

regional and sectoral activities. Among other responsibilities, the NAST has been responsible for preparing the National Assessment Synthesis Report and providing overall intellectual guidance on the Assessment.

## II. Review Process

Drafts of the National Assessment Synthesis Report have undergone two rounds of technical peer review. In the first round that took place in November and December of 1999, over 500 experts were asked to review the Overview report plus one to four chapters of the Foundation report for technical and scientific accuracy. Review drafts were also sent to federal agency representatives, all members of the Synthesis Team, and the chairs of all regional and sectoral teams. Over 300 technical reviews of the Overview and individuals chapters were received. In the second round that took place in March and April, about two dozen additional experts were asked to review the report as a whole.

The technical review process has been overseen by a small panel of eminent persons from the private and public sectors that has been assembled under the auspices of the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST). This special panel has assured a representative mix of reviewers and the responsiveness of the NAST to the technical comments received. In addition to the outside technical review, the report was provided to the federal agency members of the SGCR for comment as part of the overall review process.

The SGCR is now responsible for coordinating a public comment period on this draft version of the National Assessment Synthesis Report. This notice announces the availability of this report for public comment by experts, interested organizations and individuals, and the public. Comments that are provided will be evaluated, integrated, and used, as appropriate, in the revision of this draft of the report. An information sheet providing specific requests for formatting submissions of comments is available on the Web site. All comments must indicate who is submitting the comments. The emphasis should be on providing detailed recommendations on the Overview and/or on specific chapters of the Foundation report so that changes can be considered that address the comment. To be most useful, comments should be specific in suggesting alternative wording or other changes to the text of a particular paragraph or chapter and, where appropriate, offer supporting information and peer-

reviewed references supporting the proposed changes. Comments on the overall tone, internal consistency, and scientific validity of the Overview and chapters and comments expressing the reasons for agreement or disagreement with specific major points are also invited.

The materials available for review include the draft versions of the Overview report and Foundation chapters. Documents available for review include the following:

### Overview Report

Foundation Report (listing is of subject matter of chapter)

1. Climate Change
2. Vegetation and Biochemistry Scenarios
3. Socioeconomic Change
4. Northeast
5. Southeast
6. Midwest
7. Great Plains
8. West
9. Pacific Northwest
10. Alaska
11. Islands
12. Native Peoples and Homelands
13. Agriculture
14. Water Resources
15. Human Health
16. Coastal Areas and Marine Resources
17. Forests
18. Conclusions
19. Research Needs

## III. Public Availability of Comments

Subsequent to the receipt and collation of the comments, the collection of comments received will be available for public inspection weekdays during normal business hours at the library of the National Science Foundation in Arlington, VA. Appointments can be made by calling 703-306-0658.

Dated: June 6, 2000.

**Karen J. York,**

*Human Resource and Management Specialist.*

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## NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

### Consolidated Guidance About Materials Licenses: Program-Specific Guidance About Service Provider Licenses

**AGENCY:** U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC).

**ACTION:** Notice of Availability and Request for Comments.

**SUMMARY:** The NRC is announcing the availability of, and requesting comments on, draft NUREG-1556, Volume 18, "Consolidated Guidance about Materials Licenses: Program-Specific Guidance about Service Provider Licenses," dated May 2000.

The NRC is using Business Process Redesign techniques to redesign its materials licensing process, as described in NUREG-1539, "Methodology and Findings of the NRC's Materials Licensing Process Redesign." A critical element of the new process is consolidating and updating numerous guidance documents into a NUREG-series of reports. This draft NUREG report is the 18th guidance document developed to support an improved materials licensing process.

This guidance is intended for use by applicants, licensees, and the NRC staff, and will also be available to Agreement States. This document combines and updates the guidance found in the following draft regulatory guides: "Guide for the Application for a License for the Use of Radioactive Materials for Calibrating Radiation Survey and Monitoring Instruments," "Guide for the Application for the Use of Radioactive Materials in Leak-Testing Services," and "Guide for the Applications for the Use of Radioactive Materials in Servicing Preregistered Gauges, Measuring Devices, and Sealed Sources Used in Such Devices." Additionally, NRC staff included information contained in the corresponding Standard Review Plans for these three draft regulatory guides. This draft report takes a more risk-informed, performance-based approach to licensing service providers, and reduces the information (amount and level of detail) needed to support an application for these activities. This document is strictly for public comment and is not for use in preparing or reviewing service provider licenses until it is published in final form. It is being distributed for comment to encourage public participation in its development.

**DATES:** The comment period ends August 11, 2000. Comments received after that time will be considered if practicable.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit written comments to: Chief, Rules and Directives Branch, Division of Administrative Services, Office of Administration, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555-0001. Hand-deliver comments to 11545 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland, between 7:15 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. on Federal workdays. Comments may also be submitted

through the Internet by addressing electronic mail to [dlm1@nrc.gov](mailto:dlm1@nrc.gov).

Those considering public comment may request a free single copy of draft NUREG-1556, Volume 18, by writing to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, ATTN: Mrs. Carrie Brown, Mail Stop TWFN 9-C-24, Washington, D.C. 20555-0001. Alternatively, submit requests through the Internet by addressing electronic mail to [cxb@nrc.gov](mailto:cxb@nrc.gov). A copy of draft NUREG-1556, Volume 18, is also available for inspection and/or copying for a fee in the NRC Public Document Room, 2120 L Street, NW. (Lower Level), Washington, D.C. 20555-0001.

The Presidential Memorandum dated June 1, 1998, entitled, "Plain Language in Government Writing," directed that the Federal government's writing be in plain language. The NRC requests comments on this licensing guidance NUREG specifically with respect to the clarity and effectiveness of the language used. Comments should be sent to the address listed above.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mrs. Carrie Brown, TWFN 9-F-24, Division of Industrial and Medical Nuclear Safety, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555, telephone (301) 415-8092; electronic mail address: [cxb@nrc.gov](mailto:cxb@nrc.gov).

#### Electronic Access

Draft NUREG-1556, Vol. 18 is available electronically by visiting the NRC's Home Page (<http://www.nrc.gov/nrc/nucmat.html>).

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 6th day of June, 2000.

**Catherine Haney,**

*Acting Chief, Rulemaking and Guidance Branch, Division of Industrial and Medical Nuclear Safety, NMSS.*

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## SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

### Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

Upon Written Request Copies Available  
From: Securities and Exchange Commission, Office of Filings and Information Services, Washington, DC 20549.

Extension:

Rule 17f-1, SEC File No. 270-236, OMB Control No. 3235-0222  
Form N-17f-1, SEC File No. 270-316, OMB Control No. 3235-0359

Rule 17f-2, SEC File No. 270-233, OMB Control No. 3235-0223  
Form N-17f-2, SEC File No. 270-317, OMB Control No. 3235-0360

Notice is hereby given that pursuant to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*) the Securities and Exchange Commission ("Commission") has submitted to the Office of Management and Budget requests for extension of the previously approved collections of information discussed below.

Rule 17f-1 under the Investment Company Act of 1940 (the "Act") is entitled: "Custody of Securities with Members of National Securities Exchanges." Rule 17f-1 provides that any registered management investment company ("fund") that wishes to place its assets in the custody of a national securities exchange member may do so only under a written contract that must be ratified initially and approved annually by a majority of the fund's board of directors. The written contract also must contain certain specified provisions. In addition, the rule requires an independent public accountant to examine the fund's assets in the custody of the exchange member at least three times during the fund's fiscal year. The rule requires the written contract and the certificate of each examination to be transmitted to the Commission. The purpose of the rule is to ensure the safekeeping of fund assets.

Commission staff estimates that approximately five funds maintain their assets with a national securities exchange member.<sup>1</sup> The annual burden of the rule's requirements is estimated to be approximately 4.5 hours for each of these funds.<sup>2</sup> Commission staff estimates the total annual burden for all funds is 22.5 hours.

Compliance with the collection of information required by rule 17f-1 is mandatory for funds that place their assets in the custody of a national securities exchange. Responses will not be kept confidential. Form N-17f-1 is entitled: "Certificate of Accounting of Securities and Similar Investments of a Management Investment Company in the Custody of Members of National Securities Exchanges." Form N-17f-1 is the cover sheet for accountant

examination certificates filed under rule 17f-1 of the Act. Rule 17f-1 requires the accountant's certificate of each examination be attached to Form N-17f-1 and transmitted to the Commission promptly after each examination. The form facilitates the filing of the accountant's certificate, and increases the accessibility of the certificate to both Commission's staff and interested investors.

Commission staff estimates that approximately five funds maintain their assets with a national securities exchange member. The annual burden of the rule's requirements is estimated to be approximately 27 minutes for each of these funds.<sup>3</sup> The total annual burden for all funds is therefore estimated to be 2.25 burden hours.

Compliance with the collection of information required by Form N-17f-1 is mandatory for funds that place their assets in the custody of a national securities exchange member.

Rule 17f-2 under the Act is entitled: "Custody of Investments by Registered Management Investment Company." Rule 17f-2 establishes safeguards for arrangements in which a registered management investment company is deemed to maintain custody of its own assets, such as when the fund maintains its assets in a facility that provides safekeeping but not custodial services. The rule includes several recordkeeping or reporting requirements. The fund's directors must prepare a resolution designating not more than five fund officers or responsible employees who may have access to the fund's assets. The designated access persons (two or more of whom must act jointly when handling fund assets) must prepare a written notation providing certain information about each deposit or withdrawal of fund assets, and must transmit the notation to another officer or director designated by the directors. Independent public accounts must verify the fund's assets at least three times a year, and two of the examinations must be unscheduled.

The requirement that directors designate access persons is intended to ensure that directors evaluate the trustworthiness of insiders who handle fund assets. The requirements that access persons act jointly in handling fund assets, prepare a written notation of each transaction, and transmit the notation to another designated person

<sup>1</sup> The Commission's records show that five funds filed Form N-17f-1 during calendar year 1999.

<sup>2</sup> The Commission staff estimates, based upon the experience of staff familiar with the information collection requirements of the rule, that each fund spends approximately 4.5 hours annually in complying with the rule's requirements: 4 hours of clerical time (1 hour to prepare the custodial contract for board review and to transmit the contract, and 1 hour to transmit of the accountant's certificates three times yearly), and 0.5 hours for the board of directors to ratify the custodial contract.

<sup>3</sup> Commission staff estimates that it takes approximately 9 minutes of clerical time to prepare each Form N-17f-1. This estimated is based on Commission staff members filling out the Form N-17f-1. Each fund is required to file Form N-17f-1 three times annually, for an average hour burden per fund of 27 minutes.