form for the collection of information is available for review by calling OSC, or on OSC's Web site, at http://www.osc.gov/library.htm.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: OSC is an independent agency responsible for, among other things, (1) investigation of allegations of prohibited personnel practices defined by law at 5 U.S.C. 2302(b), protection of whistleblowers, and certain other illegal employment practices under titles 5 and 38 of the U.S. Code, affecting current or former Federal employees or applicants for employment, and covered state and local government employees; and (2) the interpretation and enforcement of Hatch Act provisions on political activity in chapters 15 and 73 of title 5 of the U.S. Code. OSC is required to conduct an annual survey of individuals who seek its assistance. Section 13 of Public Law 103-424 (1994), codified at 5 U.S.C. 1212 note, states, in part: ''[T]he survey shall--(1) determine if the individual seeking assistance was fully apprised of their rights; (2) determine whether the individual was successful either at the Office of Special Counsel or the Merit Systems Protection Board; and (3) determine if the individual, whether successful or not, was satisfied with the treatment received from the Office of Special Counsel.'' The same section also provides that survey results are to be published in OSC's annual report to Congress. Copies of prior years' annual reports are available on OSC's Web site, at http://www.osc.gov/library.htmıcongress or by calling OSC at (202) 254-3600.

OSC has enhanced the effectiveness of this survey by revising the questions asked. OSC continues to use the online survey, due to its effectiveness in reducing response time.

Title of Collection: OSC Survey--Prohibited Personnel Practice or Other Prohibited Activity (Agency Form Number OSC-48a; OMB Control Number 3255-0003)

Type of Information Collection Request: Approval of a previously approved collection of information that expired on March 31, 2009, with revisions.

Affected public: Current and former Federal employees, applicants for Federal employment, state and local government employees, and their representatives, and the general public.

Respondent's Obligation: Voluntary.

Estimated Annual Number of Respondents: 600.

Frequency: Annual.

Estimated Average Amount of Time for a Person to Respond: 12 minutes.

Estimated Annual Burden: 109 hours.

Abstract: This form is used to survey current and former Federal employees and applicants for Federal employment who have submitted allegations of possible prohibited personnel practices or other prohibited activity for investigation and possible prosecution by OSC, and whose matter has been closed or otherwise resolved during the prior fiscal year, on their experience at OSC. Specifically, the survey asks questions relating to whether the respondent was: (1) apprised of his or her rights; (2) successful at the OSC or at the Merit Systems Protection Board; and (3) satisfied with the treatment received at the OSC.

Dated: December 18, 2009.

William E. Reukauf

Associate Special Counsel.

[FR Doc. E9–31167 Filed 12–31–09; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7405–01–S

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

[Public Notice Number 6844]

Overseas Schools Advisory Council Notice of Meeting

The Overseas Schools Advisory Council, Department of State, will hold its Executive Committee Meeting on Thursday, January 21, 2010, at 9:30 a.m. in Conference Room 1107, Department of State Building, 2201 C Street, NW., Washington, DC. The meeting is open to the public and will last until approximately 12 p.m.

The Overseas Schools Advisory Council works closely with the U.S. business community in improving those American-sponsored schools overseas that are assisted by the Department of State and attended by dependents of U.S. Government families and children of employees of U.S. corporations and foundations abroad.

This meeting will deal with issues related to the work and the support provided by the Overseas Schools Advisory Council to the American-sponsored overseas schools. The agenda includes a review of the projects selected for the 2008 and 2009 Educational Assistance Program, which are under development, and an address by Dr. Thelma Melendez, Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education, U.S. Department of Education, on education matters in the United States.

Members of the public may attend the meeting and join in the discussion, subject to the instructions of the Chair. Admittance of public members will be limited to the seating available. Access to the State Department is controlled, and individual building passes are required for all attendees. Persons who plan to attend should so advise the office of Dr. Keith D. Miller, Department of State, Office of Overseas Schools, Room H328, SA–1, Washington, DC 20522–0132, telephone 202–261–8200, prior to January 11, 2010. Each visitor will be asked to provide his/her date of birth and either driver's license or passport number at the time of registration and attendance, and must carry a valid photo ID to the meeting. Any requests for reasonable accommodation should be made at the time of registration. All such requests will be considered, however, requests made after January 11th might not be possible to fill. All attendees must use the C Street entrance to the building.

Dated: December 18, 2009.

Keith D. Miller,

Executive Secretary, Overseas Schools Advisory Council.

[FR Doc. E9–31107 Filed 12–31–09; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4710–24–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Research and Innovative Technology Administration

Agency Information Collection; Activity Under OMB Review; Confidential Close Call Reporting System

AGENCY: Research & Innovative Technology Administration (RITA), Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS), DOT.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*), this notice announces that the Information Collection Request (ICR) described below is being forwarded to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for approval for renewal of information collection supporting a five-year research study that aims at improving rail safety by analyzing information on close calls and other unsafe occurrences in the rail industry. The ICR describes the nature of the information collection and its expected burden. The **Federal Register** notice with a 60-day comment period soliciting comments on the following collection of information was published on October 21, 2009 (74 FR 54116) and the comment period ended on December 21, 2009. The 60-day notice produced no comments.

DATES: Written comments should be submitted by February 3, 2010.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Demetra V. Collia, E–36, Room 314, Bureau of Transportation Statistics, Research and Innovative Technology Administration, 1200 New Jersey Ave., SE., Washington, DC 20590; (202) 366–1610; Fax (202) 366–3676; e-mail *Demetra.Collia@dot.gov.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Confidential Close Call Reporting System.

Type of Request: Approval to continue to collect information on close calls.

OMB Control Number: 2139–0010.

Affected Public: Workers in the railroad industry.

Number of Respondents: 4,000.

Number of Responses: 730.

Total Annual Burden: 365.00 hours (Average estimate of 30 minutes to complete the C³RS Close Call form and employee survey, resulting in a total of 365.00 hours).

Abstract: Collecting data on the nation's transportation system is an important component of BTS's responsibility to the transportation community and is authorized in BTS statutory authority (49 U.S.C. 111(c)(1) and (2) and 49 U.S.C. 111(c)(5)(j)). The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and BTS share a common interest in promoting rail safety based on better data. To that end, FRA's Office of Research and Development is sponsoring the Confidential Close Call Reporting System (C³RS) Demonstration Project to investigate the effectiveness of such system in improving rail safety.

A close call represents a situation in which an ongoing sequence of events was stopped from developing further, preventing the occurrence of potentially serious safety-related consequences. This might include the following: (1) Events that happen frequently, but have low safety consequences; (2) events that happen infrequently but have the potential for high consequences (e.g., a train in dark territory proceeds beyond its authority); (3) events that are below the FRA reporting threshold (e.g., an event that causes a minor injury); and (4) events that are reportable to FRA but have the potential for a far greater accident than the one reported (e.g., a slow speed collision with minor damage to the equipment and no injuries.)

Employees involved in a close call are asked to provide information about the reported event by filling out a questionnaire and participating in a brief interview, as needed. The close call reporting form (questionnaire) asks the respondent to provide information on: (1) Name and contact information; (2) time and location of the incident; (3) a short description of the event; (4) contributing factors to the close call; and (5) any other information that might be useful in determining a root cause of such event.

BTS collects close call reports submitted by railroad employees and protects the confidentiality of these data through its own statute (49 U.S.C. 111(i)) and the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act of 2002 (CIPSEA). Accordingly, only statistical and non-sensitive information will be made available through publications and reports. In addition, BTS is developing an analytical database containing the reported data and other pertinent information to determine root causes of frequently reported close calls. The database is a valuable tool to railroad carriers and the FRA in their effort to identify safety issues and provide corrective measures before an accident occurs.

Voluntary reporting of close calls to a confidential system can provide a tool to identify and correct weaknesses in railroad safety systems before an accident actually occurs. The C³RS demonstration project offers a voluntary, cooperative, non-punitive environment to communicate safety concerns. Through the analysis of close calls, the FRA and the railroad community receive information about factors that may contribute to unsafe events and the error recovery mechanisms that prevented an adverse consequence from occurring. Such information is used to develop new training programs, identify root causes of potentially adverse events, assess risk and allocate resources to address those risks more efficiently. In addition, the database provides rail safety researchers with valuable information regarding precursors to safety risks and contributes to research and development of intervention programs aimed at preventing accidents and fatalities.

It is estimated that close call reporting will take no more than 30 minutes to complete for a maximum total burden of 365.00 hours (730 reports * 30 minutes/60 = 365.00 hours). Reports are submitted when there is a qualifying event, i.e., a close call occurs within a pilot site. The frequency of such event is estimated to be approximately two per day.

ADDRESSES: The agency seeks public comments on its proposed information collection. Comments should address whether the information will have practical utility; the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed information collection; ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; and ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology. Send comments to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, 725–17th Street, NW., Washington, DC 20503, Attention: BTS Desk Officer.

Issued in Washington, DC on December 28, 2009.

Steven D. Dillingham,

Director, Bureau of Transportation Statistics, Research and Innovative Technology Administration.

[FR Doc. E9–31135 Filed 12–31–09; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–HY–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Railroad Administration

Petition for Waiver of Compliance

In accordance with Part 211 of Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), notice is hereby given that the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) received a request for a waiver of compliance with certain requirements of its safety standards. The individual petition is described below, including the party seeking relief, the regulatory provisions involved, the nature of the relief being requested, and the petitioner's arguments in favour of relief.

Alton & Southern Railway

[Waiver Petition Docket Number FRA–2009–0121]

The Alton & Southern Railway Company (ALS) has petitioned for a waiver of compliance from the requirements of Title 49 CFR 229.23(d)(f), 229.27(3), and 229.29(a) as it pertains to the physical recordkeeping requirements for 92-day periodic, annual, and biennial locomotive inspection reports at mechanical facilities where the inspections are performed, and for the maintenance of a copy of the locomotive inspection and repair record in the cab of the locomotive.

Through this waiver, for all locomotives leased from the Union Pacific Railroad Company, ALS seeks to complete and maintain an electronic report of each locomotive inspection report, repair record, and a hard copy. Pursuant to Title 49 CFR 229.23(d)(f), 229.27(3), and 229.29(a), this electronic report will be maintained in a centralized computer database for the required period, and a hard copy of the