DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Bureau of Customs and Border Protection

Notice of Availability for Public Viewing of a Final Programmatic Environmental Assessment and a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) Relative to Customs and Border Protection’s Gamma Imaging Inspection System for Use at Various Sea and Land Ports of Entry

AGENCY: Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security.

ACTION: General notice.

SUMMARY: This document announces the availability for public viewing of a Final Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) and a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) relative to the gamma imaging inspection system employed by the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection at various sea and land ports of entry. The Final PEA and FONSI are being issued and made available to the public in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations for Implementing the NEPA (40 CFR parts 1500–1508), and Department of the Treasury Directive 75–02 (Department of the Treasury Environmental Quality Program). The notice discussed the gamma imaging or radiation inspection system (referred to there as the VACIS system), briefly explained the applicable NEPA process, informed the public on how to obtain a copy of the draft PEA, and requested comments from the public on the draft PEA.

As set forth in the notice, the VACIS system employs a non-intrusive inspection technique that uses low energy gamma radiation technology and allows CBP inspectors to inspect for contraband without having to physically enter into or unload motor vehicles, containers, or other conveyances. Deployment of this technology is already underway and will continue at various land ports and sea ports of entry throughout the United States and Puerto Rico. Given the serious nature of CBP’s mission to protect the nation’s borders from terrorism, it is envisioned that all ports are candidates for deployment of this technology in the future.

The NEPA Process

NEPA requires that an agency evaluate for environmental implications any proposal of a major Federal action that significantly affects the quality of the human environment. Under §1508.18(a) of the CEQ regulations (40 CFR 1508.18(a)), a major Federal action includes not only new activities but also continuing agency activities, such as the gamma imaging inspection system deployed by CBP. To meet the NEPA evaluation requirement, a Federal agency, in some instances, must produce an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that thoroughly examines the environmental implications (or impacts) of a major Federal action. In other instances, an agency need only prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) that briefly analyzes the environmental impacts to assist the agency in decision-making.

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making. An EA is preliminary to production of either an EIS or a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), depending on the preliminary analysis and findings of the EA. The effect of a FONSI is that an agency will not have to produce an EIS. In still other instances, a categorical exclusion may apply to the Federal action, in which case the agency need not produce either an EA or an EIS. A programmatic EA (or PEA) is one that evaluates a major Federal action on a broad, programmatic basis and is then followed by Supplemental Environmental Assessments (referred to as Supplemental Environmental Documents or SEDs in the draft PEA) that focus the evaluation on particular site-specific localities.

Comments
The comment period announced in the May 2004 notice ended on June 28, 2004. Only six comments were received. The comments have been reviewed and are addressed in the Final PEA document.

Further Action
Following issuance of the Final PEA and the FONSI, CBP will issue a draft SED relative to each affected port of entry and make them available for public review by issuance of a notice of availability in a local newspaper of general circulation in each affected locality. Each draft SED will address a local deployment site at a particular port, evaluating potential environmental impacts with respect to the particular conditions present at each locality. Each draft SED also will solicit public comment. CBP will review the comments and then determine whether a FONSI or an EIS is warranted. (CBP notes that while the draft PEA indicated that notice of availability of draft SEDs will be published in the Federal Register, this is not necessary under the NEPA process and the CEQ regulations. Accordingly, CBP will publish notice of availability in local newspapers of general circulation.)

Public Review
The Final PEA and FONSI announced in this document will be available for public review for a period of 30 days beginning on the date this document is published in the Federal Register. The Final PEA/FONSI can be obtained as follows: By written request submitted to Customs and Border Protection, Suite 1575, 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20229; Attn: Mr. Thomas Nelson; by telephone at (202) 344–2975; by e-mail at: THOMAS.Nelson@associates.dhs.gov; or by accessing the following Web site address (click on “Recent Federal Register Notices”): http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/toolbox/legal.

Ira Reese,
Acting Assistant Commissioner, Office of Information and Technology.

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

[Docket No. FR–4903–N–74]
Notice of Submission of Proposed Information Collection To OMB; Lender Application To Participate in Multifamily Accelerated Processing (MAP)

AGENCY: Office of the Chief Information Officer.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The proposed information collection requirement described below has been submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act. The Department is soliciting public comments on the subject proposal. This request is for reinstatement of a collection of information for which approval has expired. The collection is being revised to include a Quality Control Plan.

DATES: Comments Due Date: October 18, 2004.

ADDRESSES: Interested persons are invited to submit comments regarding this proposal. Comments should refer to the proposal by name and/or OMB approval Number (2502–0541) and should be sent to: HUD Desk Officer, Office of Management and Budget, New Executive Office Building, Washington, DC 20503; fax: 202–395–6974.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Wayne Eddins, Reports Management Officer, AYO, Department of Housing and Urban Development, 451 Seventh St., Washington, DC 20410; e-mail Wayne.Eddins@HUD.gov; telephone (202) 708–2374. This is not a toll-free number. Copies of available documents submitted to OMB may be obtained from Mr. Eddins and at HUD’s Web site at http://www5.hud.gov/doi/ichb/collectionsearch.cfm.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This Notice informs the public that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has submitted to OMB, for emergency processing, a survey instrument to obtain information from faith based and community organizations on their likelihood and success at applying for various funding programs. This Notice is soliciting comments from members of the public and affecting agencies concerning the proposed collection of information:

1. Evaluate whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility; (2) Evaluate the accuracy of the agency’s estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information; (3) Enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (4) Minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond; including through the use of appropriate automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses.

This Notice also lists the following information:

Title of Proposal: Lender Application to Participate in Multifamily Accelerated Processing (MAP).

OMB Approval Number: 2502–0541.

Form Numbers: None.

Description of the Need for the Information and its Proposed Use: FHA-approved multifamily lenders wishing to participate in Multifamily Accelerated Processing (MAP) must submit a MAP application package establishing the additional qualifications required of a MAP Lender. A Quality Control Plan is now required in the Lender application package. Current MAP Lenders will also be required to submit a Quality Control Plan.

Frequency Of Submission: On Occasion and Annually.

Reporting Burden:

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