

Commission may find that the Postal Service's determination disposes of one or more of those issues.

The Postal Reorganization Act requires that the Commission issue its decision within 120 days from the date this appeal was filed (39 U.S.C. 404 (b)(5)). In the interest of expedition, in light of the 120-day decision schedule, the Commission may request the Postal Service to submit memoranda of law on any appropriate issue. If requested, such memoranda will be due 20 days from the issuance of the request and the Postal Service shall serve a copy of its memoranda on the petitioners. The Postal Service may incorporate by reference in its briefs or motions, any arguments presented in memoranda it previously filed in this docket. If necessary, the Commission also may ask petitioners or the Postal Service for more information.

The Commission orders:

(a) The Postal Service shall file the record in this appeal by March 18, 1997.

(b) The Secretary of the Postal Rate Commission shall publish this Notice and Order and Procedural Schedule in the Federal Register.

By the Commission.
Margaret P. Crenshaw,
Secretary.

Appendix

March 3, 1997—Filing of Appeal letter

March 10, 1997—Commission Notice and Order of Filing of Appeal

March 28, 1997—Last day of filing of petitions to intervene (see 39 CFR 3001.111(b))

April 7, 1997—Petitioner's Participant Statement or Initial Brief (see 39 CFR 3001.115(a) and (b))

April 28, 1997—Postal Service's Answering Brief (see 39 CFR 3001.115(c))

May 13, 1997—Petitioner's Reply Brief should Petitioner choose to file one (see 39 CFR 3001.115(d))

May 20, 1997—Deadline for motions by any party requesting oral argument. The Commission will schedule oral argument only when it is a necessary addition to the written filings (see 39 CFR 3001.116)

July 1, 1997—Expiration of the Commission's 120-day decisional schedule (see 39 U.S.C. 404(b)(5))

[FR Doc. 97-6350 Filed 3-12-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7710-FW-P

RAILROAD RETIREMENT BOARD

Agency Forms Submitted for OMB Review

Summary: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35), the Railroad Retirement Board has submitted the following proposal(s) for the collection of information to the Office of Management and Budget for review and approval.

Summary of Proposal(s):

(1) *Collection title:* Application and Claim for RUIA Benefits Due at Death.

(2) *Form(s) submitted:* UI-63.

(3) *OMB Number:* 3220-0055.

(4) *Expiration date of current OMB clearance:* 4/30/97.

(5) *Type of request:* Extension of a currently approved collection.

(6) *Respondents:* Individuals or households.

(7) *Estimated annual number of respondents:* 200.

(8) *Total annual responses:* 200.

(9) *Total annual reporting hours:* 23.

(10) *Collection description:* The collection obtains the information needed by the Railroad Retirement Board to pay, under section 2(g) of the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act, benefits under that Act accrued, but not paid because of the death of the employee.

Additional Information or Comments:

Copies of the form and supporting documents can be obtained from Chuck Mierzwa, the agency clearance officer (312-751-3363). Comments regarding the information collection should be addressed to Ronald J. Hodapp, Railroad Retirement Board, 844 North Rush Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611-2092 and the OMB reviewer, Laura Oliven (202-395-7316), Office of Management and Budget, Room 10230, New Executive Office Building, Washington, DC 20503. Chuck Mierzwa,
Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. 97-6294 Filed 3-12-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7905-01-M

SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

[Declaration of Economic Injury Disaster Loan Area #9389]

Declaration of Disaster Loan Area Minnesota

Kandiyohi, Lincoln, Murray, and Stevens Counties and the contiguous Counties of Big Stone, Chippewa, Cottonwood, Douglas, Grant, Jackson, Lyon, Meeker, Nobles, Pipestone, Pope, Redwood, Renville, Rock, Stearns, Swift, Traverse and Yellow Medicine in

the State of Minnesota constitute an economic injury disaster loan area as a result of severe winter storms and blizzard conditions during the period beginning November 1996 through January 1997. Eligible small businesses without credit available elsewhere and small agricultural cooperatives without credit available elsewhere may file applications for economic injury assistance for this disaster until the close of business on December 4, 1997 at the address listed below: U.S. Small Business Administration, Disaster Area 2 Office, One Baltimore Place, Suite 300, Atlanta, GA 30308, or other locally announced locations. The interest rate for eligible small businesses and small agricultural cooperatives is 4 percent. Any contiguous counties not listed herein have been covered under a separate declaration for the same occurrence.

The economic injury number assigned to this disaster is 938900.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program No. 59002)

Dated: March 4, 1997.

Ginger Lew,

Acting Administrator.

[FR Doc. 97-6253 Filed 3-12-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8025-01-P

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

Privacy Act of 1974; Report of New Routine Use

AGENCY: Social Security Administration (SSA).

ACTION: New routine use.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. 552a(e)(4) and (11)), we are issuing public notice of our intent to establish a new routine use applicable to the Earnings Recording and Self-Employment Income System, SSA/OSR, 09-60-0059. (For convenience, we will refer to this system of records as the Master Earnings File.) The proposed new routine use will allow SSA to disclose quarters of coverage to Federal, State, and local entities for use in their administration of sections 402, 412, 421 and 435 of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, Pub. L. 104-193.

We invite public comment on this publication.

DATES: We filed a report of an altered system of records—new routine use with the Chairman, Committee on Government Reform and Oversight of the House of Representatives; the Chairman, Committee on Governmental

Affairs of the Senate; and the Administrator, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget on February 28, 1997. The routine use will become effective as proposed, without further notice April 22, 1997, unless we receive comments on or before that date that result in a contrary determination.

ADDRESSES: Interested individuals may comment on this publication by writing to the SSA Privacy Officer, Social Security Administration, Room 3-A-6 Operations Building, 6401 Security Boulevard, Baltimore, Maryland 21235. Comments may be faxed to (410) 966-0869. All comments received will be available for public inspection at that address.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Michael Walker, Social Insurance Specialist, Office of Disclosure Policy, Social Security Administration, 3-C-1 Operations Building, 6401 Security Boulevard, Baltimore, Maryland 21235, telephone 410-965-8525.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

A. Discussion of Proposed Routine Use

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 included provisions regarding eliminating payment of benefits under certain specified Federal and State programs to qualified aliens. Section 431 of Public Law 104-193 states that 'qualified alien' means an alien who, at the time the alien applies for, receives, or attempts to receive a Federal public benefit, is:

- (1) An alien who is lawfully admitted for permanent residence under the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA),
- (2) An alien who is granted asylum under section 208 of the INA;
- (3) A refugee who is admitted to the United States under section 207 of the INA,
- (4) An alien who is paroled into the United States under section 212(d)(5) of the INA for a period of at least 1 year,
- (5) An alien whose deportation is being withheld under section 243(h) of the INA, or
- (6) An alien who is granted conditional entry pursuant to section 203(a)(7) of the INA as in effect prior to April 1, 1980.

Section 402(a) of Pub. L. 104-193 provides that, with several exceptions, a qualified alien is not eligible for any specified Federal program, which section 402 defines as (A) the supplemental security income program under title XVI of the Social Security Act, including supplementary payments pursuant to an agreement for Federal administration under section 1616(a) of

the Social Security Act and payments pursuant to an agreement entered into under section 212(b) of Public Law 93-66; and (B) the food stamp program as defined in section 3(h) of the Food Stamp Act of 1977.

Similarly, section 402(b) of Pub. L. 104-193 provides that a State is authorized to determine the eligibility of an alien who is a qualified alien for any designated Federal program defined as (A) Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (the program of block grants to States for temporary assistance for needy families under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act), (B) Social Services Block Grant (the program of block grants to States for social services under title XX of the Social Security Act), and (C) Medicaid (a State plan approved under title XIX of the Social Security Act, other than medical assistance described in section 401(b)(1)(A)).

Additionally, section 412 of Pub. L. 104-193 provides that a State is authorized to determine the eligibility for any State public benefits of an alien who is a qualified alien, as defined at section 431, a nonimmigrant under the INA, or an alien who is paroled into the United States under section 212(d)(5) of such Act for less than one year.

However, sections 402, 412 and 421 of Pub. L. 104-193 provide exceptions for certain refugees and asylees, certain permanent resident aliens, and certain veterans. Section 411 of this Act provides certain exceptions to the above listed State or local benefits.

Pub. L. 104-193 provides that if the alien has worked 40 qualifying quarters of coverage as defined under title II of the Social Security Act, he or she may be eligible for benefits listed in sections 402 and 412. The alien may also receive credit for (1) all of the qualifying quarters of coverage as defined under title II of the Social Security Act worked by a parent of such alien while the alien was under age 18, and (2) all of the qualifying quarters worked by a spouse of such alien during their marriage and the alien remains married to such spouse or such spouse is deceased.

The Social Security Administration is the primary repository of income information (including quarters of coverage information) for everyone working in covered employment in the United States. Federal and State agencies must have quarters of coverage information in order to determine qualifying quarters and to adjudicate claims for eligibility for the benefits programs covered by sections 402 and 412 of Pub. L. 104-193. We therefore are proposing to add a routine use to the Master Earnings File system of records

allowing disclosure of quarters of coverage information to Federal and State agencies administering sections 402, 412 and 421 of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996. The routine use will read that disclosures will be made:

"to Federal, State, and local agencies for administration of sections 402, 412, 421 and/or 435 of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, Pub. L. 104-193. SSA will disclose information regarding quarters of coverage (non-tax return information) earned by the alien applicant as well as quarters of coverage earned by his/her parents while the alien was under age 18 and/or his/her spouse during the marriage (if the alien remains married to such spouse or the marriage ended with the death of the spouse) to a Federal, State, or local requesting agency for their sole use in determining eligibility for programs or benefits programs covered by sections 402 and 412 of Pub. L. 104-193."

A notice of the Master Earnings File system, to which the routine use will apply, was last published in the Federal Register at 60 FR 52948, October 11, 1995.

B. Compatibility of Proposed Routine Use

We are proposing the changes discussed above in accordance with the Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. 552a (a)(7), (b)(3), (e)(4) and (e)(11)) and our disclosure regulation (20 CFR part 401).

The Privacy Act permits us to disclose information about individuals without their consent for a routine use, i.e., where the information will be used for a purpose that is compatible with the purpose for which we collected the information. Consistent with the Privacy Act, under 20 CFR 401.310 we may disclose information under a routine use for administering our programs, or for administering similar programs of other agencies. SSA collects and maintains earnings data along with quarters of coverage information in the Master Earnings File system in order to qualify individuals for certain benefit programs administered by SSA and to compute accurate benefit payments to those individuals. Other Federal, State, or local agencies use such information for similar purposes in programs similar to SSA's programs. Disclosing quarters of coverage information to such Federal, State, or local agencies will support the effective and efficient administration of various assistance programs by those agencies. Therefore, we find that disclosing quarters of coverage information to Federal, State, or local agencies for the purpose of administering sections 402, 412, 421 and 435 of the Personal Responsibility

and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 serves purposes that are compatible with purposes for which SSA collects the information and meets the criteria of the Privacy Act and the regulation for establishment of a routine use.

C. Effect of the Proposal on Individual Rights

As discussed above, the proposed revised routine use will permit SSA to disclose quarters of coverage information to Federal, State, or local agencies for the purpose of administering certain income-maintenance and health-maintenance programs, where such use is authorized by Federal statute. Disclosure will assist Federal, State, or local agencies in determining eligibility for income-maintenance and health-maintenance programs. While disclosure will have some impact on the privacy of individuals (for example, disclosures will be made regarding the work records of related third parties, i.e., parents and spouses), Federal, State, or local agencies will be better able to adjudicate entitlement to section 402, 412, 421 and 435 programs or benefits. Such disclosures will only be made where authorized by Federal statute. SSA will follow all statutory and regulatory requirements for disclosure. Thus, we do not anticipate that the disclosure will have any unwarranted effect on the privacy or other rights of individuals.

Dated: February 28, 1997.

Shirley S. Chater,

Commissioner of Social Security.

[FR Doc. 97-6241 Filed 3-12-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4190-29-P

OFFICE OF SPECIAL COUNSEL

Proposed Information Collection Activities; Comment Request

AGENCY: Office of Special Counsel.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Office of Special Counsel (OSC), in accordance with the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. chapter 35), has applied to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for an emergency approval to reinstate two previously approved information collections, consisting of forms and related regulations at 5 CFR part 1800. Also, OSC is providing an opportunity for public comment in anticipation of its request to OMB for regular approval of the two forms. Federal employees, other Federal agencies, and the general public are invited to comment on OSC's

information collection activities regarding possible prohibited personnel practices and other prohibited activity and whistleblower disclosures.

Comments are invited on (a) whether the proposed collections of information are necessary for the proper performance of OSC's functions, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of OSC's estimate of the burden of the proposed collections of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Send written comments regarding the emergency approval of the information collections to the Desk Officer, OMB, 3255-0002, OIRA, Washington, DC 20503. OMB should receive comments by March 13, 1997.

Send written comments regarding the request for regular approval of the information collections and requests for copies of the proposed information collections to Cathleen Sadlo Schulz, Senior Attorney, U.S. Office of Special Counsel, 1730 M Street, NW., Suite 300, Washington, DC 20036-4505. Comments should be received on or before May 12, 1997.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Comment is requested on the following collections of information:

1. *Title of Collection:* Report of Possible Prohibited Personnel Practice or Other Prohibited Activity.

Agency Form Number: OSC 11; OMB Control Number 3255-0002.

Type of Information Collection: Emergency approval and reinstatement, with change, of a previously approved collection for which approval has expired.

Affected public: Current and former Federal employees and applicants for Federal employment.

Respondent's Obligation: Voluntary.

Estimated Annual Number of Respondents: 1884.

Frequency: On occasion.

Estimated Average Burden Per Respondent: 1 hour.

Estimated Annual burden: 1884 hours.

Abstract: This optional form, or the format provided in 5 CFR 1800.1, are for use by current and former Federal employees and applicants for Federal employment to report possible prohibited personnel practices or other prohibited activity by Federal agencies or employees.

2. *Title of Collection:* Disclosure of Information.

Agency Form Number: OSC 12; OMB Control Number 3255-0002.

Type of Information Collection: Emergency approval and reinstatement, with change, of a previously approved collection for which approval has expired.

Affected public: Federal employees and agencies and other individuals.

Respondent's Obligation: Voluntary.

Estimated Annual Number of Respondents: 252.

Frequency: On occasion.

Estimated Average Burden Per Respondent: 1 hour.

Estimated Annual burden: 252 hours.

Abstract: This optional whistleblower disclosure form, and the format provided in 5 CFR 1800.2, are for use by current and former Federal employees and applicants for Federal employment to disclose a violation of any law, rule, or regulation, or gross mismanagement, a gross waste of funds, an abuse of authority, or a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety.

Erin M. McDonnell,

Associate Special Counsel for Planning and Advice.

[FR Doc. 97-6295 Filed 3-12-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7405-01-U

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

[Public Notice No. 2514]

Advisory Committee on International Communications and Information Policy; Public Meeting

The Department of State is holding the next meeting of its Advisory Committee on International Communications and Information Policy. The Committee was renewed on August 22, 1996, in order to continue to provide a formal channel for regular consultation and coordination on major economic, social and legal issues and problems in international communications and information policy, especially as these issues and problems involve users of information and communication services, providers of such services, technology research and development, foreign industrial and regulatory policy, the activities of international organizations with regard to communications and information, and developing country interests.

The 24-person committee was appointed by Ambassador Vonya B. McCann, United States Coordinator for International Communications and Information Policy, U.S. Department of State, and serves under the