

(2) Any interim administrative restrictions that were imposed will be lifted.

(c) When any satisfactory investigation confirms misconduct,

(1) In cases in which debarment is considered by OIG to be an appropriate disposition, the case will be referred to the debarring official pursuant to 45 CFR part 620 and the procedures of 45 CFR part 620 will be followed, but:

(i) The debarring official will be either the Deputy Director, or an official designated by the Deputy Director.

(ii) Except in unusual circumstances, the investigation report and recommended disposition will be included among the materials provided to the subject of the investigation as part of the notice of proposed debarment.

(iii) The notice of the debarring official's decision will include instructions on how to pursue an appeal to the Director.

(2) In all other cases,

(i) Except in unusual circumstances, the investigation report will be provided by OIG to the subject of the investigation, who will be invited to submit comments or rebuttal. Comments or rebuttal submitted within the period allowed, normally thirty days, will receive full consideration and may lead to revision of the report or of a recommended disposition.

(ii) Normally within 45 days after completing an NSF investigation or receiving the report from a satisfactory external investigation, OIG will submit to the Deputy Director the investigation report, any comments or rebuttal from the subject of the investigation, and a recommended disposition. The recommended disposition will propose any final actions to be taken by NSF. Section 689.3 lists possible final actions and considerations to be used in determining them.

(iii) The Deputy Director will review the investigation report and OIG's recommended disposition. Before issuing a disposition the Deputy Director may initiate further hearings or investigation. Normally within 120 days after receiving OIG's recommendations or after completion of any further proceedings, the Deputy Director will send the affected individual or institution a written disposition, specifying actions to be taken. The decision will include instructions on how to pursue an appeal to the Director.

§ 689.10 Appeals.

(a) An affected individual or institution may appeal to the Director in writing within 30 days after receiving the Deputy Director's written decision. The Deputy Director's decision becomes

a final administrative action if it is not appealed within the 30 day period.

(b) The Director may appoint an uninvolved NSF officer or employee to review an appeal and make recommendations.

(c) The Director will normally inform the appellant of a final decision within 60 days after receiving the appeal. That decision will be the final administrative action of the Foundation.

[FR Doc. 02-1833 Filed 1-24-02; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7555-01-P

NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION

48 CFR Parts 1813 and 1852

RIN 2700-AC33

Non-Commercial Representations and Certifications and Evaluation Provisions for Use in Simplified Acquisitions

AGENCY: National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

ACTION: Proposed rule.

SUMMARY: This proposed change to the NFS will establish a consolidated set of representations and certifications and an evaluation provision for the acquisition of non-commercial items within the simplified acquisition threshold.

DATES: Comments should be submitted on or before March 26, 2002.

ADDRESSES: Interested parties should submit written comments to Celeste Dalton, NASA Headquarters, Office of Procurement, Contract Management Division (Code HK), Washington, DC 20546. Comments may also be submitted by e-mail to: cdalton@hq.nasa.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Celeste Dalton, Code HK, (202) 358-1645, e-mail: cdalton@hq.nasa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

A. Background

Currently for commercial acquisition, FAR provision 52.212-3, Offeror Representations and Certifications—Commercial Items, provides a consolidated set of representations and certifications. No equivalent provision exists for non commercial items. NASA proposes to establish an equivalent provision for use with NASA's non-commercial acquisitions within the simplified acquisition threshold (SAT). This new consolidated provision will ensure that all appropriate representations and certifications are

consistently used and will simplify the incorporation of representation and certification into solicitations. Additionally, this rule proposes to establish an evaluation provision to be used in non-commercial acquisitions within the SAT when selection is based on other than technically acceptable low offer. This evaluation provision will provide a consistent notice to offerors of how evaluations will be conducted.

B. Regulatory Flexibility Act

NASA certifies that this proposed rule will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small business entities within the meaning of the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601, et seq.), because this proposed rule merely consolidates within one provision existing FAR representations and certifications for use in non-commercial simplified acquisitions.

C. Paperwork Reduction Act

The Paperwork Reduction Act does not apply because the proposed changes to the NFS do not impose any new recordkeeping or information collection requirements, or collection of information from offerors, contractors, or members of the public that require the approval of the Office of Management and Budget under 44 U.S.C. 3501, et seq.

List of Subjects in 48 CFR Parts 1813 and 1852

Government Procurement.

Tom Luedtke,

Associate Administrator for Procurement.

Accordingly, 48 CFR Parts 1813 and 1852 are proposed to be amended as follows:

1. The authority citation for 48 CFR Parts 1813 and 1852 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 42 U.S.C. 2473(c)(1).

PART 1813—SIMPLIFIED ACQUISITION PROCEDURES

2. Add section 1813.302-570 to read as follows:

§ 1813.302-570 NASA solicitation provisions.

(a)(1) The contracting officer may use the provision at 1852.213-70, Offeror Representations and Certifications—Other Than Commercial Items, in simplified acquisitions exceeding the micropurchase threshold that are for other than commercial items. This provision must not be used for acquisitions conducted under FAR 13.5.

(2) This provision provides a single, consolidated list of certifications and representations for the acquisition of

other than commercial items using simplified acquisition procedures and is attached to the solicitation for offerors to complete and return with their offer. Use the provision with its Alternate I in solicitations for acquisitions that are for, or specify the use of recovered materials (see FAR 23.4). Use the provision with its Alternate II in solicitations for the acquisition of research, studies, supplies, or services of the type normally acquired from higher education institutions (see FAR 26.3). Use the provision with its Alternate III in solicitations which include the clause at FAR 52.227-14, Rights in Data—General (see FAR 27.404(d)(2) and 1827.404(d)).

(b) The contracting officer may insert a provision substantially the same as the provision at 1852.213-71, Evaluation—Other Than Commercial Items, in solicitations using simplified acquisition procedures for other than commercial items when evaluation factors are to be included for evaluation and the selection will be based upon best value, rather than technically acceptable, low price (see FAR 13.106).

PART 1852—SOLICITATION PROVISIONS AND CONTRACT CLAUSES

3. Add sections 1852.213-70 and 1852.213-71 to read as follows:

1852.213-70 Offeror Representations and Certifications—Other Than Commercial Items.

As prescribed in 1813.302-570, insert the following provision:

OFFEROR REPRESENTATIONS AND CERTIFICATIONS—OTHER THAN COMMERCIAL ITEMS

(XX/XX)

(a) *Definitions.* As used in this provision: “Emerging small business” means a small business concern whose size is no greater than 50 percent of the numerical size standard for the NAICS code designated.

“Forced or indentured child labor” means all work or service—

(1) Exacted from any person under the age of 18 under the menace of any penalty for its nonperformance and for which the worker does not offer himself voluntarily; or

(2) Performed by any person under the age of 18 pursuant to a contract the enforcement of which can be accomplished by process or penalties.

“Service-disabled veteran-owned small business concern”—(1) Means a small business concern—

(i) Not less than 51 percent of which is owned by one or more service-disabled veterans or, in the case of any publicly owned business, not less than 51 percent of the stock of which is owned by one or more service-disabled veterans; and

(ii) The management and daily business operations of which are controlled by one or more service-disabled veterans or, in the case of a veteran with permanent and severe disability, the spouse or permanent caregiver of such veteran.

(2) Service-disabled veteran means a veteran, as defined in 38 U.S.C. 101(2), with a disability that is service-connected, as defined in 38 U.S.C. 101(16).

“Small business concern” means a concern, including its affiliates, that is independently owned and operated, not dominant in the field of operation in which it is bidding on Government contracts, and qualified as a small business under the criteria in 13 CFR Part 121 and size standards in this solicitation.

“Veteran-owned small business concern” means a small business concern—

(1) Not less than 51 percent of which is owned by one or more veterans (as defined at 38 U.S.C. 101(2)) or, in the case of any publicly owned business, not less than 51 percent of the stock of which is owned by one or more veterans; and

(2) The management and daily business operations of which are controlled by one or more veterans.

“Women-owned business concern” means a concern which is at least 51 percent owned by one or more women; or in the case of any publicly owned business, at least 51 percent of its stock is owned by one or more women; and whose management and daily business operations are controlled by one or more women.

“Women-owned small business concern” means a small business concern—

(1) Which is at least 51 percent owned by one or more women or, in the case of any publicly owned business, at least 51 percent of the stock of which is owned by one or more women; and

(2) Whose management and daily business operations are controlled by one or more women.

(b) Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) (26 U.S.C. 6109, 31 U.S.C. 7701).

(1) All offerors must submit the information required in paragraphs (b)(3) through (b)(5) of this provision to comply with debt collection requirements of 31 U.S.C. 7701(c) and 3325(d), reporting requirements of 26 U.S.C. 6041, 6041A, and 6050M, and implementing regulations issued by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

(2) The TIN may be used by the Government to collect and report on any delinquent amounts arising out of the offeror's relationships with the Government (31 U.S.C. 7701(c)(3)). If the resulting contract is subject to the payment reporting requirements described in FAR 4.904, the TIN provided hereunder may be matched with IRS records to verify the accuracy of the offeror's TIN.

(3) Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN).

[] TIN: _____.

[] TIN has been applied for.

[] TIN is not required because:

[] Offeror is a nonresident alien, foreign corporation, or foreign partnership that does not have income effectively connected with the conduct of a trade or business in the United States and does not

have an office or place of business or a fiscal paying agent in the United States;

[] Offeror is an agency or instrumentality of a foreign government;

[] Offeror is an agency or instrumentality of the Federal Government.

(4) Type of organization.

[] Sole proprietorship;

[] Partnership;

[] Corporate entity (not tax-exempt);

[] Corporate entity (tax-exempt);

[] Government entity (Federal, State, or local);

[] Foreign government;

[] International organization per 26

CFR 1.6049-4;

[] Other _____.

(5) Common parent.

[] Offeror is not owned or controlled by a common parent;

[] Name and TIN of common parent:

Name _____.

[] TIN _____.

(c) Offerors must complete the following representations when the resulting contract is to be performed inside the United States, its territories or possessions, Puerto Rico, the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, or the District of Columbia. Check all that apply.

(1) Small business concern. The offeror represents as part of its offer that it [] is, [] is not a small business concern.

(2) Veteran-owned small business concern. [Complete only if the offeror represented itself as a small business concern in paragraph (c)(1) of this provision.] The offeror represents as part of its offer that it [] is, [] is not a veteran-owned small business concern.

(3) Service-disabled veteran-owned small business concern. [Complete only if the offeror represented itself as a veteran-owned small business concern in paragraph (c)(2) of this provision.] The offeror represents as part of its offer that it [] is, [] is not a service-disabled veteran-owned small business concern.

(4) Small disadvantaged business concern. [Complete only if the offeror represented itself as a small business concern in paragraph (c)(1) of this provision.] The offeror represents, for general statistical purposes, that it [] is, [] is not a small disadvantaged business concern as defined in 13 CFR 124.1002.

(5) Women-owned small business concern. [Complete only if the offeror represented itself as a small business concern in paragraph (c)(1) of this provision.] The offeror represents that it [] is, [] is not a women-owned small business concern.

(6) Small Business Size for the Small Business Competitiveness Demonstration Program and for the Targeted Industry Categories under the Small Business Competitiveness Demonstration Program. [Complete only if the offeror has represented itself to be a small business concern under the size standards for this solicitation.]

(i) [Complete only for solicitations indicated in an addendum as being set-aside for emerging small businesses in one of the four designated industry groups (DIGs).] The offeror represents as part of its offer that it [] is, [] is not an emerging small business.

(ii) [Complete only for solicitations indicated in an addendum as being for one of the targeted industry categories (TICs) or four designated industry groups (DIGs).] Offeror represents as follows:

(A) Offeror's number of employees for the past 12 months (check the Employees column if size standard stated in the solicitation is expressed in terms of number of employees); or

(B) Offeror's average annual gross revenue for the last 3 fiscal years (check the Average Annual Gross Number of Revenues column if size standard stated in the solicitation is expressed in terms of annual receipts).

(Check one of the following):

Number of employees	Average annual gross revenues
50 or fewer ..	\$1 million or less.
51-100	\$1,000,001-\$2 million.
101-250	\$2,000,001-\$3.5 million.
251-500	\$3,500,001-\$5 million.
501-750	\$5,000,001-\$10 million.
751-1000	\$10,000,001-\$17 million.
Over 1000 ...	Over \$17 million.

(7) HUBZone small business concern. [Complete only if the offeror represented itself as a small business concern in paragraph (c)(1) of this provision.] The offeror represents as part of its offer that—
 (i) It [] is, [] is not a HUBZone small business concern listed, on the date of this representation, on the List of Qualified HUBZone Small Business Concerns maintained by the Small Business Administration, and no material change in ownership and control, principal place of ownership, or HUBZone employee percentage has occurred since it was certified by the Small Business Administration in accordance with 13 CFR Part 126; and
 (ii) It [] is, [] is not a joint venture that complies with the requirements of 13 CFR Part 126, and the representation in paragraph (c)(11)(i) of this provision is accurate for the HUBZone small business concern or concerns that are participating in the joint venture. [The offeror shall enter the name or names of the HUBZone small business concern or concerns that are participating in the joint venture: _____.] Each HUBZone small business concern participating in the joint venture shall submit a separate signed copy of the HUBZone representation.

(8) (Complete if dollar value of the resultant contract is expected to exceed \$25,000 and the offeror has represented itself as disadvantaged in paragraph (c)(4) of this provision.) [The offeror shall check the category in which its ownership falls]:

- ___ Black American.
- ___ Hispanic American.
- ___ Native American (American Indians, Eskimos, Aleuts, or Native Hawaiians).
- ___ Asian-Pacific American (persons with origins from Burma, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Brunei, Japan, China, Taiwan, Laos, Cambodia (Kampuchea), Vietnam, Korea, The Philippines, U.S. Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (Republic of Palau), Republic of the Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, Samoa, Macao, Hong Kong, Fiji, Tonga, Kiribati, Tuvalu, or Nauru).

___ Subcontinent Asian (Asian-Indian) American (persons with origins from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, the Maldives Islands, or Nepal).

___ Individual/concern, other than one of the preceding.

(d) Representations required to implement provisions of Executive Order 11246—

(1) Previous contracts and compliance. The offeror represents that—

(i) It [] has, [] has not participated in a previous contract or subcontract subject to the Equal Opportunity clause of this solicitation; and

(ii) It [] has, [] has not filed all required compliance reports.

(2) Affirmative Action Compliance. The offeror represents that—

(i) It [] has developed and has on file, [] has not developed and does not have on file, at each establishment, affirmative action programs required by rules and regulations of the Secretary of Labor (41 CFR Parts 60-1 and 60-2), or

(ii) It [] has not previously had contracts subject to the written affirmative action programs requirement of the rules and regulations of the Secretary of Labor.

(e) Buy American Act—Balance of Payments Program Certificate. (Applies only if the clause at Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) 52.225-1, Buy American Act—Balance of Payments Program—Supplies, is included in this solicitation.)

(1) The offeror certifies that each end product, except those listed in paragraph (e)(2) of this provision, is a domestic end product as defined in the clause of this solicitation entitled “Buy American Act—Balance of Payments Program—Supplies” and that the offeror has considered components of unknown origin to have been mined, produced, or manufactured outside the United States. The offeror shall list as foreign end products those end products manufactured in the United States that do not qualify as domestic end products.

(2) Foreign End Products:

Line item No.	Country of origin
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

[List as necessary]

(3) The Government will evaluate offers in accordance with the policies and procedures of FAR Part 25.

(f)(1) Buy American Act—North American Free Trade Agreement—Israeli Trade Act—Balance of Payments Program Certificate. (Applies only if the clause at FAR 52.225-3, Buy American Act—North American Free Trade Agreement—Israeli Trade Act—Balance of Payments Program, is included in this solicitation.)

(i) The offeror certifies that each end product, except those listed in paragraph (f)(1)(ii) or (f)(1)(iii) of this provision, is a domestic end product as defined in the clause of this solicitation entitled “Buy American Act—North American Free Trade Agreement—Israeli Trade Act—Balance of Payments Program” and that the offeror has considered components of unknown origin to have been mined, produced, or manufactured outside the United States.

(ii) The offeror certifies that the following supplies are NAFTA country end products or Israeli end products as defined in the clause of this solicitation entitled “Buy American Act—North American Free Trade Agreement—Israeli Trade Act—Balance of Payments Program”:

NAFTA Country or Israeli End Products:

Line Item No.	Country of origin
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

[List as necessary]

(iii) The offeror shall list those supplies that are foreign end products (other than those listed in paragraph (f)(1)(ii) of this provision) as defined in the clause of this solicitation entitled “Buy American Act—North American Free Trade Agreement—Israeli Trade Act—Balance of Payments Program.” The offeror shall list as other foreign end products those end products manufactured in the United States that do not qualify as domestic end products.

Other Foreign End Products:

Line Item No.	Country of origin
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

[List as necessary]

(iv) The Government will evaluate offers in accordance with the policies and procedures of FAR Part 25.

(2) Buy American Act—North American Free Trade Agreements—Israeli Trade Act—Balance of Payments Program Certificate, Alternate I. If Alternate I to the clause at FAR 52.225-3 is included in this solicitation, substitute the following paragraph(f)(1)(ii) for paragraph (f)(1)(ii) of the basic provision:

(f)(1)(ii) The offeror certifies that the following supplies are Canadian end products as defined in the clause of this solicitation entitled “Buy American Act—North American Free Trade Agreement—Israeli Trade Act—Balance of Payments Program”:

Canadian End Products:

Line Item No.

[List as necessary]

(3) Buy American Act—North American Free Trade Agreements—Israeli Trade Act—Balance of Payments Program Certificate, Alternate II. If Alternate II to the clause at FAR 52.225-3 is included in this solicitation, substitute the following paragraph (f)(1)(ii) for paragraph (f)(1)(ii) of the basic provision:

(f)(1)(ii) The offeror certifies that the following supplies are Canadian end products or Israeli end products as defined in the clause of this solicitation entitled “Buy

American Act—North American Free Trade Agreement—Israeli Trade Act—Balance of Payments Program”:

Canadian or Israeli End Products:

Line item No.	Country of origin
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

[List as necessary]

(4) Trade Agreements Certificate. (Applies only if the clause at FAR 52.225-5, Trade Agreements, is included in this solicitation.)

(i) The offeror certifies that each end product, except those listed in paragraph f(4)(ii) of this provision, is a U.S.-made, designated country, Caribbean Basin country, or NAFTA country end product, as defined in the clause of this solicitation entitled “Trade Agreements.”

(ii) The offeror shall list as other end products those end products that are not U.S.-made, designated country, Caribbean Basin country, or NAFTA country end products.

Other End Products:

Line item No.	Country of origin
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

[List as necessary]

(iii) The Government will evaluate offers in accordance with the policies and procedures of FAR Part 25. For line items subject to the Trade Agreements Act, the Government will evaluate offers of U.S.-made, designated country, Caribbean Basin country, or NAFTA country end products without regard to the restrictions of the Buy American Act or the Balance of Payments Program. The Government will consider for award only offers of U.S.-made, designated country, Caribbean Basin country, or NAFTA country end products unless the Contracting Officer determines that there are no offers for such products or that the offers for such products are insufficient to fulfill the requirements of the solicitation.

(g) Certification Regarding Knowledge of Child Labor for Listed End Products (Executive Order 13126). [The Contracting Officer must list in paragraph (j)(1) any end products being acquired under this solicitation that are included in the List of Products Requiring Contractor Certification as to Forced or Indentured Child Labor, unless excluded at 22.1503(b).]

(1) Listed end products.

Listed end product	Listed countries of origin
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

(2) Certification. [If the Contracting Officer has identified end products and countries of origin in paragraph (g)(1) of this provision, then the offeror must certify to either (g)(2)(i)

or (g)(2)(ii) by checking the appropriate block.]

[] (i) The offeror will not supply any end product listed in paragraph (g)(1) of this provision that was mined, produced, or manufactured in the corresponding country as listed for that product.

[] (ii) The offeror may supply an end product listed in paragraph (g)(1) of this provision that was mined, produced, or manufactured in the corresponding country as listed for that product. The offeror certifies that it has made a good faith effort to determine whether forced or indentured child labor was used to mine, produce, or manufacture any such end product furnished under this contract. On the basis of those efforts, the offeror certifies that it is not aware of any such use of child labor.

(End of provision)

ALTERNATE I

(XX/XX)

As prescribed in 1813.302-570(a)(2), add the following paragraph to the end of the basic provision and identify appropriately:

[] Recovered Material Certification. As required by the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 (42 U.S.C. 6962(c)(3)(A)(i)), the offeror certifies, that the percentage of recovered materials to be used in the performance of the contract will be at least the amount required by the applicable contract specifications.

ALTERNATE II

(XX/XX)

As prescribed in 1813.302-570(a)(2), add the following paragraph to the end of the basic provision and identify appropriately:

[] Historically Black College Or University And Minority Institution Representation
 (1) *Definitions.* As used in this provision—
 “Historically black college or university” means an institution determined by the Secretary of Education to meet the requirements of 34 CFR 608.2. For the Department of Defense, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and the Coast Guard, the term also includes any nonprofit research institution that was an integral part of such a college or university before November 14, 1986.

“Minority institution” means an institution of higher education meeting the requirements of Section 1046(3) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1067k, including a Hispanic-serving institution of higher education, as defined in Section 316(b)(1) of the Act (20 U.S.C. 1101a)).

(2) *Representation.* The offeror represents that it—
 [] is [] is not a historically black college or university;
 [] is [] is not a minority institution.

ALTERNATE III

(MONTH/YEAR)

As prescribed in 1813.302-570(a)(2), add the following paragraph to the end of the basic provision and identify appropriately:

[] Representation Of Limited Rights Data And Restricted Computer Software. (1) This solicitation sets forth the work to be

performed if a contract award results, and the Government’s known delivery requirements for data (as defined in FAR 27.401). Any resulting contract may also provide the Government the option to order additional data under the Additional Data Requirements clause at 52.227-16 of the FAR, if included in the contract. Any data delivered under the resulting contract will be subject to the Rights in Data-General clause at 52.227-14 that is to be included in this contract. Under the latter clause, a Contractor may withhold from delivery data that qualify as limited rights data or restricted computer software, and deliver form, fit, and function data in lieu thereof. The latter clause also may be used with its Alternates II and/or III to obtain delivery of limited rights data or restricted computer software, marked with limited rights or restricted rights notices, as appropriate. In addition, use of Alternate V with this latter clause provides the Government the right to inspect such data at the Contractor’s facility.

(2) As an aid in determining the Government’s need to include Alternate II or Alternate III in the clause at 52.227-14, Rights in Data-General, the offeror shall complete paragraph (3) of this provision to either state that none of the data qualify as limited rights data or restricted computer software, or identify, to the extent feasible, which of the data qualifies as limited rights data or restricted computer software. Any identification of limited rights data or restricted computer software in the offeror’s response is not determinative of the status of such data should a contract be awarded to the offeror.

(3) The offeror has reviewed the requirements for the delivery of data or software and states [offeror check appropriate block]—

[] None of the data proposed for fulfilling such requirements qualifies as limited rights data or restricted computer software.

[] Data proposed for fulfilling such requirements qualify as limited rights data or restricted computer software and are identified as follows:

Note: “Limited rights data” and “Restricted computer software” are defined in the contract clause entitled “Rights in Data-General.”

§ 1852.213-71 Evaluation—Other than commercial items.

As prescribed in 1813.302-570(b) insert the following provision:

EVALUATION—OTHER THAN COMMERCIAL ITEMS

(XX/XX)

(a) The Government will award a contract resulting from this solicitation to the responsible offeror whose offer conforming to the solicitation will be most advantageous to the Government, price and other factors considered. The following factors shall be used to evaluate offers:

[Contracting Officer shall insert the evaluation factors, such as (i) technical capability of the item offered to meet the Government requirement; (ii) price; (iii) past performance (see FAR 15.304).]

(b) Options. The Government will evaluate offers for award purposes by adding the total price for all options to the total price for the basic requirement. The Government may determine that an offer is unacceptable if the option prices are significantly unbalanced. Evaluation of options shall not obligate the Government to exercise the option(s).

(End of provision)

[FR Doc. 02-1915 Filed 1-24-02; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7510-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Research and Special Programs Administration

49 CFR Part 176

[Docket No. RSPA-2002-11270; Notice No. 02-3]

Regulatory Flexibility Act Section 610 and Plain Language Reviews

AGENCY: Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of regulatory review; request for comments.

SUMMARY: RSPA requests comments on the economic impact of its regulations on small entities. As required by the Regulatory Flexibility Act and as published in DOT's Semi-Annual Regulatory Agenda, we are analyzing the rules on Carriage by Vessel to identify rules that may have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities. We also request comments on ways to make these regulations easier to read and understand.

DATES: Comments must be received by April 25, 2002.

ADDRESSES: Address written comments to the Dockets Management System, U.S. Department of Transportation, Room PL-401, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590-0001. Identify the docket number RSPA-2002-11270 at the beginning of your comments and submit two copies. If you want to

receive confirmation of receipt of your comments, include a self-addressed, stamped postcard. You can also submit comments by e-mail by accessing the Dockets Management System on the Internet at "<http://dms.dot.gov>" or by fax to (202) 366-3753.

The Dockets Management System is located on the Plaza Level of the Nassif Building at the Department of Transportation at the above address. You can review public dockets there between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. In addition, you can review comments by accessing the Dockets Management System at "<http://dms.dot.gov>."

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Susan Gorsky, Office of Hazardous Materials Standards, Research and Special Programs Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, telephone (202) 366-8553; or Donna O'Berry, Office of Chief Counsel, Research and Special Programs Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, telephone (202) 366-4400.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Section 610 of the Regulatory Flexibility Act

A. Background and Purpose

Section 610 of the Regulatory Flexibility Act of 1980 (Pub. L. 96-354), as amended by the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996 (Pub. L. 104-121), requires agencies to conduct periodic reviews of rules that have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small business entities. The purpose of the review is to determine whether such rules should be continued without change, amended, or rescinded, consistent with the objectives of applicable statutes, to minimize any significant economic impact of the rules on a substantial number of such small entities.

B. Review Schedule

The Department of Transportation (DOT) published its Semiannual Regulatory Agenda on December 3, 2001, listing in Appendix D (66 FR 61900) those regulations that each operating administration will review

under section 610 during the next 12 months. Appendix D also contains DOT's 10-year review plan for all of its existing regulations.

The Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA, we) has divided its Hazardous Materials Regulations (HMR; 49 CFR parts 171-180) into 10 groups by subject area. Each group will be reviewed once every 10 years, undergoing a two-stage process—an Analysis Year and Section 610 Review Year. For purposes of these reviews, a year will coincide with the fall-to-fall publication schedule of the Semiannual Regulatory Agenda. Thus, Year 1 began in the fall of 1998 and ended in the fall of 1999; Year 2 began in the fall of 1999 and ended in the fall of 2000; and so on.

During the Analysis Year, we will analyze each of the rules in a given year's group to determine whether any rule has a significant impact on a substantial number of small entities and, thus, requires review in accordance with section 610 of the Regulatory Flexibility Act. In each fall's Regulatory Agenda, we will publish the results of the analyses we completed during the previous year. For rules that have a negative finding, we will provide a short explanation. For parts, subparts, or other discrete sections of rules that do have a significant impact on a substantial number of small entities, we will announce that we will be conducting a formal section 610 review during the following 12 months.

The section 610 review will determine whether a specific rule should be revised or revoked to lessen its impact on small entities. We will consider: (1) The continued need for the rule; (2) the nature of complaints or comments received from the public; (3) the complexity of the rule; (4) the extent to which the rule overlaps, duplicates, or conflicts with other federal rules or with state or local government rules; and (5) the length of time since the rule has been evaluated or the degree to which technology, economic conditions, or other factors have changed in the area affected by the rule. At the end of the Review Year, we will publish the results of our review.

The following table shows the 10-year analysis and review schedule:

RSPA SECTION 610 REVIEW PLAN 1999-2009

Title	Regulation	Analysis year	Review year
Incident reports	§§ 171.15 and 171.16	1998	N/A
Hazmat safety procedures	Parts 106 and 107	1999	N/A
General Information, Regulations, and Definitions	Part 171		
Carriage by Rail and Highway	Parts 174 and 177	2000	2001