

DATES: Public comments should be received no later than 5 p.m. February 28, 2005.

ADDRESSES: Persons submitting comments are strongly advised to make such submissions by electronic mail to the following address:

FRFTAUA@dol.gov. Submissions by facsimile may be sent to: Betsy White, Office of International Economic Affairs, Bureau of International Labor Affairs, U.S. Department of Labor, at (202) 693-4851.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For procedural questions regarding the submissions, please contact Betsy White, Office of International Economic Affairs, Bureau of International Labor Affairs, U.S. Department of Labor, at (202) 693-4919, facsimile (202) 693-4851. These are not toll-free numbers. Substantive questions concerning the labor rights report and/or the report on the United Arab Emirates' laws governing exploitative child labor should be addressed to Jorge Perez-Lopez, Office of International Economic Affairs, Bureau of International Labor Affairs, U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20210, telephone (202) 693-4883, facsimile (202) 693-4851.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

On November 15, 2004, in accordance with section 2104(a)(1) of the Trade Act of 2002, the United States Trade Representative (USTR) notified the Congress of the President's intent to enter into free trade negotiations with the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The notification letters to the Senate and the House of Representatives can be found on the USTR Web site at http://www.ustr.gov/assets/Document_Library/Letters_to_Congress/2004/asset_upload_file848_6741.pdf and http://www.ustr.gov/assets/Document_Library/Letters_to_Congress/2004/asset_upload_file847_6740.pdf, respectively. In December, USTR announced its intention to hold a public hearing on January 12, 2005, for the interagency Trade Policy Staff Committee (TPSC) to receive written comments and oral testimony from the public to assist USTR in formulating positions and proposals with respect to all aspects of the negotiations (69 FR 70500) (Dec. 6, 2004). USTR intends to launch the negotiations in March 2005.

The Trade Act of 2002 (Pub.L. 107-210) (the Trade Act) sets forth special procedures (Trade Promotion Authority) for approval and implementation of Agreements subject to meeting conditions and requirements in Division

B of the Trade Act, "Bipartisan Trade Promotion Authority." Section 2102(a)-(c) of the Trade Act includes negotiating objectives and a listing of priorities for the President to promote in order to "address and maintain United States competitiveness in the global economy" in pursuing future trade agreements. The President assigned several of the functions in section 2102(c) to the Secretary of Labor. (E.O. 13277). These include the functions set forth in section 2102(c)(8), which requires that the President "in connection with any trade negotiations entered into under this Act, submit to the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Finance of the Senate a meaningful labor rights report of the country, or countries, with respect to which the President is negotiating," and the function in section 2102(c)(9), which requires that the President "with respect to any trade agreement which the President seeks to implement under trade authorities procedures, submit to the Congress a report describing the extent to which the country or countries that are parties to the agreement have in effect laws governing exploitative child labor."

II. Information Sought

Interested parties are invited to submit written information as specified below to be taken into account in drafting the required reports. Materials submitted should be confined to the specific topics of the reports. In particular, agencies are seeking written submissions on the following topics:

1. Labor laws of the UAE, including laws governing exploitative child labor, and that country's implementation and enforcement of its labor laws and regulations;
2. The situation in the UAE with respect to core labor standards;
3. Steps taken by the UAE to comply with International Labor Organization Convention No. 182 on the worst forms of child labor; and
4. The nature and extent, if any, of exploitative child labor in the UAE.

Section 2113(6) of the Trade Act defines "core labor standards" as:

- (A) The right of association;
- (B) The right to organize and bargain collectively;
- (C) A prohibition on the use of any form of forced or compulsory labor;
- (D) A minimum age for the employment of children; and
- (E) Acceptable conditions of work with respect to minimum wages, hours of work, and occupational safety and health.

III. Requirements for Submissions

This document is a request for facts or opinions submitted in response to a general solicitation of comments from the public. To ensure prompt and full consideration of submissions, we strongly recommend that interested persons submit comments by electronic mail to the following e-mail address: *FRFTAUA@dol.gov*. Persons making submissions by e-mail should use the following subject line: "UAE: Labor Rights and Child Labor Reports." Documents should be submitted in WordPerfect, MSWord, or text (.TXT) format. Supporting documentation submitted as spreadsheets is acceptable in Quattro Pro or Excel format. Persons who make submissions by e-mail should not provide separate cover letters; information that might appear in a cover letter should be included in the submission itself. Similarly, to the extent possible, any attachments to the submission should be included in the same file as the submission itself, and not as separate files. Written comments will be placed in a file open to public inspection at the Department of Labor, Room S-5317, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20210, and in the USTR Reading Room in Room 3 of the annex of the Office of the USTR, 1724 F Street, NW., Washington, DC 20508. An appointment to review the file at the Department of Labor may be made by contacting Betsy White at (202) 693-4919. An appointment to review the file at USTR may be made by calling (202) 395-6186. The USTR Reading Room is generally open to the public from 10 a.m.-12 noon and 1-4 p.m., Monday through Friday. Appointments must be scheduled at least 48 hours in advance.

Signed at Washington, DC, this 10th of January 2005.

Arnold Levine,

Deputy Under Secretary for International Affairs.

[FR Doc. 05-804 Filed 1-13-05; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4510-28-P

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

**Employment Standards
Administration; Wage and Hour
Division**

**Minimum Wages for Federal and
Federally Assisted Construction;
General Wage Determination Decisions**

General wage determination decisions of the Secretary of Labor are issued in accordance with applicable law and are based on the information obtained by the Department of Labor from its study

of local wage conditions and data made available from other sources. They specify the basic hourly wage rates and fringe benefits which are determined to be prevailing for the described classes of laborers and mechanics employed on construction projects of a similar character and in the localities specified therein.

The determinations in these decisions of prevailing rates and fringe benefits have been made in accordance with 29 CFR Part 1, by authority of the Secretary of Labor pursuant to the provisions of the Davis-Bacon Act of March 3, 1931, as amended (46 Stat. 1494, as amended, 40 U.S.C. 276a) and of other Federal statutes referred to in 29 CFR Part 1, Appendix, as well as such additional statutes as may from time to time be enacted containing provisions for the payment of wages determined to be prevailing by the Secretary of Labor in accordance with the Davis-Bacon Act. The prevailing rates and fringe benefits determined in these decisions shall, in accordance with the provisions of the foregoing statutes, constitute the minimum wages payable on Federal and federally assisted construction projects to laborers and mechanics of the specified classes engaged on contract work of the character and in the localities described therein.

Good cause is hereby found for not utilizing notice and public comment procedure thereon prior to the issuance of these determinations as prescribed in 5 U.S.C. 553 and not providing for delay in the effective date as prescribed in that section, because the necessity to issue current construction industry wage determinations frequently and in large volume causes procedures to be impractical and contrary to the public interest.

General wage determination decisions, and modifications and supersedeas decisions thereto, contain no expiration dates and are effective from their date of notice in the **Federal Register**, or on the date written notice is received by the agency, whichever is earlier. These decisions are to be used in accordance with the provisions of 29 CFR Parts 1 and 5. Accordingly, the applicable decision, together with any modifications issued, must be made a part of every contract for performance of the described work within the geographic area indicated as required by an applicable Federal prevailing wage law and 29 CFR Part 5. The wage rates and fringe benefits, notice of which is published herein, and which are contained in the Government Printing Office (GPO) document entitled "General Wage Determinations Issued Under The Davis-Bacon And Related

Acts," shall be the minimum paid by contractors and subcontractors to laborers and mechanics.

Any person, organization, or governmental agency having an interest in the rates determined as prevailing is encouraged to submit wage rate and fringe benefit information for consideration by the Department. Further information and self-explanatory forms for the purpose of submitting this data may be obtained by writing to the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment Standards Administration, Wage and Hour Division, Division of Wage Determinations, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW., Room S-3014, Washington, DC 20210.

Modification to General Wage Determination Decisions

The number of the decisions listed to the Government Printing Office document entitled "General Wage Determinations Issued Under the Davis-Bacon and related Acts" being modified are listed by Volume and State. Dates of publication in the **Federal Register** are in parentheses following the decisions being modified.

Volume I

New Hampshire
NH030004 (Jun. 13, 2003)
New Jersey
NJ030004 (Jun. 13, 2003)
NJ030005 (Jun. 13, 2003)
NJ030007 (Jun. 13, 2003)
Rhode Island
RI030001 (Jun. 13, 2003)

Volume II

None

Volume III

Kentucky
KY030004 (Jun. 13, 2003)
KY030007 (Jun. 13, 2003)
KY030025 (Jun. 13, 2003)
KY030027 (Jun. 13, 2003)
KY030029 (Jun. 13, 2003)

Volume IV

Ohio
OH030001 (Jun. 13, 2003)
OH030002 (Jun. 13, 2003)
OH030003 (Jun. 13, 2003)
OH030005 (Jun. 13, 2003)
OH030009 (Jun. 13, 2003)
OH030012 (Jun. 13, 2003)
OH030013 (Jun. 13, 2003)
OH030014 (Jun. 13, 2003)
OH030020 (Jun. 13, 2003)
OH030026 (Jun. 13, 2003)
OH030029 (Jun. 13, 2003)
OH030032 (Jun. 13, 2003)
OH030033 (Jun. 13, 2003)
OH030034 (Jun. 13, 2003)
OH030035 (Jun. 13, 2003)
OH030036 (Jun. 13, 2003)

Volume V

Texas
TX030028 (Jun. 13, 2003)

TX030030 (Jun. 13, 2003)
TX030031 (Jun. 13, 2003)
TX030043 (Jun. 13, 2003)
TX030045 (Jun. 13, 2003)

Volume VI

Colorado

CO030001 (Jun. 13, 2003)
CO030002 (Jun. 13, 2003)
CO030003 (Jun. 13, 2003)
CO030004 (Jun. 13, 2003)
CO030005 (Jun. 13, 2003)
CO030006 (Jun. 13, 2003)
CO030007 (Jun. 13, 2003)
CO030008 (Jun. 13, 2003)
CO030009 (Jun. 13, 2003)
CO030010 (Jun. 13, 2003)
CO030011 (Jun. 13, 2003)

Idaho

ID030015 (Jun. 13, 2003)
ID030016 (Jun. 13, 2003)
ID030018 (Jun. 13, 2003)
ID030019 (Jun. 13, 2003)

Oregon

OR030001 (Jun. 13, 2003)
OR030002 (Jun. 13, 2003)
OR030007 (Jun. 13, 2003)

Washington

WA030001 (Jun. 13, 2003)
WA030002 (Jun. 13, 2003)
WA030009 (Jun. 13, 2003)

Volume VII

California

CA030001 (Jun. 13, 2003)
CA030002 (Jun. 13, 2003)
CA030009 (Jun. 13, 2003)
CA030013 (Jun. 13, 2003)
CA030019 (Jun. 13, 2003)
CA030023 (Jun. 13, 2003)
CA030025 (Jun. 13, 2003)
CA030027 (Jun. 13, 2003)
CA030028 (Jun. 13, 2003)
CA030029 (Jun. 13, 2003)
CA030030 (Jun. 13, 2003)
CA030031 (Jun. 13, 2003)
CA030033 (Jun. 13, 2003)
CA030035 (Jun. 13, 2003)
CA030036 (Jun. 13, 2003)
CA030037 (Jun. 13, 2003)

General Wage Determination Publication

General wage determinations issued under the Davis-Bacon and related Acts, including those noted above, may be found in the Government Printing Office (GPO) document entitled "General Wage Determinations Issued Under the Davis-Bacon And Related Acts". This publication is available at each of the 50 Regional Government Depository Libraries and many of the 1,400 Government Depository Libraries across the country.

General wage determinations issued under the Davis-Bacon and related Acts are available electronically at no cost on the Government Printing Office site at www.access.gpo.gov/davisbacon. They are also available electronically by subscription to the Davis-Bacon Online Service (<http://davisbacon.fedworld.gov>) of the National

Technical Information Service (NTIS) of the U.S. Department of Commerce at 1-800-363-2068. This subscription offers value-added features such as electronic delivery of modified wage decisions directly to the user's desktop, the ability to access prior wage decisions issued during the year, extensive Help desk Support, etc.

Hard-copy subscriptions may be purchased from: Superintendent of Document, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402, (202) 512-1800.

When ordering hard-copy subscription(s), be sure to specify the State(s) of interest, since subscriptions may be ordered for any or all of the six separate Volumes, arranged by State. Subscriptions include an annual edition (issued in January or February) which includes all current general wage determinations for the States covered by each volume. Throughout the remainder of the year, regular weekly updates will be distributed to subscribers.

Signed at Washington, DC, this 6th day of January, 2005.

Terry Sullivan,

Acting Chief, Branch of Construction Wage Determinations.

[FR Doc. 05-577 Filed 1-13-05; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4510-27-M

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Bureau of Labor Statistics

Proposed Collection, Comment Request

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Labor, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, conducts a pre-clearance consultation program to provide the general public and Federal agencies with an opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing collections of information in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA95) [44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)]. This program helps to ensure that requested data can be provided in the desired format, reporting burden (time and financial resources) is minimized, collection instruments are clearly understood, and the impact of collection requirements on respondents can be properly assessed. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) is soliciting comments concerning the proposed revision of the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages Program. A copy of the proposed information collection request (ICR) can be obtained by contacting the individual

listed below in the Addresses section of this notice.

DATES: Written comments must be submitted to the office listed in the **ADDRESSES** section of this notice on or before March 15, 2005.

ADDRESSES: Send comments to Amy A. Hobby, BLS Clearance Officer, Division of Management Systems, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Room 4080, 2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE., Washington, DC 20212, telephone number 202-691-7628. (This is not a toll free number.)

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Amy A. Hobby, BLS Clearance Officer, telephone number 202-691-7628. (See **ADDRESSES** section.)

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

The Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program, a Federal/State cooperative effort, produces monthly employment and quarterly wage information. It is a by-product of quarterly reports submitted to State Workforce Agencies (SWAs) by employers subject to State Unemployment Insurance (UI) laws. The collection of these data is authorized by 29 U.S.C. 1, 2. The QCEW data, which are compiled for each calendar quarter, provide a comprehensive business name and address file with employment and wage information for employers subject to State UI laws. Similar data for Federal Government employers covered by the Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees program also are included. These data are submitted to the BLS by all 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. The BLS summarizes these data to produce totals for all counties, Metropolitan Statistical Areas, the States, and the nation. The QCEW program provides a virtual census of nonagricultural employees and their wages, with about 55 percent of the workers in agriculture covered as well.

The QCEW program is a comprehensive and accurate source of data on the number of establishments, monthly employment, and quarterly wages, by industry, at the six-digit North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) level, and at the national, State, Metropolitan Statistical Area, and county levels. The QCEW series has broad economic significance in measuring labor trends and major industry developments, in time series analyses of establishments, employment, and wages by size of establishment.

II. Desired Focus of Comments

The Bureau of Labor Statistics is particularly interested in comments that:

- 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;
- Evaluate the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;
- Enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and
- Minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submissions of responses.

III. Current Action

Office of Management and Budget clearance is being sought for the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program.

The QCEW program is the only Federal statistical program that provides information on establishments, wages, tax contributions and the number of employees subject to State UI laws and the Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees program. The consequences of not collecting QCEW data would be grave to the Federal statistical community. The BLS would not have a sampling frame for its establishment surveys; it would not be able to publish as accurate current estimates of employment for the U.S., States, and metropolitan areas; and it would not be able to publish quarterly census totals of local establishment counts, employment and wages. The Bureau of Economic Analysis would not be able to publish as accurate personal income data in a timely manner for the U.S., States, and local areas. Finally, the Employment Training Administration would not have the information it needs to administer the Unemployment Insurance Program.

Type of Review: Revision of a currently approved collection.

Agency: Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Title: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) Program.

OMB Number: 1220-0012.

Affected Public: State Government.

Total Respondents: 53.