

publication of both Respondent's identity and its data, submission of the information to agencies outside BTS for review, analysis and possible use in regulatory and other administrative matters.

Donald W. Bright,

*Assistant Director, Airline Information,
Bureau of Transportation Statistics.*

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Bureau of Transportation Statistics

**Agency Information Collection;
Activity Under OMB Review;
Submission of Audit Reports—Part 248**

AGENCY: Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS), DOT.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13, the Bureau of Transportation Statistics invites the general public, industry and other governmental parties to comment on the continuing need for and usefulness of BTS requiring U.S. large certificated air carriers to submit a true and complete of its annual audit that is made by an independent public accountant. If a carrier does not have an annual audit, the carrier must file a statement that no audit has been performed. Comments are requested concerning whether the audit reports are needed by BTS and DOT; BTS accurately estimated the reporting burden; there are other ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information collected; and there are ways to minimize reporting burden, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

DATES: Written comments should be submitted by February 15, 2005.

ADDRESSES: Comments should be directed to: Office of Airline Information, K-14, Room 4125, Bureau of Transportation Statistics, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590-0001, fax no. 366-3383 or e-mail bernard.stankus@bts.gov.

Comments: Comments should identify the OMB # 2138-0004. Persons wishing the Department to acknowledge receipt of their comments must submit with those comments a self-addressed stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: Comments on OMB # 2138-0004. The postcard will be date/time stamped and returned.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:
Bernie Stankus Office of Airline

Information, K-14, Room 4125, Bureau of Transportation Statistics, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590-0001, (202) 366-4387.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

OMB Approval No.: 2138-0004.

Title: Submission of Audit Reports—Part 248.

Form No.: None.

Type Of Review: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Respondents: Large certificated air carriers.

Number of Respondents: 84.

Number of Responses: 84.

Total Annual Burden: 21 hours.

Needs and Uses: BTS collects independent audited financial reports from U.S. certificated air carriers. Carriers not having an annual audit must file a statement that no such audit has been performed. In lieu of the audit report, BTS will accept the annual report submitted to the stockholders. The audited reports are needed by the Department of Transportation as (1) a means to monitor an air carrier's continuing fitness to operate, (2) reference material used by analysts in examining foreign route cases (3) reference material used by analyst in examining proposed mergers, acquisitions and consolidations, (4) a means whereby BTS sends a copy of the report to the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) in fulfillment of a United States treaty obligation, and (5) corroboration of a carrier's Form 41 filings.

The Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act of 2002 (44 U.S.C. 3501 note), requires a statistical agency to clearly identify information it collects for non-statistical purposes. BTS hereby notifies the respondents and the public that BTS uses the information it collects under this OMB approval for non-statistical purposes including, but not limited to, publication of both Respondent's identity and its data, submission of the information to agencies outside BTS for review, analysis and possible use in regulatory and other administrative matters.

Donald W. Bright,

*Assistant Director, Airline Information,
Bureau of Transportation Statistics.*

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Bureau of Transportation Statistics

**Agency Information Collection;
Activity Under OMB Review; Reporting
Required for International Civil
Aviation Organization (ICAO)**

AGENCY: Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS), DOT.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13, the Bureau of Transportation Statistics invites the general public, industry and other governmental parties to comment on the continuing need and usefulness of BTS collecting supplemental data for the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). Comments are requested concerning whether the supplemental reports are needed by BTS to fulfill the United States treaty obligation of furnishing financial and traffic reports to ICAO; BTS accurately estimated the reporting burden; there are other ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information collected; and there are ways to minimize reporting burden, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

DATES: Written comments should be submitted by February 15, 2005.

ADDRESSES: Comments should be directed to: Office of Airline Information, K-14, Room 4125, Bureau of Transportation Statistics, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590-0001, FAX NO. 366-3383 or EMAIL bernard.stankus@bts.gov.

Comments: Comments should identify the OMB # 2138-0039. Persons wishing the Department to acknowledge receipt of their comments must submit with those comments a self-addressed stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: Comments on OMB # 2138-0039. The postcard will be date/time stamped and returned.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Bernie Stankus, Office of Airline Information, K-14, Room 4125, Bureau of Transportation Statistics, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590-0001, (202) 366-4387.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

OMB Approval No.: 2138-0039.

Title: Reporting Required for International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

Form No.: BTS Form EF.

Type Of Review: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Respondents: Large certificated air carriers.

Number of Respondents: 40.

Number of Responses: 40.

Total Annual Burden: 26 hours.

Needs and Uses: As a party to the Convention on International Civil Aviation (Treaty), the United States is obligated to provide ICAO with financial and statistical data on operations of U.S. carriers. Over 99% of the data filled with ICAO is extracted from the air carriers' Form 41 submissions to BTS. BTS Form EF is the means by which BTS supplies the remaining 1% of the air carrier data to ICAO.

The Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act of 2002 (44 U.S.C. 3501 note), requires a statistical agency to clearly identify information it collects for non-statistical purposes. BTS hereby notifies the respondents and the public that BTS uses the information it collects under this OMB approval for non-statistical purposes including, but not limited to, publication of both Respondent's identity and its data, submission of the information to agencies outside BTS for review, analysis and possible use in regulatory and other administrative matters.

Donald W. Bright,

Assistant Director, Airline Information, Bureau of Transportation Statistics.

[FR Doc. 04-27593 Filed 12-16-04; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Bureau of Transportation Statistics

Agency Information Collection; Activity Under OMB Review; Report of Financial and Operating Statistics for Large Certificated Air Carriers

AGENCY: Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS), DOT.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13, the Bureau of Transportation Statistics invites the general public, industry and other governmental parties to comment on the continuing need for and usefulness of the BTS Form 41. Comments are requested concerning whether the continuation of Form 41 is necessary for DOT to carry out its mission of promoting air transportation; BTS accurately estimated the reporting burden; there are other ways to enhance the quality, use and clarity of the data collected; and there are ways to

minimize reporting burden, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

DATES: Written comments should be submitted by February 15, 2005.

ADDRESSES: Comments should be directed to: Office of Airline Information, K-14, Room 4125, Bureau of Transportation Statistics, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590-0001, FAX NO. (202) 366-3383 or EMAIL bernard.stankus@bts.gov.

Comments: Comments should identify the OMB # 2138-0013. Persons wishing the Department to acknowledge receipt of their comments must submit with those comments a self-addressed stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: Comments on OMB # 2138-0013. The postcard will be date/time stamped and returned.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Bernie Stankus, Office of Airline Information, K-14, Room 4125, Bureau of Transportation Statistics, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590-0001, (202) 366-4387.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

OMB Approval No.: 2138-0013.

Title: Report of Financial and Operating Statistics for Large Certificated Air Carriers.

Form No.: BTS Form 41.

Type Of Review: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Respondents: Large certificated air carriers.

Number of Respondents: 84.

Estimated Time per Response: 4 hours per schedule, an average carrier may submit 90 schedules in one year.

Total Annual Burden: 27,000 hours.

Needs and Uses: Program uses for Form 41 data are as follows:

Mail Rates

The Department of Transportation sets and updates the international and mainline Alaska mail rates based on carrier aircraft operating expense, traffic and operational data. Form 41 cost data, especially fuel costs, terminal expenses, and line haul expenses are used in arriving at rate levels. DOT revises the established rates based on the percentage of unit cost changes in the carriers' operations. These updating procedures have resulted in the carriers receiving rates of compensation that more closely parallel their costs of providing mail service and contribute to the carriers' economic well-being.

Submission of U.S. Carrier Data to ICAO

As a party to the Convention on International Civil Aviation, the United

States is obligated to provide the International Civil Aviation Organization with financial and statistical data on operations of U.S. air carriers. Over 99 percent of the data filed with ICAO is extracted from the carriers' Form 41 reports.

Standard Foreign Fare and Rate Levels

DOT uses Form 41 cost data to calculate the Standard Foreign Fare Level (SFFL) for passengers and the Standard Foreign Rate Level (SFRL) for freight. Any international fare or rate set below this fare level are automatically approved. Separate passenger fare and rate levels are established for Canadian, Atlantic, Latin America, and Pacific areas. In markets where liberal bilateral or multilateral pricing agreements provide for more competitive open market pricing, such agreements may take precedence over the SFFL and SFRL.

Carrier Fitness

Fitness determinations are made for both new entrants and established U.S. domestic carriers proposing a substantial change in operations. A portion of these applications consists of an operating plan for the first year (14 CFR part 204) and an associated projection of revenues and expenses. The carrier's operating costs, included in these projections, are compared against the cost data in Form 41 for a carrier or carriers with the same aircraft type and similar operating characteristics. Such a review validates the reasonableness of the carrier's operating plan.

Form 41 reports, particularly balance sheet reports and cash flow statements play a major role in the identification of vulnerable carriers. Data comparisons are made between current and past periods in order to assess the current financial position of the carrier. Financial trend lines are extended into the future to analyze the continued viability of the carrier. DOT reviews three areas of a carrier's operation: (1) The qualifications of its management team, (2) its disposition to comply with laws and regulations, and (3) its financial posture. DOT must determine whether or not a carrier has sufficient financial resources to conduct its operations without imposing undue risk on the traveling public. Moreover, once a carrier is operating, DOT is required to monitor its continuing fitness.

Senior DOT officials must be kept fully informed as to all current and developing economic issues affecting the airline industry. In preparing financial conditions reports or status reports on a particular airline, financial