

B. The Substance and Quality of Administration of the Bank Supervisory and Counter-Money Laundering Laws of That Jurisdiction

Iran's serious deficiencies with respect to anti-money laundering/countering the financing of terrorism ("AML/CFT") controls has long been highlighted by numerous international bodies and government agencies. Starting in October 2007, the FATF has issued a series of public statements expressing its concern that Iran's lack of a comprehensive AML/CFT regime represents a significant vulnerability within the international financial system. The statements further called upon Iran to address those deficiencies with urgency, and called upon FATF-member countries to advise their institutions to conduct enhanced due diligence with respect to the risks associated with Iran's deficiencies.¹⁰⁸

The FATF has been particularly concerned with Iran's failure to address the risk of terrorist financing, and starting in February 2009, the FATF called upon its members and urged all jurisdictions to apply effective countermeasures to protect their financial sectors from the terrorist financing risks emanating from Iran.¹⁰⁹ In addition, the FATF advised jurisdictions to protect correspondent relationships from being used to bypass or evade countermeasures and risk mitigation practices, and to take into account money laundering and financing of terrorism risks when considering requests by Iranian financial institutions to open

branches and subsidiaries in their jurisdictions.¹¹⁰ The FATF also called on its members and other jurisdictions to advise their financial institutions to give special attention to business relationships and transactions with Iran, including Iranian companies and financial institutions.¹¹¹ Over the past three years, the FATF has repeatedly reiterated these concerns and reaffirmed its call for FATF-member countries and all jurisdictions to implement countermeasures to protect the international financial system from the terrorist financing risk emanating from Iran. In response, numerous countries, including all G7 countries, have issued advisories to their financial institutions.¹¹²

The FATF's most recent statement in October 2011 reiterated, with a renewed urgency, its concern regarding Iran's failure to address the risk of terrorist financing and the serious threat this poses to the integrity to the international financial system.¹¹³ The FATF reaffirmed its February 2009 call to apply effective countermeasures to protect their financial sectors from ML/FT risks emanating from Iran, and further called upon its members to consider the steps already taken and possible additional safeguards or strengthen existing ones.¹¹⁴ In addition, the FATF stated that, if Iran fails to take concrete steps to improve its AML/CFT regime, the FATF will consider calling on its members and urging all jurisdictions to strengthen countermeasures in February 2012.¹¹⁵ The numerous calls by FATF for Iran to urgently address its terrorist financing vulnerability, coupled with the extensive record of Iranian entities using the financial system to finance terrorism, proliferation activities, and

other illicit activity,¹¹⁶ raises significant concern over the willingness or ability of Iran to establish adequate controls to counter terrorist financing.

C. Whether the United States Has a Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty With That Jurisdiction, and the Experience of U.S. Law Enforcement Officials and Regulatory Officials in Obtaining Information About Transactions Originating in or Routed Through or to Such Jurisdiction

Iran has not entered into any mutual legal assistance treaties. Additionally, U.S. law enforcement and regulatory officials have found Iran to be uncooperative regarding access to information about financial transactions. Accordingly, Iran remains a safe haven for those who would commit financial crimes against the United States.

III. Finding

Based on the foregoing factors, the Director of FinCEN hereby finds that the Islamic Republic of Iran is a jurisdiction of primary money laundering concern.

Dated: November 18, 2011

James H. Freis, Jr.,
Director, Financial Crimes Enforcement Network.

[FR Doc. 2011-30332 Filed 11-23-11; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4810-02-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Office of the Comptroller of the Currency

Proposed Information Collection; Comment Request

AGENCY: Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC), Treasury.

ACTION: Notice and request for comment.

SUMMARY: The OCC, 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 a continuing information collection, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. Currently, the OCC is soliciting comment concerning its extension, without change, of an information collection titled, "Release of Non-Public Information—12 CFR 4, Subpart C."

DATES: You should submit written comments by January 24, 2012.

¹¹⁶ "Update on the Continuing Illicit Finance Threat Emanating From Iran," FinCEN, June 22, 2010 (http://www.fincen.gov/statutes_regs/guidance/html/fin-2010-a008.html).

[sanctions/Programs/Documents/20110331_advisory.pdf](http://www.fatf-gafi.org/dataoecd/23/16/39318680.pdf).

¹⁰⁸ In response to concerns raised by these FATF and IMF reports, FinCEN issued an advisory on October 16, 2007 to financial institutions regarding the heightened risk of Iranian "money laundering, terrorist financing, and weapons of mass destruction proliferation financing." The advisory further cautioned institutions that there may be an increased effort by Iranian entities to circumvent international sanctions and related financial community scrutiny through the use of deceptive practices. See "Guidance to Financial Institutions on the Increasing Money Laundering Threat Involving Illicit Iranian Activity," FinCEN, October 16, 2007 (http://www.fincen.gov/statutes_regs/guidance/pdf/guidance_fi_increasing_mlt_iranian.pdf). The FATF simultaneously published guidance to assist countries with implementation of UNSCRs 1737 and 1747. See "Guidance Regarding the Implementation of Activity-Based Financial Prohibitions of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1737," October 12, 2007 (<http://www.fatf-gafi.org/dataoecd/43/17/39494050.pdf>) and "Guidance Regarding the Implementation of Financial Provisions of the United Nations Security Council Resolutions to Counter the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction," September 5, 2007 (<http://www.fatf-gafi.org/dataoecd/23/16/39318680.pdf>).

¹⁰⁹ See "FATF Statement on Iran," The Financial Action Task Force, February 25, 2009 (<http://www.fatf-gafi.org/dataoecd/18/28/42242615.pdf>).

¹¹⁰ Id.

¹¹¹ Id.

¹¹² See "Circular 13/2008 (GW)—Statement of the FATF of 16 October 2008," November 7, 2008 (http://www.bafin.de/cln_171/nn_721228/SharedDocs/Veroeffentlichungen/EN/Service/Circulars/rs_0813_gw.html?_nnn=true); "February 27, 2009 FINTRAC Advisory," February 27, 2009 (<http://www.fintrac-canafe.gc.ca/publications/avs/2009-02-27-eng.asp>); "HM Treasury warns businesses of serious threats posed to the international financial system," March 11, 2009 (http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/press_26_09.htm); "Letter from French Minister of Economy," (http://www2.economie.gouv.fr/directions_services/dgtpe/sanctions/sanctionsiran.php); and "Bank of Italy Circular," (http://www.dt.tesoro.it/it/prevenzione_reati_finanziari/).

¹¹³ See "FATF Public Statement," The Financial Action Task Force, October 28, 2011 (http://www.fatf-gafi.org/document/55/0,3746,en_32250379_32236992_48966519_1_1_1_1,00.html).

¹¹⁴ Id.

¹¹⁵ Id.

ADDRESSES: You should direct all written comments to: Communications Division, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Public Information Room, Mailstop 1-5, *Attention:* 1557-0200, 250 E Street, SW., Washington, DC 20219. In addition, comments may be sent by fax to (202) 874-4448, or by electronic mail to regs.comments@occ.treas.gov. You can inspect and photocopy the comments at the OCC's Public Information Room, 250 E Street, SW., Washington, DC 20219. For security reasons, the OCC requires that visitors make an appointment to inspect comments. You may do so by calling (202) 874-5043. Upon arrival, visitors will be required to present valid government-issued photo identification and submit to security screening in order to inspect and photocopy comments.

Additionally, you should send a copy of your comments to: OCC Desk Officer, 1557-0200, by mail to U.S. Office of Management and Budget, 725 17th Street, NW., #10235, Washington, DC 20503, or by fax to (202) 395-6974.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: You can request additional information or a copy of the collection from Ira L. Mills, OCC Clearance Officer, (202) 874-6055, Legislative and Regulatory Activities Division, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, 250 E Street, SW., Washington, DC 20219.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

The OCC is proposing to extend OMB approval of the following information collection:

Title: Release of Non-Public Information—12 CFR 4, Subpart C.

OMB Number: 1557-0200.

Form Number: None.

Abstract: This submission covers an existing regulation and involves no change to the regulation or to the information collections embodied in the regulation. The OCC requests only that OMB renew its approval of the information collections in the current regulation.

The information requirements require individuals who are requesting non-public OCC information to provide the OCC with information regarding the requester's legal grounds for the request. The release of non-public OCC information to a requester who did not have sufficient legal grounds to obtain the information would inhibit open consultation between a bank and the OCC, thereby impairing the OCC's supervisory and regulatory mission. The OCC is entitled, under statute and caselaw, to require requesters to demonstrate that they have sufficient legal grounds for the OCC to release

non-public OCC information. The OCC needs to identify the requester's legal grounds to determine if it should release the requested non-public OCC information.

The information requirements in 12 CFR part 4, subpart C, are located as follows:

- 12 CFR 4.33: Request for non-public OCC records or testimony.
- 12 CFR 4.35(b)(3): Third parties requesting testimony.
- 12 CFR 4.37(a)(2): OCC former employee notifying OCC of subpoena.
- 12 CFR 4.37(a) and (b): Limitation on dissemination of released information.
- 12 CFR 4.39(d): Request for authenticated records or certificate of nonexistence of records.

The OCC uses the information to process requests for non-public OCC information and to determine if sufficient grounds exist for the OCC to release the requested information or provide testimony that would include a discussion of non-public information. This information collection facilitates the processing of requests and expedites the OCC's release of non-public information and testimony to the requester, as appropriate.

Type of Review: Extension, without change, of a currently approved collection.

Affected Public: Businesses or other for-profit; individuals.

Number of Respondents: 195.

Total Annual Responses: 195.

Frequency of Response: On occasion.

Total Annual Burden: 592 hours.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for OMB approval. All comments will become a matter of public record. Comments are invited on:

(a) Whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information has 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 the information to be collected;

(d) Ways to minimize the burden of the collection on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology; and

(e) Estimates of capital or start-up costs and costs of operation, maintenance, and purchase of services to provide information.

Dated: November 17, 2011.

Michele Meyer,

Assistant Director, Legislative & Regulatory Activities Division.

[FR Doc. 2011-30310 Filed 11-23-11; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4810-33-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Financial Crimes Enforcement Network

Bank Secrecy Act Advisory Group; Solicitation of Application for Membership

AGENCY: Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, Treasury.

ACTION: Notice and request for nominations.

SUMMARY: FinCEN is inviting the public to nominate financial institutions and trade groups for membership on the Bank Secrecy Act Advisory Group. New members will be selected for three-year membership terms.

DATES: Nominations must be received by December 27, 2011.

ADDRESSES: Applications may be mailed (not sent by facsimile) to Regulatory Policy and Programs Division, Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, P.O. BOX 39, Vienna, VA 22183 or emailed to: BSAAG@fincen.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Clare Murphy, Regulatory Outreach Specialist at (202) 354-6400.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Annunzio-Wylie Anti-Money Laundering Act of 1992 required the Secretary of the Treasury to establish a Bank Secrecy Act Advisory Group (BSAAG) consisting of representatives from federal regulatory and law enforcement agencies, financial institutions, and trade groups with members subject to the requirements of the Bank Secrecy Act, 31 CFR 1000-1099 *et seq.* or Section 6050I of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986. The BSAAG is the means by which the Secretary receives advice on the operations of the Bank Secrecy Act. As chair of the BSAAG, the Director of FinCEN is responsible for ensuring that relevant issues are placed before the BSAAG for review, analysis, and discussion. Ultimately, the BSAAG will make policy recommendations to the Secretary on issues considered. BSAAG membership is open to financial institutions and trade groups. New members will be selected to serve a three-year term and must designate one individual to represent that member at plenary meetings. In compliance with Executive Order 13490 of January 21, 2009, and White House policy, member