

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

**Donald A. Cool,**

*Director, Division of Industrial and Medical Nuclear Safety, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards.*

[FR Doc. 98-11341 Filed 4-28-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590-01-P

## OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

### Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request for Reclearance of a Revised Information Collection: Form RI 20-1

**AGENCY:** Office of Personnel Management.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13, May 22, 1995), this notice announces that the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) intends to submit to the Office of Management and Budget a request for reclearance of a revised information collection. RI 20-1, Application for Minimum Annuity, is completed by annuitants to determine if they qualify for minimum annuity under the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 8345(f).

Comments are particularly invited on: whether this information is necessary for the proper performance of functions of the Office of Personnel Management, and whether it will have practical utility; whether our estimate of the public burden of this collection of information is accurate, and based on valid assumptions and methodology; and ways in which we can minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, through the use of appropriate technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Approximately 50 RI 20-1 forms will be completed annually. We estimate it takes approximately 15 minutes to complete the form. The annual burden is 13 hours.

For copies of this proposal, contact Jim Farron on (202) 418-3208, or E-mail to [jmfarron@opm.gov](mailto:jmfarron@opm.gov)

**DATES:** Comments on this proposal should be received on or before June 29, 1998.

**ADDRESSES:** Send or deliver comments to Lorraine E. Dettman, Chief, Operations Support Division, Retirement and Insurance Service, U.S. Office of Personnel Management, 1900 E Street, NW, Room 3349, Washington, DC 20415.

## FOR INFORMATION REGARDING

**ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATION CONTACT:** Mary Beth Smith-Toomey, Budget & Administrative Services Division, (202) 606-0623.

U.S. Office of Personnel Management.

**Janice R. Lachance,**

*Director.*

[FR Doc. 98-11405 Filed 4-28-98; 8:45 am]

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## OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

### Federal Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee; Open Committee Meetings

According to the provisions of section 10 of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463), notice is hereby given that a meeting of the Federal Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee will be held on Thursday, May 7, 1998.

The meeting will start at 10:00 a.m. and will be held in Room 5A06A, Office of Personnel Management Building, 1900 E Street, NW., Washington, DC.

The Federal Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee is composed of a Chair, five representatives from labor unions holding exclusive bargaining rights for Federal blue-collar employees, and five representatives from Federal agencies. Entitlement to membership on the Committee is provided for in 5 U.S.C. 5347.

The Committee's primary responsibility is to review the Prevailing Rate System and other matters pertinent to establishing prevailing rates under subchapter IV, chapter 53, 5 U.S.C., as amended, and from time to time advise the Office of Personnel Management.

This scheduled meeting will start in open session with both labor and management representatives attending. During the meeting either the labor members or the management members may caucus separately with the Chair to devise strategy and formulate positions. Premature disclosure of the matters discussed in these caucuses would unacceptably impair the ability of the Committee to reach a consensus on the matters being considered and would disrupt substantially the disposition of its business. Therefore, these caucuses will be closed to the public because of a determination made by the Director of the Office of Personnel Management under the provisions of section 10(d) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463) and 5 U.S.C. 552b(c)(9)(B). These caucuses may, depending on the issues involved, constitute a substantial portion of a meeting.

Annually, the Chair compiles a report of pay issues discussed and concluded

recommendations. These reports are available to the public, upon written request to the Committee's Secretary.

The public is invited to submit material in writing to the Chair on Federal Wage System pay matters felt to be deserving of the Committee's attention. Additional information on this meeting may be obtained by contacting the Committee's Secretary, Office of Personnel Management, Federal Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee, Room 5559, 1900 E Street, NW., Washington, DC 20415 (202) 606-1500.

Dated: April 20, 1998.

**Phyllis G. Heuerman,**

*Acting Chair, Federal Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee.*

[FR Doc. 98-11356 Filed 4-28-98; 8:45 am]

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## POSTAL SERVICE

### Revised Form 8125, Plant-Verified Drop Shipment (PVDS) Verification/ Clearance and New Facsimile Consolidated Form 8125, Plant-Verified Drop Shipment (PVDS) Verification/ Clearance; Consolidated

**AGENCY:** Postal Service.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** This notice presents pending revisions to Form 8125, *Plant-Verified Drop Shipment (PVDS) Verification/Clearance*, and Form 8125-C, a new *Plant-Verified Drop Shipment (PVDS) Verification/Clearance—Consolidated* form intended for use as a computer-generated facsimile. The Mailer's Technical Advisory Committee (MTAC) 8125 Redesign Work Group developed the revised forms. The Postal Service expects the revised hard copy Form 8125 to be available this summer. Once the final format is approved, Forms 8125 and 8125-C will be available on the USPS Web ([www.usps.gov/buscctr/welcome.htm](http://www.usps.gov/buscctr/welcome.htm) under business forms).

In addition, Form 2866-IP, *In-Plant Verification for Second- and Fourth-Class Matter*, will be eliminated upon implementation of the revised forms 8125 and 8125-C. Form 2866-IP is used by some Periodicals mailers who pay postage through the Centralized Postage Payment (CPP) program.

To ensure that the revised Forms 8125 and facsimile 8125-C meet the needs of customers, the Postal Service is seeking comments from PVDS mailers regarding the revisions described in this notice. Copies of the revised draft Forms 8125 and 8125-C are available for review on the USPS Web page in the business section under Rates & Classification

initiatives. You may also request copies using the address indicated below.

**DATES:** Comments must be received on or before May 29, 1998.

**ADDRESSES:** Mail or deliver written comments to the Manager, Business Mail Acceptance, USPS Headquarters, 475 L'Enfant Plaza SW Rm 6801, Washington, DC 20260-6808. Copies of all written comments will be available at the above address for inspection and photocopying between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday through Friday.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Cheryl Beller, (202) 268-5166.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Under the provisions of *Domestic Mail Manual* (DMM) P750.2.9, mailers must submit a completed Form 8125 to the origin (verifying) post office for each PVDS mailing destined for a destination entry post office. The completed form serves as a receipt indicating that the postage for a shipment being presented to a destination entry postal facility for acceptance as mail has been paid at the appropriate rates.

Many mailers are using early versions of Form 8125 rather than the most recent version (October 1996). Other mailers are using computer-generated facsimile Form 8125 with formats and data elements that vary from the current Form 8125. A large number of mailers are using a facsimile consolidated Form 8125 (replaced by Form 8125-C) to represent multiple mailings for a single destination entry office that originate from the same mailing plant. Because the information on many of these forms appears in varied locations or formats, or is missing altogether on some older Forms 8125 and on facsimile forms, it often is difficult for destination entry facilities to readily identify key information on the forms to attempt to compare the information with the physical mail being presented for acceptance.

The MTAC 8125 Redesign Work Group was formed to develop a usable Form 8125 for single mailings to an entry postal facility, as well as to develop a standard format for consolidated facsimile Form 8125, for use by all PVDS mailers. Use of the new forms 8125 and 8125-C is intended to allow entry postal facilities to readily identify key information on the forms for comparison with the physical mail. The attendees of the work group agreed to limit the focus of their efforts to the design and use of Form 8125 rather than to any broader issues related to PVDS in general that do not directly relate to the current clearance document. The Postal Service proposes phasing out older versions of Form 8125 and facsimiles

that do not meet the new format standards over a 6-month period to begin 30 days from the publication of the final notice in the **Federal Register** announcing availability of the revised forms.

The MTAC work group agreed that Form 8125 does not necessarily need to be a hard copy document and that future developments, such as Direct Link, may offer an electronic alternative for some mailers. However, the focus of the group was on the general needs of the Postal Service and mailing industry in our current hard copy environment.

#### Form 8125

The following key features are incorporated into the revised Form 8125 for single mailings:

- Form 8125 contains only essential elements presented in an easy-to-read format.
- Form 8125 will continue to be a three-part form.
- Facsimile forms used by mailers must closely mirror the layout and content of Form 8125.
- Detailed instructions for completion of the form will be printed on the reverse of each page of the Form 8125. These instructions will not be required to be printed on facsimile forms. Removing the instructions from the front of the form will make the form less cluttered and ensure that key information about mailing(s) will appear more prominently. Facsimile forms also will be easier to print. The instructions to appear on the reverse have been expanded to include more information about PVDS requirements because these postal forms are more likely to be used by mailers less familiar with PVDS than mailers who use computer-generated facsimile forms.
- The information on the front of Form 8125 more clearly describes the mail verified for both mailers and postal employees responsible for verifying and accepting PVDS mailings.
- The revised form includes information for contacting the origin postal facility and mailer when problems are identified at destination entry offices.
- Because it is the key to closing out an appointment in the Drop Ship Appointment System (DSAS), the confirmation (appointment) number is moved to the top of Form 8125 to make it clearly identifiable.
- No data elements of the revised Form 8125 appear in shaded areas (currently the entry post office block is shaded) because shaded areas do not photocopy well.
- Information about the units comprising the mailing are described

more clearly to differentiate between mail properly presorted and cleared for acceptance at origin as palletized mail and mail that was not cleared at origin as palletized mail (e.g., trays presorted on pallets will be identified as such while trays that are not verified and cleared as properly palletized trays will be identified as nonpalletized mail).

- A mailer comment section is included in Part 1. This may be used for information relevant to the load or the shipper, such as the name (and possibly the telephone number) of the consolidator, if one is used, if known at the time the form is being completed.

- Information has been added to accommodate drop-shipped international mail (e.g., ISAL).

- Information about load condition for completion by entry postal facilities is included on Form 8125 in a manner (as a list of items to check) that will facilitate entering the information into DSAS.

#### Proposed Format for Form 8125-C

Some mailers have been approved to present facsimile consolidated Forms 8125. The new Form 8125-C will allow mailers to identify multiple mailings for the same destination entry office that are prepared by a single mailer and verified and cleared for dispatch on a single day. The mailings must be transported on the same vehicle to the destination entry office. The consolidated form contains line item information about each mailing and total information about the unit loads being presented to the destination facility. It simplifies the process by which the destination entry office compares total mail units presented with the totals shown on the consolidated form (e.g., total pallets). The new Form 8125-C was established by the MTAC work group members to replace the variety of formats currently being used by mailers. Because these forms are most likely to be computer generated, there is no justification for the Postal Service to print Form 8125-C.

The proposed format of Form 8125-C omits several separate data blocks that appear in Part 1—Mailer and Part 2—Post Office of Origin sections on Form 8125 because the information is shown in the line item entries describing each individual mailing reported on the facsimile consolidated Form 8125-C in Part 1. For example, the following items that appear in separate sections in Parts 1 and 2 on the revised Form 8125 are included in the line entry (in columns) for each mailing reported on the consolidated Form 8125-C:

- Class of mail

- Product name/ID
- Type and number of containers
- Piece weight
- Weight of mailing
- Postage payment method.

Other information to be included for each mailing reported as a line item entry includes:

- Permit holder
- Postage statement sequence number
- Number of pieces in the mailing.

#### Elimination of Form 2866-IP

Some mailers who pay postage through the CPP program still use Form 2866-IP, In-Plant Verification for Second- and Fourth-Class Matter, for Periodicals mailings that are verified at a central location and deposited at destination entry offices. Because the information on Form 2866-IP is duplicated on Form 8125, there is no longer any need for a separate Form 2866-IP. CPP customers have already been notified that Form 2866-IP will be eliminated when the revised Forms 8125 and 8125-C are available.

**Stanley F. Mires,**

*Chief Counsel, Legislative.*

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#### SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[Rel. No. IC-23126; 812-10892]

#### The Americas Growth Fund, Inc., et al.; Notice of Application

April 23, 1998.

**AGENCY:** Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC").

**ACTION:** Notice of application for exemption under section 57(c) of the Investment Company Act of 1940 (the "Act") from section 57(a) of the Act.

**SUMMARY OF APPLICATION:** The order would permit The Americas Growth Fund, Inc. ("AGRO"), a business development company ("BDC"), to complete a merger with an affiliated person.

**APPLICANTS:** AGRO and JW Charles Financial Services, Inc. ("JWCFS").

**FILING DATE:** The application was filed on December 9, 1997. Applicants have agreed to file an amendment, the substance of which is incorporated in this notice, during the notice period.

**HEARING OR NOTIFICATION OF HEARING:** An order granting the application will be issued unless the SEC orders a hearing. Interested persons may request a hearing by writing to the SEC's Secretary and serving applicants with a copy of the request, personally or by

mail. Hearing requests should be received by the SEC by 5:30 p.m. on May 19, 1998, and should be accompanied by proof of service on applicants in the form of an affidavit or, for lawyers, a certificate of service. Hearing requests should state the nature of the writer's interest, the reason for the request, and the issues contested. Persons who wish to be notified of a hearing may request notification by writing to the SEC's Secretary.

**ADDRESSES:** Secretary, SEC, 450 5th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20549. Applicants: AGRO, 701 Brickell Avenue, Suite 2000, Miami, Florida 33131 and JWCFS, 980 North Federal Highway, Suite 310, Boca Raton, Florida 33432.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Elaine M. Boggs, Senior Counsel, at (202) 942-0572 (Office of Investment Company Regulation, Division of Investment Management).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The following is a summary of the application. The complete application may be obtained for a fee at the SEC's Public Reference Branch, 450 5th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20549 (telephone (202) 942-8090).

#### Applicants' Representations

1. AGRO is a Maryland corporation that is a closed-end non-diversified management investment company and that has elected to be regulated as a BDC under the Act. AGRO's common stock was listed on Nasdaq until delisted on March 17, 1998. JWCFS is a Florida corporation and a financial services holding company. JWCFS, through wholly-owned subsidiaries, engages primarily in securities brokerage, investment banking, and clearing and execution of securities transactions. JWCFS's common stock trades on the American Stock Exchange ("AMEX").

2. On August 13, 1997, JWCFS commenced an exchange offer (the "Exchange Offer") to AGRO's shareholders to acquire each share of AGRO common stock for .431 shares of JWCFS common stock (the "Exchange Ratio"). The Exchange Ratio was calculated based upon the net asset value ("NAV") per share of AGRO common stock on March 31, 1997 and the average of the last reported sales prices of JWCFS common stock on AMEX for the ten trading days immediately preceding the public announcement of the Exchange Offer on June 9, 1997. In connection with its consideration of the Exchange Offer, the board of directors of AGRO ("Board") engaged an independent appraiser to provide an opinion concerning the

fairness of the transaction from a financial point of view to the shareholders of AGRO. Based upon the value of the offer using the traded market price of the common stock of both AGRO and JWCFS and applying the Exchange Ratio and its comparison to: (a) the traded market price of AGRO's common stock; (b) the NAV per share of AGRO's common stock; and (c) the liquidation value per share of AGRO's common stock, the appraiser delivered an opinion to the Board on August 22, 1997 concluding that the JWCFS common stock to be received as consideration for the sale of AGRO common stock to JWCFS, if the JWCFS common stock had a value of \$3.40 per share or higher, was fair from a financial point of view to the shareholders of AGRO. The price of JWCFS common stock on August 14, 1997 (the date the Exchange Offer began) and September 22, 1997 (the date of the Exchange Offer ended) was \$3.66 and \$3.50, respectively. The JWCFS common stock to be received per share of AGRO common stock represented a premium to AGRO shareholders of 23.2% and 12.5% in August 14 and September 22, 1997, respectively. A prospectus and related letter of transmittal relating to the Exchange Offer were mailed to AGRO's shareholders on August 14, 1997. The prospectus stated that the Exchange Offer would be followed by a consolidating merger. As a result of the Exchange Offer, JWCFS now owns approximately 91 percent of the issued and outstanding common stock of AGRO.

3. Applicants propose to merge AGRO into JWCFS at the earliest practicable date following receipt of the requested order (the "Merger"). Because JWCFS now owns more than 90 percent of the outstanding AGRO common stock, JWCFS may carry out the Merger as a "short-form" merger under the relevant provisions of Florida and Maryland corporate law. The short-form merger would permit the Merger to be accomplished without a vote of the shareholders of either corporation.

4. Under the proposed terms of the Merger, each share of AGRO common stock not owned by JWCFS would be canceled and those AGRO shareholders would be entitled to receive .431 share of JWCFS common stock for each share of AGRO common stock owned by them (which is the same as the Exchange Ratio used for the Exchange Offer). In the Merger, JWCFS would become the owner of all of the issued and outstanding common stock of AGRO and, as the sole shareholder of AGRO, intends to approve the withdrawal of AGRO's status as a BDC under the Act.