

SUMMARY: The Department of Commerce, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on proposed and/or existing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1996, Public Law 104-13 (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)).

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before May 3, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to Linda Engelmeier, Departmental Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 5327, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20230. The Internet address is LEngel@doc.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument and instructions should be directed to: Elizabeth Bury, Manufacturing Extension Partnership, Building 301, Room C-100, National Institute of Standards and Technology, Stop 4800, Gaithersburg, Maryland 20899; phone: (301) 975-3944, and fax: (301) 926-3787.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Abstract

This submission under the Paperwork Reduction Act represents a request for a revision to an existing collection by the Department of Commerce's National Institute of Standards and Technology. The revision being proposed is a pilot test of modifications to an existing, ongoing collection effort, the National Institute of Standards & Technology, Manufacturing Extension Partnership Program Evaluation Survey, OMB number 0693-0021.

The Manufacturing Extension Partnership is a nationwide system of services and support for smaller manufacturers giving them unprecedented access to new technologies, resources, and expertise. Sponsored by the National Institute of Standards and Technology, the MEP is comprised of a network of locally based manufacturing extension centers working with small manufacturers to help them improve their manufacturing competitiveness.

Obtaining specific information from clients about the impact of MEP services is essential for National Institute of Standards and Technology officials to evaluate program strengths and weaknesses and plan improvements in program effectiveness and efficiency. Recently, program managers completed a new strategic plan focusing greater

attention on a more focused set of program goals and objectives. The new strategic plan has resulted in program managers desire to revisit the current data collection effort. The purpose of the revised collection will be to make it more compatible with the new strategic plan goals and to further examine areas for overall improvement in methodology.

The program wishes to pilot a new, revised data collection effort.

Method of Collection

The Survey will be administered using Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) technology.

Data

OMB Number: 0693-0021.

Form Number: N/A.

Type of Review: Regular submission.

Affected Public: Businesses or other for-profit organizations.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 600.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 100 hours.

Estimated Time Per Response: 10 minutes.

Estimated Annual Cost: There is no cost to respondents other than their time to respond to the survey.

IV. Requests for Comments

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 (including hours and cost) 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.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection; they will also be come a matter of public record.

Dated: February 22, 1999.

Linda Engelmeier,

Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Office of Chief Information Officer.

[FR Doc. 99-5266 Filed 3-2-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE: 3510-13-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 012099D]

Marine Mammals; File No. 259-1481-00 and File No. 633-1483-00

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Issuance of permits.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that Dr. Ronald J. Schusterman, Long Marine Laboratory, University of California Santa Cruz, 100 Shaffer Road, Santa Cruz, CA 95060, has been issued a permit to take two California sea lions (*Zalophus californianus*), one Pacific harbor seal (*Phoca vitulina*), and one northern elephant seal (*Mirounga angustirostris*) for purposes of scientific research.

Notice is also hereby given that the Center for Coastal Studies, P.O. Box 1036, Provincetown, MA 02657, has been issued a permit to take right whales (*Eubalaena glacialis*) for purposes of scientific research.

ADDRESSES: The permits and related documents are available for review upon written request or by appointment in the following office(s) for both 259-1481-00 and 633-1483-00:

Permits and Documentation Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910 (301/713-2289);

For 259-1481-00 only: Regional Administrator, Southwest Region, National Marine Fisheries Service, NOAA, 501 West Ocean Boulevard, Suite 4200, Long Beach, CA 90802-4213 (562/980-4001); and

For 633-1483-00 only: Regional Administrator, Northeast Region, National Marine Fisheries Service, NOAA, One Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930-2298 (978/281-9250).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Sara Shapiro or Ruth Johnson, 301/713-2289.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On December 17, 1998, notice was published in the **Federal Register** (63 FR 69615) that a request for a scientific research permit to take two California sea lions (*Zalophus californianus*), one Pacific harbor seal (*Phoca vitulina*), and one northern elephant seal (*Mirounga angustirostris*) had been submitted by Dr. Schusterman. On December 21, 1998, notice was published in the **Federal Register** (63 FR 70395) that a

request for a scientific research permit to take Northern right whales (*Eubalaena glacialis*) had been submitted by the Center for Coastal Studies. The requested permits have been issued under the authority of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*), the Regulations Governing the Taking and Importing of Marine Mammals (50 CFR part 216), the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), and the regulations governing the taking, importing, and exporting of endangered fish and wildlife (50 CFR parts 217–227).

Dated: February 24, 1999.

Ann D. Terbush,

Chief, Permits and Documentation Division,
Office of Protected Resources, National
Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 99–5247 Filed 3–2–99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–22–F

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Patent and Trademark Office

Customer Input—Patent and Trademark Customer Surveys

ACTION: Proposed collection; comment request.

SUMMARY: The Department of Commerce (DOC), as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to comment on the continuing and proposed information collection, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104–13 (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)).

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before May 3, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to Linda Engelmeier, Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 5327, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20230. Her Internet address is LEngel@doc.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information should be directed to the attention of Greg Mullen, Senior Program Analyst, Center for Quality Services, Crystal Park 1—Suite 812, 2011 Crystal Drive, Arlington, VA 22202, by telephone at (703) 305–4207, by facsimile transmission to (703) 308–8002, or by e-mail to greg.mullen@uspto.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

This is a generic clearance for an undefined number of surveys that the

Patent and Trademark Office (PTO) may conduct over the next three years. These surveys may be conducted in a variety of forms, such as telephone surveys, face-to-face interviews, mail surveys, questionnaires and customer surveys, comment cards, and focus groups. The PTO is currently investigating the feasibility of electronic surveys, in which case the PTO may quite possibly use the electronic medium to conduct customer surveys. A brief description of the expected methodology for the various survey vehicles is provided below.

For telephone surveys, the PTO calls the respondent and either surveys the respondent or schedules an appointment and faxes the survey questions to the respondent. In addition, a script is prepared for the actual telephone interview so that each telephone survey is conducted in the same manner. At this time, the PTO is unable to predict the number of telephone surveys that may be conducted. The PTO estimates that 400 responses will be received from telephone surveys, for an estimated burden of 100 hours.

For possible face-to-face interviews, the PTO uses a variety of delivery mechanisms to try to meet our customers needs. There are two public search rooms which members of the public use on a regular basis. A script is prepared so each respondent is asked the same questions. There may also be other occasional uses of face to face interviews to assess customer satisfaction. The PTO estimates that 200 responses will be received from face to face interviews, for an estimated burden of 50 hours.

The PTO also mails surveys to respondents with instructions to mail the completed surveys back to the PTO in the self-addressed and stamped envelope provided with the survey. In general, the PTO follows-up non-responses by mailing reminders and through phone contacts. At this time, the PTO is unable to predict the number of survey mailings that may be conducted. The PTO estimates that 3,500 responses will be received from survey mailings, for an estimated burden of 1,750 hours.

The PTO uses customer surveys and questionnaires to survey users of PTO's various services or to survey attendees at various conferences, among other items. The PTO provides survey forms which are either handed to the respondents by the staff or left for attendees to pick up as they enter or exit from various functions. If the completed surveys are not handed directly back to a staff member, the respondents are

instructed to drop off their surveys or mail them back to the PTO. At this time, the PTO is unable to predict the number of customer surveys and questionnaires that may be conducted. The PTO estimates that 1,000 responses will be received from customer surveys and questionnaires, for an estimated burden of 83 hours.

Another survey instrument which the PTO frequently uses are customer comment cards. These comment cards are pre-paid and return addressed postage cards which the respondent can mail back to the PTO. At this time, the PTO is unable to predict the number of customer surveys and questionnaires that may be conducted. The PTO estimates that 2,000 responses will be received from customer surveys and questionnaires, for an estimated burden of 166 hours.

The PTO frequently uses focus groups as a survey instrument. The PTO asks groups of its customers to get together and discuss issues of mutual interest. Many times the results of these sessions are used to help make improvements to PTO operations or to recommend that certain issues be studied further. The PTO estimates that 100 responses will be received from focus groups, for an estimated burden of 200 hours.

These surveys are designed to obtain customer feedback regarding products, services, and related service standards of the PTO. At this time, the PTO is unable to state precisely which survey vehicles will be used during the renewal period. As the PTO's survey needs are determined, the PTO will submit the specific survey instrument for approval.

Electronic surveys are currently being researched for feasibility.

II. Method of collection

These surveys will be conducted by telephone and face-to-face interviews, mailings, customer surveys and questionnaires, comment cards, and focus groups. The PTO is also exploring the possibility of using the PTO Web site to conduct customer surveys. A random sample is used to collect the data. Statistical methods will be followed.

III. Data

OMB Number: 0651–0038.

Form Number: Depending on the individual situation, the PTO may have survey and questionnaire forms and comment cards. The PTO is exploring the feasibility of using electronic surveys, so this information collection may also include electronic forms in the future.

Type of Review: Revision of a currently approved collection.