

A notice was published in the Federal Register on August 23, 1996 (61 FR 43474), extending the time to file comments to the tentative partial final decision regulating the handling of milk in the Carolina, Southeast, Tennessee Valley and Louisville-Lexington-Evansville marketing areas from August 17 to October 16, 1996. Notice is hereby given that the time for filing comments to the tentative partial decision regulating the handling of milk in the aforesaid marketing areas is hereby further extended from October 16 to November 30, 1996.

The initial comment period was extended, from August 16 to October 17, 1996, at the request of Carolina Virginia Milk Producers Association, to allow interested persons to comment more accurately on the amendments. The cooperative has asked that the comment period be extended an additional forty-five (45) days to November 30, 1996, to allow more observation time to evaluate the amendments. The cooperative stated that the amendments went into effect on August 10, 1996, and it has only observed the amendments for one Federal order pool.

It should be noted that any finalization of the tentative partial decision, with or without modification, may only be based on the factual record received in evidence at the oral hearing on May 15-16, 1996. To the extent that any comments will be based on subsequent factual occurrences, the Secretary would have to reopen the oral hearing if he believed consideration of such subsequent facts to be warranted. Nonetheless, the Secretary welcomes full participation by all interested persons in the rulemaking process. Thus, the comment period is further extended from October 16 to November 30, 1996.

This notice is issued pursuant to the provisions of the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937, as amended (7 U.S.C. 601-674), and the applicable rules of practice and procedure governing the formulation of marketing agreements and marketing orders (7 CFR Part 900).

List of Subjects in 7 CFR Parts 1005, 1007, 1011, and 1046

Milk marketing orders.

Dated: October 18, 1996.

Lon Hatamiya,  
Administrator.

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## DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

### 10 CFR Part 708

#### Contractor Employee Protection Program

**AGENCY:** Department of Energy.

**ACTION:** Notice of inquiry.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Energy's contractor employee protection program provides recourse to DOE contractor employees who believe that they have been retaliated against for such activities as disclosing information regarding mismanagement of environmental, safety, health, and other matters, for participating in Congressional proceedings, or for refusing to engage in illegal or dangerous activities. Under this program, the Department has been investigating and adjudicating cases for the past four and one half years. As part of Secretary Hazel R. O'Leary's policy of "zero tolerance for reprisal" against employees who raise workplace concerns, the DOE invites members of the public, particularly those persons with experience under this process (e.g., claimants, contractors, attorneys), to recommend any regulatory changes that might help to streamline the process and make it more responsive to the needs of both claimants and contractors.

**DATES:** Comments are due on December 24, 1996.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments (5 copies) may be submitted to: William A. Lewis, Jr., Director, Office of Employee Concerns, Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20585, Att: Contractor Employee Protection NOI.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Jeffrey C. Crater, Office of the Under Secretary, Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20585, 202-586-6479.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Pursuant to the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 (Act) [42 U.S.C. 2011 *et seq.*] and the Department of Energy Organization Act, the Department of Energy (Department) carries out numerous programs, including research, development, production, and environmental cleanup. These programs are carried out by contractors under the supervision of the Department at various Department-owned and/or operated facilities around the United States.

As part of a comprehensive set of health and safety policies, the Department has promulgated a regulation on contractor employee protection, which is codified at 10 CFR part 708. This regulation, promulgated

in 1992, 57 FR 7541 (March 3, 1992), provides a remedy for a contractor employee who has been discriminated against as a result of having disclosed information about waste, fraud, abuse, or mismanagement of health, safety, or environmental related matters, or about violations of law or regulation, for participating in Congressional proceedings, or for having in good faith refused to engage in illegal or dangerous activities. Since its inception, the Department has received comments and suggestions on how to improve the contractor employee protection program. In November 1995, the Office of Contractor Employee Protection was transferred to the Office of Inspector General. In response to congressional directive, the Office of Contractor Employee Protection was disestablished through a reorganization effective October 1, 1996. The Office of Inspector General will continue to investigate allegations of retaliation against contractor employees covered by Part 708.

Accordingly, the Department plans to amend part 708 to enhance its effectiveness and to address the reorganization of the contractor employee protection program. Although the Department has consulted with various stakeholders about this subject, the Department hereby invites public input from any interested person who thinks that part 708 should be revised and has suggestions for particular amendments. It will be followed eventually by a notice of proposed rulemaking that will give interested members of the public an opportunity to comment on the Department's formal proposal to amend part 708.

Issued in Washington, D.C., on October 11, 1996.

William A. Lewis, Jr.,

Director, Office of Employee Concerns.

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## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### 14 CFR Chapter I

[Summary Notice No. PR-96-7]

#### Petition for Rulemaking; Summary of Petitions Received; Dispositions of Petitions Issued

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of petitions for rulemaking received and of dispositions of prior petitions.