

deadline for submission of comments on the EA will generally be within 30 days of its service.

Decided: December 22, 1997.

By the Board, David M. Konschnik,  
Director, Office of Proceedings.

**Vernon A. Williams,**

*Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 97-33860 Filed 12-30-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915-00-P

## DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

### International Trade Data System Project Office; Proposed Collection; Comment Request

**ACTION:** Notice and request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of the Treasury, 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 and/or continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13 (44 U.S.C. 3505(c)(2)(A)). Currently, the International Trade Data System Project Office within the Department of the Treasury is soliciting comments concerning the migration of the North American Trade Automation Prototype (NATAP) from a prototype to an operational pilot, and the pilot of the International Trade Prototype both of which will operate under the International Trade Data System (ITDS).

**DATES:** Written comments should be received on or before April 5, 1998. To be assured of consideration.

**ADDRESSES:** Direct all written comments to The Department of the Treasury, International Trade Data Systems Project Office, Attn: William Nolle, 1300 Pennsylvania Ave. NW., Suite 4000, Washington, DC 20229, Telephone (202) 216-2760.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Requests for additional information or copies of the instructions should be directed to The Department of the Treasury, International Trade Data Systems Project Office, Attn.: William Nolle, 1300 Pennsylvania Ave. NW., Suite 4000, Washington, DC 20229, Telephone (202) 216-2760. Information concerning NATAP can also be obtained at the following Web Site: [www.itds.treas.gov](http://www.itds.treas.gov).

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

*Title:* The International Trade Data System; North American Trade

Automation Prototype (NATAP), and the International Trade Prototype (ITP).

*OMB Number:* 1505-0162.

*Abstract:* After extensive consultation with the trade community in the three countries, the NAFTA Information Exchange and Automation Working Group developed the North American Trade Automation Prototype (NATAP). NATAP is a prototype developed by the U.S., Canada, and Mexico to experiment with standardized data, advanced automation, technologies, communications, and encryption designed to reduce costs and improve trade among the three NAFTA countries. This is mandated by Article 512 of the NAFTA. NATAP has been endorsed by the three governments and their trade communities as a limited six month test to be conducted at two US/Canada and four US/Mexico border locations. After the prototype period ending in May 1998, NATAP will stop; the governments and trade community will conduct joint and individual evaluations of the concepts experienced in NATAP and will move NATAP from a prototype to a pilot.

The intent of the International Trade Prototype (ITP) is nearly identical to that of NATAP, with some variations. ITP is an initiative with the United Kingdom Customs and Excise Administration. ITP employs similar data and technology as NATAP but extends this type of processing to the ocean (marine) and air environments. NATAP, on the other hand, was limited to land border truck and rail transactions. While the ITP is being done directly with the United Kingdom, it is being carefully examined by the European Economic Union (EEU).

These two operational pilots (NATAP and ITP) will be used as a proof of concept for many attributes for the International Trade Data System (ITDS) as defined in the National Performance Review (NPR) under initiative "IT 06" and as noted in the "Access America" NPR report "A09" in which the Vice President has designated NATAP to validate the International Trade Data System concept. In addition, NATAP incorporates encryption and privacy as noted in NPR initiative "IT10." NATAP and ITP are compatible as a proof of concept of the International Trade Data System and lead into other international trade initiatives such as international standardization of trade date being developed by the G-7 countries, and harmonization efforts underway with the Asian Pacific Economic Conference (APEC).

In addition to the international standardization aspects of United States international, the intent of the U.S.

Treasury, International Trade Data System Project Office is to demonstrate the integration of individual U.S. federal agency trade procedures into a comprehensive international trade process that includes the clearance and admissibility of goods, drivers/crew, and conveyances for purposes of enforcement, revenue, health and safety, etc.

*Current Actions:* The three governments have agreed to extend NATAP as a prototype for six additional months until May 15, 1998. At the end of this prototype period, the three governments have agreed to deploy NATAP as an operational pilot. Note that the distinction between a prototype and operational pilots is that under the prototype, participants were required to conduct trade in the prototype and duplicate the same transaction in the current system. As an operational pilot, the transaction processed under the pilot will constitute the bonafide declaration and release. It will not be necessary under the pilot to perform both processes to obtain release of goods.

Since we have gained much experience with NATAP in these advanced methods of processing, the International Trade Prototype effort with the United Kingdom will incorporate lessons learned from the NATAP and will move directly into the operation pilot phase.

This is a request to permit the United States Treasury Department along with the Federal agencies participating in the NATAP and ITP to allow the collection of data for these pilots for a three year period.

Volunteers have agreed to participate in NATAP and ITP in order to provide traders with the opportunity to experiment with these advanced technologies and procedures with minimal expense. Through their evaluation of NATAP and ITP, they will have input into future trade processes, requirements and the design, development, and deployment of the International Trade Data System.

*Type of Review:* Extension.

*Affected Public:* Importers, exporters, customs house brokers, carriers (truck and rail) who have volunteered to participate in NATAP and ITP.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* There are approximately 120 U.S. participants. Estimated number of respondents is 120.

*Estimated Time per Respondents:* Each response will not exceed 3.5 minutes.

*Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours:* 0 (No additional burden hours required. Pilot removes the need for

parallel processing as stated in original notice of November 25, 1996. Pilot replaces burden hours for Customs document CF 3461-ALT 1515-0069.)

**Request for Comments:** Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval. All comments will become a matter of public record.

Comments are invited on: (a) evaluate whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the function of the agency, including whether the information and the prototype will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of this information to be collected; (d) ways to minimize the burden of information on respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology; (e) estimates of capital start-up costs and costs of operation, maintenance, and purchase of services to provide information.

**Richard A. Kuzmack,**

*Deputy Director, International Trade Data System Project Office.*

[FR Doc. 97-34039 Filed 12-30-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4810-25-M

## DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

### Submission to OMB for Review; Comment Request

December 16, 1997.

The Department of Treasury has submitted the following public information collection requirement(s) to OMB for review and clearance under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13. Copies of the submission(s) may be obtained by calling the Treasury Bureau Clearance Officer listed. Comments regarding this information collection should be addressed to the OMB reviewer listed and to the Treasury Department Clearance Officer, Department of the Treasury, Room 2110, 1425 New York Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20220.

#### Internal Revenue Service (IRS)

**OMB Number:** 1545-1534.

**Regulation Project Number:** REG-252936-96 NPRM and Temporary.

**Type of Review:** Extension.

**Title:** Rewards for Information Relating to Violations of Internal Revenue Laws.

**Description:** The regulations relate to rewards for information that results in

the detection and punishment of violations of the Internal Revenue Laws.

**Respondents:** Individuals or households, Business or other for-profit, Not-for-profit institutions.

**Estimated Number of Respondents:** 10,000.

**Estimated Burden Hours Per Respondent:** 3 hours.

**Frequency of Response:** On occasion.

**Estimated Total Reporting Burden:** 30,000 hours.

**Clearance Officer:** Garrick Shear, (202) 622-3869, Internal Revenue Service, Room 5571, 1111 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20224.

**OMB Reviewer:** Alexander T. Hunt, (202) 395-7860, Office of Management and Budget, Room 10226, New Executive Office Building, Washington, DC 20503.

**Lois K. Holland,**

*Departmental Reports Management Officer.*

[FR Doc. 97-34024 Filed 12-30-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4830-01-P

## DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

### Submission to OMB for Review; Comment Request

December 22, 1997.

The Department of Treasury has submitted the following public information collection requirement(s) to OMB for review and clearance under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13. Copies of the submission(s) may be obtained by calling the Treasury Bureau Clearance Officer listed. Comments regarding this information collection should be addressed to the OMB reviewer listed and to the Treasury Department Clearance Officer, Department of the Treasury, Room 2110, 1425 New York Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20220.

#### Internal Revenue Service (IRS)

**OMB Number:** 1545-1537.

**Regulation Project Number:** REG-253578-96 NPRM.

**Type of Review:** Extension.

**Title:** Health Insurance Portability for Group Health Plans (Temporary) Interim Rules for Health Insurance Portability for Group Health Plans.

**Description:** The regulations provide guidance for group health plans and the employers maintaining them regarding requirements imposed on plans relating to pre-existing condition exclusions, discrimination based on health status, and access to coverage.

**Respondents:** Business or other for-profit, Not-for-profit institutions, State, Local or Tribal Government.

**Estimated Number of Respondents:** 1,300,000.

**Estimated Burden Hours Per Respondent:** 27 minutes.

**Estimated Total Reporting Burden:** 591,561 hours.

**Clearance Officer:** Garrick Shear, (202) 622-3869, Internal Revenue Service, Room 5571, 1111 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20224.

**OMB Reviewer:** Alexander T. Hunt, (202) 395-7860, Office of Management and Budget, Room 10226, New Executive Office Building, Washington, DC 20503.

**Lois K. Holland,**

*Departmental Reports Management Officer.*

[FR Doc. 97-34025 Filed 12-30-97; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

### Submission to OMB for Review; Comment Request

December 22, 1997.

The Department of Treasury has submitted the following public information collection requirement(s) to OMB for review and clearance under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13. Copies of the submission(s) may be obtained by calling the Treasury Bureau Clearance Officer listed. Comments regarding this information collection should be addressed to the OMB reviewer listed and to the Treasury Department Clearance Officer, Department of the Treasury, Room 2110, 1425 New York Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20220.

#### Internal Revenue Service (IRS)

**OMB Number:** 1545-1224.

**Regulation Project Number:** INTL-112-88 Final.

**Type of Review:** Extension.

**Title:** Allocation and Apportionment of Deduction for State Income Taxes.

**Description:** The reporting requirements affect those taxpayers claiming foreign tax credits and that elect to use an alternative method of allocating and apportioning deductions for state income taxes. This information will be used by the IRS to estimate the resources to be required in auditing income tax returns, and should facilitate the completion of audits.

**Respondents:** Business or other for-profit.

**Estimated Number of Respondents:** 1,000.

**Estimated Burden Hours Per Respondent:** 1 hour.

**Frequency of Response:** Annually.

**Estimated Total Reporting Burden:** 1,000 hours.

**OMB Number:** 1545-1291.

**Regulation Project Number:** PS-78-91 Final.