

Department of Labor (Department) is issuing this notice to announce the 2018 Adverse Effect Wage Rate (AEWR) for the employment of temporary or seasonal nonimmigrant foreign workers (H-2A workers) to perform herding or production of livestock on the range.

AEWRs are the minimum wage rates the Department has determined must be offered and paid by employers to H-2A workers and workers in corresponding employment so that the wages and working conditions of similarly employed U.S. workers will not be adversely affected. In this notice, the Department announces the annual update of the AEWR for workers engaged in the herding or production of livestock on the range, as required by the methodology established in the *Temporary Agricultural Employment of H-2A Foreign Workers in the Herding or Production of Livestock on the Range in the United States*, 80 FR 62958, 63067–63068 (Oct. 16, 2015); 20 CFR 655.211.

DATES: The rates take effect January 1, 2018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

William W. Thompson, II, Administrator, Office of Foreign Labor Certification, Box #12–200, Employment & Training Administration, U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20210. Telephone number: 202–513–7350 (this is not a toll-free number).

Individuals with hearing or speech impairments may access the telephone number above via TTY by calling the toll-free Federal Information Relay Service at 1–877–889–5627.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services of the Department of Homeland Security will not approve an employer's petition for the admission of H-2A nonimmigrant temporary and seasonal agricultural workers in the U.S. unless the petitioner has received from the Department an H-2A labor certification. The labor certification provides that: (1) There are not sufficient U.S. workers who are able, willing, and qualified and who will be available at the time and place needed to perform the labor or services involved in the petition; and (2) the employment of the foreign worker(s) in such labor or services will not adversely affect the wages and working conditions of workers in the U.S. similarly employed. 8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(15)(H)(ii)(a), 1184(c)(1), and 1188(a); 8 CFR 214.2(h)(5); 20 CFR 655.100.

Adverse Effect Wage Rate for 2018

The Department's H-2A regulations covering the herding or production of

livestock on the range (H-2A Herder Rule) at 20 CFR 655.210(g) and 655.211(a)(1) provide that employers must offer, advertise in recruitment, and pay each worker employed under 20 CFR 655.200–655.235 a wage that is at least the highest of: (i) The monthly AEWR, (ii) the agreed-upon collective bargaining wage, or (iii) the applicable minimum wage imposed by Federal or State law or judicial action. Further, when the monthly AEWR is adjusted during a work contract, and is higher than both the agreed-upon collective bargaining wage and the applicable minimum wage imposed by Federal or State law or judicial action in effect at the time the work is performed, the employer must pay that adjusted monthly AEWR upon publication by the Department in the **Federal Register**. 20 CFR 655.211(a)(2).

As provided in 20 CFR 655.211(c) of the H-2A Herder Rule, the methodology for establishing the monthly AEWR for range occupations in all states is based on the rate of \$7.25/hour multiplied by 48 hours per week, and then multiplied by 4.333 weeks per month. Beginning with calendar year 2017, the monthly AEWR is adjusted annually based on the Employment Cost Index (ECI) for wages and salaries published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics for the preceding annual period.

In setting the AEWR for 2017, ETA applied the required ECI adjustment of 2.4 percent, resulting in a monthly wage of \$1544.07. The H-2A Herder Rule at 20 CFR 655.211(d) applied a two-year transition to the full monthly AEWR, with the wage in 2017 set at 90 percent of the full monthly AEWR, *i.e.*, \$1,389.67/month. For calendar year 2018, the Department is setting the national monthly AEWR at 100 percent of the full wage calculated using the H-2A Herder Rule methodology. The 12-month change in the ECI for wages and salaries of private industry workers between September 2016 and September 2017 was 2.6 percent. To set the AEWR for 2018, ETA used that ECI percentage to adjust what would have been the full monthly AEWR for calendar year 2017 if the 2017 rate had not been reduced to 90 percent of the wage due to the transition period.¹

¹ The regulation at 20 CFR 655.211(c)(2) states that the monthly AEWR is calculated based on the ECI for wages and salaries “for the preceding October–October period.” This regulatory language was intended to identify the Bureau of Labor Statistics' October publication of ECI for wages and salaries, which presents data for the September–September period. Accordingly, the most recent 12-month change in the ECI for private sector workers published on October 31, 2017 by the Bureau of Labor Statistics was used for establishing the monthly AEWR under the regulations. See <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/eci.htm>.

Thus, the national monthly AEWR rate for all range occupations in the H-2A program in 2018 is calculated by multiplying the full AEWR for calendar year 2017 by the 2018 ECI adjustment ($\$1544.07 \times 1.026 = \$1,584.22$). Accordingly, any employer certified or seeking certification for range workers must pay each worker a wage that is at least the highest of the monthly AEWR of \$1,548.22, the agreed-upon collective bargaining wage, or the applicable minimum wage imposed by Federal or State legislation or judicial action, at the time work is performed on or after the effective date of this notice.

Signed in Washington, DC.

Rosemary Lahasky,

Deputy Assistant Secretary, Employment and Training Administration.

[FR Doc. 2017–27530 Filed 12–21–17; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4510–FP–P

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Office of Workers' Compensation Programs

Meeting of the Advisory Board on Toxic Substances and Worker Health Subcommittee on the Site Exposure Matrices (SEM)

AGENCY: Office of Workers' Compensation Programs, Department of Labor.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: Announcement of meeting of the Subcommittee on the Site Exposure Matrices of the Advisory Board on Toxic Substances and Worker Health (Advisory Board) for the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act (EEOICPA).

DATES: The subcommittee will meet via teleconference on January 16, 2018, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For press inquiries: Ms. Amy Louviere, Office of Public Affairs, U.S. Department of Labor, Room S–1028, 200 Constitution Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20210; telephone (202) 693–4672; email Louviere.Amy@dol.gov. For further information you may contact Douglas Fitzgerald, Designated Federal Officer, at fitzgerald.douglas@dol.gov, or Carrie Rhoads, Alternate Designated Federal Officer, at rhoads.carrie@dol.gov, U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution

www.bls.gov/news.release/eci.htm. The ECI for private sector workers was used rather than the ECI for all civilian workers given the characteristics of the H-2A herder workforce.

Avenue NW, Suite S-3524, Washington, DC 20210, telephone (202) 343-5580.

This is not a toll-free number.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Advisory Board is mandated by Section 3687 of EEOICPA. The Secretary of Labor established the Board under this authority and Executive Order 13699 (June 26, 2015). The purpose of the Advisory Board is to advise the Secretary with respect to: (1) The Site Exposure Matrices (SEM) of the Department of Labor; (2) medical guidance for claims examiners for claims with the EEOICPA program, with respect to the weighing of the medical evidence of claimants; (3) evidentiary requirements for claims under Part B of EEOICPA related to lung disease; and (4) the work of industrial hygienists and staff physicians and consulting physicians of the Department of Labor and reports of such hygienists and physicians to ensure quality, objectivity, and consistency. The Advisory Board sunsets on December 19, 2024. This subcommittee is being assembled to gather and analyze data and continue working on advice under Area #1, the Site Exposure Matrices.

The Advisory Board operates in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) (5 U.S.C. App. 2) and its implementing regulations (41 CFR part 102-3).

Agenda: The tentative agenda for the Subcommittee on the Site Exposure Matrices meeting includes: Developing comments on DOL responses to Board recommendations; continuing discussions on items related to SEM from recent Board meeting as necessary.

OWCP transcribes Advisory Board subcommittee meetings. OWCP posts the transcripts on the Advisory Board web page, <http://www.dol.gov/owcp/energy/regs/compliance/AdvisoryBoard.htm>, along with written comments and other materials submitted to the subcommittee or presented at subcommittee meetings.

Public Participation, Submissions, and Access to the Public Record

Subcommittee meeting: The subcommittee will meet via teleconference on Tuesday, January 16, 2018, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Eastern Time. Advisory Board subcommittee meetings are open to the public. The teleconference number and other details for listening to the meeting will be posted on the Advisory Board's website no later than 72 hours prior to the meeting. This information will be posted at <http://www.dol.gov/owcp/energy/regs/compliance/AdvisoryBoard.htm>.

Requests for special accommodations: Please submit requests for special accommodations to participate in the subcommittee meeting by email, telephone, or hard copy to Ms. Carrie Rhoads, OWCP, Room S-3524, U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20210; telephone (202) 343-5580; email EnergyAdvisoryBoard@dol.gov.

Submission of written comments for the record: You may submit written comments, identified by the subcommittee name and the meeting date of January 11, 2018, by any of the following methods:

- **Electronically:** Send to: EnergyAdvisoryBoard@dol.gov (specify in the email subject line, "Subcommittee on the Site Exposure Matrices").
- **Mail, express delivery, hand delivery, messenger, or courier service:** Submit one copy to the following address: U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Workers' Compensation Programs, Advisory Board on Toxic Substances and Worker Health, Room S-3522, 200 Constitution Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20210. Due to security-related procedures, receipt of submissions by regular mail may experience significant delays.

Comments must be received by January 11, 2017. OWCP will make available publicly, without change, any written comments, including any personal information that you provide. Therefore, OWCP cautions interested parties against submitting personal information such as Social Security numbers and birthdates.

Electronic copies of this **Federal Register** notice are available at <http://www.regulations.gov>. This notice, as well as news releases and other relevant information, are also available on the Advisory Board's web page at <http://www.dol.gov/owcp/energy/regs/compliance/AdvisoryBoard.htm>.

Signed at Washington, DC, on December 12, 2017.

Julia Hearthway,

Director, Office of Workers' Compensation Programs.

[FR Doc. 2017-27394 Filed 12-21-17; 8:45 am]

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NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Alan T. Waterman Award Committee; Notice of Meeting

In accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463, as amended), the National Science Foundation (NSF) announces the following meeting:

NAME AND COMMITTEE CODE: Alan T. Waterman Award Committee (#1172).

DATE AND TIME: January 30, 2018; 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

PLACE: National Science Foundation, 2415 Eisenhower Avenue, Suite W19000, Alexandria, Virginia 22314.

TYPE OF MEETING: Closed.

CONTACT PERSON: Sherrie B. Green, Program Manager, NSF, 2415 Eisenhower Avenue, Suite W17126, Alexandria, VA 22314; Telephone: (703) 292-8040.

PURPOSE OF MEETING: To provide advice and recommendations in the selection of the Alan T. Waterman Award recipient.

AGENDA: To review and evaluate nominations as part of the selection process for awards.

REASON FOR CLOSING: The nominations being reviewed include information of a personal nature where disclosure would constitute unwarranted invasions of personal privacy. These matters are exempt under 5 U.S.C. 552b(c), (6) of the Government in the Sunshine Act.

Dated: December 19, 2017.

Crystal Robinson,

Committee Management Officer.

[FR Doc. 2017-27586 Filed 12-21-17; 8:45 am]

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NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Proposal Review Panel for Ocean Sciences; Notice of Meeting

In accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463, as amended), the National Science Foundation (NSF) announces the following meeting:

NAME AND COMMITTEE CODE: Proposal Review Panel for Ocean Sciences (#10752)—JOIDES Resolution Science Operator (JRSO), Texas A&M (Site Visit).

DATE AND TIME: February 28–March 2, 2018, 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

PLACE: JOIDES Resolution Science Operator (JRSO), Texas A&M University, 1000 Discovery Drive, Texas A&M University West Campus, College Station, TX 77845, Conference Room C126.

TYPE OF MEETING: Part-open.

CONTACT PERSON: James F. Allan, Program Director, Ocean Drilling, Division of Ocean Sciences; National Science Foundation, 2415 Eisenhower Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22314; Telephone: (703) 292-8144.

PURPOSE OF MEETING: Site visit to provide advice and recommendations