

*Type of Review:* Extension (without change).

*Affected Public:* Business or other for-profit institutions.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 177.

*Estimated Time Per Respondent:* 2 hours.

*Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours:* 354.

Dated: January 18, 1996.

V. Carol Barr,

Leader, Printing and Records Services Group.

[FR Doc. 96-1602 Filed 1-29-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4820-02-P

## Announcement of National Customs Automation Test Regarding Electronic Protest Filing

**AGENCY:** Customs Service, Department of the Treasury.

**ACTION:** General notice.

**SUMMARY:** This notice announces Customs plan to conduct a test regarding the electronic filing of protests. This notice invites public comments concerning any aspect of the test, informs interested members of the public of the eligibility requirements for voluntary participation in the test, and describes the basis on which Customs will select participants.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** The test will commence no earlier than May 1, 1996, and will run for approximately six months. Comments must be received on or before February 29, 1996. Anyone interested in participating in the test should contact Customs on or before February 29, 1996.

**ADDRESSES:** Written comments regarding this notice and information submitted to be considered for voluntary participation in the test, should be addressed to the Chief, Commercial Compliance Branch, U.S. Customs Service, 1301 Constitution Avenue, N.W. Room 1313, Washington D.C. 20229-0001.

### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

For protest systems or automation issues: Steve Linnemann (202) 927-0436.

For information on how to become ABI operational: Kris Crane (202) 927-0452.

For operational or policy issues: Jim Casler (713) 313-2876.

### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Title VI of the North American Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act (the Act), Public Law 103-182, 107 Stat.

2057 (December 8, 1993), contains provisions pertaining to Customs Modernization (107 Stat. 2170). Subtitle B of title VI establishes the National Customs Automation Program (NCAP)—an automated and electronic system for the processing of commercial importations. Section 631 in Subtitle B of the Act creates sections 411 through 414 of the Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C. 1411-1414), which define and list the existing and planned components of the NCAP (section 411), promulgate program goals (section 412), and provide for the implementation and evaluation of the program (section 413). In addition section 645 of the Act provides for the electronic filing of protests. Section 411 (2) (A) defines the "electronic filing and status of protests" as a "Planned Component" of the NCAP. Section 101.9(b) of the Customs Regulations (19 CFR 101.9(b)), implements the testing of NCAP components. See T.D. 95-21 (60 FR 14211, March 16, 1995).

### I. Description of the Test

#### The Concept of Electronic Protest Filing

The Customs Service has developed transaction sets for the Automated Broker Interface (ABI) system which will allow the following to be filed electronically and their status tracked electronically:

(1) Protests against decisions of the Customs Service under 19 U.S.C. 1514;

(2) Claims for refunds of Customs duties or corrections of errors requiring reliquidation pursuant to 19 U.S.C. 1520(c) and (d); and

(3) Interventions in an importer's protest by an exporter or producer of merchandise from a country that is a party to the North American Free Trade Agreement under § 181.115 of the Customs Regulations.

Customs Regulations regarding who has the right to file a protest and the port having jurisdiction over the protest remain the same. For the purposes of the test, the date of filing for a protest will be determined by the date of ABI input of the protest based on midnight eastern standard time. A customhouse broker will be able to input the protest from any computer processing location, but will still have to be licensed to transact business at the port where the protest is filed.

The test will be implemented at selected ports. Ports selected will depend in part upon the number of volunteers who transact Customs business at those ports and the anticipated volume of protests filed at those ports.

### II. Eligibility Criteria

In order to qualify for the electronic protest test, volunteers must be currently ABI operational, or become ABI operational, and willing to develop or acquire the software necessary to input protests into and interact with the electronic protest programming which has been established within Customs Automated Commercial System (ACS).

Note that participation in this testing will not constitute confidential information and lists of participants will be made available to the public upon written request.

#### Test Participation Application

This notice requests volunteers for the test. Protest filers who wish to volunteer for the test should contact the Trade Compliance Branch, U.S. Customs Service, 1301 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Room 1322, Washington D.C. 20229-0001 on or after the date set forth in the effective date paragraph at the beginning of this notice.

#### Basis for Participation Selection

Eligible filers will be considered for participation in the test. Those not selected for participation will be invited to comment on the design, conduct, and evaluation of the test. Selections will be based on anticipated volume of protests, ports identified as having jurisdiction over those protests, and the selectee's electronic abilities to interface with Customs ABI electronic protest programming. Participants selected will be notified by means of the Customs Electronic Bulletin Board and the Customs Administrative Message System and by letter of notification.

### III. Test Evaluation Criteria

Once participants are selected, Customs and the participants will meet to review all public comments received concerning any aspect of the test program or procedures, finalize procedures in light of those comments, form problem solving teams, and establish baseline measures and evaluation methods and criteria. At 90 days and 180 days after commencement, evaluations of the test will be conducted with the final results published in the Federal Register as required by § 101.9(b) of the Customs Regulations.

Dated: January 22, 1996.

Samuel H. Banks,

Assistant Commissioner, Office of Field Operations.

[FR Doc. 96-1593 Filed 1-29-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4820-02-P

**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS****Proposed Information Collection Activity; Public Comment Request: Persian Gulf Registry Questionnaire; VA Form 10-20988 (NR)**

**AGENCY:** Veterans Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** As part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) invites the general public and other Federal agencies to comment on this information collection. This request for comment is being made pursuant to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13; 44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)). Comments should address the accuracy of the burden estimates and ways to minimize the burden including the use of automated collection techniques or the use of other forms of information technology, as well as other relevant aspects of the information collection.

**DATES:** Written comments and recommendations on the proposal for the collection of information should be received on or before April 1, 1996.

**ADDRESSES:** Direct all written comments to Nancy J. Kessinger, Veterans Benefits Administration (20M30), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420. All

comments will become a matter of public record and will be summarized in the VBA request for Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval. In this document VBA is soliciting comments concerning the following information collection:

*OMB Control Number:* None assigned.

*Title and Form Number:* Persian Gulf Registry Questionnaire, VA Form 10-20988 (NR).

*Type of Review:* Existing collection in use without an OMB control number.

*Need and Uses:* Participants in the VA Persian Gulf Registry Health Examination Program are given the opportunity to report information on potential exposures during Persian Gulf Service and their reproductive health since serving in Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

*Current Actions:* VA created the Persian Gulf Registry Health Examination Program in 1992. U.S. troops returning from Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm began reporting a variety of illnesses which they initially attributed to inhalation of fumes and smoke from burning Kuwaiti oil-well fires. The products of oil-well fires (carbon monoxide, sulfur oxides, hydrocarbons, particulate matter, and nitrogen oxides), may singly or in combination, cause both chronic and acute adverse health conditions. These adverse health conditions include chronic bronchitis, pulmonary emphysema, chronic obstructive

pulmonary disease, lung cancer and bronchial asthma.

The Persian Gulf Registry Examination Program was designed to assist VA in identifying possible adverse health conditions in military personnel who served in the Persian Gulf War. The health examination program offers a free, complete physical examination with basic laboratory studies to every Persian Gulf veteran who has health concerns.

*Affected Public:* Individuals or households.

*Estimated Annual Burden:* 12,500 hours.

*Estimated Average Burden Per Respondent:* 15 minutes.

*Frequency of Response:* One time.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 50,000.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Requests for additional information or copies of the form should be directed to Department of Veterans Affairs, Attn: Jacquie McCray, Information Management Service (045A4), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420, Telephone (202) 565-8266 or FAX (202) 565-8267.

Dated: January 22, 1996.

By direction of the Secretary.

Donald L. Neilson,

*Director, Information Management Service.*  
[FR Doc. 96-1641 Filed 1-29-96; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 8320-01-P**