

**OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES
TRADE REPRESENTATIVE**
**Notice of Request for Public Comment
on the Andean Trade Preferences Act:
Report to Congress**

AGENCY: Office of the United States Trade Representative.

ACTION: Notice and solicitation of public comment.

SUMMARY: The Trade Policy Staff Committee (TPSC) is seeking the views of interested parties on the operation of the Andean Trade Preference Act, as amended (19 U.S.C. 3201 *et seq.*) ("the ATPA"). Section 203(f) as amended requires the President to submit a report to the Congress regarding the operation of the ATPA on or before January 31, 2001, following the ninth anniversary of the enactment of the ATPA. The TPSC invites written comments concerning the issues to be examined in preparing such a report, including the considerations described in subsections 203(c) and (d) of the ATPA.

DATES: Public comments are due at USTR by September 11, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, 600 17th Street NW., Room 523, Washington, DC 20508.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Bennett Harman, Deputy Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for Latin America, Office of the Western Hemisphere, Office of the United States Trade Representative, (202) 395-5190.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This report is the last one required of the Administration before the program's expiration on December 4, 2001. Renewal of the program will be considered in 2001. Interested parties are invited to submit comments on any aspect of the program's operation, including the status of beneficiary countries—Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru—under the criteria described in subsections 203(c) and (d) of the ATPA, 19 U.S.C. 3202(c) and (d). Issues to be examined in this report include: The program's effect on the volume and composition of trade and investment between the United States and the Andean beneficiary countries; its effect on the economic growth and development of the beneficiary countries; the extent to which the program has advanced narcotics eradication through sustainable alternative development efforts in coca-growing areas; and the degree to which the program has encouraged the trade and investment policies cited in the ATPA.

Written Notice

Persons submitting written comments should provide a statement in twenty copies, no later than 5 p.m., September 8, 2000, to Gloria Blue, Executive Secretary, TPSC, Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, Room 122, 600 17th Street, NW., Washington, DC 20508. Non-confidential information received will be available for public inspection by appointment, in the USTR Reading Room, Room 101, Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 12 noon and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. For an appointment call Brenda Webb on 202-395-6186. All submissions must be in English and should conform to the information requirements of 15 CFR part 2003. Any business confidential material must be clearly marked as such on the cover letter or page and each succeeding page, and must be accompanied by a non-confidential summary thereof.

Peter F. Allgeier,

Associate U.S. Trade Representative for the Western Hemisphere.

[FR Doc. 00-19812 Filed 8-3-00; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
Coast Guard

[USCG 2000-7694]

Guidelines for Proficiency in Advanced Fire-Fighting

AGENCY: Coast Guard, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of Availability and Request for Comments.

SUMMARY: The Coast Guard announces the availability of, and seeks public comments on, the national performance measures proposed here for use as guidelines when mariners demonstrate their proficiency in Advanced Fire-Fighting. A working group of the Merchant Marine Personnel Advisory Committee (MERPAC) developed and recommended national performance measures for this proficiency. The Coast Guard has adapted the measures recommended by MERPAC.

DATES: Comments and related material must reach the Docket Management Facility on or before October 3, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Please identify your comments and related material by the docket number of this rulemaking [USCG 2000-7694]. Then, to make sure they enter the docket only once, submit them by just one of the following means:

(1) By mail to the Docket Management Facility, U.S. Department of Transportation, room PL-401, 400 Seventh Street SW., Washington, DC 20590-0001.

(2) By delivery to room PL-401 on the Plaza level of the Nassif Building, 400 Seventh Street SW., Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The telephone number is 202-366-9329.

(3) By fax to the Docket Management Facility at 202-493-2251.

(4) Electronically through the Web Site for the Docket Management System at <http://dms.dot.gov>.

The Docket Management Facility maintains the public docket for this Notice. Comments and related material received from the public, as well as documents mentioned in this Notice, will become part of this docket and will be available for inspection or copying at room PL-401 on the Plaza level of the Nassif Building, 400 Seventh Street SW., Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. You may also find this docket on the Internet at <http://dms.dot.gov>.

The measures proposed here are also available from Mr. Mark Gould or Mr. Gerald Miente, Maritime Personnel Qualifications Division, Office of Operating and Environmental Standards, Commandant (G-MSO-1), U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters, telephone 202-267-0229.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For questions on this Notice or on the national performance measures proposed here, write or call Mr. Gould or Mr. Miente where indicated under **ADDRESSES**. For questions on viewing or submitting material to the docket, call Ms. Dorothy Beard, Chief of Dockets, Department of Transportation, telephone 202-366-9329.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:
What Action Is the Coast Guard taking?

Table A-VI/3 of the Code accompanying the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW), 1978, as amended in 1995, articulates qualifications for ensuring merchant mariners' attaining the minimum standard of competence through demonstrations of their proficiency in Advanced Fire-Fighting. The Coast Guard tasked MERPAC with referring to the Table, modifying and specifying it as it deemed necessary, and recommending national performance measures. The Coast Guard has adapted the measures recommended by MERPAC and is proposing them here for use as guidelines for assessing that proficiency. Next we set forth the Four Skills by which a mariner must demonstrate that proficiency and we give an example of a Performance Condition, a Performance Behavior, and

three Performance Standards for one of the skills.

Four Skills: Control fire-fighting operations aboard ships; organize and train fire parties; inspect and service fire-detection and fire-extinguishing systems and equipment; and investigate and compile reports on incidents involving fire.

The Performance Condition for the skill entitled, "investigate and compile reports on incidents involving fire" is: "In a mockup of a shipboard-fire or in a live fire-training facility, when presented with the remains of a fire in a fully involved and heavily damaged space (consistent with that of a ship of 500 Gross Tonnage (ITC) or more) for which the point(s) of origin and cause are unknown".

The Performance Behavior for the same skill is: "when asked, the candidate will describe the process of determining the point(s) of origin of the fire, using burn patterns; charred debris, material and structural damage, discoloration, and distortion, and other physical evidence."

The Performance Standards for the same skill are: "descriptions of physical evidence are relevant to determining the point of origin; process continually eliminates areas that are not points of origin; and the point(s) of origin is (are) identified correctly and completely."

If the mariner properly meets all of the Performance Standards, he or she passes the practical demonstration. If he or she fails to properly carry out any of the Performance Standards, he or she fails it.

Why Is the Coast Guard Taking This Action?

The Coast Guard is taking this action to comply with STCW, as amended in 1995 and incorporated into domestic law at 46 CFR parts 10, 12, and 15 in 1997. Guidance from the International Maritime Organization on shipboard assessments of proficiency suggests that Parties develop standards and measures of performance for practical tests as part of their programs for training and assessing seafarers.

How May I Participate in This Action?

You may participate in this action by submitting comments and related material on the national performance measures proposed here. (Although the Coast Guard does not seek public comment on the measures recommended by MERPAC, as distinct from the measures proposed here, those measures are available on the Internet at the Homepage of MERPAC, <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/advisory/merpac/merpac.htm>.) These measures

are available on the Internet at <http://dms.dot.gov>. They are also available from Mr. Gould or Mr. Miente where indicated under **ADDRESSES**. If you submit written comments please include-

- Your name and address;
 - The docket number for this Notice [USCG 2000-7694];
 - The specific section of the performance measures to which each comment applies; and
 - The reason for each comment.
- You may mail, deliver, fax, or electronically submit your comments and related material to the Docket Management Facility, using an address or fax number listed in **ADDRESSES**. Please do not submit the same comment or material more than once. If you mail or deliver your comments and material, they must be on 8½-by-11-inch paper, and the quality of the copy should be clear enough for copying and scanning. If you mail your comments and material and would like to know whether the Docket Management Facility received them, please enclose a stamped, self-addressed postcard or envelope. The Coast Guard will consider all comments and material received during the 60-day comment period.

Once we have considered all comments and related material, we will publish a final version of the national performance measures for use as guidelines by the general public. Individuals and institutions assessing the competence of mariners may refine the final version of these measures and develop innovative alternatives. If you vary from the final version of these measures, however, you must submit your alternative to the National Maritime Center for approval by the Coast Guard under 46 CFR 10.303(e) before you use it as part of an approved course or training program.

Dated: July 27, 2000.

Joseph J. Angelo,

Director of Standards, Marine Safety and Environmental Protection.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

Notice of Intent To Request Review and Approval From the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) of a Proposed Public Collection of Information

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*), this notice announces that the FAA is planning to submit a proposed information collection request to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and approval. Through this notice, the FAA is soliciting comment on the proposed, one-time information request of a Volcanic Ash User Needs Survey.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before October 3, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Comments may be mailed or delivered to the FAA at the following address: Mr. Steven Albersheim, Room 8320, Federal Aviation Administration, Aviation Weather Policy Division, ARW-100, 400, 7th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Judy Street at 800 Independence Ave., SW., Washington, DC 20591, or on (202) 267-9895.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Volcanic Ash User Needs Survey.

Abstract: Volcanic activity, specifically volcanic ash, constitutes a severe hazard to aviation. Over the past 20 years there have been numerous reports and aircraft encounters with volcanic ash at cruise altitude. The FAA as part of its responsibility to safeguard the usage of the National Airspace System (NAS) has a variety of ways to alert users of the inherent dangers associated with volcanic ash. This includes surface observations, Volcanic Ash Advisories, pilot reports, volcanic ash graphics, Notice to Airmen, and significant meteorological statements. All of these products are generally available to users of the NAS during a volcanic eruption that results in an ash cloud that endangers the safety of flight or ground operations at the aerodrome. However, there is evidence that FAA needs to improve the quality of information and dissemination for products to flight crews, airline operations centers (*i.e.*, dispatchers and meteorologists), and airport managers. To accomplish this, the FAA plans to survey a variety of airline/airport service professionals and pilots to better understand their specific operational needs. The results of the survey will be used to identify the shortfalls in the existing alerting mechanism with the aim of defining firm requirements to improve the quality of information on volcanic eruptions/ash and its dissemination to users of the NAS.

The survey consists of four parts. The first part of the questionnaire identifies the respondent's function and responsibility with regard to the usage