

deployment and adoption in their communities?

20. What can the federal government do to make it easier for state, local, and tribal governments or organizations to access funding for broadband?

21. How can the federal government support state, local, and tribal efforts to promote and/or invest in broadband networks and promote broadband adoption? For example, what type of capacity-building or technical assistance is needed?

F. Issues Related to Vulnerable Communities and Communities With Limited or No Broadband

22. How can specific regulatory policies within the Executive Branch agencies be altered to remove or reduce barriers that prevent vulnerable populations from accessing and using broadband technologies? Vulnerable populations might include, but are not limited to, veterans, seniors, minorities, people with disabilities, at-risk youth, low-income individuals and families, and the unemployed.

23. How can the federal government make broadband technologies more available and relevant for vulnerable populations?

G. Issues Specific to Rural Areas

24. What federal regulatory barriers can Executive Branch agencies alter to improve broadband access and adoption in rural areas?

25. Would spurring competition to offer broadband service in rural areas expand availability and, if so, what specific actions could Executive Branch agencies take in furtherance of this goal?

26. Because the predominant areas with limited or no broadband service tend to be rural, what specific provisions should Executive Branch agencies consider to facilitate broadband deployment and adoption in such rural areas?

H. Measuring Broadband Availability, Adoption, and Speeds

27. What information about existing broadband services should the Executive Branch collect to inform decisions about broadband investment, deployment, and adoption? How often should this information be updated?

28. Are there gaps in the level or reliability of broadband-related information gathered by other entities that need to be filled by Executive Branch data collection efforts?

29. What additional research should the government conduct to promote broadband deployment, adoption, and competition?

30. How might the federal government encourage innovation in broadband deployment, adoption, and competition?

Dated: April 24, 2105.

Lawrence E. Strickling,
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information.

Lisa Mensah,
Under Secretary for Rural Development.

[FR Doc. 2015-09996 Filed 4-28-15; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Patent and Trademark Office

[Docket No.: PTO-P-2015-0008]

Change to Internet Usage Policy To Permit Oral Authorization for Video Conferencing Tools by Patent Examiners

AGENCY: United States Patent and Trademark Office, Commerce.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) established an Internet usage policy in 1999, and this Internet usage policy permits patent examiners to communicate via the Internet only with individuals who have a written authorization in the application. This Internet usage policy also applies to USPTO video conferencing tools such as WebEx for use by patent examiners. The USPTO is updating its Internet usage policy by modifying the authorization requirements to now permit oral authorization for video conferencing tools, such as WebEx, to be provided by the patent applicant/practitioner to patent examiners before an interview is conducted.

DATES: *Effective:* The change to the Internet usage policy set forth in this notice is effective on April 29, 2015.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mark Polutta, Senior Legal Advisor, Office of Patent Legal Administration, Office of the Deputy Commissioner for Patent Examination Policy at (571) 272-7709.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The USPTO adopted an Internet usage policy in 1999. See Internet Usage Policy, 64 FR 33056 (June 21, 1999). The Patents portion of the Internet usage policy has been incorporated into section 502.03 of the Manual of Patent Examining Procedure (MPEP). The Trademarks portion of the Internet usage policy has been superseded by the Trademark Manual of Examining Procedure, which contains the relevant

guidance on this subject matter for trademark examining attorneys, trademark applicants, and registration owners.

In accordance with the Internet usage policy as adopted in 1999, patent examiners may communicate via the Internet only with individuals who have a written authorization in the application. See MPEP 502.03 (9th ed. 2014). This Internet usage policy also applies to USPTO video conferencing tools, such as WebEx, used by patent examiners.

The USPTO is updating its Internet usage policy by modifying the authorization requirements for patent examination to now include oral authorization for video conferencing tools such as WebEx in view of the more prevalent and accepted use of electronic communications and improvements in internet security. The USPTO will now accept oral authorization by the patent applicant/practitioner (practitioner) to participate in a video conference. Practitioners may request a video conference just as they would request a telephone or in-person interview with the examiner. For applicants that are juristic entities, see MPEP 401, which explains that a juristic entity must be represented by a registered practitioner.

Under the updated Internet usage policy, patent examiners may now use USPTO video conferencing tools, e.g., WebEx, to conduct examiner interviews in both published and unpublished applications without written authorization in the application. Authorization by the practitioner (which may be oral) to conduct a video conference is still required and must be obtained prior to sending a meeting invitation using email, calendar/scheduler applications, or USPTO video conferencing tools. Authorization is required to confirm that the practitioner is able to conduct a video conference and to confirm the email address to which the invitation will be sent. The patent examiner should note on the record the details of the authorization either in the interview summary or a separate communication. This authorization is limited to the video conference interview being arranged (including the meeting invitation) and does not extend to other communications regarding the application.

Although this change in Internet usage policy provides applicant's representative with an alternative to providing a written authorization to conduct an interview using USPTO video conferencing tools, the best practice is to have such written authorization of record in the file.

All Internet communications between USPTO employees and practitioners must be made using USPTO tools. Video conferencing communications regarding a patent application must be hosted by USPTO personnel. No personal phones, non-USPTO email, PDAs, etc. may be used by USPTO employees for official communications.

In accordance with MPEP 502.03 and 713.04, all communications with regard to the merits of a patent application between USPTO employees and applicants must be made of record.

Dated: April 23, 2015.

Michelle K. Lee,

Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office.

[FR Doc. 2015-10051 Filed 4-28-15; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-16-P

COMMODITY FUTURES TRADING COMMISSION

Agency Information Collection Activities: Notice of Intent To Renew Collection 3038-0097, Process for Review of Swaps for Mandatory Clearing

AGENCY: Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Commodity Futures Trading Commission (“Commission” or “CFTC”) is announcing an opportunity for public comment on the proposed collection of certain information by the agency. Under the Paperwork Reduction Act (“PRA”), Federal agencies are required to publish notice in the **Federal Register** concerning each proposed collection of information, including each proposed extension of an existing collection of information, and to allow 60 days for public comment. This notice solicits comments on reporting and recordkeeping requirements relating to information management requirements for derivatives clearing organizations.

DATES: Comments must be submitted on or before June 29, 2015.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments, identified by “Process for Review of Swaps for Mandatory Clearing,” by any of the following methods:

- *The Agency’s Web site*, at <http://comments.cftc.gov/>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments through the Web site.
- *Mail:* Christopher Kirkpatrick, Secretary of the Commission, Commodity Futures Trading Commission, Three Lafayette Centre,

1155 21st Street NW., Washington, DC 20581.

- *Hand Delivery/Courier:* Same as Mail above.
- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments through the Portal.

Please submit your comments using only one method.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Eileen Chotiner, Division of Clearing and Risk, Commodity Futures Trading Commission, Three Lafayette Centre, 1155 21st Street NW., Washington, DC 20581, (202) 418-5467; email: echotiner@cftc.gov, and refer to OMB Control No. 3038-0097.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Under the PRA, Federal agencies must obtain approval from the Office of Management and Budget (“OMB”) for each collection of information they conduct or sponsor. “Collection of Information” is defined in 44 U.S.C. 3502(3) and 5 CFR 1320.3 and includes agency requests or requirements that members of the public submit reports, keep records, or provide information to a third party. Section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the PRA, 44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A), requires Federal agencies to provide a 60-day notice in the **Federal Register** concerning each proposed collection of information, including each proposed extension of an existing collection of information, before submitting the collection to OMB for approval. To comply with this requirement, the Commission is publishing notice of the proposed extension of the collection of information listed below.

Title: Process for Review of Swaps for Mandatory Clearing (OMB Control No. 3038-0097). This is a request for extension of a currently approved information collection.

Abstract: The Commodity Exchange Act and Commission regulations require a derivatives clearing organization (“DCO”) that wishes to accept a swap for clearing to be eligible to clear the swap and to submit the swap to the Commission for a determination as to whether the swap is required to be cleared. Commission Regulation 39.5 sets forth the process for these submissions. The Commission will use the information in this collection to determine whether a DCO that wishes to accept a swap for clearing is eligible to clear the swap and whether the swap should be required to be cleared.

With respect to the collection of information, the CFTC invites comments on:

- Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper

performance of the functions of the Commission, including whether the information will have a practical use;

- The accuracy of the Commission’s estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;
- Ways to enhance the quality, usefulness, and clarity of the information to be collected; and
- Ways to minimize the burden of 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 submission of responses.

All comments must be submitted in English, or if not, accompanied by an English translation. Comments will be posted as received to <http://www.cftc.gov>. You should submit only information that you wish to make available publicly. If you wish the Commission to consider information that you believe is exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, a petition for confidential treatment of the exempt information may be submitted according to the procedures established in section 145.9 of the Commission’s regulations.¹

The Commission reserves the right, but shall have no obligation, to review, pre-screen, filter, redact, refuse or remove any or all of your submission from <http://www.cftc.gov> that it may deem to be inappropriate for publication, such as obscene language. All submissions that have been redacted or removed that contain comments on the merits of the Information Collection Request will be retained in the public comment file and will be considered as required under the Administrative Procedure Act and other applicable laws, and may be accessible under the Freedom of Information Act.

Burden Statement: The respondent burden for this collection is estimated to be 40 hours per response.

Respondents/Affected Entities: Derivatives clearing organizations.

Estimated number of respondents: 14.

Estimated total annual burden on respondents: 560.

Frequency of collection: Daily, annual, and on occasion.

Authority: 44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*

Dated: April 24, 2015.

Robert N. Sidman,

Deputy Secretary of the Commission.

[FR Doc. 2015-09994 Filed 4-28-15; 8:45 am]

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¹ 17 CFR 145.9.