

merchandise by that importer during the POR.

Furthermore, the following deposit requirements will be effective upon completion of the final results of these administrative reviews for all shipments of circular welded-non-alloy steel pipe from Mexico entered, or withdrawn from warehouse, for consumption on or after the publication date of the final results of these administrative reviews, as provided by section 751(a)(1) of the Act: (1) The cash deposit rate for reviewed firms will be the rate established in the final results of administrative review, except if the rate is less than 0.50 percent, and therefore, *de minimis* within the meaning of 19 CFR 351.106(c), in which case the cash deposit rate will be zero; (2) For merchandise exported by manufacturers or exporters not covered in this review but covered in the original less-than-fair-value (LTFV) investigation or a previous review, the cash deposit will continue to be the most recent rate published in the final determination or final results for which the manufacturer or exporter received a company-specific rate; (3) If the exporter is not a firm covered in this review, or the original investigation, but the manufacturer is, the cash deposit rate will be that established for the manufacturer of the merchandise in the final results of these reviews, or the LTFV investigation; and (4) If neither the exporter nor the manufacturer is a firm covered in this or any previous review or the original fair value investigation, the cash deposit rate will be 36.62%, the "all other" rate from the original investigation.

This notice also serves as a preliminary reminder to importers of their responsibility under 19 CFR 351.402(f)(2) to file a certificate regarding the reimbursement of antidumping duties prior to liquidation of the relevant entries during this review period. Failure to comply with this requirement could result in the Secretary's presumption that reimbursement of antidumping duties occurred and the subsequent assessment of double antidumping duties.

This administrative review and notice are in accordance with sections 751(a)(1) and 777(i)(1) of the Act.

Dated: November 30, 1999.

Richard W. Moreland,

Acting Assistant Secretary for Import Administration.

[FR Doc. 99-31983 Filed 12-8-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-DS-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

International Trade Administration

[A-570-840]

Manganese Metal from the People's Republic of China; Preliminary Results and Partial Rescission of Antidumping Administrative Review

AGENCY: Import Administration, International Trade Administration, Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of Preliminary Results and Partial Rescission of Antidumping Duty Administrative Review of Manganese Metal from the People's Republic of China.

SUMMARY: We have preliminarily determined that sales by China Metallurgical Import & Export Hunan Corporation/Hunan Nonferrous Metals Import & Export Associated Corporation have been made below normal value during the period of review of February 1, 1998, through January 31, 1999. China Hunan International Economic Development (Group) Corporation did not respond to our questionnaire and has been assigned a dumping margin based on adverse facts available. If these preliminary results are adopted in our final results of review, we will instruct the U.S. Customs Service to assess antidumping duties based on the difference between the export price and normal value on all appropriate entries.

We have also determined that the review of China National Electronics Import & Export Hunan Company and Minmetals Precious & Rare Minerals Import & Export Corporation should be rescinded. Furthermore, neither Shieldalloy Metallurgical Corporation nor London & Scandinavian Metallurgical Co., Limited, subsidiaries of Metallurg, Inc., submitted a timely request for review. Therefore, sales by these companies have not been reviewed.

We invite interested parties to comment on these preliminary results.

EFFECTIVE DATES: December 9, 1999.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Greg Campbell or Paul Stolz, Office I, Antidumping/Countervailing Duty Enforcement, Import Administration, International Trade Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, 14th Street and Constitution Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20230; telephone (202) 482-2239 or (202) 482-4474, respectively.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Applicable Statute

Unless otherwise indicated, all citations to the Tariff Act of 1930, as

amended (the Act), are references to the provisions effective January 1, 1995, the effective date of the amendments made to the Act by the Uruguay Round Agreements Act (URAA). In addition, all references to the Department's regulations are to 19 CFR part 351 (April 1998).

Background

On February 6, 1996, the Department of Commerce (the Department) published in the **Federal Register** the antidumping duty order on manganese metal from the People's Republic of China (PRC). See *Notice of Amended Final Determination and Antidumping Duty Order: Manganese Metal from the People's Republic of China*, 61 FR 4415 (February 6, 1996) (*LTFV Investigation*). In accordance with 19 CFR 351.213(b)(2), on February 25, 1999, China Hunan International Economic Development (Group) Corporation (HIED), China Metallurgical Import & Export Hunan Corp./Hunan Nonferrous Metals Import & Export Associate Corp. (CMIECHN/CNIECHN), and Minmetals Precious & Rare Minerals Import & Export (Minmetals) requested that we conduct an administrative review of this order. On February 26, 1999, Elkem Metals Company¹ (Elkem/Eramet) requested that we conduct an administrative review of this order covering HIED, CMIECHN/CNIECHN, Minmetals, and China National Electronics Import & Export Hunan Company (CEIEC). On February 26, 1999, Kerr-McGee Chemical, LLC (Kerr-McGee) requested that we conduct an administrative review of this order covering HIED.

On March 29, 1999, in accordance with 19 CFR 351.213(c)(3), we published a notice of initiation of this antidumping duty administrative review. See 64 FR 14860. On April 20, 1999, Sumitomo Canada, Limited, (SCL), submitted an entry of appearance and requested that it receive a questionnaire so that it could establish the identity of its Chinese supplier and that its sales were made to U.S. customers not below normal value.

The Department is conducting this administrative review in accordance with section 751 of the Act. The period of review (POR) is February 1, 1998 through January 31, 1999.

Scope of Review

The merchandise covered by this review is manganese metal, which is

¹ Subsequent to this request, on June 30, 1999, the manganese metal production operations of Elkem Metals Company were acquired by Eramet Marietta Inc. Thus, this petitioner is referred to in this notice as "Elkem/Eramet."

composed principally of manganese, by weight, but also contains some impurities such as carbon, sulfur, phosphorous, iron and silicon. Manganese metal contains by weight not less than 95 percent manganese. All compositions, forms and sizes of manganese metal are included within the scope of this administrative review, including metal flake, powder, compressed powder, and fines. The subject merchandise is currently classifiable under subheadings 8111.00.45.00 and 8111.00.60.00 of the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (HTSUS). Although the HTSUS subheadings are provided for convenience and customs purposes, our written description of the scope of this proceeding is dispositive.

Partial Rescission

CEIEC notified the Department that it had not made any U.S. sales of subject merchandise during the POR. Entry data provided by the U.S. Customs Service confirms that there were no POR entries from CEIEC of manganese metal. Also, on May 7, 1999, Minmetals informed the Department that although it had made two shipments of subject merchandise to the United States at the end of the POR, it believes these shipments did not enter the United States during the POR. The Department has not identified any customs entries of subject merchandise from Minmetals during the POR.

Therefore, consistent with the Department's regulations and practice, we are rescinding this review with respect to CEIEC and Minmetals. See 19 CFR 351.213(d)(3); *Silicon Metal from Brazil; Final Results of Antidumping Duty Administrative Review*, 61 FR 46763 (September 5, 1996).

Untimely Requests for Review

On April 20, 1999, 22 days after initiation of this administrative review, SCL submitted an entry of appearance, a request for access to business proprietary information and a request that it receive a questionnaire. On April 28, 1999, Shielddalloy Metallurgical Corporation (SMC) and London & Scandinavian Metallurgical Co., Limited, (LSM), subsidiaries of Metallurg, Inc., submitted a request that the Department extend the time limit for requesting an administrative review of LSM and that the Department initiate a review of its U.S. sales. The Department declined to extend the time limit for requesting an administrative review and did not initiate a review of LSM. Although these companies were not reviewed, based upon SCL's July 15, 1999 submission, and upon LSM's

August 30, 1999 submission, we were able to ascertain SCL's and LSM's suppliers and confirm that SCL and LSM entered the merchandise at the appropriate cash deposit rate. Therefore, we intend to instruct Customs to liquidate these entries collecting the antidumping duties posted at the time of entry. This is consistent with the Department's consideration of SCL's entries during the last review. See *Manganese Metal from the People's Republic of China; Final Results of Antidumping Duty Administrative Review*, 64 FR 49447 (September 13, 1999).

Verification

As provided in section 782(i) of the Act, we verified factor information provided by a supplier, Xiang Tan Manganese Mine (XTMM). We also conducted a sales verification at CMIECHN/CNIECHN. Our verification at each of these companies consisted of standard verification procedures, including the examination of relevant sales and financial records and the selection of original documentation containing relevant information. Our verification results are detailed in the verification reports on file in the Central Records Unit (CRU) in room B-099 of the Department's main building.

Separate Rates

It is the Department's standard policy to assign all exporters of the merchandise subject to review in nonmarket economy (NME) countries a single rate unless an exporter can demonstrate an absence of government control, both in law and in fact, with respect to exports. To establish whether an exporter is sufficiently independent of government control to be entitled to a separate rate, the Department analyzes the exporter in light of the criteria established in the *Final Determination of Sales at Less Than Fair Value: Sparklers from the People's Republic of China*, 56 FR 20588 (May 6, 1991) (*Sparklers*), as amplified in the *Final Determination of Sales at Less Than Fair Value: Silicon Carbide from the People's Republic of China*, 59 FR 22585 (May 2, 1994) (*Silicon Carbide*). Evidence supporting, though not requiring, a finding of *de jure* absence of government control over export activities includes: (1) An absence of restrictive stipulations associated with an individual exporter's business and export licenses; (2) Any legislative enactments decentralizing control of companies; and (3) Any other formal measures by the government decentralizing control of companies. See *Sparklers* at 20589. A *de facto* analysis

of absence of government control over exports is based on four factors—whether the respondent: (1) Sets its own export prices independent of the government and other exporters; (2) retains the proceeds from its export sales and makes independent decisions regarding the disposition of profits or financing of losses; (3) has the authority to negotiate and sign contracts and other agreements; and (4) has autonomy from the government regarding the selection of management. See *Silicon Carbide* at 22587; see also *Sparklers* at 20589.

In our final LTFV determination, we determined that there was *de jure* and *de facto* absence of government control of each company's export activities and determined that each company warranted a company-specific dumping margin. See *LTFV Investigation*. For this period of review, CMIECHN/CNIECHN responded to the Department's request for information regarding separate rates. We have found that the evidence on the record is consistent with the final determination in the *LTFV Investigation* and CMIECHN/CNIECHN continues to demonstrate an absence of government control, both in law and in fact, with respect to this company's exports, in accordance with the criteria identified in *Sparklers* and *Silicon Carbide*.

Use of Facts Otherwise Available

Section 776(a)(2) of the Act provides that if an interested party (1) withholds information that has been requested by the Department, (2) fails to provide such information in a timely manner or in the form requested, (3) significantly impedes a proceeding under the antidumping statute, or (4) provides information that cannot be verified, the Department shall use, subject to section 782(d), facts available in reaching the applicable determination.

1. Application of Facts Available

We preliminarily determine that, in accordance with sections 776(a)(2)(A) and (C) of the Act, the use of facts otherwise available is appropriate for HIED because it did not submit a response to our questionnaire issued to it on April 20, 1999.

2. Use of Adverse Facts Available

In selecting from among the facts available, section 776(b) of the Act authorizes the Department to use an adverse inference if the Department finds that a party has failed to cooperate by not acting to the best of its ability to comply with requests for information. See *Statement of Administrative Action* (SAA), H.R. Doc. 316, Vol. 1, 103rd Cong., 2d sess. 870 at 870 (1994). To examine whether the respondent

“cooperated” by “acting to the best of its ability” under section 776(b) of the Act, the Department considers, *inter alia*, the accuracy and completeness of submitted information and whether the respondent has hindered the calculation of accurate dumping margins. See, e.g., *Certain Welded Carbon Steel Pipes and Tubes From Thailand: Final Results of Antidumping Duty Administrative Review*, 62 FR 53808, 53819–53820 (October 16, 1997).

As discussed above, HIED failed to respond to the Department’s questionnaire. Thus, we have determined that HIED withheld information we requested and significantly impeded the antidumping proceeding.

We have, therefore, determined that HIED has not acted to the best of its ability to comply with our requests for information. Accordingly, consistent with section 776(b) of the Act, we have applied adverse facts available to this company.

3. Corroboration of Secondary Information

In this review, we are using as adverse facts available the PRC-wide rate (143.32 percent) determined for non-responding exporters involved in the *LTFV Investigation*. This margin represents the highest margin in the petition, as modified by the Department for the purposes of initiation. See *Initiation of Antidumping Duty Investigation: Manganese Metal from the PRC*, 59 FR 61869 (December 2, 1994) (*LTFV Initiation*).

Information derived from the petition constitutes secondary information within the meaning of the SAA. See SAA at 870. Section 776(c) of the Act provides that the Department shall, to the extent practicable, corroborate secondary information from independent sources reasonably at its disposal. The SAA provides that “corroborate” means that the Department will satisfy itself that the secondary information to be used has probative value. The SAA at 870, however, states further that “the fact that corroboration may not be practicable in a given circumstance will not prevent the agencies from applying an adverse inference.” In addition, the SAA, at 869, emphasizes that the Department need not prove that the facts available are the best alternative information.

The PRC-wide rate being used in this proceeding as adverse facts available was previously corroborated. See *Manganese Metal from the People’s Republic of China: Final Results of Antidumping Duty Administrative*

Review, 64 FR 49447 (September 13, 1999). We have no new information that would lead us to reconsider that decision.

Export Price

For U.S. sales made by CMIECHN/CNIECHN we calculated an export price, in accordance with section 772(a) of the Act, because the subject merchandise was sold to unaffiliated purchasers in the United States prior to importation into the United States and constructed export price treatment was not otherwise indicated.

For these sales, we calculated export price based on the price to unaffiliated purchasers. We deducted an amount, where appropriate, for foreign inland freight, ocean freight, and marine insurance. The costs for these items were valued in the surrogate country (see discussion below).

U.S. Customs entry data for the POR indicate that CMIECHN/CNIECHN was the direct exporter for many more shipments of manganese metal than could be accounted for by CMIECHN/CNIECHN’s verified U.S. sales. Based upon our verification of CMIECHN/CNIECHN’s total U.S. sales, we have preliminarily determined that these additional entries are not U.S. sales by CMIECHN/CNIECHN for the purposes of this review.

Given our preliminary finding that these additional entries are not CMIECHN/CNIECHN sales for the purposes of this review, and consistent with our methodology adopted in the previous review, we have not calculated an export price for these entries. Also, for the reasons enumerated in the *Use of Facts Otherwise Available* section below, we likewise have not calculated an export price for HIED’s sales.

Normal Value

1. Nonmarket-Economy Status

For the calculation of dumping margins for merchandise originating in NME countries, section 773(c)(1) of the Act provides that the Department shall determine normal value (NV) using a factors-of-production methodology if (1) the merchandise is exported from an NME country, and (2) the information does not permit the calculation of NV using home-market prices, third-country prices, or constructed value under section 773(a) of the Act.

The Department has treated the PRC as an NME country in all previous antidumping cases. In accordance with section 771(18)(c)(i) of the Act, any determination that a foreign country is a NME country shall remain in effect until revoked by the administering

authority. None of the parties to this proceeding has contested such treatment in this review. Furthermore, available information does not permit the calculation of NV using home-market prices, third-country prices or constructed value under section 773(a) of the Act. Therefore, we treated the PRC as a NME country for purposes of this review and calculated NV by valuing the factors of production in a comparable market-economy country which is a significant producer of comparable merchandise.

2. Surrogate-Country Selection

In accordance with section 773(c)(4) of the Act and section 351.408(b) of our regulations, we preliminarily determine that India is the most comparable surrogate to the PRC. (See Memorandum to Susan Kuhnback from Jeff May; “Non-Market-Economy Status and Surrogate Country Selection” dated July 13, 1999, a public copy of which is available in the Central Records Unit.) In addition, India is a significant producer of comparable merchandise. Therefore, for this review, we have selected India as the surrogate country and have used publicly available information relating to India, unless otherwise noted, to value the various factors of production.

3. Factors-of-Production Valuation

For purposes of calculating NV, we valued PRC factors of production in accordance with section 773(c)(1) of the Act. Factors of production include but are not limited to the following elements: (1) hours of labor required; (2) quantities of raw materials employed; (3) amounts of energy and other utilities consumed; and (4) representative capital cost, including depreciation. In examining potential surrogate values, we selected, where possible, the publicly available value which was: (1) an average non-export value; (2) representative of a range of prices within the POR or most contemporaneous with the POR; (3) product-specific; and (4) tax-exclusive. Where we could not obtain a POR-representative price for an appropriate surrogate value, we selected a value in accordance with the remaining criteria mentioned above and which was the closest in time to the POR. In accordance with this methodology, we have valued the factors as described below.

We valued manganese ore using a June 1998 export price quote (in U.S. dollars) from a Brazilian manganese mine for manganese carbonate ore. We adjusted this price further to account for the reported manganese content of the ore used in the PRC manufacture of the

subject merchandise and to account for the differences in transportation distances.

To value various process chemicals used in the production of manganese metal, we used prices obtained from the following Indian sources: *Indian Chemical Weekly* (March, 1998 through March, 1999) and the *Monthly Statistics of Foreign Trade of India, Volume II—Imports* (March, 1998) (*Import Statistics*). Where necessary, we adjusted these values to reflect inflation up to the POR using an Indian wholesale price index (WPI) published by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Additionally, we adjusted these values, where appropriate, to account for differences in chemical content and to account for freight costs incurred between the suppliers and manganese metal producers.

To value the labor input, consistent with 19 CFR 351.408(c)(3), we used the regression-based estimated wage rate for the PRC as calculated by the Department.

For selling, general, and administrative expenses (SG&A), factory overhead, and profit values, we used information from the *Reserve Bank of India Bulletin* (January, 1997) for the Indian industrial grouping "Processing and Manufacturing: Metals, Chemicals, and Products Thereof." To value factory overhead, we calculated the ratio of factory overhead expenses to the cost of materials and energy. Using the same source, we also calculated the SG&A expense as a percentage of the cost of materials, energy and factory overhead, and profit as a percentage of the cost of production (*i.e.*, materials, energy, labor, factory overhead and SG&A).

For most packing materials values, we used per-unit values based on the data in the *Import Statistics*. For iron drums, however, we used a price quote from an Indian manufacturer rather than a value from the *Import Statistics* because the quoted price was for the appropriate type of container used, whereas the *Import Statistics* were aggregated over various types of containers. We made further adjustments to account for freight costs incurred between the PRC supplier and manganese metal producers.

To value electricity, we used the average rate applicable to large industrial users throughout India as reported in the *1995 Confederation of Indian Industries Handbook of Statistics*. We adjusted the March 1, 1995, value to reflect inflation up to the POR using the WPI published by the IMF.

To value rail freight, we relied on rate tables published by the Indian Railway

Conference Association. To value truck freight, we used a price quotation from an Indian freight provider.

For a more detailed explanation of the methodology used in calculating various surrogate values, see Memorandum to the File from Case Team; "Calculations for the Preliminary Results" (December 2, 1999).

Preliminary Results of the Review

We hereby determine that the following weighted-average margins exist for the period February 1, 1998, through January 31, 1999:

Manufacturer/exporter	Margin (percent)
CMIECHN/CNIECHN	2.00
PRC-wide	143.32

Because we are rescinding the review with respect to CEIEC and Minmetals, the respective company-specific rates for these companies remain unchanged. Likewise, because SMC and LSM submitted an untimely request for review, LSM's sales of subject merchandise during the POR were not reviewed. Moreover, an administrative review was not initiated with respect to SCL for this POR, and, therefore, SCL's U.S. sales were not reviewed.

Any interested party may request a hearing within 30 days of publication of this notice. Any hearing, if requested, will be held approximately 37 days after the publication of this notice. Interested parties may submit written comments (case briefs) within 30 days of the date of publication of this notice. Rebuttal comments (rebuttal briefs), which must be limited to issues raised in the case briefs, may be filed not later than 35 days after the date of publication. The Department will issue a notice of final results of this administrative review, including the results of its analysis of issues raised in any such written comments, within 120 days of publication of these preliminary results.

Assessment and Cash Deposit Rates

The Department shall determine, and the Customs Service shall assess, antidumping duties on all appropriate entries. The Department will issue appraisal instructions directly to the Customs Service.

In order to assess duties on appropriate entries as a result of this review, we have calculated entry-specific duty assessment rates based on the ratio of the amount of duty calculated for each of CMIECHN/CNIECHN's verified sales during the POR to the total entered value of the corresponding entry. The Department will instruct the Customs Service to

assess these rates on those entries which correspond to sales verified by the Department as having been made directly by CMIECHN/CNIECHN. With respect to SCL and LSM, third country resellers which established the identity of their suppliers, the Department will instruct Customs to liquidate these entries at the cash deposit rate in effect for their supplier(s) at the time of entry.

As discussed in the *Export Price* section above, however, the Customs entry data for the POR indicates that many more shipments of manganese metal listing CMIECHN/CNIECHN as the manufacturer/exporter were entered into the United States than the number of POR sales reported by CMIECHN/CNIECHN. On those entries listing CMIECHN/CNIECHN as the direct exporter but for which there are no corresponding verified sales, the Department will instruct the Customs Service to assess the PRC-wide rate of 143.32 percent. This is consistent with the Department's practice as applied during the last review. See *Manganese Metal from the People's Republic of China; Final Results of Antidumping Duty Administrative Review*, 64 FR 49449 (September 13, 1999). The Department will likewise instruct the Customs Service to assess the PRC-wide rate on all POR entries from HIED and on all other PRC exporters that do not have separate rates.

Furthermore, the following cash deposit requirements will be effective upon publication of the final results of this administrative review for all shipments of the subject merchandise entered, or withdrawn from warehouse, for consumption on or after the publication date, as provided for by section 751(a)(1) of the Act: (1) for CMIECHN/CNIECHN, the cash deposit rate will be the rates established in the final results of this review for this firm; (2) for Minmetals and CEIEC, which we determined to be entitled to a separate rate in the *LTFV Investigation* but which did not have shipments or entries to the United States during the POR, the rates will continue to be 5.88 percent and 11.77 percent, respectively (these are the rates which currently apply to these companies); (3) for sales made by LSM and SCL, the cash deposit rates will be those cash deposit rates in effect at the time of entry for their respective PRC supplier(s);² (4) for other non-PRC

² See *e.g.*, *Manganese Metal from the People's Republic of China; Final Results of Antidumping Duty Administrative Review*, 64 FR 49447 (September 13, 1999); *Fresh Garlic from the PRC; Final Results of Antidumping Duty Administrative Review and Partial Termination of Administrative Review*, 62 FR 23758, 23760; *Sparklers from the*

exporters of subject merchandise from the PRC, the cash deposit rate will be the rate applicable to the PRC supplier of that exporter; and (5) for all other PRC exporters, including HIED, the cash deposit rate will be 143.32 percent. These deposit requirements, when imposed, shall remain in effect until publication of the final results of the next administrative review.

This notice also serves as a preliminary reminder to importers of their responsibility under 19 CFR 351.402(f) to file a certificate regarding the reimbursement of antidumping duties prior to liquidation of the relevant entries during this review period. Failure to comply with this requirement could result in the Secretary's presumption that reimbursement of antidumping duties occurred and the subsequent assessment of double antidumping duties.

We are issuing and publishing this determination in accordance with sections 751(a)(1) and 777(i)(1) of the Act.

Dated: December 2, 1999.

Richard W. Moreland,
Acting Assistant Secretary for Import Administration.

[FR Doc. 99-31984 Filed 12-8-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-DS-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Institute of Standards and Technology

Evaluation of the Common Industry Format (CIF) for Reporting the Results of Usability Tests

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 take this opportunity to comment on 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 February 7, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to Linda Engelmeier, Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 5027, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20230 or via the Internet at LEngelme@doc.gov.

PRC; Final Results of Antidumping Duty Administrative Review, 61 FR 39630, 39631.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument(s) and instructions should be directed to: Sharon Laskowski, Ph.D., National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), 100 Bureau Drive, Stop 8940, Gaithersburg, MD 20899-8940.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

The Common Industry Format (CIF) has been developed as part of the IUSR (Industry Usability Reporting; <http://www.nist.gov/iusr>) Project. The goal of that project is to find ways to highlight the importance of usability in software development. Companies that make software can now use the CIF to communicate their findings on usability; the CIF can be used by companies that buy software to help make more informed decisions.

CIFter (Common Industry Format—Testing of Usability Evaluation Reports) is a project that seeks to determine whether the extent of the variability in usability test results can be minimized by using a common format for reporting results. CIFter participants will use the CIF (developed in the NIST IUSR project) in the context of an experimental setting to report on results of user testing of a web site to be designated by CIFter.

In order to validate the use of the CIF for reporting usability results, the CIFter project team plans to identify a website and 5 or more evaluation teams. These teams will be recruited from professional usability practitioners, the software industry, and academic institutions. Each of the teams will perform testing of the website and will report the results of their evaluation in the recommended format (CIF).

Alternatively, NIST expects that members of the IUSR project, both in the U.S. and Europe, might submit completed CIF forms to facilitate comparison of reports from a variety of companies. NIST's role in such cases would be to facilitate sharing of the results among its industrial participants.

II. Method of Collection

After performing a usability analysis of a software product, participants will complete the CIF form and return it to NIST. All elements of the CIF are free-form text rather than checklists.

III. Data

OMB Approval Number: None.

Agency Form Number: None.

Type of Request: New collection.

Burden: 120 hours.

Number of Respondents: 30.

Average Hours Per Response: 4 hours.
Affected Public: Researchers in academic, public and business settings.
Respondent's Obligation: Voluntary.

IV. Request 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 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 the notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval of the information collection; they also will become a matter of public record.

Dated: December 3, 1999.

Linda Engelmeier,
Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Office of the Chief Information Officer.

[FR Doc. 99-31963 Filed 12-8-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-13-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 120399B]

Endangered Species; Permits

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

ACTION: Issuance of a modification to scientific research permit 1159.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that NMFS has issued a modification to scientific research permit 1159 to Dr. Robert Brownell of NMFS Southwest Fisheries Science Center (SWFSC).

ADDRESSES: The application and related documents are available for review by appointment in the Office of Protected Resources, Endangered Species Division, F/PR3, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910 (301-713-1401).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Terri Jordan, Silver Spring, MD (ph: 301-713-1401, fax: 301-713-0376, e-mail: Terri.Jordan@noaa.gov).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: