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Decided: December 23, 1996.

By the Board, Chairman Morgan, Vice Chairman Simmons, and Commissioner Owen.

Vernon A. Williams,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 96-33276 Filed 12-30-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915-00-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Customs Service

Extension of National Customs Automation Test Regarding Electronic Protest Filing

AGENCY: U.S. Customs Service, Department of the Treasury.

ACTION: General notice.

SUMMARY: This notice announces Customs plan to extend the test of its electronic filing of protests and to expand the number of test ports. The test will not be opened to new participants at this time. The notice invites public comments concerning any aspect of the test.

EFFECTIVE DATE: The test of electronic filing of protests, which was scheduled to end on October 31, 1996, is now scheduled to extend through April, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Written comments regarding this notice or any aspect of the test of the electronic protest system should be addressed to the Chief, Commercial Compliance Branch, U.S. Customs Service, 1301 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Room 1313, Washington, D.C. 20229-0001.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For operational or policy issues: Neil Shannon (202)927-0300. For protest system or automation issues: Steve Linnemann (202) 927-0436.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

On January 30, 1996, a document was published by Customs in the Federal Register (61 FR 3086) announcing, as part of the National Customs Automation Program (NCAP), a test regarding the electronic filing of protests. The test, which began on May 1, 1996 and was to last six months, involved transaction sets for the Automated Broker Interface (ABI) allowing the following to be filed electronically and their status to be tracked electronically:

(1) Protests against decisions of the Customs Service under 19 U.S.C. 1514;

(2) Claims for refunds of Customs duties or corrections of errors requiring reliquidation pursuant to 19 U.S.C. 1520(c) and (d); and

(3) Interventions in an importer's protest by an exporter or producer of merchandise from a country that is a party to the North American Free Trade Agreement under § 181.115 of the Customs Regulations.

A total of seventeen entities, consisting of importers, brokers, legal firms and sureties, volunteered to participate in the test. Six of these volunteers are currently operational. Eight ports were originally selected for the tests: Baltimore, Buffalo, Chicago, Los Angeles, Laredo, Los Angeles Airport, New York and Philadelphia.

Extension of Test

The purpose of this notice is to inform the public that Customs has extended the test of electronic filing and query of protests. The test is now extended through April 1997. While the test will not be opened to new participants at this time, Customs will consider expanding the number of ports at which electronic protests may be filed. Customs is considering expanding the test to one or more of the following ports: Charleston (South Carolina), Dallas, El Paso, Houston, Seattle, Miami and New Orleans.

Dated: December 24, 1996.

Albert W. Tennant,

Acting Assistant Commissioner, Office of Field Operations.

[FR Doc. 96-33107 Filed 12-30-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4820-02-P

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Agency Information Collection Activities: Proposed Collection; Comment

AGENCY: Veterans Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: As part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) invites the general public and other Federal agencies to comment on this information collection. This request for comment is being made pursuant to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13; 44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)). Comments should address the accuracy of the burden estimates and ways to

minimize the burden including the use of automated collection techniques or the use of other forms of information technology, as well as other relevant aspects of the information collection.

DATES: Written comments and recommendations on the proposal for the collection of information should be received on or before March 3, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to Nancy J. Kessinger, Veterans Benefits Administration (20S52), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420. All comments will become a matter of public record and will be summarized in the VBA request for Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval. In this document VBA is soliciting comments concerning the following information collection:

OMB Control Number: 2900-0132.

Title and Form Number: Veteran's Application in Acquiring Specially Adapted Housing or Special Home Adaptation Grant, VA Form 26-4555.

Type of Review: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Need and Uses: The form is used to gather the necessary information to determine the veteran's eligibility to specially adapted housing or the special home adaptation grant.

Current Actions: Title 38, U.S.C., Sections 2101(a) and (b), authorizes VA grants for specially adapted housing and special housing adaptations for disabled veterans. The sections specifically outline those determinations that must be made by the VA before such a grant is approved for a particular veteran. VA Form 26-4555 is used to collect information that is necessary for VBA to meet the requirements.

Affected Public: Individuals or households.

Estimated Annual Burden: 133 hours.

Estimated Average Burden Per Respondent: 10 minutes.

Frequency of Response: On occasion.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 800.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or copies of the form should be directed to Department of Veterans Affairs, Attn: Nancy J. Kessinger, Veterans Benefits Administration (20S52), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420, Telephone (202) 273-7079 or FAX (202) 275-4884.

Dated: December 16, 1996.

By direction of the Secretary:

Donald L. Neilson,

Director, Information Management Service.

[FR Doc. 96-33082 Filed 12-30-96; 8:45 am]

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