

Issued in Washington, DC, on March 11, 1998.

Phillip A. Leach,

Clearance Officer, U.S. Department of Transportation.

[FR Doc. 98-6887 Filed 3-16-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Office of the Secretary

Reports, Forms and Recordkeeping Requirements Agency Information Collection Activity Under OMB Review

AGENCY: Office of the Secretary, DOT.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*), this notice announces that the Information Collection Request (ICR) abstracted below has been forwarded to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and comment. The ICR describes the nature of the information collection and its expected burden. The **Federal Register** Notice with a 60-day comment period soliciting comments on the following collection of information was published on January 2, 1998 [6 FR 123].

DATES: Comments must be submitted on or before April 16, 1998.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Thomas Vining, Office of Motor Carrier Information Analysis, (202) 358-7028, Federal Highway Administration, Department of Transportation, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590. Office hours are from 7:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m., E.T., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

Electronic Availability: An electronic copy of this document may be downloaded using a modem and suitable communications software from the **Federal Register** electronic bulletin board service (telephone number: 202-512-1661). Internet users may reach the **Federal Register's** WWW site at: <http://www.access.gpo.gov/su<INF>--</INF>docs>

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

Title: Revision of Licensing Application Forms, Application Procedures, and Corresponding Regulations.

OMB Number: 2125-0568.

Type Request: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Form(s): OP-1, OP-1(P), OP-1(FF).

Affected Public: Motor carriers, freight forwarders, and brokers.

Abstract: The Secretary of Transportation is authorized to register for-hire motor carriers of regulated commodities under the provisions of 49 U.S.C. 13902, surface freight forwarders under the provisions of 49 U.S.C. 13903, and property brokers under the provisions of 49 U.S.C. 13904. These persons may conduct transportation services only if they are registered. 49 U.S.C. 13901. Authority pertaining to these registrations has been delegated to the FHWA, and related regulations are found at 49 CFR part 365. Forms OP-1 (for motor property carriers and brokers), OP-1(P) (for motor passenger carriers), and OP-1(FF) (for freight forwarders) are used to apply for registration with the FHWA. The forms all ask for limited information on the applicant's identity, location, familiarity with safety requirements, and type of proposed operations. Minor differences in each form reflect specific statutory standards for registration of the different types of transportation entities.

Estimated Total Annual Burden: The estimated total annual burden is 36,000 hours.

ADDRESSES: Send comments to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, 725-17th Street, NW., Washington, DC 20503, Attention FHWA Desk Officer.

Comments are invited on: Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Department, including whether the information will have practical utility; the accuracy of the Department's estimate of the burden of the proposed information collection; ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; and ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

A comment to OMB is best assured of having its full effect if OMB receives it within 30 days of publishing in the **Federal Register**.

Issued in Washington, DC, on March 9, 1998.

Phillip A. Leach,

Clearance Officer, United States Department of Transportation.

[FR Doc. 98-6888 Filed 3-16-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Office of the Secretary

Reports, Forms and Recordkeeping Requirements Agency Information Collection Activity Under OMB Review

AGENCY: Office of the Secretary, DOT.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*), this notice announces that the Information Collection (ICR) abstracted below has been forwarded to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and comment. The ICR describes the nature of the information collection and its expected burden. The Federal Register Notice with a 60-day comment period soliciting comments on the following collection of information was published on December 10, 1997, [62 FR 65123].

DATES: Comments must be submitted on or before April 16, 1998.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Judith Street, ABC-100; Federal Aviation Administration; 800 Independence Avenue, SW.; Washington, DC 20591; Telephone number (202) 267-9895.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)

Title: Office of Rulemaking Request for Evaluation of Customer Standards Survey.

OMB Control Number: 2120-0623.

Type of Request: Extension of currently approved collection.

Affected Public: 325 individuals/businesses who have applied for exemptions.

Abstract: This information is being conducted to comply with the Executive Order 12862, Setting Customer Service Standards. The information will be used to evaluate agency performance in the area of response to exemptions. The completion of this form is voluntary and the information will be conducted anonymously.

Annual Estimated Burden Hours: 81 hours.

ADDRESSES: Send comments to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, 725-17th Street, NW., Washington, DC 20503, Attention FAA Desk Officer.

Comments are invited on: Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Department, including whether the information will

have practical utility; the accuracy of the Department's estimate of the burden of the proposed information collection; ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; and ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Issued in Washington, D.C. on March 11, 1998.

Vanester M. Williams,

Clearance Officer, United States Department of Transportation.

[FR Doc. 98-6890 Filed 3-16-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Coast Guard

[USCG-1998-3584]

Proposed Modernization of the Coast Guard National Distress System

AGENCY: Coast Guard, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an environmental assessment; and request for public comment.

SUMMARY: The United States Coast Guard (USCG) is seeking early public input on their proposed action to modernize the National Distress System (NDS), a major portion of their Short Range Communications System (SRCS). To more effectively accomplish maritime safety, maritime law enforcement, national security, and marine environmental protection, the USCG needs a more efficient, modern, and technologically advanced system than the current NDS.

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act, the Coast Guard intends to prepare a programmatic environmental assessment (EA) on the viable alternatives for achieving a more modern and effective system. The environmental assessment will examine the reasonable alternatives available to the USCG to fulfill their need for an efficient, modern, and technologically improved National Distress System and whether any alternatives have the potential for significant environmental impacts. At this time, the USCG does not have a preferred alternative.

Specifically, we are requesting input on any environmental concerns you may have related to the existing NDS or to alternatives for achieving a modernized system, suggested analyses or methodologies for inclusion in the EA, possible sources of relevant data or

information, or other alternatives not included in this notice.

DATES: Comments must be received by 13 April 1998.

ADDRESSES: You may mail comments to the Docket Management Facility, [USCG-1998-3584], U.S. Department of Transportation, Room PL-401, 400 Seventh Street SW., Washington, DC 20590-0001, or deliver them to room PL-401, located on the Plaza Level of the Nassif Building at the same address between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The telephone number to the Docket Management Facility is (202) 366-9329.

The Docket Management Facility maintains the public docket for this notice. Comments, and documents as indicated in this preamble, will become part of this docket and will be available for inspection or copying at room PL-401, located on the Plaza Level of the Nassif Building at the above address between 9:30 a.m. and 2 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Dan Muslin, telephone: (619) 532-3403, for questions concerning this notice, the proposed modernization project, or the associated EA. For questions concerning the Docket Management Facility contact Paulette Twine, Chief, Documentary Services Division, U.S. Department of Transportation, telephone (202) 366-9329.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Request for Comments

The Coast Guard encourages your participation in the environmental analysis of the proposed NDS modernization by the submission of written data, views, or arguments. Your comments should include your name and address, and identify this notice [USCG-1998-3584] and the specific section of the notice to which each comment applies, along with the reason for each comment. Please submit all comments and attachments in an unbound format, no larger than 8½ by 11 inches, suitable for copying and electronic filing to the DOT Docket Management Facility at the address under **ADDRESSES**. If you want acknowledgment of receipt of your comment, enclose a stamped, self-addressed postcard or envelope.

The Coast Guard will consider all comments received during the comment period.

The Coast Guard plans no public hearing. You may request a public hearing by submitting a request to the address under **ADDRESSES**. The request should include the reasons a hearing

would be beneficial. If the Coast Guard determines that oral presentations are crucial to the preparation of the EA, and will significantly aid in environmental planning for the proposal, it will hold a public hearing at a time and place announced by a later notice in the **Federal Register**.

Background

The NDS forms the backbone of the Coast Guard's Short Range Communication System (SRCS) which supports Coast Guard Activity, Group, Marine Safety Office (MSO), Vessel Traffic Service (VTS), Air Station, Cutter and Station operations. As part of the SRCS, the National Distress System incorporates the use of VHF-FM radios to provide two-way voice communications coverage for the majority of Coast Guard missions in coastal areas and navigable waterways where commercial and recreational traffic exists. The system, consisting of approximately 300 remotely controlled VHF transceivers and antenna high-level sites, was originally intended for monitoring the international VHF-FM maritime distress frequency (Channel 16), and as the primary command and control network to coordinate Coast Guard search and rescue (SAR) response activities. The secondary function was to provide command, control, and communications for the Coast Guard missions of National Security, Maritime Safety, Law Enforcement, and Marine Environmental Protection.

Need for Action

Due to the following deficiencies present in the current system, the Coast Guard has identified a need for an efficient, modern, more technologically advanced National Distress System than the one currently in place:

Obsolete/Nonstandard Equipment. The NDS was originally put into service in the 1970's and now suffers from technological obsolescence. Much of the existing equipment is no longer commercially available off-the-shelf and is becoming increasingly difficult to support. The expected service life of electronic equipment installed during this period was 15 years. Equipment failures have necessitated the replacement of many system components that are no longer commercially available, resulting in a lack of standardization. Costly short-term fixes such as individual off-the-shelf purchases of equipment (e.g., new command modules, recording and playback equipment, direction finding receivers, cellular phones, and Digital Encryption Standard (DES) radios) and services are being applied in the field to