

ratio of 1.1957924 produces the amount of \$53,810.66 which must then be rounded to \$53,700. Because \$53,700 exceeds the current amount of \$50,700, the "old-law" contribution and benefit base is determined to be \$53,700 for 1999.

Substantial Gainful Activity Amount for Blind Individuals

General. A finding of disability under titles II and XVI of the Act requires that a person be unable to engage in substantial gainful activity (SGA). Under current regulations, a person who is not statutorily blind and who is earning more than \$500 a month (net of impairment-related work expenses) is ordinarily considered to be engaging in SGA. Section 223(d)(4)(A) of the Act specifies a higher SGA amount for statutorily blind individuals. This higher SGA amount increases in accordance with increases in the national average wage index.

Computation. The monthly SGA amount for statutorily blind individuals for 1999 shall be the larger of (1) such amount for 1994 multiplied by the ratio of the national average wage index for 1997 to that for 1992, or (2) such amount for 1998. If the amount so determined is not a multiple of \$10, it shall be rounded to the nearest multiple of \$10.

SGA Amount for Statutorily Blind Individuals. The ratio of the national average wage index for 1997, \$27,426.00, compared to that for 1992, \$22,935.42, is 1.1957924. Multiplying the 1994 monthly SGA amount for statutorily blind individuals of \$930 by the ratio of 1.1957924 produces the amount of \$1,112.09. This must then be rounded to \$1,110. Because \$1,110 is larger than the current amount of \$1,050, the monthly SGA amount for statutorily blind individuals is determined to be \$1,110 for 1999.

Domestic Employee Coverage Threshold

General. Section 2 of the "Social Security Domestic Employment Reform Act of 1994" (Pub. L. 103-387) increased the threshold for coverage of a domestic employee's wages paid per employer from \$50 per calendar quarter to \$1,000 in calendar year 1994. The statute holds the coverage threshold at the \$1,000 level for 1995 and then increases the threshold in \$100 increments for years after 1995. The formula for increasing the threshold is provided in section 3121(x) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Computation. Under the formula, the domestic employee coverage threshold amount for 1999 shall be equal to the

1995 amount of \$1,000 multiplied by the ratio of the national average wage index for 1997 to that for 1993. If the amount so determined is not a multiple of \$100, it shall be rounded to the next lower multiple of \$100.

Domestic Employee Coverage Threshold Amount. The ratio of the national average wage index for 1997, \$27,426.00, compared to that for 1993, \$23,132.67, is 1.1855960. Multiplying the 1995 domestic employee coverage threshold amount of \$1,000 by the ratio of 1.1855960 produces the amount of \$1,185.60, which must then be rounded to \$1,100. Accordingly, the domestic employee coverage threshold amount is determined to be \$1,100 for 1999.

OASDI Fund Ratio

General. In addition to providing an annual automatic cost-of-living increase in OASDI benefits, section 215(i) of the Act also includes a "stabilizer" provision that can limit such benefit increase under certain circumstances. If the combined assets of the OASI and DI Trust Funds, as a percentage of annual expenditures, are below a specified threshold, the automatic benefit increase is equal to the lesser of (1) the increase in the national average wage index or (2) the increase in prices. The threshold specified for the OASDI fund ratio is 20.0 percent for benefit increases for December of 1989 and later. The law also provides for subsequent "catch-up" benefit increases for beneficiaries whose previous benefit increases were affected by this provision. "Catch-up" benefit increases can occur only when trust fund assets exceed 32.0 percent of annual expenditures.

Computation. Section 215(i) specifies the computation and application of the OASDI fund ratio. The OASDI fund ratio for 1998 is the ratio of (1) the combined assets of the OASI and DI Trust Funds at the beginning of 1998 to (2) the estimated expenditures of the OASI and DI Trust Funds during 1998, excluding transfer payments between the OASI and DI Trust Funds, and reducing any transfers to the Railroad Retirement Account by any transfers from that account into either trust fund.

Ratio. The combined assets of the OASI and DI Trust Funds at the beginning of 1998 equaled \$655,510 million, and the expenditures are estimated to be \$382,871 million. Thus, the OASDI fund ratio for 1998 is 171.2 percent, which exceeds the applicable threshold of 20.0 percent. Therefore, the stabilizer provision does not affect the benefit increase for December 1998. Although the OASDI fund ratio exceeds the 32.0-percent threshold for potential "catch-up" benefit increases, no past

benefit increase has been reduced under the stabilizer provision. Thus, no "catch-up" benefit increase is required.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance: Program Nos. 96.001 Social Security-Disability Insurance; 96.002 Social Security-Retirement Insurance; 96.003 Social Security-Special Benefits for Persons Aged 72 and Over; 96.004 Social Security-Survivors Insurance; 96.006 Supplemental Security Income.)

Dated: October 21, 1998.

Kenneth S. Apfel,

Commissioner, Social Security Administration.

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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 ICRs describe the nature of the information collections and their expected burden. The **Federal Register** Notice with a 60-day comment period soliciting comments on the following information collection was published on May 26, 1998 (63 FR 28548-28549).

DATES: Comments must be submitted on or before November 30, 1998.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Marian Lee, Office of Motor Carrier Information Analysis, (202) 358-7051, 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.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Federal Highway Administration

Title: Financial Responsibility, Trucking and Freight Forwarding.
OMB Number: 2125-0570.

Type of Request: Extension of a currently approved collection.

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 pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 13901. The Secretary has delegated authority pertaining to these registrations to the FHWA. Registration remains valid only as long as the transportation entities maintain, on file with the FHWA, evidence of the required levels of insurance coverage pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 13906. Regulations governing financial responsibility requirements are found at 49 CFR part 387. Forms BMC-91, 91x and 82 provide evidence of the required coverage for bodily injury and property damage (BI&PD) liability. Forms BMC-34 and 83 establish compliance with cargo liability requirements. Forms BMC-84 and 85 are filed by brokers to comply with the requirement for a \$10,000 surety bond or trust fund agreement. Forms BMC-35, 36, and 85 cancel prior filings. Forms BMC-90 and 32 are endorsements which must be attached to BI&PD and cargo insurance policies, respectively, but are not filed with the FHWA. Motor carriers can also apply to self-insure BI&PD and/or cargo liability in lieu of filing certificates of insurance or surety bonds with the FHWA. Form BMC-40 is the application used to apply for self-insurance authority.

Estimated Total Annual Burden: The estimated total annual burden is 200 hours for the BMC-40 based on 5 filings per year. The estimated total annual burden for all of the other forms is 30,000 hours based on 180,000 filings per year.

ADDRESSES: Send comments, within 30 days, to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, 725-17th Street, NW., Washington, DC 20503, Attention DOT 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 publication.

Issued in Washington, DC, on October 26, 1998.

Vanester M. Williams,

Clearance Officer, United States Department of Transportation.

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BILLING CODE 4910-62-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Office of the Secretary

Reports, Forms and Recordkeeping Requirements

AGENCY: Office of the Secretary, DOT.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This notice lists those forms, reports, and recordkeeping requirements imposed upon the public which were transmitted by the Department of Transportation to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for its approval in accordance with the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35). Section 3507 of Title 44 of the United States Code, requires that agencies prepare a notice for publication in the **Federal Register**, listing information collection request submitted to OMB for approval or renewal under that Act. OMB reviews and approves agency submissions in accordance with criteria set forth in that Act. In carrying out its responsibilities, OMB also considers public comments on the proposed forms and the reporting and recordkeeping requirements. OMB approval of an information collection requirement must be renewed at least once every three years.

The **Federal Register** Notice with a 60-day comment period soliciting comments on the information collection's described below was published on August 19, 1998 (63 FR 44503-44505). The ICR's are: 1. Claims Under The Oil Pollution Act of 1990; 2. Security Zones, Regulated Navigation Areas, and Safety Zones; 3. Advance Notice and Adequacy Certification for Reception Facilities; 4. Commercial Fishing Vessel Regulations; 5. Equivalent and Approved Equipment; 6. Marine Portable Tanks (MPT's); Alteration Non-specification Portable Tanks; Approval; 7. Plan Approval and Records For Vessels Carrying Oil in Bulk; 8. Application For A Permit To Transport Municipal or Commercial Waste; and 9. State Access To The Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund For Removal

Costs Under The Oil Pollution Act of 1990.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received on or before November 30, 1998.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For copies of these documents, contact Barbara Davis, Office of Information Management, 202-267-2326.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

U. S. Coast Guard

1. *Title:* Claims Under the Oil Pollution Act of 1990.

OMB Control Number: 2115-0596.

Type of Request: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Forms: N/A.

Affected Public: Claimants and responsible parties of oil spills.

Abstract: The information collected will be used to determine if claims submitted to the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund are compensable and where compensable, ensure that the correct amount of reimbursement for damages are made from the Fund.

Need: Coast Guard will ensure that fair and reasonable payments are made to claimants and will protect the interest of the Federal Government. Claims that are submitted must be fully substantiated and the procedures for advertising and presentation of claims must be followed as directed by OPA 90 (33 U.S.C. 2713 and 2714).

Burden Estimate: The estimated burden is 10,163 hours annually.

2. *Title:* Security Zones, Regulated Navigation Areas, and Safety Zones.

OMB Control Number: 2115-0076.

Type Request: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Form(s): N/A.

Affected Public: States, Local Government Agencies, Vessels and facilities.

Abstract: The information for this report is only collected when a security zone, regulated navigation area or safety zone is requested. The information collected will be used to assess the need to establish a security zone, safety zone or regulated navigation area.

Need: 33 CFR, parts 6 and 165 gives the Coast Guard Captain of the Port (COTP), the authority to designate security zones in the U.S. for a period of time he deems necessary to prevent damage or injury. 33 U.S.C. 1223 authorized the Coast Guard to prescribe regulations to control vessel traffic in areas which are determined to be hazardous due to conditions of reduced visibility, adverse weather or vessel congestion. 33 U.S.C. 1225 authorized the Coast Guard to establish regulations to allow the designation of safety zones