodated during the scheduled open public hearing session, FDA may conduct a lottery to determine the speakers for the scheduled open public hearing session. The contact person will notify interested persons regarding their request to speak by July 3, 2018.

Persons attending FDA's advisory committee meetings are advised that FDA is not responsible for providing access to electrical outlets.

For press inquiries, please contact the Office of Media Affairs at *fdaoma@fda.hhs.gov* or 301–796–4540.

FDA welcomes the attendance of the public at its advisory committee meetings and will make every effort to accommodate persons with disabilities. If you require accommodations due to a disability, please contact Jennifer Shepherd (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**) at least 7 days in advance of the meeting.

FDA is committed to the orderly conduct of its advisory committee meetings. Please visit our website at *https://www.fda.gov/AdvisoryCommittees/AboutAdvisoryCommittees/ucm111462.htm* for procedures on public conduct during advisory committee meetings.

Notice of this meeting is given under the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. app. 2).

Dated: June 1, 2018.

Leslie Kux,

Associate Commissioner for Policy.

[FR Doc. 2018–12226 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4164–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Office of the Secretary

Facilitation of Public-Private Dialogue to Increase Innovation and Investment in the Healthcare Sector

AGENCY: Immediate Office of the Secretary, HHS.

ACTION: Request for information.

SUMMARY: This request for information solicits public comment on a planned initiative of the Office of the Deputy Secretary of HHS to develop a workgroup to facilitate constructive, high-level dialogue between HHS leadership and those focused on innovating and investing in the healthcare industry. HHS seeks comment on how to structure a workgroup, or other form of interaction between the Department and such participants in the healthcare industry, in order to best support communication and understanding between these parties that will spur investment, increase competition, accelerate innovation, and allow capital investment in the healthcare sector to have a more significant impact on the health and wellbeing of Americans. HHS also seeks comment more broadly on opportunities for increased engagement and dialogue between HHS and those focused on innovating and investing in the healthcare industry.

DATES: Comments must be submitted within 30 days after the date of publication in the **Federal Register**.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments in one of three ways (please choose only one of the ways listed):

1. *Electronically.* You may submit electronic comments through *http://www.regulations.gov*.

2. *By regular mail.* You may mail written comments to the following address ONLY: Immediate Office of the Secretary, Office of the Deputy Secretary, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, *Attention: RFI Regarding Healthcare Sector Innovation and Investment Workgroup*, 200 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20201.

Please allow sufficient time for mailed comments to be received before the close of the comment period.

3. *By express or overnight mail.* You may mail written comments to the following address ONLY: Immediate Office of the Secretary, Office of the Deputy Secretary, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, *Attention: RFI Regarding Healthcare Sector Innovation and Investment Workgroup*, 200 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20201.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: William Brady, (202) 690–6133.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

The healthcare industry is a complex and highly regulated industry, and although significant investment occurs within the industry, innovation and investment in the healthcare industry must increase to produce more significant impact on the health and wellbeing of the American people. Through this effort, the Department intends to provide a forum for HHS leadership to engage in a dialogue with those focused on innovating and investing in the healthcare industry, such as healthcare innovation-focused companies, healthcare startup incubators and accelerators, healthcare investment professionals, healthcare-focused private equity firms, healthcare-focused venture capital firms, and lenders to healthcare investors and innovators. While HHS seeks comment on the structure and focus of the workgroup, as well as other opportunities for engagement, the Department envisions the workgroup as a forum to hear the individual perspectives of attendees and foster new and innovative approaches to tackle the complicated challenges facing the healthcare industry. The Department intends for non-HHS attendees to be diverse across the subsectors of the healthcare industry and the investment and innovation lifecycles, and for HHS attendees to be diverse across the Department in senior leadership positions. Workgroup members will not be asked to provide any reports or collaborative work product. No travel expenses, per diem, or compensation of any type will be provided to attendees.

II. Solicitation of Comments

HHS seeks comment on how to structure the workgroup in order to best support communication and understanding between these parties that will spur investment in the healthcare industry, increase competition, improve innovation, and allow capital investment in the healthcare sector to have a more significant impact on the health and wellbeing of Americans. HHS also seeks comment more broadly on opportunities for increased engagement and dialogue between HHS and those focused on innovating and investing in the healthcare industry. Specifically, HHS seeks comments addressing the following topics:

1. Specific areas of inquiry or focus for the workgroup. Should the workgroup review recent developments in health innovation and investing? Should the workgroup examine perceived barriers to innovation and competition in the healthcare industry? Should the workgroup encourage outside parties to provide HHS with information about how they are affected by HHS programs or regulatory requirements? Should the workgroup provide a forum for attendees to share their perspectives as to how the Department may improve relevant regulations, guidance, or other documents? Should the workgroup examine ways to encourage private sector investment to help combat health crises? What other areas of focus would best help the Department engage with diverse subsectors of the healthcare

industry and investment industry in order to increase innovation and investment in the healthcare sector?

2. How the workgroup should be convened and structured, including what subsectors of the healthcare economy should be invited to participate, and the most effective size. How should the agency structure meetings or other engagements in order to best facilitate the exchange of information and the presentation of attendees' individual perspectives? The Department seeks comment on how suitable attendees should be identified and selected to attend and engage in an exchange of ideas about the Department's goals of increasing innovation and investment in the healthcare sector.

3. HHS also seeks comment more broadly on opportunities for increased engagement and dialogue between HHS and those focused on innovating and investing in the healthcare industry, including alternatives to the workgroup structure discussed in this request for information. The Department is interested in comments that propose alternatives for developing a durable and consistent approach to increase innovation and investment in the healthcare sector to improve the public health and wellbeing of Americans.

This is a request for information only. Respondents are encouraged to provide complete but concise responses to any or all of the questions outlined above. This request for information is issued solely for information and planning purposes; it does not constitute a notice of proposed rulemaking or request for proposals, applications, proposal abstracts, or quotations, nor does it suggest that the Department will undertake any particular action in response to comments. This request for information does not commit the United States Government (''Government'') to contract for any supplies or services or make a grant award. Further, HHS is not seeking proposals through this request for information and will not accept unsolicited proposals. Respondents are advised that the Government will not pay for any information or administrative costs incurred in response to this request for information; all costs associated with responding to this request for information will be solely at the interested party's expense. Not responding to this request for information does not preclude participation in any future rulemaking or procurement, if conducted. It is the responsibility of the potential responders to monitor this request for information announcement for additional information pertaining to this request. We also note that HHS will not respond to questions about the policy issues raised in this request for information. HHS may or may not choose to contact individual responders. Such communications would only serve to further clarify written responses. Contractor support personnel may be used to review the responses submitted under this request for information. Responses to this notice are not offers and cannot be accepted by the Government to form a binding contract or issue a grant. Information obtained in response to this request for information may be used by the Government for program planning on a non-attribution basis. Respondents should not include any information that might be considered proprietary or confidential. This request for information should not be construed as a commitment or authorization to incur cost for which reimbursement would be required or sought. All submissions become Government property and will not be returned. HHS may publicly post the comments received, or a summary thereof. While responses to this request for information do not bind HHS to any further actions related to the response, all comments may be posted online on *http://www.regulations.gov.*

III. Collection of Information

This document does not impose information collection requirements; that is, reporting, recordkeeping or third-party disclosure requirements. This request for information constitutes a general solicitation of comments. In accordance with the implementing regulations of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA) at 5 CFR 1320.3(h)(4), information subject to the PRA does not generally include ''facts or opinions submitted in response to general solicitations of comments from the public, published in the **Federal Register** or other publications, regardless of the form or format thereof, provided that no person is required to supply specific information pertaining to the commenter, other than that necessary for self-identification, as a condition of the agency's full consideration of the comment.'' Consequently, this document need not be reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget under the authority of the PRA (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*).

Authority: 42 U.S.C. 3501.

Dated: June 1, 2018.

Eric D. Hargan,

Deputy Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services.

[FR Doc. 2018–12234 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4150–03–P

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

National Institutes of Health

National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases; Notice of Closed Meetings

Pursuant to section 10(d) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended, notice is hereby given of the following meetings.

The meetings will be closed to the public in accordance with the provisions set forth in sections 552b(c)(4) and 552b(c)(6), Title 5 U.S.C., as amended. The grant applications and the discussions could disclose confidential trade secrets or commercial property such as patentable material, and personal information concerning individuals associated with the grant applications, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.

Name of Committee: Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases Initial Review Group; Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases Special Grants Review Committee.

Date: June 13–14, 2018.

Time: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Agenda: To review and evaluate grant applications.

Place: Embassy Suites, Chevy Chase Pavilion, 4300 Military Rd. NW, Washington, DC 20015.

Contact Person: Helen Lin, Ph.D., Scientific Review Officer, NIH/NIAMS/RB, 6701 Democracy Blvd., Suite 800, Plaza One, Bethesda, MD 20817, 301–594–4952, *linh1@mail.nih.gov*.

Name of Committee: Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases Initial Review Group; Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases Clinical Trials Review Committee.

Date: June 19, 2018.

Time: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Agenda: To review and evaluate grant applications.

Place: Hyatt Regency Bethesda, 1 Bethesda Metro Center, Bethesda, MD 20814.

Contact Person: Nakia C Brown, Ph.D., Scientific Review Officer, 6701 Democracy Blvd., RM 816, Bethesda, MD 20892, 301–827–4905, *brownnac@mail.nih.gov*.

(Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Nos. 93.846, Arthritis, Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases Research, National Institutes of Health, HHS)

Dated: June 1, 2018.

Sylvia L. Neal,

Program Analyst, Office of Federal Advisory Committee Policy.

[FR Doc. 2018–12175 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4140–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

National Institutes of Health

Prospective Grant of an Exclusive Patent License: The Development of an Anti-BCMA Immunotoxin for the Treatment of Human Cancer

AGENCY: National Institutes of Health, Department of Health and Human Services.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The National Cancer Institute, an institute of the National Institutes of Health, Department of Health and Human Services, is contemplating the grant of an Exclusive Patent License to practice the inventions embodied in the Patents and Patent Applications listed in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section of this notice to BEORO Therapeutics, GmbH. (''Beoro'') located in Seefeld, Germany.

DATES: Only written comments and/or complete applications for a license which are received by the National Cancer Institute's Technology Transfer Center on or before June 22, 2018 will be considered.

ADDRESSES: Requests for copies of the patent application, inquiries, and comments relating to the contemplated an Exclusive Patent License should be directed to: David A. Lambertson, Ph.D., Senior Technology Transfer Manager, NCI Technology Transfer Center, 9609 Medical Center Drive, RM 1E530 MSC 9702, Bethesda, MD 20892–9702 (for business mail), Rockville, MD 20850–9702 Telephone: (240)–276–5530; Facsimile: (240)–276–5504 Email: *david.lambertson@nih.gov*.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Intellectual Property

The following represents the intellectual property to be licensed under the prospective agreement:

U.S. Patent Application 62/255,255 (HHS reference E–010–2016–0–US–01), U.S. Patent Application 62/257,493 (HHS reference E–010–2016–1–US–01), and PCT Patent Application PCT/US2016/061320 (HHS reference E–010–2016–2–PCT–01);

U.S. Patent Application 61/887,418 (HHS reference E–771–2013–0–US–01), U.S. Patent Application 61/908,464 (HHS reference E–771–2013–1–US–01), U.S. Patent Application 61/982,051 (HHS reference E–771–2013–2–US–01), U.S. Patent Application 61/052,665 (HHS reference E–771–2013–3–US–01), PCT Application PCT/US2014/058941 (HHS reference E–771–2013–4–PCT–01), U.S. Patent 9,388,222 (HHS reference E–771–2013–4–US–02), Australian Patent Application 2014329437 (HHS reference E–771–2013–4–AU–08), Canadian Patent Application 2926215 (HHS reference E–771–2013–4–CA–09), Chinese Patent Application 201480062185.7 (HHS Reference E–771–2013–4–CN–10), European Patent Application 14789449.7 (HHS reference E–771–2013–4–EP–11), Indian Patent Application 201647015226 (HHS reference E–771–2013–4–IN–12), Russian Patent Application 2016114406 (HHS reference E–771–2013–4–RU–13), Japanese Patent Application (HHS reference E–771–2013–4–JP–14), and U.S. Patent Application 15/191,392 (HHS reference E–771–2013–4–US–15);

U.S. Patent Application 61/535,668 (HHS reference E–263–2011–0–US–01), PCT Application PCT/US2012/055034 (HHS reference E–263–2011–0–PCT–02), Australian Patent 2012308591 (HHS reference E–263–2011–0–AU–03), Canadian Patent Application 2846608 (HHS reference E–263–2011–0–CA–04), European Patent 2755993 (HHS reference E–263–2011–0–EP–05), U.S. Patent 9,206,240 (HHS reference E–263–2011–0–US–06), Hong Kong Patent Application 14111650.2 (HHS reference E–263–2011–0–HK–07), U.S. Patent 9,657,066 (HHS reference E–263–2011–0–US–08), U.S. Patent Application 15/488,898 (HHS reference E–263–2011–0–US–09) and European Patent Application 14/927,645 (HHS reference E–263–2011–0–EP–18);

U.S. Patent Application 61/495,085 (HHS reference E–174–2011–0–US–01), PCT Application PCT/US2012/041234 (HHS reference E–174–2011–0–PCT–02), Australian Patent 2012268013 (HHS reference E–174–2011–0–AU–03), Brazilian Patent Application 112013031262–9 (HHS reference E–174–2011–0–BR–04), Canadian Patent Application 2838013 (HHS reference E–174–2011–0–CA–05), Chinese Patent Application 201280039071.1 (HHS reference E–174–2011–0–CN–06), European Patent 2718308 (HHS reference E–174–2011–0–EP–07) as validated in Germany, Spain, France, the United Kingdom, and Italy, Hong Kong Patent Application 14105911.9 (HHS reference E–174–2011–0–HK–08), Japanese Patent 6100764 (HHS reference E–174–2011–0–JP–09), South Korean Patent Application 2013–7032402 (HHS reference E–174–2011–0–KR–10), Mexican Patent Application MX/a/2013/014388 (HHS reference E–174–2011–0–MX–11), Russian Patent 2627216 (HHS reference E–174–2011–0–RU–12), U.S. Patent 9,346,859 (HHS reference E–174–2011–0–US–13), Hong Kong Patent Application 14106689.7 (HHS reference E–174–2011–0–HK–14), U.S. Patent 9,765,123 (HHS reference E–174–2011–0–US–15), Australian Patent Application 2017200541 (HHS reference E–174–2011–0–AU–16), European Patent Application 17163568.3 (HHS reference E–174–2011–0–EP–17), Japanese Patent Application 2017–031283 (HHS reference E–174–2011–0–JP–18), and U.S. Patent Application 15/693,705 (HHS reference E–174–2011/0–US–24);

U.S. Patent Application 61/241,620 (HHS reference E–269–2009–0–US–01), PCT Application PCT/US2010/048504 (HHS reference E–269–2009–0–PCT–02), Australian Patent 2010292069 (HHS reference E–269–2009–0–AU–03), Canadian Patent 2773665 (HHS reference E–269–2009–0–CA–04), Chinese Patent 201080049559.3 (HHS reference E–269–2009–0–CN–05), European Patent 2475398 (HHS reference E–269–2009–0–EP–06), as validated in France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom, Indian Patent Application 3197/CHENP/2012 (HHS reference E–269–2009–0–IN–07), Japanese Patent 5795765 (HHS reference E–269–2009–0–JP–08), Russian Patent Application 2012114005 (HHS reference E–269–2009–0–RU–09), and U.S. Patent 8,936,792 (HHS reference E–269–2009–0–US–10);

U.S. Patent Application 60/969,929 (HHS reference E–292–2007–0–US–01), PCT Application PCT/US2008/075296 (HHS reference E–292–2007–0–PCT–02), Australian Patent 2008296194 (HHS reference E–292–2007–0–AU–03), Canadian Patent 2698357 (HHS reference E–292–2007–0–CA–04), European Patent 2197903 (HHS reference E–292–2007–0–EP–05) as validated in Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Switzerland, Cyprus, Germany, Denmark, Estonia, Spain, Finland, France, the United Kingdom, Greece, Croatia, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Latvia, Monaco, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, and Turkey, U.S. Patent 8,871,906 (HHS reference E–292–2007–0–US–06), European Patent 2570425 (HHS reference E–292–2007–0–EP–07) as validated in France, Germany, the United Kingdom, Italy and Spain, and Hong Kong Patent Application 13106628.2 (HHS reference E–292–2007–0–HK–08);

U.S. Patent Application 60/703,798 (HHS reference E–262–2005–0–US–01), PCT Application PCT/US2006/028986 (HHS reference E–262–2005–0–PCT–02), Australian Patent 2006275865 (HHS reference E–262–2005–0–AU–03), Canadian Patent 2616987 (HHS reference E–262–2005–0–CA–04), European Patent 1910407 (HHS reference E–262–2005–0–EP–05) as validated in Switzerland, Germany, Spain, France, the United Kingdom, and Italy, U.S. Patent 8,907,060 (HHS reference E–262–2005–0–US–06), European Patent 2311854 (HHS reference E–262–2005–0–EP–07) as validated in Switzerland, Germany, Spain, France, the United Kingdom, and Italy, European Patent 2332970 (HHS reference E–262–2005–0–EP–08) as validated in Germany, Spain, France, the United Kingdom, and Italy, Australian Patent 2012216642 (HHS reference E–262–2005–0–AU–15), Australian Patent 2014208269 (HHS reference E–262–2005–0–AU–22), European Patent Application 15191388.6 (HHS reference E–262–2005–0–EP–28), European Patent 3006457 (HHS reference E–262–2005/0–EP–29) as validated in Austria, Belgium, Germany, Spain, France, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, and Poland, European Patent 3006458 (HHS reference E–262–2005–0–EP–30) as validated in Austria, Belgium, Germany, Spain, France, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, and Poland, Australian Patent 2016202754 (HHS reference E–262–2005–0–AU–31), and Canadian Patent Application 2941466 (HHS reference E–262–2005/0–CA–32);

and all continuing applications and foreign counterparts to the patents and applications listed above for each technology.

With respect to persons who have an obligation to assign their right, title and interest to the Government of the United States of America, the patent rights in these inventions have been assigned to the Government of the United States of America.

The prospective exclusive license territory may be worldwide and the field of use may be limited to the following:

''The development and commercialization of a monospecific BCMA-targeted immunotoxin, whereby the immunotoxin is comprised of:

(1) the complementary determining region (CDR) sequences of either

i. the anti-BCMA antibody known as BM24; or

ii. the anti-BCMA antibody known as BM306; and

(2) a *Pseudomonas* Exotoxin A-based payload consisting of a PE25 variant with or without alterations of one or more amino acids in one or more B cell and/or T cell epitopes.

for the treatment of hematological malignancies.''

The E–010–2016 technology discloses antibodies that recognize the BCMA (B Cell Maturation Antigen) protein. BCMA is expressed on the cell surface of several forms of cancer, most notably multiple myeloma. Although these BCMA antibodies can potentially be used in many therapeutic formats (*e.g.,* unconjugated antibodies, bispecific antibodies (and variants thereof), antibody-drug conjugates (ADCs), chimeric antigen receptors (CARs), etc., to target cancer cells for destruction, the contemplated field of use only concerns the development of one specific format (recombinant immunotoxins) using one type of toxin variant (*Pseudomonas* Exotoxin A variants). Many other formats, and therefore fields of use, remain available for licensing and development.

The E–263–2011–0, E–174–2011–0, E–269–2009–0, E–292–2007, E–262–2005–0 and E–771–2013–0–5 technologies (*i.e.,* ''non-E–010–2016–0 technologies'') all concern distinct variants of *Pseudomonas* Exotoxin A which can be used in the BCMA-targeted immunotoxin. The *Pseudomonas* Exotoxin A variants represent the ''payload'' portion of the immunotoxin, which is the portion that instigates the destruction of the cancer cells that are targeted by the aforementioned BCMA antibodies.

The development of a new therapeutic targeting BCMA will benefit public health by offering up a treatment for these cancers in instances when conventional first line therapies are ineffective.

This notice is made in accordance with 35 U.S.C. 209 and 37 CFR part 404. The prospective exclusive license will be royalty bearing, and the prospective exclusive license may be granted unless within fifteen (15) days from the date of this published notice, the National Cancer Institute receives written evidence and argument that establishes that the grant of the license would not be consistent with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 209 and 37 CFR part 404.

In response to this Notice, the public may file comments or objections. Comments and objections, other than those in the form of a completed license application, will not be treated confidentially, and may be made publicly available.

License applications submitted in response to this Notice will be presumed to contain business confidential information and any release of information in these license applications will be made only as required and upon a request under the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552.

Dated: June 1, 2018.

Richard U. Rodriguez,

Associate Director, Technology Transfer Center, National Cancer Institute.

[FR Doc. 2018–12179 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4140–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

National Institutes of Health

National Institute of Nursing Research; Notice to Close Meeting

Pursuant to section 10(d) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended, notice is hereby given of the following meeting.

The meeting will be closed to the public in accordance with the provisions set forth in sections 552b(c)(4) and 552b(c)(6), Title 5 U.S.C., as amended. The grant applications and the discussions could disclose confidential trade secrets or commercial property such as patentable material, and personal information concerning individuals associated with the grant applications, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.

Name of Committee: National Institute of Nursing Research Special Emphasis Panel; Multicenter Clinical Grants.

Date: June 6, 2018.

Time: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Agenda: To review and evaluate grant applications.

Place: Bethesda Marriott Suites, 6711 Democracy Boulevard, Bethesda, MD 20817.

Contact Person: Tamizchelvi Thyagarajan, Ph.D., Scientific Review Officer, National Institute of Nursing Research, National Institutes of Health, 6701 Democracy Boulevard, Bethesda, MD 20892, (301) 594–0343, *Tamizchelvi.thagarajan@nih.gov*.

This notice is being published less than 15 days prior to the meeting due to the timing limitations imposed by the review and funding cycle.

(Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Nos. 93.361, Nursing Research, National Institutes of Health, HHS)

Dated: June 1, 2018.

Sylvia L. Neal,

Program Analyst, Office of Federal Advisory Committee Policy.

[FR Doc. 2018–12178 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4140–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

National Institutes of Health

National Institute of Mental Health; Notice of Closed Meeting

Pursuant to section 10(d) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended, notice is hereby given of the following meeting.

The meeting will be closed to the public in accordance with the provisions set forth in sections 552b(c)(4) and 552b(c)(6), Title 5 U.S.C., as amended. The contract proposals and the discussions could disclose confidential trade secrets or commercial property such as patentable material, and personal information concerning individuals associated with the contract proposals, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.

Name of Committee: National Institute of Mental Health Special Emphasis Panel; NIMH Psychoactive Drug Screening Program (PDSP).

Date: June 19, 2018.

Time: 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Agenda: To review and evaluate contract proposals.

Place: National Institutes of Health, Neuroscience Center, 6001 Executive Boulevard, Rockville, MD 20852 (Telephone Conference Call).

Contact Person: Vinod Charles, Ph.D., Scientific Review Officer, Division of Extramural Activities, National Institute of Mental Health, NIH, Neuroscience Center, 6001 Executive Blvd., Room 6151, MSC 9606, Bethesda, MD 20892–9606, 301–443–1606, *charlesvi@mail.nih.gov*.

This notice is being published less than 15 days prior to the meeting due to the timing limitations imposed by the review and funding cycle.

(Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance Program No. 93.242, Mental Health Research Grants, National Institutes of Health, HHS)

Dated: May 31, 2018.

Melanie J. Pantoja,

Program Analyst, Office of Federal Advisory Committee Policy.

[FR Doc. 2018–12176 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4140–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

National Institutes of Health

End of the Call for Participation for Computational Photography Project for Pill Identification (C3PI)

AGENCY: National Institutes of Health, HHS.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: With the successful completion of the 2016 Pill Image Recognition Challenge, the National Library of Medicine (NLM) gratefully acknowledges the pharmaceutical manufacturers, re-packagers, wholesalers, and retail and institutional pharmacies that submitted prescription drug products for imaging as part of its Computational Photography Project for Pill Identification (C3PI). Effective immediately, the NLM is concluding its collection of digital imagery of C3PI oral solid dosage formulations (OSDFs), discontinuing the program, and is no longer accepting prescription drug products for photography.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Any question regarding C3PI and its discontinuation should be sent to: Dr. Terry Yoo at *splimage@nlm.nih.gov,* 301–827–4976.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: C3PI developed information infrastructure and computational tools for identifying pills from digital photographs and associated data. C3PI issued a Pill Image Recognition (PIR) computer vision challenge in January 2016, seeking software solutions for the content-based information retrieval of drug information from images submitted as queries. NLM quantitatively evaluated the resulting entries and awarded prizes to the winners. The findings from the PIR challenge were published in October 2016. See *https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5973812/.*

NLM is ending the project. No future prescription drug products will be accepted. Digital images will not be obtained of drug products that may have been submitted but not photographed as of the termination of this project.

Previous NLM Imaging Initiative Superseded: This notice supersedes all prior instructions provided by 79 FR 56381–56382 *https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2014/09/19/2014-22308/call-for-participation-for-computational-photography-project-for-pill-identification-c3pi,* published on September 19, 2014.

Dated: June 1, 2018.

Patricia Brennan,

Director, National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health.

[FR Doc. 2018–12273 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4140–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

National Institutes of Health

National Institute of Nursing Research; Notice to Close Meeting

Pursuant to section 10(d) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended, notice is hereby given of the following meeting.

The meeting will be closed to the public in accordance with the provisions set forth in sections 552b(c)(4) and 552b(c)(6), Title 5 U.S.C., as amended. The grant applications and the discussions could disclose confidential trade secrets or commercial property such as patentable material, and personal information concerning individuals associated with the grant applications, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.

Name of Committee: National Institute of Nursing Research Initial Review Group.

Date: June 21, 2018.

Time: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Agenda: To review and evaluate grant applications.

Place: Bethesda Marriott Suites, 6711 Democracy Boulevard, Bethesda, MD 20817.

Contact Person: Weiqun Li, MD, Scientific Review Officer, National Institute of Nursing Research, National Institutes of Health, 6701 Democracy Blvd., Suite 710, Bethesda, MD 20892, (301) 594–5966, *wli@mail.nih.gov*.

(Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Nos. 93.361, Nursing Research, National Institutes of Health, HHS)

Dated: June 1, 2018.

Sylvia L. Neal,

Program Analyst, Office of Federal Advisory Committee Policy.

[FR Doc. 2018–12177 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4140–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

National Institutes of Health

Center for Scientific Review; Notice of Closed Meetings

Pursuant to section 10(d) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended, notice is hereby given of the following meetings.

The meetings will be closed to the public in accordance with the provisions set forth in sections 552b(c)(4) and 552b(c)(6), Title 5 U.S.C., as amended. The grant applications and the discussions could disclose confidential trade secrets or commercial property such as patentable material, and personal information concerning individuals associated with the grant

applications, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.

Name of Committee: Center for Scientific Review Special Emphasis Panel; Member Conflict: Medical Imaging Investigations.

Date: June 29, 2018.

Time: 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Agenda: To review and evaluate grant applications.

Place: National Institutes of Health, 6701 Rockledge Drive, Bethesda, MD 20892 (Virtual Meeting).

Contact Person: Songtao Liu, MD, Scientific Review Officer, Center for Scientific Review, National Institutes of Health, 6701 Rockledge Drive, Room 5118, Bethesda, MD 20817, 301–827–6828, *songtao.liu@nih.gov*.

Name of Committee: Center for Scientific Review Special Emphasis Panel; Small Business: Dermatology, Rheumatology and Inflammation.

Date: July 6, 2018.

Time: 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Agenda: To review and evaluate grant applications.

Place: Hyatt at Olive 8, 1635 8th Avenue, Seattle, WA 98275.

Contact Person: Rajiv Kumar, Ph.D., Chief, MOSS IRG, Center for Scientific Review, National Institutes of Health, 6701 Rockledge Drive, Room 4216, MSC 7802, Bethesda, MD 20892, 301–435–1212, *kumarra@csr.nih.gov*.

Name of Committee: Center for Scientific Review Special Emphasis Panel; Role of Microbiome in the Developmental Origins of Health and Disease.

Date: July 6, 2018.

Time: 8:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Agenda: To review and evaluate grant applications.

Place: Embassy Suites by Hilton Washington DC Chevy Chase, Embassy Suites by Hilton Washington DC Chevy Chase, 4300 Military Road, Washington, DC 20015.

Contact Person: Meenakshisundar Ananthanarayanan, Ph.D., Scientific Review Officer, Center for Scientific Review, National Institutes of Health, 6701 Rockledge Drive, Room 2178, Bethesda, MD 20892, 301–827–6281, *meena.ananthanarayanan@nih.gov*.

Name of Committee: Center for Scientific Review Special Emphasis Panel; PAR16–274/275: Serious Adverse Drug Reaction Research.

Date: July 6, 2018.

Time: 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Agenda: To review and evaluate grant applications.

Place: National Institutes of Health, 6701 Rockledge Drive, Bethesda, MD 20892 (Virtual Meeting).

Contact Person: Alexander D Politis, Ph.D., Scientific Review Officer, Center for Scientific Review, National Institutes of Health, 6701 Rockledge Drive, Room 3210, MSC 7808, Bethesda, MD 20892, (301) 435–1150, *politisa@csr.nih.gov*.

Name of Committee: Center for Scientific Review Special Emphasis Panel; Member Conflict: Dermatology and Autoimmune Diseases.

Date: July 6, 2018.

Time: 1:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Agenda: To review and evaluate grant applications.

Place: Hyatt at Olive 8, 1635 8th Avenue, Seattle, WA 98275.

Contact Person: Rajiv Kumar, Ph.D., Chief, MOSS IRG, Center for Scientific Review, National Institutes of Health, 6701 Rockledge Drive, Room 4216, MSC 7802, Bethesda, MD 20892, 301–435–1212, *kumarra@csr.nih.gov*.

(Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Nos. 93.306, Comparative Medicine; 93.333, Clinical Research, 93.306, 93.333, 93.337, 93.393–93.396, 93.837–93.844, 93.846–93.878, 93.892, 93.893, National Institutes of Health, HHS)

Dated: June 1, 2018.

Sylvia L. Neal,

Program Analyst, Office of Federal Advisory Committee Policy.

[FR Doc. 2018–12174 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4140–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Coast Guard

[Docket No. USCG–2018–0453]

Certificate of Alternative Compliance for the M/V SAMANTHA S

AGENCY: Coast Guard, DHS.

ACTION: Notification of issuance of a certificate of alternative compliance.

SUMMARY: The Coast Guard announces that the Chief, Prevention Division, Thirteenth District has issued a certificate of alternative compliance from the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, 1972 (72 COLREGS), for the M/V SAMANTHA S (O.N. 1283014). We are issuing this notice because its publication is required by statute. Due to the construction and placement of the towing gear, deck equipment and required lights, the M/V SAMANTHA S cannot fully comply with the light, shape, or sound signal provisions of the 72 COLREGS without interfering with the vessel's design and construction. This notification of issuance of a certificate of alternative compliance promotes the Coast Guard's marine safety mission.

DATES: The Certificate of Alternative Compliance was issued on May 31, 2018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For information or questions about this notice call or email LT B. Luke Woods, Thirteenth District, U.S. Coast Guard; telephone 206–220–7232, email *Bert.L.Woods@uscg.mil@uscg.mil.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The United States is signatory to the International Maritime Organization's International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, 1972 (72 COLREGS), as amended. The special construction or purpose of some vessels makes them unable to comply with the light, shape, or sound signal provisions of the 72 COLREGS. Under statutory law [1] and Coast Guard regulation,[2] the vessel's owner, builder, operator, or agent of those vessels may apply for a certificate of alternative compliance (COAC).[3] For vessels of special construction, the cognizant Coast Guard District Office determines whether the vessel for which the COAC is sought complies as closely as possible with the 72 COLREGS, and decides whether to issue the COAC which must specify the required alternative installation. If the Coast Guard issues a COAC, under the governing statute [4] and regulations,[5] the Coast Guard must publish notice of this action. Once issued, a COAC remains valid until information supplied in the COAC application or the COAC terms become inapplicable to the vessel.

The Chief, Prevention Division, of the Thirteenth Coast Guard District, U.S. Coast Guard, certifies that the M/V SAMANTHA S (O.N. 1283014) is a vessel of special construction or purpose, and that, with respect to the position of the sternlight, towing light and sidelights, it is not possible to comply fully with the requirements of the provisions enumerated in the 72 COLREGS, without interfering with the normal operation, construction, or design of the vessel. The Chief, Prevention Division, of the Thirteenth Coast Guard District, U.S. Coast Guard further finds and certifies that the sternlight, towing light and sidelights, are in the closest possible compliance with the applicable provisions of the 72 COLREGS.[6]

This notice is issued under authority of 33 U.S.C. 1605(c) and 33 CFR 81.18.

Dated: May 31, 2018.

D.L. Brown,

Commander, U.S. Coast Guard, Acting Chief, Prevention Division, Thirteenth Coast Guard District.

[FR Doc. 2018–12288 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 9110–04–P

[1] 33 U.S.C. 1605(c).

[2] 33 CFR 81.3.

[3] 33 CFR 81.5.

[4] 33 U.S.C. 1605(c).

[5] 33 CFR 81.18.

[6] 33 U.S.C. 1605(a); 33 CFR 81.9.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Federal Emergency Management Agency

[Docket ID FEMA–2018–0002]

Changes in Flood Hazard Determinations

AGENCY: Federal Emergency Management Agency, DHS.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: New or modified Base (1-percent annual chance) Flood Elevations (BFEs), base flood depths, Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) boundaries or zone designations, and/or regulatory floodways (hereinafter referred to as flood hazard determinations) as shown on the indicated Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) for each of the communities listed in the table below are finalized. Each LOMR revises the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs), and in some cases the Flood Insurance Study (FIS) reports, currently in effect for the listed communities. The flood hazard determinations modified by each LOMR will be used to calculate flood insurance premium rates for new buildings and their contents.

DATES: Each LOMR was finalized as in the table below.

ADDRESSES: Each LOMR is available for inspection at both the respective Community Map Repository address listed in the table below and online through the FEMA Map Service Center at *https://msc.fema.gov.*

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Rick Sacbibit, Chief, Engineering Services Branch, Federal Insurance and Mitigation Administration, FEMA, 400 C Street SW, Washington, DC 20472, (202) 646–7659, or (email) *patrick.sacbibit@fema.dhs.gov;* or visit the FEMA Map Information eXchange (FMIX) online at *https://www.floodmaps.fema.gov/fhm/fmx_main.html.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) makes the final flood hazard determinations as shown in the LOMRs for each community listed in the table below. Notice of these modified flood hazard determinations has been published in newspapers of local circulation and 90 days have elapsed since that publication. The Deputy Associate Administrator for Insurance and Mitigation has resolved any appeals resulting from this notification.

The modified flood hazard determinations are made pursuant to section 206 of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, 42 U.S.C. 4105, and are in accordance with the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968, 42 U.S.C. 4001 *et seq.,* and with 44 CFR part 65.

For rating purposes, the currently effective community number is shown and must be used for all new policies and renewals.

The new or modified flood hazard information is the basis for the floodplain management measures that the community is required either to adopt or to show evidence of being already in effect in order to remain qualified for participation in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

This new or modified flood hazard information, together with the floodplain management criteria required by 44 CFR 60.3, are the minimum that are required. They should not be construed to mean that the community must change any existing ordinances that are more stringent in their floodplain management requirements. The community may at any time enact stricter requirements of its own or pursuant to policies established by other Federal, State, or regional entities.

These new or modified flood hazard determinations are used to meet the floodplain management requirements of the NFIP and also are used to calculate the appropriate flood insurance premium rates for new buildings, and for the contents in those buildings. The changes in flood hazard determinations are in accordance with 44 CFR 65.4.

Interested lessees and owners of real property are encouraged to review the final flood hazard information available at the address cited below for each community or online through the FEMA Map Service Center at *https://msc.fema.gov*.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance No. 97.022, ''Flood Insurance.'')

David I. Maurstad,

Deputy Associate Administrator for Insurance and Mitigation (Acting), Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency.

State and county	Location and case No.	Chief executive officer of community	Community map repository	Date of modification	Community No.
Alabama: Cullman (FEMA Docket No.: B–1807).	Unincorporated areas of Cullman County (17–04–5897P).	The Honorable Kenneth Walker, Chairman, Cullman County Board of Commissioners, 500 2nd Avenue Southwest, Cullman, AL 35055.	Cullman County Courthouse, 500 2nd Avenue Southwest, Cullman, AL 35055.	Apr. 27, 2018	010247
Arkansas: Benton (FEMA Docket No.: B–1807).	City of Lowell (17–06–3879P).	The Honorable Eldon Long, Mayor, City of Lowell, 216 North Lincoln Street, Lowell, AR 72745.	City Hall, 216 North Lincoln Street, Lowell, AR 72745.	Apr. 23, 2018	050342
Colorado:					
Broomfield (FEMA Docket No.: B–1810).	City and County of Broomfield (17–08–0870P).	The Honorable Randy Ahrens, Mayor, City and County of Broomfield, 1 DesCombes Drive, Broomfield, CO 80020.	Community Development Department, 1 DesCombes Drive, Broomfield, CO 80020.	May 4, 2018	085073
Jefferson (FEMA Docket No.: B–1807).	City of Lakewood (17–08–0933P).	The Honorable Adam A. Paul, Mayor, City of Lakewood, 470 South Allison Parkway, Lakewood, CO 80226.	Engineering Department, 470 South Allison Parkway, Lakewood, CO 80226.	Apr. 20, 2018	085075
Jefferson (FEMA Docket No.: B–1810).	City of Westminster (17–08–0870P).	The Honorable Herb Atchison, Mayor, City of Westminster, 4800 West 92nd Avenue, Westminster, CO 80031.	City Hall, 4800 West 92nd Avenue, Westminster, CO 80031.	May 4, 2018	080008
Jefferson (FEMA Docket No.: B–1807).	Unincorporated areas of Jefferson County (17–08–0933P).	The Honorable Libby Szabo, Chair, Jefferson County Board of Commissioners, 100 Jefferson County Parkway, Suite 5550, Golden, CO 80419.	Jefferson County Planning and Zoning Division, 100 Jefferson County Parkway, Suite 3550, Golden, CO 80419.	Apr. 20, 2018	080087
Teller (FEMA Docket No.: B–1810).	City of Woodland Park (17–08–0477P).	The Honorable Neil Levy, Mayor, City of Woodland Park, P.O. Box 9007, Woodland Park, CO 80866.	City Hall, 220 West South Avenue, Woodland Park, CO 80866.	Apr. 19, 2018	080175

State and county	Location and case No.	Chief executive officer of community	Community map repository	Date of modification	Community No.
Teller (FEMA Docket No.: B–1810).	Unincorporated areas of Teller County (17–08–0477P).	The Honorable Dave Paul, Chairman, Teller County Board of Commissioners, P.O. Box 959, Cripple Creek, CO 80813.	Teller County Planning Department, 800 Research Drive, Woodland Park, CO 80863.	Apr. 19, 2018	080173
Weld (FEMA Docket No.: B–1807).	Town of Windsor (17–08–0666P).	Mr. Kelly Arnold, Manager, Town of Windsor, 301 Walnut Street, Windsor, CO 80550.	Town Hall, 301 Walnut Street, Windsor, CO 80550.	Apr. 30, 2018	080264
Weld (FEMA Docket No.: B–1807).	Unincorporated areas of Weld County (17–08–0666P).	The Honorable Julie Cozad, Chair, Weld County Board of Commissioners, P.O. Box 758, Greeley, CO 80632.	Weld County Commissioner's Office, 915 10th Street, Greeley, CO 80632.	Apr. 30, 2018	080266
Florida:					
Charlotte (FEMA Docket No.: B–1810).	Unincorporated areas of Charlotte County (17–04–7978P).	The Honorable Bill Truex, Chairman, Charlotte County Board of Commissioners, 18500 Murdock Circle, Suite 536, Port Charlotte, FL 33948.	Charlotte County Community Development Department, 18500 Murdock Circle, Port Charlotte, FL 33948.	Apr. 26, 2018	120061
Charlotte (FEMA Docket No.: B–1807).	Unincorporated areas of Charlotte County (18–04–0115P).	The Honorable Bill Truex, Chairman, Charlotte County Board of Commissioners, 18500 Murdock Circle, Suite 536, Port Charlotte, FL 33948.	Charlotte County Community Development Department, 18400 Murdock Circle, Port Charlotte, FL 33948.	Apr. 20, 2018	120061
Collier (FEMA Docket No.: B–1807).	Unincorporated areas of Collier County (18–04–0104P).	The Honorable Penny Taylor, Chair, Collier County Board of Commissioners, 3299 East Tamiami Trail, Suite 303, Naples, FL 34112.	Collier County Administrative Building, 3301 East Tamiami Trail, Building F, 1st Floor, Naples, FL 34112.	Apr. 27, 2018	120067
Monroe (FEMA Docket No.: B–1807).	Unincorporated areas of Monroe County (18–04–0288P).	The Honorable David Rice, Mayor, Monroe County Board of Commissioners, 500 Whitehead Street, Suite 102, Key West, FL 33040.	Monroe County Building Department, 2798 Overseas Highway, Suite 300, Key West, FL 33050.	Apr. 26, 2018	125129
Monroe (FEMA Docket No.: B–1807).	Unincorporated areas of Monroe County (18–04–0313P).	The Honorable David Rice, Mayor, Monroe County Board of Commissioners, 500 Whitehead Street, Suite 102, Key West, FL 33040.	Monroe County Building Department, 2798 Overseas Highway, Suite 300, Key West, FL 33050.	Apr. 30, 2018	125129
Osceola (FEMA Docket No.: B–1807).	City of St. Cloud (17–04–5506P).	The Honorable Nathan Blackwell, Mayor, City of St. Cloud, 1300 9th Street, St. Cloud, FL 34769.	Public Works Department, 1300 9th Street, St. Cloud, FL 34769.	Apr. 30, 2018	125191
Palm Beach (FEMA Docket No.: B–1810).	City of Riviera Beach (17–04–6959P).	The Honorable Thomas A. Masters, Mayor, City of Riviera Beach, 600 West Blue Heron Boulevard, Riviera Beach, FL 33404.	Department of Community Development, 600 West Blue Heron Boulevard, Riviera Beach, FL 33404.	May 4, 2018	125142
Palm Beach (FEMA Docket No.: B–1810).	Unincorporated areas of Palm Beach County (17–04–6959P).	The Honorable Melissa McKinlay, Mayor, Palm Beach County, 301 North Olive Avenue, Suite 1201, West Palm Beach, FL 33401.	Palm Beach County Building Department, 2300 North Jog Road, West Palm Beach, FL 33411.	May 4, 2018	120192
Georgia:					
Hall (FEMA Docket No.: B–1807).	City of Flowery Branch (17–04–5316P).	The Honorable James "Mike" Miller, Mayor, City of Flowery Branch, P.O. Box 757, Flowery Branch, GA 30542.	Community Development Department, 5512 Main Street, Flowery Branch, GA 30542.	Apr. 30, 2018	130333
Hall (FEMA Docket No.: B–1807).	Unincorporated areas of Hall County (17–04–5316P).	The Honorable Richard Higgins, Chairman, Hall County Board of Commissioners, P.O. Drawer 1435, Gainesville, GA 30504.	Hall County Engineering Division, 2875 Browns Bridge Road, Gainesville, GA 30504.	Apr. 30, 2018	130466
Houston (FEMA Docket No.: B–1807).	City of Warner Robins (17–04–4313P).	The Honorable Randy Toms, Mayor, City of Warner Robins, 700 Watson Boulevard, Warner Robins, GA 31093.	Engineering Department, 610B Watson Boulevard, Warner Robins, GA 31093.	Apr. 19, 2018	130111
Tift (FEMA Docket No.: B–1807).	City of Tifton (17–04–7716P).	The Honorable Julie Smith, Mayor, City of Tifton, 130 1st Street East, Tifton, GA 31793.	Public Works Department, 1000 Armour Road, Tifton, GA 31794.	Apr. 30, 2018	130171
Tift (FEMA Docket No.: B–1807).	Unincorporated areas of Tift County (17–04–7716P).	The Honorable Grady Thompson, Chairman, Tift County Commission, 225 North Tift Avenue, Tifton, GA 31794.	Tift County Development Support Services Department, 225 North Tift Avenue, Tifton, GA 31794.	Apr. 30, 2018	130404
Louisiana: Lafayette (FEMA Docket No.: B–1807).	Unincorporated areas of Lafayette Parish (17–06–3167P).	The Honorable Joel Robideaux, Mayor-President, Lafayette Consolidated, Government, P.O. Box 4017–C, Lafayette, LA 70502.	Lafayette Parish Department of Planning and Development, 220 West Willow Street, Building B, Lafayette, LA 70501.	Apr. 16, 2018	220101
Maine: Knox (FEMA Docket No.: B–1810).	Town of Isle au Haut (17–01–1368P).	The Honorable Peggi Stevens, Chair, Town of Isle au Haut Board of Selectmen, P.O. Box 71, Isle au Haut, ME 04645.	Town Hall, 1 Main Street, Isle au Haut, ME 04645.	Apr. 6, 2018	230227
New Mexico:					
Sierra (FEMA Docket No.: B–1807).	City of Truth or Consequences (17–06–2009P).	Mr. Juan Fuentes, Manager, City of Truth or Consequences, 505 Sims Street, Truth or Consequences, NM 87901.	City Hall, 505 Sims Street, Truth or Consequences, NM 87901.	Apr. 23, 2018	350073
Sierra (FEMA Docket No.: B–1807).	Unincorporated areas of Sierra County (17–06–2009P).	The Honorable Kenneth Lyon, Chairman, Sierra County Commission, 855 Van Patten Street, Truth or Consequences, NM 87901.	Sierra County Administration Office, 855 Van Patten Street, Truth or Consequences, NM 87901.	Apr. 23, 2018	350071

State and county	Location and case No.	Chief executive officer of community	Community map repository	Date of modification	Community No.
Sierra (FEMA Docket No.: B–1807).	Village of Williamsburg (17–06–2009P).	The Honorable Deb Stubblefield, Mayor, Village of Williamsburg, P.O. Box 150, Williamsburg, NM 87942.	Sierra County Administration Office, 855 Van Patten Street, Truth or Consequences, NM 87901.	Apr. 23, 2018	350074
New York:					
Erie (FEMA Docket No.: B–1803).	City of Lackawanna (17–02–1965P).	The Honorable Geoffrey M. Szymanski, Mayor, City of Lackawanna, 714 Ridge Road, Lackawanna, NY 14218.	City Hall, 714 Ridge Road, Lackawanna, NY 14218.	May 2, 2018	360247
Erie (FEMA Docket No.: B–1803).	Town of Hamburg (17–02–1965P).	The Honorable Steven J. Walters, Chairman, Town of Hamburg Board of Supervisors, 6100 South Park Avenue, Hamburg, NY 14075.	Town Hall, 6100 South Park Avenue, Hamburg, NY 14075.	May 2, 2018	360244
Erie (FEMA Docket No.: B–1803).	Town of West Seneca (17–02–1965P).	The Honorable Sheila M. Meegan, Chair, Town of West Seneca Board of Supervisors, 1250 Union Road, West Seneca, NY 14224.	Town Hall, 1250 Union Road, West Seneca, NY 14224.	May 2, 2018	360262
North Carolina:					
Mecklenburg (FEMA Docket No.: B–1810).	Town of Huntersville (17–04–6263P).	The Honorable John Aneralla, Mayor, Town of Huntersville, P.O. Box 664, Huntersville, NC 28070.	Planning Department, 105 Gilead Road, 3rd Floor, Huntersville, NC 28078.	May 4, 2018	370478
Mitchell (FEMA Docket No.: B–1821).	Unincorporated areas of Mitchell County (17–04–0891P).	The Honorable Vern Grindstaff, Chairman, Mitchell County Board of Commissioners, 26 Crimson Laurel Circle, Suite 2, Bakersville, NC 28705.	Mitchell County Building Inspections Department, 130 Forest Service Drive, Suite B, Bakersville, NC 28705.	May 3, 2018	370161
Pennsylvania: Lycoming (FEMA Docket No.: B–1807).	Borough of South Williamsport (17–03–1817P).	The Honorable J. Bernard Schelb, President, Borough of South Williamsport Council, 329 West Southern Avenue, South Williamsport, PA 17702.	Planning and Community Development Department, Hazard Mitigation Division, 48 West 3rd Street, South Williamsport, PA 17701.	Apr. 12, 2018	420658
South Carolina:					
Charleston (FEMA Docket No.: B–1807).	City of Charleston (17–04–7085P).	The Honorable John J. Tecklenburg, Mayor, City of Charleston, P.O. Box 652, Charleston, SC 29402.	Engineering Division, 2 George Street, Charleston, SC 29401.	Apr. 30, 2018	455412
Lancaster (FEMA Docket No.: B–1807).	Unincorporated areas of Lancaster County (17–04–5698P).	The Honorable Steve Harper, Chairman, Lancaster County Council, 101 North Main Street, 2nd Floor, Lancaster, SC 29721.	Lancaster County Zoning Department, 101 North Main Street, Lancaster, SC 29721.	Apr. 23, 2018	450120
Tennessee:					
Williamson (FEMA Docket No.: B–1807).	City of Franklin (17–04–8021P).	The Honorable Ken Moore, Mayor, City of Franklin, 109 3rd Avenue South, Franklin, TN 37064.	Building and Neighborhood Services Department, 109 3rd Avenue South, Franklin, TN 37064.	Apr. 13, 2018	470206
Wilson (FEMA Docket No.: B–1810).	City of Lebanon (17–04–4038P).	The Honorable Bernie Ash, Mayor, City of Lebanon, 200 North Castle Heights Avenue, Suite 100, Lebanon, TN 37087.	Engineering Department, 200 North Castle Heights Avenue, Suite 300, Lebanon, TN 37087.	May 4, 2018	470208
Wilson (FEMA Docket No.: B–1810).	Unincorporated areas of Wilson County (17–04–4038P).	The Honorable Randall Hutto, Mayor, Wilson County, 228 East Main Street, Lebanon, TN 37087.	Wilson County Planning Department, 228 East Main Street, Lebanon, TN 37087.	May 4, 2018	470207
Texas:					
Collin (FEMA Docket No.: B–1810).	City of Anna (17–06–1736P).	The Honorable Nate Pike, Mayor, City of Anna, P.O. Box 776, Anna, TX 75409.	City Hall, 120 West 4th Street, Anna, TX 75409.	Apr. 16, 2018	480132
Collin (FEMA Docket No.: B–1810).	Unincorporated areas of Collin County (17–06–1736P).	The Honorable Keith Self, Collin County Judge, 2300 Bloomdale Road, Suite 4192, McKinney, TX 75071.	Collin County Engineering Department, 4690 Community Avenue, Suite 200, McKinney, TX 75071.	Apr. 16, 2018	480130
Denton (FEMA Docket No.: B–1807).	City of Denton (17–06–0580P).	The Honorable Chris A. Watts, Mayor, City of Denton, 215 East McKinney Street, Denton, TX 76201.	Engineering Department, 901–A Texas Street, Denton, TX 76509.	May 4, 2018	480194
Harris (FEMA Docket No.: B–1807).	Unincorporated areas of Harris County (17–06–4282P).	The Honorable Edward M. Emmett, Harris County Judge, 1001 Preston Street, Suite 911, Houston, TX 77002.	Harris County Permit Office, 10555 Northwest Freeway, Suite 120, Houston, TX 77092.	Apr. 30, 2018	480287
Tarrant (FEMA Docket No.: B–1807).	City of Fort Worth (17–06–4080P).	The Honorable Betsy Price, Mayor, City of Fort Worth, 200 Texas Street, Fort Worth, TX 76102.	Transportation and Public Works Department, 200 Texas Street, Fort Worth, TX 76102.	Apr. 27, 2018	480596
Tarrant (FEMA Docket No.: B–1807).	City of River Oaks (17–06–4080P).	The Honorable Herman Earwood, Mayor, City of River Oaks, 4900 River Oaks Boulevard, River Oaks, TX 76114.	City Hall, 4900 River Oaks Boulevard, River Oaks, TX 76114.	Apr. 27, 2018	480609
Tarrant (FEMA Docket No.: B–1807).	City of Sansom Park (17–06–4080P).	The Honorable Jim Barnett, Jr., Mayor, City of Sansom Park, 5705 Azle Avenue, Sansom Park, TX 76114.	City Hall, 5705 Azle Avenue, Sansom Park, TX 76114.	Apr. 27, 2018	480611
Travis (FEMA Docket No.: B–1807).	City of Bee Cave (17–06–2595P).	The Honorable Caroline Murphy, Mayor, City of Bee Cave, 4000 Galleria Parkway, Bee Cave, TX 78738.	Department of Planning and Development, 4000 Galleria Parkway, Bee Cave, TX 78738.	Apr. 12, 2018	480610

State and county	Location and case No.	Chief executive officer of community	Community map repository	Date of modification	Community No.
Travis (FEMA Docket No.: B–1807).	Unincorporated areas of Travis County (17–06–2595P).	The Honorable Sarah Eckhardt, Travis County Judge, P.O. Box 1748, Austin, TX 78767.	Travis County Transportation and Natural Resources Division, 700 Lavaca Street, Suite 540, Austin, TX 78701.	Apr. 12, 2018	481026
Utah: Cache (FEMA Docket No.: B–1807).	City of Hyrum (17–08–0954P).	The Honorable Stephanie Miller, Mayor, City of Hyrum, 60 West Main Street, Hyrum, UT 84319.	City Hall, 60 West Main Street, Hyrum, UT 84319.	Apr. 25, 2018	490017
Virginia: Prince William (FEMA Docket No.: B–1807).	Unincorporated areas of Prince William County (17–03–1502P).	Mr. Christopher E. Martino, Prince William County Executive, 1 County Complex Court, Woodbridge, VA 22192.	Prince William County Department of Public Works, 5 County Complex Court, Suite 170, Woodbridge, VA 22192.	Apr. 26, 2018	510119

[FR Doc. 2018–12248 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 9110–12–P

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Federal Emergency Management Agency

[Docket ID FEMA–2018–0002; Internal Agency Docket No. FEMA–B–1828]

Proposed Flood Hazard Determinations

AGENCY: Federal Emergency Management Agency, DHS.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: Comments are requested on proposed flood hazard determinations, which may include additions or modifications of any Base Flood Elevation (BFE), base flood depth, Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) boundary or zone designation, or regulatory floodway on the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs), and where applicable, in the supporting Flood Insurance Study (FIS) reports for the communities listed in the table below. The purpose of this notice is to seek general information and comment regarding the preliminary FIRM, and where applicable, the FIS report that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has provided to the affected communities. The FIRM and FIS report are the basis of the floodplain management measures that the community is required either to adopt or to show evidence of having in effect in order to qualify or remain qualified for participation in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). In addition, the FIRM and FIS report, once effective, will be used by insurance agents and others to calculate appropriate flood insurance premium rates for new buildings and the contents of those buildings.

DATES: Comments are to be submitted on or before September 5, 2018.

ADDRESSES: The Preliminary FIRM, and where applicable, the FIS report for each community are available for inspection at both the online location *https://www.fema.gov/preliminaryfloodhazarddata* and the respective Community Map Repository address listed in the tables below. Additionally, the current effective FIRM and FIS report for each community are accessible online through the FEMA Map Service Center at *https://msc.fema.gov* for comparison.

You may submit comments, identified by Docket No. FEMA–B–1828, to Rick Sacbibit, Chief, Engineering Services Branch, Federal Insurance and Mitigation Administration, FEMA, 400 C Street SW, Washington, DC 20472, (202) 646–7659, or (email) *patrick.sacbibit@fema.dhs.gov.*

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Rick Sacbibit, Chief, Engineering Services Branch, Federal Insurance and Mitigation Administration, FEMA, 400 C Street SW, Washington, DC 20472, (202) 646–7659, or (email) *patrick.sacbibit@fema.dhs.gov;* or visit the FEMA Map Information eXchange (FMIX) online at *https://www.floodmaps.fema.gov/fhm/fmx_main.html.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: FEMA proposes to make flood hazard determinations for each community listed below, in accordance with section 110 of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, 42 U.S.C. 4104, and 44 CFR 67.4(a).

These proposed flood hazard determinations, together with the floodplain management criteria required by 44 CFR 60.3, are the minimum that are required. They should not be construed to mean that the community must change any existing ordinances that are more stringent in their floodplain management requirements. The community may at any time enact stricter requirements of its own or pursuant to policies established by other Federal, State, or regional entities. These flood hazard determinations are used to meet the floodplain management requirements of the NFIP and also are used to calculate the appropriate flood insurance premium rates for new buildings built after the FIRM and FIS report become effective.

The communities affected by the flood hazard determinations are provided in the tables below. Any request for reconsideration of the revised flood hazard information shown on the Preliminary FIRM and FIS report that satisfies the data requirements outlined in 44 CFR 67.6(b) is considered an appeal. Comments unrelated to the flood hazard determinations also will be considered before the FIRM and FIS report become effective.

Use of a Scientific Resolution Panel (SRP) is available to communities in support of the appeal resolution process. SRPs are independent panels of experts in hydrology, hydraulics, and other pertinent sciences established to review conflicting scientific and technical data and provide recommendations for resolution. Use of the SRP only may be exercised after FEMA and local communities have been engaged in a collaborative consultation process for at least 60 days without a mutually acceptable resolution of an appeal. Additional information regarding the SRP process can be found online at *https://www.floodsrp.org/pdfs/srp_overview.pdf.*

The watersheds and/or communities affected are listed in the tables below. The Preliminary FIRM, and where applicable, FIS report for each community are available for inspection at both the online location *https://www.fema.gov/preliminaryfloodhazarddata* and the respective Community Map Repository address listed in the tables. For communities with multiple ongoing Preliminary studies, the studies can be identified by the unique project number and Preliminary FIRM date listed in the tables. Additionally, the current effective FIRM and FIS report for each community are accessible online through the FEMA Map Service Center at *https://msc.fema.gov* for comparison.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance No. 97.022, ''Flood Insurance.'')

David I. Maurstad,

Deputy Associate Administrator for Insurance and Mitigation (Acting), Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Community	Community map repository address
Cook County, Illinois and Incorporated Areas	
Project: 17–05–1776S Preliminary Date: October 12, 2017	
City of Oak Forest	City Hall, 15440 South Central Avenue, Oak Forest, IL 60452.
Unincorporated Areas of Cook County	Cook County Building and Zoning Department, 69 West Washington, 21st Floor, Chicago, IL 60602.
Village of Alsip	Village Hall, 4500 West 123rd Street, Alsip, IL 60803.
Village of Crestwood	Village Hall, 13840 South Cicero Avenue, Crestwood, IL 60418.
Village of Orland Hills	Village Hall, 16033 South 94th Avenue, Orland Hills, IL 60487.
Village of Orland Park	Village Hall, 14700 South Ravinia Avenue, Orland Park, IL 60462.
Village of Palos Park	Kaptur Administrative Center, 8999 West 123rd Street, Palos Park, IL 60464.
Village of Tinley Park	Village Hall, 16250 South Oak Park Avenue, Tinley Park, IL 60477.
Hamilton County, Indiana and Incorporated Areas	
Project: 12–05–8944S Preliminary Date: September 7, 2016	
City of Noblesville	Planning Department, 16 South 10th Street, Suite 150, Noblesville, IN 46060.
Town of Cicero	Utilities Office, 150 West Jackson Street, Cicero, IN 46034.
Unincorporated Areas of Hamilton County	Hamilton County Government and Judicial Center, One Hamilton County Square, Noblesville, IN 46060.
Perry County, Indiana and Incorporated Areas	
Project: 12–05–8921S Preliminary Date: September 29, 2017	
City of Cannelton	Cannelton City Hall, 210 South 8th Street, Cannelton, IN 47520.
City of Tell City	City Hall, 700 Main Street, Tell City, IN 47586.
Unincorporated Areas of Perry County	Perry County Courthouse, 2219 Payne Street, Tell City, IN 47586.
Vanderburgh County, Indiana and Incorporated Areas	
Project: 10–05–2681S Preliminary Date: September 29, 2017	
City of Evansville	Building Commission Department, Civic Center Complex, 1 Northwest Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, Room 310, Evansville, IN 47708.
Unincorporated Areas of Vanderburgh County	Building Commission Department, Civic Center Complex, 1 Northwest Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, Room 310, Evansville, IN 47708.
Marion County, Oregon and Incorporated Areas	
Project: 17–10–0516S Preliminary Date: February 14, 2017	
City of Salem	City Hall, 555 Liberty Street Southeast, Room 325, Salem, OR 97301.
City of Turner	City Hall, 5255 Chicago Street Southeast, Turner, OR 97392.
Unincorporated Areas of Marion County	555 Court Street Northeast, Salem, OR 97301.

[FR Doc. 2018–12246 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 9110–12–P

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Federal Emergency Management Agency

[Internal Agency Docket No. FEMA–4360–DR; Docket ID FEMA–2018–0001]

Ohio; Amendment No. 1 to Notice of a Major Disaster Declaration

AGENCY: Federal Emergency Management Agency, DHS.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This notice amends the notice of a major disaster declaration for the State of Ohio (FEMA–4360–DR), dated April 17, 2018, and related determinations.

DATES: This amendment was issued May 25, 2018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dean Webster, Office of Response and Recovery, Federal Emergency

Management Agency, 500 C Street SW, Washington, DC 20472, (202) 646–2833.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The notice of a major disaster declaration for the State of Ohio is hereby amended to include the following areas among those areas determined to have been adversely affected by the event declared a major disaster by the President in his declaration of April 17, 2018.

Coshocton, Harrison, Jefferson, and Morgan Counties for Public Assistance.

The following Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Numbers (CFDA) are to be used for reporting and drawing funds: 97.030, Community Disaster Loans; 97.031, Cora Brown Fund; 97.032, Crisis Counseling; 97.033, Disaster Legal Services; 97.034, Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA); 97.046, Fire Management Assistance Grant; 97.048, Disaster Housing Assistance to Individuals and Households In Presidentially Declared Disaster Areas; 97.049, Presidentially Declared Disaster Assistance—Disaster Housing Operations for Individuals and Households; 97.050 Presidentially Declared Disaster Assistance to Individuals and Households—Other Needs; 97.036, Disaster Grants—Public Assistance (Presidentially Declared Disasters); 97.039, Hazard Mitigation Grant.

Brock Long,

Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency.

[FR Doc. 2018–12247 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 9111–23–P

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Agency Information Collection Activities: Homeland Security Acquisition Regulation (HSAR) Regulation on Agency Protests

AGENCY: Office of the Chief Procurement Officer, Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

ACTION: 30-Day Notice and request for comments; Extension of a Currently Approved Collection, 1600–0004.

SUMMARY: The DHS Office of the Chief Procurement Officer will submit the following Information Collection Request (ICR) to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and clearance in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. The information being collected will be obtained from contractors as part of their submissions whenever they file a bid protest with DHS. The information will be used by DHS officials in deciding how the protest should be resolved. Failure to collect this information would result in delayed resolution of protests. DHS previously published this ICR in the **Federal Register** on Wednesday, February 28, 2018 for a 60-day public comment period. Seven unrelated comments were received by DHS. The purpose of this notice is to allow an additional 30 days for public comments.

DATES: Comments are encouraged and will be accepted until July 9, 2018. This process is conducted in accordance with 5 CFR 1320.1.

ADDRESSES: Interested persons are invited to submit written comments on the proposed information collection to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget. Comments should be addressed to OMB Desk Officer, Department of Homeland Security and sent via electronic mail to *dhsdeskofficer@omb.eop.gov.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) and 48 CFR Chapter 1 provide general procedures on handling protests submitted by contractors to Federal agencies. FAR Part 33.103, Protests to the agency, prescribes policies and procedures for filing protests and for processing contract disputes and appeals. While the FAR prescribes the procedures to be followed for protests to the agency, it allows agencies to determine the method of receipt. DHS will utilize electronic mediums (email or facsimile) for collection of information and will not prescribe a format or require more information than what is already required in the FAR. If DHS determines there is a need to collect additional information outside of what is required in the FAR, DHS will submit a request to OMB for approval.

The information being collected will be obtained from contractors as part of their submissions whenever they file a bid protest with DHS. The information will be used by DHS officials in deciding how the protest should be resolved. Failure to collect this information would result in delayed resolution of protests.

Agency protest information is contained in each individual solicitation document, and provides the specified contracting officer's name, email, and mailing address that the contractors would use to submit its response. The FAR does not specify the format in which the contractor should submit protest information. However, most contractors use computers to prepare protest materials and submit time sensitive responses electronically (email or facsimile) to the specified Government point of contact. Since the responses must meet specific timeframes, a centralized mailbox or website would not be a practical method of submission. Submission of protest information through contracting officers' email or through facsimile are the best methods to use to document receipt of protest information, and are the methods most commonly used in the Government protest process.

DHS/ALL/PIA–006 General Contact Lists covers the basic contact information that must be collected for DHS to address these protests. The other information collected will typically pertain to the contract itself, and not individuals. However, all information for this information collection is submitted voluntarily. Technically, because this information is not retrieved by personal identifier, no SORN is required. However, DHS/ALL–021 DHS Contractors and Consultants provides coverage for the collection of records on DHS contractors and consultants, to include resume and qualifying employment information. There is no assurance of confidentiality provided to the respondents.

The burden estimates are based upon reports of protest activities submitted to the Government Accountability Office (GAO) or the Court of Federal Claims in Fiscal Year 2016. No program changes occurred, however, the burden was adjusted to reflect an agency adjustment increase of 4 respondents within DHS for Fiscal Year 2016, as well as an increase in the average hourly wage rate.

This is an Extension of a Currently Approved Collection, 1600–0004. DHS previously published this ICR in the **Federal Register** on Wednesday, February 28, 2018 at 83 FR 8687 for a 60-day public comment period, and is soliciting public comment for another 30 days. OMB is particularly interested in comments which:

1. Evaluate whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility;

2. Evaluate the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;

3. Enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and

4. Minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, *e.g.,* permitting electronic submissions of responses.

Analysis

Agency: Office of the Chief Procurement Officer, DHS.

Title: Agency Information Collection Activities: Homeland Security Acquisition Regulation (HSAR) Regulation on Agency Protests.

OMB Number: 1600–0004.

Frequency: On Occasion.

Affected Public: Individuals or Households.

Number of Respondents: 99.

Estimated Time per Respondent: 2 hours.

Total Burden Hours: 198.

Dated: May 31, 2018.

Melissa Bruce,

Executive Director, Enterprise Business Management Office.

[FR Doc. 2018–12286 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 9110–9B–P

INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION

[USITC SE–18–026]

Government in the Sunshine Act Meeting Notice

AGENCY HOLDING THE MEETING: United States International Trade Commission.

TIME AND DATE: June 15, 2018 at 11:00 a.m.

PLACE: Room 101, 500 E Street SW, Washington, DC 20436, Telephone: (202) 205–2000.

STATUS: Open to the public.

MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED:

1. *Agendas for future meetings:* None.
2. Minutes.
3. Ratification List.
4. Vote on Inv. No. 731–TA–1103 (Second Review) (Activated Carbon from China). The Commission is currently scheduled to complete and file its determination and views of the Commission by June 27, 2018.
5. Outstanding action jackets: None.

In accordance with Commission policy, subject matter listed above, not disposed of at the scheduled meeting, may be carried over to the agenda of the following meeting.

By order of the Commission.

Issued: June 5, 2018.

William Bishop,

Supervisory Hearings and Information Officer.

[FR Doc. 2018–12363 Filed 6–5–18; 4:15 pm]

BILLING CODE 7020–02–P

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives

[OMB Number 1140–0022]

Agency Information Collection Activities; Proposed eCollection eComments Requested; Federal Explosives License/Permit (FEL) Renewal Application—ATF Form 5400.14/5400.15 Part III

AGENCY: Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, Department of Justice.

ACTION: 30-Day notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Justice (DOJ), Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), will submit the following information collection request to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and approval in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. The proposed information collection was previously published in the [**Federal Register**, on April 6, 2018, allowing for a 60-day comment period].

DATES: Comments are encouraged and will be accepted for an additional 30 days until July 9, 2018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: If you have additional comments, particularly with respect to the estimated public burden or associated response time, have suggestions, need a copy of the proposed information collection instrument with instructions, or desire any other additional information, please contact Shawn Stevens, Federal Explosives Licensing Center, either by mail at 244 Needy Road, Martinsburg, WV 25405, by email *Shawn.Stevens@atf.gov,* or by telephone at (304) 616–4421. Written comments and/or suggestions can also be directed to the Office of Management and Budget, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Attention Department of Justice Desk Officer, Washington, DC 20503 or sent to *OIRA_submissions@omb.eop.gov.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Written comments and suggestions from the public and affected agencies concerning the proposed collection of information are encouraged. Your comments should address one or more of the following four points:

—Evaluate whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility;

—Evaluate the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;

—Evaluate whether and if so how the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected can be enhanced; and

– Minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, *e.g.,* permitting electronic submission of responses.

Overview of this information collection:

(1) *Type of Information Collection:* Extension, without change, of a currently approved collection.

(2) *The Title of the Form/Collection:* Federal Explosives License/Permit (FEL) Renewal Application.

(3) *The agency form number, if any, and the applicable component of the Department sponsoring the collection:*

Form number: ATF Form 5400.14/5400.15 Part III.

Component: Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, U.S. Department of Justice.

(4) *Affected public who will be asked or required to respond, as well as a brief abstract:*

Primary: Business or other for-profit.

Other: None.

Abstract: Licenses or permits are issued for a specific period of time and are renewable upon the same conditions as the original license or permit. In order to continue uninterruptedly in these activities, licenses and permits can be renewed by filing a short renewal application.

(5) *An estimate of the total number of respondents and the amount of time estimated for an average respondent to respond:* An estimated 2,500 respondents will respond once to this information collection, and it will take each respondent approximately 20 minutes to provide each response.

(6) *An estimate of the total public burden (in hours) associated with the collection:* The estimated annual public burden associated with this collection is 825 hours, which is equal to 2,500 (total # of responses) *.33 (20 minutes per each response.).

If additional information is required contact: Melody Braswell, Department Clearance Officer, United States Department of Justice, Justice Management Division, Policy and Planning Staff, Two Constitution

Square, 145 N Street NE, 3E.405A, Washington, DC 20530.

Dated: June 4, 2018.

Melody Braswell,

Department Clearance Officer for PRA, U.S. Department of Justice.

[FR Doc. 2018–12215 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4410–14–P

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives

[OMB Number 1140–0060]

Agency Information Collection Activities; Proposed eCollection eComments Requested; Revision of a Currently Approved Collection; Firearms Disabilities for Nonimmigrant Aliens

AGENCY: Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, Department of Justice.

ACTION: 30-day notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Justice (DOJ), Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), will submit the following information collection request to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and approval in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. The proposed information collection was previously published in the **Federal Register**, on April 6, 2018, allowing for a 60-day comment period.

DATES: Comments are encouraged and will be accepted for an additional 30 days until July 9, 2018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: If you have additional comments, particularly with respect to the estimated public burden or associated response time, have suggestions, need a copy of the proposed information collection instrument with instructions, or desire any other additional information, please contact L. William Babbie, ATF Firearms & Explosives Industry Division either by mail at 99 New York Avenue NE, Washington, DC 20226, by email at *fipb-information collection@atf.gov,* or by telephone at 202–648–7252.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Written comments and suggestions from the public and affected agencies concerning the proposed collection of information are encouraged. Your comments should address one or more of the following four points:

—Evaluate whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility;

—Evaluate the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;

—Evaluate whether and if so how the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected can be enhanced; and

—Minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, *e.g.,* permitting electronic submission of responses.

Overview of this information collection:

(1) *Type of Information Collection:* Revision of a currently approved collection.

(2) *The Title of the Form/Collection:* Firearms Disabilities for Nonimmigrant Aliens.

(3) *The agency form number, if any, and the applicable component of the Department sponsoring the collection:*

Form number: None.

Component: Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, U.S. Department of Justice.

(4) *Affected public who will be asked or required to respond, as well as a brief abstract:*

Primary: Business or other for-profit.

Other: None

Abstract: The nonimmigrant alien information is used to determine if a nonimmigrant alien is eligible to obtain a Federal firearms license and purchase, obtain, possess, or import a firearm. Nonimmigrant aliens also must maintain the documents while in possession of firearms or ammunition in the United States for verification purposes.

(5) *An estimate of the total number of respondents and the amount of time estimated for an average respondent to respond:* An estimated 1,434 respondents will respond once to this information collection, and it will take each respondent approximately 4.08 minutes to provide their responses.

(6) *An estimate of the total public burden (in hours) associated with the collection:* The estimated annual public burden associated with this collection is 98 hours, which is equal to 1,434 (# of responses) * .068 hours (4.08 minutes).

(7) *An Explanation of the Change in Estimates:* The decrease in the total number of respondents by 14, 347, the time taken for each response by 2 minutes, as well as a reduction in total burden 1,489 respectively, is due to the change in methodology used to calculate the current public burden, which differs from that which was used during the previous renewal in 2015.

If additional information is required contact: Melody Braswell, Department Clearance Officer, United States Department of Justice, Justice Management Division, Policy and Planning Staff, Two Constitution Square, 145 N Street NE, 3E.405A, Washington, DC 20530.

Dated: June 4, 2018.

Melody Braswell,

Department Clearance Officer for PRA, U.S. Department of Justice.

[FR Doc. 2018–12214 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4410–14–P

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Antitrust Division

Notice Pursuant to the National Cooperative Research and Production Act of 1993—DVD Copy Control Association

Notice is hereby given that, on May 16, 2018, pursuant to Section 6(a) of the National Cooperative Research and Production Act of 1993, 15 U.S.C. 4301 *et seq.* (''the Act''), DVD Copy Control Association (''DVD CCA'') has filed written notifications simultaneously with the Attorney General and the Federal Trade Commission disclosing changes in its membership. The notifications were filed for the purpose of extending the Act's provisions limiting the recovery of antitrust plaintiffs to actual damages under specified circumstances. Specifically, Delphi Automotive Systems, LLC, Troy, MI, has been added as a party to this venture.

Also, Behavior Tech Computer Corp., Fremont, CA; and Rainbo Records Manufacturing Corporation, Canoga Park, CA, have withdrawn as parties to this venture.

No other changes have been made in either the membership or planned activity of the group research project. Membership in this group research project remains open, and DVD CCA intends to file additional written notifications disclosing all changes in membership.

On April 11, 2001, DVD CCA filed its original notification pursuant to Section 6(a) of the Act. The Department of Justice published a notice in the **Federal Register** pursuant to Section 6(b) of the Act on August 3, 2001 (66 FR 40727).

The last notification was filed with the Department on February 15, 2018. A notice was published in the **Federal Register** pursuant to Section 6(b) of the Act on March 12, 2018 (83 FR 10751).

Patricia A. Brink,

Director of Civil Enforcement, Antitrust Division.

[FR Doc. 2018–12209 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4410–11–P

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Antitrust Division

Notice Pursuant to the National Cooperative Research and Production Act of 1993—Heterogeneous System Architecture Foundation

Notice is hereby given that, on May 1, 2018, pursuant to Section 6(a) of the National Cooperative Research and Production Act of 1993, 15 U.S.C. 4301 *et seq.* (''the Act''), Heterogeneous System Architecture Foundation (''HSA Foundation'') has filed written notifications simultaneously with the Attorney General and the Federal Trade Commission disclosing changes in its membership. The notifications were filed for the purpose of extending the Act's provisions limiting the recovery of antitrust plaintiffs to actual damages under specified circumstances. Specifically, Nanjing Tech University, College of Computer Science and Technology, Nanjing, PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA, has been added as a party to this venture.

Also, Toshiba Corporation, Kanagawa, JAPAN, has withdrawn as a party to this venture.

No other changes have been made in either the membership or planned activity of the group research project. Membership in this group research project remains open, and HSA Foundation intends to file additional written notifications disclosing all changes in membership.

On August 31, 2012, HSA Foundation filed its original notification pursuant to Section 6(a) of the Act. The Department of Justice published a notice in the **Federal Register** pursuant to Section 6(b) of the Act on October 11, 2012 (77 FR 61786).

The last notification was filed with the Department on February 13, 2018. A notice was published in the **Federal Register** pursuant to Section 6(b) of the Act on March 19, 2018 (83 FR 12026).

Patricia A. Brink,

Director of Civil Enforcement, Antitrust Division.

[FR Doc. 2018–12206 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4410–11–P

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

[OMB Number 1123–0010]

Agency Information Collection Activities: Proposed Collection; Comments Requested; Request for Registration Under the Gambling Devices Act of 1962

ACTION: 60-Day Notice.

The Department of Justice (DOJ), Criminal Division, will be submitting the following information collection request to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and approval in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. The proposed information collection is published to obtain comments from the public and affected agencies. Comments are encouraged and will be accepted until August 6, 2018.

If you have comments especially on the estimated public burden or associated response time, suggestions, or need a copy of the proposed information collection instrument with instructions or additional information, please contact Michelle Hill, Counsel to the Director, U.S. Department of Justice, 950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Criminal Division, Office of Enforcement Operations, Gambling Device Registration Program, JCK Building, Washington, DC 20530–0001. (telephone: 202–514–7049)

Written comments and suggestions from the public and affected agencies concerning the proposed collection of information are encouraged. Your comments should address one or more of the following four points:

—Evaluate whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility;

—Evaluate the accuracy of the agencies estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;

—Enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and

—Minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, *e.g.,* permitting electronic submission of responses.

Overview of this information collection:

(1) Type of Information Collection: Revision of a currently approved collection.

(2) Title of the Form/Collection: Request for Registration Under the Gambling Devices Act of 1962.

(3) Agency form number, if any, and the applicable component of the Department of Justice sponsoring the collection: Form Number: DOJ\CRM\OEO\GDR–1. Sponsoring component: Criminal Division, Department of Justice.

(4) Affected public who will be asked or required to respond, as well as a brief abstract: Primary: Business or other for-profit. Other: Not-for-profit institutions, individuals or households, and State, Local or Tribal Government. The form can be used by any entity required to register under the Gambling Devices Act of 1962 (15 U.S.C. 1171–1178).

(5) An estimate of the total number of respondents and the amount of time estimated for an average respondent to respond: It is estimated that 7,800 respondents will complete each form within approximately 5 minutes.

(6) An estimate of the total public burden (in hours) associated with the collection: There are an estimated 650 total annual burden hours associated with this collection.

If additional information is required contact: Melody Braswell, Department Clearance Officer, United States Department of Justice, Justice Management Division, Policy and Planning Staff, Two Constitution Square, 145 N Street NE, 3E.405A, Washington, DC 20530.

Dated: June 4, 2018

Melody Braswell,

Department Clearance Officer for PRA, U.S. Department of Justice.

[FR Doc. 2018–12290 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4410–14–P

NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION

[Notice (18–049)]

Notice of Intent To Grant Partially Exclusive License

AGENCY: National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

ACTION: Notice of intent to grant partially exclusive patent license.

SUMMARY: The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) hereby gives notice of its intent to grant a partially exclusive patent license in the United States to practice the inventions described and claimed in U.S. Patent Number 7,075,295 B2 titled ''Magnetic Field Response Sensor for Conductive Media,'' NASA Case Number LAR–16571–1; U.S. Patent Number 7,589,525 B2 titled ''Magnetic Field Response Sensor for Conductive Media,'' NASA Case Number LAR–16571–2; U.S. Patent No. 7,759,932 B2 titled ''Magnetic Field Response for Conductive Media,'' NASA Case Number LAR–16571–3; U.S. Patent No. 7,086,593 B2 titled ''Magnetic Field Response Measurement Acquisition System,'' NASA Case Number LAR–16908–1; U.S. Patent No. 7,047,807 B2 titled ''Flexible Framework for Capacitive Sensing,'' NASA Case No. LAR–16974–1; U.S. Patent No. 7,159,774 B2 titled ''Magnetic Field Response Measurement Acquisition System,'' NASA Case No. LAR–17280–1; U.S. Patent No. 8,430,327 B2 titled ''Wireless Sensing System Using Open-Circuit, Electrically-Conductive Spiral-Trace Sensor,'' NASA Case No. LAR–17294–1; U.S. Patent No. 8,673,649 B2 titled ''Wireless Chemical Sensor and Sensing Method for Use Therewith,'' NASA Case No. LAR–17579–1; U.S. Patent No. 9,329,149 B2 titled ''Wireless Chemical Sensor and Sensing Method for Use Therewith,'' NASA Case No. LAR–17579–2; U.S. Patent No. 9,733,203 B2 titled ''Wireless Chemical Sensing Method,'' NASA Case No. LAR–17579–3; U.S. Patent No. 8,179,203 B2 titled ''Wireless Electrical Device using Open-Circuit Elements Having No Electrical Connections,'' NASA Case No. LAR–17711–1; U.S. Patent Application No. 14/193,861 titled ''Wireless Temperature Sensor Having No Electrical Connections and Sensing Method for Use Therewith,'' NASA Case No. LAR–17747–1–CON; U.S. Patent No. 9,329,153 B2 titled ''Method of Mapping Anomalies in Homogenous Material,'' NASA Case No. LAR–17848–1; U.S. Patent No. 8,636,407 B2 titled ''Wireless Temperature Sensor Having No Electrical Connections and Sensing Method for Use Therewith,'' NASA Case No. LAR–18016–1; U.S. Patent Application No. 14/520,785 titled ''Multi-Layer Wireless Sensor Construct for Use at Electrically Conductive Material Surface,'' NASA Case No. LAR–18399–1; and U.S. Patent Application No. 14/520,863 titled ''Antenna for Far Field Transceiving,'' NASA Case No. LAR–18400–1, to Doull Site Assessments Ltd., having its principal place of business in Alberta, Canada. The fields of use may be limited to emissions detection and quantification, gas and liquid flow rate measurement, compositional analysis, and quantification for hydrocarbons and other substances, including but not limited to H_2S, CO_2 and SO_2, associated with the oil, gas and waste management industries at the well bore and/or below grade cavern, and associated above ground facilities for each; and/or similar fields of use thereto.

DATES: The prospective partially exclusive license may be granted unless NASA receives written objections, including evidence and argument no later than June 22, 2018 that establish that the grant of the license would not be consistent with the requirements regarding the licensing of federally owned inventions as set forth in the Bayh-Dole Act and implementing regulations. Competing applications completed and received by NASA no later than June 22, 2018 will also be treated as objections to the grant of the contemplated partially exclusive license. Objections submitted in response to this notice will not be made available to the public for inspection and, to the extent permitted by law, will not be released under the Freedom of Information Act.

ADDRESSES: Objections relating to the prospective license may be submitted to Patent Counsel, Office of Chief Counsel, NASA Langley Research Center, MS 30, Hampton, Virginia 23681. Phone (757) 864–3221. Facsimile (757) 864–9190.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Robin W. Edwards, Patent Counsel, Office of Chief Counsel, NASA Langley Research Center, MS 30, Hampton, Virginia 23681. Phone (757) 864–3221. Facsimile (757) 864–9190.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This notice of intent to grant a partially exclusive patent license is issued in accordance with 35 U.S.C. 209(e) and 37 CFR 404.7(a)(1)(i). The patent rights in these inventions have been assigned to the United States of America as represented by the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. The prospective exclusive license will comply with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 209 and 37 CFR 404.7.

Information about other NASA inventions available for licensing can be found online at *http://technology.nasa.gov.*

Mark Dvorscak,

Agency Counsel for Intellectual Property.

[FR Doc. 2018–12232 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7510–13–P

NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION

[Notice (18–048)]

Notice of Intent To Grant Partially Exclusive Patent License

AGENCY: National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

ACTION: Notice of Intent to Grant Partially Exclusive Patent License.

SUMMARY: NASA hereby gives notice of its intent to grant a partially exclusive patent license in the United States to practice the inventions described and claimed in U.S. Patent Application No. 15/014,608 titled ''Nuclear Thermionic Avalanche Cells with Thermoelectric (NTAC–TE) Generator in Tandem Model,'' NASA Case Number LAR–17981–1; U.S. Patent Application No. 62/513,497 titled ''Portable Compact Thermionic Power Cell,'' NASA Case Number LAR–18860–P2; U.S. Patent Application No. 15/479,679 titled ''Metallic Junction Thermoelectric Generator,'' NASA Case Number LAR–18866–1; U.S. Patent Application No. 62/621,930 titled ''Selective and Direct Deposition Technique for Streamlined CMOS Processing,'' NASA Case Number LAR–18925–P2; U.S. Patent Application No. 62/643,292 titled ''Portable Miniaturized Thermionic Power Cell with Multiple Regenerative Layers,'' NASA Case No. LAR–18926–P; U.S. Patent Application No. 62/643,303 titled ''High Performance Electric Generators Boosted by Nuclear Electorn Avalanche (NEA),'' NASA Case No. LAR–19112–P, to Braidy Industries, Inc., having its principal place of business in Ashland, Kentucky. The fields of use may be limited to power generators, generation of electricity and/or similar fields of use thereto.

DATES: The prospective partially exclusive patent license may be granted unless NASA receives written objections, including evidence and argument, no later than June 22, 2018 that establish that the grant of the license would not be consistent with the requirements regarding the licensing of federally owned inventions as set forth in the Bayh-Dohl Act and implementing regulations. Competing applications completed and received by NASA no later than June 22, 2018 will also be

treated as objections to the grant of the contemplated partially exclusive patent license. Objections submitted in response to this notice will not be made available to the public for inspection and, to the extent permitted by law, will not be released under the Freedom of Information Act.

ADDRESSES: Objections relating to the prospective license may be submitted to Patent Counsel, Office of Chief Counsel, NASA Langley Research Center, MS 30, Hampton, Virginia 23681. Phone (757) 864–3221. Facsimile (757) 864–9190.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jonathan B. Soike, Patent Attorney, Office of Chief Counsel, NASA Langley Research Center, MS 30, Hampton, Virginia 23681. Phone (757) 864–7863. Facsimile (757) 864–9190.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This notice of intent to grant a partially exclusive patent license is issued in accordance with 35 U.S.C. 209(e) and 37 CFR 404.7(a)(1)(i). The patent rights in these inventions have been assigned to the United States of America as represented by the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. The prospective partially exclusive patent license will comply with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 209 and 37 CFR 404.7.

Information about other NASA inventions available for licensing can be found online at *http://technology.nasa.gov.*

Mark Dvorscak,

Agency Counsel for Intellectual Property.

[FR Doc. 2018–12231 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7510–13–P

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket No. 72–26; NRC–2018–0108]

Pacific Gas and Electric Company Diablo Canyon Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation

AGENCY: Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

ACTION: Environmental assessment and finding of no significant impact; issuance.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is considering issuing an environmental assessment (EA) and a finding of no significant impact (FONSI) for its review and approval of the decommissioning funding plans (DFPs) submitted by Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PGEC) on December 17, 2012, and December 17, 2015, for the independent spent fuel storage installation (ISFSI) at Diablo Canyon in Avila Beach, California.

DATES: The EA and FONSI referenced in this document are available on June 7, 2018.

ADDRESSES: Please refer to Docket ID NRC–2018–0108 when contacting the NRC about the availability of information regarding this document. You may obtain publicly-available information related to this document using any of the following methods:

- *Federal Rulemaking Website:* Go to *http://www.regulations.gov* and search for Docket ID NRC–2018–0108. Address questions about NRC dockets to Jennifer Borges; telephone: 301–287–9127; email: *Jennifer.Borges@nrc.gov.* For technical questions, contact the individual listed in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section of this document.
- *NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS):* You may obtain publicly-available documents online in the ADAMS Public Documents collection at *http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html.* To begin the search, select ''ADAMS Public Documents'' and then select ''Begin Web-based ADAMS Search.'' For problems with ADAMS, please contact the NRC's Public Document Room (PDR) reference staff at 1–800–397–4209, 301–415–4737, or by email to *pdr.resource@nrc.gov.* The ADAMS accession number for each document referenced in this document (if it is available in ADAMS) is provided the first time that it is mentioned in this document. In addition, for the convenience of the reader, the ADAMS accession numbers are provided in a table in the ''Availability of Documents'' section of this document.
- *NRC's PDR:* You may examine and purchase copies of public documents at the NRC's PDR, Room O1–F21, One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland 20852.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Pamela Longmire, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555–0001; telephone: 301–415–7465, email: *Pamela.Longmire@nrc.gov.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Introduction

The NRC is considering the approval of the DFPs for the Diablo Canyon ISFSI. PGEC submitted an initial DFP and an updated DFP for NRC review and approval by letters dated December 17, 2012 (ADAMS Accession No. ML12353A315), and December 17, 2015 (ADAMS Accession No. ML15351A502), respectively. The NRC staff has prepared a final EA (ADAMS Accession No. ML18131A047) in support of its review of PGEC's DFPs in accordance with the NRC regulations in part 51 of title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR), ''Environmental Protection Regulations for Domestic Licensing and Related Regulatory Functions,'' which implements the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*). Based on the EA, the NRC staff has determined that approval of the DFPs for the Diablo Canyon ISFSI will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment, and accordingly, the staff has concluded that a FONSI is appropriate. The NRC staff further finds that preparation of an environmental impact statement is not warranted.

II. Environmental Assessment

Background

The Diablo Canyon ISFSI is located in Avila Beach, California. PGEC is authorized by the NRC, under License No. SNM–2511, to store spent nuclear fuel at the Diablo Canyon ISFSI.

The NRC requires its licensees to plan for the eventual decommissioning of their licensed facilities prior to license termination. On June 17, 2011, the NRC published a final rule in the **Federal Register** amending its decommissioning planning regulations (76 FR 35512). The final rule amended the NRC regulation, 10 CFR 72.30, which concerns financial assurance and decommissioning for ISFSIs. This regulation now requires each holder of, or applicant for, a license under 10 CFR part 72 to submit, for NRC review and approval, a DFP. The purpose of the DFP is to demonstrate the licensee's financial assurance (*i.e.,* that funds will be available to decommission the ISFSI). The NRC staff is reviewing the DFPs submitted by PGEC on December 13, 2012, and December 17, 2015. Specifically, the NRC must determine whether PGEC's DFPs contain the information required by §§ 72.30(b) and (c), and whether PGEC has provided reasonable assurance that funds will be available to decommission the ISFSI.

Description of the Proposed Action

The proposed action is the NRC's review and approval of PGEC's DFPs submitted in accordance with §§ 72.30(b) and (c). To approve the DFPs, the NRC will evaluate whether the decommissioning cost estimate adequately estimates the cost to conduct the required ISFSI decommissioning activities prior to license termination,

including identification of the volume of onsite subsurface material containing residual radioactivity that will require remediation to meet the license termination criteria in §§ 20.1402 or 20.1403. The NRC will also evaluate whether the aggregate dollar amount of PGEC financial instruments provides adequate financial assurance to cover the decommissioning cost estimate and that the financial instruments meet the criteria of 10 CFR 72.30(e). Finally, the NRC will evaluate whether the effects of the following events have been considered in PGEC's submittal: (1) Spills of radioactive material producing additional residual radioactivity in onsite subsurface material; (2) facility modifications; (3) changes in authorized possession limits; and (4) actual remediation costs that exceed the previous cost estimate, consistent with 10 CFR 72.30(c).

The proposed action does not require any changes to the ISFSI's licensed routine operations, maintenance activities, or monitoring programs, nor does it require any new construction or land-disturbing activities. The scope of the proposed action concerns only the NRC's review and approval of PGEC's DFPs. The scope of the proposed action does not include, and will not result in, the review and approval of any decontamination or decommissioning activity or license termination for the ISFSI or any other part of Diablo Canyon.

Need for the Proposed Action

The proposed action provides a means for PGEC to demonstrate that it will have sufficient funding to cover the costs of decommissioning the ISFSI, including the reduction of the residual radioactivity at the ISFSI to the level specified by the applicable NRC license termination regulations concerning release of the property (10 CFR 20.1402 or 10 CFR 20.1403).

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action

The NRC's approval of the DFPs will not change the scope or nature of the operation of the ISFSI and will not authorize any changes to licensed operations or maintenance activities. The NRC's approval of the DFPs will not result in any changes in the types, characteristics, or quantities of radiological or non-radiological effluents released into the environment from the ISFSI, or result in the creation of any solid waste. Moreover, the approval of the DFPs will not authorize any construction activity or facility modification. Therefore, the NRC staff concludes that the approval of PGEC's DFPs is a procedural and administrative action that will not result in any significant impact to the environment.

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (NHPA), requires Federal agencies to consider the effects of their undertakings on historic properties. In accordance with the NHPA implementing regulations at 36 CFR part 800, ''Protection of Historic Properties,'' the NRC's approval of PGEC's DFPs constitutes a Federal undertaking. The NRC, however, has determined that the approval of the DFPs is a type of undertaking that does not have the potential to cause effects on historic properties, assuming such historic properties were present, because the NRC's approval of PGEC's DFPs will not authorize or result in changes to licensed operations or maintenance activities, or changes in the types, characteristics, or quantities of radiological or non-radiological effluents released into the environment from the ISFSI, or result in the creation of any solid waste. Therefore, in accordance with 36 CFR 800.3(a)(1), no consultation is required under Section 106 of the NHPA.

Under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, prior to taking a proposed action, a Federal agency must determine whether (i) endangered and threatened species or their critical habitats are known to be in the vicinity of the proposed action and, if so, whether (ii) the proposed Federal action may affect listed species or critical habitats. The NRC has determined that the proposed action will have no effect on any listed species or their critical habitats because the NRC's approval of PGEC's DFPs will not authorize or result in changes to licensed operations or maintenance activities, or changes in the types, characteristics, or quantities of radiological or non-radiological effluents released into the environment from the ISFSI, or result in the creation of any solid waste.

Alternative to the Proposed Action

In addition to the proposed action, the NRC evaluated the no-action alternative. The no-action alternative is to deny PGEC's DFPs. A denial of a DFP that meets the criteria of §§ 72.30(b) or (c) does not support the regulatory intent of the 2011 rulemaking. As noted in the EA for the 2011 rulemaking (ADAMS Accession No. ML090500648), not promulgating the 2011 final rule would have increased the likelihood of additional legacy sites. Thus, denying PGEC's DFPs, which the NRC has found to meet the criteria of §§ 72.30(b) and (c), will undermine the licensee's decommissioning planning. On this basis, the NRC has concluded that the no-action alternative is not a viable alternative.

Agencies and Persons Consulted

The NRC staff consulted with other agencies and parties regarding the environmental impacts of the proposed action. The NRC provided a draft of its EA to the California Energy Commission (CEC or State) by letter dated April 25, 2016 (ADAMS Accession No. ML17107A273), and gave the CEC 30 days to respond. The State did not respond. The NRC also consulted with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service by letter dated April 25, 2016 (ADAMS Accession No. ML16120A606). However, the NRC staff has determined that consultation under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 is not required because the proposed action is administrative/procedural in nature and will not affect listed species or critical habitat (ADAMS Accession No. ML17135A062).

III. Finding of No Significant Impact

The NRC staff has determined that the proposed action, the review and approval of PGEC's DFPs submitted in accordance with §§ 72.30(b) and (c), will not authorize or result in changes to licensed operations or maintenance activities, or changes in the types, characteristics, or quantities of radiological or non-radiological effluents released into the environment from the ISFSI, or result in the creation of any solid waste. Moreover, the approval of the DFPs will not authorize any construction activity, facility modification, or any other land-disturbing activity. The NRC staff has concluded that the proposed action is a procedural and administrative action and, as such, that the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. Therefore, the NRC staff has determined not to prepare an environmental impact statement for the proposed action but will issue this FONSI. In accordance with 10 CFR 51.32(a)(4), the FONSI incorporates the EA by reference.

IV. Availability of Documents

The following documents, related to this Notice, can be found using any of the methods provided in the following table. Instructions for accessing ADAMS were provided under the **ADDRESSES** section of this notice.

Date	Document	ADAMS Accession No.
December 17, 2012	Submission of PGEC DFP	ML12353A315
December 17, 2015	Submission of PGEC Triennial DFP	ML15351A502
February 1, 2009	Environmental Assessment for Final Rule—Decommissioning Planning	ML090500648
May 15, 2017	Note to File Re: Section 7 Consultations for ISFSI DFPs	ML17135A062
April 25, 2016	Consultation Letter (ML16120A553–RLSO)	ML17107A273
April 25, 2016	Letter to M. Fris, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Re: NRC Preliminary Determination of No Effects Regarding the Diablo Canyon ISFSI DFP.	ML16120A606
May 11, 2018	Final EA for the Approval of the DFP	ML18131A047

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 4th day of June, 2018.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

John McKirgan,

Branch Chief, Spent Fuel Licensing Branch, Division of Spent Fuel Management, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards.

[FR Doc. 2018–12249 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590–01–P

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Advisory Committee on the Medical Uses of Isotopes: Meeting Notice

AGENCY: Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) will convene a teleconference meeting of the Advisory Committee on the Medical Uses of Isotopes (ACMUI) on July 16, 2018, to discuss the draft report of the ACMUI Subcommittee on Training and Experience Requirements for All Modalities. This report will include the subcommittee's comments on the NRC staff's evaluation of the training and experience requirements for different categories of radiopharmaceuticals in Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations,* part 35, ''Medical Use of Byproduct Material,'' Subpart E, ''Unsealed Byproduct Material—Written Directive Required.'' Meeting information, including a copy of the agenda and handouts, will be available at *http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/acmui/meetings/2018.html.* The agenda and handouts may also be obtained by contacting Ms. Maryann Ayoade using the information below.

DATES: The teleconference meeting will be held on Monday, July 16, 2018, 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

Public Participation: Any member of the public who wishes to participate in the teleconference should contact Ms. Ayoade using the contact information below or may register for the GoToWebinar at *https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2201638285137455618.*

Contact Information: Maryann Ayoade, email: *Maryann.Ayoade@nrc.gov,* telephone: (301) 415–0862.

Conduct of the Meeting

Dr. Christopher Palestro, ACMUI Chairman, will preside over the meeting. Dr. Palestro will conduct the meeting in a manner that will facilitate the orderly conduct of business. The following procedures apply to public participation in the meeting:

1. Persons who wish to provide a written statement should submit an electronic copy to Ms. Ayoade at the contact information listed above. All submittals must be received by July 11, 2018, three business days prior to the meeting, and must pertain to the topic on the agenda for the meeting.

2. Questions and comments from members of the public will be permitted during the meetings, at the discretion of the Chairman.

3. The draft transcript and meeting summary will be available on the ACMUI's website *http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/acmui/meetings/2018.html* on or about August 27, 2018.

This meeting will be held in accordance with the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended (primarily Section 161a); the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App); and the Commission's regulations in Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations,* part 7, ''Advisory Committees.''

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 4th day of June, 2018.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Russell E. Chazell,

Federal Advisory Committee Management Officer.

[FR Doc. 2018–12269 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590–01–P

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[NRC–2018–0109]

Draft Letter to the Nuclear Energy Institute Regarding the Clarification of Regulatory Paths for Lead Test Assemblies

AGENCY: Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

ACTION: Notice of availability; opportunity for comment.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is soliciting public comments on a draft letter to the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) clarifying the regulatory paths for the use of lead test assemblies (LTAs). This draft letter would finalize the NRC staff's views on the preliminary positions regarding LTAs provided in a letter to NEI dated June 29, 2017. The NRC does not currently have consolidated regulatory guidance regarding the use of LTAs. Therefore, the NRC has drafted this letter to clarify its positions regarding the use of LTAs. These positions would affect light-water reactor licensees who wish to irradiate LTAs.

DATES: Submit comments by June 27, 2018. Comments received after this date will be considered if it is practical to do so, but the Commission is able to ensure consideration only for comments received before this date.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments by any of the following methods:

- Federal Rulemaking website: Go to *http://www.regulations.gov* and search for Docket ID NRC–2018–0109. Address questions about NRC dockets to Jennifer Borges; telephone: 301–287–9127; email: *Jennifer.Borges@nrc.gov.* For technical questions, contact the individuals listed in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section of this document.
- *Mail comments to:* May Ma, Office of Administration, Mail Stop: TWFN–7–A60M, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555–0001.

For additional direction on obtaining information and submitting comments, see ''Obtaining Information and

Submitting Comments'' in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section of this document.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jennifer Whitman, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation, telephone: 301–415–3253, email: *Jennifer.Whitman@nrc.gov,* or Kimberly Green, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation, telephone: 301–415–1627, email: *Kimberly.Green@nrc.gov.* Both are staff of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555–0001.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Obtaining Information and Submitting Comments

A. Obtaining Information

Please refer to Docket ID NRC–2018–0109 when contacting the NRC about the availability of information for this action. You may obtain publicly-available information related to this action by any of the following methods:

- *Federal Rulemaking Website:* Go to *http://www.regulations.gov* and search for Docket ID NRC–2018–0109.
- *NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS):* You may obtain publicly-available documents online in the ADAMS Public Documents collection at *http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html.* To begin the search, select ''*ADAMS Public Documents*'' and then select ''*Begin Web-based ADAMS Search.*'' For problems with ADAMS, please contact the NRC's Public Document Room (PDR) reference staff at 1–800–397–4209, 301–415–4737, or by email to *pdr.resource@nrc.gov.* For the convenience of the reader, instructions about obtaining materials referenced in this document are provided in the ''Availability of Documents'' section.
- *NRC's PDR:* You may examine and purchase copies of public documents at the NRC's PDR, Room O1–F21, One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland 20852.

B. Submitting Comments

Please include Docket ID NRC–2018–0109 in your comment submission. The NRC cautions you not to include identifying or contact information that you do not want to be publicly disclosed in your comment submission. The NRC will post all comment submissions at *http://www.regulations.gov* as well as enter the comment submissions into ADAMS. The NRC does not routinely edit comment submissions to remove identifying or contact information.

If you are requesting or aggregating comments from other persons for submission to the NRC, then you should inform those persons not to include identifying or contact information that they do not want to be publicly disclosed in their comment submission. Your request should state that the NRC does not routinely edit comment submissions to remove such information before making the comment submissions available to the public or entering the comment into ADAMS.

II. Background

This draft letter clarifies the NRC staff's interpretation of Standard Technical Specification (STS) 4.2.1, ''Fuel Assemblies.'' The first part of STS 4.2.1 places limitations on the number of fuel assemblies in the reactor core, the type of fuel that can be used, the cladding material that can be used (*e.g.,* zircaloy or ZIRLO), and requires the use of NRC-approved codes and methods for the fuel assemblies. The last sentence of STS 4.2.1 allows for the irradiation of a limited number of LTAs that have not completed representative testing if placed in nonlimiting regions of the reactor core.

In the past, licensees have taken different approaches when conducting LTA campaigns. Some licensees obtained prior NRC approval by license amendments approving changes to Technical Specification (TS) 4.2.1 or exemptions from § 50.46, ''Acceptance criteria for emergency core cooling systems for light-water nuclear power reactors,'' of title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR), or both, for their LTA campaigns. Other licensees conducted LTA campaigns under 10 CFR 50.59, ''Changes, tests, and experiments,'' without prior NRC approval. This draft letter to NEI clarifies the NRC's current interpretation of when prior NRC approval is needed for LTA campaigns. This draft letter responds to concerns from stakeholders, including NEI, that there is a lack of clarity in the regulatory requirements associated with the use of LTAs. For example, concerns were raised on the preliminary positions regarding LTAs provided in a letter to NEI dated June 29, 2017, as comments, in response to the NRC's publication of the document, ''Draft Project Plan to Prepare the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission to License and Regulate Accident Tolerant Fuel'' (82 FR 60633; December 21, 2017), and in a license amendment request for Byron Station, Unit 2, dated March 8, 2018.

The draft letter provides clarification on the LTA provision in STS 4.2.1; clarification on the use of approved methods for LTA campaigns; two regulatory paths for LTA campaigns; guidance on the use of NEI 96–07, Revision 1, ''Guidelines for 10 CFR 50.59 Implementation,'' with regard to LTAs; and a position that an exemption to the requirements in 10 CFR 50.46 is not needed solely for the insertion of LTAs.

III. Non-Concurrence

An NRC staff member did not agree with some content of the draft letter to the NEI and submitted a non-concurrence on the draft letter. In accordance with the NRC's non-concurrence process, NRC management and staff worked to address the staff member's concerns, and documentation of the non-concurrence is available in ADAMS.

IV. Backfitting and Issue Finality

If finalized, the letter would provide additional clarification on previous staff preliminary statements and positions regarding the use of LTAs made in a letter to NEI dated June 29, 2017. Issuance of the letter, if finalized, would not constitute backfitting as defined in 10 CFR 50.109 (the Backfit Rule) and would not otherwise be inconsistent with the issue finality provisions in 10 CFR part 52. The NRC has no current intention to impose the positions described in the draft letter on holders of current operating licenses or combined licenses.

V. Availability of Documents

The documents identified in the following table are available to interested persons through one or more of the following methods, as indicated.

Document	ADAMS Accession No.
Draft letter from U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission to Nuclear Energy Institute, Re: Clarification of Regulatory Paths for Lead Test Assemblies, dated May 31, 2008.	ML18100A045
Letter from Dr. Mirela Gavrilas, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, to Mr. Andrew Mauer, Nuclear Energy Institute, Re: Response to Nuclear Energy Institute Letter Concerning the Regulatory Path for Lead Test Assemblies, dated June 29, 2017.	ML17150A443
NUREG-1430, Standard Technical Specifications, Babcock and Wilcox Plants, Volume 1, Revision 4.0	ML12100A177

Document	ADAMS Accession No.
NUREG-1431, Standard Technical Specifications, Westinghouse Plants, Volume 1, Revision 4.0	ML12100A222
NUREG-1432, Standard Technical Specifications, Combustion Engineering Plants, Volume 1, Revision 4.0	ML12102A165
NUREG-1433, Standard Technical Specifications, General Electric BWR/4 Plants, Volume 1, Revision 4.0	ML12104A192
NUREG-1434, Standard Technical Specifications, General Electric BWR/6 Plants, Volume 1, Revision 4.0	ML12104A195
Letter from Andrew Mauer, Nuclear Energy Institute, to Dr. Mirela Gavrilas, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Re: Regulatory Path for Introduction of Lead Test Assemblies in Commercial Nuclear Reactors, dated May 19, 2017.	ML18038B080
Letter from David M. Gullott, Exelon Generation Company, LLC, to U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Re: License Amendment Request to Utilize Accident Tolerant Fuel Lead Test Assemblies, Byron Station, Unit 2, dated March 8, 2018.	ML18067A431
NEI 96-07, Revision 1, Guidelines for 10 CFR 50.59 Implementation, dated November 2000	ML003771157
Non-Concurrence Form, dated May 31, 2018	ML18151B016

The NRC may post materials related to this document, including public comments, on the Federal Rulemaking website at *http://www.regulations.gov* under Docket ID NRC–2018–0109. The Federal Rulemaking website allows you to receive alerts when changes or additions occur in a docket folder. To subscribe: (1) Navigate to the docket folder (NRC–2018–0109); (2) click the ''Sign up for Email Alerts'' link; and (3) enter your email address and select how frequently you would like to receive emails (daily, weekly, or monthly).

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 4th day of June, 2018.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Joseph G. Giitter,

Director, Division of Operating Reactor Licensing, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

[FR Doc. 2018–12276 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590–01–P

POSTAL SERVICE

Product Change—Priority Mail Negotiated Service Agreement

AGENCY: Postal Service™.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Postal Service gives notice of filing a request with the Postal Regulatory Commission to add a domestic shipping services contract to the list of Negotiated Service Agreements in the Mail Classification Schedule's Competitive Products List.

DATES: *Date of required notice:* June 7, 2018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Elizabeth Reed, 202–268–3179.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The United States Postal Service® hereby gives notice that, pursuant to 39 U.S.C. 3642 and 3632(b)(3), on June 4, 2018, it filed with the Postal Regulatory Commission a *USPS Request to Add Priority Mail Contract 438 to Competitive Product List.* Documents are available at *www.prc.gov,* Docket Nos. MC2018–161, CP2018–231.

Elizabeth Reed,

Attorney, Corporate and Postal Business Law.

[FR Doc. 2018–12255 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7710–12–P

POSTAL SERVICE

Product Change—Priority Mail Express Negotiated Service Agreement

AGENCY: Postal Service™.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Postal Service gives notice of filing a request with the Postal Regulatory Commission to add a domestic shipping services contract to the list of Negotiated Service Agreements in the Mail Classification Schedule's Competitive Products List.

DATES: *Date of required notice:* June 7, 2018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Elizabeth Reed, 202–268–3179.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The United States Postal Service® hereby gives notice that, pursuant to 39 U.S.C. 3642 and 3632(b)(3), on June 4, 2018, it filed with the Postal Regulatory Commission a *USPS Request to Add Priority Mail Express Contract 62 to Competitive Product List.* Documents are available at *www.prc.gov,* Docket Nos. MC2018–158, CP2018–228.

Elizabeth Reed,

Attorney, Corporate and Postal Business Law.

[FR Doc. 2018–12252 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7710–12–P

POSTAL SERVICE

Product Change—Priority Mail Negotiated Service Agreement

AGENCY: Postal Service™.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Postal Service gives notice of filing a request with the Postal Regulatory Commission to add a domestic shipping services contract to the list of Negotiated Service Agreements in the Mail Classification Schedule's Competitive Products List.

DATES: *Date of required notice:* June 7, 2018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Elizabeth Reed, 202–268–3179.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The United States Postal Service® hereby gives notice that, pursuant to 39 U.S.C. 3642 and 3632(b)(3), on June 4, 2018, it filed with the Postal Regulatory Commission a *USPS Request to Add Priority Mail Contract 436 to Competitive Product List.* Documents are available at *www.prc.gov,* Docket Nos. MC2018–159, CP2018–229.

Elizabeth Reed,

Attorney, Corporate and Postal Business Law.

[FR Doc. 2018–12253 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7710–12–P

POSTAL SERVICE

Product Change—Priority Mail Negotiated Service Agreement

AGENCY: Postal Service™.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Postal Service gives notice of filing a request with the Postal Regulatory Commission to add a domestic shipping services contract to the list of Negotiated Service Agreements in the Mail Classification Schedule's Competitive Products List.

DATES: *Date of required notice:* June 7, 2018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Elizabeth Reed, 202–268–3179.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The United States Postal Service® hereby gives notice that, pursuant to 39 U.S.C. 3642 and 3632(b)(3), on June 4, 2018, it filed with the Postal Regulatory Commission a *USPS Request to Add Priority Mail Contract 437 to Competitive Product List.* Documents

are available at *www.prc.gov,* Docket Nos. MC2018–160, CP2018–230.

Elizabeth Reed,

Attorney, Corporate and Postal Business Law.

[FR Doc. 2018–12254 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7710–12–P

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[Investment Company Act Release No. 33112; 812–14871]

Sprott ETF Trust and Sprott Asset Management USA Inc.

June 1, 2018.

AGENCY: Securities and Exchange Commission (''Commission'').

ACTION: Notice.

Notice of an application for an order under section 6(c) of the Investment Company Act of 1940 (the ''Act'') for an exemption from sections 2(a)(32), 5(a)(1), 22(d), and 22(e) of the Act and rule 22c–1 under the Act, under sections 6(c) and 17(b) of the Act for an exemption from sections 17(a)(1) and 17(a)(2) of the Act, and under section 12(d)(1)(J) for an exemption from sections 12(d)(1)(A) and 12(d)(1)(B) of the Act. The requested order would permit (a) actively-managed series of certain open-end management investment companies (''Funds'') to issue shares redeemable in large aggregations only (''Creation Units''); (b) secondary market transactions in Fund shares to occur at negotiated market prices rather than at net asset value (''NAV''); (c) certain Funds to pay redemption proceeds, under certain circumstances, more than seven days after the tender of shares for redemption; (d) certain affiliated persons of a Fund to deposit securities into, and receive securities from, the Fund in connection with the purchase and redemption of Creation Units; (e) certain registered management investment companies and unit investment trusts outside of the same group of investment companies as the Funds (''Funds of Funds'') to acquire shares of the Funds; and (f) certain Funds (''Feeder Funds'') to create and redeem Creation Units in-kind in a master-feeder structure.

Applicants: Sprott ETF Trust (''Trust''), a Delaware statutory trust that will be registered under the Act as an open-end management investment company with multiple series, and Sprott Asset Management USA Inc. (''Initial Adviser''), a California corporation registered as an investment adviser under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940.

Filing Dates: The application was filed on January 23, 2018 and amended on May 22, 2018.

Hearing or Notification of Hearing: An order granting the requested relief will be issued unless the Commission orders a hearing. Interested persons may request a hearing by writing to the Commission's Secretary and serving applicants with a copy of the request, personally or by mail. Hearing requests should be received by the Commission by 5:30 p.m. on June 26, 2018, and should be accompanied by proof of service on applicants, in the form of an affidavit, or for lawyers, a certificate of service. Pursuant to rule 0–5 under the Act, hearing requests should state the nature of the writer's interest, any facts bearing upon the desirability of a hearing on the matter, the reason for the request, and the issues contested. Persons who wish to be notified of a hearing may request notification by writing to the Commission's Secretary.

ADDRESSES: Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, 100 F Street NE, Washington, DC 20549–1090; Applicants: Bibb L. Strench, Esq., Thompson Hine LLP, 1919 M Street NW, Suite 700, Washington, DC 20036–3537; Thomas W. Ulrich, Esq., Sprott Asset Management USA Inc., 1910 Palomar Point Way, Suite 200, Carlsbad, CA 92008.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Courtney S. Thornton, Senior Counsel, at (202) 551–6812, or Andrea Ottomanelli Magovern, Branch Chief, at (202) 551–6821 (Division of Investment Management, Chief Counsel's Office).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The following is a summary of the application. The complete application may be obtained via the Commission's website by searching for the file number, or for an applicant using the Company name box, at *http://www.sec.gov/search/search.htm* or by calling (202) 551–8090.

Summary of the Application

1. Applicants request an order that would allow Funds to operate as actively-managed exchange traded funds (''ETFs'').[1] Fund shares will be purchased and redeemed at their NAV in Creation Units only. All orders to purchase Creation Units and all redemption requests will be placed by or through an ''Authorized Participant,'' which will have signed a participant agreement with a broker-dealer registered under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (''Exchange Act'') (''Distributor''). Shares will be listed and traded individually on a national securities exchange, where share prices will be based on the current bid/offer market. Certain Funds may operate as Feeder Funds in a master-feeder structure. Any order granting the requested relief would be subject to the terms and conditions stated in the application.

2. Each Fund will consist of a portfolio of securities and other assets and investment positions (''Portfolio Instruments''). Each Fund will disclose on its website the identities and quantities of the Portfolio Instruments that will form the basis for the Fund's calculation of NAV at the end of the day.

3. Shares will be purchased and redeemed in Creation Units and generally on an in-kind basis. Except where the purchase or redemption will include cash under the limited circumstances specified in the application, purchasers will be required to purchase Creation Units by depositing specified instruments (''Deposit Instruments''), and shareholders redeeming their shares will receive specified instruments (''Redemption Instruments''). The Deposit Instruments and the Redemption Instruments will each correspond pro rata to the positions in the Fund's portfolio (including cash positions) except as specified in the application.

4. Because shares will not be individually redeemable, applicants request an exemption from section 5(a)(1) and section 2(a)(32) of the Act that would permit the Funds to register as open-end management investment companies and issue shares that are redeemable in Creation Units only.

5. Applicants also request an exemption from section 22(d) of the Act and rule 22c–1 under the Act as secondary market trading in shares will take place at negotiated prices, not at a current offering price described in a Fund's prospectus, and not at a price based on NAV. Applicants state that (a)

[1] Applicants request that the order apply to the Initial Fund, as well as to future series of the Trust and any other existing or future open-end management investment companies or series thereof (each, included in the term ''Fund''), each of which will operate as an actively-managed ETF. Any Fund will (a) be advised by the Initial Adviser or an entity controlling, controlled by, or under common control with the Initial Adviser (each of the foregoing and any successor thereto included in the term ''Adviser'') or any successor thereto, and (b) comply with the terms and conditions of the application. For purposes of the requested Order, a ''successor'' is limited to an entity or entities that result from a reorganization into another jurisdiction or a change in the type of business organization.

secondary market trading in shares does not involve a Fund as a party and will not result in dilution of an investment in shares, and (b) to the extent different prices exist during a given trading day, or from day to day, such variances occur as a result of third-party market forces, such as supply and demand. Therefore, applicants assert that secondary market transactions in shares will not lead to discrimination or preferential treatment among purchasers. Finally, applicants represent that share market prices will be disciplined by arbitrage opportunities, which should prevent shares from trading at a material discount or premium from NAV.

6. With respect to Funds that hold non-U.S. Portfolio Instruments and that effect creations and redemptions of Creation Units in kind, applicants request relief from the requirement imposed by section 22(e) in order to allow such Funds to pay redemption proceeds within fifteen calendar days following the tender of Creation Units for redemption. Applicants assert that the requested relief would not be inconsistent with the spirit and intent of section 22(e) to prevent unreasonable, undisclosed or unforeseen delays in the actual payment of redemption proceeds.

7. Applicants request an exemption to permit Funds of Funds to acquire Fund shares beyond the limits of section 12(d)(1)(A) of the Act; and the Funds, and any principal underwriter for the Funds, and/or any broker or dealer registered under the Exchange Act, to sell shares to Funds of Funds beyond the limits of section 12(d)(1)(B) of the Act. The application's terms and conditions are designed to, among other things, help prevent any potential (i) undue influence over a Fund through control or voting power, or in connection with certain services, transactions, and underwritings, (ii) excessive layering of fees, and (iii) overly complex fund structures, which are the concerns underlying the limits in sections 12(d)(1)(A) and (B) of the Act.

8. Applicants request an exemption from sections 17(a)(1) and 17(a)(2) of the Act to permit a person who is an affiliated person, as defined in section 2(a)(3) of the Act (''Affiliated Person''), or an affiliated person of an Affiliated Person (''Second-Tier Affiliate''), of the Funds, solely by virtue of certain ownership interests, to effectuate purchases and redemptions in-kind. The deposit procedures for in-kind purchases of Creation Units and the redemption procedures for in-kind redemptions of Creation Units will be the same for all purchases and redemptions and Deposit Instruments and Redemption Instruments will be valued in the same manner as those Portfolio Instruments currently held by the Funds. Applicants also seek relief from the prohibitions on affiliated transactions in section 17(a) to permit a Fund to sell its shares to and redeem its shares from a Fund of Funds, and to engage in the accompanying in-kind transactions with the Fund of Funds.[2] The purchase of Creation Units by a Fund of Funds directly from a Fund will be accomplished in accordance with the policies of the Fund of Funds and will be based on the NAVs of the Funds.

9. Applicants also request relief to permit a Feeder Fund to acquire shares of another registered investment company managed by the Adviser having substantially the same investment objectives as the Feeder Fund (''Master Fund'') beyond the limitations in section 12(d)(1)(A) and permit the Master Fund, and any principal underwriter for the Master Fund, to sell shares of the Master Fund to the Feeder Fund beyond the limitations in section 12(d)(1)(B).

10. Section 6(c) of the Act permits the Commission to exempt any persons or transactions from any provision of the Act if such exemption is necessary or appropriate in the public interest and consistent with the protection of investors and the purposes fairly intended by the policy and provisions of the Act. Section 12(d)(1)(J) of the Act provides that the Commission may exempt any person, security, or transaction, or any class or classes of persons, securities, or transactions, from any provision of section 12(d)(1) if the exemption is consistent with the public interest and the protection of investors. Section 17(b) of the Act authorizes the Commission to grant an order permitting a transaction otherwise prohibited by section 17(a) if it finds that (a) the terms of the proposed transaction are fair and reasonable and do not involve overreaching on the part of any person concerned; (b) the proposed transaction is consistent with the policies of each registered investment company involved; and (c) the proposed transaction is consistent with the general purposes of the Act.

[2] The requested relief would apply to direct sales of shares in Creation Units by a Fund to a Fund of Funds and redemptions of those shares. Applicants, moreover, are not seeking relief from section 17(a) for, and the requested relief will not apply to, transactions where a Fund could be deemed an Affiliated Person, or a Second-Tier Affiliate, of a Fund of Funds because an investment adviser to the Funds is also an investment adviser to a Fund of Funds.

For the Commission, by the Division of Investment Management, under delegated authority.

Eduardo A. Aleman,

Assistant Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2018–12191 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8011–01–P

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[Release No. 34–83359; File No. SR–NYSE–2018–22]

Self-Regulatory Organizations; New York Stock Exchange LLC; Notice of Filing and Immediate Effectiveness of Proposed Rule Change To Amend the Content of the NYSE Best Quote & Trades Data Feed

June 1, 2018.

Pursuant to Section 19(b)(1) [1] of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (the ''Act'') [2] and Rule 19b–4 thereunder,[3] notice is hereby given that on May 18, 2018, New York Stock Exchange LLC (''NYSE'' or the ''Exchange'') filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (''Commission'') the proposed rule change as described in Items I and II below, which Items have been prepared by the self-regulatory organization. The Commission is publishing this notice to solicit comments on the proposed rule change from interested persons.

I. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement of the Terms of the Substance of the Proposed Rule Change

The Exchange proposes to amend the content of the NYSE Best Quote & Trades (''NYSE BQT'') data feed. The proposed rule change is available on the Exchange's website at *www.nyse.com,* at the principal office of the Exchange, and at the Commission's Public Reference Room.

II. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement of the Purpose of, and Statutory Basis for, the Proposed Rule Change

In its filing with the Commission, the self-regulatory organization included statements concerning the purpose of, and basis for, the proposed rule change and discussed any comments it received on the proposed rule change. The text of those statements may be examined at the places specified in Item IV below. The Exchange has prepared summaries, set forth in sections A, B, and C below,

[1] 15 U.S.C.78s(b)(1).

[2] 15 U.S.C. 78a.

[3] 17 CFR 240.19b–4.

of the most significant parts of such statements.

A. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement of the Purpose of, and Statutory Basis for, the Proposed Rule Change

1. Purpose

The Exchange proposes to amend the content of NYSE BQT to include data feeds from the Exchange's affiliate, NYSE National, Inc. (''NYSE National''). The Exchange recently filed a proposed rule change to establish NYSE National market data feeds, including NYSE National BBO (''NYSE National BBO'') and NYSE National Trades (''NYSE National Trades'') [4] and now proposes to amend the content of the NYSE BQT market data feed to include NYSE National BBO and NYSE National Trades.

The NYSE BQT [5] data feed currently provides a unified view of best bid and offer (''BBO'') and last sale information for the Exchange and its affiliates, NYSE Arca, Inc. (''NYSE Arca'') and NYSE American LLC (''NYSE American'') and consists of data elements from six existing market data feeds: NYSE Trades,[6] NYSE BBO,[7] NYSE Arca Trades,[8] NYSE Arca BBO,[9] NYSE American Trades [10] and NYSE American BBO.[11]

NYSE BBO, NYSE Arca BBO, and NYSE American BBO are existing data feeds that distribute on a realtime basis the same BBO information that NYSE, NYSE Arca, and NYSE American, respectively, report under the Consolidated Quotation (''CQ'') Plan for inclusion in the CQ Plan's consolidated quotation information data stream. NYSE Trades, NYSE Arca Trades, and NYSE American Trades are existing data feeds that distribute on a real-time basis the same last sale information that NYSE, NYSE Arca, and NYSE American, respectively, report under the Consolidated Tape Association (''CTA'') Plan for inclusion in the CTA Plan's consolidated data streams.

The NYSE BQT data feed has three channels: One channel for the last sale data (the ''last sale channel''); another channel for the BBO data (the ''best quotes channel''); and a third channel for consolidated volume data (the ''consolidated volume channel'').

The last sale channel provides an aggregation of the same data that is currently available through NYSE Trades, NYSE Arca Trades, and NYSE American Trades. With this proposed rule change, the last sale channel would also include data available through NYSE National Trades.

The best quotes channel provides the NYSE BQT BBO, which is the best quote from among the NYSE BBO, NYSE Arca BBO, and NYSE MKT BBO based on the following criteria, in order:

- *Price:* The exchange with the highest bid or the lowest offer has overall priority;
- *Size:* The largest size takes precedence when multiple exchanges submit the same bid and/or offer price; and
- *Time:* The earliest time takes precedence when multiple exchanges submit the same bid and/or offer price with the same sizes.

With this proposed rule change, the best quotes channel would also include data available through NYSE National BBO.

For each security, the best quotes channel would only include one best bid and one best offer from among the four exchanges. The NYSE BQT BBO would be marked with a market center ID identifying the exchange from which the BBO originated.

The consolidated volume channel carries consolidated volume for all listed equities in a manner consistent with the requirements for redistributing such data as set forth in the securities information processor plans.

As it does today, NYSE BQT would also provide related data elements for NYSE National, such as trade and security status updates (*e.g.,* trade corrections and trading halts).

The Exchange believes that NYSE BQT would continue to provide high-quality, comprehensive last sale and BBO data for the Exchange, NYSE Arca, NYSE American, and now, NYSE National, in a unified view and would respond to subscriber demand for such a product.

With respect to cost, the Exchange will file a separate rule filing to amend the fees for NYSE BQT.[12] To ensure that vendors could continue to compete with the Exchange by creating the same product as NYSE BQT and selling it to their clients, the Exchange would continue to charge its clients for the NYSE BQT feed an amount that represents the cost to a market data vendor to obtain the underlying data feeds, plus an access fee to perform an aggregation and consolidation function that the Exchange performs in creating NYSE BQT. The Exchange believes that a competing vendor could create and offer a product similar to the proposed NYSE BQT data feed at a similar cost. For these reasons, the Exchange continues to believe that vendors could readily offer a product similar to NYSE BQT on a competitive basis.

The Exchange will announce the date through a market data notice that the amended NYSE BQT feed that includes NYSE National BBO and NYSE National Trades data would be available and by when a subscriber must subscribe to NYSE National BBO and NYSE National Trades to continue receiving NYSE BQT. This proposed change to NYSE BQT will not be operative until NYSE National has established the NYSE National BBO and NYSE National Trades and related fees via a proposed rule change(s) and NYSE National has re-launched operations.

2. Statutory Basis

The Exchange believes that the proposed rule change is consistent with Section 6(b) [13] of the Act (''Act''), in general, and furthers the objectives of Section 6(b)(5) [14] of the Act, in particular, in that it is designed to prevent fraudulent and manipulative acts and practices, to promote just and equitable principles of trade, to foster cooperation and coordination with persons engaged in facilitating transactions in securities, to remove impediments to and perfect the mechanism of a free and open market and a national market system and, in general, to protect investors and the public interest, and it is not designed to permit unfair discrimination among customers, brokers, or dealers. This proposal is in keeping with those principles in that it promotes increased transparency through the dissemination of the NYSE BQT market data feed to those interested in receiving it.

The NYSE BQT data feed is a product that relies on the Exchange's receipt of

[4] *See* SR–NYSENat–2018–09.

[5] *See* Securities Exchange Act Release No. 73553 (November 6, 2014), 79 FR 67491 (November 13, 2014) (Notice of Amendment No. 1 and Order Granting Accelerated Approval to a Proposed Rule Change, as Modified by Amendment No. 1, To Establish the NYSE Best Quote and Trades Data Feed).

[6] *See* Securities Exchange Act Release Nos. 59290 (Jan. 23, 2009), 74 FR 5707 (Jan. 30, 2009) (SR–NYSE–2009–05); 59606 (Mar. 19, 2009), 74 FR 13293 (Mar. 26, 2009) (SR–NYSE–2009–04).

[7] *See* Securities Exchange Act Release No. 62181 (May 26, 2010), 75 FR 31488 (June 3, 2010) (SR–NYSE–2010–30).

[8] *See* Securities Exchange Act Release Nos. 59289 (Jan. 23, 2009), 74 FR 5711 (Jan. 30, 2009) (SR–NYSEArca–2009–06); and 59598 (Mar. 18, 2009), 74 FR 12919 (Mar. 25, 2009) (SR–NYSEArca–2009–05).

[9] *See* Securities Exchange Act Release No. 62188 (May 27, 2010), 75 FR 31484 (June 3, 2010) (SR–NYSEArca–2010–23).

[10] *See* Securities Exchange Act Release No. 62187 (May 27, 2010), 75 FR 31500 (June 3, 2010) (SR–NYSEAmex–2010–35).

[11] *See* Securities Exchange Act Release No. 62187 (May 27, 2010), 75 FR 31500 (June 3, 2010) (SR–NYSEAmex–2010–35).

[12] *See* SR–NYSE–2018–24.

[13] 15 U.S.C. 78f(b).

[14] 15 U.S.C. 78f(b)(5).

underlying data, which is available to all market participants, before it can aggregate and consolidate information to create the NYSE BQT; this is a process that a vendor could also perform. Accordingly, the Exchange is not the only distributor of the NYSE BQT data feed.

The Exchange believes that the proposed rule change is consistent with Rule 603 of Regulation NMS,[15] which provides that any national securities exchange that distributes information with respect to quotations for or transactions in an NMS stck [sic] do so on terms that are not unreasonably discriminatory. In adopting Regulation NMS, the Commission granted self-regulatory organizations (''SROs'') and broker dealers increased authority and flexibility to offer new and unique market data to consumers of such data. It was believed that this authority would expand the amount of data available to users and consumers of such data and also spur innovation and competition for the provision of market data.

The Exchange further notes that the existence of alternatives to the Exchange's product, including real-time consolidated data, free delayed consolidated data, and proprietary data from other sources, as well as the continued availability of the Exchange's separate data feeds, ensures that the Exchange is not unreasonably discriminatory because vendors and subscribers can elect these alternatives as their individual business cases warrant. Additionally, the Exchange has taken into consideration its affiliated relationship with NYSE Arca, NYSE American and NYSE National in its design of the NYSE BQT data feed to assure that similarly situated competing vendors would be able to offer a similar product on the same terms as the Exchange, both from the perspective of latency and cost.

The Exchange believes that NYSE BQT offers an alternative to the use of consolidated data products and proprietary data products such as NASDAQ Basic and NLS Plus. NASDAQ Basic, which is offered by The NASDAQ Stock Market, Inc. (''NASDAQ'') provides best bid and offer and last sale information for all U.S. exchange-listed securities (including NYSE and its affiliates) based on liquidity within NASDAQ, as well as trades reported to the FINRA/NASDAQ Trade Reporting Facility (''TRF''), including NASDAQ last sale, NASDAQ BBO, NASDAQ opening and closing prices, and other market status information.[16] Further, NLS Plus provides all trade data from NASDAQ, the FINRA/NASDAQ TRF, NASDAQ BX, and NASDAQ PSX, as well as consolidated volume information as part of each trade message.[17]

Cboe Global Markets, Inc. (''Cboe'') also offers a market data product that provides a unified view of the aggregated quote and trade updates for all the Cboe equity exchanges.[18] The Exchange believes that NYSE BQT offers a competitive alternative to the two existing NASDAQ products and the Cboe product.

In addition, this proposal would not permit unfair discrimination because NYSE BQT will continue to be available to all of the Exchange's customers through SFTI and market data vendors on an equivalent basis. In addition, any customer that wished to continue to be able to purchase one or more of the individual underlying data feeds would be able to do so.

B. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement on Burden on Competition

In accordance with Section 6(b)(8) of the Act,[19] the Exchange does not believe that the proposed rule change will impose any burden on competition that is not necessary or appropriate in furtherance of the purposes of the Act. The Exchange believes that the proposed rule change will enhance competition because it would enable the Exchange to include NYSE National BBO and NYSE National Trades as part of NYSE BQT, thereby enabling it to better compete with market data products offered by NASDAQ and Cboe.[20] As noted above, the Exchange already offers NYSE BQT and this proposed rule change simply amends the content of the current market data product to include data elements from two additional data feeds from the Exchange's affiliate, NYSE National. Although the Exchange, NYSE Arca, NYSE American and NYSE National are the exclusive distributors of the eight BBO and Trades feeds from which certain data elements are taken to create NYSE BQT, the Exchange would not be the exclusive distributor of the aggregated and consolidated information that would compose the amended NYSE BQT data feed. Vendors would be able, if they chose, to create a data feed with the same information as NYSE BQT and distribute it to their clients on a level-playing field with respect to latency and cost as compared to the Exchange's product.

With respect to latency, the Exchange, NYSE Arca, NYSE American and NYSE National are located in the same data center in Mahwah, New Jersey. The system creating and supporting the NYSE BQT data feed would need to obtain the eight underlying data feeds from the four exchanges before it could aggregate and consolidate information to create NYSE BQT and then distribute it to end users. Likewise, a competing market data vendor co-located at the Exchange's Mahwah, New Jersey facility could perform the aggregation and consolidation function in the Mahwah facility and redistribute a competing product from that location to similarly situated customers on a level-playing field with respect to the speed that the Exchange could create and redistribute the NYSE BQT data feed.

The Exchange believes that NYSE BQT will continue to promote competition among exchanges by offering an alternative to NASDAQ Basic, NLS Plus and Cboe Equites One Feed.[21] For these reasons, the Exchange believes that NYSE BQT will continue to promote, rather than unnecessarily or inappropriately burden, competition for market data products that are offered in the capacity as a vendor and are not core exchange market data products.

C. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement on Comments on the Proposed Rule Change Received From Members, Participants, or Others

No written comments were solicited or received with respect to the proposed rule change.

III. Date of Effectiveness of the Proposed Rule Change and Timing for Commission Action

Because the proposed rule change does not (i) significantly affect the protection of investors or the public interest; (ii) impose any significant burden on competition; and (iii) become operative for 30 days from the date on which it was filed, or such shorter time as the Commission may designate, it has become effective pursuant to Section 19(b)(3)(A) of the Act[22] and Rule 19b–4(f)(6) thereunder.[23]

[15] 17 CFR 242.603.

[16] *See* NASDAQ Basic, available at *http://business.nasdaq.com/intel/market-data-feeds/Equities-Market-Data/basic.*

[17] *See* NLS Plus, available at *http://www.nasdaqtrader.com/Trader.aspx?id=NLSplus.*

[18] *See https://markets.cboe.com/us/equities/market_data_products/bats_one/.* The Cboe Equities One Premium Feed also includes five levels of aggregate depth information for all four Cboe exchanges.

[19] 15 U.S.C. 78f(b)(8).

[20] *See supra* notes 16–18.

[21] *See supra* notes 16–18.

[22] 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(3)(A).

[23] 17 CFR 240.19b–4(f)(6). As required under Rule 19b–4(f)(6)(iii), the Exchange provided the Commission with written notice of its intent to file

Continued

A proposed rule change filed pursuant to Rule 19b–4(f)(6) under the Act [24] normally does not become operative for 30 days after the date of its filing. However, Rule 19b–4(f)(6)(iii) [25] permits the Commission to designate a shorter time if such action is consistent with the protection of investors and the public interest. The Exchange has asked the Commission to waive the 30-day operative delay so that the proposed rule change may become operative upon filing. The Exchange states that waiver of the operative delay would be consistent with the protection of investors and the public interest because it will allow the Exchange to provide an amended NYSE BQT market data feed that will include the NYSE National Market Data Feeds immediately upon launch of NYSE National, which the Exchange states is intended in May 2018, and will further allow the Exchange to compete directly with the similar NASDAQ and Cboe market data products on a timely basis. The Commission believes that waiving the 30-day operative delay is consistent with the protection of investors and the public interest. Therefore, the Commission hereby waives the operative delay and designates the proposal as operative upon filing.[26]

At any time within 60 days of the filing of the proposed rule change, the Commission summarily may temporarily suspend such rule change if it appears to the Commission that such action is necessary or appropriate in the public interest, for the protection of investors, or otherwise in furtherance of the purposes of the Act. If the Commission takes such action, the Commission shall institute proceedings to determine whether the proposed rule should be approved or disapproved.

IV. Solicitation of Comments

Interested persons are invited to submit written data, views, and arguments concerning the foregoing, including whether the proposed rule change is consistent with the Act. Comments may be submitted by any of the following methods:

Electronic Comments

- Use the Commission's internet comment form (*http://www.sec.gov/rules/sro.shtml*); or
- Send an email to *rule-comments@sec.gov.* Please include File Number SR–NYSE–2018–22 on the subject line.

Paper Comments

- Send paper comments in triplicate to Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, 100 F Street NE, Washington, DC 20549–1090.

All submissions should refer to File Number SR–NYSE–2018–22. This file number should be included on the subject line if email is used. To help the Commission process and review your comments more efficiently, please use only one method. The Commission will post all comments on the Commission's internet website (*http://www.sec.gov/rules/sro.shtml*). Copies of the submission, all subsequent amendments, all written statements with respect to the proposed rule change that are filed with the Commission, and all written communications relating to the proposed rule change between the Commission and any person, other than those that may be withheld from the public in accordance with the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 552, will be available for website viewing and printing in the Commission's Public Reference Room, 100 F Street NE, Washington, DC 20549 on official business days between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Copies of the filing also will be available for inspection and copying at the principal office of the Exchange. All comments received will be posted without change. Persons submitting comments are cautioned that we do not redact or edit personal identifying information from comment submissions. You should submit only information that you wish to make available publicly. All submissions should refer to File Number SR–NYSE–2018–22, and should be submitted on or before June 28, 2018.

For the Commission, by the Division of Trading and Markets, pursuant to delegated authority.[27]

Eduardo A. Aleman,

Assistant Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2018–12193 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8011–01–P

the proposed rule change, along with a brief description and the text of the proposed rule change, at least five business days prior to the date of filing of the proposed rule change, or such shorter time as designated by the Commission.

[24] 17 CFR 240.19b–4(f)(6).

[25] 17 CFR 240.19b–4(f)(6)(iii).

[26] For purposes only of waiving the 30-day operative delay, the Commission has also considered the proposed rule's impact on efficiency, competition, and capital formation. *See* 15 U.S.C. 78c(f).

[27] 17 CFR 200.30–3(a)(12).

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[SEC File No. 270–233, OMB Control No. 3235–0223]

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

Upon Written Request, Copies Available From: Securities and Exchange Commission, Office of FOIA Services, 100 F Street NE, Washington, DC 20549–2736

Extension:
Rule 17f–2

Notice is hereby given that, pursuant to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 350l *et seq.*), the Securities and Exchange Commission (the ''Commission'') has submitted to the Office of Management and Budget a request for extension of the previously approved collection of information discussed below.

Rule 17f–2 (17 CFR 270.17f–2), entitled ''Custody of Investments by Registered Management Investment Company,'' was adopted in 1940 under section 17(f) of the Investment Company Act of 1940 (15 U.S.C. 80a–17(f)) (the ''Act''), and was last amended materially in 1947. Rule 17f–2 establishes safeguards for arrangements in which a registered management investment company (''fund'') is deemed to maintain custody of its own assets, such as when the fund maintains its assets in a facility that provides safekeeping but not custodial services.[1] The rule includes several recordkeeping or reporting requirements. The fund's directors must prepare a resolution designating not more than five fund officers or responsible employees who may have access to the fund's assets. The designated access persons (two or more of whom must act jointly when handling fund assets) must prepare a written notation providing certain information about each deposit or withdrawal of fund assets, and must transmit the notation to another officer or director designated by the directors. An independent public accountant must verify the fund's assets three times each year, and two of those examinations must be unscheduled.[2]

[1] The rule generally requires all assets to be deposited in the safekeeping of a ''bank or other company whose functions and physical facilities are supervised by Federal or State authority.'' The fund's securities must be physically segregated at all times from the securities of any other person.

[2] The accountant must transmit to the Commission promptly after each examination a certificate describing the examination on Form N–17f–2. The third (scheduled) examination may coincide with the annual verification required for every fund by section 30(g) of the Act (15 U.S.C. 80a–29(g)).

Rule 17f–2's requirement that directors designate access persons is intended to ensure that directors evaluate the trustworthiness of insiders who handle fund assets. The requirements that access persons act jointly in handling fund assets, prepare a written notation of each transaction, and transmit the notation to another designated person are intended to reduce the risk of misappropriation of fund assets by access persons, and to ensure that adequate records are prepared, reviewed by a responsible third person, and available for examination by the Commission. The requirement that auditors verify fund assets without notice twice each year is intended to provide an additional deterrent to the misappropriation of fund assets and to detect any irregularities.

The Commission staff estimates that each fund makes 974 responses and spends an average of 252 hours annually in complying with the rule's requirements.[3] Commission staff estimates that on an annual basis it takes: (i) 0.5 hours of fund accounting personnel at a total cost of $102 to draft director resolutions; [4] (ii) 0.5 hours of the fund's board of directors at a total cost of $2,233 to adopt the resolution; [5] (iii) 244 hours for the fund's accounting personnel at a total cost of $65,745 to prepare written notations of transactions; [6] and (iv) 7 hours for the fund's accounting personnel at a total cost of $1,428 to assist the independent public accountants when they perform verifications of fund assets.[7] Commission staff estimates that approximately 206 funds file Form N–17f–2 each year.[8] Thus, the total annual hour burden for rule 17f–2 is estimated to be 51,912 hours.[9] Based on the total costs per fund listed above, the total cost of rule 17f–2's collection of information requirements is estimated to be approximately $13.5 million.[10]

The estimate of average burden hours is made solely for the purposes of the Paperwork Reduction Act, and is not derived from a comprehensive or even a representative survey or study of the costs of Commission rules and forms. Complying with the collections of information required by rule 17f–2 is mandatory for those funds that maintain custody of their own assets. Responses will not be kept confidential. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid control number.

The public may view the background documentation for this information collection at the following website, *www.reginfo.gov.* Comments should be directed to: (i) Desk Officer for the Securities and Exchange Commission, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, Room 10102, New Executive Office Building, Washington, DC 20503, or by sending an email to: *Shagufta_Ahmed@omb.eop.gov;* and (ii) Pamela Dyson, Director/Chief Information Officer, Securities and Exchange Commission, c/o Remi Pavlik-Simon, 100 F Street NE, Washington, DC 20549 or send an email to: *PRA_Mailbox@sec.gov.* Comments must be submitted to OMB within 30 days of this notice.

Dated: June 1, 2018.

Eduardo A. Aleman,

Assistant Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2018–12192 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8011–01–P

[3] The 974 responses are: 1 (one) response to draft and adopt the resolution and 973 notations. Estimates of the number of hours are based on conversations with individuals in the fund industry. The actual number of hours may vary significantly depending on individual fund assets.

[4] This estimate is based on the following calculation: 0.5 (burden hours per fund) × $204 (senior accountant's hourly rate) = $102. Unless otherwise indicated, the hourly wage figures used herein are from the Securities Industry and Financial Markets Association's Management & Professional Earnings in the Securities Industry 2013, modified by Commission staff to account for an 1800-hour work-year and inflation, and multiplied by 5.35 to account for bonuses, firm size, employee benefits and overhead.

[5] The estimate for the cost of board time as a whole is derived from estimates made by the staff regarding typical board size and compensation that is based on information received from fund representatives and publicly available sources.

[6] Respondents estimated that each fund makes 974 responses on an annual basis and spends a total of 0.25 hours per response. The fund personnel involved are Accounts Payable Manager ($192 hourly rate), Operations Manager ($345 hourly rate) and Accounting Manager ($274 hourly rate). The average hourly rate of these personnel is $270. The estimated cost of preparing notations is based on the following calculation: 974 × 0.25 × $270 = $65,745.

[7] This estimate is based on the following calculation: 7 × $204 (senior accountant's hourly rate) = $1,428.

[8] On average, each year approximately 206 funds filed Form N–17f–2 with the Commission during calendar years 2015–2017.

[9] This estimate is based on the following calculation: 206 (funds) × 252 (total annual hourly burden per fund) = 51,912 hours for rule. The annual burden for rule 17f–2 does not include time spent preparing Form N–17f–2. The burden for Form N–17f–2 is included in a separate collection of information.

[10] This estimate is based on the following calculation: $65,745 (total annual cost per fund) × 206 funds = $13,543,470.

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[Release No. 34–83360; File No. SR–NYSE–2018–24]

Self-Regulatory Organizations; New York Stock Exchange LLC; Notice of Filing and Immediate Effectiveness of Proposed Rule Change To Amend the NYSE Proprietary Market Data Fee Schedule Regarding the NYSE Best Quote and Trades Market Data Feed

June 1, 2018.

Pursuant to Section 19(b)(1) [1] of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (the ''Act'') [2] and Rule 19b–4 thereunder,[3] notice is hereby given that on May 21, 2018, New York Stock Exchange LLC (''NYSE'' or the ''Exchange'') filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (''Commission'') the proposed rule change as described in Items I, II, and III below, which Items have been prepared by the self-regulatory organization. The Commission is publishing this notice to solicit comments on the proposed rule change from interested persons.

I. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement of the Terms of the Substance of the Proposed Rule Change

The Exchange proposes to amend the NYSE Proprietary Market Data Fee Schedule (''Fee Schedule'') regarding the NYSE Best Quote and Trades (''BQT'') market data feed. The Exchange proposes to make the fee change effective May 21, 2018. The proposed rule change is available on the Exchange's website at *www.nyse.com,* at the principal office of the Exchange, and at the Commission's Public Reference Room.

II. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement of the Purpose of, and Statutory Basis for, the Proposed Rule Change

In its filing with the Commission, the self-regulatory organization included statements concerning the purpose of, and basis for, the proposed rule change and discussed any comments it received on the proposed rule change. The text of those statements may be examined at the places specified in Item IV below. The Exchange has prepared summaries, set forth in sections A, B, and C below, of the most significant parts of such statements.

[1] 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

[2] 15 U.S.C. 78a.

[3] 17 CFR 240.19b–4.

A. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement of the Purpose of, and Statutory Basis for, the Proposed Rule Change

1. Purpose

The Exchange proposes to amend the Fee Schedule regarding the NYSE BQT market data feed. The NYSE BQT data feed provides best bid and offer and last sale information for the Exchange and its affiliates, NYSE Arca, Inc. (''NYSE Arca'') and NYSE American LLC (''NYSE American'').[4] In connection with the re-launch of operations of another affiliate of the Exchange, NYSE National, Inc. (''NYSE National''), the Exchange recently filed a proposed rule change to amend the content of the NYSE BQT market data feed [5] to include NYSE National BBO and NYSE National Trades market data feeds.[6]

The Exchange currently charges an access fee of $250 per month for the NYSE BQT data feed. The Exchange is not proposing any change to the access fee. The purpose of this filing is to amend footnote 5 to the Fee Schedule to provide that to subscribe to NYSE BQT, subscribers must also subscribe to, and pay applicable fees for, NYSE National BBO and NYSE Trades in addition to subscribing to, and paying for, NYSE BBO, NYSE Trades, NYSE Arca BBO, NYSE Arca Trades, NYSE American BBO and NYSE American Trades.

2. Statutory Basis

The Exchange believes that the proposed rule change is consistent with the provisions of Section 6 of the Act,[7] in general, and Sections 6(b)(4) and 6(b)(5) of the Act,[8] in particular, in that it provides an equitable allocation of reasonable fees among its members, issuers, and other persons using its facilities and is not designed to permit unfair discrimination among customers, issuers, brokers, or dealers. The Exchange also believes that the proposed rule change is consistent with Section 11(A) of the Act [9] in that it is consistent with (i) fair competition among brokers and dealers, among exchange markets, and between exchange markets and markets other than exchange markets; and (ii) the availability to brokers, dealers, and investors of information with respect to quotations for and transactions in securities. Furthermore, the proposed rule change is consistent with Rule 603 of Regulation NMS,[10] which provides that any national securities exchange that distributes information with respect to quotations for or transactions in an NMS stock do so on terms that are not unreasonably discriminatory.

The Exchange further believes that requiring market data recipients to separately subscribe to and pay for the eight underlying data feeds to NYSE BQT is reasonable because by design, NYSE BQT represents an aggregated and consolidated version of those existing eight data feeds. The Exchange notes that it is not seeking with this filing to establish fees relating to the underlying BBO and Trades data feeds, as those fees have already been established consistent with Section 19(b)(3)(A) of the Act [11] and Rule 19b–4(f)(2) [12] thereunder, and which may be amended from time to time. However, the Exchange believes it would be unfair if it did not require NYSE BQT data feed recipients to separately subscribe to and pay for those underlying feeds because otherwise, NYSE BQT data feed recipients would be receiving a data product that includes such underlying data at a lower cost than separately subscribing to the underlying data feeds. The Exchange therefore believes that the fee structure for NYSE BQT would not be lower than the cost to another party to create a comparable product, including the cost of receiving the underlying data feeds.

The Exchange further believes that the proposed NYSE BQT fee structure is equitable and not unfairly discriminatory because all vendors and subscribers that elect to purchase NYSE BQT would be subject to the same fees. In addition, vendors and subscribers that do not wish to purchase NYSE BQT may separately purchase the individual underlying data feed, and if they so choose, perform a similar aggregation and consolidation function that the Exchange performs in creating NYSE BQT. To enable such competition, the Exchange would continue to offer NYSE BQT on terms that a subscriber of the underlying feeds could offer a competing product if it so chooses.

The Exchange also notes that the use of NYSE BQT is entirely optional. Firms have a wide variety of alternative market data products from which to choose, including the Exchanges' own underlying data products, and proprietary data products offered by the Exchange's competitors, and consolidated data. Moreover, the Exchange is not required to make any proprietary data products available or to offer any specific pricing alternatives to any customers.

As explained below in the Exchange's Statement on Burden on Competition, the existence of alternatives to these data products further ensures that the Exchange cannot set unreasonable fees, or fees that are unreasonably discriminatory, when vendors and subscribers can elect such alternatives. That is, the Exchange competes with other exchanges (and their affiliates) that provide similar ''best quote and trade'' market data products. If another exchange (or its affiliate) were to charge less to consolidate and distribute its similar product than the Exchange charges to consolidate and distribute NYSE BQT, prospective users likely would not subscribe to, or would cease subscribing to, NYSE BQT. In addition, the Exchange would compete with unaffiliated market data vendors who would be in a position to consolidate and distribute the same data that comprises the NYSE BQT feed into the vendor's own comparable market data product. If the third-party vendor is able to provide the exact same data for a lower cost, prospective users would avail themselves of that lower cost and elect not to take NYSE BQT.

B. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement on Burden on Competition

In accordance with Section 6(b)(8) of the Act,[13] the Exchange does not believe that the proposed rule change will impose any burden on competition that is not necessary or appropriate in furtherance of the purposes of the Act. As noted above, the NYSE BQT data feed represents aggregated and consolidated information of eight existing market data feeds. Although the Exchange, NYSE Arca, NYSE American and NYSE National are the exclusive distributors of the underlying BBO and Trades feeds from which certain data elements are taken to create NYSE BQT, the Exchange may not be the exclusive distributor of the aggregated and consolidated information that comprises the NYSE BQT data feed. Any other market data recipient of the underlying data feeds would be able, if they chose, to create a data feed with the same information as NYSE BQT and distribute it to their clients on a level playing field with respect to latency and cost as compared to the Exchange's product.

The market for proprietary data products is competitive and inherently

[4] *See* Securities Exchange Act Release No. 34–73553 (Nov. 6, 2014), 79 FR 67491 (Nov. 13, 2014) (SR–NYSE–2014–40) (''NYSE BQT Approval Order'').

[5] *See* SR–NYSE–2018–22.

[6] *See* SR–NYSENat–2018–09.

[7] 15 U.S.C. 78f(b).

[8] 15 U.S.C. 78f(b)(4), (5).

[9] 15 U.S.C. 78k–1.

[10] *See* 17 CFR 242.603.

[11] 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(3)(A).

[12] 17 CFR 240.19b–4(f)(2).

[13] 78 U.S.C. 78f(b)(8).

contestable because there is fierce competition for the inputs necessary for the creation of proprietary data and strict pricing discipline for the proprietary products themselves. Numerous exchanges compete with one another for listings and order flow and sales of market data itself, providing ample opportunities for entrepreneurs who wish to compete in any or all of those areas, including producing and distributing their own market data. Proprietary data products are produced and distributed by each individual exchange, as well as other entities, in a vigorously competitive market. Indeed, the U.S. Department of Justice (''DOJ'') (the primary antitrust regulator) has expressly acknowledged the aggressive actual competition among exchanges, including for the sale of proprietary market data. In 2011, the DOJ stated that exchanges ''compete head to head to offer real-time equity data products. These data products include the best bid and offer of every exchange and information on each equity trade, including the last sale.'' [14]

Moreover, competitive markets for listings, order flow, executions, and transaction reports impose pricing discipline for the inputs of proprietary data products and therefore constrain markets from overpricing proprietary market data. Broker-dealers send their order flow and transaction reports to multiple venues, rather than providing them all to a single venue, which in turn reinforces this competitive constraint. As a 2010 Commission Concept Release noted, the ''current market structure can be described as dispersed and complex'' with ''trading volume . . . dispersed among many highly automated trading centers that compete for order flow in the same stocks'' and ''trading centers offer[ing] a wide range of services that are designed to attract different types of market participants with varying trading needs.'' [15] More recently, former SEC Chair Mary Jo White reported that competition for order flow in exchange-listed equities is ''intense'' and divided among many trading venues, including exchanges, more than 40 alternative trading systems, and more than 250 broker-dealers.[16] And as the Commission's own Chief Administrative Law Judge found after considering extensive fact and expert testimony and documentary evidence on the subject, ''there is fierce competition for trading services (or 'order flow')'' among exchanges, and ''the record evidence shows that competition plays a significant role in restraining exchange pricing of depth-of-book products.'' *In the Matter of the Application of Securities Industry And Financial Markets Association For Review of Actions Taken By Self-Regulatory Organizations,* Initial Decision Release No. 1015, Administrative Proceeding File No. 3–15350 (June 1, 2016), at pp. 8 and 33.

If an exchange succeeds in competing for quotations, order flow, and trade executions, then it earns trading revenues and increases the value of its proprietary market data products because they will contain greater quote and trade information. Conversely, if an exchange is less successful in attracting quotes, order flow, and trade executions, then its market data products may be less desirable to customers in light of the diminished content and data products offered by competing venues may become more attractive. Thus, competition for quotations, order flow, and trade executions puts significant pressure on an exchange to maintain both execution and data fees at reasonable levels.

In addition, in the case of products that are also redistributed through market data vendors, such as Bloomberg and Thompson Reuters, the vendors themselves provide additional price discipline for proprietary data products because they control the primary means of access to certain end users. These vendors impose price discipline based upon their business models. For example, vendors that assess a surcharge on data they sell are able to refuse to offer proprietary products that their end users do not or will not purchase in sufficient numbers. Vendors will not elect to make NYSE BQT available unless their customers request it, and customers will not elect to pay for NYSE BQT unless the product can provide value by sufficiently increasing revenues or reducing costs in the customer's business in a manner that will offset the fees. All of these factors operate as constraints on pricing proprietary data products.

C. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement on Comments on the Proposed Rule Change Received From Members, Participants, or Others

No written comments were solicited or received with respect to the proposed rule change.

III. Date of Effectiveness of the Proposed Rule Change and Timing for Commission Action

The foregoing rule change is effective upon filing pursuant to Section 19(b)(3)(A) [17] of the Act and subparagraph (f)(2) of Rule 19b–4 [18] thereunder, because it establishes a due, fee, or other charge imposed by the Exchange.

At any time within 60 days of the filing of such proposed rule change, the Commission summarily may temporarily suspend such rule change if it appears to the Commission that such action is necessary or appropriate in the public interest, for the protection of investors, or otherwise in furtherance of the purposes of the Act. If the Commission takes such action, the Commission shall institute proceedings under Section 19(b)(2)(B) [19] of the Act to determine whether the proposed rule change should be approved or disapproved.

IV. Solicitation of Comments

Interested persons are invited to submit written data, views, and arguments concerning the foregoing, including whether the proposed rule change is consistent with the Act. Comments may be submitted by any of the following methods:

Electronic Comments

- Use the Commission's internet comment form (*http://www.sec.gov/rules/sro.shtml*); or
- Send an email to *rule-comments@sec.gov.* Please include File Number SR–NYSE–2018–24 on the subject line.

Paper Comments

- Send paper comments in triplicate to Secretary, Securities and Exchange

[14] ''Press Release, U.S. Department of Justice, Assistant Attorney General Christine Varney Holds Conference Call Regarding NASDAQ OMX Group Inc. and IntercontinentalExchange Inc. Abandoning Their Bid for NYSE Euronext (May 16, 2011), *available at http://www.justice.gov/iso/opa/atr/speeches/2011/at-speech-110516.html; see also Complaint in U.S.* v. *Deutsche Borse AG* and *NYSE Euronext,* Case No. 11–cv–2280 (D.C. Dist.) ¶ 24 (''NYSE and Direct Edge compete head-to-head . . . in the provision of real-time proprietary equity data products.'').

[15] Concept Release on Equity Market Structure, Securities Exchange Act Release No. 61358 (Jan. 14, 2010), 75 FR 3594 (Jan. 21, 2010) (File No. S7–02–10). This Concept Release included data from the third quarter of 2009 showing that no market center traded more than 20% of the volume of listed stocks, further evidencing the dispersal of and competition for trading activity. *Id.* at 3598. Data available on ArcaVision show that from June 30, 2013 to June 30, 2014, no exchange traded more than 12% of the volume of listed stocks by either trade or dollar volume, further evidencing the continued dispersal of and fierce competition for trading activity. *See https://www.arcavision.com/Arcavision/arcalogin.jsp.*

[16] Mary Jo White, Enhancing Our Equity Market Structure, Sandler O'Neill & Partners, L.P. Global Exchange and Brokerage Conference (June 5, 2014) (available on the Commission website), citing Tuttle, Laura, 2014, ''OTC Trading: Description of Non-ATS OTC Trading in National Market System Stocks,'' at 7–8.

[17] 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(3)(A).

[18] 17 CFR 240.19b–4(f)(2).

[19] 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(2)(B).

Commission, 100 F Street NE, Washington, DC 20549–1090.

All submissions should refer to File Number SR–NYSE–2018–24. This file number should be included on the subject line if email is used. To help the Commission process and review your comments more efficiently, please use only one method. The Commission will post all comments on the Commission's internet website (*http://www.sec.gov/rules/sro.shtml*). Copies of the submission, all subsequent amendments, all written statements with respect to the proposed rule change that are filed with the Commission, and all written communications relating to the proposed rule change between the Commission and any person, other than those that may be withheld from the public in accordance with the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 552, will be available for website viewing and printing in the Commission's Public Reference Room, 100 F Street NE, Washington, DC 20549 on official business days between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Copies of the filing also will be available for inspection and copying at the principal office of the Exchange. All comments received will be posted without change. Persons submitting comments are cautioned that we do not redact or edit personal identifying information from comment submissions. You should submit only information that you wish to make available publicly. All submissions should refer to File Number SR–NYSE–2018–24, and should be submitted on or before June 28, 2018.

For the Commission, by the Division of Trading and Markets, pursuant to delegated authority.[20]

Eduardo A. Aleman,

Assistant Secretary.

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[20] 17 CFR 200.30–3(a)(12).

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[Release No. 34–83362; File No. SR–FICC–2018–001]

Self-Regulatory Organizations; Fixed Income Clearing Corporation; Notice of Filing of Amendment No. 1 and Order Granting Accelerated Approval of a Proposed Rule Change, as Modified by Amendment No. 1, To Implement Changes to the Required Fund Deposit Calculation in the Government Securities Division Rulebook

June 1, 2018.

I. Introduction

The Fixed Income Clearing Corporation (''FICC'') filed with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (''Commission'') on January 12, 2018 proposed rule change SR–FICC–2018–001 (''Proposed Rule Change'') pursuant to Section 19(b)(1) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (''Exchange Act'')[1] and Rule 19b–4 thereunder.[2] The Proposed Rule Change was published for comment in the **Federal Register** on February 1, 2018.[3] The Commission received eight comments on the proposal.[4] On March 14, 2018, the Commission issued an order instituting proceedings to determine whether to approve or disapprove the Proposed Rule Change.[5] On April 25, 2018, FICC filed Amendment No. 1 to the Proposed Rule Change (''Amendment No. 1'').[6] The Commission is publishing this notice to solicit comment on Amendment No. 1 from interested persons and to approve the Proposed Rule Change, as modified by Amendment No. 1, on an accelerated basis.

II. Description of the Proposed Rule Change

FICC proposes to change the FICC GSD Rulebook (''GSD Rules'')[7] to adjust GSD's method of calculating GSD netting members' (''Members'') margin.[8] Specifically, FICC proposes to (1) change GSD's method of calculating the Value-at-Risk (''VaR'') Charge component; (2) add a new component referred to as the ''Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment;'' (3) eliminate the existing Blackout Period Exposure Charge and the Coverage Charge components; (4) adjust the existing Backtesting Charge component to (i) include the backtesting deficiencies of certain GCF Repo Transaction[9] counterparties during the Blackout Period, and (ii) give GSD the ability to assess the Backtesting Charge on an intraday basis for all Members; and (5) adjust the calculation for determining

[1] 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

[2] 17 CFR 240.19b–4. FICC also filed the Proposed Rule Change as advance notice SR–FICC–2018–801 (''Advance Notice'') pursuant to Section 806(e)(1) of the Payment, Clearing, and Settlement Supervision Act of 2010, 12 U.S.C. 5465(e)(1), and Rule 19b–4(n)(1)(i) under the Exchange Act, 17 CFR 240.19b–4(n)(1)(i). Notice of Filing of the Advance Notice was published for comment in the **Federal Register** on March 2, 2018. Securities Exchange Act Release No. 82779 (February 26, 2018), 83 FR 9055 (March 2, 2018) (SR–FICC–2018–801). The Commission extended the deadline for its review period of the Advance Notice for an additional 60 days on March 7, 2018. Securities Exchange Act Release No. 82820 (March 7, 2018), 83 FR 10761 (March 12, 2018) (SR–FICC–2018–801). On April 25, 2018, FICC filed Amendment No.1 to the Advance Notice. *Available at https://www/sec/gov/comments/sr-ficc-2018-801/ficc2018801.htm.* The Commission issued a notice of filing of Amendment No. 1 and notice of no objection to the Advance Notice, as modified by Amendment No. 1, on May 11, 2018. Securities Exchange Act Release No. 83223 (May 11, 2018), 83 FR 23020 (May 17, 2018).

[3] Securities Exchange Act Release No. 82588 (January 26, 2018), 83 FR 4687 (February 1, 2018) (SR–FICC–2018–001).

[4] Letter from Robert E. Pooler, Chief Financial Officer, Ronin Capital LLC (''Ronin''), dated February 22, 2018, to Robert W. Errett, Deputy Secretary, Commission (''Ronin Letter I''); letter from Michael Santangelo, Chief Financial Officer, Amherst Pierpont Securities LLC (''Amherst''), dated February 22, 2018, to Brent J. Fields, Secretary, Commission (''Amherst Letter I''); letter from Timothy Cuddihy, Managing Director, FICC, dated March 19, 2018, to Robert W. Errett, Deputy Secretary, Commission (''FICC Letter I''); letter from James Tabacchi, Chairman, Independent Dealer and Trader Association (''IDTA''), dated March 29, 2018, to Eduardo A. Aleman, Assistant Secretary, Commission (''IDTA Letter''); letter from Michael Santangelo, Chief Financial Officer, Amherst Pierpont Securities LLC, dated April 4, 2018, to Brent J. Fields, Secretary, Commission (''Amherst Letter II''); letter from Levent Kahraman, Chief Executive Officer, KGS-Alpha Capital Markets (''KGS''), dated April 4, 2018, to Brent J. Fields, Secretary, Commission (''KGS Letter''); letter from Timothy Cuddihy, Managing Director, FICC, dated April 13, 2018, to Robert W. Errett, Deputy Secretary, Commission (''FICC Letter II''); and letter from Robert E. Pooler, Chief Financial Officer, Ronin, dated April 13, 2018, to Eduardo A. Aleman, Assistant Secretary, Commission (''Ronin Letter II''). Since the proposal contained in the Proposed Rule Change was also filed as an Advance Notice, *supra* note 2, the Commission is considering all public comments received on the proposal regardless of whether the comments were submitted to the Advance Notice or the Proposed Rule Change.

[5] *See* Securities Exchange Act Release No. 34–82876 (March 14, 2018), 83 FR 12229 (March 20, 2018) (SR–FICC–2018–001). The order instituting proceedings re-opened the comment period and extended the Commission's period of review of the Proposed Rule Change. *See id.*

[6] *Available at https://www.sec.gov/comments/sr-ficc-2018-001/ficc2018001.htm.* FICC filed related amendments to the related Advance Notice. *Supra* note 2.

[7] *Available at http://www.dtcc.com/legal/rules-and-procedures.*

[8] Notice, *supra* note 3, at 4688.

[9] GCF Repo Transactions refer to transactions made on FICC's GCF Repo Service that enable dealers to trade general collateral repos, based on rate, term, and underlying product, throughout the day, without requiring intra-day, trade-for-trade settlement on a Delivery-versus-Payment basis. *Id.*

the existing Excess Capital Premium for Broker Members, Inter-Dealer Broker Members, and Dealer Members.[10] In addition, FICC proposes to provide transparency with respect to GSD's existing authority to calculate and assess Intraday Supplemental Fund Deposit amounts.[11] The proposed QRM Methodology document would reflect the proposed VaR Charge calculation and the proposed Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment calculation.[12]

A. Changes to GSD's VaR Charge Component

FICC states that the changes proposed in the Proposed Rule Change are designed to improve GSD's current VaR Charge so that it responds more effectively to market volatility.[13] Specifically, FICC proposes to (1) replace GSD's current full revaluation approach with a sensitivity approach; [14] (2) employ the existing Margin Proxy as an alternative (*i.e.,* a back-up) VaR Charge calculation; [15] (3) use an evenly-weighted 10-year look-back period, instead of the current front-weighted one-year look-back period; (4) eliminate GSD's current augmented volatility adjustment multiplier; (5) utilize a haircut method for securities cleared by GSD that lack sufficient historical data; and (6) establish a VaR Floor calculation that would serve as a minimum VaR Charge for Members, as discussed below.[16]

For the proposed sensitivity approach to the VaR Charge, FICC would source sensitivity data and relevant historical risk factor time series data generated by an external vendor based on its econometric, risk, and pricing models.[17] FICC would conduct independent data checks to verify the accuracy and consistency of the data feed received from the vendor.[18] In the event that the external vendor is unable to provide the sourced data in a timely manner, FICC would employ its existing Margin Proxy as a back-up VaR Charge calculation.[19]

Additionally, FICC proposes to change the look-back period from a front-weighted one-year look-back to an evenly-weighted 10-year look-back period that would include, to the extent applicable, an additional stressed period. FICC states that the proposed extended look-back period would help to ensure that the historical simulation contains a sufficient number of historical market conditions.[20] In the event FICC observes that the 10-year look-back period does not contain a sufficient number of stressed market conditions, FICC would have the ability to include an additional period of historically observed stressed market conditions to a 10-year look-back period or adjust the length of look-back period.[21]

FICC also proposes to look at the historical changes of specific risk factors during the look-back period in order to generate risk scenarios to arrive at the market value changes for a given portfolio.[22] A statistical probability distribution would be formed from the portfolio's market value changes, and then the VaR Charge calculation would be calibrated to cover the projected liquidation losses at a 99 percent confidence level.[23] The portfolio risk sensitivities and the historical risk factor time series data would then be used by FICC's risk model to calculate the VaR Charge for each Member.[24]

FICC also proposes to eliminate the augmented volatility adjustment multiplier. FICC states that the multiplier would not be necessary because the proposed sensitivity approach would have a longer look-back period and the ability to include an additional stressed market condition to account for periods of market volatility.[25]

According to FICC, in the event that a portfolio contains classes of securities that do not have sufficient volume and price information available, a historical simulation approach would not generate VaR Charge amounts that reflect the risk profile of such securities.[26] Therefore, FICC proposes to calculate the VaR Charge for these securities by utilizing a haircut approach based on a market benchmark with a similar risk profile as the related security.[27] The proposed haircut approach would be calculated separately for U.S. Treasury/Agency securities and mortgage-backed securities.[28]

Finally, FICC proposes to adjust the existing calculation of the VaR Charge to include a VaR Floor, which would be the amount used as the VaR Charge when the sum of the amounts calculated

[10] Notice, *supra* note 3, at 4689.

[11] *Id.* Pursuant to the GSD Rules, FICC has the existing authority and discretion to calculate an additional amount on an intraday basis in the form of an Intraday Supplemental Clearing Fund Deposit. *See* GSD Rules 1 and 4, *supra* note 7.

[12] Notice, *supra* note 3, at 4689.

[13] *Id.* FICC proposes to change its calculation of GSD's VaR Charge because during the fourth quarter of 2016, FICC's current methodology for calculating the VaR Charge did not respond effectively to the market volatility that existed at that time. *Id.* As a result, the VaR Charge did not achieve backtesting coverage at a 99 percent confidence level and, therefore, yielded backtesting deficiencies beyond FICC's risk tolerance. *Id.*

[14] Notice, *supra* note 3, at 4690 GSD's proposed sensitivity approach is similar to the sensitivity approach that FICC's Mortgage-Backed Securities Division (''MBSD'') uses to calculate the VaR Charge for MBSD clearing members. *See* Securities Exchange Act Release No. 79868 (January 24, 2017) 82 FR 8780 (January 30, 2017) (SR–FICC–2016–007); Securities Exchange Act Release No. 79643 (December 21, 2016), 81 FR 95669 (December 28, 2016) (SR–FICC–2016–801).

[15] The Margin Proxy was implemented by FICC in 2017 to supplement the full revaluation approach to the VaR Charge calculation with a minimum VaR Charge calculation. Securities Exchange Act Release No. 80349 (March 30, 2017), 82 FR 16638 (April 5, 2016) (SR–FICC–2017–001); *see also* Securities Exchange Act Release No. 80341 (March 30, 2017), 82 FR 16644 (April 5, 2016) (SR–FICC–2017–801).

[16] *Id.*

[17] *See* Notice, *supra* note 3, at 4690. The following risk factors would be incorporated into GSD's proposed sensitivity approach: Key rate, convexity, implied inflation rate, agency spread, mortgage-backed securities spread, volatility, mortgage basis, and time risk factor. These risk factors are defined as follows:

- Key rate measures the sensitivity of a price change to changes in interest rates;
- convexity measures the degree of curvature in the price/yield relationship of key interest rates;
- implied inflation rate measures the difference between the yield on an ordinary bond and the yield on an inflation-indexed bond with the same maturity;
- agency spread is yield spread that is added to a benchmark yield curve to discount an Agency bond's cash flows to match its market price;
- mortgage-backed securities spread is the yield spread that is added to a benchmark yield curve to discount a to-be-announced (''TBA'') security's cash flows to match its market price;
- volatility reflects the implied volatility observed from the swaption market to estimate fluctuations in interest rates;
- mortgage basis captures the basis risk between the prevailing mortgage rate and a blended Treasury rate; and
- time risk factor accounts for the time value change (or carry adjustment) over the assumed liquidation period. *Id.*

The above-referenced risk factors are similar to the risk factors currently utilized in MBSD's sensitivity approach; however, GSD has included other risk factors that are specific to the U.S. Treasury securities, Agency securities and mortgage-backed securities cleared through GSD. *Id.* Concerning U.S. Treasury securities and Agency securities, FICC would select the following risk factors: Key rates, convexity, agency spread, implied inflation rates, volatility, and time. *Id.* For mortgage-backed securities, each security would be mapped to a corresponding TBA forward contract and FICC would use the risk exposure analytics for the TBA as an estimate for the mortgage-backed security's risk exposure analytics. *Id.* FICC would use the following risk factors to model a TBA security: Key rates, convexity, mortgage-backed securities spread, volatility, mortgage basis, and time. *Id.* To account for differences between mortgage-backed securities and their corresponding TBA, FICC would apply an additional basis risk adjustment. *Id.*

[18] Notice, *supra* note 3, at 4690.

[19] *See* Notice, *supra* note 3, at 4692. In the event that the data used for the sensitivity approach is unavailable for a period of more than five days, FICC proposes to revert back to the Margin Proxy as an alternative VaR Charge calculation. *Id.*

[20] Notice, *supra* note 3, at 4691.

[21] *Id.*

[22] Notice, *supra* note 3, at 4690.

[23] *Id.*

[24] *Id.*

[25] Notice, *supra* note 3, at 4692.

[26] Notice, *supra* note 3, at 4693.

[27] *Id.*

[28] *Id.*

by the proposed sensitivity approach and haircut method is less than the proposed VaR Floor.[29] The VaR Floor would be calculated as the sum of (1) a U.S. Treasury/Agency bond margin floor [30] and (2) a mortgage-backed securities margin floor.[31]

B. Addition of the Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment Component

FICC proposes to add a new component to GSD's margin calculation—the Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment.[32] FICC states that the Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment would be calculated to address risks that could result from overstated values of mortgage-backed securities that are pledged as collateral for GCF Repo Transactions [33] during a Blackout Period.[34] A Blackout Period is the period between the last business day of the prior month and the date during the current month upon which a government-sponsored entity that issues mortgage-backed securities publishes its updated Pool Factors.[35] The proposed Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment would result in a charge that either increases a Member's VaR Charge or a credit that decreases the VaR Charge.[36]

C. Elimination of the Blackout Period Exposure Charge and Coverage Charge Components

FICC proposes to eliminate the existing Blackout Period Exposure Charge component from GSD's margin calculation.[37] The Blackout Period Exposure Charge only applies to Members with GCF Repo Transactions that have two or more backtesting deficiencies during the Blackout Period and whose overall 12-month trailing backtesting coverage falls below the 99 percent coverage target.[38] FICC would eliminate this charge because the proposed Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment would apply to all Members with GCF Repo Transactions collateralized with mortgage-backed securities during the Blackout Period.[39]

FICC also proposes to eliminate the existing Coverage Charge component from GSD's margin calculation.[40] FICC would eliminate the Coverage Charge because, as FICC states, the proposed sensitivity approach would provide overall better margin coverage, rendering the Coverage Charge unnecessary.[41]

D. Adjustment to the Backtesting Charge Component

FICC proposes to amend GSD's existing Backtesting Charge component of its margin calculation to (1) include the backtesting deficiencies of certain Members during the Blackout Period and (2) give GSD the ability to assess the Backtesting Charge on an intraday basis.[42]

Currently, the Backtesting Charge does not apply to Members with mortgage-backed securities during the Blackout Period because such Members would be subject to a Blackout Period Exposure Charge.[43] In coordination with its proposal to eliminate the Blackout Period Exposure Charge, FICC proposes to adjust the applicability of the Backtesting Charge.[44] Specifically, FICC proposes to apply the Backtesting Charge to Members with backtesting deficiencies that also experience backtesting deficiencies that are attributed to the Member's GCF Repo Transactions collateralized with mortgage-backed securities during the Blackout Period within the prior 12-month rolling period.[45]

FICC also proposes to adjust the Backtesting Charge to apply to Members that experience backtesting deficiencies during the trading day because of such Member's intraday trading activities.[46] The Intraday Backtesting Charge would be assessed on Members with portfolios that experience at least three intraday backtesting deficiencies over the prior 12-month period and would generally equal a Member's third largest historical intraday backtesting deficiency.[47]

E. Adjustment to the Excess Capital Premium Charge

FICC proposes to adjust GSD's calculation for determining the Excess Capital Premium. Currently, GSD assesses the Excess Capital Premium when a Member's VaR Charge exceeds the Member's Excess Capital.[48] Only Members that are brokers or dealers are required to report Excess Net Capital figures to FICC while other Members report net capital or equity capital, based on the type of regulation to which the Member is subject.[49] If a Member is not a broker or dealer, FICC uses the net capital or equity capital in order to calculate each Member's Excess Capital Premium.[50] FICC proposes to move to a net capital measure for broker Members, inter-dealer broker Members, and dealer Members.[51] FICC states that such a change would make the Excess Capital Premium for those Members more consistent with the equity capital measure that is used for other Members in the Excess Capital Premium calculation.[52]

F. Additional Transparency Surrounding the Intraday Supplemental Fund Deposit

Separate from the above changes to GSD's margin calculation, FICC proposes to provide transparency in the GSD Rules with respect to GSD's existing calculation of the Intraday Supplemental Fund Deposit.[53] FICC proposes to provide more detail in the GSD rules surrounding both GSD's calculation of the Intraday Supplemental Fund Deposit charge and its determination of whether to assess the charge.[54]

FICC calculates the Intraday Supplemental Fund Deposit by tracking three criteria for each Member.[55] The first criterion, the ''Dollar Threshold,'' evaluates whether a Member's Intraday VaR Charge equals or exceeds a set

[29] *Id.*

[30] *Id.* The U.S. Treasury/Agency bond margin floor would be calculated by mapping each U.S. Treasury/Agency security to a tenor bucket, then multiplying the gross positions of each tenor bucket by its bond floor rate, and summing the results. *Id.* The bond floor rate of each tenor bucket would be a fraction (initially set at 10 percent) of an index-based haircut rate for such tenor bucket. *Id.*

[31] Notice, *supra* note 3, at 4693. The mortgage-backed securities margin floor would be calculated by multiplying the gross market value of the total value of mortgage-backed securities in a Member's portfolio by a designated amount, referred to as the pool floor rate, (initially set at 0.05 percent). *Id.*

[32] Notice, *supra* note 3, at 4694. The proposed Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment would be calculated by (1) projecting an average pay-down rate of mortgage loan pools (based on historical pay down rates) for the government sponsored enterprises (Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac) and the Government National Mortgage Association (Ginnie Mae), respectively, then (2) multiplying the projected pay-down rate by the net positions of mortgage-backed securities in the related program, and (3) summing the results from each program. *Id.*

[33] *Id.*

[34] *Id.*

[35] *Id.* Pool Factors are the percentage of the initial principal that remains outstanding on the mortgage loan pool underlying a mortgage-backed security, as published by the government-sponsored entity that is the issuer of such security. *Id.*

[36] Notice, *supra* note 3, at 4694.

[37] *Id.*

[38] *Id.*

[39] *Id.*

[40] *Id.*

[41] Notice, *supra* note 3, at 4695.

[42] *Id.*

[43] *Id.*

[44] *Id.*

[45] *Id.* Additionally, during the Blackout Period, the proposed Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment Charge, as described in Section I.C, above, would be applied to all applicable Members. *Id.*

[46] *Id.*

[47] *Id.*

[48] Notice, *supra* note 3, at 4696. The term ''Excess Capital'' means Excess Net Capital, net assets, or equity capital as applicable, to a Member based on its type of regulation. GSD Rules, Rule 1, *supra* note 7.

[49] *Id.*

[50] *Id.*

[51] *Id.*

[52] *Id.*

[53] *Id.*

[54] *Id.*

[55] *Id.*

dollar amount when compared to the VaR Charge that was included in the most recent margin collection.[56] The second criterion, the ''Percentage Threshold,'' evaluates whether the Intraday VaR Charge equals or exceeds a percentage increase of the VaR Charge that was included in the most recent margin collection.[57] The third criterion, the ''Coverage Target,'' evaluates whether a Member is experiencing backtesting results below a 99 percent confidence level.[58] In the event that a Member's additional risk exposure breaches all three criteria, FICC assesses an Intraday Supplemental Fund Deposit.[59] FICC also assesses an Intraday Supplemental Fund Deposit if, under certain market conditions, a Member's Intraday VaR Charge breaches both the Dollar Threshold and the Percentage Threshold.[60]

G. Description of the QRM Methodology

The QRM Methodology document provides the methodology by which FICC would calculate the VaR Charge, with the proposed sensitivity approach, as well as other components of the Members' margin calculation.[61] The QRM Methodology document specifies (i) the model inputs, parameters, assumptions and qualitative adjustments; (ii) the calculation used to generate margin amounts; (iii) additional calculations used for benchmarking and monitoring purposes; (iv) theoretical analysis; (v) the process by which the VaR methodology was developed as well as its application and limitations; (vi) internal business requirements associated with the implementation and ongoing monitoring of the VaR methodology; (vii) the model change management process and governance framework (which includes the escalation process for adding a stressed period to the VaR Charge calculation); (viii) the haircut methodology; (ix) the Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment calculations; (x) intraday margin calculation; and (xi) the Margin Proxy calculation.[62]

H. Description of Amendment No. 1

In Amendment No. 1, FICC proposes three things. First, FICC proposes to stagger the implementation of the proposed Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment and the proposed removal of the Blackout Period Exposure Charge.[63] Specifically, on a date that is approximately three weeks after the later of the Commission's order approving the Proposed Rule Change, as modified by Amendment No. 1, or its notice of no objection to the related Advance Notice, as modified by Amendment No. 1 (''Implementation Date''), FICC would charge Members only 50 percent of any amount calculated under the proposed Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment, while, at the same time, decreasing by 50 percent any amount charge under the Blackout Period Exposure Charge.[64] Then, no later than September 30, 2018, FICC would increase any amount charged under the Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment to 75 percent, while, at the same time, decreasing by 75 percent any amount charge under the Blackout Period Exposure Charge.[65] Finally, no later than December 31, 2018, FICC would increase any amount charged under the Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment to 100 percent, while, at the same time, eliminating the Blackout Period Exposure Charge. FICC states that it is proposing this amendment to address concerns raised by several Members that the implementation of the proposed Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment would have a material impact on their liquidity planning and margin charge.[66] FICC states that the staggered implementation would give Members the opportunity to assess and further prepare for the impact of the proposed Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment. FICC states the proposed VaR Charge calculation and the existing Blackout Period Exposure Charge would appropriately mitigate the potential mortgage-backed securities pay-down on a short-term basis, given FICC's assessment of mortgage-backed securities pay-down projections for this calendar year.[67]

Second, FICC proposes to amend the implementation date for the remainder of the proposed changes contained in the Proposed Rule Change.[68] Specifically, FICC proposes that such remaining changes would become operative on the Implementation Date, as opposed to the originally proposed 45 business days after the later of the Commission's order approving the Proposed Rule Change, as modified by Amendment No. 1, or notice of no objection to the related Advance Notice, as modified by Amendment No. 1.[69] FICC states that it is proposing this amendment because FICC is primarily concerned that the look-back period that is currently used in calculating the VaR Charge under the Margin Proxy may not calculate sufficient margin amounts to cover GSD's exposure to a defaulting Member.[70]

Third, FICC proposes to correct an incorrect description of the calculation of the Excess Capital Premium that appears once in the narrative to the Proposed Rule Change, as well as in the corresponding location in the Exhibit 1A to the Proposed Rule Change.[71] Specifically, FICC proposes to change the term ''Required Fund Deposit'' to ''VaR Charge'' in the description at issue, as ''Required Fund Deposit'' was incorrectly used in that instance.[72]

III. Solicitation of Comments on Amendment No. 1

Interested persons are invited to submit written data, views and arguments concerning whether Amendment No. 1 is consistent with the Exchange Act. Comments may be submitted by any of the following methods:

Electronic Comments

- Use the Commission's internet comment form (*http://www.sec.gov/rules/sro.shtml*); or
- Send an email to *rule-comments@sec.gov*. Please include File Number SR–FICC–2018–001 on the subject line.

Paper Comments

- Send paper comments in triplicate to Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, 100 F Street NE, Washington, DC 20549–1090.

All submissions should refer to File Number SR–FICC–2018–001. This file number should be included on the subject line if email is used. To help the Commission process and review your comments more efficiently, please use only one method. The Commission will post all comments on the Commission's internet website (*http://www.sec.gov/rules/sro.shtml*). Copies of the submission, all subsequent amendments, all written statements with respect to the Proposed Rule Change that are filed with the Commission, and all written communications relating to the Proposed Rule Change between the Commission and any person, other than those that may be withheld from the

[56] *Id.*
[57] Notice, *supra* note 3, at 4697.
[58] *Id.*
[59] *Id.*
[60] *Id.*
[61] Notice, *supra* note 3, at 4698.
[62] *Id.*
[63] Amendment No. 1, *supra* note 6.
[64] *Id.*
[65] *Id.*
[66] *Id.*
[67] *Id.*
[68] *Id.*
[69] *Id.*
[70] *Id.*
[71] *Id.*
[72] *Id.*

public in accordance with the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 552, will be available for website viewing and printing in the Commission's Public Reference Room, 100 F Street NE, Washington, DC 20549, on official business days between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Copies of the filing also will be available for inspection and copying at the principal office of FICC and on DTCC's website (*http://dtcc.com/legal/sec-rule-filings.aspx*). All comments received will be posted without change. Persons submitting comments are cautioned that we do not redact or edit personal identifying information from comment submissions. You should submit only information that you wish to make available publicly. All submissions should refer to File Number SR–FICC–2018–001 and should be submitted on or before June 22, 2018.

IV. Discussion and Commission Findings

Section 19(b)(2)(C) of the Exchange Act[73] directs the Commission to approve a proposed rule change of a self-regulatory organization if it finds that the proposed rule change is consistent with the requirements of the Exchange Act and the rules and regulations thereunder applicable to such organization. After carefully considering the Proposed Rule Change, as modified by Amendment No. 1, and all comments received, the Commission finds that the Proposed Rule Change, as modified by Amendment No. 1, is consistent with the Exchange Act and the rules and regulations thereunder applicable to FICC.[74] In particular, as discussed below, the Commission finds that the Proposed Rule Change, as modified by Amendment No. 1, is consistent with Sections 17A(b)(3)(F)[75] and (I) of the Exchange Act,[76] as well as Rules 17Ad–22(e)(4)(i),[77] (6)(i),[78] (ii),[79] (iv),[80] (v),[81] (vi)(B),[82] and (23)(ii) under the Exchange Act.[83]

A. Consistency With Section 17A(b)(3)(F) of the Exchange Act

Section 17A(b)(3)(F) of the Exchange Act requires, in part, that the rules of a clearing agency be designed to, among other things, assure the safeguarding of securities and funds which are in the custody or control of the clearing agency or for which it is responsible.[84]

The Commission believes that the changes proposed in the Proposed Rule Change, as modified by Amendment No. 1, are designed to assure the safeguarding of securities and funds which are in the custody or control of the clearing agency or for which it is responsible, consistent with Section 17A(b)(3)(F) of the Exchange Act.[85] First, as described above, FICC currently calculates the VaR Charge component of each Member's margin using a VaR Charge calculation that relies on a full revaluation approach. FICC proposes to instead implement a sensitivity approach to its VaR Charge calculation, with, at minimum, an evenly-weighted 10-year look-back period. The proposed sensitivity approach would leverage an external vendor's expertise in supplying market risk attributes (*i.e.,* sensitivity data) used to calculate the VaR Charge. Relying on such sensitivity data with a 10-year look-back period would help correct deficiencies in FICC's existing VaR Charge calculation, thus enabling FICC to better account for market risk in calculating the VaR Charge and better limit its credit exposure to Members.

Second, as described above, FICC proposes to implement the existing Margin Proxy as a back-up methodology to the proposed sensitivity approach to the VaR Charge calculation. This proposed change would help FICC to better limit its credit exposure to Members by continuing to calculate each Member's VaR Charge in the event that FICC experiences a data disruption with the vendor that supplies the sensitivity data.

Third, as described above, FICC proposes to eliminate the augmented volatility adjustment multiplier from its current VaR Charge calculation. This proposed change would enable FICC to remove a component from the VaR Charge calculation that would no longer be needed on account of the proposed 10-year look-back period that has the option of an additional stress period.

Fourth, as described above, FICC proposes to implement a haircut method for securities with inadequate historical pricing data and, thus, lack sufficient data to generate a historical simulation that adequately reflects the risk profile of such securities under the proposed sensitivity approach to FICC's VaR Charge calculation. Employing a haircut on such securities would help FICC limit its credit exposure to Members that transact in the securities by establishing a way to better capture their risk profile.

Fifth, as described above, FICC proposes to implement a VaR Floor. The proposed VaR Floor would be triggered in the event that the proposed sensitivity VaR model calculates a VaR Charge that is too low because of offsets applied by the model from certain offsetting long and short positions. In other words, the VaR Floor would serve as a backstop to the proposed sensitivity approach to FICC's VaR Charge calculation, which would help ensure that FICC continues to limit its credit exposure to Members. Altogether, these proposed changes to the VaR Charge component of the margin calculation would enable FICC to view and respond more effectively to market volatility by attributing market price moves to various risk factors and more effectively limiting FICC's credit exposure to Members in market conditions that reflect a rapid decrease in market price volatility levels.

In addition to these changes to the VaR Charge component of the margin calculation, FICC proposes to make a number of changes to other components of the margin calculation. Specifically, as described above, FICC proposes to (1) add the Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment component to FICC's margin calculation to help address risks that could result from overstated values of mortgage-backed securities that are pledged as collateral for GCF Repo Transactions during a Blackout Period; (2) make changes to the existing Backtesting Charge component to help ensure that the charge will apply to (i) all Members that experience backtesting deficiencies attributable to the Member's GCF Repo Transactions that are collateralized with mortgage-backed securities during the Blackout Period, and (ii) all Members that experience backtesting deficiencies during the trading day because of such Member's intraday trading activities; (3) provide more detail in the GSD Rules regarding FICC's calculation of the existing Intraday Supplemental Fund Deposit charge and its determination of whether to assess the charge; and (4) remove the Coverage Charge and Blackout Period Exposure Charge components because the risk these components addressed would be addressed by the other proposed changes to the margin calculation, specifically the proposed

[73] 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(2)(C).

[74] In approving this Proposed Rule Change, the Commission has considered the proposed rule's impact on efficiency, competition, and capital formation. *See* 15 U.S.C. 78c(f). The Commission addresses comments about economic effects of the Proposed Rule Change, including competitive effects, below.

[75] 15 U.S.C. 78q–1(b)(3)(F).

[76] 15 U.S.C. 78q–1(b)(3)(I).

[77] 17 CFR 240.17Ad–22(e)(4)(i).

[78] 17 CFR 240.17Ad–22(e)(6)(i).

[79] 17 CFR 240.17Ad–22(e)(6)(ii).

[80] 17 CFR 240.17Ad–22(e)(6)(iv).

[81] 17 CFR 240.17Ad–22(e)(6)(v).

[82] 17 CFR 240.17Ad–22(e)(6)(vi)(B).

[83] 17 CFR 240.17Ad–22(e)(23)(ii).

[84] 15 U.S.C. 78q–1(b)(3)(F).

[85] *Id.*

sensitivity approach to FICC's VaR Charge calculation and the proposed Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment component, respectively.

In Amendment No. 1, as described above, FICC proposes to (1) stagger the implementation of the proposed Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment and the proposed removal of the Blackout Period Exposure Charge in response to commenters; (2) accelerate the implementation date for the remainder of the proposed changes contained in the Proposed Rule Change, in order address concerns with the existing VaR Charge calculation sooner; and (3) correct an incorrect description of the calculation of the Excess Capital Premium in the originally filed materials.

Taken together, the above mentioned proposed changes to the components of the margin calculation would enhance FICC's current method for calculating each Member's margin. This enhancement, in turn, would enable FICC to produce margin levels more commensurate with the risks associated with its Members' portfolios in a broader range of scenarios and market conditions, and, thus, more effectively cover its credit exposure to its Members. In addition, the Proposed Rule Change is designed to help FICC mitigate losses that Member default could cause to FICC and its non-defaulting Members.

By better limiting FICC's credit exposure to Members, the proposed changes are designed to help ensure that, in the event of a Member default, FICC has collected sufficient margin from the defaulted Member to manage the default, so that non-defaulting Members would not be exposed to mutualized losses as a result of the default. By helping to limit non-defaulting Members' exposure to mutualized losses, the proposal is designed to help assure the safeguarding of securities and funds that are in FICC's custody or control. As such, the Proposed Rule Change, as modified by Amendment No. 1, is designed to help promote the safeguarding of securities and funds in FICC's custody and control. Therefore, the Commission believes that the Proposed Rule Change, as modified by Amendment No. 1, is consistent with Section 17A(b)(3)(F) of the Exchange Act.[86]

B. Consistency With Section 17A(b)(3)(I) of the Exchange Act

Section 17A(b)(3)(I) of the Exchange Act requires that the rules of a clearing agency do not impose any burden on competition not necessary or appropriate in furtherance of the purposes of the Exchange Act.[87] As discussed above, FICC is proposing a number of changes to the way it calculates margin collected from Members—a key tool that FICC uses to mitigate potential losses to FICC associated with liquidating a Member's portfolio in the event of a Member default. FICC states that the proposed changes are designed to assure the safeguarding of securities and funds that are in the custody or control of FICC, consistent with Section 17A(b)(3)(F) of the Exchange Act,[88] because the proposed changes would enable FICC to better limit its credit exposure to Members arising out of the activity in Members' portfolios.[89] FICC states that the proposed changes would collectively work to help ensure that FICC calculates and collects adequate margin from its Members.[90]

However, several commenters stated that some, if not all, of the proposed changes would impose an undue burden on competition. Specifically, Ronin states that the proposed sensitivity VaR model requires more margin of its Members than is necessary, and thus, would unduly impose a competitive burden on Members that have higher costs of capital.[91] Ronin further states that over-margining also unfairly exposes smaller Members to greater potential risk of loss should one of the largest Members' default.[92] Ronin also states the proposed changes would make it less economic for non-bank Members to participate in centralized clearing.[93]

Similarly, IDTA states that that the proposed changes would disproportionately result in greater increases in margin for non-Bank Members on a percentage basis and consequently would impose an unnecessary burden on competition.[94] Specifically, IDTA states the proposed changes would result in a material increase to some Members' margin due to the proposed change to the VaR Charge and also due to the compounding effect the new VaR Charge has on other components of the margin calculation.[95] IDTA notes that FICC illustrates that the statistical impact of the Proposed Rule Change resulted in 40 percent of Members having a net reduction to margin and 31 percent of Members having between no change and a 10 percent increase in margin.[96] IDTA states that the remaining 29 percent of Members therefore saw an increase of over 10 percent to the margin.[97] IDTA adds that six members of the IDTA that submitted data saw, on average, an 85 percent increase under the proposed changes compared to the existing FICC margin calculation.[98] IDTA states that this disproportionality places competitive and financial burdens on non-Bank Members that have a higher cost of funds and access to fewer pools of liquidity than those available to Bank Members.[99] IDTA also states it is possible that these burdens could adversely affect the diversity of liquidity across fixed income markets during times when both market participants and regulators want this diversity.[100]

Two commenters state that not utilizing cross-margining in the GSD margin calculation creates a burden on competition.[101] Specifically, Amherst states that the lack of cross-margining inflates the margin requirements and that the ''inflation, in turn, could distort the liquidity profile'' of Members.[102] Additionally, KGS states that not having a cross-margining process for positions in GSD and MBSD will have a distortive effect on GSD's margining system, producing ''burdensome double charges.''[103] KGS also states that the absence of cross-margining will impose a disproportionate and adverse impact on all GSD members other than ''the very largest banks and dealers'' and that the burdens on competition that would be imposed are significant.[104] Finally, KGS states that absent cross-margining for common Members of GSD and MBSD, ''markets that are free and open to all competitors with the greatest spreading of risk'' cannot be achieved.''[105]

Two commenters state that FICC's use of a 10-year look-back period and an additional stressed period in the VaR Charge calculation would impose a burden on competition.[106] Ronin first notes that FICC acknowledges that the proposed changes might impose a competitive burden.[107] Ronin then

[86] *Id.*

[87] 15 U.S.C. 78q–1(b)(3)(I).

[88] *See* 15 U.S.C. 78q–1(b)(3)(F).

[89] Notice, *supra* note 3, at 4698.

[90] *Id.*

[91] Ronin Letter at 5.

[92] *Id.*

[93] *Id.*

[94] IDTA Letter at 14.

[95] IDTA Letter at 3.

[96] *Id.*

[97] *Id.*

[98] *Id.*

[99] IDTA Letter at 1.

[100] *Id.*

[101] *See* Amherst Letter II; KGS Letter.

[102] Amherst Letter II at 4.

[103] KGS Letter at 2.

[104] *Id.*

[105] *Id.*

[106] *See* Ronin Letter; IDTA Letter.

[107] Ronin Letter at 5.

states that the overall effect of this proposed rule change is to ''treat every day as if the market was in the midst of a financial crisis'' and to require more margin from Members at all times.[108] Ronin contends that this ''blunt approach'' of requiring more margin by utilizing ''statistical bias is discriminatory and imposes an undue competitive burden on firms with a higher cost of capital.'' [109] Similarly, IDTA states that the 10-year look-back period and additional stressed period result in the unnecessary collection of margin, which creates harmful costs that disproportionately burden non-Bank Members as compared to larger Bank Members.[110]

Two commenters state that the proposed Excess Capital Premium charge would impose a burden on competition.[111] Specifically, Amherst states that broker-dealer Members would see a material impact from the adoption of the proposed sensitivity approach because it would significantly increase the numerator in the formula and, thereby, increase the likelihood of triggering the Excess Capital Premium charge.[112] Similarly, IDTA states that the proposed use of Net Capital in the denominator in the Excess Capital Premium would result in a discriminatory change that arbitrarily penalizes Dealer Members as many Members who currently do not have an Excess Capital Premium charge would end up having the charge if the Proposed Rule Change is approved.[113]

Amherst further states that the Excess Capital Premium calculation would impose an additional competitive burden on broker-dealer Members, as non broker-dealer Member's Excess Capital used in the measurement of any Excess Capital Premium may not be based on net worth after reductions for haircuts or other non-allowable asset deductions similar to broker-dealer Member requirements.[114] Similarly, IDTA states that using Net Capital as the Excess Capital figure also would result in discrimination against Dealer Members as compared to Bank Members because Bank Members' Excess Capital is based on equity without any reduction for positions, while Dealer Members are required to use Net Capital, a measure of net worth after reductions for haircuts on positions.[115]

One commenter states that the Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment would result in a burden on competition.[116] Specifically, IDTA states that serious flaws exist in the current Blackout Period Exposure Charge and the proposed Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment would result in both an inaccurate measurement of risk and excessive margin charges that are harmful to Members, particularly non-Bank Members that have a relative higher cost of funds than other Members.[117] IDTA states that the proposed Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment assumes 100 percent probability of a GCF Repo Service counterparty default across all Members. IDTA states that it does not believe a credit risk model would account for such a high probability of loss and suggests applying a credit risk weighting to the Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment.[118]

In response to commenters concerns, generally, FICC states that the proposed changes are necessary to ensure that its margin methodology would appropriately address the risks presented by Members' clearing portfolios.[119] Specifically, in response to concerns regarding the proposed sensitivity approach, FICC states that the proposed sensitivity approach integrates observed risk factor changes over current and historical market conditions to more effectively respond to current market price moves that may not be adequately reflected in the current methodology for calculating the VaR Charge as supplemented by the Margin Proxy.[120] With this in mind, FICC states that Ronin's assertion that the proposed sensitivity approach ''simply requires increased margin from Members'' is inaccurate.[121] FICC notes it proposes to eliminate the augmented volatility adjustment multiplier and Coverage Component because these components would have the effect of unnecessarily increasing margin amounts.[122] Additionally, FICC notes that its impact study reveals that the proposed methodology does not simply increase the margin requirements and the impacts vary based on Members' clearing portfolios and the market volatility that exists at that time.[123] Statistically, FICC states that 71 percent of all Members will have a 10 percent or less increase in margin under the proposed changes and 40 percent of all Members will have no increase.[124]

In response to Ronin and IDTA concerns, discussed above, that smaller, non-bank Members would see greater increases in margin as a result of the proposed changes, FICC states that the proposed sensitivity approach is based on a risk factor approach for securities in a Member's portfolio to calculate such Member's VaR Charge.[125] FICC states that if Members have similar portfolios, the impact of the proposed VaR Charge calculation, together with the other proposed changes to the margin calculation, would be similar.[126] FICC further states that the largest impact of the proposal is for those Members with mortgage-backed securities (''MBS'') concentrations.[127] FICC acknowledges that while smaller Members with MBS concentrations would be impacted more, many of these Members have less diversified portfolios; thus, the effect of the margin calculation on conventional MBS would be more pronounced.[128] FICC notes that the impact of the proposal would be determined by a Member's portfolio composition rather than a Member ''type,'' as a result, Members with lower MBS concentrations would experience smaller impacts from the proposal.[129] Therefore, FICC believes that the proposal does not create a burden on any particular size or type of Member, such as non-bank Members, that does not result from the necessary and appropriate risk mitigation of the underlying securities in each Member's portfolio.[130]

In response to the commenters concerns, discussed above, regarding the need for utilizing cross-margining in the GSD margin calculation, FICC notes that it operates under two divisions—GSD and MBSD—and each has its own rules and members.[131] FICC states that as a registered clearing agency, it is subject to the requirements that are contained in the Exchange Act and in the Commission's regulations and rules thereunder.[132] Further, FICC states it must ensure that the GSD Rules and the MBSD Rules, individually, are consistent with the Exchange Act.[133] Therefore, FICC states that because it must comply with the Exchange Act for

[108] *Id.*
[109] *Id.*
[110] IDTA Letter at 7, 11.
[111] *See* Amherst Letter; IDTA Letter.
[112] Amherst Letter II at 4.
[113] IDTA Letter at 9.
[114] Amherst Letter II at 4.
[115] IDTA Letter at 9.
[116] *Id.* at 12.
[117] *Id.*
[118] *Id.* at 13.
[119] FICC Letter I at 4.
[120] *Id.* at 3.
[121] *Id.*
[122] *Id.*
[123] *Id.*
[124] *Id.*
[125] *Id.*
[126] *Id.*
[127] FICC Letter II at 5.
[128] *Id.* at 6.
[129] *Id.*
[130] *Id.*
[131] *Id.* at 12.
[132] *Id.*
[133] *Id.*

GSD and MBSD separately, FICC disagrees with Amherst's statement that FICC's failure to implement a cross-margining arrangement would be inconsistent with the requirements of Rule 17Ad–22(e)(6) under the Exchange Act.[134]

Nevertheless, FICC agrees that data sharing and cross-margining arrangements would be beneficial to its membership.[135] FICC notes it has and will continue to explore data sharing and cross-margining opportunities.[136] FICC also states it will continue to develop a framework with the Chicago Mercantile Exchange (''CME'') that will enhance FICC's existing cross-margining arrangement with CME.[137]

In response to the commenters concerns, discussed above, suggesting FICC's proposed use of a 10-year look-back period and an additional stressed period in the VaR Charge calculation would be unnecessary and biased, FICC states that the proposed changes to extend the look-back period and add an additional stressed period would help to ensure that the historical simulation contains a sufficient number of historical market conditions (including but not limited to stressed market conditions) that are necessary to calculate margin amounts that achieve a 99 percent confidence level.[138] FICC further states that because VaR models typically rely on historical data to estimate the probability distribution of potential market prices, FICC believes that a longer look-back period will typically produce more stable VaR estimates that adequately reflect extreme market moves.[139] FICC notes that, as part of its model validation report, FICC performed a benchmark analysis of its calculation of the VaR Charge which included the 10-year look-back period and two alternative look-back periods—a five-year look-back period and a one-year look-back period.[140] FICC notes that the model validation report compared the rolling one-year backtesting performance for the one-year, five-year, and 10-year look-back periods using all Member portfolios for the period of January 1, 2013 through April 28, 2017.[141] FICC states that the 10-year look-back period (which included a stress period) provides backtesting coverage above 99 percent while the five-year look-back period and the one-year look-back period do not.[142] Therefore, FICC states that the proposed look-back period provides the appropriate margin coverage for GSD's exposures.[143]

In response to the commenters concerns, discussed above, regarding the Excess Capital Premium, FICC states that for a majority of Members, the proposed VaR Charge calculation would be higher than the current VaR Charge calculation excluding the Margin Proxy and that the higher VaR Charge could result in a higher Excess Capital Premium for some Members.[144] However, FICC believes that this increase is appropriate for the exposure that the Excess Capital Premium is designed to mitigate.[145] FICC notes that even with the potential increase in the proposed VaR Charge, the majority of Members would not incur the Excess Capital Premium.[146] Additionally, FICC believes that the proposed change to Net Capital for the Excess Capital Premium would reduce the impact to Members.[147] Statistically, FICC states that, during a test period, the proposed change to utilize Net Capital would reduce the Excess Capital Premium from 188 to 159 instances.[148] Further, FICC states that as a result of the proposed change to utilize Net Capital (instead of the existing practice of using the Excess Net Capital) in the Excess Capital Premium calculation, the Member with the largest number of instances would have had a 27 percent reduction in the number of instances of Excess Capital Premium and, on average, an 82 percent decrease in the dollar value of the charge on the days such Excess Capital Premium occurred.[149] Also, FICC believes that the proposed change to the Excess Capital Premium would benefit a small set of Members and potentially lower the Excess Capital Premium for Members that exhibit fluctuations in their Excess Net Capital because the proposed change would be based on Net Capital that may be more predictable.[150]

In response to the commenters concerns, discussed above, regarding the Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment, FICC states that the proposed Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment is appropriate at the intraday collection cycle on the last business day of the month to mitigate exposure that begins on the first business day of the following month.[151] FICC believes that Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment collections that occur after the MBS collateral pledge would not mitigate the risk that a Member defaults after the collateral is pledged but before such Member satisfies the next day's margin.[152] FICC believes the proposed Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment is necessary because it would help to ensure that FICC maintains a sufficient margin that covers FICC's current and future exposure to changes in MBS collateral from pay-down exposure from its Members, at a 99 percent confidence level.[153] In response to IDTA's suggestion that a probability of default approach would be more appropriate, FICC states that such an approach would provide insufficient margin coverage to maintain a 99 percent confidence level.[154]

As a general matter, the Commission acknowledges that a proposal to enhance FICC's VaR model, such as this proposal, could entail increased margin charges to some Members that would be borne by those Members and market participants more generally. The Commission understands that the impact of the cost of meeting an increased margin requirement would depend, in part, on each Member's specific business model and that some Members could satisfy the increase at a lower cost than others. As a result, the proposed changes contained in the Proposed Rule Change that would result in an increased margin charge could impose higher costs on some Members relative to others because of those Members' business choices. These higher relative burdens may weaken certain Members' competitive positions relative to other Members. However, as discussed below, the Commission believes that any competitive burden imposed by the proposed changes would not impose any burden on competition not necessary or appropriate in furtherance of the purposes of the Exchange Act.[155]

As discussed above, during the fourth quarter of 2016, FICC's current methodology for calculating the VaR Charge did not respond effectively to the market volatility that existed at that time. As a result, the VaR Charge did not achieve backtesting coverage at a 99 percent confidence level and, therefore, yielded backtesting deficiencies beyond FICC's risk tolerance. To address this

[134] *Id.*
[135] *Id.*
[136] *Id.*
[137] *Id.*
[138] FICC Letter I at 4.
[139] *Id.*
[140] FICC Letter II at 9.
[141] *Id.*
[142] *Id.*
[143] *Id.* at 10.
[144] *Id.* at 11.
[145] *Id.*
[146] *Id.*
[147] *Id.*
[148] *Id.*
[149] *Id.*
[150] *Id.*
[151] *Id.* at 12.
[152] *Id.* at 13.
[153] *Id.* at 14.
[154] *Id.* at 13.
[155] 15 U.S.C. 78q–1(b)(3)(I).

issue, FICC has proposed the changes discussed herein, which are designed to improve GSD's current VaR Charge calculation so that it responds more effectively to market volatility and helps FICC achieve backtesting coverage at a 99 percent confidence level. Although FICC had previously implemented the Margin Proxy to help address the issue,[156] FICC is still concerned that the look-back period that is currently used in calculating the VaR Charge under the Margin Proxy may not calculate sufficient margin amounts to cover GSD's exposure to a defaulting Member.[157] Therefore, the Commission believes that the Proposed Rule Change will help FICC better address this ongoing concern of maintaining sufficient financial resources to cover its credit exposure to each Member fully with a high degree of confidence. By helping FICC to better manage its credit exposure, the proposed changes would, in turn, help FICC better mitigate the potential losses to FICC and its Members associated with liquidating a Member's portfolio in the event of a Member default, in furtherance of FICC's obligations under Section 17A(b)(3)(F) of the Exchange Act to safeguard the securities and funds in FICC's custody or control, as discussed above.[158]

While the proposed changes contained in the Proposed Rule Change may raise the costs that certain Members incur to cover the risks associated with their portfolios, the Commission believes that these costs reflect the risks that these Members present to FICC, as the proposal is tailored to the different risk factors presented by each Member's portfolio, as described above. Specifically, the proposal to (1) move to a sensitivity approach to the VaR Charge calculation would enable the VaR Charge calculation to respond more effectively to market volatility by allowing FICC to attribute market price moves to various risk factors; (2) establish an evenly-weighted 10-year look-back period, with the option to add an additional stress period, would help FICC to ensure that the proposed sensitivity VaR Charge calculation contains a sufficient number of historical market conditions, to include stressed market conditions; (3) use the existing Margin Proxy as a back-up methodology system would help ensure FICC is able to calculate a VaR Charge for Members despite not being able to receive sensitivity data; (4) to implement a haircut method for securities with insufficient sensitivity data would help ensure that FICC is able to capture the risk profile of the securities; (5) establish the VaR Floor would help ensure that FICC assesses a VaR Charge where the proposed sensitivity calculation has produce too low of a VaR Charge; (6) establish the Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment component would enable FICC to address risks that could result from overstated values of mortgage-backed securities that are pledged as collateral for GCF Repo Transactions during a Blackout Period; (7) adjust the existing Backtesting Charge component would enable FICC to ensure that the charge applies to all Members, as appropriate, and to Members intraday trading activities that could pose a risk to FICC in the event that such Members default during the trading day; and (8) eliminate the Blackout Period Exposure Charge, Coverage Charge, and augmented volatility adjustment multiplier components would ensure that FICC did not maintain elements of the prior margin calculation that would unnecessarily increase Members' margin under the proposed margin calculation. Therefore, the Commission believes that each of the above proposed changes is tailored to the different risk factors presented by Members' portfolios. Tailoring the proposed changes to the different risk factors presented would, in turn, help FICC better mitigate the potential losses to FICC and its Members associated with liquidating a Member's portfolio in the event of a Member default. Specifically, such tailoring would help ensure that FICC collects adequate margin to offset the specific risks associated with each Member's portfolio, in furtherance of FICC's obligations under Section 17A(b)(3)(F) of the Exchange Act to safeguard the securities and funds in FICC's custody or control, as discussed above.[159]

In response to commenters' concerns, discussed above, that too much margin would be collected, after reviewing the data provided by FICC in Exhibit 3 to the Proposed Rule Change in conjunction with the Commission's supervisory observations, the Commission believes that the proposed changes would better enable FICC to collect margin commensurate with the different levels of risk that Members pose to FICC. Further, the Commission believes the amount of margin FICC would collect under the proposed changes would help FICC better manage its credit exposures to its Members and those exposures arising from its payment, clearing, and settlement processes. The Commission also believes, having reviewed Exhibit 3 to the Proposed Rule Change, that not all Members' margin requirements would increase as a result of the proposed changes and that the impact of the proposed changes vary based on Members' clearing portfolios and the market volatility that exists at that time. Further, the Commission believes that the proposed changes to the VaR Charge would not necessarily result in higher margin requirements in other components of the margin calculation where the VaR Charge is used in calculating the component. The Commission also notes that FICC proposes to eliminate the augmented volatility adjustment multiplier and Coverage Component because these components would have the effect of unnecessarily increasing margin amounts. Therefore, the Commission is not persuaded by IDTA's generalized statement that the proposed changes would have such a dramatic effect as to limit the diversity of liquidity in the U.S. markets, such as by causing Members to terminate their GSD membership. Rather, the Commission believes that the proposed changes promote a margin methodology that would appropriately address the risks presented by Members' clearing portfolios, enabling FICC to better mitigate losses that a Member default could cause to FICC and its non-defaulting Members.

Commenters expressed concerns, discussed above, that smaller, non-bank Members would be overly burdened by the proposed changes. After reviewing the data provided by FICC in Exhibit 3 to the Proposed Rule Change in conjunction with the Commission's supervisory observations, the Commission believes that the proposed sensitivity approach appropriately calculates a Member's VaR Charge based on risk factors presented by the securities held in a Member's portfolio and, thus, that the impact of the proposed changes would be determined by a Member's portfolio composition rather than a Member ''type.'' To the extent a Member's VaR Charge would increase under the proposed changes, it would be based on the securities held by the Member and FICC needing to collect margin to appropriately address that risk.

In response to the commenters concerns, discussed above, regarding the need for utilizing cross-margining in

[156] *Supra* note 14.

[157] *See* Amendment No. 1, *supra* note 6. Based on information learned from the Commission's general supervision of FICC, the Commission agrees that FICC should address this concern.

[158] As described further in Sections IV.A, C, D, and G.

[159] As described further in Sections IV.A and C through G.

the GSD margin calculation, the Commission notes that the Proposed Rule Change does not propose to establish or change any cross-margining agreements, whether between GSD and MBSD or between GSD, MBSD, and another clearing agency. As such, cross-margining is not one of the proposed changes under the Commission's review. The Commission further notes that GSD and MBSD have different members (although a member of one could, and some do, apply and become a member of the other), offer different services, and clear different products. To the extent there is the potential to offset risk exposures present across the different products, those products are still cleared by different services. Accordingly, FICC maintains not only separate rulebooks for each division but also separate liquidity resources. Therefore, the Commission believes that the potential burden on Members that exists absent a proposed change in the Proposed Rule Change to establish cross-margining between GSD and MBSD, or to expanding cross-margining between GSD and another clearing agency, does not mean that the proposals are in and of themselves not necessary or not appropriate. Rather, the Commission believes that the proposed changes to GSD's margin calculation are tailored to the specific risks associated with the products and services offered by GSD and that the proposed GSD margin calculation is commensurate with the risks associated with portfolios held by Members in GSD.

The Commission also notes that certain other actions by FICC may address some of the commenter concerns with respect to cross-margining. For instance, FICC states that it has and will continue to explore data sharing and cross-margining opportunities, and that FICC is in the process of completing a proposal that would enable a margin reduction for Members with MBS positions that offset between GSD and MBSD. FICC has also committed to continuing to develop a framework with CME that will enhance FICC's existing cross-margining arrangement with CME.

In response to the commenters concerns, discussed above, regarding the 10-year look-back period and an additional stressed period in the VaR Charge calculation, the Commission believes that an evenly-weighted 10-year look-back period, plus an additional stress period, as needed, would be an appropriate approach to help ensure that the proposed sensitivity VaR Charge calculation accounts for historical market observations of the securities cleared by GSD. Such a look-back period would help enable FICC to be in a better position to maintain backtesting coverage above 99 percent for GSD. As evidenced in FICC's second comment letter, a 10-year look-back period that includes a stress period would provide backtesting coverage above 99 percent, while a five-year look-back period and a one-year look-back period would not.[160]

In response to the commenters concerns, discussed above, regarding the Excess Capital Premium, the Commission notes that this proposed change would modify the denominator used in the calculation. Specifically, the denominator would become larger, as the proposal to use Net Capital (proposed denominator) is a larger amount than the current use of Excess Net Capital (current denominator).[161] The effect, holding all else constant, would be to lower those Members' Excess Capital Premium.

The Commission notes that under the Proposed Rule Change, FICC is not proposing to amend the numerator, as the numerator used for calculating the Excess Capital Premium would still be calculated using the VaR Charge calculation. Of course, if the numerator in the calculation (*i.e.,* a Member's VaR Charge amount using the proposed sensitivity approach) were to increase as a result of the other proposed changes, then the Excess Capital Premium could increase. Further, the numerator will not necessarily increase for every Member. Data provided by FICC, which was filed with the Commission as Exhibit 3 to the Proposed Rule Change, shows that the numerator used for calculating the Excess Capital Premium could increase or decrease depending on the risks associated with a Member's portfolio.

In response to the commenters concerns, discussed above, regarding the calculation of the Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment, the Commission agrees with FICC. Specifically, the Commission agrees that (i) given the number of assumptions that one would need to make with respect to the various factors that influence MBS pay-down rates, the weighted-average approach would provide Members more transparency and certainty around the charge; and (ii) a credit-risk weighting would not likely produce a sufficient charge amount in the event of an actual Member default, as the approach would assume something less than a 100 percent probability of default in calculating the charge. Furthermore, in response to commenters' concerns regarding the Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment collection cycle, the Commission notes the proposed cycle follows the same cycle currently used for the Blackout Period Exposure Charge, which FICC proposes to eliminate on account of the proposed Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment. For both the current and proposed cycle, the Commission understands, based on its experience and expertise, that FICC's application of the charge on the last business day of the month, as opposed to the first business day of the following month, is an appropriate way to ensure that FICC collects the funds before realizing the risk that the charge is intended to mitigate (*i.e.,* a Member defaults during the Blackout Period). Similarly, FICC's extension of the charge through the end of the day on the Factor Date, as opposed to releasing the charge during FICC's standard intraday margin calculation on the Factor Date, also is an appropriate way to mitigate the risk exposure to FICC because, operationally, the MBS are not released and revalued with the update factors by the applicable clearing bank until after FICC has already completed the intraday margin calculation.

Taken together, the Commission believes that the above discussed proposed changes to the components of the margin calculation would enhance FICC's current method for calculating each Member's margin. This enhancement would enable FICC to produce margin levels more commensurate with the risks associated with its Members' portfolios in a broader range of scenarios and market conditions, and, thus, more effectively cover its credit exposure to its Members.

Therefore, for all of the above reasons, Commission believes that the Proposed Rule Change is consistent with Section 17A(b)(3)(I) of the Exchange Act, as the proposal would not impose a burden on competition not necessary or appropriate in furtherance of the purposes of the Exchange Act.

C. Consistency With Rule 17Ad–22(e)(4)(i) of the Exchange Act

The Commission believes that the changes proposed in the Proposed Rule Change are consistent with Rule 17Ad–22(e)(4)(i) under the Exchange Act. Rule 17Ad–22(e)(4)(i) requires each covered clearing agency [162] to establish,

[160] FICC Letter II at 9–10.

[161] *See* Form X–17A–5, line 3770, *available at https://www.sec.gov/files/formx-17a-5_2.pdf.*

[162] A ''covered clearing agency'' means, among other things, a clearing agency registered with the Commission under Section 17A of the Exchange Act (15 U.S.C. 78q–1 *et seq.*) that is designated systemically important by Financial Stability

Continued

implement, maintain and enforce written policies and procedures reasonably designed to effectively identify, measure, monitor, and manage its credit exposures to participants and those arising from its payment, clearing, and settlement processes, including by maintaining sufficient financial resources to cover its credit exposure to each participant fully with a high degree of confidence.[163]

As described above, FICC proposes a number of changes to the way it addresses credit exposure to its Members through its margin calculation. Specifically, FICC proposes to (1) replace its existing full revaluation VaR Charge calculation with a sensitivity approach to the VaR Charge calculation that uses an evenly-weighted 10-year look-back period; (2) utilize the existing Margin Proxy as a back-up VaR Charge calculation to the proposed sensitivity approach in the event that FICC experiences a data disruption with the third-party vendor; (3) implement a haircut method for securities that are ineligible for the sensitivity approach to FICC's VaR Charge calculation due to inadequate historical pricing data; (4) establish the VaR Floor; (5) establish the Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment component; (6) adjust the existing Backtesting Charge component; and (7) use Net Capital instead of Excess Capital when calculating the Excess Capital Premium, as applicable, for broker Members, inter-dealer broker Members, and dealer Members.

Two commenters expressed concerns regarding the proposed change to the Excess Capital Premium.[164] IDTA states that FICC needs to provide further clarification and justification for the Excess Capital Premium because the Excess Capital Premium under the proposed sensitivity approach to the VaR Charge calculation could result in additional margin for some Members ''without sufficient explanation in the proposed rule change.'' [165] Additionally, IDTA states that the use of Net Capital in the denominator of the Excess Capital Premium will result in some additional Members being assessed the charge, specifically Dealer Members.[166] IDTA states that Dealer Members should be able to use net worth, as compared to Net Capital, because a bank Member's capital figure is based on assets without any haircut for certain positions.[167] In contrast, IDTA states that dealers must include haircuts on certain positions before calculating Net Capital.[168] IDTA also states that FICC should allow dealer Members to calculate Net Capital for purposes of the Excess Capital Premium to not include a haircut on U.S. Government securities cleared at FICC.[169] Finally, IDTA states that the Excess Capital Premium should instead be used to trigger a credit review for Members because, in conjunction with the other proposed changes, the Excess Capital Premium would not be a ''sound measure'' of a Member's credit risk.[170] Similarly, Amherst notes that FICC should review further how it can allow dealer Members to be compared similarly to bank Members for Excess Capital Premium purposes to account for the haircut on assets that dealers must account for in their Net Capital calculation.[171]

In response, FICC states that the Excess Capital Premium is used to more effectively manage the risk posed by a Member whose activity causes it to have a margin requirement that is greater than its excess regulatory capital.[172] FICC notes that for a majority of Members, the proposed sensitivity VaR Charge calculation would be higher than the current VaR Charge calculation, excluding the Margin Proxy, and that the higher VaR Charge could result in a higher Excess Capital Premium.[173] Where there is an increase, FICC states that this increase is appropriate for the exposure that the Excess Capital Premium is designed to mitigate.[174] However, FICC notes that even with the potential increase in the proposed VaR Charge, the majority of Members would not incur the Excess Capital Premium.[175] Additionally, FICC states that the proposed change to Net Capital for the Excess Capital Premium would reduce the impact to Members.[176] For example, for period of December 18, 2017 through April 2, 2018, FICC states that by using Net Capital instead of Excess Net Capital, the Member with the largest number of instances of the Excess Capital Premium would have had a 27 percent reduction in the number of instances and, on average, an 82 percent decrease in the dollar value of the charge on the days such Excess Capital Premium occurred.[177]

Additionally, two commenters noted that the proposed sensitivity approach to the VaR Charge calculation is not needed at this time because the Margin Proxy [178] is sufficient to cover any gaps in margin requirements. Specifically, Amherst states that FICC has not presented the Commission with the full impact analysis of the supplemental Margin Proxy calculation and that the full analysis would reveal that the current margining process, inclusive of the Margin Proxy, has already significantly and materially increased Members' margin amounts. Therefore, Amherst states that a full analysis of the current supplemental Margin Proxy calculation would reveal that the Margin Proxy enables FICC to collect adequate levels of margin to protect itself during stressed periods.[179] Similarly, IDTA states that the Margin Proxy allows GSD to maintain its backtesting goal at the 99 percent confidence level.[180]

In response, FICC states that the Margin Proxy has historically provided a more accurate VaR Charge calculation than the full valuation approach, but the current VaR Charge as supplemented by the Margin Proxy calculation reflects relatively low market price volatility that has been present in the mortgage-backed securities market since the beginning of 2017. As such, FICC states that this current approach contains an insufficient amount of look-back data to ensure that the backtesting will remain above 99 percent if volatility returns to levels seen beyond the one-year look-back period that is currently used to calibrate the Margin Proxy for MBS.[181] Additionally, in order to help ensure that it is calculating adequate margin, FICC filed Amendment No. 1 to accelerate the implementation of all the proposed changes, except for the proposed Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment and the removal of the existing Blackout Period Exposure Charge, which FICC proposes to implement in phases, through the remainder of 2018, in response to commenters.

In Amendment No. 1, FICC states that it has been discussing the proposed changes with Members since August 2017 in order to help Members prepare for and understand why FICC proposed

Oversight Council (''FSOC'') pursuant to the Clearing Supervision Act (12 U.S.C. 5461 *et seq.*). *See* 17 CFR 240.17Ad–22(a)(5)–(6). Because FICC is a registered clearing agency with the Commission that has been designated systemically important by FSOC, FICC is a covered clearing agency.

[163] 17 CFR 240.17Ad–22(e)(4)(i).

[164] IDTA Letter; Amherst Letter II.

[165] IDTA Letter at 9.

[166] *Id.*

[167] *Id.* at 10.

[168] *Id.* at 10.

[169] *Id.* at 10.

[170] *Id.*

[171] Amherst Letter II at 4.

[172] FICC Letter II at 10,11; *see* Exchange Act Release No. 54457 (September 15, 2006), 71 FR 55239 (September 21, 2006) (SR–FICC–2006–03).

[173] FICC Letter II at 11.

[174] *Id.*

[175] *Id.*

[176] *Id.*

[177] *Id.*

[178] *Supra* note 12.

[179] Amherst II Letter at 2.

[180] IDTA Letter at 3–4.

[181] FICC Letter II at 3.

the rule changes.[182] FICC states that it is primarily concerned that the look-back period that is currently used in calculating the VaR Charge under the Margin Proxy may not calculate sufficient margin amounts to cover GSD's exposure to a defaulting Member.[183] Therefore, FICC proposes to accelerate the implementation of all the proposed changes, except for the proposed Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment and the removal of the existing Blackout Period Exposure Charge.[184]

The Commission believes that these proposed changes are designed to help FICC better identify, measure, monitor, and manage its credit exposure to its Members by calculating more precisely the risk presented by Members, which would enable FICC to assess a more reliable VaR Charge. Specifically, FICC's proposed change to (1) switch to a sensitivity approach to the VaR Charge calculation, with a 10-year look-back period, would help the calculation respond more effectively to market volatility by attributing market price moves to various risk factors; (2) use the Margin Proxy as a back-up to the proposed sensitivity calculation would help ensure that FICC is able to assess a VaR Charge, even if its unable to receive sensitivity data from the third-party vendor; (3) apply a haircut on securities that are ineligible for the sensitivity VaR Charge calculation would enable FICC to better account for the risk presented by such securities; (4) establish the VaR Floor would enable FICC to better calculate a VaR Charge for portfolios where the proposed sensitivity approach would yield too low a VaR Charge; (5) establish the Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment component would enable FICC to better address risks that could result from overstated values of mortgage-backed securities that are pledged as collateral for GCF Repo Transactions during a Blackout Period; (6) adjust the existing Backtesting Charge component would ensure that the charge applied to all Members, as appropriate, and to Member's intraday trading activities; and (7) use Net Capital instead of Excess Capital when calculating the Excess Capital Premium would make the Excess Capital Premium calculation for broker Members, inter-dealer broker Members, and dealer Members more consistent with the equity capital measure that is used for other Members.

In response to commenters concerns regarding the proposed change to the Excess Capital Premium calculation, the Commission notes that this proposed change would only modify the denominator used in the calculation. Specifically, the denominator would become larger, as the proposal to use Net Capital (proposed denominator) is a larger amount than the current use of Excess Net Capital (current denominator).[185] The effect, holding all else constant, would be to lower those Members' Excess Capital Premium.

Of course, if the numerator in the calculation (*i.e.,* a Member's VaR Charge amount) would increase, then the Excess Capital Premium could increase. However, FICC does not propose to change the numerator used for calculating the Excess Capital Premium. The Commission notes that under the Proposed Rule Change, the numerator used for calculating the Excess Capital Premium would be calculated using the proposed sensitivity approach to the VaR Charge calculation. As described further below, the proposed sensitivity approach would calculate margin commensurate with the risks associated with a Member's portfolio.

In response to the comments that the proposed sensitivity approach to the VaR Charge calculation is not necessary at this time in light of the Margin Proxy, the Commission disagrees. In considering these comments, the Commission thoroughly reviewed (i) the Proposed Rule Change, including the supporting exhibits that provided confidential information on the performance of the proposed sensitivity calculation, impact analysis, and backtesting results; (ii) the comments received; and (iii) the Commission's own understanding of the performance of the current VaR Charge calculation, with which the Commission has experience from its general supervision of FICC, compared to the proposed sensitivity calculation. More specifically, the confidential Exhibit 3 submitted by FICC includes (i) 12-month rolling coverage backtesting results; (ii) intraday backtesting impact analysis; (iii) a breakdown of coverage percentages and dollar amounts, for each Member, under the current margin model with and without Margin Proxy and under the proposed sensitivity model; and (iv) an impact study of the proposed changes detailing the margin amounts required per Member during Blackout Periods and non-Blackout Periods.

On a Member basis, the Commission notes that there is not a sizeable change in the amount of margin collected under the current margin model, supplemented by the Margin Proxy, compared to the proposed sensitivity model. The Commission also notes that the Margin Proxy was implemented as a temporary solution to issues identified with the current model, as it only has a one year look-back period.[186] Additionally, the Commission believes that the sensitivity approach is simpler and more accurate as it uses a broad spectrum of sensitivity data that is tailored to the specific risks associated with Members' portfolios. Ultimately, the Commission finds that the proposed sensitivity approach, and the related implementation schedule proposed in Amendment No. 1, would provide FICC with a more robust margin calculation in FICC's efforts to meet the applicable regulatory requirements for margin coverage.

Therefore, for the reasons discussed above, the Commission believes that the changes proposed in the Proposed Rule Change are consistent with Rule 17Ad–22(e)(4)(i) under the Exchange Act.[187]

D. Consistency With Rule 17Ad–22(e)(6)(i) of the Exchange Act

The Commission believes that the changes proposed in the Proposed Rule Change are consistent with Rule 17Ad–22(e)(6)(i) under the Exchange Act. Rule 17Ad–22(e)(6)(i) requires each covered clearing agency to establish, implement, maintain and enforce written policies and procedures reasonably designed to cover its credit exposures to its participants by establishing a risk-based margin system that, at a minimum considers, and produces margin levels commensurate with, the risks and particular attributes of each relevant product, portfolio, and market.[188]

As described above, FICC proposes a number of changes to how it calculates Members' margin charge through a risk-based margin system that considers the risks and attributes of securities that GSD clears. Specifically, FICC proposes to (1) move to a sensitivity approach to the VaR Charge calculation; (2) move from a front-weighted one-year look-back period to an evenly-weighted 10-year look-back period with the option for an additional stress period; (3) use the existing Margin Proxy as a back-up methodology to the proposed sensitivity approach to the VaR Charge calculation; (4) implement a haircut method for securities with insufficient sensitivity data due to inadequate historical pricing; (5) establish the VaR Floor; (6) establish the Blackout Period Exposure

[182] *Id.*

[183] *Id.*

[184] *Id.*

[185] *See* Form X–17A–5, line 3770, *available at https://www.sec.gov/files/formx-17a-5_2.pdf.*

[186] *See supra* note 15.

[187] 17 CFR 240.17Ad–22(e)(4)(i).

[188] 17 CFR 240.17Ad–22(e)(6)(i).

Adjustment component; (7) adjust the existing Backtesting Charge component; and (8) eliminate the Blackout Period Exposure Charge, Coverage Charge, and augmented volatility adjustment multiplier components.

Several commenters raised concerns that the proposed changes to the margin calculation would not produce a margin charge commensurate with the risks and particular attributes of Members' complete portfolios. Specifically, Ronin states that the use of the proposed sensitivity approach to the VaR Charge calculation only uses a subset of a Member's entire portfolio (*i.e.,* it does not incorporate data from other clearing agencies) to calculate the Member's risk to FICC.[189] Ronin suggests that the implementation of data sharing and cross margining between MBSD, GSD, and CME would provide FICC with a more accurate representation of the risk associated with a Member's portfolio.[190] Ronin also states that the existing cross-margin agreement between FICC and CME needs an update to provide true cross-margin relief for all GSD Members.[191] Similarly, IDTA states that FICC cannot accurately identify the risk associated with a Member's portfolio due to the lack of incentive to share data with other clearing agencies.[192] IDTA suggests that FICC should develop cross-margining ability between GSD and MBSD and improve cross-margining with CME.[193] KGS and Amherst make similar arguments. KGS states that in order to more effectively analyze and address Members' portfolio risks, there should be cross margining for Members that hold offsetting positions in GSD and MBSD, stating that not having such an intra-DTCC cross-margining process will have a distortive effect on GSD's margining system, forcing members to reduce their use of GSD and reduce their positions cleared through GSD, in effect reducing market liquidity.[194] Amherst states that not implementing cross-margin capabilities will inflate the margin requirements and distort the liquidity profile of the Member.[195]

In response, FICC disagrees with Amherst's statement that FICC's failure to implement a cross-margining arrangement would be inconsistent with the requirements of Rule 17Ad–22(e)(6) under the Exchange Act.[196] FICC notes that it operates under two divisions, GSD and MBSD, each of which has its own rules and members.[197] As a registered clearing agency, FICC notes that it is subject to the requirements that are contained in the Exchange Act and in the Commission's regulations and rules thereunder.[198]

Nevertheless, FICC states that it agrees with commenters that data sharing and cross-margining would be beneficial to its Members and is exploring data sharing and cross-margining opportunities outside of the Proposed Rule Change.[199] FICC states it is in the process of completing a proposal that would enable a margin reduction for Members with mortgage-backed securities (''MBS'') positions that offset between GSD and MBSD.[200] FICC also states it will continue to develop a framework with CME that will enhance FICC's existing cross-margining arrangement with CME.[201] Finally, FICC notes that the proposed changes to the GSD margin methodology are necessary because they provide appropriate risk mitigation that must be in place before FICC can fully evaluate potential cross-margining opportunities.[202]

Separate from those comments, two commenters also raised concerns with the proposed extended look-back period. Ronin states that FICC's assumption of adding a continued stress period to the 10-year look-back calculation is employing ''statistical bias'' because it treats every day as if the market is in ''the midst of a financial crisis'' and creates over margining.[203] Similarly, IDTA states the addition of an arbitrary year to the look-back period is statistically biased and makes the ''most volatile day'' permanent and therefore, the calculations are not addressing the actual risk of a portfolio.[204] IDTA believes that a shorter look-back period of five years without an additional stress period would sufficiently margin Members for the risk of their portfolios.[205]

In response, FICC states that a longer look-back period will produce a more stable VaR estimate that adequately reflects extreme market moves ensuring the VaR Charge does not decrease as quickly during periods of low volatility nor increase as sharply during periods of a market crisis.[206] Additionally, FICC states that an extended look-back period including stressed market conditions are necessary to calculate margin requirements that achieve a 99 percent confidence level.[207] As part of FICC's model validation report, FICC performed a benchmark analysis of its calculation of the VaR Charge. FICC analyzed a 10-year look-back period, a five-year look-back period, and a one-year look-back period using all Member portfolios from January 1, 2013 through April 28, 2017.[208] The results of FICC's analysis showed that a 10-year look-back period, which included a stress period, provides backtesting coverage above 99 percent while a five-year look-back period and a one-year look-back period did not.[209]

The Commission believes that these proposed changes are designed to help FICC better cover its credit exposures to its Members, as the changes would help establish a risk-based margin system that considers and produces margin levels commensurate with the risks and particular attributes of the products cleared in GSD. Specifically, the proposal to (1) move to a sensitivity approach to the VaR Charge calculation would enable the VaR Charge calculation to respond more effectively to market volatility by allowing FICC to attribute market price moves to various risk factors; (2) establish an evenly-weighted 10-year look-back period, with the option to add an additional stress period, would help FICC to ensure that the proposed sensitivity VaR Charge calculation contains a sufficient number of historical market conditions, to include stressed market conditions; (3) use the existing Margin Proxy as a back-up methodology system would help ensure FICC is able to calculate a VaR Charge for Members despite a not being able to receive sensitivity date; (4) to implement a haircut method for securities with insufficient sensitivity data would help ensure that FICC is able to capture the risk profile of the securities; (5) establish the VaR Floor would help ensure that FICC assesses a VaR Charge where the proposed sensitivity calculation has produce too low of a VaR Charge; (6) establish the Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment component would enable FICC to address risks that could result from overstated values of mortgage-backed securities that are pledged as collateral for GCF Repo Transactions during a Blackout Period; (7) adjust the existing Backtesting Charge component would enable FICC to ensure that the charge applies to all Members, as appropriate,

[189] Ronin Letter I at 1.

[190] *Id.* at 2.

[191] Ronin Letter II at 2.

[192] IDTA Letter at 11.

[193] *Id.*

[194] KGS Letter at 1.

[195] Amherst Letter II at 2.

[196] FICC Letter II at 12.

[197] *Id.*

[198] *Id.*

[199] FICC Letter I at 5.

[200] FICC Letter II at 12.

[201] *Id.*

[202] *Id.*

[203] Ronin Letter I at 4; Ronin Letter 2 at 5.

[204] IDTA Letter I at 7.

[205] *Id.*

[206] FICC Letter I at 4.

[207] *Id.*

[208] FICC Letter II at 9.

[209] *Id.*

and to Members' intraday trading activities that could pose a risk to FICC in the event that such Members default during the trading day; and (8) eliminate the Blackout Period Exposure Charge, Coverage Charge, and augmented volatility adjustment multiplier components would ensure that FICC did not maintain elements of the prior margin calculation that would unnecessarily increase Members' margin under the proposed margin calculation.

In response to comments regarding cross-margining and its potential impact upon membership levels and market liquidity, the Commission notes that the Proposed Rule Change does not propose to establish or change any cross-margining agreements, whether between GSD and MBSD or between GSD, MBSD, and another clearing agency. As such, cross-margining is not one of the proposed changes under the Commission's review. The Commission further notes that GSD and MBSD have different members (although a member of one could, and some may, apply and become a member of the other), offer different services, and clear different products. To the extent there is the potential to offset risk exposure present across the different products, those products are still cleared by different services. Accordingly, FICC maintains not only separate rulebooks for each division but also separate liquidity resources.

Therefore, the Commission believes that the absence of a proposal in the Proposed Rule Change to establish cross-margining between GSD and MBSD, or to expanding cross-margining between GSD and another clearing agency, does not render the specific changes proposed in the Proposed Rule Change for GSD inconsistent with the Clearing Supervision Act or the applicable rules discussed herein. Rather, the Commission believes that the proposed changes to GSD's margin calculation are designed to be tailored to the specific risks associated with the products and services offered by GSD and that the proposed GSD margin calculation is commensurate with the risks associated with portfolios held by Members in GSD.

In response to comments about the proposed look-back period, the Commission believes that an evenly-weighted 10-year look-back period, plus an additional stress period, as needed, is an appropriate approach to help ensure that the proposed sensitivity VaR Charge calculation accounts for historical market observations of the securities cleared by GSD. Such a look-back period would help enable FICC to be in a better position to maintain backtesting coverage above 99 percent for GSD. As evidenced in FICC's second comment letter, a 10-year look-back period that includes a stress period would provide backtesting coverage above 99 percent, while a five-year look-back period and a one-year look-back period would not.[210]

Therefore, for the above discussed reasons, the Commission believes that the changes proposed in the Proposed Rule Change are consistent with Rule 17Ad–22(e)(6)(i) under the Exchange Act.[211]

E. Consistency With Rule 17Ad–22(e)(6)(ii) of the Exchange Act

The Commission believes that the changes proposed in the Proposed Rule Change are consistent with Rule 17Ad–22(e)(6)(ii) under the Exchange Act. Rule 17Ad–22(e)(6)(ii) requires each covered clearing agency to establish, implement, maintain and enforce written policies and procedures reasonably designed to cover its credit exposures to its participants by establishing a risk-based margin system that, at a minimum, marks participant positions to market and collects margin, including variation margin or equivalent charges if relevant, at least daily and includes the authority and operational capacity to make intraday margin calls in defined circumstances.[212]

As described above, FICC proposes to adjust the existing Backtesting Charge component. Specifically, FICC proposes to collect the charge from all Members on a daily basis, as applicable, as well as from Members that have backtesting deficiencies during the trading day due to large fluctuations of intraday trading activity that could pose risk to FICC in the event that such Members default during the trading day.

The change is designed to help improve FICC's risk-based margin system by authorizing FICC to assess this specific margin charge on all Members at least daily, as needed, and on an intra-day basis, as needed. Therefore, the Commission believes that the changes proposed in the Proposed Rule Change are consistent with Rule 17Ad–22(e)(6)(ii) under the Exchange Act.[213]

F. Consistency With Rule 17Ad–22(e)(6)(iv) of the Exchange Act

The Commission believes that the changes proposed in the Proposed Rule Change are consistent with Rule 17Ad–22(e)(6)(iv) under the Exchange Act. Rule 17Ad–22(e)(6)(iv) requires each covered clearing agency to establish, implement, maintain and enforce written policies and procedures reasonably designed to cover its credit exposures to its participants by establishing a risk-based margin system that, at a minimum, uses reliable sources of timely price data and procedures and sound valuation models for addressing circumstances in which pricing data are not readily available or reliable.[214]

As described above, FICC proposes a number of changes to its margin calculation that are designed to use reliable price data and address circumstances in which pricing data may not be available or reliable. Specifically, FICC proposes to (1) replace its existing full revaluation VaR Charge calculation with the proposed sensitivity approach that relies upon the expertise of a third-party vendor to produce the needed sensitivity data; (2) utilize the existing Margin Proxy as a back-up to the proposed sensitivity VaR Charge calculation in the event that FICC experiences a data disruption with the third-party vendor; (3) implement a haircut method for securities that are ineligible for the proposed sensitivity approach to the VaR Charge calculation due to inadequate historical pricing data; and (4) establish the VaR Floor.

The Commission believes that these proposed changes are designed to help FICC better cover its credit exposures to its Members, as the changes would help establish a risk-based margin system that uses reliable sources of timely price data and procedures and sound valuation models for addressing circumstances in which pricing data are not readily available or reliable. Specifically, the proposal to (1) move to a sensitivity approach to the VaR Charge calculation would not only enable the VaR Charge calculation to respond more effectively to market volatility by allowing FICC to attribute market price moves to various risk factors but also would enable FICC to employ the expertise of a third-party vendor to supply applicable sensitivity data; (2) use the existing Margin Proxy as a back-up methodology system would help ensure FICC is able to calculate a VaR Charge for Members despite any difficulty in receiving sensitivity data from the third-party vendor; (3) implement a haircut method for securities with insufficient sensitivity data would help ensure that FICC is able to capture the risk profile of the securities; and (4) establish the VaR Floor would help ensure that FICC

[210] *Id.* at 9–10.

[211] 17 CFR 240.17Ad–22(e)(6)(i).

[212] 17 CFR 240.17Ad–22(e)(6)(ii).

[213] *Id.*

[214] 17 CFR 240.17Ad–22(e)(6)(iv).

assesses a VaR Charge where the proposed sensitivity VaR Charge calculation produces too low of a VaR Charge.

Therefore, for these reasons, the Commission believes that the changes proposed in the Proposed Rule Change are consistent with Rule 17Ad–22(e)(6)(iv) under the Exchange Act.[215]

G. Consistency With Rule 17Ad–22(e)(6)(v) of the Exchange Act

The Commission believes that the changes proposed in the Proposed Rule Change are consistent with Rule 17Ad–22(e)(6)(v) under the Exchange Act. Rule 17Ad–22(e)(6)(v) requires each covered clearing agency to establish, implement, maintain and enforce written policies and procedures reasonably designed to use an appropriate method for measuring credit exposure that accounts for relevant product risk factors and portfolio effects across products.[216]

As described above, FICC proposes a number of changes to its margin calculation that are designed to help ensure that FICC accounts for the relevant product risk factors and portfolio effects across GSD's products when measuring its credit exposure to Members. Specifically, FICC proposes to (1) replace its existing full revaluation VaR Charge calculation with the proposed sensitivity approach to the VaR Charge calculation; (2) implement a haircut method for securities that are ineligible for the proposed sensitivity approach due to inadequate historical pricing data; and (3) establish the Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment component.

Two commenters raised concerns regarding the Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment.[217] Specifically, IDTA states that that the Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment results in an inaccurate measurement of risk and excessive margin charges.[218] First, IDTA states that the Blackout Period should run from the first business day of the current month to the morning of the fifth business day to more accurately capture FICC's exposure.[219] Second, IDTA states that the Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment should be calculated using historical pay-down rates for the MBS pools held in each Members' portfolio, rather than historical pay-down rates for all active MBS pools. Finally, IDTA states that FICC should apply a credit-risk weighting to the Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment instead of assuming a 100 percent probability of a GCF Repo Service counterparty default across all Members.[220]

Amherst similarly states that using historical pay-down rates for all active MBS pools, rather than using historical pay-down rates for the MBS pools held in each Members' portfolio, in calculating the Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment would eliminate ''prudent risk and position management'' that Members can undertake to reduce FICC's exposure.[221] Amherst states that FICC should retain its current approach that provides incentives for Members to ''manage the prepay characteristics of the mortgage-backed securities held within FICC.'' [222]

In response, FICC states that Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment collections that occur after the MBS collateral pledge would not mitigate the risk that a Member defaults after the collateral is pledged but before such Member satisfies the next day's margin.[223] Therefore, FICC states that IDTA's proposed change to the timing of the Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment would be inconsistent with FICC's requirements under the Exchange Act.[224] Additionally, FICC states it considered different approaches for determining the calculation of the Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment that would ensure FICC has sufficient backtesting coverage, and give Members transparency and the ability to plan for the Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment requirements.[225] FICC notes that MBS pay-down rates are influenced by several factors that can be projected at the loan level, however, such projections would be dependent on several assumptions that may not be predictable and transparent to Members.[226] Thus, FICC states that the proposed Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment applies weighted averages of pay-down rates for all active mortgage pools of the related program during the three most recent preceding months, and FICC believes that this approach would allow Members to effectively plan for the Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment.[227] Finally, FICC disagrees with IDTA's suggestion that a probability of default approach would be more appropriate because a probability of default approach would provide lower margin coverage than the current approach.[228] FICC notes this lower margin would not be sufficient to maintain the margin coverage at a 99 percent confidence level.[229]

The Commission believes that these proposed changes are designed to help FICC use an appropriate method for measuring credit exposure that accounts for relevant product risk factors and portfolio effects across products cleared by GSD. Specifically, the proposal to (1) move to a sensitivity approach to the VaR Charge calculation would enable the VaR Charge calculation to respond more effectively to market volatility by allowing FICC to attribute market price moves to various risk factors; (2) to implement a haircut method for securities with insufficient sensitivity data would help ensure that FICC is able to capture the risk profile of the securities; and (3) establish the Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment component would enable FICC to address risks that could result from overstated values of mortgage-backed securities that are pledged as collateral for GCF Repo Transactions during a Blackout Period.

In response to commenters' concerns regarding the Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment collection cycle, as stated above, the Commission notes the proposed cycle follows the same cycle currently used for the Blackout Period Exposure Charge, which FICC proposes to eliminate on account of the proposed Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment. For both the current and proposed cycle, the Commission understands, based on its experience and expertise, that FICC's application of the charge on the last business day of the month, as opposed to the first business day of the following month, is an appropriate way to ensure that FICC collects the funds before realizing the risk that the charge is intended to mitigate (*i.e.,* a Member defaults during the Blackout Period). Similarly, FICC's extension of the charge through the end of the day on the Factor Date, as opposed to releasing the charge during FICC's standard intraday margin calculation on the Factor Date, also is an appropriate way to mitigate the risk exposure to FICC because, operationally, the MBS are not released and revalued with the update factors by the applicable clearing bank until after FICC has already completed the intraday margin calculation.

In response to commenters' concerns regarding the calculation of the Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment, the Commission agrees with FICC. Specifically, the Commission agrees that (i) given the number assumptions that

[215] *Id.*

[216] 17 CFR 240.17Ad–22(e)(6)(v).

[217] IDTA Letter; Amherst Letter II.

[218] IDTA Letter at 12.

[219] *Id.*

[220] *Id.*

[221] Amherst Letter II at 5.

[222] *Id.*

[223] FICC Letter II at 13.

[224] *Id.*

[225] *Id.*

[226] *Id.*

[227] *Id.*

[228] *Id.*

[229] *Id.*

one would need to make with respect to the various factors that influence MBS pay-down rates, the weighted–average approach would provide Members more transparency and certainty around the charge; and (ii) a credit-risk weighting would not likely produce a sufficient charge amount in the event of an actual Member default, as the approach would assume something less than a 100 percent probability of default in calculating the charge.

Therefore, for these reasons, the Commission believes that the changes proposed in the Proposed Rule Change are consistent with Rule 17Ad–22(e)(6)(v) under the Exchange Act.[230]

H. Consistency With Rule 17Ad–22(e)(6)(vi)(B) of the Exchange Act

Rule 17Ad–22(e)(6)(vi)(B) under the Exchange Act requires each covered clearing agency to establish, implement, maintain and enforce written policies and procedures reasonably designed to cover its credit exposures to its participants by establishing a risk-based margin system that, at a minimum, is monitored by management on an ongoing basis and is regularly reviewed, tested, and verified by conducting a sensitivity analysis [231] of its margin model and a review of its parameters and assumptions for backtesting on at least a monthly basis, and considering modifications to ensure the backtesting practices are appropriate for determining the adequacy of the covered clearing agency's margin resources.[232]

Some of the commenters raise concerns that two of the presumptions assumed by FICC for backtesting, in order to determine the adequacy of the FICC's margin resources, are inaccurate.[233] First, Ronin and IDTA claim that FICC incorrectly assumes that it would take three days to liquidate or hedge the portfolio of a defaulting Member in normal market conditions. Specifically, Ronin states that FICC's assumption that it would take three days to liquidate or hedge the portfolio of a defaulted Member is incorrect because FICC incorrectly assumes that liquidity needs following a default will be identical for all Members.[234] Ronin states that the three-day liquidation period creates an ''arbitrary and extremely high hurdle'' for historical backtesting by overestimating the closeout-period risk posed to FICC by many of its Members by ''triple-counting'' a single event.[235] Similarly, IDTA notes that it is arbitrary to apply the same liquidation period across all Members because smaller Member portfolios can be more easily liquidated or hedged in a short period of time.[236] IDTA believes FICC should link the liquidation period to the portfolio size of the Member.[237]

In its response, FICC states that the three-day liquidation period is an accurate assumption of the length of time it would take to liquidate a portfolio given the volume and types of securities that can be found in a Member's portfolio at any given time.[238] Further, FICC notes that it validates the three-day liquidation period, at least annually, through FICC's simulated close-out, which is augmented with statistical and economic analysis to reflect potential liquidation costs of sample portfolios of various sizes.[239] FICC also notes that idiosyncratic exposures cannot be mitigated quickly and that the risk associated with idiosyncratic exposures is present in large and small portfolios.[240] Finally, FICC states that although a single market price shock will influence a three-day portfolio price return, the mark-to-market calculation will vary daily based on the day's positions and margin collection for each Member.[241]

The Commission believes that FICC's assumption that it could take three days to liquidate the portfolio of a defaulted Member, regardless of the size of the portfolio or the type of Member, is appropriate. To the extent there is a difference in the time required for FICC to liquidate various GSD products over a three-day period, the Commission believes that such time is appropriate in order for FICC to focus on the overall risk management of the defaulted Member without creating a liquidation methodology that is overly complex and susceptible to flaws.

Therefore, the Commission believes that the Proposed Rule Change is consistent with Rule 17Ad–22(e)(6)(vi)(B) under the Exchange Act.[242]

I. Consistency With Rule 17Ad–22(e)(23)(ii) of the Exchange Act

Rule 17Ad–22(e)(23)(ii) under the Exchange Act requires each covered clearing agency to establish, implement, maintain and enforce written policies and procedures reasonably designed to provide sufficient information to enable participants to identify and evaluate the risks, fees, and other material costs they incur by participating in the covered clearing agency.[243]

Three commenters expressed concerns regarding the limited time in which Members have had to evaluate the data provided by FICC and the effects of the proposed changes.[244] IDTA states that the proposed changes are complex and warrant adequate testing and transparency between FICC and its Members.[245] IDTA states that FICC has not provided Members with adequate time to review and evaluate the potential impacts of the proposed changes on a Member's portfolio.[246] IDTA suggests that FICC (i) provide more time for Members to adapt to the change; (ii) launch a calculator that enables Members to input sample portfolios to determine the margin required; and (iii) provide full disclosure of the methodology used.[247]

Similarly, Amherst states that the proposed changes should not be implemented until Members have had the appropriate time and sufficient information to complete a comparison between the current margin methodology and the proposed changes.[248] Amherst requests that FICC provide the appropriate tools and information to replicate the new sensitivity model in order to manage the risks to Members that may be introduced as a result of the proposed changes.[249] Amherst also requests that FICC provide transparency surrounding the effects of the Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment and the Excess Capital Premium calculations in order to assess the impacts of the proposed changes.[250]

Similarly, Ronin states that FICC has heavily relied on parallel and historical studies when providing its Members

[230] 17 CFR 240.17Ad–22(e)(6)(v).

[231] Rule 17Ad–22(a)(16)(i) under the Exchange Act defines sensitivity analysis to include an analysis that involves analyzing the sensitivity model to its assumptions, parameters, and inputs that consider the impact on the model of both moderate and extreme changes in a wide range of inputs, parameters, and assumptions, including correlations of price movements or returns if relevant, which reflect a variety of historical and hypothetical market conditions. 17 CFR 240.17Ad–22(a)(16)(i). Sensitivity analysis must use actual portfolios and, where applicable, hypothetical portfolios that reflect the characteristics of proprietary positions and customer positions. *Id.*

[232] 17 CFR 240.17Ad–22(e)(6)(vi)(B).

[233] Ronin Letter I at 2–4; IDTA Letter at 6, 7.

[234] Ronin Letter I at 2–3; Ronin Letter II at 1.

[235] Ronin Letter I at 3.

[236] IDTA Letter at 6; Ronin Letter II at 2.

[237] *Id.*

[238] FICC Letter I at 3.

[239] *Id.* at 3–4.

[240] *Id.* at 4.

[241] *Id.*

[242] 17 CFR 240.17Ad–22(e)(6)(vi)(B).

[243] 17 CFR 240.17Ad–22(e)(23)(ii).

[244] *See* Amherst Letter II; IDTA Letter; Ronin II Letter.

[245] IDTA Letter at 5.

[246] *Id.*

[247] *Id.*

[248] Amherst Letter II at 2.

[249] *Id.*

[250] *Id.* at 5, 6.

with data, but Members lack the necessary tools to conduct their own scenario analysis.[251] Ronin notes that when trading activity or market conditions deviate from assumptions made under the various studies conducted by the FICC, Members are forced to react rather than proactively manage capital needs.[252] Ronin, therefore, states it is significantly more difficult to manage the capital needs of a business when a clearing agency does not provide appropriate tools for calculating projected margin requirements in advance.[253]

In response, FICC states that its Members have been provided with sufficient time and information to assess the impact of the proposed changes.[254] FICC states that it has provided Members with numerous opportunities to gather information including (i) holding customer forums in August 2017; (ii) making individual impact studies available in September 2017 and December 2017; (iii) providing parallel reporting on a daily basis since December 18, 2017; and (iv) meeting and speaking with Members on an individual basis and responding to request for additional information since August 2017.[255] Separately, FICC agrees with commenters that launching a calculator that enables Members to input sample portfolios to determine the margin required would be beneficial to its Members and is exploring creating such a calculator outside of the changes proposed in the Proposed Rule Change.[256] Additionally, in order to provide Members with more time, FICC filed Amendment No. 1 to delay implementation of the Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment and the removal of the Blackout Period Exposure Charge.[257] Such changes now would be implemented in phases throughout the remainder of 2018.[258]

In response to commenters, the Commission notes that the disclosure requirements of Rule 17Ad–22(e)(23)(ii) under the Exchange Act [259] should not be conflated with the filing requirements for proposed rule changes under Section 19(b)(1) of the Exchange Act [260] and Rule 19b–4 thereunder.[261] Section 19(b)(1) of the Exchange Act requires a self-regulatory organization to provide the Commission with copies of any proposed rule or proposed change to the self-regulatory organization's rules, accompanied by a concise general statement of the basis and purpose of the proposed rule change,[262] which FICC did in this case.[263] Meanwhile, Rule 19b–4(l) under the Exchange Act requires the clearing agency to post the proposed rule change, and any amendments thereto, on its website within two business days after filing with the Commission,[264] which FICC did in this case.[265]

Until the Commission approves the changes proposed in a proposed rule change, disclosure of the proposed changes under Rule 17Ad–22(e)(23)(ii) is not yet applicable, as there would not yet be (and there may not be if the Commission objects to the proposed changes) any risks, fees, or other material costs incurred with respect to the proposed changes. Nevertheless, the Commission notes that FICC has conducted outreach to Members, as described above, and proposes a staggered implementation of the proposed Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment and removal of the Blackout Period Exposure Charge in response to commenters. The Commission believes that the absence of a longer period of time to review the Proposed Rule Change does not render the proposed changes inconsistent with the Clearing Supervision Act or the applicable rules discussed herein.

Therefore, the Commission believes that the changes proposed in the Proposed Rule Change are consistent with Rule 17Ad–22(e)(23)(ii) under the Exchange Act.[266]

V. Accelerated Approval of Proposed Rule Change, as Modified by Amendment No. 1

The Commission finds good cause to approve the Proposed Rule Change, as modified by Amendment No. 1, prior to the thirtieth day after the date of publication of the notice of Amendment No. 1 in the **Federal Register**. As discussed above, FICC submitted Amendment No. 1 to (1) stagger the implementation of the proposed Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment and the proposed removal of the Blackout Period Exposure Charge; (2) amend the implementation date for the remainder of the proposed changes contained in the Proposed Rule Change; and (3) correct an incorrect description of the calculation of the Excess Capital Premium that appears once in the narrative to the Proposed Rule Change, as well as in the corresponding location in the Exhibit 1A to the Proposed Rule Change.

The Commission believes that Amendment No. 1 does not raise any novel issues: (i) Staggering the implementation of the proposed Blackout Period Exposure Adjustment is in response to comments received, as described above; (ii) accelerating the implementation date for the remainder of the proposed changes would enable FICC to implement those proposed changes sooner, which, as discussed above, would help FICC address issues identified with its current margin calculation; and (iii) the remaining change is non-substantive. Accordingly, the Commission finds good cause to approve the proposed rule change, as modified by Amendment No. 1, on an accelerated basis, pursuant to Section 19(b)(2) of the Exchange Act.[267]

VI. Conclusion

On the basis of the foregoing, the Commission finds that the Proposed Rule Change, as modified by Amendment No. 1, is consistent with the requirements of the Exchange Act, in particular, with the requirements of Section 17A of the Exchange Act and the rules and regulations thereunder.

It is therefore ordered, pursuant to Section 19(b)(2) of the Exchange Act,[268] that proposed rule change SR–FICC–2018–001, as modified by Amendment No. 1, be, and it hereby is, approved on an accelerated basis.

For the Commission, by the Division of Trading and Markets, pursuant to delegated authority.[269]

Eduardo A. Aleman,

Assistant Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2018–12195 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8011–01–P

[251] Ronin Letter II at 3.

[252] *Id.*

[253] *Id.*

[254] FICC Letter I at 5; FICC Letter II at 8–9.

[255] FICC Letter I at 5; FICC Letter II at 8–9.

[256] FICC Letter I at 5.

[257] Amendment No. 1, *supra* note 6.

[258] *Id.*

[259] 17 CFR 240.17Ad–22(e)(23)(ii).

[260] 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

[261] 17 CFR 240.19b–4.

[262] 12 U.S.C. 5465(e)(1)(A).

[263] *See* Notice, *supra* note 3.

[264] *See* 17 CFR 240.19b–4(l).

[265] *Available at http://www.dtcc.com/legal/sec-rule-filings.*

[266] 17 CFR 240.17Ad–22(e)(23)(ii).

[267] 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(2).

[268] *Id.*

[269] 17 CFR 200.30–3(a)(12).

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[Release No. 34–83363; File No. SR–CboeBZX–2018–036]

Self-Regulatory Organizations; Cboe BZX Exchange, Inc.; Notice of Filing and Immediate Effectiveness of a Proposed Rule Change to Amend a Representation Made in a Proposed Rule Change Previously Approved by the Commission Relating to the Listing and Trading of the iShares Inflation Hedged Corporate Bond ETF

June 1, 2018.

Pursuant to Section 19(b)(1) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (''Act''),[1] and Rule 19b–4 thereunder,[2] notice is hereby given that on May 24, 2018, Cboe BZX Exchange, Inc. (the ''Exchange'' or ''BZX'') filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (''Commission'') the proposed rule change as described in Items I and II below, which Items have been prepared by the Exchange. The Commission is publishing this notice to solicit comments on the proposed rule change from interested persons.

I. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement of the Terms of Substance of the Proposed Rule Change

The Exchange filed a proposal to amend a representation made in a proposed rule change previously approved by the Commission relating to the listing and trading of the iShares Inflation Hedged Corporate Bond ETF (the ''Fund'').

The text of the proposed rule change is available at the Exchange's website at *www.markets.cboe.com,* at the principal office of the Exchange, and at the Commission's Public Reference Room.

II. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement of the Purpose of, and Statutory Basis for, the Proposed Rule Change

In its filing with the Commission, the Exchange included statements concerning the purpose of and basis for the proposed rule change and discussed any comments it received on the proposed rule change. The text of these statements may be examined at the places specified in Item IV below. The Exchange has prepared summaries, set forth in Sections A, B, and C below, of the most significant parts of such statements.

[1] 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

[2] 17 CFR 240.19b–4.

A. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement of the Purpose of, and Statutory Basis for, the Proposed Rule Change

1. Purpose

The shares of the Fund (the ''Shares'') were approved for listing and trading on the Exchange under Rule 14.11(i), which governs the listing and trading of Managed Fund Shares.[3] The Shares have commenced trading on the Exchange. The Fund is a series of the iShares U.S. ETF Trust (the ''Trust''), which was established as a Delaware statutory trust on June 21, 2011. BlackRock Fund Advisors (the ''Adviser'') is the investment adviser to the Fund. The Trust is registered with the Commission as an open-end management investment company and has filed a registration statement on behalf of the Fund on Form N–1A (''Registration Statement'') with the Commission.[4]

The Exchange proposes to amend a representation made in the Approval Order such that the representation that limits Fund holdings in Inflation Hedging Instruments[5] to 50% of the weight of its portfolio (including gross notional exposure) would instead limit the Fund's holdings in Inflation Hedging Instruments to 60% of the weight of its portfolio (including gross notional exposure). While the Fund generally expects to have approximately 50% of the weight of its portfolio (including gross notional exposure) in Inflation Hedging Instruments, the Adviser would prefer to allow the Fund the flexibility to increase to 60% in order to allow for potential market movement in the Fund's holdings. Specifically, the Exchange is proposing to change the sentence that reads:

The Exchange is proposing to allow the Fund to hold up to 50% of the weight of its portfolio (including gross notional exposure) in Inflation Hedging Instruments, collectively, in a manner that may not comply with Rules 14.11(i)(4)(C)(iv)(a), 14.11(i)(4)(C)(iv)(b), and/or 14.11(i)(4)(C)(v), as discussed above.

The Exchange is proposing to replace that sentence with the following:

The Exchange is proposing to allow the Fund to hold up to 60% of the weight of its portfolio (including gross notional exposure) in Inflation Hedging Instruments, collectively, in a manner that may not comply with Rules 14.11(i)(4)(C)(iv)(a), 14.11(i)(4)(C)(iv)(b), and/or 14.11(i)(4)(C)(v), as discussed above.

The Exchange believes that this proposed change is a non-controversial change because it is intended only to provide the Adviser with additional flexibility within the Fund's portfolio to hedge inflation risk associated with its exposure to corporate bonds. The Fund's investment objective and investment strategy are not changing. Further to this point, all other representations in the Approval Order that constitute Continued Listing Representations[6] for the Fund remain true and will apply on a continuous basis, consistent with Rule 14.11 and the proposed change to the representation above will be a Continued Listing Representation for the Fund going forward. The Exchange also notes that the statements in the filing that formed the basis for the Commission approving the Fund for listing and trading remain true. As such, the Exchange believes that the proposal does not raise any substantive issues that were not previously addressed in the Approval Order.

2. Statutory Basis

The Exchange believes that the proposal is consistent with Section 6(b) of the Act[7] in general and Section 6(b)(5) of the Act[8] in particular in that it is designed to prevent fraudulent and manipulative acts and practices, to promote just and equitable principles of trade, to remove impediments to, and perfect the mechanism of a free and open market and, in general, to protect investors and the public interest. Specifically, the Exchange believes that the proposal is designed to prevent fraudulent and manipulative acts and

[3] *See* Securities Exchange Act Release No. 82591 (January 26, 2018), 83 FR 4707 (February 1, 2018) (SR–BatsBZX–2017–54) (the ''Approval Order'').

[4] *See* Registration Statement on Form N–1A for the Trust, dated April 6, 2018 (File Nos. 333–179904 and 811–22649). The descriptions of the Fund and the Shares contained herein are based, in part, on information in the Registration Statement. The Commission has issued an order granting certain exemptive relief to the Company under the Investment Company Act of 1940 (15 U.S.C. 80a–1) (''1940 Act'') (the ''Exemptive Order''). *See* Investment Company Act Release No. 29571 (January 24, 2011) (File No. 812–13601).

[5] As defined in the Approval Order, Inflation Hedging Instruments include only the following instruments: OTC or listed inflation swaps (*i.e.,* contracts in which the Fund will make fixed-rate payments based on notional amount while receiving floating-rate payments determined from an inflation index), Treasury Inflation-Protected Securities, total return swaps, credit default swaps, interest rate swaps, and U.S. Treasury futures.

[6] As defined in Rule 14.11(a), the term ''Continued Listing Representations'' means any of the statements or representations regarding the index composition, the description of the portfolio or reference assets, limitations on portfolio holdings or reference assets, dissemination and availability of index, reference asset, and intraday indicative values (as applicable), or the applicability of Exchange listing rules specified in any filing to list a series of Other Securities.

[7] 15 U.S.C. 78f.

[8] 15 U.S.C. 78f(b)(5).

practices, to promote just and equitable principles of trade, to remove impediments to, and perfect the mechanism of a free and open market and, in general, to protect investors and the public interest.

As described above, all of the Continued Listing Representations which formed the basis for the Commission approving the Approval Order remain true and will continue to constitute Continued Listing Representations for the Fund with the exception of the single representation that the Exchange is proposing to amend, which, as amended, will be a Continued Listing Representation for the Fund going forward. This proposed change will only provide the Adviser with additional flexibility within the Fund's portfolio to hedge inflation risk associated with its exposure to corporate bonds. The Fund's investment objective and investment strategy are not changing. As such, the Exchange believes that the proposal does not raise any substantive issues that were not previously addressed in the Approval Order.

Based on the foregoing, the Exchange believes that the proposal is designed to prevent fraudulent and manipulative acts and practices, to promote just and equitable principles of trade, to remove impediments to and perfect the mechanism of a free and open market and a national market system, and, in general, to protect investors and the public interest because there are no substantive issues raised by this proposal that were not otherwise addressed by the Approval Order.

B. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement on Burden on Competition

The Exchange does not believe that the proposed rule change will impose any burden on competition that is not necessary or appropriate in furtherance of the purposes of the Act. The Exchange believes that adding the flexibility to fully implement the Fund's hedging strategy will have no impact on competition.

C. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement on Comments on the Proposed Rule Change Received From Members, Participants or Others

The Exchange has neither solicited nor received written comments on the proposed rule change.

III. Date of Effectiveness of the Proposed Rule Change and Timing for Commission Action

Because the foregoing proposed rule change does not: (i) Significantly affect the protection of investors or the public interest; (ii) impose any significant burden on competition; and (iii) become operative for 30 days from the date on which it was filed, or such shorter time as the Commission may designate, it has become effective pursuant to Section 19(b)(3)(A)(iii) of the Act[9] and subparagraph (f)(6) of Rule 19b–4 thereunder.[10]

A proposed rule change filed pursuant to Rule 19b–4(f)(6) under the Act[11] normally does not become operative for 30 days after the date of its filing. However, Rule 19b–4(f)(6)(iii)[12] permits the Commission to designate a shorter time if such action is consistent with the protection of investors and the public interest. The Exchange has asked the Commission to waive the 30-day operative delay so that the proposed rule change may become effective and operative immediately upon filing. The Exchange states that waiver of the operative delay would permit the Adviser of the Fund to immediately employ the Adviser's strategy for hedging against inflation risk. According to the Exchange, this hedging strategy will best allow the Fund to achieve its investment objective and employ its investment strategy.

The Commission believes that waiving the 30-day operative delay is consistent with the protection of investors and the public interest. The proposal raises no new novel issues. Moreover, as the noted above, apart from increasing the Fund's holdings in Inflation Hedging Instruments to 60% of the weight of its portfolio (including gross notional exposure), all other representations in the Approval Order that constitute Continued Listing Representations for the Fund would remain true and will apply on a continuous basis. Further, the proposed change to the representation above will be a Continued Listing Representation for the Fund going forward. Accordingly, the Commission hereby waives the operative delay and designates the proposal operative upon filing.[13]

At any time within 60 days of the filing of the proposed rule change, the Commission summarily may temporarily suspend such rule change if it appears to the Commission that such action is: (i) Necessary or appropriate in the public interest; (ii) for the protection of investors; or (iii) otherwise in furtherance of the purposes of the Act. If the Commission takes such action, the Commission shall institute proceedings to determine whether the proposed rule should be approved or disapproved.

IV. Solicitation of Comments

Interested persons are invited to submit written data, views and arguments concerning the foregoing, including whether the proposal is consistent with the Act. Comments may be submitted by any of the following methods:

Electronic Comments

- Use the Commission's internet comment form (*http://www.sec.gov/rules/sro.shtml*); or
- Send an email to *rule-comments@sec.gov*. Please include File Number SR–CboeBZX–2018–036 on the subject line

Paper Comments

- Send paper comments in triplicate to Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, 100 F Street NE, Washington, DC 20549–1090.

All submissions should refer to File Number SR–CboeBZX–2018–036. This file number should be included on the subject line if email is used. To help the Commission process and review your comments more efficiently, please use only one method. The Commission will post all comments on the Commission's internet website (*http://www.sec.gov/rules/sro.shtml*). Copies of the submission, all subsequent amendments, all written statements with respect to the proposed rule change that are filed with the Commission, and all written communications relating to the proposed rule change between the Commission and any person, other than those that may be withheld from the public in accordance with the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 552, will be available for website viewing and printing in the Commission's Public Reference Room, 100 F Street NE, Washington, DC 20549, on official business days between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Copies of the filing will also be available for inspection and copying at the principal office of the Exchange. All comments received will be posted without change. Persons submitting comments are cautioned that we do not redact or edit personal identifying information from comment submissions. You should

[9] 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(3)(A)(iii).

[10] 17 CFR 240.19b–4(f)(6). In addition, Rule 19b–4(f)(6) requires a self-regulatory organization to give the Commission written notice of its intent to file the proposed rule change at least five business days prior to the date of filing of the proposed rule change, or such shorter time as designated by the Commission. The Exchange has satisfied this requirement.

[11] 17 CFR 240.19b–4(f)(6).

[12] 17 CFR 240.19b–4(f)(6)(iii).

[13] For purposes only of waiving the 30-day operative delay, the Commission has also considered the proposed rule's impact on efficiency, competition, and capital formation. *See* 15 U.S.C. 78c(f).

submit only information that you wish to make available publicly. All submissions should refer to File Number SR–CboeBZX–2018–036 and should be submitted on or before June 28, 2018.

For the Commission, by the Division of Trading and Markets, pursuant to delegated authority.[14]

Eduardo A. Aleman,

Assistant Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2018–12196 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8011–01–P

SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

[Disaster Declaration #15544 and #15545; VIRGINIA Disaster Number VA–00071]

Administrative Declaration of a Disaster for the Commonwealth of VIRGINIA

AGENCY: U.S. Small Business Administration.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This is a notice of an Administrative declaration of a disaster for the Commonwealth of Virginia dated 05/30/2018.

Incident: Severe Storm and Tornadoes.

Incident Period: 04/15/2018.

DATES: Issued on 05/30/2018.

Physical Loan Application Deadline Date: 07/30/2018.

Economic Injury (EIDL) Loan Application Deadline Date: 03/04/2019.

ADDRESSES: Submit completed loan applications to: U.S. Small Business Administration, Processing and Disbursement Center, 14925 Kingsport Road, Fort Worth, TX 76155.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: A. Escobar, Office of Disaster Assistance, U.S. Small Business Administration, 409 3rd Street SW, Suite 6050, Washington, DC 20416, (202) 205–6734.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Notice is hereby given that as a result of the Administrator's disaster declaration, applications for disaster loans may be filed at the address listed above or other locally announced locations.

The following areas have been determined to be adversely affected by the disaster:

Primary Counties: Lynchburg City

Contiguous Counties:

Virginia: Amherst, Bedford, Campbell.

The Interest Rates are:

	Percent
For Physical Damage:	
Homeowners With Credit Available Elsewhere	3.625
Homeowners Without Credit Available Elsewhere	1.813
Businesses With Credit Available Elsewhere	7.160
Businesses Without Credit Available Elsewhere	3.580
Non-Profit Organizations With Credit Available Elsewhere	2.500
Non-Profit Organizations Without Credit Available Elsewhere	2.500
For Economic Injury:	
Businesses & Small Agricultural Cooperatives Without Credit Available Elsewhere	3.580
Non-Profit Organizations Without Credit Available Elsewhere	2.500

The number assigned to this disaster for physical damage is 15544C and for economic injury is 155450.

The State which received an EIDL Declaration # is Virginia.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number 59008)

Dated: May 30, 2018.

Linda E. McMahon,

Administrator.

[FR Doc. 2018–12185 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8025–01–P

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

[Docket No. FD 36196]

Delmarva Central Railroad Company—Change in Operator Exemption—Cassatt Management, LLC d/b/a Bay Coast Railroad

Delmarva Central Railroad Company (DCR), a Class III rail carrier, has filed a verified notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1150.41 to assume operations over an approximately 14.8-mile rail line owned by Canonie Atlantic Co. (CAC) on behalf of the Accomack-Northampton Transportation District Commission (ANTDC) from milepost 30.9 in Pocomoke City, Md., to milepost 45.7 in Hallwood, Va. (the Line).

DCR states that the Line has been operated by Cassatt Management, LLC d/b/a Bay Coast Railroad (BCR).[1] DCR states that BCR has ceased operation of the Line and does not object to the proposed change in operators. DCR has concurrently filed a petition for waiver of the 30-day period specified under 49 CFR 1150.42(b) to allow the exemption to become effective immediately.[2] According to DCR, a lease and operation agreement providing for its common carrier service on the Line is being finalized and executed.

DCR states that the proposed lease and operation of the Line does not involve any provision or agreement that would limit future interchange with a third-party connecting carrier. DCR certifies that its projected annual revenues from freight operations will not result in the creation of a Class II or Class I rail carrier.

Under 49 CFR 1150.42(b), a change in operators requires that notice be given to shippers. DCR certifies that it has provided notice of the proposed change in operator to the shippers on the Line.[3]

If the verified notice contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void ab initio. Petitions to revoke the exemption under 49 U.S.C. 10502(d) may be filed at any time. The filing of a petition to revoke will not automatically stay the effectiveness of the exemption.

An original and 10 copies of all pleadings, referring to Docket No. FD 36196, must be filed with the Surface Transportation Board, 395 E Street SW, Washington, DC 20423–0001. In addition, a copy of each pleading must be served on DCR's representative, Thomas J. Litwiler, Fletcher & Sippel LLC, 29 North Wacker Drive, Suite 920, Chicago, IL 60606–2832.

According to DCR, this action is excluded from environmental review under 49 CFR 1105.6(c) and from historic preservation reporting requirements under 49 CFR 1105.8(b)(1).

Board decisions and notices are available on our website at *WWW.STB.GOV.*

Decided: June 4, 2018. By the Board, Scott M. Zimmerman, Acting Director, Office of Proceedings.

Jeffrey Herzig,

Clearance Clerk.

[FR Doc. 2018–12308 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915–01–P

[14] 17 CFR 200.30–3(a)(12).

[1] *See Cassatt Management, LLC d/b/a Bay Coast R.R.—Lease & Operation Exemption—Canonie Atlantic Co. on behalf of ANTDC,* FD 34818 (STB served Feb. 6, 2006).

[2] The petition for waiver will be addressed in a separate decision.

[3] DCR certifies that on May 17, 2018, it posted notice of the transaction at the workplace of the then-current BCR employees on the Line as required under 49 CFR 1150.42(e). DCR states that BCR employees are not represented by any labor union. In addition to waiver of the 30-day effective date requirement, DCR's petition seeks waiver of the full 60-day labor notice requirement, in order for the exemption to become effective immediately. As noted above, the petition for waiver will be addressed in a separate decision.

TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY

Cumberland Fossil Plant Coal Combustion Residuals Management Operations Final Environmental Impact Statement

AGENCY: Tennessee Valley Authority.

ACTION: Record of decision.

SUMMARY: This notice is provided in accordance with the Council on Environmental Quality's regulations and Tennessee Valley Authority's (TVA) procedures for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). TVA has decided to construct and operate a bottom ash dewatering facility, process water basins, and an onsite landfill at the Cumberland Fossil Plant (CUF). The notice of availability (NOA) of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Cumberland Fossil Plant Coal Combustion Residuals Managment Operations was published in the **Federal Register** on April 20, 2018. The Final EIS identified TVA's preferred alternative as Alternative C, which includes the Construction and Operation of a Bottom Ash Dewatering Facility, Closure-In-Place of the Bottom Ash Impoundment, and a combination of Closure-in-Place and Closure-by-Removal of the Main Ash Impoundment and Stilling Impoundment. The portion of the Main Ash Impoundment and the Stilling Impoundment that would be Closed-by-Removal would be repurposed as Process Water Basin 1 and Process Water Basin 2, with coal combustion residuals (CCR) that are removed from the impoundment transported to an existing onsite landfill. In addition, under Alternative C, TVA would construct an onsite landfill to manage future CCR produced at CUF. TVA's current decision pertains only to the construction and operation of a Bottom Ash Dewatering Facility, construction and operation of the new onsite CCR Landfill, and construction of the Processs Water Basins, which includes removal of CCR from a portion of the Main Ash Impoundment and the Stilling Impoundment. TVA is electing to further consider the location for permanent disposal of the ash excavated from the Main Ash Impoundment and the Stilling Impoundment. CCR removed for construction of the basins would be staged temporarily within the Main Ash Impoundment footprint until a final decision is made (following any necessary supplemental environmental review) on a location for permanent disposal of the material. The preferred alternative would achieve the project purpose and need of converting the wet storage of CCR to a dry system and promoting the future management of dry CCR at CUF by converting to dry bottom ash handling and providing additional long-term disposal for dry CCR materials produced at CUF. In addition to state and federal water and waste regulations, TVA's CCR disposal areas at CUF, including the impoundments, are subject to the 2015 Commissioner's Order entered by the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC). Investigations at CUF under that Order are ongoing. Therefore, TVA is electing to further consider the proposed in-place closure of the Bottom Ash Impoundment and a portion of the Main Ash Impoundment before making a decision on closure of these facilities. In addition, TVA is electing to further consider the location for permanent disposal of the ash excavated from the Main Ash Impoundment and the Stilling Impoundment.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ashley Pilakowski, Project Environmental Planning, NEPA Project Manager, Tennessee Valley Authority, 400 W Summit Hill Drive (WT 11D), Knoxville, Tennessee 37902; telephone (865) 632–2256, or by email *aapilakowski@tva.gov*. The Final EIS, this Record of Decision (ROD) and other project documents are available on TVA's website *https://www.tva.gov/nepa.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: TVA is a corporate agency of the United States that provides electricity for business customers and local power distributors serving more than 9 million people in an 80,000 square miles comprised of most of Tennessee and parts of Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Kentucky. TVA receives no taxpayer funding, deriving virtually all of its revenues from sales of electricity. In addition to operating and investing its revenues in its power system, TVA provides flood control, navigation and land management for the Tennessee River system and assists local power companies and state and local governments with economic development and job creation.

Built between 1968 and 1973, the two-unit plant at CUF generates enough energy to supply about 1.1 million homes. The plant consumes an average of 5.6 million tons of coal annually and produces nearly 1 million tons of CCR each year. The CCR consist of fly ash, bottom ash, commercial grade gypsum, and solids from the flue gas desulfurization (FGD) process. TVA has managed storage of CCR materials at CUF in a combination of dry stacks and impoundments. Bottom ash generated by the operating units is sluiced to the existing Bottom Ash Impoundment where most of the material settles out. The settled bottom ash is excavated and stacked in the Fly Ash Stack. Water from the Bottom Ash Impoundment flows to the Main Ash Impoundment and Stilling Impoundment before being discharged to the Cumberland River through a permitted outfall. Fly ash is transported in dry form to the Fly Ash Stack. Gypsum is dewatered and conveyed to an adjacent wall-board manufacturer or disposed in the Gypsum Stack or to lined channels where it is dewatered, stockpiled for later use, or disposed in the Gypsum Stack.

The approximately 2,470 megawatts of generating capacity provided by CUF is important in maintaining an adequate and reliable power supply to the north-central portion of TVA's service area. Accordingly, CUF was identified in TVA's 2015 Integrated Resource Plan as one of the coal plants that TVA plans to continue operating in the future. The purpose of the proposed action is to convert the wet storage of CCR to a dry system, to promote the future management of dry CCR at CUF, and to meet the state and federal regulatory requirements for closing ash impoundments including EPA's CCR Rule. The project helps fulfill TVA's goal to convert wet CCR storage to dry and applies to both existing CCR (CCR in the impoundments) and future CCR (dry CCR that would be produced from CUF operations under all of the alternatives). In addition, the dewatering facilities would also foster TVA's compliance with present and future regulatory requirements. This includes the 2015 TDEC Commissioner's Order that requires TVA to evaluate and remediate, if necessary, CCR risks at its plants in Tennessee, except Gallatin. The TDEC Commissioner's Order and other environmental regulatory programs help ensure that CCR management activities at TVA's plants will continue to be protective of human health and the environment.

To enable this wet-to-dry conversion, TVA proposes several projects including: construction and operation of a Bottom Ash Dewatering Facility; closure of the existing ash impoundments; construction and operation of process water basins to handle process wastewater and storm water that previously was routed to the impoundments; and construction and operation of a landfill within the boundaries of TVA owned property on

CUF (onsite) for disposal of future dry CCR generated at the plant.

Alternatives Considered

Based on an extensive analysis of options to manage CCR produced at CUF, TVA considered four alternatives in the Draft EIS and Final EIS. These alternatives are:

Alternative A—No Action. Under this Alternative, TVA would not construct the proposed Bottom Ash Dewatering Facility and current operations for handling sluiced bottom ash would not change. TVA would not close the ash impoundments. Accordingly, TVA would not seek additional disposal options for dry placement of CCR generated at CUF. Rather, CCR would continue to be managed in the current impoundments and onsite stacks for as long as storage capacity is available. The No Action Alternative is not consistent with other actions that TVA could be required to take in response to the CCR Rule and other regulatory programs including the TDEC Commissioner's Order.

Consequently, this alternative would not satisfy the project purpose and need and, therefore, is not considered viable or reasonable. It does, however, provide a benchmark for comparing the environmental impacts of implementation of Alternatives B, C, and D.

Alternative B—Bottom Ash Dewatering Facility, Ash Impoundment Closure (In-Place or By-Removal to Offsite Landfill), Onsite Landfill for Future CCR Produced at CUF. Under Alternative B, TVA would complete a series of actions to manage CCR produced at CUF. These actions include:

1. Construct and operate a Bottom Ash Dewatering Facility at one of two previously disturbed sites proximate to the Main Plant. TVA may construct a recirculation system in a subsequent phase where excess water would be routed back to the plant for future sluicing or other allowed reuse operations. The recirculation system would be contained within the existing facility footprint.

2. Consolidation and Closure-in-Place of the Bottom Ash Impoundment and North Ditch. Closure-by-Removal of a portion of the Main Ash Impoundment and the Stilling Impoundment and repurposing the closed portion as lined Process Water Basin 1 and Process Water Basin 2. To facilitate construction of the lined process water basins, CCR from these areas, plus a foot of underlying soil would be removed and transported to an approved offsite disposal facility. Specifically, approximately 180,000 yd^3 of CCR material would be removed from the Stilling Impoundment and approximately 245,700 yd^3 of CCR material would be removed from the Main Ash Impoundment. A geosynthetic clay liner would be installed over these areas followed by a non-woven geotextile cushion and 18 inches of protective cover.

3. Construct and operate a landfill for disposal of future dry CCR generated at the plant on a site located approximately 1.2 miles southwest of the plant site which is still on CUF property. The selected site encompasses approximately 174 acres with a landfill footprint of approximately 80 acres. The landfill would be built in four major stages with a total estimated capacity of 14.3 million yd^3. At current generation levels, the closure date of this landfill is approximately 2040. In the event beneficial reuse via marketing continues at its current rate, the landfill closure is approximately 2100. The estimated capacity provides adequate CCR storage for long-range planning purposes.

Alternative C—Bottom Ash Dewatering Facility, Ash Impoundment Closure (In-Place or By-Removal to Existing Onsite Landfill), Onsite Landfill for Future CCR Produced at CUF. Under Alternative C, TVA would construct and operate a series of related actions to manage CCR produced at CUF. These actions include:

1. Construct and operate a Bottom Ash Dewatering Facility as described for Alternative B.

2. Consolidation and Closure-in-Place of the Bottom Ash Impoundment and North Ditch. Closure-by-Removal of a portion of the Main Ash Impoundment and Stilling Impoundment and repurpose the closed portion as lined Process Water Basin 1 and Process Water Basin 2. The closure of the ash impoundments under this option would be the same as described under Alternative B. However, under this alternative, CCR removed from the ash impoundments would be transported to the existing onsite landfill (Fly Ash Stack) for long-term storage.

3. Construct and operate a landfill for disposal of future dry CCR generated at the plant onsite as described under Alternative B.

Alternative D—Bottom Ash Dewatering Facility, Ash Impoundment Closure (In-Place or By-Removal to Offsite Landfill), Offsite Landfill for Future CCR Produced at CUF. Under Alternative D, TVA would construct and operate a series of related actions to manage CCR produced at CUF. These actions include:

1. Construct and operate a Bottom Ash Dewatering Facility as described for Alternative B.

2. The closure of the ash impoundments under this option would be the same as described under Alternative B.

3. Dry CCR produced at CUF would be transported by truck to an offsite landfill, the Bi-County Solid Waste Management Landfill (located approximately 12 miles northeast of CUF) along public roadways. No landfill would be constructed at CUF.

Barge and rail transport were not considered feasible options for this EIS as the facilities at CUF are not configured and designed to support loading and transport of CCR offsite and as such would need to be expanded and improved which could result in environmental impacts and would require additional environmental permitting. In addition, rail and barge facilities are not typical near permitted landfills and are not available at the Bi-County Solid Waste Management Landfill. Therefore, any CCR hauled by barge or rail for landfill disposal would still entail trucking.

Environmentally Preferred Alternative

The EIS includes baseline information for understanding the potential environmental and socioeconomic impacts associated with the alternatives considered by TVA. TVA considered 21 resource areas related to the human and natural environments and the impacts on these resources associated with each alternative.

Alternative A (No Action) would result in fewer environmental impacts than Alternative B, C and D. However, Alternative A does not meet the purpose and need for the project as continuing current operations would not promote the future management of dry CCR at CUF, and would not meet the state and federal regulatory requirements for closing ash impoundments including EPA's CCR Rule and the TDEC Commissioner's Order. Implementation of Alternative B would result in minimal unmitigated impacts to the environment, most of which would be related to construction activities that would be temporary in nature and minimized with implementation of best management practices. The landfill would change the existing visual integrity which would result in a long-term moderate impact to the viewshed of some members of the surrounding community. Scenic attractiveness may be reduced to minimal in the foreground, but would remain common in the middleground and background. Long-term impacts to streams, aquatic

and cultural resources, alteration of bat foraging habitat, and impacts to 0.5 acre of wetland associated with construction of an onsite landfill would be mitigated as described below. The transport of CCR from a portion of the Main Ash Impoundment and the Stilling Impoundment to an existing offsite landfill would result in air emissions, increased traffic and associated long-term safety risks, and disruptions to the public that would be related to such off-site transport. Impacts associated with Alternative C would be the same as for Alternative B, except this alternative would avoid the offsite transport of existing CCR from the Closure-by-Removal of a portion of the Main Ash Impoundment and the Stilling Impoundment as CCR removed from these facilities would be transported to the existing onsite landfill. Under Alternative D, impacts associated with the construction and operation of the Bottom Ash Dewatering Facility would be the same as Alternatives B and C. There would be no impacts to the natural environment associated with taking CCR to an offsite landfill. However, impacts to air quality, transportation, public health and safety would be higher than Alternatives B and C because of the transport of existing CCR from the Closure-by-Removal of the Main Ash Impoundment and the Stilling Impoundment as well as the transport of future CCR generated at CUF to an offsite landfill.

TVA determined that Alternative C, which avoids the offsite transport of CCR on public roadways would be the environmentally preferable alternative.

Public Involvement

On December 5, 2016, TVA published a Notice of Intent (NOI) in the **Federal Register** announcing that it planned to prepare an EIS to address the management of CCR at CUF. The NOI initiated a public scoping period, which concluded on Janaury 6, 2017. In addition to the NOI in the **Federal Register**, TVA published notices regarding this effort in regional and local newspapers; issued a news release to the media outlets; and posted the news release on the TVA website to solicit public input. TVA also developed an initial project mailing list that included local and regional stakeholders, governments and other interested parties. Letters were sent to notify those on the list of the project. Approximately 350 postcards were also mailed to all residents within 3 miles of the CUF plant.

TVA also hosted an open house public scoping meeting on December 12, 2016, at the Freedom Point Events Center at Liberty Park in Clarksville, Tennessee. Comments received addressed project alternatives, adequacy of impact analysis, groundwater and surface water, aquatic ecology, tiering from the PEIS, and other general topics

The Notice of Availability (NOA) of the Draft EIS was published in the **Federal Register** on November 17, 2017, initiating a 45-day public comment period. The Draft EIS was posted on TVA's website and hard copies were available by request. To solicit public input, the availability of the Draft EIS was announced in regional and local newspapers and a news release was issued to the media and posted to TVA's website. TVA hosted a public meeting on November 28, 2017, at the Cumberland City Fire Hall in Cumberland City, Tennessee. Notification of the public meeting was sent to all addresses within 3 miles of the CUF plant, and was also published in local newspapers. TVA's agency involvement included sending letters to local, state, and federal agencies and federally recognized tribes to notify them of the availability of the Draft EIS. The public comment period closed on January 2, 2018.

TVA received 69 comments from 15 commenters. Of the 15 submissions, three were from federal entities, one was from a state entity, one was from a group of environmental advocacy organizations, and 10 were from members of the public. Comments were received in relation to the Draft EIS's sufficiency, compliance with the CCR Rule and TDEC Commissioner's Order, selection of the preferred alternative, groundwater and surface water impacts, local geology, air impacts, solid waste management, and other general topics. TVA provided responses to these comments, made appropriate minor revisions to the Draft EIS, and issued a Final EIS.

The NOA for the Final EIS was published in the **Federal Register** on April 20, 2018.

Decision

TVA has decided to implement portions of the preferred alternative identified in the Final EIS, Alternative C. This decision includes the construction and operation of a Bottom Ash Dewatering Facility, construction and operation of an onsite landfill, and Closure-by-Removal of a portion of the Main Ash Impoundment and the Stilling Impoundment. The closed area would be repurposed as Process Water Basin 1 and Process Water Basin 2. CCR removed for construction of the basins would be staged temporarily within the Main Ash Impoundment, and TVA will further consider its options before making a decision as to the location for the permanent disposal of the CCR. TVA will issue a decision regarding this and any additional documentation at a future date.

In addition to state and federal water and waste regulations, TVA's CCR disposal areas at CUF, including the impoundments, are subject to the 2015 TDEC Commissioner's Order. Therefore, it is TVA's intention not to pursue Closure-in-Place activities immediately, but rather let the execution of the requirements of the TDEC Commissioner's Order guide the closure activities to the maximum extent possible while complying with the requirements of the CCR Rule. TVA will issue a decision regarding closure of the remaining portion of the Main Ash Impoundment and the Bottom Ash Impoundment and any additional documentation at a future date.

Mitigation Measures

TVA will use appropriate best management practices during all phases of construction and operation of the Bottom Ash Dewatering Facilty, the process water basins and the landfill. Mitigation measures, actions taken to reduce adverse impacts associated with the proposed action, include:

- A TDEC Aquatic Resources Alteration Permit and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 404 permit will be required for disturbance to wetlands and stream features, and the terms and conditions of these permits would likely require mitigation for these proposed activities. TVA will adhere to all conditions stipulated in these permits.
- TVA will implement supplemental groundwater mitigation measures that could include monitoring, assessment, or corrective action programs as mandated by state and federal requirements. The CCR Rule and state requirements provide an additional layer of groundwater protection to minimize risk.
- TVA will coordinate with the Tennessee Department of Transportation and Stewart County transportation officials as needed to develop appropriate mitigation measures to reduce localized temporary transportation effects.
- Potential impacts to Wells Creek and/or Scott Branch from landfill leachate and storm water discharges will be mitigated as required to meet permit requirements.
- Forested land within the proposed landfill project area is of low summer roosting quality for threatened and endangered bats, although it may be used as a foraging area. Section 7

consultation with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has been completed. No tree removal would occur between June 1 and July 31 to avoid any potential direct impact to juvenile bats at a time when they are unable to fly.

• TVA executed a memorandum of agreement with the Tennessee State Historic Preservation Officer to address the adverse effects of National Register of Historic Places listed site 40SW219.

Dated: May 31, 2018.

Robert M. Deacy, Sr.,

Senior Vice President, Generation Construction, Projects & Services, Tennessee Valley Authority.

[FR Doc. 2018–12236 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8120–08–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

Agency Information Collection Activities: Requests for Comments; Clearance of Reinstate Approval of Information Collection: Aviation Insurance

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, FAA invites public comments about our intention to request the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval to reinstate an information collection. The collection involves obtaining basic information from new aviation insurance applicants about eligible aviation insurance applicants needed to establish a legally binding, non-premium insurance policy with the FAA, as requested by another Federal agency, such as the applicants name and address, and the aircraft to be covered by the policy. The information collected will be used to determine whether applicants are eligible for Chapter 443 insurance and the amount of coverage necessary; populate non-premium insurance policies with the legal name and address; and meet conditions of coverage required by each insurance policy.

As a condition of coverage, air carriers will be required to submit any changes to the basic information initially submitted on the application, as necessary. Air carrier's will also be responsible for providing a copy of their current commercial insurance policy on an ongoing basis, and aircraft registration and serial numbers for any new aircraft the air carrier would like to add to the policy. This information will form part of a legally binding agreement (*i.e.* insurance policy) between the FAA and air carrier. Failure to provide this updated information could result in lack or denial of coverage.

DATES: Written comments should be submitted by August 6, 2018.

ADDRESSES: Send comments to the FAA at the following address: Barbara Hall, Federal Aviation Administration, ASP–110, 10101 Hillwood Parkway, Fort Worth, TX 76177

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Barbara Hall by email at: *Barbara.L.Hall@faa.gov;* phone: 940–594–5913.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: *Public Comments Invited:* You are asked to comment on any aspect of this information collection, including (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for FAA's performance; (b) the accuracy of the estimated burden; (c) ways for FAA to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information collection; and (d) ways that the burden could be minimized without reducing the quality of the collected information. The agency will summarize and/or include your comments in the request for OMB's clearance of this information collection.

OMB Control Number: 2120–0514.

Title: Aviation Insurance.

Form Numbers: 2120–0514.

Type of Review: Reinstate an information collection.

Background: Title 49 U.S.C. 44305 authorizes the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, acting pursuant to a delegation of authority from the Secretary of Transportation, to provide aviation insurance at the request of another Federal agency, without premium, provided that the head of the Federal agency agrees to indemnify the FAA from loss.

The FAA Non-Premium Aviation War Risk Insurance Program offers war risk coverage, without premium, to air carriers at the request of DoD and other Federal agencies. DoD and other Federal agencies rely on the FAA to provide aviation war risk insurance to contracted air carriers supporting mission objectives and operations that is not available commercially on reasonable terms and conditions. Air carriers never insured under the FAA Non-Premium War Risk Insurance Program must submit an application before the FAA can provide coverage.

Respondents: The FAA currently insure 31 U.S. air carriers through its Non-Premium Aviation Insurance Program at the request of other Federal agencies. We estimate the addition of one new air carrier to the program each year. In addition, air carriers insured will be required to provide and update information on an ongoing basis as a condition of insurance coverage and to remain eligible for insurance policy renewals.

Frequency: The initial application for insurance is required only from air carriers that have not previously received aviation insurance from the FAA. We estimate one new air carrier will need to submit an application annually; 6 insured air carriers will need to update basic information submitted on their initial application, such as business name and/or address, annually; 31 insured air carriers will be required to provide one commercial insurance policy to the FAA annually by uploading an electronic image into the FAA's Aviation Insurance Data Management System (AIDMS) annually; and 31 insured air carriers will need to update their Schedule of Aircraft with aircraft registration data adding and removing a total of 550 aircraft to or from AIDMS, annually.

Estimated Average Burden per Response: Initial Application—4 hours; Commercial Policy Submission—10 minutes; Business Information Update—5 minutes; and Aircraft Schedule Update—2 minutes per aircraft.

Estimated Total Annual Burden: 28 hours.

Issued in Washington, DC on June 1, 2018.

Barbara L. Hall,

FAA Information Collection Clearance Officer, Performance, Policy, and Records Management Branch, ASP–110.

[FR Doc. 2018–12296 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

Agency Information Collection Activities: Requests for Comments; Clearance of Renewed Approval of Information Collection: Dealer's Aircraft Registration Certificate Application

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, FAA invites public comments about our intention to request the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval to renew an information collection. The collection involves submittal of pertinent information by a

business or an individual to support issuance by the FAA of a Dealer's Aircraft Registration Certificate, which allows operation of an aircraft on a temporary basis under the auspices of a dealer business rather than having to obtain permanent registration.

DATES: Written comments should be submitted by August 6, 2018.

ADDRESSES: Send comments to the FAA at the following address: Barbara Hall, Federal Aviation Administration, ASP–110, 10101 Hillwood Parkway, Fort Worth, TX 76177.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Barbara Hall by email at: *Barbara.L.Hall@faa.gov;* phone: 940–594–5913.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: *Public Comments Invited:* You are asked to comment on any aspect of this information collection, including (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for FAA's performance; (b) the accuracy of the estimated burden; (c) ways for FAA to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information collection; and (d) ways that the burden could be minimized without reducing the quality of the collected information. The agency will summarize and/or include your comments in the request for OMB's clearance of this information collection.

OMB Control Number: 2120–0024.

Title: Dealer's Aircraft Registration Certificate Application.

Form Numbers: AC Form 8050–5.

Type of Review: Renewal of an information collection.

Background: This information collection supports the Department of Transportation's strategic goals on safety and security. Maintaining proper registration of aircraft is fundamental to ensure compliance with operations/airworthiness safety requirements in order to promote the public health and safety by working toward the elimination of transportation-related deaths, injuries, and property damage. Proper registration of aircraft is necessary to advance the nations vital security interest in support of national strategies by ensuring that the national transportation system is secure.

Public Law 103–272 states that all aircraft must be registered before they may be flown. It sets forth registration eligibility requirements and provides for application for registration as well as suspension and/or revocation of registration.

a. Federal Aviation Regulation (FAR) Part 47 prescribes procedures that implement Public Law 103–272 which provides for the issuance of dealer's aircraft registration certificates and for their use in connection with aircraft eligible for registration under this Act by persons engaged in manufacturing, distributing or selling aircraft. Dealer's certificates enable such persons to fly aircraft for sale immediately without having to go through the paperwork and expense of applying for and securing a permanent Certificate of Aircraft Registration. It also provides a system of identification of aircraft dealers.

b. Federal Aviation Regulations (FAR) Part 47 establishes procedures for implementing Section 505 of the Act. Specifically, Subpart C, Parts 47.61 through 47.71, describes procedures for obtaining and using dealer's certificates in FAR Part 47.63, elicit the information needed from the applicant in order to comply with Section 505 of the Act and FAR Part 47, Subpart C.

Respondents: Application for dealer's certificate may be made by any individual or company engaged in manufacturing, distributing, or selling aircraft who wants to be able operate those aircraft with a dealer's certificate instead of registering them permanently in the name of the entity.

Frequency: To maintain the certificate, the holder must renew/re-submit annually as the certificate expires one year after issuance.

Estimated Average Burden per Response: 45 minutes.

Estimated Total Annual Burden: During FY–2017, the FAA received 3,579 applications for dealer certificate.

Issued in Fort Worth, TX on June 1, 2018.

Barbara L. Hall,

FAA Information Collection Clearance Officer, Performance, Policy, and Records Management Branch, ASP–110.

[FR Doc. 2018–12298 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

Agency Information Collection Activities: Requests for Comments Approval of Information Collection: Organization Designation Authorization

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, FAA invites public comments about our intention to request the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval to renew an information collection. This collection involves organizations applying to perform certification functions on behalf of the FAA, including approving data and issuing various aircraft and organization certificates.

DATES: Written comments should be submitted by August 6, 2018.

ADDRESSES: Send comments to the FAA at the following address: Barbara Hall, Federal Aviation Administration, ASP–110, 10101 Hillwood Parkway, Fort Worth, TX 76177

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Barbara Hall by email at: *Barbara.L.Hall@faa.gov;* phone: 940–594–5913.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Public Comments Invited: You are asked to comment on any aspect of this information collection, including (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for FAA's performance; (b) the accuracy of the estimated burden; (c) ways for FAA to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information collection; and (d) ways that the burden could be minimized without reducing the quality of the collected information. The agency will summarize and/or include your comments in the request for OMB's clearance of this information collection.

OMB Control Number: 2120–0704.

Title: Organization Designation Authorization.

Form Numbers: FAA Form 8100–13.

Type of Review: Extension without change of an information collection.

Background: 49 U.S.C. Section 44702(d) empowers the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration to delegate to any properly qualified private person functions related to the examination, inspection, and testing necessary to the issuance of certificates. Subpart D to part 183 allows the FAA to appoint organizations as representatives of the administrator. As authorized, these organizations perform certification functions on behalf of the FAA. Applications are submitted to the appropriate FAA office and are reviewed by the FAA to determine whether the applicant meets the requirements necessary to be authorized as a representative of the Administrator. Procedures manuals are submitted and approved by the FAA as a means to ensure that the correct processes are utilized when performing functions on behalf of the FAA. These requirements are necessary to manage the various approvals issued by the organization and to document approvals issued and must be maintained in order to address potential future safety issues.

Respondents: The application form is submitted to the appropriate Federal

Aviation Administration (FAA) office by an interested organization.

Frequency: Information is collected on occasion.

Estimated Average Burden per Response: 43.5 hours.

Estimated Total Annual Burden: 5,623 hours.

Issued in Washington, DC, on June 1, 2018.

Barbara L. Hall,

FAA Information Collection Clearance Officer Performance, Policy, and Records Management Branch, ASP–110.

[FR Doc. 2018–12299 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Highway Administration

Notice of Public Meeting: National Dialogue on Highway Automation

AGENCY: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: FHWA will conduct a series of public meetings to seek input on the integration of automated vehicles on the Nation's roadways that will be held at different locations across the country. The objectives of the public meetings are to: engage with a diverse group of stakeholders to understand key issues regarding automated vehicles and their implications for the roadway infrastructure; and gather input on highway automation to help inform FHWA research, policy, and programs. The public meetings will have presentations and breakout sessions during which participants can provide written and oral comments. This meeting is the first in a series of related public meetings being conducted during 2018.

DATE AND TIME: FHWA will hold the first public meeting on June 7, 2018, in Detroit, Michigan. The meeting will start at 8 a.m. and continue until 2 p.m. EDT. Check-in will begin at 7:30 a.m. Attendees should arrive early enough to check in by 7:50 a.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Cobo Center located at 1 Washington Blvd., Detroit, Michigan 48226. This facility is accessible to individuals with disabilities.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: If you have questions about the public meeting, please contact John Corbin at *john.corbin@dot.gov*. More information is available at *https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/automationdialogue/index.htm*.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: *Registration is necessary for all attendees.* Attendees should register at: *https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/automationdialogue/index.htm*. Please provide your name, email address, and affiliation. In person attendance will be limited, so advance registration is required. Should it be necessary to cancel the meeting due to inclement weather or other emergency, FHWA will take all available measures to notify registered participants beforehand.

Background

Automated vehicles have the potential to significantly transform the Nation's roadways. They could help save lives, expand access to transportation, and improve the convenience of travel. However, even as these technologies offer new opportunities, they may introduce new challenges for those responsible for the planning, design, construction, operation, and maintenance of the Nation's roadway infrastructure. As a result, FHWA is interested in better understanding the implications of highway automation for its stakeholders and the Agency.

As the effect of automation on the Nation's roadways becomes clearer, FHWA will define its role in further facilitating innovation and enabling the benefits of the capabilities. This National Dialogue on Highway Automation is an opportunity to engage the public and broad stakeholder community to understand their key areas of interest. These stakeholders will include original equipment manufacturers, technology suppliers, transportation network companies, associations, and public-sector partners. The National Dialogue will help inform national research, policy, and implementation assistance activities to support highway automation readiness. This meeting is one in a series of related public meetings being conducted during 2018.

Meeting Agenda

The draft meeting agenda is as follows:

8:00 a.m. Welcome and Overview of Dialogue Objectives
8:15 a.m. Panel Discussion on Preliminary Focus Areas
9:00 a.m. Breakout Session 1: Issues and Challenges for Highway Automation
9:45 a.m. Report Out: Breakout Session 1
10:00 a.m. Break
10:15 a.m. Keynote
10:30 a.m. Breakout Session 2: Developing New Models for Partnering: Bringing Industry, Government, and Associations Together
11:15 a.m. Report Out: Breakout Session 2
11:30 a.m. Next Steps for the National Dialogue
12:00 p.m. Lunch (not included)
1:00 p.m. Open Debrief
2:00 p.m. Adjourn

Issued: June 1, 2018.

Brandye L. Hendrickson,

Acting Administrator, Federal Highway Administration.

[FR Doc. 2018–12292 Filed 6–4–18; 4:15 pm]

BILLING CODE 4910–22–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Highway Administration

Notice of Final Federal Agency Actions on Proposed Highway in California

AGENCY: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of Limitation on Claims for Judicial Review of Actions by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327.

SUMMARY: The FHWA, on behalf of Caltrans, is issuing this notice to announce actions taken by Caltrans, that are final. The actions relate to a proposed highway project, I–110 High-Occupancy Toll Lane Flyover Project 07–LA–110–PM 20.10/20.92 in the City and County of Los Angeles, State of California. Those actions grant licenses, permits, and approvals for the project.

DATES: By this notice, the FHWA, on behalf of Caltrans, is advising the public of final agency actions subject to 23 U.S.C. 139(*l*)(1). A claim seeking judicial review of the Federal agency actions on the highway project will be barred unless the claim is filed on or before 150 days after publication in the **Federal Register** for actions relate to a proposed highway project, I–110 High-Occupancy Toll Lane Flyover Project 07–LA–110–PM 20.10/20.92 in the City and County of Los Angeles, State of California. If the Federal law that authorizes judicial review of a claim provides a time period of less than 150 days for filing such claim, then that shorter time period still applies.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For Caltrans: Jason Roach Senior Environmental Planner Chief, Environmental Branch Caltrans, District 7, 100 South Main Street, MS 16A, Los Angeles, CA 90012, Office Hours: 9 a.m.–4:00 p.m., Office Phone: (213) 897–0357, Email: *jason.roach@dot.ca.gov*.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Effective July 1, 2007, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) assigned, and the California Department of

Transportation (Caltrans) assumed, environmental responsibilities for this project pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327. Notice is hereby given that the Caltrans, have taken final agency actions subject to 23 U.S.C. 139(*l*)(1) by issuing licenses, permits, and approvals for the following highway project in the State of California: Caltrans, in cooperation with Metro, proposes to construct an elevated off-ramp structure on the NB I–110 between 30th St. and Figueroa St. Overcrossing in the City of Los Angeles. The proposed structure would bypass the bottleneck intersections at Flower St. and Adams Blvd. and NB I–110 HOT off-ramp to Adams Blvd., connecting the HOT lane traffic to Figueroa St. The structure would be approximately 1400 feet in length with two standard lanes (twelve feet in width) and a four-foot left shoulder as well as eight-foot right shoulder will be provided. All new structures will be within State right of way; minimal right of way acquisition will be required for maintenance, ingress/egress, access control, and setback purposes as well as emergency services access. The actions by the Federal agencies, and the laws under which such actions were taken, are described in the Final Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the project, approved on April 24, 2018. The Caltrans FONSI can accessed at the following link *http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist07/resources/envdocs/,* or viewed at public libraries in the project area.

This notice applies to all Federal agency decisions as of the issuance date of this notice and all laws under which such actions were taken, including but not limited to:

(1) Council on Environmental Quality regulations;

(2) National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA);

(3) Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP–21);

(4) Department of Transportation Act of 1966;

(5) Federal Aid Highway Act of 1970;

(6) Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990;

(7) Noise Control Act of 1970;

(8) 23 CFR part 772 FHWA Noise Standards, Policies and Procedures;

(9) Department of Transportation Act of 1966, Section 4(f);

(10) Clean Water Act of 1977 and 1987;

(11) Endangered Species Act of 1973;

(12) Migratory Bird Treaty Act;

(13) National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended;

(14) Historic Sites Act of 1935; and,

(15) Executive Order 13112, Invasive Species.

(16) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Number 20.205, Highway Planning and Construction. The regulations implementing Executive Order 12372 regarding intergovernmental consultation on Federal programs and activities apply to this program.

Authority: 23 U.S.C. 139(*l*)(1).

Matt Schmitz,

Director, Project Delivery, FHWA—CA Division.

[FR Doc. 2018–12235 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–RY–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Railroad Administration

[Docket Number FRA–2018–0048]

Petition for Waiver of Compliance

Under part 211 of Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), this document provides the public notice that on May 25, 2018, the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (SCVTA) and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) petitioned the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) for a waiver of compliance from certain provisions of the Federal hours of service laws contained at 49 U.S.C. 21105, which in part prohibit a dispatching service employee from being on duty for more than a total of 9 hours during a 24-hour period. FRA assigned the petition Docket Number FRA–2018–0048.

Specifically, Petitioners seek approval of a pilot project under 49 U.S.C. 21108, which allows railroads and labor organizations to jointly petition for a waiver of compliance from the hours of service laws to enable the establishment of a pilot project. The proposed pilot project would permit a 4-day, 10 hours-per-day work week for the affected employees, ''the controllers'' on the SCVTA system. Petitioners allege the pilot project will enhance safety of operations due to the increased flexibility in terms of staff assignments and covering unanticipated occurrences on the system, be beneficial to morale, and will provide more flexibility in arranging for ongoing training for employees without having to ask them to sacrifice days off from work.

Petitioners explain that SCVTA is a public agency, with light rail transit operations on three lines, including the Vasona Corridor, which shares a corridor and grade crossings, but not tracks, with Union Pacific Railroad Company (UP). AFSCME is the authorized collective bargaining representative for the controllers, the employees on the SCVTA system that dispatch SCVTA light rail trains. UP train crews contact the SCVTA Operating Control Center prior to operating in the shared corridor, but SCVTA controllers do not otherwise communicate directly with UP train crews, nor do they share a radio frequency with UP.

A copy of the petition, as well as any written communications concerning the petition, is available for review online at *www.regulations.gov* and in person at the U.S. Department of Transportation's (DOT) Docket Operations Facility, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, W12–140, Washington, DC 20590. The Docket Operations Facility is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal Holidays.

Interested parties are invited to participate in these proceedings by submitting written views, data, or comments. FRA does not anticipate scheduling a public hearing in connection with these proceedings since the facts do not appear to warrant a hearing. If any interested parties desire an opportunity for oral comment and a public hearing, they should notify FRA, in writing, before the end of the comment period and specify the basis for their request.

All communications concerning these proceedings should identify the appropriate docket number and may be submitted by any of the following methods:

- *Website: http://www.regulations.gov.* Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.
- *Fax:* 202–493–2251.
- *Mail:* Docket Operations Facility, U.S. Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, W12–140, Washington, DC 20590.
- *Hand Delivery:* 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Room W12–140, Washington, DC 20590, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal Holidays.

Communications received by July 23, 2018 will be considered by FRA before final action is taken. Comments received after that date will be considered if practicable.

Anyone can search the electronic form of any written communications and comments received into any of our dockets by the name of the individual submitting the comment (or signing the document, if submitted on behalf of an association, business, labor union, etc.). Under 5 U.S.C. 553(c), DOT solicits comments from the public to better inform its processes. DOT posts these comments, without edit, including any personal information the commenter provides, to *www.regulations.gov,* as described in the system of records

notice (DOT/ALL–14 FDMS), which can be reviewed at *https://www.transportation.gov/privacy.* See also *https://www.regulations.gov/privacyNotice* for the privacy notice of *regulations.gov.*

Issued in Washington, DC.

Robert C. Lauby,

Associate Administrator for Railroad Safety, Chief Safety Officer.

[FR Doc. 2018–12224 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–06–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Transit Administration

Limitation on Claims Against Proposed Public Transportation Projects

AGENCY: Federal Transit Administration (FTA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This notice announces final environmental actions taken by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for a project extending the METRO Green Line from downtown Minneapolis through the communities of St. Louis Park, Hopkins, Minnetonka, and Eden Prairie, passing near Edina, Minnesota. The purpose of this notice is to announce publicly the environmental decisions by FTA on the subject project and to activate the limitation on any claims that may challenge this final environmental action.

DATES: By this notice, FTA is advising the public of final agency actions subject to Section 139(l) of Title 23, United States Code (U.S.C.). A claim seeking judicial review of FTA actions announced herein for the listed public transportation project will be barred unless the claim is filed on or before November 5, 2018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Nancy-Ellen Zusman, Assistant Chief Counsel, Office of Chief Counsel, (312) 353–2577, or Alan Tabachnick, Environmental Protection Specialist, Office of Environmental Programs, (202) 366–8541. FTA is located at 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590. Office hours are from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Notice is hereby given that FTA has taken final agency action by issuing a certain approval for the public transportation project listed below. The actions on the project, as well as the laws under which such actions were taken, are described in the documentation issued in connection with the project to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and in other documents in the FTA administrative record for the project. Interested parties may contact either the project sponsor or the FTA Regional Office for more information. Contact information for FTA's Regional Offices may be found at *https://www.fta.dot.gov.*

This notice applies to all FTA decisions on the listed project as of the issuance date of this notice and all laws under which such actions were taken, including NEPA [42 U.S.C. 4321–4375], Section 4(f) requirements [23 U.S.C. 138, 49 U.S.C. 303], Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act [16 U.S.C. 470f], and the Clean Air Act [42 U.S.C. 7401–7671q]. This notice does not, however, alter or extend the limitation period for challenges of project decisions subject to previous notices published in the **Federal Register**. The project and action that is the subject of this notice follow:

Project name and location: Southwest Light Rail Transit Project (LRT), Minneapolis to Eden Prairie, Minnesota (METRO Green Line Extension). *Project Sponsor:* The Metropolitan Council (Council). *Project description:* The project is approximately 14.5 miles of new double-track light rail transit to extend the METRO Green Line from downtown Minneapolis through the communities of St. Louis Park, Hopkins, Minnetonka, and Eden Prairie, passing close to Edina. The Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Record of Decision (ROD) for the Southwest LRT Project was issued in May and July 2016, respectively. A Supplemental Environmental Assessment (EA) was issued in February 2018 to address and incorporate 10 design modifications that were identified during the final design and permitting processes, leading to the preparation of an Amended ROD.

Final agency actions: Amended Section 4(f) determination dated February 2018; Section 106 finding of adverse effect dated April 18, 2018; Section 106 Memorandum of Agreement dated June 2016; project-level air quality conformity, and an Amended Record of Decision dated May 15, 2018. *Supporting documentation:* Southwest LRT Project Supplemental EA and Amended Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation dated February 2018.

Elizabeth S. Riklin,

Deputy Associate Administrator for Planning and Environment.

[FR Doc. 2018–12238 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration

[Docket No. PHMSA–2018–0021]

Pipeline Safety: Information Collection Activities

AGENCY: Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: On March 26, 2018, in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) published a notice in the **Federal Register** (83 FR 13004) inviting comments on three information collections identified by Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control numbers 2137–0048, 2137–0600, and 2137–0618 that expire this Summer. PHMSA is requesting an extension with no change for these information collections.

During the public comment period, PHMSA received no comments in response to the information collections. PHMSA received 10 comments that did not pertain to the information collection requests. PHMSA is publishing this notice to provide the public with an additional 30 days to comment on the renewal of the information collections referenced above and to announce that the information collection requests will be submitted to OMB for approval.

DATES: Interested persons are invited to submit comments on or before July 9, 2018 to be assured of consideration.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Angela Dow by telephone at 202–366–1246, by email at *angela.dow@dot.gov,* by fax at 202–366–4566, or by mail at U.S. Department of Transportation, PHMSA, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, PHP–30, Washington, DC 20590–0001.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments identified by the docket number PHMSA–2018–0021 by any of the following methods:

- *Fax:* 1–202–395–5806.
- *Mail:* Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Records Management Center, Room 10102 NEOB, 725 17th Street NW, Washington, DC 20503, ATTN: Desk Officer for the U.S. Department of Transportation\PHMSA.
- *Email:* Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, OMB, at the following email address: *OIRA_Submission@omb.eop.gov.*

Requests for a copy of the information collections should be directed to Angela

Dow by telephone at 202–366–1246, by fax at 202–366–4566, by email at *angela.dow@dot.gov,* or by mail at U.S. Department of Transportation, PHMSA, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, PHP–30, Washington, DC 20590–0001.

Summary of Comments Received

During the 60-day comment period, PHMSA received 10 comments from anonymous submitters that emphasized the general importance of environmental safety in the oil and gas industry.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 1320.8(d), Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, requires PHMSA to provide interested members of the public and affected agencies an opportunity to comment on information collection and recordkeeping requests. This notice identifies three information collection requests that PHMSA will submit to OMB for renewal. The following information is provided for each information collection: (1) Title of the information collection; (2) OMB control number; (3) Current expiration date; (4) Type of request; (5) Abstract of the information collection activity; (6) Description of affected public; (7) Estimate of total annual reporting and recordkeeping burden; and (8) Frequency of collection. PHMSA will request a three-year term of approval for each information collection activity. PHMSA requests comments on the following information collections:

1. *Title:* Recordkeeping Requirements for Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) Facilities.

OMB Control Number: 2137–0048.

Current Expiration Date: 06/30/2018.

Type of Request: Renewal with no change of a currently approved information collection.

Abstract: LNG facility owners and operators are required to maintain records, make reports, and provide information to the Secretary of Transportation at the Secretary's request.

Affected Public: Owners and operators of liquefied natural gas facilities.

Annual Reporting and Recordkeeping Burden:

Estimated number of responses: 101.

Estimated annual burden hours: 12,120.

Frequency of Collection: On Occasion.

2. *Title:* Qualification of Pipeline Safety Training.

OMB Control Number: 2137–0600.

Current Expiration Date: 07/31/2018.

Type of Request: Renewal with no change of a currently approved information collection.

Abstract: All individuals responsible for the operation and maintenance of pipeline facilities are required to be properly qualified to safely perform their tasks. Section 192.807 of Title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, requires each operator to maintain records that demonstrate compliance with the mandated qualification criteria. Records must be kept to be provided upon request.

Affected Public: Operators of pipeline facilities.

Annual Reporting and Recordkeeping Burden:

Estimated number of responses: 29,167.

Estimated annual burden hours: 7,292.

Frequency of collection: On occasion.

3. *Title:* Pipeline Safety: Periodic Underwater Inspection and Notification of Abandoned Underwater Pipelines.

OMB Control Number: 2137–0618.

Current Expiration Date: 8/31/2018.

Type of Request: Renewal with no change of a currently approved information collection.

Abstract: The Federal pipeline safety regulations at 49 CFR 192.612 and 195.413 require operators to conduct appropriate periodic underwater inspections in the Gulf of Mexico and its inlets. If an operator discovers that its underwater pipeline is exposed or poses a hazard to navigation, among other remedial actions such as marking and reburial in some cases, the operator must contact the National Response Center by telephone within 24 hours of discovery and report the location of the exposed pipeline. PHMSA's regulations for reporting the abandonment of underwater pipelines can be found at 49 CFR 192.727 and 195.59. These provisions contain certain requirements for disconnecting and purging abandoned pipelines and require operators to notify PHMSA of each abandoned offshore pipeline facility or each abandoned onshore pipeline facility that crosses over, under or through a commercially navigable waterway.

Affected Public: Operators of pipeline facilities (except master meter operators).

Annual Reporting and Recordkeeping Burden:

Estimated number of responses: 92.

Estimated annual burden hours: 1,372.

Frequency of collection: On occasion.

Comments are invited on:

(a) The need for the renewal of these collections of information for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility;

(b) The accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;

(c) Ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected, and

(d) Ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques.

Authority: The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995; 44 U.S.C. Chapter 35, as amended; and 49 CFR 1.48.

Issued in Washington, DC on June 04, 2018, under authority delegated in 49 CFR 1.97.

John A. Gale,

Director, Standards and Rulemaking Division.

[FR Doc. 2018–12239 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–60–P

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Office of Foreign Assets Control

Notice of OFAC Sanctions Actions

AGENCY: Office of Foreign Assets Control, Treasury.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) is publishing the names of one or more persons that have been placed on OFAC's Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List based on OFAC's determination that one or more applicable legal criteria were satisfied. All property and interests in property subject to U.S. jurisdiction of these persons are blocked, and U.S. persons are generally prohibited from engaging in transactions with them.

DATES: See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: OFAC: Associate Director for Global Targeting, tel.: 202–622–2420; Assistant Director for Sanctions Compliance & Evaluation, tel.: 202–622–2490; Assistant Director for Licensing, tel.: 202–622–2480; or the Department of the Treasury's Office of the General Counsel: Office of the Chief Counsel (Foreign Assets Control), tel.: 202–622–2410.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Electronic Availability

The Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List and additional

information concerning OFAC sanctions programs are available on OFAC's website (*www.treas.gov/ofac*).

Notice of OFAC Actions

On May 30, 2018, OFAC determined that the property and interests in property subject to U.S. jurisdiction of the following persons are blocked under the relevant sanctions authorities listed below.

Individuals

1. MOHTASHAM, Abdolhamid

(Arabic: عبدالحميد محتشم)

(a.k.a. MOHTASHAM, Abdol-Hamid; a.k.a. MOHTASHAM, Abdul-Hamid), Iran; DOB 1955 to 1957; Additional Sanctions Information—Subject to Secondary Sanctions; Gender Male (individual) [IRAN–HR] (Linked To: ANSAR–E HEZBOLLAH).

Designated pursuant to section 1(a)(ii)(C) of Executive Order 13553 of September 28, 2010, ''Blocking Property of Certain Persons With Respect to Serious Human Rights Abuses by the Government of Iran and Taking Certain Other Actions'' (E.O. 13553), for having acted or purported to act for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, ANSAR–E HEZBOLLAH, a person determined to be subject to E.O. 13553.

2. OSTAD, Hamid, Iran; DOB 1964 to 1966; Additional Sanctions Information—Subject to Secondary Sanctions; Gender Male (individual) [IRAN–HR] (Linked To: ANSAR–E HEZBOLLAH).

Designated pursuant to section 1(a)(ii)(C) of E.O. 13553 for having acted or purported to act for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, ANSAR–E HEZBOLLAH, a person determined to be subject to E.O. 13553.

3. ALLAHKARAM, Hossein

(Arabic: حسين الله كرم),

Iran; DOB 1944 to 1946; POB Najafabad, Iran; Additional Sanctions Information—Subject to Secondary Sanctions; Gender Male (individual) [IRAN–HR] (Linked To: ANSAR–E HEZBOLLAH).

Designated pursuant to section 1(a)(ii)(C) of E.O. 13553 for having acted or purported to act for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, ANSAR–E HEZBOLLAH, a person determined to be subject to E.O. 13553.

4. ALI–ASGARI, Abdulali, Iran; DOB 1958 to 1959; Additional Sanctions Information—Subject to Secondary Sanctions; Gender Male (individual) [IRAN–TRA] (Linked To: ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING).

Designated pursuant to section 3(a)(iii) of Executive Order 13628 of October 9, 2012, ''Authorizing the Implementation of Certain Sanctions Set Forth in the Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012 and Additional Sanctions With Respect to Iran'' (E.O. 13628), for having acted or purported to act for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING, a person determined to be subject to E.O. 13628.

5. FIROUZABADI, Abdolhassan, Iran; DOB 08 Jan 1962; citizen Iran; Additional Sanctions Information—Subject to Secondary Sanctions; Gender Male (individual) [IRAN–TRA].

Designated pursuant to section 3(a)(i) of E.O. 13628 for having engaged in censorship or other activities with respect to Iran on or after June 12, 2009, that prohibit, limit, or penalize the exercise of freedom of expression or assembly by citizens of Iran, or that limit access to print or broadcast media, including the facilitation or support of intentional frequency manipulation by the Government of Iran or an entity owned or controlled by the Government of Iran that would jam or restrict an international signal.

6. KHORAMABADI, Abdolsamad, Iran; DOB 01 Jul 1960; citizen Iran; Additional Sanctions Information—Subject to Secondary Sanctions; Gender Male (individual) [IRAN–TRA].

Designated pursuant to section 3(a)(i) of E.O. 13628 for having engaged in censorship or other activities with respect to Iran on or after June 12, 2009, that prohibit, limit, or penalize the exercise of freedom of expression or assembly by citizens of Iran, or that limit access to print or broadcast media, including the facilitation or support of intentional frequency manipulation by the Government of Iran or an entity owned or controlled by the Government of Iran that would jam or restrict an international signal.

Entities

1. ANSAR–E HEZBOLLAH

(Arabic: انصار حزب الله)

(a.k.a. ANSAR HEZBOLLAH; a.k.a. ANSAR UL HEZBOLLAH; a.k.a. ANSAR–I HEZBOLLAH; a.k.a. ANSAR–I HIZBULLAH; a.k.a. SUPPORTERS OF THE PARTY OF GOD), Iran; Additional Sanctions Information—Subject to Secondary Sanctions [IRAN–HR].

Designated pursuant to section 1(a)(ii)(A) of E.O. 13553 for being an official of the Government of Iran or a person acting on behalf of the Government of Iran (including members of paramilitary organizations) who is responsible for or complicit in, or responsible for ordering, controlling, or otherwise directing, the commission of serious human rights abuses against persons in Iran or Iranian citizens or residents, or the family members of the foregoing, on or after June 12, 2009, regardless of whether such abuses occurred in Iran.

2. EVIN PRISON, Tehran, Iran; Additional Sanctions Information—Subject to Secondary Sanctions [IRAN–HR].

Designated pursuant to section 1(a)(ii)(A) of E.O. 13553 for being an official of the Government of Iran or a person acting on behalf of the Government of Iran (including members of paramilitary organizations) who is responsible for or complicit in, or responsible for ordering, controlling, or otherwise directing, the commission of serious human rights abuses against persons in Iran or Iranian citizens or residents, or the family members of the foregoing, on or after June 12, 2009, regardless of whether such abuses occurred in Iran.

3. HANISTA PROGRAMING GROUP

(Arabic: گروه برنامه نوسيس هانيستا)

(a.k.a. HANISTA DEVELOPER GROUP), Iran; Additional Sanctions Information—Subject to Secondary Sanctions [HRIT–IR].

Designated pursuant to section 1(a)(ii)(A) of Executive Order 13606 of April 22, 2012, ''Blocking the Property and Suspending Entry Into the United States of Certain Persons With Respect to Grave Human Rights Abuses by the Governments of Iran and Syria via Information Technology,'' for having operated, or having directed the operation of, information and communications technology that facilitates computer or network disruption, monitoring, or tracking that could assist in or enable serious human rights abuses by or on behalf of the Government of Iran or the Government of Syria.

Additionally, on May 30, 2018, OFAC updated the entries on the Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List for the following entities, whose property and interests in property subject to U.S. jurisdiction continue to be blocked under the relevant sanctions authorities listed below.

Entities

1. AL–BILAD ISLAMIC BANK FOR INVESTMENT AND FINANCE P.S.C. (a.k.a. AL BILAD ISLAMIC BANK), 37 Building El-Karadeh 909 Street 1 Near

Al Hurea Square, Baghdad, Iraq; Al Masbah Branch, Baghdad Al Masbah Intersection, 929 Street 17 Bldg. 40, Previously the German Embassy, Baghdad, Iraq; Erbil Branch, Erbil Province, 60 Bldg 354/132, 45 Street, Erbil, Iraq; Al Mawarid Branch, Baghdad—Street 62 Neighboring the Department of Electricity, Baghdad, Iraq; Al Nasiryah Branch, Zi Kar Province El Saray, Bldg. 2/239 Janat Al Janoub Hotel Building, Nasiryah, Iraq; Al Basra Branch Al Basra, Manawy Pasha Corniche Street, Basra, Iraq; Al Sadr Branch, Jameela District—8–22–512, Sadr City, Iraq; Al Jaderya Branch Baghdad, Al Jaderya—Versus Baghdad University, 906 Street 28—Dar 3, Baghdad, Iraq; Karbala Branch Karbala, Al Dareeba Intersection, Karbala, Iraq; Al Najaf Branch, Al Najaf Al Ashraf, Al Amir District—Al Koufa Street, Najaf, Iraq; Zakho Branch Dahook, Zakho—Ibrahim Al Khaleel Street, Baydar Boulevard, Zakho, Iraq; Al Mansour Branch Baghdad, Al Mansour-12–G 605–M-Bldg, Baghdad, Iraq; Babel Branch Babel, Kalaj—Al Honood Branch, Babel, Iraq; Beirut Branch Lebanon, Beirut—Hamra Street, Broadway Center—Versus Costa Caf, Lebanon, Beirut, Lebanon; SWIFT/BIC AIIFIQBA; website *www.Bilad-Bank.com;* Additional Sanctions Information—Subject to Secondary Sanctions; All Branches Worldwide [SDGT] [IRGC] [IFSR] (Linked To: KAREEM, Aras Habib).

Designated on May 15, 2018 pursuant to section 1(c) of Executive Order 13224 of September 23, 2001, ''Blocking Property and Prohibiting Transactions With Persons Who Commit, Threaten to Commit, or Support Terrorism,'' (E.O. 13224) for being owned or controlled by ARAS HABIB KAREEM, a person determined to be subject to E.O. 13224.

2. AL–NASER AIRLINES (a.k.a. AL NASER WINGS; a.k.a. AL NASER WINGS AIRLINES; a.k.a. ALNASER AIRLINES), Al-Karrada, Babil Region—District 929, St. 21, Home 46, Baghdad, Iraq; P.O. Box 28360, Dubai, United Arab Emirates; P.O. Box 911399, Amman 11191, Jordan; Additional Sanctions Information—Subject to Secondary Sanctions [SDGT] [IFSR] (Linked To: MAHAN AIR).

Designated on May 21, 2015 pursuant to section 1(d)(i) of E.O. 13224 for assisting in, sponsoring, or providing financial, material, technological support for, or financial or other services to or in support of, Iran's MAHAN AIR, a person determined to be subject to E.O. 13224.

3. DART AIRLINES (a.k.a. AIR ALANNA; a.k.a. DART AIRCOMPANY; a.k.a. DART UKRAINIAN AIRLINES; a.k.a. TOVARYSTVO Z OBMEZHENOYU VIDPOVIDALNISTYU 'DART'; a.k.a. ''ALANNA''; a.k.a. ''ALANNA LLC''; a.k.a. ''DART, LLC''; a.k.a. ''DART, TOV''), 26a, Narodnogo Opolchenyia Street, Kiev 03151, Ukraine; Kv. 107, Bud. 15/2 Vul.Shuliavska, Kyiv 01054, Ukraine; Ave. Vozdukhoflostsky 90, Kiev 03036, Ukraine; Additional Sanctions Information—Subject to Secondary Sanctions; Tax ID No. 252030326052 (Ukraine); Government Gazette Number 25203037 (Ukraine) [SDGT] [IFSR] (Linked To: CASPIAN AIRLINES).

Designated on September 14, 2017 pursuant to section 1(d)(i) of E.O. 13224 for assisting in, sponsoring, or providing financial, material, technological support for, or financial or other services to or in support of, Iran's CASPIAN AIR, a person determined to be subject to E.O. 13224.

Dated: May 30, 2018.

Andrea M. Gacki,

Acting Director, Office of Foreign Assets Control.

[FR Doc. 2018–12189 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4810–AL–P

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Internal Revenue Service

Electronic Tax Administration Advisory Committee (ETAAC); Notice of Meeting

AGENCY: Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Treasury.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The Electronic Tax Administration Advisory Committee (ETAAC) will hold a public meeting on Wednesday, June 27, 2018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Michael Deneroff, National Public Liaison, CL:NPL:SRM, Rm. 7559, 1111 Constitution Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20224. Phone: 202–317–6851 (not a toll-free number). Email address: *PublicLiaison@irs.gov.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Notice is hereby given pursuant to section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. App. (1988), that a public meeting of the ETAAC will be held on Wednesday, June 27, 2018 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at 1111 Constitution Avenue NW, Washington, DC, 20224. The purpose of the ETAAC is to provide continuing advice with regard to the development and implementation of the IRS organizational strategy for electronic tax administration. ETAAC is an organized public forum for discussion of electronic tax administration issues such as prevention of identity theft and refund fraud. It supports the overriding goal that paperless filing should be the preferred and most convenient method of filing tax and information returns. ETAAC members convey the public's perceptions of IRS electronic tax administration activities, offer constructive observations about current or proposed policies, programs and procedures, and suggest improvements. Due to limited seating and security requirements, call or email Michael Deneroff to confirm your attendance. Mr. Deneroff can be reached at 202–317–6851 or *PublicLiaison@irs.gov* . Should you wish the ETAAC to consider a written statement, please call 202–317–6851, or write to: Internal Revenue Service, Office of National Public Liaison, CL:NPL:SRM, Room 7559, 1111 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20224 or email: *PublicLiaison@irs.gov.*

Dated: June 1, 2018.

John Lipold,

Designated Federal Official, Branch Chief, National Public Liaison.

[FR Doc. 2018–12207 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4830–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Internal Revenue Service

Open Meeting of the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel Special Projects Committee

AGENCY: Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Treasury.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: An open meeting of the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel Special Projects Committee will be conducted. The Taxpayer Advocacy Panel is soliciting public comments, ideas, and suggestions on improving customer service at the Internal Revenue Service.

DATES: The meeting will be held Wednesday, July 18, 2018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Matthew O'Sullivan at 1–888–912–1227 or (510) 907–5274.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Notice is hereby given pursuant to Section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. App. (1988) that a meeting of the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel Special Projects Committee will be held Wednesday, July 18, 2018, at 2:00 p.m. Eastern Time via teleconference. The public is invited to make oral comments or submit written statements for consideration. Due to limited conference lines,

notification of intent to participate must be made with Matthew O'Sullivan. For more information please contact Matthew O'Sullivan at 1–888–912–1227 or (510) 907–5274, or write TAP Office, 1301 Clay Street, Oakland, CA 94612–5217 or contact us at the website: *http://www.improveirs.org.* The agenda will include various IRS issues.

The agenda will include a discussion on various special topics with IRS processes.

Dated: June 1, 2018.

Antoinette Ross,

Acting Director, Taxpayer Advocacy Panel.

[FR Doc. 2018–12211 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4830–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Internal Revenue Service

Open Meeting of the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel Notices and Correspondence Project Committee

AGENCY: Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Treasury.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: An open meeting of the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel Notices and Correspondence Project Committee will be conducted. The Taxpayer Advocacy Panel is soliciting public comments, ideas, and suggestions on improving customer service at the Internal Revenue Service.

DATES: The meeting will be held Thursday, July 12, 2018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Otis Simpson at 1–888–912–1227 or 202–317–3332.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Notice is hereby given pursuant to Section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. App. (1988) that a meeting of the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel Notices and Correspondence Project Committee will be held Thursday, July 12, 2018, at 1:00 p.m. Eastern Time via teleconference. The public is invited to make oral comments or submit written statements for consideration. Due to limited conference lines, notification of intent to participate must be made with Otis Simpson. For more information please contact Otis Simpson at 1–888–912–1227 or 202–317–3332, or write TAP Office, 1111 Constitution Ave. NW, Room 1509, Washington, DC 20224 or contact us at the website: *http://www.improveirs.org.* The agenda will include various IRS issues. Otis Simpson. For more information please contact Otis Simpson at 1–888–912–1227 or 202–317–3332, or write TAP Office, 1111 Constitution Ave. NW, Room 1509, Washington, DC 20224 or contact us at the website: *http://www.improveirs.org.* The agenda will include various IRS issues.

The agenda will include a discussion on various letters, and other issues related to written communications from the IRS.

Dated: June 1, 2018.

Antoinette Ross,

Acting Director, Taxpayer Advocacy Panel.

[FR Doc. 2018–12204 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4830–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Internal Revenue Service

Open Meeting of the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel Toll-Free Phone Line Project Committee

AGENCY: Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Treasury.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: An open meeting of the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel Toll-Free Phone Line Project Committee will be conducted. The Taxpayer Advocacy Panel is soliciting public comments, ideas, and suggestions on improving customer service at the Internal Revenue Service.

DATES: The meeting will be held Tuesday, July 10, 2018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Rosalind Matherne at 1–888–912–1227 or 202–317–4115.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Notice is hereby given pursuant to Section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. App. (1988) that an open meeting of the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel Toll-Free Phone Line Project Committee will be held Tuesday, July 10, 2018, at 3:00 p.m. Eastern Time via teleconference. The public is invited to make oral comments or submit written statements for consideration. Due to limited conference lines, notification of intent to participate must be made with Rosalind Matherne. For more information please contact Rosalind Matherne at 1–888–912–1227 or 202–317–4115, or write TAP Office, 1111 Constitution Ave. NW, Room 1509, Washington, DC 20224 or contact us at the website: *http://www.improveirs.org.* The agenda will include various IRS issues.

The committee will be discussing Toll-free issues and public input is welcomed.

Dated: June 1, 2018.

Antoinette Ross,

Acting Director, Taxpayer Advocacy Panel.

[FR Doc. 2018–12203 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4830–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Internal Revenue Service

Open Meeting of the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel Tax Forms and Publications Project Committee

AGENCY: Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Treasury.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: An open meeting of the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel Tax Forms and Publications Project Committee will be conducted. The Taxpayer Advocacy Panel is soliciting public comments, ideas and suggestions on improving customer service at the Internal Revenue Service.

DATES: The meeting will be held Wednesday, July 11, 2018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Robert Rosalia at 1–888–912–1227 or (718) 834–2203.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Notice is hereby given pursuant to section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. App. (1988) that an open meeting of the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel Tax Forms and Publications Project Committee will be held Wednesday, July 11, 2018, at 2:00 p.m., Eastern Time via teleconference. The public is invited to make oral comments or submit written statements for consideration. Due to limited conference lines, notification of intent to participate must be made with Robert Rosalia. For more information please contact Robert Rosalia at 1–888–912–1227 or (718) 834–2203, or write TAP Office, 2 Metrotech Center, 100 Myrtle Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11201 or contact us at the website: *http://www.improveirs.org.* The agenda will include various IRS issues.

Dated: June 1, 2018.

Antoinette Ross,

Acting Director, Taxpayer Advocacy Panel.

[FR Doc. 2018–12205 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4830–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Internal Revenue Service

Open Meeting of the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel Taxpayer Communications Project Committee

AGENCY: Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Treasury.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: An open meeting of the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel Taxpayer Communications Project Committee will be conducted. The Taxpayer Advocacy Panel is soliciting public comments, ideas, and suggestions on improving customer service at the Internal Revenue Service.

DATES: The meeting will be held Tuesday, July 17, 2018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Antoinette Ross at 1–888–912–1227 or (202) 317–4110.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Notice is hereby given pursuant to Section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. App. (1988) that an open meeting of the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel Taxpayer Communications Project Committee will be held Tuesday, July 17, 2018, at 2:00 p.m. Eastern Time via teleconference. The public is invited to make oral comments or submit written statements for consideration. Due to limited conference lines, notification of intent to participate must be made with Antoinette Ross. For more information please contact: Antoinette Ross at 1–888–912–1227 or (202) 317–4110, or write TAP Office, 1111 Constitution Avenue NW, Room 1509, National Office, Washington, DC 20224, or contact us at the website: *http://www.improveirs.org.*

The committee will be discussing various issues related to Taxpayer Communications and public input is welcome.

Dated: June 1, 2018.

Antoinette Ross,

Acting Director, Taxpayer Advocacy Panel.

[FR Doc. 2018–12212 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4830–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Internal Revenue Service

Open Meeting of the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel Joint Committee

AGENCY: Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Treasury.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: An open meeting of the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel Joint Committee will be conducted. The Taxpayer Advocacy Panel is soliciting public comments, ideas, and suggestions on improving customer service at the Internal Revenue Service.

DATES: The meeting will be held Thursday, July 26, 2018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Lisa Billups at 1–888–912–1227 or (214) 413–6523.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Notice is hereby given pursuant to Section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. App. (1988) that an open meeting of the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel Joint Committee will be held Thursday, July 26, 2018, at 1:00 p.m. Eastern Time via teleconference. The public is invited to make oral comments or submit written statements for consideration. For more information please contact Lisa Billups at 1–888–912–1227 or (214) 413–6523, or write TAP Office, 1114 Commerce Street, Dallas, TX 75242–1021, or post comments to the website: *http://www.improveirs.org.*

The agenda will include various committee issues for submission to the IRS and other TAP related topics. Public input is welcomed.

Dated: June 1, 2018.

Antoinette Ross,

Acting Director, Taxpayer Advocacy Panel.

[FR Doc. 2018–12210 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4830–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Internal Revenue Service

Open Meeting of the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel Taxpayer Assistance Center Improvements Project Committee

AGENCY: Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Treasury.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The Taxpayer Advocacy Panel Taxpayer Assistance Center Improvements Project Committee will conduct an open meeting and will solicit public comments, ideas, and suggestions on improving customer service at the Internal Revenue Service.

DATES: The meeting will be held Tuesday, July 17, 2018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Gilbert Martinez at 1–888–912–1227 or (737) 800–4060.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Notice is hereby given pursuant to Section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. App. (1988) that a meeting of the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel Taxpayer Assistance Center Improvements Project Committee will be held Tuesday, July 17, 2018, at 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time. The public is invited to make oral comments or submit written statements for consideration. Due to limited conference lines, notification of intent to participate must be made with Gilbert Martinez. For more information please contact Gilbert Martinez at 1–888–912–1227 or 214–413–6523, or write TAP Office, 3651 S IH–35, STOP 1005 AUSC, Austin, TX 78741, or post comments to the website: *http://www.improveirs.org.*

The committee will be discussing various issues related to the Taxpayer Assistance Centers and public input is welcomed.

Dated: June 1, 2018.

Antoinette Ross,

Acting Director, Taxpayer Advocacy Panel.

[FR Doc. 2018–12208 Filed 6–6–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4830–01–P

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