

on January 31, 1999. Applicants with one or more of the following backgrounds are needed to fill the positions:

- (a) Licensed Deck Officer.
- (b) Shipping Company employed in ship operation management.
- (c) Licensed Engineering Officer.
- (d) Pilot.
- (e) Able Bodied Seaman.
- (f) Marine Educator associated with a maritime academy.

Each member serves for a term of 3 years. No member may hold more than two consecutive 3-year terms. MERPAC members serve without compensation from the Federal Government; however, travel reimbursement and per diem will be provided.

In support of the policy of the Department of Transportation on gender and ethnic diversity, the Coast Guard encourages applications from qualified women and members of minority groups.

Applicants selected may be required to complete a Confidential Financial Disclosure Report (OGE Form 450). Neither the report nor the information it contains may be released to the public, except under an order issued by a Federal court or as otherwise provided under the Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. 552a).

Dated: May 28, 1998.

Joseph J. Angelo,

Director of Standards, Marine Safety and Environmental Protection.

[FR Doc. 98-15141 Filed 6-5-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-15-M

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Coast Guard

[USCG-1998-3917]

Year 2000 (Y2K) Problems in the Maritime Industry

AGENCY: Coast Guard, DOT.

ACTION: Notice; solicitation of comments.

SUMMARY: "Y2K" is the acronym for "Year 2000" and the problems which may occur in computer software and equipment with computer chips before, on or after January 1, 2000. The effects on equipment could be disastrous. Consequently, the Coast Guard has arranged to serve as a clearing house for any lessons learned or problems identified with this issue as it relates to the maritime industry.

DATES: This docket will remain open until January 1, 2002.

ADDRESSES: You may mail comments to the Docket Management Facility,

[USCG-1998-3917], U.S. Department of Transportation, Room PL-401, 400 Seventh Street SW., Washington, DC 20590-0001, or deliver them to room PL-401, located on the Plaza Level of the Nassif Building at the same address between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The telephone number is (202) 366-9329.

The Docket Management Facility maintains the public docket for this notice. Comments will become part of this docket and will be available for inspection or copying at room PL-401, located on the Plaza Level of the Nassif Building at the above address between 9:30 a.m. and 2 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. You may also access this docket on the Internet at <http://dms.dot.gov>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

For questions concerning the issues discussed in this notice contact John Schonacher at the National Maritime Center, (703) 235-0018. For questions concerning the Docket Management Service contact Paulette Twine, Chief, Documentary Services Division, U.S. Department of Transportation, telephone (202) 366-9329.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Request for Comments

The Coast Guard encourages interested person to participate in discussions regarding the Y2K problem by submitting written data, views, or arguments. Persons submitting comments should include their names and addresses, identifying this notice and the specific section of this notice to which each comment applies, and give the reason for each comment. Please submit all comments and attachments in an unbound format, no larger than 8½ by 11 inches, suitable for copying and electronic filing. Persons wanting acknowledgment of receipt of comments should enclose stamped, self-addressed postcards or envelopes.

Background and Purpose

"Y2K" is the acronym for "Year 2000" and the problems which may occur in computer software and equipment with computer chips at the onset of the year 2000. This phenomenon is also referred to as the "Millennium Bug." Either term may be used to describe the potential failure of software and electronic devices prior to, on, or after January 1, 2000.

The potential exists because of the widespread industry practice of using two digits, not four, to represent the year in computer databases, software applications, and hardware chips to

store or calculate dates. Many systems will cease "00" in the year 2000 because they will treat the year as 1900 instead. The results may be disastrous. For example, envision the scenario of a generator or main engine which automatically shuts down because the automated control system believes it has not received maintenance for 97 years instead of 3 years.

The Y2K problem is not confined to large mainframe computer systems. Personal computers and electronics embedded with microprocessors are also at risk. "Smart Devices" on board ships, ranging from simple items such as timers, to more sophisticated systems like electronic cargo handling systems, radar systems, and GPS, could be affected and are at risk from this threat.

This problem is not limited to U.S. and foreign flag ships, but also affects port facilities of every kind. In addition to shipboard systems with embedded microprocessors or date sensitive lines of codes, the effects of Y2K on related shoreside systems should be considered. These include, but are not limited to crane, cargo systems, servicing equipment, firefighting and scheduling equipment.

The insidious nature of this problem is compounded by the fact that identical devices, performing well today, may act very differently in the year 2000. This potentially drastic difference in performance is due to the fact that they each may use a very slightly different chip. For this reason, experts recommend that any "smart" system or electronic device be checked out.

A recent survey found that only one in six of the corporations surveyed have begun implementing a Y2K fix. Many executives apparently do not understand the magnitude of the problem or the complexity and costs involved with fixing it. Corporations and government agencies will reportedly spend over \$200 billion, by even conservative estimates, to fix the Y2K problem.

In addition to the Coast Guard's Marine Safety Y2K website, the International Chamber of Shipping has a site at <http://www.ship2000.com>. This site provides a comprehensive look at Y2K issues in the maritime industry, and contains links to other maritime Y2K sites.

Due to the potentially significant impact of this problem, the Coast Guard has arranged to serve as a clearing house for any lessons learned or problems identified with this issue as it relates to the maritime industry. The comment period will be open until January 1, 2002, since we anticipate that problems may still occur at least two years after

the turn of the century. Submitters are encouraged to provide additional comments as new problems and solutions are found.

We would also like to determine the level of support for Y2K maritime conferences in various cities. In February, 1998, the Coast Guard co-sponsored a Y2K Maritime Issues Conference with the New York Maritime Association Port of NY/NJ. This widely attended information-sharing conference drew representation from a large cross-section of industry. Since the Y2K problem will affect all sectors of industry, future similar conferences may be beneficial to stakeholders. The Coast Guard may be interested in cosponsoring such events in the future.

We would specifically like comments in the following areas:

- (1) Identification of Y2K problems.
- (2) Solutions to and lessons learned about Y2K problems.
- (3) Resources available to address Y2K issues.
- (4) Your interest in attending Y2K maritime conferences in Washington, DC and other cities.

All comments, which will be maintained on the Docket Management System, can be accessed at <http://dms.dot.gov>. Also, the Coast Guard's Marine Safety Y2K Web Site at: <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/nmc/y2k.htm> can be accessed to obtain information on comments received.

Dated: June 2, 1998.

Joseph J. Angelo,

Director of Standards, Marine Safety and Environmental Protection.

[FR Doc. 98-15179 Filed 6-5-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

Notice of Intent To Rule on Application To Impose and Use the Revenue From a Passenger Facility Charge (PFC) at Texarkana Regional Airport, Texarkana, AR

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of intent to rule on application.

SUMMARY: The FAA proposes to rule and invites public comment on the application to impose and use the revenue from a PFC at Texarkana Regional Airport under the provisions of the Aviation Safety and Capacity Expansion Act of 1990 (Title IX of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990) (Pub. L. 101-508) and Part 158 of

the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR Part 158).

DATES: Comments must be received on or before July 8, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Comments on this application may be mailed or delivered in triplicate copies to the FAA at the following address: Mr. Ben Guttery, Federal Aviation Administration, Southwest Region, Airports Division, Planning and Programming Branch, ASW-610D, Fort Worth, Texas 76193-0610.

In addition, one copy of any comments submitted to the FAA must be mailed or delivered to Mr. Robert L. McDaniel, Airport Director, at the following address: Mr. Robert L. McDaniel, Airport Director, Texarkana Regional Airport Authority, 201 Airport Drive, Texarkana, AR-TX 71854.

Air carriers and foreign air carriers may submit copies of the written comments previously provided to the Airport under § 158.23 of Part 158.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Mr. Ben Guttery, Federal Aviation Administration, Southwest Region, Airports Division, Planning and Programming Branch, ASW-610D, Fort Worth, Texas 76193-0610, (817) 222-5614.

The application may be reviewed in person at this same location.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The FAA proposes to rule and invites public comment on the application to impose and use the revenue from a PFC at Texarkana Regional Airport under the provisions of the Aviation Safety and Capacity Expansion Act of 1990 (Title IX of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990) (Public Law 101-508) and Part 158 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR Part 158).

On May 29, 1998, the FAA determined that the application to impose and use the revenue from a PFC submitted by the Airport was substantially complete within the requirements of § 158.25 of Part 158. The FAA will approve or disapprove the application, in whole or in part, no later than September 25, 1998.

The following is a brief overview of the application:

Level of the proposed PFC: \$3.00.

Proposed charge effective date: December 1, 1998.

Proposed charge expiration date: May 1, 2003.

Total estimated PFC revenue: \$412,532.00.

PFC application number: 98-02-C-00-TXK.

Brief description of proposed project(s):

Projects to Impose and Use PFC's

Safety Area Improvements, North Apron Expansion, Runway 4/22 Overlay, Security/Perimeter Fencing, and PFC Application Costs.

Proposed class or classes of air carriers to be exempted from collecting PFC's:

None.

Any person may inspect the application in person at the FAA office listed above under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** and at the FAA regional Airports office located at: Federal Aviation Administration, Southwest Region, Airports Division, Planning and Programming Branch, ASW-610D, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Fort Worth, Texas 76137-4298.

In addition, any person may, upon request, inspect the application, notice and other documents germane to the application in person at Texarkana Regional Airport.

Issued in Fort Worth, Texas on May 29, 1998.

Naomi L. Saunders,

Manager, Airports Division.

[FR Doc. 98-15143 Filed 6-5-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-M

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

[OMB Control No. 2900-0096]

Agency Information Collection Activities Under OMB Review

AGENCY: Veterans Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995 (44 U.S.C., 3501 *et seq.*), this notice announces that the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), Department of Veterans Affairs, has submitted the collection of information abstracted below to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and comment. The PRA submission describes the nature of the information collection and its expected cost and burden; it includes the actual data collection instrument.

DATES: Comments must be submitted on or before July 8, 1998.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION OR A COPY OF THE SUBMISSION CONTACT: Ron Taylor, Information Management Service (045A4), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420, (202) 273-8015 or FAX (202) 273-5981. Please refer to "OMB Control No. 2900-0096."