

Business-Cooperative Service, USDA, STOP 1521, Room 5412, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250, Telephone: (202) 720-9558. FAX: 202-720-6561. E-mail: PWing@rus.usda.gov.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The maximum loan and grant awards are calculated as 3.0 percent of the projected program level for zero-interest loans and grants during the fiscal year. The projected program level for zero-interest loans during FY 1998 is \$25,000,000, and the projected program level for grants is \$11,000,000. Applying the specified 3.0 percent to these program levels results in the maximum loan award of \$750,000 and the maximum grant award of \$330,000.

Dated: December 19, 1997.

**Dayton J. Watkins,**

*Administrator, Rural Business-Cooperative Service.*

[FR Doc. 97-33696 Filed 12-24-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-XY-U

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### Bureau of Export Administration

#### Sensors and Instrumentation Technical Advisory Committee; Notice of Open Meeting

A meeting of the Sensors and Instrumentation Technical Advisory Committee will be held January 13, 1998, 9:00 a.m., in the Herbert C. Hoover Building, Room 1617M-2, 14th Street & Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. The Committee advises the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration with respect to technical questions that affect the level of export controls applicable to sensors and instrumentation equipment and technology.

#### Agenda

1. Opening remarks by the Chairman.
2. Presentation of papers or comments by the public.
3. Update on the status of the National Defense Authorization Act implementation regulation.
4. Update on the status of the Wassenaar Arrangement implementation regulation.

The meeting will be open to the public and a limited number of seats will be available. To the extent that time permits, members of the public may present oral statements to the Committee. Written statements may be submitted at any time before or after the meeting. However, to facilitate distribution of public presentation materials to the Committee members, the Committee suggests that presenters

forward the public presentation materials two weeks prior to the meeting date to the following address: Ms. Lee Ann Carpenter, OAS/EA/BXA—MS:3886C, U.S. Department of Commerce, 14th St. & Pennsylvania Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20230.

For further information or copies of the minutes, contact Lee Ann Carpenter on (202) 482-2583.

Dated: December 22, 1997.

**Lee Ann Carpenter,**

*Director, Technical Advisory Committee Unit.*

[FR Doc. 97-33685 Filed 12-24-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-DT-M

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Institute of Standards and Technology

#### Manufacturing Extension Partnership National Advisory Board

**AGENCY:** National Institute of Standards and Technology, Department of Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice of Open Meeting.

**SUMMARY:** Pursuant to the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. app. 2, notice is hereby given that the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) National Advisory Board, National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), will meet to hold a meeting on Wednesday, January 21, 1998. The Manufacturing Extension Partnership National Advisory Board is composed of 9 members appointed by the Director of NIST who were selected for their expertise in the area of industrial extension and their work on behalf of smaller manufacturers. The Board was set up under the direction of the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology to fill a need for outside input and advice for MEP, a unique program consisting of centers in all 50 states and Puerto Rico which are created by a state, federal and local partnership. The Board works closely with the Manufacturing Extension Partnership to provide input and advice on MEP's programs, plans and policies. The purpose of this meeting is to delve into areas the Board selected at the previous meeting. On January 21, 1998, the agenda for the meeting of the Board will include an ethics briefing by the Department of Commerce's Ethics Division, an overview of MEP's national marketing efforts to assist the centers in reaching their clients, studying the impacts of services provided by the centers and an overview of a national initiative-supply chain integration.

**DATES:** The meeting will convene on January 21, 1998 at 9:00 am and will adjourn at 3:00 pm.

**ADDRESSES:** The meeting will be held in Building 101, Employee Lounge (seating capacity 60, includes 15 participants), at NIST, Gaithersburg, Maryland.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** MEP services to smaller manufacturers address the needs of the national market as well as the unique needs of each company. Since MEP is committed to providing this type of individualized service through its centers, the program requires the perspective of locally-based experts to be incorporated into its national plans. The MEP National Advisory Board was set up at the direction of the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology to maintain MEP's focus on local and market based needs. The MEP National Advisory Board was approved on October 24, 1996, in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. app.2., to provide advice on MEP programs, plans, and policies; assess soundness of MEP plans and strategies; assess current performance against MEP program plans, and function in an advisory capacity. The Board will meet three times a year and reports to the Director of NIST. This will be the first meeting of the members in 1998.

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Linda Acierio, Assistant to the Director for Policy, Manufacturing Extension Partnership, National Institute of Standards and Technology, Gaithersburg, MD 20899, Telephone number (301) 975-5033.

Dated: December 22, 1997.

**Michael R. Rubin,**

*Deputy Chief Counsel for NIST.*

[FR Doc. 97-33762 Filed 12-24-97; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 093097E]

#### Small Takes of Marine Mammals Incidental to Specified Activities; Space Launch Vehicles at Vandenberg Air Force Base, CA

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

**ACTION:** Notice of issuance of incidental harassment authorizations.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with provisions of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) as amended, notification is

hereby given that Incidental Harassment Authorizations to take small numbers of seals and sea lions by harassment incidental to launches of Delta II, Titan II, Titan IV, and Taurus launch vehicles at Vandenberg Air Force Base, CA (Vandenberg) have been issued to the U.S. Air Force.

**DATES:** Effective December 19, 1997.

**ADDRESSES:** The application and authorizations are available for review in the following offices: Marine Mammal Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910 and the Southwest Region, NMFS, 501 West Ocean Blvd. Long Beach, CA 90802. A copy of the application, previous documentation and **Federal Register** notices on this action may be obtained by writing to this address or by telephoning the contact listed below.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Kenneth Hollingshead, Office of Protected Resources at 301-713-2055, or Irma Lagomarsino, Southwest Regional Office at 562-980-4016.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

### Background

Section 101(a)(5)(A) of the MMPA (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*) directs the Secretary of Commerce to allow, upon request, the incidental, but not intentional, taking of marine mammals by U.S. citizens who engage in a specified activity (other than commercial fishing) within a specified geographical region if certain findings are made and regulations are issued.

Permission may be granted if NMFS finds that the taking will have a negligible impact on the species or stock(s); will not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of the species or stock(s) for subsistence uses; and the permissible methods of taking and requirements pertaining to the monitoring and reporting of such taking are set forth. NMFS has defined "negligible impact" in 50 CFR 216.103 as " \* \* \* an impact resulting from the specified activity that cannot be reasonably expected to, and is not reasonably likely to, adversely affect the species or stock through effects on annual rates of recruitment or survival."

Subsection 101(a)(5)(D) of the MMPA established an expedited process by which U.S. citizens can apply for an authorization to incidentally take small numbers of marine mammals by harassment for a period of up to one year. The MMPA defines "harassment" as:

...any act of pursuit, torment, or annoyance which (a) has the potential to injure a marine mammal or marine mammal stock in the wild; or (b) has the potential to disturb a

marine mammal or marine mammal stock in the wild by causing disruption of behavioral patterns, including, but not limited to, migration, breathing, nursing, breeding, feeding, or sheltering.

Subsection 101(a)(5)(D) establishes a 45-day time limit for NMFS review of an application followed by a 30-day public notice and comment period on any proposed authorizations for the incidental harassment of small numbers of marine mammals. Within 45 days of the close of the comment period, NMFS must either issue or deny issuance of the authorization.

### Summary of Request

On October 7, 1997, NMFS received an application from the U.S. Air Force, Vandenberg, requesting continuation of authorizations for the harassment of small numbers of seals and sea lions incidental to launches of Delta II, Titan II, Titan IV, and Taurus launch vehicles at Vandenberg. This application incorporated by reference the information contained in applications provided last year for these rocket launches. These applications (Titan II and IV-January 24, 1996, Delta II-July 17, 1996, Taurus-August 14, 1996) are available upon request (see **ADDRESSES**).

### Comments and Responses

A notice of receipt of the application and the proposed authorization was published on November 14, 1997 (62 FR 61092) and a 30-day public comment period was provided on the application and proposed authorization. No comments were received during the comment period.

### Discussion

In addition to this action, NMFS has received a petition for regulations and an application for a small take authorization under section 101(a)(5)(A) of the MMPA. If implemented, this rulemaking will replace these 1-year authorizations, along with another issued previously for Lockheed launch vehicles (62 FR 40335, July 28, 1997) with a 5-year regulatory program, governing incidental takes of marine mammals by launches of all rocket and missile types from Vandenberg. A notice of this petition was published on November 14, 1997 (62 FR 61077).

### Description of Marine Mammals and Potential Effects of Launches on Marine Mammals

The marine mammal species anticipated to be incidentally harassed by launches from Vandenberg are harbor seals (*Phoca vitulina*), California sea lions (*Zalophus californianus*), northern elephant seals (*Mirounga angustirostris*),

northern fur seals (*Callorhinus ursinus*) and possibly Guadalupe fur seals (*Arctocephalus townsendi*) in the vicinity of Vandenberg and on the Northern Channel Islands (NCI). In conjunction with publication of the previous application notices for launch activities, a description of the Southern California Bight population of seals and sea lions and the potential impacts from rocket launches on these species and stocks was provided on August 18, 1995 (60 FR 43120), and August 29, 1996 (61 FR 45404), for Delta II authorizations, September 25, 1996 (61 FR 50276), for Taurus rocket authorization, and March 15, 1996 (61 FR 10727), for Titan II and IV authorizations. Interested reviewers are encouraged to refer to those documents for the appropriate discussion. These documents are available from NMFS (see **ADDRESSES**).

As a result of the noise associated with launches and the sonic boom resulting from some launch vehicles at certain trajectories, there is a potential to cause a startle response to those seals and sea lions that haul out on the coastline of Vandenberg and on the NCI. The effect on the above listed seals and sea lions would be anticipated to result in a negligible short-term impact to small numbers of seals and sea lions that are hauled out at the time of a launch. No impacts are anticipated to animals that are in the water at the time of launch. Detailed descriptions of the expected impact from rocket launches on harbor seals and other marine mammals have been provided in the above referenced **Federal Register** notices and are not repeated here.

### Conclusions

Based upon information provided by the applicant, and previous reviews of the incidental take of seals and sea lions by this activity, NMFS believes that the short-term impact of the rocket launches at Vandenberg and sonic booms on NCI is expected to result at worst, in a temporary reduction in utilization of the haulout as seals and/or sea lions leave the beach for the safety of the water. Launchings are not expected to result in any reduction in the number of seals or sea lions, and they are expected to continue to occupy the same areas. In addition, there will not be any impact on the habitat itself. Based upon studies conducted for previous space vehicle launches at Vandenberg, significant long-term impacts on seals and sea lions at Vandenberg are unlikely. For these reasons, NMFS has determined that the requirements of section 101(a)(5)(D) have been met and the authorization can be issued.

## Authorization

For the above reasons, NMFS has issued an incidental harassment authorization for a period of time not to exceed 1 year for launches of Delta II, Titan II, Titan IV, and Taurus launch vehicles at Vandenberg provided the monitoring and reporting requirements currently in effect are continued.

Dated: December 19, 1997.

**Hilda Diaz-Soltero,**

*Director, Office of Protected Resources,  
National Marine Fisheries Service.*

[FR Doc. 97-33642 Filed 12-24-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-F

## COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS

### 1998 National Capital Arts and Cultural Affairs Program

Notice is hereby given that Pub. L. 105-83, as amended, authorizing the National Capital Arts and Cultural Affairs Program, has been funded for 1998 in the amount of \$7,000,000.00. All requests for information and applications for grants should be addressed to: Charles H. Atherton, Secretary, Commission of Fine Arts, Pension Building, Suite 312, 441 F Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001; Phone: 202-504-2200.

Deadlines for receipt of submission of grants applications is 2 March 1998.

This program provides grants for general operating support of organizations whose primary purpose is performing, exhibiting, and/or presenting the arts. To be eligible for these grants, organizations must be located in the District of Columbia, must be not-for-profit, non-academic institutions of demonstrated national repute, and must have annual income, exclusive of federal funds, in excess of one million dollars for the current year and for the past three years.

**Charles H. Atherton,**

*Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 97-33720 Filed 12-24-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6330-01-M

## COMMITTEE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TEXTILE AGREEMENTS

### Announcement of Import Restraint Limits for Certain Cotton, Wool, Man-Made Fiber, Silk Blend and Other Vegetable Fiber Textile Products Produced or Manufactured in Bahrain

December 19, 1997.

**AGENCY:** Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements (CITA).

**ACTION:** Issuing a directive to the Commissioner of Customs establishing limits.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** January 1, 1998.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Janet Heinzen, International Trade Specialist, Office of Textiles and Apparel, U.S. Department of Commerce, (202) 482-4212. For information on the quota status of these limits, refer to the Quota Status Reports posted on the bulletin boards of each Customs port or call (202) 927-5850. For information on embargoes and quota re-openings, call (202) 482-3715.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

**Authority:** Section 204 of the Agricultural Act of 1956, as amended (7 U.S.C. 1854); Executive Order 11651 of March 3, 1972, as amended.

The import restraint limits for textile products, produced or manufactured in Bahrain and exported during the period January 1, 1998 through December 31, 1998 are based on limits notified to the Textiles Monitoring Body pursuant to the Uruguay Round Agreement on Textiles and Clothing (ATC).

Pursuant to the provisions of the ATC, the second stage of the integration commences on January 1, 1998 (see 60 FR 21075, published on May 1, 1995). Accordingly, certain previously restrained categories may have been modified or eliminated and certain limits may have been revised. Integrated products will no longer be subject to quota. CITA has informed Bahrain of its intent to continue the bilateral visa arrangement for those products.

In the letter published below, the Chairman of CITA directs the Commissioner of Customs to establish the limits for the 1998 period.

A description of the textile and apparel categories in terms of HTS numbers is available in the CORRELATION: Textile and Apparel Categories with the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (see **Federal Register** notice 61 FR 66263, published on December 17, 1996). Also see 62 FR 51832, published on October

3, 1997. Information regarding the 1998 CORRELATION will be published in the **Federal Register** at a later date.

**Troy H. Cribb,**

*Chairman, Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements.*

### Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements

December 19, 1997.

Commissioner of Customs,  
*Department of the Treasury, Washington, DC 20229.*

Dear Commissioner: Pursuant to section 204 of the Agricultural Act of 1956, as amended (7 U.S.C. 1854); Executive Order 11651 of March 3, 1972, as amended; and the Uruguay Round Agreement on Textiles and Clothing (ATC), you are directed to prohibit, effective on January 1, 1998, entry into the United States for consumption and withdrawal from warehouse for consumption of cotton, wool, man-made fiber, silk blend and other vegetable fiber textile products in the following categories, produced or manufactured in Bahrain and exported during the twelve-month period beginning on January 1, 1998 and extending through December 31, 1998, in excess of the following levels of restraint:

Category	Twelve-month restraint limit
Group I 237, 239pt. <sup>1</sup> , 331-336, 338, 339, 340-342, 345, 347, 348, 350-352, 359pt. <sup>2</sup> , 431, 433-436, 438, 440, 442-448, 459pt. <sup>3</sup> , 631, 633-636, 638, 639, 640-647, 648, 649, 650-652, 659pt. <sup>4</sup> , 831, 833-836, 838, 840, 842-847, 850-852, 858 and 859pt. <sup>5</sup> , as a group.	43,267,869 square meters equivalent.
Sublevels in Group I 338/339 ..... 340/640 .....	601,216 dozen. 288,453 dozen of which not more than 216,339 dozen shall be in Categories 340-Y/640-Y <sup>6</sup> .

<sup>1</sup>Category 239pt.: only HTS number 6209.20.5040 (diapers).

<sup>2</sup>Category 359pt.: all HTS numbers except 6406.99.1550.

<sup>3</sup>Category 459pt.: all HTS numbers except 6405.20.6030, 6405.20.6060, 6405.20.6090, 6406.99.1505 and 6406.99.1560.

<sup>4</sup>Category 659pt.: all HTS numbers except 6406.99.1510 and 6406.99.1540.

<sup>5</sup>Category 859pt.: only HTS numbers 6115.19.8040, 6117.10.6020, 6212.10.5030, 6212.10.9040, 6212.20.0030, 6212.30.0030, 6212.90.0090, 6214.10.2000 and 6214.90.0090.