

Savings Banks .....	2
Federal Reserve Banks .....	2
Clearing Houses .....	1
Trade Associations .....	1
Other <sup>2</sup> .....	3

Total Commenters ..... 45

<sup>1</sup> Banks, bank holding companies, and operating subsidiaries of banks or bank holding companies.

<sup>2</sup> Law firms and consumer research groups.

Thirty-three commenters supported the Board's conducting the check-fraud survey. Seven of those commenters also indicated that the EFAA availability schedules should be lengthened. Eight commenters did not address whether the Board should conduct the check fraud survey. Five of those commenters, however, supported an extension of the EFAA schedules, while three commenters indicated that no changes should be made to the EFAA. Two commenters questioned the methodology of the survey and indicated that they do not support any changes to the EFAA. Two commenters stated that the survey should not be conducted because they experienced no losses related to check fraud or the EFAA schedules.

Five commenters addressed the issue of the estimated burden to depository institutions of completing the survey document. Three commenters indicated that the estimated burden was reasonable. Two of the commenters, however, stated that the actual burden to DIs would be greater than estimated because obtaining the requested information would require a manual review of records. The Board recognizes that the burden for each survey respondent will vary based on an institution's recordkeeping practices and experience with check fraud, but continues to believe that its estimate of an average of nine hours per respondent is reasonable.

Two commenters suggested that the survey should be conducted prospectively. A prospective approach would allow depository institutions to collect actual data in the format the Board requires, thus improving the accuracy and the response rate. The Board considered this option but rejected it because a prospective survey would significantly increase the recordkeeping burden for depository institutions and would not likely improve the response rate. In addition, because the Board must report to the Congress in September 1996, there is not sufficient time to permit DIs to make the necessary programming changes to their data reporting systems, collect the data, and provide it to the Board in time

to meet the Congressionally mandated schedule.

Six commenters suggested that additional definitions be added to the survey and that certain language be clarified. Several of the suggested clarifications and definitions were made to the survey document. For example, definitions were added for the number of cases of check fraud and the dollar amount of losses. Several commenters also asked that the definition of "organized and professional efforts" in check fraud be clarified. Because of ambiguity of this question and the difficulty in determining a clear definition, the question has been deleted from the survey.

Six commenters suggested that additional detail be added to some questions or that some categories of checks be expanded. In response to these comments, the Board expanded the scope of six questions. Questions were expanded to address large-dollar return notifications and their effectiveness in preventing losses; to obtain information on the number of checks returned from the paying bank; to address DIs' interest in modifying Regulation CC for new accounts; and to expand the categories of fraudulent checks.

Two commenters raised questions about the survey methodology. These commenters postulated that the survey, as proposed, would produce biased results because participation is voluntary; depository institutions have the option of providing estimates; and depository institutions with less than \$1 million in transaction accounts are excluded.

The Board believes that the survey methodology is sound. The survey sample is based on a stratified random sample of 5,200 commercial banks, savings institutions, and credit unions, drawn to achieve a 95 percent confidence interval for the results, based on an expected overall response rate of 32 percent. A minimum of \$1 million in transaction accounts was established to reduce the burden on smaller institutions. In addition, while the Board would prefer that respondents to the survey provide data on actual losses, the Board understands that it is unrealistic to expect all institutions to collect the required data in the format requested because of the differences in how DIs collect data concerning check-fraud losses. Therefore, to ensure that a significant number of DIs will be able to respond to the survey, the survey allows for estimates. Statistical analyses and follow-up with non-respondents will be used to test for potential bias in the responses. For example, an institution

may not respond to the survey because it does not experience check-fraud losses or because the data are unavailable in the requested format. Follow-up with the non-respondents will provide further information about the reasons, and where appropriate, such information will be integrated into the analyses.

One commenter also questioned the content of the questionnaire. The commenter indicated that the survey questions appeared to be biased "toward obtaining the results that check fraud volume, losses and costs (1) are enormous, (2) are due to the check hold law, and (3) can be reduced by lengthening the check-hold period." The Board believes that the questions in the survey will provide the information needed to determine the magnitude of check-fraud losses and whether lengthening the check hold period would reduce these losses. At this time, the Board has no preconceived notions about the outcome of the survey results. The costs and benefits of any recommended changes to regulations will be carefully reviewed.

Several commenters addressed issues other than the survey. These issues included arguments both for and against extending the EFAA availability schedules; discussion of an institution's experiences with check fraud; discussion of check-fraud prevention methods other than modifying the EFAA; and suggestions on how the Board should evaluate the results. The Board will take these additional comments into consideration when developing legislative recommendations.

In addition to the above comments, the Board received seven completed draft survey forms, indicating a good interest in the survey.

The survey questionnaire was distributed following Board approval.

Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, March 11, 1996.

Jennifer J. Johnson,

*Deputy Secretary of the Board.*

[FR Doc. 96-6188 Filed 3-14-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6210-01-P

## Sunshine Act Meeting

**AGENCY HOLDING THE MEETING:** Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.

**TIME AND DATE:** Approximately 10:45 a.m., Wednesday, March 20, 1996, following a recess at the conclusion of the open meeting.

**PLACE:** Marriner S. Eccles Federal Reserve Board Building, C Street

entrance between 20th and 21st Streets, NW., Washington, DC 20551.

**STATUS:** Closed.

**MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED:**

1. Personnel actions (appointments, promotions, assignments, reassignments, and salary actions) involving individual Federal Reserve System employees.

2. Any items carried forward from a previously announced meeting.

**CONTACT PERSON FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

Mr. Joseph R. Coyne, Assistant to the Board; (202) 452-3204. You may call (202) 452-3207, beginning at approximately 5 p.m. two business days before this meeting, for a recorded announcement of bank and bank holding company applications scheduled for the meeting.

Dated: March 13, 1996.

Jennifer J. Johnson,

*Deputy Secretary of the Board.*

[FR Doc. 96-6384 Filed 3-13-96; 11:02 am]

**BILLING CODE 6210-1-P**

**Sunshine Act Meeting**

**AGENCY HOLDING THE MEETING:** Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.

**TIME AND DATE:** 10:00 a.m., Wednesday, March 20, 1996.

**PLACE:** Marriner S. Eccles Federal Reserve Board Building, C Street entrance between 20th and 21st Streets, NW., Washington, DC 20551.

**STATUS:** Open.

**MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED:**

1. Proposed amendments to simplify, clarify, and update Regulation E (Electronic Fund Transfers) (proposed earlier for public comment; Docket No. R-0830).

2. Publication for comment of proposed amendments to Regulation E (Electronic Fund Transfers) concerning stored-value cards, electronic communications, and error resolution.

3. Any items carried forward from a previously announced meeting.

Note: This meeting will be recorded for the benefit of those unable to attend. Cassettes will be available for listening in the Board's Freedom of Information Office, and copies may be ordered for \$5 per cassette by calling (202) 452-3684 or by writing to:

Freedom of Information Office, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, Washington, DC 20551.

**CONTACT PERSON FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

Mr. Joseph R. Coyne, Assistant to the Board; (202) 452-3204.

Dated: March 13, 1996.

Jennifer J. Johnson,

*Deputy Secretary of the Board.*

[FR Doc. 96-6385 Filed 3-13-96; 11:02 am]

**BILLING CODE 6210-01-P**

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

**Office of the Secretary**

**Agency Information Collection Activities: Proposed Collections; Comment Request**

The Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Secretary will periodically publish summaries of proposed information collections projects and solicit public comments in compliance with the requirements of Section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. To request more information on the project or to obtain a copy of the information collection plans and instruments, call the OS Reports Clearance Officer on (202) 619-1053.

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information; (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 respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

1. JOBS Evaluation: Five Year Follow-up—New—As a part of the on-going JOBS program evaluation, the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation is planning a Five-year Recipient Survey and a Child School Progress Survey. This information will be combined with other data sources in the process of evaluating the JOBS program.—Respondents: individuals or households—Burden Information for Recipient Survey—Respondents: 4,500; Average Burden per Response: 1 hour; Total Burden for Recipient Survey: 4,500 hours—Burden Information for Child School Progress Survey—Respondents: 2,225; Average Burden per Response: 15 minutes; Total Burden for Child School Progress Survey: 563 hours—Total Burden: 5,063 hours.

Send comments to Cynthia Agens Bauer, OS Reports Clearance Officer, Room 530H, Humphrey Building, 200 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC, 20201. Written comments should be received within 60 days of this notice.

Dated: March 7, 1996.

Dennis P. Williams,

*Deputy Assistant Secretary, Budget.*

[FR Doc. 96-6168 Filed 3-14-96; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4150-04-M**

**Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry**

**Board of Scientific Counselors, Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry; Meeting**

In accordance with section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463), the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) announces the following committee meeting.

*Name:* Board of Scientific Counselors, Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (BSC, ATSDR).

*Times and Dates:*

1 p.m.-5 p.m., April 16, 1996.

8 a.m.-3:15 p.m., April 17, 1996.

*Place:* The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, Training Room, Building 35, 35 Executive Park Drive, NE, Atlanta, Georgia 30329.

*Status:* Open to the public, limited only by the space available.

*Purpose:* The Board of Scientific Counselors, ATSDR, advises the Administrator, ATSDR, on ATSDR programs to ensure scientific quality, timeliness, utility, and dissemination of results. Specifically, the Board advises on the adequacy of the science in ATSDR-supported research, emerging problems that require scientific investigation, accuracy and currency of the science in ATSDR reports, and program areas to emphasize and/or to de-emphasize.

*Matters To Be Discussed:* Agenda items will include an update on Superfund reauthorization and will also focus on other issues of concern to ATSDR, including the ATSDR Minority Health and Environmental Justice Program, Mississippi Delta Project (Health and Environment), Assessing Demographic Parameters at National Priorities List (NPL) Sites, Howard Emergency Medicine Rotation Program, Hispanic Internship Program, Tribal Cooperative Agreement Program, Head Start Environmental Health Program, Risk Communication Project (Sheboygan Harbor and River), Enhancing Community Involvement (ATSDR Cooperative Agreements), Work Group on Health Studies Update, ATSDR's Children's Health Initiative, Laboratory Methods to Measure Contaminants in Biological Media, and Significant Human Exposure Levels Update.

Written comments are welcome and should be received by the contact person listed below prior to the opening of the meeting.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Charles Xintaras, Sc.D., Executive Secretary, BSC, ATSDR, M/S E-28, 1600