for the most recent 12-month period for which statistics are available). However, this has been replaced by the gross domestic product by the Department of Commerce as a more appropriate measure for the short-term monitoring and analysis of the U.S. economy.

The number of bales to be classed by the United States Department of Agriculture from the 1998 crop is estimated at 15,684,900 bales. The 1998 base fee was decreased 15 percent based on the estimated number of bales to be classed (one percent for every 100,000 bales or portion thereof above the base of 12,500,000, limited to a maximum adjustment of 15 percent). This percentage factor amounts to a 32 cents per bale reduction and was subtracted from the 1998 base fee of \$2.12 per bale, resulting in a fee of \$1.80 per bale.

With a fee of \$1.80 per bale, the projected operating reserve would be 46.806 percent. The Act specifies that the Secretary shall not establish a fee which, when combined with other sources of revenue, will result in a projected operating reserve of more than 25 percent. Accordingly, the fee of \$1.80 must be reduced by 50 cents per bale, to \$1.30 per bale, to provide an ending accumulated operating reserve for the fiscal year of 25 percent of the projected cost of operating the program. This would establish the 1998 season fee at \$1.30 per bale.

Accordingly, § 28.909, paragraph (b) would be revised to reflect the reduction in the HVI classification fees.

As provided for in the Uniform Cotton Classing Fees Act of 1987, as amended, a five cent per bale discount would continue to be applied to voluntary centralized billing and collecting agents as specified in § 28.909 (c).

Growers or their designated agents requesting classification data provided on computer punched cards will be charged a fee of 10 cents per card to reflect the costs of providing this service. Requests for punch card classification data represents only 2.6 percent of the total bales classed. This change would be reflected in § 28.910 (a). Growers or their designated agents receiving classification data by methods other than computer punched cards would continue to incur no additional fees if only one method of receiving classification data was requested. The fee for each additional method of receiving classification data in § 28.910 would remain at five cents per bale, and it would be applicable even if the same method was requested. However, if computer punched cards were requested, a fee of ten cents per card would be charged. The fee in § 28.910 (b) for an owner receiving classification

data from the central database would remain at five cents per bale, and the minimum charge of \$5.00 for services provided per monthly billing period would remain the same. The provisions of §28.910 (c) concerning the fee for new classification memoranda issued from the central database for the business convenience of an owner without reclassification of the cotton will remain the same.

The fee for review classification in § 28.911 would be reduced from \$1.40 per bale to \$1.30 per bale.

The fee for returning samples after classification in § 28.911 would remain at 40 cents per sample.

Finally, the authority citation for Subpart D of Part 28 was revised at 61 FR 19512. This action would correct that revision by specifying Subpart D rather than a reference to Part 28 in its entirety.

A thirty-day comment period is provided for public comments. This period is appropriate because it is anticipated that the proposed changes, if adopted, would be made effective July 1, 1998, as provided by the Cotton Statistics and Estimates Act.

List of Subjects in 7 CFR Part 28

Administrative practice and procedure, Cotton, Cotton samples, Grades, Market news, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Standards, Staples, Testing, Warehouses.

For the reasons set forth in the preamble, 7 CFR Part 28 is proposed to be amended as follows:

PART 28—[AMENDED]

1. The authority citation for Part 28, Subpart D, would be revised to read as follows:

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 471-476.

2. In § 28.909, paragraph (b) would be revised to read as follows:

§ 28.909 Costs.

(b) The cost of High Volume Instrument (HVI) cotton classification service to producers is \$1.30 per bale.

3. In § 28.910, paragraph (a) would be revised to read as follows:

§ 28.910 Classification of samples and issuance of classification data.

(a) (1) The samples submitted as provided in the subpart shall be classified by employees of the Division and classification memoranda showing the official quality determination of each sample according to the official cotton standards of the United States shall be issued by any one of the

following methods at no additional charge:

(i) Computer diskettes,

(ii) Computer tapes, or (iii) Telecommunications, with all long distance telephone line charges paid by the receiver of data.

(2) When an additional copy of the classification memorandum is issued by any method listed in (a)(1), there will be a charge of five cents per bale. If provided as an additional method of data transfer, the minimum fee for each tape or diskette issued shall be \$10.00.

(3) Upon request, computer punch cards may be issued. The fee for this service shall be 10 cents per card.

4. In § 28.911, the last sentence of paragraph (a) would be revised to read as follows:

§ 28.911 Review classification.

(a) * * * The fee for review classification is \$1.30 per bale.

Dated: March 24, 1998.

Enrique E. Figueroa,

Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service.

[FR Doc. 98–8177 Filed 3–26–98; 8:45 am] BILLING CODE 3410–02–P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration

7 CFR Part 800

RIN 05800-AA59

Fees for Official Inspection and Official Weighing Services

AGENCY: Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration, USDA. **ACTION:** Proposed rule.

SUMMARY: The Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) is proposing an approximate 2.9 percent increase in certain service fees for official inspection and weighing services performed in the United States under the United States Grain Standards Act (USGSA), as amended. The proposed increase covers hourly rates and certain unit rates on tests performed at other than an applicant's facility. The proposed increase is designed to generate additional revenue required to recover operational costs created by cost-of-living increases to Federal salaries in fiscal year 1998.

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before May 26, 1998. **ADDRESSES:** Written comments must be submitted to George Wollam, USDA,

GIPSA, ART, Stop 3649, Washington, D.C. 20250–3649, or FAX them to (202) 720–4628. All comments received will be made available for public inspection during regular business hours in Room 0623, South Building, USDA, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250–3649 (7 CFR 1.27(b)). Comments may also be sent by electronic mail or Internet to: gwollam@fgisdc.usda.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: George Wollam at above address or telephone (202) 720–0292.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Executive Order 12866

This rule has been determined to be nonsignificant for the purpose of Executive Order 12866 and, therefore, has not been reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget.

Executive Order 12988

This proposed rule has been reviewed under Executive Order 12988, Civil Justice Reform. This action is not intended to have a retroactive effect. The USGSA provides in §87g that no subdivision may require or impose any requirements or restrictions concerning the inspection, weighing, or description of grain under the Act. Otherwise, this proposed rule will not preempt any State or local laws, regulations, or policies unless they present irreconcilable conflict with this proposed rule. There are no administrative procedures which must be exhausted prior to any judicial challenge to provisions of this proposed rule.

Effects on Small Entities

James R. Baker, Administrator, GIPSA, has determined that this proposed rule will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities as defined in the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601 et seq.). Most users of GIPSA inspection and weighing services do not meet the requirements for small entities. GIPSA is required by statute to make services available and to recover costs of providing such services, as nearly as practicable.

The proposed fee revision is primarily applicable to entities engaged in the export of grain. Under provisions of the USGSA, most grain exported from U.S. export port locations must be officially inspected and weighed. Mandatory inspection and weighing services are provided by GIPSA on a fee basis at 37 export facilities. All of the export facilities are owned and managed by multi-national corporations, large cooperatives, or public entities that do

not meet the criteria for small entities as defined under the Regulatory Flexibility Act and the regulations issued thereunder. Some users of the service who request non-mandatory official inspection and weighing services (most of which represent appeals) at other than export locations could be considered small entities. However, this fee increase merely reflects the cost-of-living increases in Federal salaries for hourly and certain unit fees.

In fiscal year 1997, GIPSA's obligations were \$22,972,026 with revenue of \$21,527,695, resulting in a loss of \$1,444,331 and retained earnings of negative \$419,417. In fiscal year 1998, as of January 31, GIPSA's obligations were \$8,116,935 with revenue of \$8,170,327 and retained earnings of negative \$374.608. GIPSA cannot absorb the 2.9 percent increase in salary costs with the existing deficit in retained earnings. Additionally, GIPSA will continue to monitor its costs to improve operating efficiencies, and adopt cost saving measures, where possible and practicable.

The approximate 2.9 percent proposed increase in fees would not have a significant impact on either small or large entities. GIPSA estimates an annual increase of \$509,000 in revenue based on a work volume of 74,045,472 metric tons, the equivalent to fiscal year 1997.

Information Collection and Recordkeeping Requirements

In compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35), the information collection and recordkeeping requirements in Part 800 have been previously approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 0580–0013.

Background

The USGSA requires GIPSA to charge and collect reasonable fees for performing official inspection and weighing services. The fees are to cover, as nearly as practicable, GIPSA's costs for performing these services, including related administrative and supervisory costs.

The proposed 2.9 percent fee increase generates additional revenue required to recover operational costs created by a January 1998 cost-of-living increase to Federal salaries. The average salary increase for GIPSA employees in calendar year 1998 is approximately 2.9 percent. This proposed action is being taken to ensure that the service fees charged by GIPSA generate adequate revenue to cover the additional cost created by the January 1998 Federal salary increase.

The current USGSA fees covering hourly rates and certain unit rates on tests performed at other than an applicant's facility were published in the Federal Register on June 11, 1997 (62 FR 31701), and became effective on June 15, 1997. They will appear in the 1998 edition of 7 CFR 800.71, Schedule A, Fees for Official Inspection and Weighing Services Performed in the United States. The hourly fees covered by this proposal generate revenue to cover the basic salary, benefits, and leave for those employees providing direct service delivery. GIPSA has also identified certain unit fees, for services not performed at an applicant's facility, that contain direct labor costs. This proposal increases those unit fees based on a 2.9 percent increase to the labor cost of each unit. Other associated costs, including overhead, are collected through additional fees contained in the published fee schedule and are not included under this proposal.

The amount of revenue collected as a result of this proposal is a direct function of the work volume. GIPSA estimates an annual increase of \$509,000 in revenue based on a work volume of 74,045,472 metric tons, the equivalent to fiscal year 1997. If GIPSA foregoes this adjustment, GIPSA will incur a net loss equivalent to 2.9 percent for every hour worked by an employee providing direct service delivery.

In fiscal year 1997, GIPSA's obligations were \$22,972,026 with revenue of \$21,527,695, resulting in a loss of \$1,444,331 and retained earnings of negative \$419,417. In fiscal year 1998, as of January 31, GIPSA's obligations were \$8,116,935 with revenue of \$8,170,327 and retained earnings of negative \$374,608. GIPSA cannot afford to absorb an additional \$509,000 loss due to the 2.9 percent increase in salary costs with the existing deficit in retained earnings. Additionally, GIPSA will continue to monitor its costs to improve operating efficiencies and adopt cost saving measures, where possible and practicable.

Proposed Action

GIPSA proposes to apply an approximate 2.9 percent increase to those hourly and certain unit rates in 7 CFR 800.71, Table 1—Fees for Official Services Performed at an Applicant's Facility in an Onsite GIPSA Laboratory; Table 2—Services Performed at Other Than an Applicant's Facility in a GIPSA Laboratory; and Table 3, Miscellaneous Services.

In reviewing the fee schedule to identify fees that would require an approximate 2.9 percent increase, GIPSA has identified several fees that under the current fee schedule are at levels that would not require any change. Accordingly, these fees would remain the same at this time.

List of Subjects in 7 CFR Part 800

Administrative practice and procedure, Grains.

For the reasons set out in the preamble, 7 CFR Part 800 is proposed to be revised as follows:

PART 800—GENERAL REGULATIONS

1. The authority citation for Part 800 continues to read as follows:

Authority: Pub. L. 94-582, 90 Stat. 2867, as amended (7 U.S.C. 71 et seq.)

2. In § 800.71 Paragraph(s), Schedule A is revised to read as follows:

§ 800.71 Fees assessed by the Service.

Schedule A.—Fees for Official **Inspection and Weighing Services** Performed in the United States

19.00

108.00

	Monday to Friday (6 a.m to 6 p.m.)	Monday to Friday (6 p.m. to 6 a.m.)	Saturday, Sunday, and Over- time ²	Holidays
(1) Inspection and Weighing Services Hourly Rates (per service represent	tative)			
-year contract	\$24.40	\$26.40	\$34.40	\$41.4
-month contract		28.60	36.60	47.8
-month contract		31.60	39.80	49.4
Voncontract	35.40	37.40	45.40	55.8
(2) Additional Tests (cost per test, assessed in addition to the hourly rate)) 3			
Aflatoxin (other than Thin Layer Chromatography)				\$8.5
i) Aflatoxin (Thin Layer Chromatography method)				20.0
ii) Soybean protein and oil (one or both)				1.5
iv) Wheat protein (per test)				1.5
v) Sunflower oil (per test)				1.9
vi) Vomitoxin (qualitative)				7.
vii) Vomitoxin (quantitative)				12.
viii) Waxy corn (per test)				1.
x) Fees for other tests not listed above will be based on the lowest noncontract ho	ourly rate.			
x) Other services				
(a) Class Y Weighing (per carrier)				
(1) Truck/container				.;
(2) Railcar				1.2
(3) Barge				
(3) Administrative Fee (assessed in addition to all other applicable fe				
(a) 1–1,000,000 (b) 1,000,001—2,000,000 (d) 2,000,001—7,000,000 (e) 5,000,001—7,000,000 (f) 7,000,000+	ees, only one adr	ninistrative fe	e will be asse	\$0.10° .092 .047 .036 .019
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(b) Railcar (per carrier)

(c) Barge (per carrier)

TABLE 2.— SERVICES PERFORMED AT OTHER THAN AN APPLICANT'S FACILITY IN AN FGIS LABORATORY 12—Continued

(d) Sacked grain (per hour per service representative plus an administrative fee per hundredweight) (CWT)	0.02
(iv) Other services	40.50
(a) Submitted sample (per sample—grade and factor)	10.50
(b) Warehouseman inspection (per sample)	17.50
(c) Factor only (per factor—maximum 2 factors)	4.50
(d) Checkloading/condition examination (use hourly rates from Table 1, plus an administrative fee per hundredweight if not previously assessed) (CWT)	0.02
(e) Reinspection (grade and factor only. Sampling service additional, item (i) above)	11.50
(f) Class X Weighing (per hour per service representative)	46.40
(v) Additional tests (excludes sampling)	
(a) Aflatoxin (per test—other than TLC method)	25.50
(b) Aflatoxin (per test—TLC method)	101.50
(c) Soybean protein and oil (one or both)	8.00
(d) Wheat protein (per test)	8.00
(e) Sunflower oil (per test)	8.00
(f) Vomitoxin (qualitative)	26.00
	31.00
(g) Vomitoxin (quantitative)	
(h) Waxy corn (per test)	9.25
(i) Canola (per test—00 dip test)	9.25
(j) Pesticide Residue Testing ³	
(1) Routine Compounds (per sample)	200.00
(2) Special Compounds (per service representative)	100.00
(k) Fees for other tests not listed above will be based on the lowest noncontract hourly rate from Table 1.	
(2) Appeal inspection and review of weighing service.4	
(i) Board Appeals and Appeals (grade and factor)	75.25
(a) Factor only (per factor—max 2 factors)	39.00
(b) Sampling service for Appeals additional (hourly rates from Table 1)	
(ii) Additional tests (assessed in addition to all other applicable fees)	
(a) Aflatoxin (per test, other than TLC)	25.75
(b) Aflatoxin (TLC)	111.00
(c) Soybean protein and oil (one or both)	15.75
(d) Wheat protein (per test)	15.75
(e) Sunflower oil (per test)	15.75
(f) Vomitoxin (per test—qualitative)	36.00
(g) Vomitoxin (per test—quantitative)	41.00
(h) Vomitoxin (per test—HPLC Board Appeal)	128.00
(i) Pesticide Residue Testing ³ .	120.00
(1) Routine Compounds (per sample)	200.00
(2) Special Compounds (per service representative)	100.00
(j) Fees for other tests not listed above will be based on the lowest noncontract hourly rate from Table 1.	100.00
(iii) Review of weighing (per hour per service representative)	67.40
	67.40
(3) Stowage examination (service-on-request) ³	FO 00
(i) Ship (per stowage space) (minimum \$250 per ship)	
(ii) Subsequent ship examinations (same as original) (minimum \$150 per ship)	
(iii) Barge (per examination)	40.00
(iv) All other carriers (per examination)	15.00

¹Fees apply for original inspection and weighing, reinspection, and appeal inspection service include, but are not limited to, sampling, grading, weighing, prior to loading stowage examinations, and certifying results performed within 25 miles of an employee's assigned duty station. Travel and related expenses will be charged for service outside 25 miles as found in § 800.72 (a).

² An additional charge will be assessed when the revenue from the services in Schedule A, Table 2, does not cover what would have been collected at the applicable hourly rate as provided in § 800.72 (b).

³ If performed outside of normal business, 1½ times the applicable unit fee will be charged.

⁴ If, at the request of the Service, a file sample is located and forwarded by the Agency for an official agency, the Agency may, upon request, be reimbursed at the rate of \$2.50 per sample by the Service.

TABLE 3.—MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES 1

(1) Grain grading seminars (per hour per service representative) ²	\$46.40 46.40
(i) Scale testing and certification	46.40
(ii) Evaluation of weighing and material handling systems	46.40
(iii) NTEP Prototype evaluation (other than Railroad Track Scales)	46.40
(iv) NTEP Prototype evaluation of Railroad Track	46.40
Scales (plus usage fee per day for test car)	100.00
(v) Mass standards calibration and reverification	46.40
(vi) Special projects	46.40
(4) Foreign travel (per day per service representative)	430.00
(5) Online customized data EGIS service.	
(i) One data file per week for 1 year	500.00
(ii) One data file per month for 1 year	300.00
(6) Samples provided to interested parties (per sample)	2.50

TABLE 3.—MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES 1—Continued

(7) Divided-lot certificates (per certificate)	1.50
(7) Divided-lot certificates (per certificate)	1.50
(8) Extra copies of certificates (per certificate)	1.50
(9) Faxing (per page)	1.50
(10) Special mailing (actual cost).	
(11) Preparing certificates onsite or during other than normal business hours (use hourly rates from Table 1).	

Dated: March 20, 1998.

James R. Baker,

Administrator.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Office of Thrift Supervision

12 CFR Parts 563f and 574

[No. 98-28] RIN 1550-AB10

Agency Disapproval of Directors and Senior Executive Officers of Savings Associations and Savings and Loan Holding Companies

AGENCY: Office of Thrift Supervision, Treasury.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking.

SUMMARY: The Office of Thrift Supervision (OTS) proposes to amend its regulations implementing section 32 of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act (FDIA). This statute requires certain savings associations and savings and loan holding companies to provide prior notice of the appointment or employment of directors and senior executive officers. The proposed changes eliminate unnecessary regulatory burden, implement changes enacted in the Economic Growth and Regulatory Paperwork Reduction Act of 1996 (EGRPRA), and more closely conform OTS regulations to those of the other banking agencies as required under section 303 of the Community Development and Regulatory Improvement Act of 1994 (CDRIA). DATES: Comments must be received on or before May 26, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Send comments to Manager, Dissemination Branch, Records Management and Information Policy, Office of Thrift Supervision, 1700 G Street, NW., Washington, D.C. 20552, Attention Docket No. 98–28. These submissions may be hand-delivered to 1700 G Street, NW., from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on business days; sent by facsimile transmission to FAX number (202) 906–7755; or sent by e-mail:

public.info@ots.treas.gov. Those commenting by e-mail should include their name and telephone number. Comments will be available for inspection at 1700 G Street, NW., from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. on business days.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Frances C. Augello, Senior Counsel, Business Transactions Division, Chief Counsel's Office (202) 906–6151; Scott Ciardi, Financial Analyst, Corporate Activities Division, (202) 906–6960; or Mary Jo Johnson, Project Manager, Supervision Policy (202) 906–5739, Office of Thrift Supervision, 1700 G Street, NW., Washington D.C. 20552. SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

Section 32 of FDIA ¹ requires certain savings associations and savings and loan holding companies to notify the OTS at least 30 days before adding any individual to the board of directors or employing an individual as a senior executive officer. Section 2209 of the EGRPRA ² amended section 32 of the FDIA by changing the circumstances under which a notice must be filed. Section 2209 also provided that the OTS may have as long as 90 days to issue a notice of disapproval of the proposed addition of a director or employment of a senior executive officer.

The OTS proposes to amend its regulations implementing section 32 of FDIA to reflect the EGRPRA amendments and to eliminate unnecessary burden. In accordance with section 303 of the CDRIA,3 the OTS has coordinated with other federal banking agencies to streamline and clarify the regulations implementing section 32 of FDIA. The proposed OTS rule conforms generally to regulations that have been promulgated by the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC) and the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System (FRB), and proposed by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC).4

4 (OCC) 61 FR 60341 (November 27, 1996); (FRB) 62 FR 9290 (February 28, 1997); (FDIC) 61 FR 52809 (October 9, 1997).

The proposed rule is discussed in detail below. This proposal restates the provisions of the existing rule at § 574.9 with the revisions noted in the discussion. In addition, the OTS has rewritten the rule using plain language drafting techniques promoted by the Vice President's National Performance Review Initiative and new guidance in the **Federal Register** Document Drafting Handbook (January 1997 edition). The primary goal of plain language drafting is to make regulations easier to understand. Plain language drafting emphasizes the use of informative headings (often written as a question), non-technical language (including the use of "you") and sentences in the active voice.

The use of the plain language format has not altered the substance of the regulation. The OTS welcomes comments on the plain language format, and suggestions on how to improve it. The OTS is committed to converting more of its regulations to the plain language format to reduce regulatory burden.

II. Proposed Amendments

Proposed Section 574.10—What does this subpart do?

Proposed § 574.10 states that the new regulations implement section 32 of the FDIA.

Proposed Section 574.11—What definitions apply to this subpart?

Proposed § 574.11 sets forth the definitions that apply to the notice requirement under section 32. The proposed provision retains the substance of the existing definitions, except as noted below.

The proposed regulation revises the definition of "director" to clarify the circumstances under which an advisory director would not be considered a director. Those circumstances would be if the individual (1) is not elected by the shareholders; (2) is not authorized to vote on any matters before the board, *or any committee* of the board; (3) provides

¹ Any requested service that is not listed will be performed at \$46.40 per hour. ² Regular business hours-Monday thru Friday-service provided at other than regular hours charged at the applicable overtime hourly rate.

¹¹² U.S.C. 1831i.

² Pub.L. 104–208, 110 Stat. 3009 (Sept. 30, 1996).

³ Pub. L. 103–325, 108 Stat. 2215 (Sept. 23, 1994). ⁴ (OCC) 61 FR 60341 (November 27, 1996); (FRB)