

on Tariffs and Trade 1994 (GATT). In addition, Belgium's administration of its customs regime for imported rice appears to be inconsistent with Belgium's obligations under the Agreement on Implementation of Article VII of the GATT 1994 ("Customs Valuation Agreement"), the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade, and the Agreement on Agriculture. Pursuant to Articles 1 and 4.3 of the WTO Dispute Settlement Understanding ("DSU"), such consultations are to take place within a period of 30 days from the date of the request, or within a period otherwise mutually agreed between the United States and Belgium. USTR invites written comments from the public concerning the issues raised in this dispute.

DATES: Although the USTR will accept any comments received during the course of the dispute settlement proceedings, comments should be submitted on or before November 25, 2000 to be assured of timely consideration by USTR.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments to Sandy McKinzy, Monitoring and Enforcement Unit, Office of the General Counsel, Room 122, Office of the United States Trade Representative, 600 17th Street, NW., Washington, DC, 20508, Attn: Belgium Rice Dispute. Telephone: (202) 395-3582.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: James M. Lyons, Associate General Counsel, Office of the United States Trade Representative, 600 17th Street, NW., Washington, DC, (202) 395-3582.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 127(b) of the Uruguay Round Agreements Act (URAA) (19 U.S.C. 3537(b)(1)) requires that notice and opportunity for comment be provided after the United States submits or receives a request for the establishment of a WTO dispute settlement panel. Consistent with this obligation, but in an effort to provide an earlier opportunity for comment, USTR is providing notice that consultations have been requested pursuant to the WTO Dispute Settlement Understanding. If such consultations should fail to resolve the matter and a dispute settlement panel is established pursuant to the DSU, such panel, which would hold its meetings in Geneva, Switzerland, would be expected to issue a report on its findings and recommendations within six to nine months after it is established.

Major Issues Raised by the United States

The United States considers that Belgium's administration of its laws and regulations establishing the customs

duties applicable to rice imported from the United States appears to be inconsistent with its WTO obligations. Belgian customs authorities have established customs values and import duties using reference prices without consideration of either the value or characteristics of the particular rice shipments involved. Moreover, the measures employed by Belgian authorities appear to have been applied in a manner that discriminates against rice imported from the United States. The Belgian measures also appear to have restricted imports of rice into Belgium.

The United States also considers that Belgium has failed to comply with the requirements of Articles I, II, VII, VIII, and X of the GATT 1994, Articles 1-6, 7, 10, 14, 16, and Annex I of the Customs Valuation Agreement, and Articles 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, and 9 of the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade.

In addition, Belgium appears to be restricting imports in a manner that would be inconsistent with GATT Articles I and XI and Articles 4 of the Agreement on Agriculture.

Public Comment: Requirements for Submissions

Interested persons are invited to submit written comments concerning the issues raised in the dispute. Comments must be in English and provided in fifteen copies. A person requesting that information contained in a comment submitted by that person be treated as confidential business information must certify that such information is business confidential and would not customarily be released to the public by the commenter. Confidential business information must be clearly marked "BUSINESS CONFIDENTIAL" in a contrasting color ink at the top of each page of each copy.

Information or advice contained in a comment submitted, other than business confidential information, may be determined by USTR to be confidential in accordance with section 135(g)(2) of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2155(g)(2)). If the submitter believes that information or advice may qualify as such, the submitter—

(1) Must so designate the information or advice;

(2) Must clearly mark the material as "SUBMITTED IN CONFIDENCE" in a contrasting color ink at the top of each page of each copy; and

(3) Is encouraged to provide a non-confidential summary of the information or advice.

Pursuant to section 127(e) of the URAA (19 U.S.C. 3537(e)), USTR will

maintain a file on this dispute settlement proceeding, accessible to the public, in the USTR Reading Room: Room 101, Office of the United States Trade Representative, 600 17th Street, NW., Washington, DC 20508. The public file will include a listing of any comments received by USTR from the public with respect to the dispute; if a dispute settlement panel is convened, the U.S. submissions to that panel, the submissions, or non-confidential summaries of submissions, to the panel received from other participants in the dispute, as well as the report of the panel; and, if applicable, the report of the Appellate Body. An appointment to review the public file (Docket WTO/D-210, Belgium—Measures Affecting Imports of Rice) may be made by calling Brenda Webb, (202) 395-6186. The USTR Reading Room is open to the public from 9:30 a.m. to 12 noon and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

A. Jane Bradley,

Assistant United States Trade Representative for Monitoring and Enforcement.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Office of the Secretary

[OST Docket No. OST-2000-7538]

Test Plan for Determining Potential for Interference From Ultra-wideband Devices (UWB) to Global Positioning System (GPS) Receivers; Response to Comment

AGENCY: Office of the Secretary, Department of Transportation.

ACTION: Response to comment.

SUMMARY: DOT announced a test program to begin to acquire data on the potential for interference to GPS systems from UWB signals, and sought comment thereon. Only one comment was received, which warrants additional explanation of, but no changes to, the test program.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Sally L. Frodge, Radionavigation and Positioning, P-7, (202) 366-4894

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Department of Transportation (DOT) became aware last year of the potential for interference to the Global Positioning System (GPS) and other communications, navigation, and surveillance systems, including actively used aviation systems, from ultra-wideband (UWB) signals. Due to the lack of technical data on interference available at that time, DOT decided to

initiate a limited testing program to begin to explore the interference potential of UWB to GPS. Working with the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, the Federal Aviation Administration, the Interdepartment Radio Advisory Committee, RTCA, Inc., and others, a test plan was devised to develop data in a technically sound and controlled manner. The Department contracted with Stanford University to perform the tests. In addition, because of the potential for wide public and industry interest in this matter, the Department distributed the test plan broadly and formally solicited comment on the plan through a notice in the **Federal Register**, 65 FR 38874 (June 22, 2000). Only one party submitted comments in response to this notice—Time Domain Corporation (TDC).

TDC criticized the test plan and concluded that it would not produce valid data about the potential for interference from UWB signals. DOT appreciates the TDC comments. Although DOT disagrees with TDC's assessment of the efficacy of the test plan, it is clear that additional clarification of certain points in the plan description and an explanation of the rationale for the plan's basic approach are warranted. DOT remains confident that the test plan is methodologically sound and will develop data that will help support a determination about whether and to what extent UWB emissions will interfere with GPS applications.

DOT's complete response will be sent to TDC, and to other interested parties upon request. DOT will provide all data and analyses available from the test program to the FCC by October 30, 2000, the filing date for test results in FCC ET Docket No. OST-98-153. The test program will be incomplete at that time and further results will continue to be developed into the first quarter of 2001.

Dated: October 19, 2000.

Joseph Canny,

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Navigation Systems Policy.

[FR Doc. 00-27645 Filed 10-26-00; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Highway Administration

Environmental Impact Statement: Hillsborough and Rockingham Counties, NH

AGENCY: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of Intent.

SUMMARY: The FHWA is issuing this notice to advise the public that an environmental impact statement (EIS) is being prepared for a proposed highway project in Hillsborough and Rockingham Counties, New Hampshire. A Notice of Intent for the project was previously published on February 21, 1992. Subsequently the project was put on hold pending development of a Statewide Transportation Model.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. William F. O'Donnell, P.E., Environmental Program Manager, Federal Highway Administration, 279 Pleasant Street, Suite 204, Concord, New Hampshire, 03301-7502, Telephone: (603) 228-0417, or Mr. William R. Hauser, Administrator, Bureau of Environment, New Hampshire Department of Transportation, P.O. Box 483, John O. Morton Building, Concord, New Hampshire 03302-0483, Telephone: (603) 271-3226.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The FHWA, in cooperation with the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT), is in the process of preparing an environmental impact statement (EIS) for a proposal for construction on a section of an existing highway facility (I-93 extending from the Massachusetts/New Hampshire State Line in Salem to just south of Exit 6 in Manchester) that serves as a major transportation link for the State of New Hampshire.

The proposed action would relieve traffic congestion, reduce travel time, improve safety and accommodate projected increases in traffic demand.

Alternatives to be considered include (1) taking no action; (2) upgrading the existing route (approximately 18 miles in length) to add capacity; (3) constructing high occupancy vehicle lanes, as well as other Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures such as carpool parking lots; (4) constructing mass transportation facilities in or adjacent to the existing corridor; and (5) combinations of these alternatives. Various designs of grade, alignment, geometry and access will be evaluated. An Advisory Task Force has been established with representation from the regional planning agencies, state and local officials, business and industry and local citizens.

Letters describing the proposed action and soliciting comments were previously sent to appropriate federal, state and local agencies, and to private organizations and citizens who have interest in this proposal. Public informational, community and Advisory

Task Force meetings have been held in study area and will continue as the project progresses, in order to include public input in the project development process. A public hearing will be held following distribution of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Public notice will be given regarding the time and location of this hearing. The DEIS will be available for review and comment by the public and interested agencies prior to the public hearing.

Because this project has been on hold for a substantial period of time, a second formal scoping meeting will be held at 4:00 pm. on December 6, 2000, the 3rd floor Auditorium of the University of NH-Manchester Campus, 3000 Commercial Street in Manchester, New Hampshire. The purpose of this meeting is to (1) reaffirm the limits of the project study area; (2) refine the study framework and the impacts to be analyzed; and (3) redefine a reasonable range of alternatives to be considered.

Agencies participating as cooperating agencies are the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the New Hampshire State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the New Hampshire Wetlands Bureau.

To ensure the full range of issues related to this proposed action are addressed and all significant issues identified, comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties. Comments or questions concerning this proposal and the EIS should be directed to the FHWA or the NHDOT at the addresses provided above. (Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Number 20.205, Highway Planning and Construction. The regulations implementing Executive Order 12372 regarding intergovernmental consultation on federal programs and activities apply to this program.)

Issued on: October 20, 2000.

Kathleen O. Laffey,

Division Administrator, Concord, New Hampshire.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Highway Administration

Environmental Impact Statement; Rutland County, VT

AGENCY: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of Intent.

SUMMARY: The FHWA is issuing this notice to advise the public that an