

The profile form includes the employment histories of the mediators for the past 10 years and any information disclosed regarding conflicts of interest. The profile also includes information about the mediator's education, business and professional background, mediation experience and training and memberships in professional associations. Mediation is a voluntary method of dispute resolution where a mediator attempts to facilitate a settlement of the dispute. When mediation is successful, cases are settled earlier, often with significant cost savings. The parties' rights are protected since any settlement is reached with their participation and agreement.

Finally, the proposed rule change adds new Rule 639 to require, on a pilot basis for two years from the date of Commission approval, an administrative conference between the parties and arbitrators in all cases where the amount of the claim is \$500,000 or more. An administrative conference early in the process will allow the arbitrators to intervene to establish discovery schedules resolve discovery disputes and other preliminary matters. The conference is intended to expedite the arbitration by narrowing the issues in dispute and avoiding costly contests over procedural matters.

2. Statutory Basis

The Exchange believes that the proposed changes are consistent with Section 6(b)(5) of the Act³ in that they promote just and equitable principles of trade by insuring the members and member organizations and the public have a fair and impartial forum for the resolution of their disputes.

B. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement on Burden on Competition

The Exchange does not believe that the proposed rule change will impose any inappropriate burden on competition.

C. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement on Comments on the Proposed Rule Change Received From Members, Participants, or Others

No written comments were either solicited or received.

III. Date of Effectiveness of the Proposed Rule Change and Timing for Commission Action

Within 35 days of the publication of this notice in the **Federal Register** or within such longer period (i) as the Commission may designate up to 90

days of such date if it finds such longer period to be appropriate and publishes its reasons for so finding or (ii) as to which the self-regulatory organization consents, the Commission will:

(A) By order approve the proposed rule change, or

(B) Institute proceedings to determine whether the proposed rule change should be disapproved.

IV. Solicitation of Comments

Interested persons are invited to submit written data, views, and arguments concerning the foregoing, including whether the proposed rule change is consistent with the Act. Persons making written submissions should file six copies thereof with the Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, 450 Fifth Street, NW, Washington, DC 20549. Copies of the submission, all subsequent amendments, all written statements with respect to the proposed rule change that are filed with the Commission, and all written communications relating to the proposed rule change between the Commission and any person, other than those that may be withheld from the public in accordance with the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 552, will be available for inspection and copying at the Commission's Public Reference Room. Copies of such filing will also be available for inspection and copying at the principal office of the Exchange. All submissions should refer to File No. SR-NYSE-98-27 and should be submitted by November 4, 1998.

For the Commission, by the Division of Market Regulation, pursuant to delegated authority.

Margaret H. McFarland,

Deputy Secretary.

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SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Data Collection Available for Public Comments and Recommendations

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice announces the Small Business Administration's intentions to request approval on a new, and/or currently approved information collection.

DATES: Comments should be submitted within 60 days of this publication in the **Federal Register**.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Curtis B. Rich, Management Analyst,

Small Business Administration, 409 3rd Street, S.W., Suite 5000, Washington, D.C. 20416. Phone Number: 202-205-6629.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: "8(a) Export Survey Initiative".

Type of Request: Revision of a currently approved collection.

Form No.: 2068.

Description of Respondents: 8(a) Firms.

Annual Responses: 200.

Annual Burden: 33.

Comments: Send all comments regarding this information collection to, William A. Fisher, Acting Associate Administrator, Office of Minority Enterprise Development, Small Business Administration, 409 3rd Street S.W., Suite 8000, Washington, D.C. 20416. Phone No.: 202-205-6412.

Send comments regarding whether this information collection is necessary for the proper performance of the function of the agency, accuracy of burden estimate, in addition to ways to minimize this estimate, and ways to enhance the quality.

Jacqueline White,

Chief, Administrative Information Branch.

[FR Doc. 98-27497 Filed 10-13-98; 8:45 am]

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SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

[Declaration of Disaster #3138]

State of Alabama

As a result of the President's major disaster declaration on September 30, 1998, I find that the following Counties in the State of Alabama constitute a disaster area due to damages caused by Hurricane Georges beginning on September 25, 1998 and continuing: Baldwin, Clarke, Coffee, Covington, Crenshaw, Escambia, Geneva, Mobile, Monroe, and Washington. Applications for loans for physical damage may be filed until the close of business on November 29, 1998 and for economic injury until the close of business on June 30, 1999 at the address listed below or other locally announced locations: U.S. Small Business Administration, Disaster Area 2 Office, One Baltimore Place, Suite 300, Atlanta, GA 30308.

In addition, applications for economic injury loans from small businesses located in the following contiguous counties may be filed until the specified date at the above location: Butler, Choctaw, Conecuh, Dale, Houston, Lowndes, Marengo, Montgomery, Pike, and Wilcox in the State of Alabama. Any counties contiguous to the above-

³ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b)(5).