

consumers on labels and in advertisements. Other optional statements are also required.

Current Actions: There are no changes to this information collection and it is being submitted for extension purposes only.

Type of Review: Extension.

Affected Public: Business or other for-profit, not-for-profit institutions.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 6,060.

Estimated Time Per Respondent: 1 hour.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 1.

Request for Comments

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or 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 shall have 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 of information 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: February 3, 1997.

John W. Magaw,

Director.

[FR Doc. 97-2953 Filed 2-5-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4810-31-P

Office of the Comptroller of the Currency

Proposed Collection; Comment Request

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

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

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 proposed and/or continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. Currently, the OCC is soliciting comments concerning an

information collection titled Loan Index Information Collection.

DATES: Written comments should be submitted by April 7, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to the Communications Division, Attention: 1557-LOAN, Third Floor, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, 250 E Street, SW, Washington, DC 20219. In addition, comments may be sent by facsimile transmission to (202) 874-5274, or by electronic mail to REGS.COMMENTS@OCC.TREAS.GOV.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Requests for additional information or copies of the collection may be obtained by contacting Jessie Gates or Dionne Walsh, (202) 874-5090, Legislative and Regulatory Activities Division (1557-LOAN), Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, 250 E Street, SW, Washington, DC 20219.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Loan Index Information Collection.

OMB Number: 1557-LOAN.

Form Number: Not applicable.

Abstract: This information collection consists of data on loan underwriting benchmarks (actual and bank management projections) by type of loan product. The OCC needs this information as a supervisory tool to identify trends in underwriting, and to more efficiently and effectively implement its supervision by risk programs and processes.

Type of Review: New collection.

Affected Public: Businesses or other for-profit.

Number of Respondents: 222.

Total Annual Responses: 808.

Frequency of Response: Quarterly; semiannual.

Total Annual Burden Hours: 1,212 hours.

COMMENTS: Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or 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 startup costs and costs of operation, maintenance, and purchase of services to provide information.

Dated: January 31, 1997.

Karen Solomon,

Director, Legislative & Regulatory Activities Division.

[FR Doc. 97-2940 Filed 2-5-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4810-33-P

Customs Service

Announcement of National Customs Automation Program Test Regarding Reconciliation

AGENCY: US Customs Service, Department of Treasury.

ACTION: General notice.

SUMMARY: This notice announces Customs' plan to conduct a third prototype test of Reconciliation. The notice invites public comments concerning any aspect of the planned test, informs interested members of the public of the eligibility requirements for voluntary participation, describes the basis for selecting participants, and establishes the process for developing evaluation criteria. To participate in this prototype test, the necessary information, as outlined in this notice, must be filed with Customs, and approval granted. It is important to note that resources expended by the trade and Customs on these prototypes may not carry forward to the final program.

EFFECTIVE DATES: The test of this prototype will commence no earlier than June 1, 1997, and will run for approximately two years, and may be extended. The prototype will be limited to formal consumption entries filed on or after June 1, 1997, through May 31, 1999. Applications for participation in this prototype must be received on or before May 1, 1997. Comments concerning the test must be received on or before May 1, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Written comments regarding this notice, and information submitted to be considered for voluntary participation in the prototype, should be addressed to Ms. Renee Orme, Reconciliation Team, US Customs Service, 1301 Constitution Ave, NW, Room 1322, Washington, DC, 20229-0001.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For operational or policy issues: Ms. Renee Orme, at (202) 927-0644. For systems or automation issues: Mr. Alfred Morawski, at (202) 927-1045.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Title VI of the North American Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act (the Act), Public Law 103-182, 107 Stat. 2057 (December 8, 1993), contains provisions pertaining to Customs Modernization (107 Stat. 2170). Subtitle B of Title VI establishes the National Customs Automation Program (NCAP)—an automated and electronic system for the processing of commercial importations. Section 637 of the Act amends Section 484 of the Tariff Act of 1930 by establishing a new subsection (b) entitled "Reconciliation."

Reconciliation is a planned component of NCAP. Section 631 authorizes tests of planned NCAP components. Section 101.9(b) of the Customs Regulations (19 CFR 101.9(b)) implements the testing of NCAP components. See TD 95-21 (60 FR 14211, March 16, 1995). This test is established pursuant to those regulations.

Previous NCAP initiatives include Customs' prototype of remote location filing (60 FR 17605), and the announcement of a Reconciliation prototype for related party importers making upward adjustments to the price of imported merchandise, pursuant to 26 U.S.C. 482 (60 FR 46141 and 60 FR 64470). On May 10, 1996, Customs announced in the Federal Register (61 FR 21534) that it was conducting a voluntary prototype test regarding Reconciliation, covering only entries to which anti-dumping and countervailing duties applied, commencing July 9, 1996. That prototype, "RP1," was conducted with a very limited number of participants, at limited locations, and generated minimal changes to the Automated Commercial System (ACS). That prototype will conclude when liquidation or reliquidation of all Reconciliations has become final.

Additional prototypes of Reconciliation are being developed by Customs to determine the systemic and operational design of the final Reconciliation program, which will allow all filers to participate in this type of entry process at a national level. This prototype will test the benefits and potential problems of Reconciliation for Customs, the trade community, and other parties impacted by this program.

I. Description of Proposed Test

The Concept of Reconciliation

Reconciliation allows an importer to provide Customs with information (other than that related to the admissibility of merchandise), which is not available at the time of entry

summary filing, at a subsequent time. A Reconciliation is treated as a legal entry for purposes of liquidation, reliquidation, and protest.

A notice of intention to file a Reconciliation ("Notice of Intent") permits the liquidation of an entry as to all issues other than those which are transferred to the Reconciliation. By filing a Notice of Intent, an importer is requesting that a certain issue be separated from the entry. The importer voluntarily requests and accepts that the issue identified in the Notice of Intent remains open and outstanding, and the importer remains liable for any duties, fees, and taxes resulting from liquidation of the Reconciliation. Importers who choose to participate in this prototype will recognize that the liquidation of the underlying consumption entries pertains only to those issues not identified by the importer on the Notice of Intent. During this prototype, the importer will "flag" the underlying consumption entries with an electronic indicator, which will be sufficient to serve as the Notice of Intent.

In this prototype, the issue of the correct value of imported merchandise (the "value issue") will be transferred to the Reconciliation. The importer must exercise reasonable care in asserting the value at the time the underlying consumption entry is filed, and provide a good faith estimate. The value information will be updated at the filing of the Reconciliation. Other Reconciliation issues, such as classification, special trade programs, and antidumping and countervailing duty, will not be included in this prototype. This permits Customs to liquidate the underlying entries as to other issues (e.g., classification), but the issue of value is held open at the request of the importer, and is transferred to the Reconciliation.

Upon liquidation of any underlying entry, any decision by Customs entering into that liquidation (e.g., classification) may be protested pursuant to 19 U.S.C. 1514. When the outstanding value information is later furnished in the Reconciliation, the Reconciliation will be liquidated. The liquidation of the Reconciliation will be posted to the Bulletin Notice of Liquidation, and may be protested pursuant to 19 U.S.C. 1514, but the protest may only pertain to the issue of value (i.e., the protest may not re-visit issues previously liquidated in the underlying entry).

The Reconciliation shall be filed within 15 months of the date of the oldest underlying consumption entry.

Absent any specified alternate procedure, the current Customs regulations apply.

This prototype, as described below, will be the exclusive means by which to reconcile entries on the value issue.

Prototype Objectives

The Reconciliation team's objectives for this prototype are:

1. To work with the trade community, other agencies, and other parties impacted by this program in the design, conduct, and evaluation of the prototype;
2. To obtain experience through the prototype for use in the design of operational procedures, automated systems, and regulations;
3. To implement Reconciliation on a national level in conjunction with the Trade Compliance Redesign.

Description of the Prototype

The purpose of this prototype is to test operational issues regarding the establishment of standard operating procedures for Reconciliation on a national scale. Customs would like to afford the opportunity to participate to all those who volunteer for the test. However, the number of participants may be limited in view of the fact that this prototype will be conducted with minimal changes to automation, requiring Customs to manually intervene in tracking and processing. It is important to note that Customs intends to focus primarily on the value issues of "9802" (maquiladora) concerns and non-dutiable freight charges in the steel industry. The trade is encouraged, however, to bring other appropriate value issues to our attention for consideration for the prototype.

Only certain service ports are currently scheduled to participate in this prototype (please see section entitled "Prerequisites"). However, a participant may file a Reconciliation in each selected port in which underlying entries were filed (i.e., an importer may file the Reconciliation in Laredo provided that all of the underlying consumption entries were filed in Laredo).

For the duration of this prototype, Customs will not process drawback claims (including accelerated drawback) filed against entries flagged for Reconciliation, until after the Reconciliation entry is liquidated. (Please refer to section V.1., "Liquidation of Reconciliation Entry.")

It is important to note that Reconciliation procedures are designed to closely parallel actual business practice in the trade. As intended by the Act, liquidation of the non-

Reconciliation issues on the underlying entries will result in a reduction of contingent liabilities for the importer. An additional benefit for the trade is that Reconciliation allows the importer additional time after filing an entry to secure the pertinent value information.

Standard Operating Procedures

I. Initial Interview

1. Upon an importer's acceptance into the pilot, Customs port personnel will interview the company's representatives to discuss the specific value issue to be reconciled, the merchandise and Harmonized Tariff System (HTS) classification, which ports the importer uses, and whether the importer has requested Reconciliation in another port.

2. During the interview, the approved value issue is documented. This permits Customs to liquidate the underlying consumption entries concerning all other issues (e.g., classification), but to hold open the issue of value, at the request of the importer, and transfer it to the Reconciliation entry.

3. The approved importer must appear as the importer of record on each of the entries designated for Reconciliation.

II. Importer Files "Flagged" Consumption Entries

1. Any formal consumption entry (type 01 or 02) that is subject to Reconciliation for the approved value issue must be filed via the Automated Broker Interface (ABI) "EI" (entry summary) application. An electronic indicator, or "flag," signifying that these entries are to be reconciled for the approved value issue, must be provided at the header level. The flag designates that the approved value issue for the entire entry summary (not just a specific line) is subject to Reconciliation. The Reconciliation entry must be filed within 15 months of the date of the oldest of these underlying entry summaries.

2. For purposes of this prototype, the "flag" serves as the importer's Notice of Intent to file a Reconciliation entry.

3. The importer must use reasonable care in asserting the value for the consumption entry, providing a good faith value estimate, and depositing the appropriate duties, taxes, and fees.

III. Importer Electronically Transmits the Association File

1. When the importer has completed the information-gathering, and has the answer to the value issue in question on the Reconciliation, the filer will electronically (via ABI) transmit an

"association file" to Customs. The association file will consist of the following data elements:

a. the Reconciliation entry number
b. all of the associated (underlying) consumption entry numbers which were previously flagged as being subject to Reconciliation

c. the total amount of duty, fees, and taxes (broken out by "class code") which should have been paid for each of the underlying consumption entries, had the complete information been available to the importer at the time of filing of that entry summary.

EXAMPLE (association file):

Header: Reconciliation Entry Number XXX

Detail: Flagged Consumption Entry #123

Total Reconciled Duty = \$500

Total Fees = \$25

Flagged Consumption Entry #456

Total Reconciled Duty = \$1,000

Total Fees = \$35

(etc.)

2. Transmission of the association file must occur within 15 months of the date of the oldest underlying entry summary.

3. The importer must clearly document how the information in the association file was derived, and provide all supporting documentation to Customs when the Reconciliation entry is filed.

IV. Importer Manually Files the Reconciliation Entry

1. In conjunction with the ABI transmission of the association file, the importer/filer will manually submit the Reconciliation entry (entry type 09). Entry type 09 cannot be filed via ABI, because of limited Customs automation capability for this prototype. The Reconciliation must be manually filed on a CF7501, within 15 months of the date of the oldest underlying consumption entry. The Reconciliation should include no fewer than 10 underlying entries.

2. The Reconciliation must include complete supporting documentation for the information provided, to substantiate the importer's claim. The supporting documentation must include details at the entry line level. Supporting documents may include, but are not limited to:

a. detailed line-level spreadsheets
b. landed cost analysis sheets
c. invoices, purchase orders, and contracts.

3. Adequate bonding will be required for each Reconciliation. Since there is no additional liability created on the Reconciliation, the bond filed on the underlying entries will in most cases suffice.

4. The manual Reconciliation entry header data elements will include, but are not limited to:

a. Reconciliation entry number
b. Reconciliation entry type (09)
c. IRS number
d. Bond type/number

e. Port of entry code

f. Surety code

g. Summary date of oldest underlying consumption entry

h. Reconciliation date.

5. The Reconciliation entry line data elements will include, but are not limited to:

a. Reconciliation issue

b. Country of Origin

c. SPI (if any)

d. HTS number

e. Quantity

f. Value

g. Charges.

6. Each Reconciliation line item will be consolidated for all of the underlying consumption entries listed in the association file. To meet certain requirements of the Bureau of Census, each different HTS number will require a separate line. The reconciled (or corrected) information will be included below the consolidated (original) information, as follows:

EXAMPLE (Reconciliation entry line item)

001 Issue: Value

(Original) C/O SPI HTS

Quantity Value Charges

(Corrected) C/O SPI HTS

Quantity Value Charges

V. Liquidation of Reconciliation Entry

1. The Reconciliation entry will be reviewed and liquidated, and a bill or refund will normally be issued (as appropriate) against each underlying consumption entry, calculated against the duty as shown in the association file. Importers will recognize that there may be instances where no bill or refund is necessary, based on the information provided. Customs will calculate any interest due in any case.

2. On a matter of dispute, the importer may follow normal protest procedures (pursuant to 19 U.S.C. 1514) with regard to the Reconciliation entry.

Prerequisites for Reconciliation Under this Prototype

A. *Common Elements:* Each Reconciliation under this prototype will be limited to entries filed by one importer and one filer, and in one port location. Importers who file entries at more than one port may participate at more than one port, if the other prerequisites are met; however, they must file a separate Reconciliation for

each port used. Further, the Reconciliation must be filed in the same port as the underlying consumption entries covered by the Reconciliation. Value is the only issue which may be reconciled under this prototype.

B. Bonding: Adequate bonding will be required for each Reconciliation. Since there is no additional liability created on the Reconciliation, the bond filed on the underlying entries will in most cases be used to cover the Reconciliation. However, Customs will analyze each participant's individual situation, and take action to ensure that sufficient bond coverage exists. While Customs prefers to have one common set of legally responsible parties for each Reconciliation, importers with entries which were secured by more than one surety will not necessarily be excluded from participation in this prototype.

C. Eligible Entries: Only entry types 01 and 02, for formal consumption entries, will be eligible for this prototype. Antidumping/countervailing duty entries (entry types 03 and 07) and warehouse withdrawals (entry types 31, 32, 34, and 38) are not eligible for participation. Entry type 09, the Reconciliation entry, will be created effective with this prototype.

D. Time Frame: This prototype is scheduled to begin no sooner than June 1, 1997, and run for 24 months, unless Customs decides to extend it. The prototype will be limited to formal consumption entries filed on or after June 1, 1997, through May 31, 1999. It is important to note that, although the test has concluded, Customs will liquidate Reconciliation entries after the closing date of the test.

E. Port Locations: The following are service port locations which will be operational under this prototype: Chicago, Detroit, El Paso, Houston, Laredo, Los Angeles, New Orleans, Nogales, and San Diego. We will consider including other service ports, based on requests from applicants. If Customs decides to expand to other ports, we will issue a notice to the Customs Electronic Bulletin Board, and will accordingly extend the deadline for applying to participate in the prototype.

F. Liquidation: Importers who choose to participate in this prototype will recognize that the liquidation of the underlying entries pertains only to those issues not identified by the importer as reconcilable (i.e., issues other than value). Upon liquidation of the underlying entries, any decisions of the Customs Service entering into that liquidation can be protested pursuant to 19 U.S.C. 1514. The liquidation of the Reconciliation will be posted to the Bulletin Notice of Liquidation, and may

be protested (pursuant to 19 U.S.C. 1514).

Regulatory Provisions Suspended

Certain requirements of Section 113.62 of the Customs Regulations (19 CFR 113.62), pertaining to basic importation and entry bond conditions, will be suspended during this prototype test. Certain provisions in Parts 141 and 142 of the Customs Regulations (19 CFR 141 and 19 CFR 142), pertaining to entry, and of Part 159 of the Customs Regulations (19 CFR Part 159), pertaining to liquidation of duties, will also be suspended during this prototype test.

Absent any specified alternate procedure, the current regulations apply.

II. Eligibility Criteria

The following requirements must be met to be considered for selection in this prototype:

1. No fewer than 10 entries may be subject to a single Reconciliation.
2. Adequate bond coverage must exist for the Reconciliation.
3. Participants may not be the subject of a current investigation by the Customs Service. Closed investigations will not necessarily preclude an importer from participating. However, the findings will be taken into consideration, as will the importer's demonstrated efforts to correct past problems.
4. Participants must be capable of submitting certain information electronically, via ABI.
5. Participants must agree to participate in the evaluation of this test.
6. Only formal consumption entry types 01 and 02 will be accepted.
7. The Reconciliation and its underlying consumption entries must be filed in the same port.

Interested candidates should note that participation in this test will not constitute confidential information, and that lists of participants will be made available on the Customs Electronic Bulletin Board and the Administrative Message System.

Reconciliation Prototype Application

This notice requests importers, or their brokers and/or attorneys, to voluntarily apply for participation in this prototype by submitting the following information:

1. Importer name and IRS number
2. Broker name(s) and filer code(s)
3. Surety name(s) and surety code(s)
4. Bond coverage (i.e., whether a continuous and/or single entry bonds will be used on the underlying entries)

5. Supplier name(s), address(es), and manufacturer's number
6. Commodities covered under the Reconciliation
7. Port(s) at which consumption entries and Reconciliation will be filed
8. Number of entries anticipated to be covered by the Reconciliation
9. Point of contact and telephone number
10. Any comments on prototype participation.

This information should be submitted to Ms. Renee Orme, Reconciliation Team, US Customs Service, 1301 Constitution Ave, NW, Room 1322, Washington, DC, 20229-001, on or before May 1, 1997. If Customs selects more service ports as prototype locations, the deadline to apply will be extended to 30 days after the date of the Customs Electronic Bulletin Board notice announcing the selections. By applying to participate in this test, the importer is agreeing to participate pursuant to the terms of the test as defined in this notice.

Basis for Participant Selection

Eligible importers will be considered for selection as participants in this prototype. Selection will be based upon automation capabilities, port of entry, and volume of entries within the designated criteria. Customs is looking for a variety of circumstances and participants for this prototype, within certain parameters. However, a limited number of participants will be selected, because of minimal automated programming available to support the test. Selected participants will be notified in writing, and the list of participants will be made available on the Customs Electronic Bulletin Board and the Administrative Message System.

We stress that those applicants not selected for participation, and other interested parties, are invited to comment on the design, conduct, and evaluation of this prototype.

Dismissal From Prototype

If a filer attempts to submit data relating to prohibited merchandise, or merchandise subject to antidumping or countervailing duties, or other non-eligible data; if the filer submits non-consumption entries; if the filer is consistently subject to a late-file condition on the Reconciliation; if the filer refuses to supply Customs with sufficient supporting documentation for the Reconciliation; if the filer is habitually delinquent in the payment of bills from Customs; or if the filer otherwise fails to follow the procedures outlined herein, or applicable laws and regulations, then the filer may be

expelled from the program, and/or may be prevented from participation in future Reconciliation prototypes, and/or may be subject to penalties.

Any decision revoking participation may be appealed to the Director of Trade Compliance, within 15 days of the decision date.

III. Test Evaluation Criteria

Once participants are selected, Customs will review all public comments received concerning any aspect of the test program or procedures, answer any questions in light of those comments, and establish baseline measures and evaluation methods and criteria. Interim evaluations of the prototype will be published on the Customs Electronic Bulletin Board, and the results of the final prototype evaluation will be published in the Federal Register as required by 19 CFR 101.9(b). The following evaluation methods and criteria have been suggested:

1. Baseline measurements to be established through dataqueries and questionnaires
2. Reports to be run through use of dataquery throughout the prototype
3. Questionnaires from both trade participants and Customs to be used before, during and after the prototype period.

Customs may assess any or all of the following evaluation criteria:

1. Workload impact (workload shifts/volume, cycle times, etc.)
2. Cost savings (staff, interest, issuance of fewer checks or bills, tracking refunds/bills, reduction in contingent liabilities, etc.)
3. Policy and procedure accommodation
4. Trade compliance impact
5. Problem resolution
6. System efficiency
7. Operational efficiency
8. Other issues identified by the participant group.

Customs will request that test participants be active in the evaluation, identifying costs and savings experienced in this prototype.

Dated: January 31, 1997.

Robert S. Trotter,

Acting Assistant Commissioner, Office of Field Operations.

[FR Doc. 97-2977 Filed 2-5-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4820-02-P

Internal Revenue Service

Proposed Collection; Comment Request for Form 4419

AGENCY: Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Treasury.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Department of the Treasury, 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 proposed and/or continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13 (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)). Currently, the IRS is soliciting comments concerning Form 4419, Application for Filing Information Returns Magnetically/Electronically.

DATES: Written comments should be received on or before April 7, 1997 to be assured of consideration.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to Garrick R. Shear, Internal Revenue Service, room 5571, 1111 Constitution Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20224.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection should be directed to Carol Savage, (202) 622-3945, Internal Revenue Service, room 5569, 1111 Constitution Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20224.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Application for Filing Information Returns Magnetically/Electronically.

OMB Number: 1545-0387.

Form Number: Form 4419.

Abstract: Under section 6011(e)(2)(a) of the Internal Revenue Code, any person, including corporations, partnerships, individuals, estates and trusts, who is required to file 250 or more information returns must file such returns magnetically or electronically. Payers required to file on magnetic media must complete Form 4419 to receive authorization to file.

Current Actions: On Form 4419, item 5 and its instructions were eliminated because the information provided is no longer necessary. In item 6, Cartridges and Tape Cartridges were added as acceptable media types. In item 7, "Other Cartridge Parameters" was added to detail the additional types of cartridges which are now acceptable for filing information returns.

Type of Review: Revision of a currently approved collection.

Affected Public: Business or other for-profit organizations, non-profit institutions, Federal government, and state, local or tribal governments.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 15,000.

Estimated Time Per Respondent: 26 minutes.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 6,500.

The following paragraph applies to all of the collections of information covered by this notice:

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless the collection of information displays a valid OMB control number.

Books or records relating to a collection of information must be retained as long as their contents may become material in the administration of any internal revenue law. Generally, tax returns and tax return information are confidential, as required by 26 U.S.C. 6103.

Request for Comments

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or 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 shall have 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 of information 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.

Approved: February 3, 1997.

Garrick R. Shear,

IRS Reports Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. 97-3009 Filed 2-5-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4830-01-U

[CO-26-96]

Proposed Collection; Comment Request for Regulation Project

AGENCY: Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Treasury.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Department of the Treasury, 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 proposed and/or continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995,