

confidential treatment (5 U.S.C. 552(b)(4) and (b)(8)). The FFIEC 009a information collection is not given confidential treatment. Small businesses (*i.e.*, small banks) are not affected.

Abstract

The Country Exposure Report (FFIEC 009) is filed quarterly with the agencies and provides information on international claims of U.S. banks and bank holding companies that is used for supervisory and analytical purposes. The information is used to monitor country exposure of banks to determine the degree of risk in their portfolios and the possible impact on U.S. banks of adverse developments in particular countries. The Country Exposure Information Report (FFIEC 009a) is a supplement to the FFIEC 009 and provides publicly available information on material foreign country exposures (all exposures to a country in excess of one percent of total assets or 20 percent of capital, whichever is less) of U.S. banks and bank holding companies that file the FFIEC 009 report. As part of the Country Exposure Information Report, reporting institutions must also furnish a list of countries in which they have lending exposures above 0.75 percent of total assets or 15 percent of total capital, whichever is less.

Current Action

On November 8, 2002, the OCC, the Board, and the FDIC jointly published a notice soliciting comments for 60 days on proposed revisions to the FFIEC 009 and FFIEC 009a (67 FR 68228). The agencies proposed to require electronic submission of all FFIEC 009 and 009a reports effective with the March 31, 2003, report date. The agencies proposed to have the Board collect and process the FFIEC 009 and 009a reports on their behalf via the Federal Reserve System's Internet Electronic Submission (IESUB) system. Electronic filing capability via IESUB is available on the Internet through the use of data entry or a file transfer feature. These methods are secure and result in a minimal burden to banks and bank holding companies. The agencies would no longer accept paper (hard copy) reports from banks and bank holding companies after the December 31, 2002, report date. The submission deadline would remain 45 calendar days after the report date. No other changes to the FFIEC 009 reporting forms or the FFIEC 009a reporting forms and instructions were proposed.

Type of Review: Revision of a currently approved collection.

Comments Received on the Agencies' Proposal

In response to the November 8, 2002, notice, the agencies received 2 comment letters, one from a banking organization and one from a bankers' association. The two commenters alluded to their familiarity with the IESUB system filing requirements and supported the proposed submission method. However, the commenters expressed concern about the start-up time and effort required to initially submit their FFIEC 009 and 009a reports electronically. The commenters specifically cited the lack of currently approved FFIEC 009 and 009a vendor software applications as a concern. The commenters recommended the agencies investigate the possibility of providing a standardized pre-formatted form for file transfer submission to alleviate this concern.

The FFIEC and the agencies have considered the comments received and determined that it would not be practical or necessary for the Board, or the Federal Reserve district banks, to create a specific pre-formatted form for filing the FFIEC 009 and 009a via IESUB using the file transfer method. Rather than developing a pre-formatted form for file transfer submissions, the Federal Reserve district banks will provide technical assistance to any respondent who needs assistance creating files for their initial FFIEC 009 and 009a submission via IESUB. Any FFIEC 009 and 009a respondent who needs assistance is encouraged to visit the Federal Reserve System Web site <http://www.reportingandreserves.org/req.html> for additional information on IESUB. The Web site also includes a link that respondents may use to contact their local Federal Reserve district bank for assistance with IESUB.

Request for Comment

Comments are invited on:

- Whether the information collections are necessary for the proper performance of the agencies' functions, including whether the information has practical utility;
- The accuracy of the agencies' estimates of the burden of the information collections, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;
- Ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected;
- Ways to minimize the burden of information collections 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.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be shared among the agencies. All comments will become a matter of public record. Written comments should address the accuracy of the burden estimates and ways to minimize burden including the use of automated collection techniques or the use of other forms of information technology as well as other relevant aspects of the information collection request.

Dated: February 24, 2003.

Mark J. Tenhundfeld,

Assistant Director, Legislative and Regulatory Activities Division, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency.

Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, February 25, 2003.

Jennifer J. Johnson,

Secretary of the Board.

Dated at Washington, DC, this 24th day of February, 2003.

Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

Robert E. Feldman,

Executive Secretary.

[FR Doc. 03-4911 Filed 2-28-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4810-33-P; 6210-01-P; 6714-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Internal Revenue Service

Open Meeting of the Area 2 Taxpayer Advocacy Panel (Including the States of Delaware, North Carolina, South Carolina, New Jersey, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia and the District of Columbia)

AGENCY: Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Treasury.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: An open meeting of the Area 2 Taxpayer Advocacy Panel will be conducted (via teleconference).

DATES: The meeting will be held Tuesday, April 1, 2003.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Inez E. De Jesus at 1-888-912-1227, or 954-423-7977.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Notice is hereby given pursuant to section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. App. (1988) that an open meeting of the Area 2 Taxpayer Advocacy Panel will be held Tuesday, April 1, 2003, from 3 p.m. e.s.t. to 4:30 p.m. e.s.t. via a telephone conference call. The Taxpayer Advocacy Panel is soliciting public comments, ideas and suggestions on improving

customer service at the Internal Revenue Service. Individual comments will be limited to 5 minutes. If you would like to have the TAP consider a written statement, please call 1-888-912-1227 or 954-423-7977, or write Inez E. De Jesus, TAP Office, 1000 South Pine Island Rd., Suite 340, Plantation, FL 33324. Due to limited conference lines, notification of intent to participate in the telephone conference call meeting must be made with Inez E. De Jesus. Ms. De Jesus can be reached at 1-888-912-1227 or 954-423-7977.

The agenda will include the following: Various IRS issues.

Note: Last minute changes to the agenda are possible and could prevent effective advance notice.

Dated: February 26, 2003.

Deryle J. Temple,

Director, Taxpayer Advocacy Panel.

[FR Doc. 03-4883 Filed 2-28-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4830-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Internal Revenue Service

Open Meeting of the Joint Committee of the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel

AGENCY: Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Treasury.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: An open meeting of the Joint Committee of the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel will be conducted via teleconference.

DATES: The meeting will be held Tuesday, March 18, 2003.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Barbara Toy at 1-888-912-1227, or 414-297-1611.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Notice is hereby given pursuant to section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. App. (1988) that an open meeting of the Joint Committee of the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel (TAP) will be held Tuesday, March 18, 2003, from 1:30 to 3 pm EST via a telephone conference call. If you would like to have the Joint Committee of TAP consider a written statement, please call 1-888-912-1227 or 414-297-1611, or write Barbara Toy, TAP Office, MS-1006-MIL, 310 West Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53203-2221, or FAX to 414-297-1623. Due to limited conference lines, notification of intent to participate in the telephone conference call meeting must be made with Barbara Toy. Ms. Toy can be reached at 1-888-912-1227

or 414-297-1611, or FAX 414-297-1623.

The agenda will include the following: Monthly committee summary report, discussion of issues brought to the joint committee, office report and discussion of next meeting.

Note: Last minute changes to the agenda are possible and could prevent effective advance notice.

Dated: February 24, 2003.

Deryle Temple,

Director, Taxpayer Advocacy Panel.

[FR Doc. 03-4884 Filed 2-28-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4830-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services (CARES) Commission; Notice of Meeting

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) gives notice under Public Law 92-463 (Federal Advisory Committee Act) that the Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services (CARES) Commission will meet on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, March 11, 12 and 13, 2003, in the first floor conference room, 1575 Eye Street, NW., Washington, DC. On March 11, the meeting will be from 8:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. On March 12 and 13, the meeting will be from 8:30 a.m. until 5 p.m. The meeting is open to the public.

The purpose of the Commission is to conduct an external assessment of VA's capital asset needs and to assure that stakeholder and beneficiary concerns are fully addressed. The Commission will consider recommendations prepared by VA's Under Secretary for Health, veterans service organizations, individual veterans, Congress, medical school affiliates, VA employees, local government entities, community groups and others. Following its assessment, the Commission will make specific recommendations to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs regarding the realignment and allocation of capital assets necessary to meet the demands for veterans health care services over the next 20 years.

This is the second meeting of the Commission. On March 11, the principal agenda topic is a detailed briefing and discussion of the CARES Demand Model. On March 12, the Commission will receive detailed briefings and discuss CARES Market Areas, Gap Analysis, Special Disability Populations and Stakeholder Communication. On March 13, the Commission will receive a detailed

briefing and discuss CARES Planning Initiatives.

No time will be allocated at this meeting for receiving oral presentations from the public. However, interested persons may either attend or file statements with the Commission. Written statements may be filed either before the meeting or within 10 days after the meeting and addressed to: Department of Veterans Affairs, CARES Commission (OOCARES), 810 Vermont Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20420. Any member of the public wishing additional information should contact Mr. Richard E. Larson at (202) 501-2000.

Dated: February 24, 2003.

By Direction of the Secretary:

E. Philip Riggan,

Committee Management Officer.

[FR Doc. 03-4906 Filed 2-28-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8320-01-M

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

President's Task Force To Improve Health Care Delivery for Our Nation's Veterans, Notice of Meeting

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) gives notice under Public Law 92-463 that a meeting of the President's Task Force to Improve Health Care Delivery for Our Nation's Veterans is scheduled for Thursday, March 6, 2003, beginning at 9 a.m. and adjourning at 5 p.m. The meeting will be held in the Horizon Ballroom of the Ronald Reagan Building International Trade Center, 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW., Washington, DC and is open to the general public.

The purpose of the President's Task Force to Improve Health Care Delivery for Our Nation's Veterans is to:

(a) Identify ways to improve benefits and services for Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) beneficiaries and Department of Defense (DoD) military retirees who are also eligible for benefits from VA, through better coordination of the activities of the two departments;

(b) Identify opportunities to remove barriers that impede VA and DoD coordination, including budgeting processes, timely billing, cost accounting, information technology, and reimbursement; and

(c) Identify opportunities through partnership between VA and DoD, to maximize the use of resources and infrastructure, including buildings, information technology and data sharing systems, procurement of supplies, equipment and services.