

2. *The title of the information collection:* Applicant Self-Assessment Form.

3. *The form number if applicable:* NRC Form 563.

4. *How often the collection is required:* Once, upon application for employment.

5. *Who will be required or asked to report:* Basically qualified external applicants applying for engineering and scientific positions with the NRC.

6. *An estimate of the number of responses:* 1,200.

7. *The estimated number of annual respondents:* 1,200.

8. *An estimate of the total number of hours needed annually to complete the requirement or request:* 100 hours (five minutes per response).

9. *An indication of whether Section 3507(d), Pub. L. 104-13 applies:* Not applicable.

10. *Abstract:* The Applicant Self-Assessment will be used to collect uniform information from external applicants as to which technical specialties they possess that are unique to the needs of the NRC. This information will be reviewed by the Office of Human Resources staff and used to match applicants technical specialties with those required by selecting officials when an engineering or scientific vacancy position is to be filled.

A copy of the final supporting statement may be viewed free of charge at the NRC Public Document Room, 2120 L Street, NW. (lower level), Washington, DC. OMB clearance requests are available at the NRC worldwide web site (<http://www.nrc.gov/NRC/PUBLIC/OMB/index.html>). The document will be available on the NRC home page site for 60 days after the signature date of this notice.

Comments and questions should be directed to the OMB reviewer listed below by September 5, 2000. Comments received after this date will be considered if it is practical to do so, but assurance of consideration cannot be given to comments received after this date.

Erik Godwin, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (3150-0177), NEOB-10202, Office of Management and Budget, Washington, DC 20503

Comments can also be submitted by telephone at (202) 395-3087.

The NRC Clearance Officer is Brenda Jo. Shelton, 301-415-7233.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 27th day of July 2000.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Beth St. Mary,

Acting NRC Clearance Officer, Office of the Chief Information Officer.

[FR Doc. 00-19621 Filed 8-2-00; 8:45 am]

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Discrimination Task Group; Announcement and Meeting Notice

This Notice serves to announce the formation of an NRC Discrimination Task Group, which will evaluate the NRC processes used in the handling of discrimination allegations and violations of employee protection standards (Applicable regulations include 10 CFR 30.7, 10 CFR 40.7, 10 CFR 50.7, 10 CFR 60.9, 10 CFR 61.9, 10 CFR 70.7, 10 CFR 76.7, 10 CFR 72.10, 10 CFR 150.20). The group will function as a management-level review group to evaluate the Commission's handling of discrimination cases. The overall objective of the NRC employee protection regulations is to promote an atmosphere where employees feel comfortable raising safety concerns or engaging in other protected activity without fear of reprisal. Because the NRC has traditionally relied on the openness of employees to identify issues, an effective and consistent NRC approach for dealing with discrimination cases is an important feature of encouraging and ensuring a safety conscious work environment. Resulting enforcement actions need to be predictable, fair and able to withstand scrutiny, since they could result in civil penalties, orders, or actions to individuals and are viewed by stakeholders as an indicator of the seriousness with which the NRC views discrimination issues.

The group's overall objective is to develop recommendations for revisions to the regulatory requirements, the enforcement policy or other agency guidelines as appropriate. A Commission Paper will be developed outlining the recommendations for NRC offices to consider in making changes to their processes.

The group's preliminary schedule is:

- Evaluation of current NRC processes. July-Sept., 2000
- Conduct Stakeholder meetings. August, 2000-April, 2001
- Review of other Federal agency processes. Oct.-Dec., 2000
- Develop recommendations for process improvements. Jan.-March, 2001.

- Provide Commission draft recommendation. April, 2001
 - Draft recommendations issued for comment. May-June, 2001
 - Issue Report with recommendations. June 30, 2001
- Task group activities being considered include:
1. Interaction with other agencies (such as Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Labor, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Agriculture, National Institutes of Health, Center for Disease Control, Department of Energy, and Office of Special Counsel) to understand how they process these issues.
 2. Conduct internal and external stakeholder meetings to solicit input on the Agency's handling of discrimination issues.
 3. Consider the issues raised in the Petition for Rulemaking "Employee Protection Training", Docket PRM-30-62, 64 Fed. Reg. 57785 (Oct. 27, 1999), regarding requiring training of first line and above supervisors of their responsibilities in implementing the employee protection regulations.
 4. The review will also:
 - (a) Evaluate the current NRC processes for dealing with discrimination matters.
 - (b) Determine whether the Enforcement Policy supplements need to consider a more graded approach regarding the appropriate enforcement sanction given the specific facts of the case, rather than the current supplement guidance which largely relies on the individual's position. Examples of guidance to consider revising include consideration of the severity of the adverse action, and better defining thresholds for taking individual action.
 - (c) Consider changes to the current enforcement process in discrimination cases, such as the usefulness of pre-decisional Enforcement Conferences and settlement discussions.
 - (d) Evaluate the process used for DOL deferrals.
 - (e) Evaluate the release of documents prior to final action being taken.
 - (f) Evaluate the reliance on regulations such as 10 CFR 50.5 for Individual Actions and evaluate revising 10 CFR 50.7 to include individual actions.
 - (g) Clarify how the NRC should use the decisions of other Agencies (*e.g.*, DOL, MSPB).
 - (h) Review the role of the complainant in the process.
- The Task Group meeting participants are listed below along with their affiliation:

- Bill Borchardt; Director, Office of Enforcement, Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

- Dennis Dambly; Assistant General Counsel for Materials Litigation and Enforcement, OGC, Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

- Cynthia D. Pederson; Director, Division of Nuclear Materials Safety, Region III, Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

- Barry Letts; Field Office Director, Office of Investigations, Region I, Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

- Edward Baker; Agency Allegation Advisor, Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

- Brad Fewell; Regional Counsel, Region I, Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Over the next several months the Task Group plans to hold several public stakeholder meetings in various areas of the country to solicit input on areas of improvement in the Agency's handling of discrimination issues.

The following public meeting shave been scheduled:

The first public meeting will be held on September 5, 2000, at the USNRC offices in the TWFN Auditorium, located at 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville Maryland. The meeting will start at 1 p.m.

A public meeting will be held in Chattanooga TN, on September 7, 2000, at the USNRC Technical Training Center, Osborne Office Center, 5746 Marlin Road, Chattanooga TN 37411 This will be an evening meeting beginning at 7:00 p.m.

A public meeting will be held in San Luis Obispo CA, on September 14, 2000, at the Embassy Suites Hotel, 333 Madonna Road. This will be an evening meeting beginning at 7:00 p.m.

Subsequent workshops in the vicinity of the Milestone Nuclear Power Plant, the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant and in the Chicago area will be announced in the **Federal Register**, local newspapers and on the NRC web site as specific plans are made.

These public meetings are open to the members of the public. Oral or written views regarding the NRC's processes for handling employee protection issues may be presented by the members of the public, including members of the nuclear industry. Persons desiring to make prepared oral presentations or statements should notify Mr. Barry Westreich (Telephone 301/415-3456, e-mail BCW@nrc.gov) five days prior to the meeting date, if possible, so that appropriate arrangements can be made to allow necessary time during the meeting for such a presentation or statements. Use of still, motion picture,

and television cameras as well as audio recording devices will be permitted during this meeting.

Further information regarding topics of discussion; whether the meeting has been canceled, rescheduled, or relocated; may be obtained by contacting Mr. Barry Westreich between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. EDT.

This meeting will not be transcribed but, if needed, a meeting report will be available electronically for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room or from the Publicly Available Records (PARS) component of NRC's document system (ADAMS). ADAMS is accessible from the NRC Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/NRC/ADAMS/index.html> (the Public Electronic Reading Room). The Task Group Charter and other pertinent documents related to Task Group Activities will also be periodically posted and updated on the Office of Enforcement Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/OE>. For those unable to attend one of the public meetings on this issue, comments on the discrimination process will be solicited in the **Federal Register** in the future.

Dated this 27th day of July 2000.

R.W. Borchardt,

Director, Office of Enforcement.

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SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[Release No. IA-1888]

Designation of NASD Regulation, Inc. To Establish and Maintain the Investment Adviser Registration Depository; Approval of IARD Fees

July 28, 2000.

AGENCY: Securities and Exchange Commission.

ACTION: Notice and order.

SUMMARY: The Commission is designating NASD Regulation, Inc. (NASDR) to establish and maintain a new electronic filing and disclosure system for investment advisers. The new system is called the Investment Adviser Registration Depository (IARD). The Commission is also approving IARD filing fees.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 28, 2000.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Lori H. Price, Senior Counsel, or Karen L. Goldstein, Attorney, 202-942-0716, Task Force on Investment Adviser Regulation, Division of Investment Management, Securities and Exchange Commission, 450 Fifth Street, NW., Washington, DC 20549-0506.

Discussion

In 1996, Congress gave us authority to participate in an electronic system for the registration of investment advisers. Section 203A(d) of the Investment Advisers Act of 1940 (Advisers Act) allows us to require investment advisers to file forms "through any entity designated [by us] for that purpose," and to "pay the reasonable costs associated with [these] filings."¹ The NASDR is building the IARD for us and the North American Securities Administrators Association. The IARD will permit advisers to file with us and the states electronically through the Internet.²

Today, pursuant to our authority under the Advisers Act, we are designating NASDR as operator of the IARD. NASDR has extensive experience administering the Central Registration Depository (CRD) through which broker-dealers make electronic filings with NASDR, the state securities authorities, and us. NASDR is the self-regulatory organization for broker-dealers.³ In operating the IARD, NASDR will perform certain administrative tasks related to the IARD, but will not act as a self-regulatory organization for advisers.

NASDR has submitted to us a schedule of filing fees that it proposes to charge advisers to initially register through the IARD and to file updating annual amendments. Today we are approving these fees. The fees will be used to pay for the operation and maintenance of the IARD. Because larger advisers will make greater use of the system and derive greater benefits, NASDR has proposed that they pay higher fees than smaller advisers. Thus, the filing fee requirements are set in three tiers, based on the amount of an adviser's assets under management. We approve these fees, which follow, as

¹ 15 USC 80b-3a(d).

² The IARD will permit advisers to satisfy filing obligations under state and federal laws by making a single electronic filing. Information contained in the filings made through the IARD will be stored in a database that will be publicly accessible through the Internet. We have proposed new rules under the Advisers Act, and amendments to current rules, that would require advisers to submit their filings through the IARD. The release proposing these rules provides further details on how the IARD will work. See Electronic Filing by Investment Advisers; Proposed Amendments to Form ADV, Investment Advisers Act Release No. 1862 (April 5, 2000) [65 FR 20524 (April 17, 2000)].

³ NASDR was established in 1996 as a wholly owned subsidiary of the National Association of Securities Dealers (NASD).