

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 also will become a matter of public record.

Dated: March 29, 2000.

**Linda Engelmeier,**

*Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Office of Chief Information Officer.*

[FR Doc. 00-8396 Filed 4-4-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-F

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### United States Patent and Trademark Office

[Docket No. 000328087-0087-01]

RIN 0651-XX23

### Reestablishment of the Patent and Trademark Office as the United States Patent and Trademark Office

**AGENCY:** United States Patent and Trademark Office, Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice of reestablishment and adoption of seal.

**SUMMARY:** The Patent and Trademark Office Efficiency Act reestablishes the Patent and Trademark Office as the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), an agency of the United States, within the Department of Commerce. USPTO will continue to issue patents, register trademarks, and disseminate information about patents and trademarks under the policy direction of the Secretary of Commerce, but will otherwise exercise independent control of its budget allocations and expenditures, personnel decisions and processes, procurements, and other administrative and management functions. This notice will explain some key aspects of USPTO's new functions and authorities.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** March 29, 2000.

**ADDRESSES:** Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office, Washington, D.C. 20231.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Richard Torczon, 703-305-9035.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Patent and Trademark Office Efficiency Act (PTOE) (Pub. L. 106-113, 113 Stat.

1501A-572) becomes effective March 29, 2000, and reestablishes the Patent and Trademark Office as an agency of the United States, within the Department of Commerce. The PTOEA transforms USPTO into a performance-based organization that uses quantitative and qualitative measures and standards for evaluating cost-effectiveness that are consistent with the principles of impartiality and competitiveness. Under the PTOEA, USPTO will continue to issue patents, register trademarks, and disseminate information about patents and trademarks under the policy direction of the Secretary of Commerce, but USPTO will exercise independent control over its budget allocations and expenditures, personnel decisions and processes, procurements, and other administrative and management functions. Some key aspects of the reestablishment of USPTO include:

#### 1. New Titles

The head of USPTO is the "Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office". The Director is assisted by the "Deputy Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Deputy Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office".

The patent operations of USPTO are now headed by the "Commissioner for Patents".

The trademark operations of USPTO are now headed by the "Commissioner for Trademarks".

Under section 4741(b) of the PTOEA, any reference to the Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks, the Assistant Commissioner for Patents, or the Assistant Commissioner for Trademarks is deemed to refer to the Director, the Commissioner for Patents, or the Commissioner for Trademarks, respectively. Hence, until further notice, no change is necessary to any mailing procedure, form, or other document submitted to USPTO. Appropriate use of the new titles is acceptable as well.

#### 2. Mailing Address

The mailing address remains the same, as reflected in the **ADDRESSES** section above. USPTO will accept mail addressed to either the Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office or the Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks.

#### 3. Continuity of Operations

Under subsection 4743(a) of the PTOEA, all orders, determinations, rules, regulations, permits, grants, loans, contracts, agreements, certificates,

licenses, and privileges in effect on March 28, 2000, shall remain in effect with equal force. Similarly, under subsection 4743(b), all proceedings under way on March 28, 2000, shall continue. To this end, USPTO adopts all authorities, including rules, manuals, orders, and precedent, of the Patent and Trademark Office in effect on March 28, 2000. Until otherwise indicated, USPTO will continue to follow the Federal Acquisition Regulations and Department of Commerce regulations applicable to the Patent and Trademark Office on March 28, 2000.

USPTO may continue to use existing stocks of letterhead and other products.

#### 5. Seal

USPTO adopts the following as its seal which shall be judicially noticed and with which letters patent, certificates of trademark registrations, and papers issued by USPTO shall be authenticated:



(Authority: Sec. 4712, Pub. L. 106-113, 113 Stat. 1501A-572 (35 U.S.C. 2(b)).)

Dated: March 30, 2000.

**Q. Todd Dickinson,**

*Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office.*

[FR Doc. 00-8285 Filed 4-4-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-16-P

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### Technology Administration

#### National Medal of Technology

**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 June 5, 2000.

**ADDRESSES:** Direct all written comments to Linda Engelmeier, Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Department of Comment, Room 5027, 1401 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20230 or via the Internet (LEngelme@doc.gov).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Requests for additional information should be directed to the attention of S.J. Dapkunas, Acting Director, National Medal of Technology Program, Technology Administration, 1401 Constitution Avenue, NW, Room 4226, Washington, DC 20230. In addition, written comments may be sent via fax, 202/501-8153, and e-mail to stanley\_\_dapkunas@ta.doc.gov.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**I. Abstract**

The National Medal of Technology is the highest honor bestowed by the President to America's leading innovators. The Medal is given to individuals, teams, or companies for accomplishments in the innovation, development, commercialization, and management of technology, as evidenced by the establishment of new or significantly improved products, processes, or services. The information provided is used by the Nomination Evaluation Committee in determining the merit and eligibility of nominees.

**II. Method of Collection**

By mail, but the nomination forms and instructions are electronically posted on the National Medal of Technology web site so interested parties can review criteria and informational requirements at their convenience.

**III. Data**

*OMB Number:* 0692-0001.

*Form Number:* None.

*Type of Review:* Reinstatement of a previously approved collection.

*Affected Public:* Individuals or households; business or other for-profit; not-for-profit institutions; and, Federal Government.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 102.

*Estimated Time Per Response:* 25 hours.

*Estimated Total Annual Respondent Burden Hours:* 2,550.

*Estimated Total Annual Respondent Cost Burden:* None (no capital expenditures).

**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 will 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, e.g., the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

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

Dated: March 29, 2000.

**Linda Engelmeier,**

*Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Office of the Chief Information Officer.*

[FR Doc. 00-8286 Filed 4-4-00; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510-18-P**

**COMMODITY FUTURES TRADING COMMISSION**

**New York Cotton Exchange: Proposed Amendment to the Cotton No. 2 Futures Contract Prohibiting Cotton Stocks Under Commodity Credit Corporation Loan From Simultaneously Being Exchange-Certified for Delivery on the Futures Contract**

**AGENCY:** Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

**ACTION:** Notice of availability of proposed amendment to contract terms and condition.

**SUMMARY:** The New York Cotton Exchange (NYCE or Exchange) has proposed an amendment to the Exchange's cotton No. 2 futures contract. The proposed amendment would prohibit cotton stocks from simultaneously being included in both Exchange-certified stocks and under Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) loan. The Acting Director of the Division, acting pursuant to the authority delegated by Commission Regulation 140.96, has determined that the proposed amendment is of major economic significance, within the meaning of section 5a(a)(12) of the Commodity Exchange Act (Act), and that its publication is in the public interest and will assist the Commission in considering the views of interested persons.

**DATES:** Comments must be received on or before May 5, 2000.

**ADDRESSES:** Interested person should submit their views and comments to Jean A. Webb, Secretary, Commodity Futures Trading Commission, Three Lafayette Centre, 1155 21st Street, NW., Washington, DC 20581. In addition, comments may be sent by facsimile transmission to facsimile number (202) 418-5521, or by electronic mail to secretary@cftc.gov. Reference should be made to the proposed amendment to the New York Cotton Exchange cotton No. 2 futures contract.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Please contact John Bird of the Division of Economic Analysis, Commodity Futures Trading Commission, Three Lafayette Centre, 1155 21st Street NW., Washington, DC 20581, telephone (202) 418-5274. Facsimile number: (202) 418-5527. Electronic Mail: jbird@cftc.gov.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The cotton No. 2 futures contract requires that cotton intended for delivery be inspected for conformity with the contract's quality specifications. Cotton that is found to meet the contract's quality specifications is certified by the Exchange as deliverable on the futures contract.

The proposal will specify that no bale of cotton may simultaneously be included in both certified stocks and Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) loan stocks. The Exchange intends to make the proposed amendment effective within 30 days following Commission approval, if granted, with respect to the first contract month with no open interest on such effective date and for all contract months listed thereafter.

In support of the proposal, the Exchange stated that:

From the perspective of the cotton futures market, the significant change to the cotton loan program which took effect in 1986 was the provision that the CCC would waive interest charges and pay some or all of the storage charges that accrued during the loan period as necessary to make the loan repayable at the lower of the loan rate plus storage and interest, or the AWP [Adjusted World Price for cotton]. In the event of forfeiture to the CCC, no interest is charged, and the CCC assumes responsibility for the warehouse storage charges that accrued during the period that the cotton was under loan.

Therefore, it is clear that, particularly at times when the AWP is below the loan rate, cotton under loan is subject to non-commercial forces. This is in contrast to "free" cotton stocks, which are subject to commercial market forces, particularly to the intertemporal relationships in the cotton No. 2 futures market. For producers and cooperatives, the loan program effectively provides a free put option at an exercise (the