

Korea-Treatment of Foreign, Research-Based Pharmaceuticals

U.S. concerns about Korea's treatment of foreign, research-based pharmaceuticals have centered around (1) discrimination in the reimbursement pricing system; (2) lack of protection of intellectual property rights (IPR), particularly with respect to clinical data and patents; and (3) burdensome and non-science-based Korean regulatory requirements, particularly on the acceptance of foreign clinical test data, testing, and approval of new drugs. In response to multiple government-to-government exchanges, including at high levels, the Korean Government has made some changes to address U.S. concerns. Specifically, imported pharmaceuticals are now listed, as are domestic drugs, on Korea's national health insurance reimbursement schedule. Also, the Korean Government has introduced a new system to reimburse hospitals for drugs at actual transaction prices to eliminate the illegal hospital margins that were available only for domestic drugs. Finally, Korea has taken some minor steps to address U.S. concerns on data protection and regulatory issues.

However, serious questions remain regarding how the new reimbursement pricing system in Korea will treat foreign innovative drugs, and regarding whether Korea provides TRIPS-consistent data protection. Korean authorities have resisted committing to a system of "linkage" between health and IPR authorities that would prevent the launch into the Korean market of drugs that would infringe valid patents. Finally, new Korean regulations finalized in December 1999 do not conform to international guidelines on the acceptance of foreign clinical test data. Prior to December of last year, in communications with the U.S. Government, the Korean Government indicated that it would implement these guidelines. In fact, the final Korean regulations appear to perpetuate requirements for redundant clinical testing and fail to shorten and streamline Korea's drug approval process. The U.S. Government will continue discussions with the Korean Government until U.S. concerns are addressed.

Malaysia-Trade and Investment in Motor Vehicles

The United States will continue to monitor Malaysia's compliance with its WTO obligations in the motor vehicle sector. Malaysia imposes local content requirements on producers of motorcycles, automobiles and

commercial vehicles (45 to 60 percent for passenger and commercial vehicles and 60 percent for motorcycles). Under the TRIMs Agreement, Malaysia was required to remove these measures by January 1, 2000 unless additional time was granted by the WTO. On December 29, 1999, Malaysia made a formal request for an additional two years to bring these measures into compliance with its obligations under the Agreement, but approval of this request has not been forthcoming. For these reasons, Malaysia appears to be in violation of the TRIMs Agreement. The approximate size of the automobile and commercial vehicle market in Malaysia in 1998 was 164,000 units. A large portion of the vehicles sold in Malaysia are produced locally. Motor vehicle parts sales into Malaysia are also reduced by these measures.

The United States hopes to receive increased interest from Malaysia in resolving this issue in a timely fashion. It will be important to increase the dialogue regarding the extension request made by the Malaysians. A meaningful first step will be for Malaysia to provide answers to a series of questions posed by several WTO members. The United States provided its questions on February 8, 2000 and on several occasions encouraged Malaysia to respond. Absent progress toward resolving Malaysia's request, we will need to consider alternate action to resolve this apparent violation. Additionally, other facets of Malaysia's motor vehicle policies will be reviewed to ensure their consistency with WTO obligations.

Mexico-Customs Valuation

The United States has requested bilateral consultations with the Government of Mexico regarding its use of reference prices for a wide range of imported products, including foods, distilled spirits, chemicals, paper, textiles, apparel, footwear, steel, hand tools, and appliances. Based on currently available information, effective May 1, 2000, companies importing affected products below the Government's minimum reference price must deposit cash in a designated Mexican financial institution (or arrange one of two alternative guarantees) to cover the difference in duties and taxes. This cash deposit requirement is to replace a bond requirement that has been in place for several years. These practices appear to violate a number of WTO agreements, including the WTO Agreement on Customs Valuation, GATT 1994, the WTO Agreement on Import Licensing Procedures, the Agreement on Preshipment Inspection,

and the Agreement on Textiles and Clothing. If consultations underway do not result, in a timely manner, in Mexican policies which are in compliance with its international agreements, the United States will initiate WTO consultations.

Mexico-Nutritional Products

Mexican Health Ministry regulations require the inspection and approval of manufacturing facilities in order to sell nutritional products, such as low-dosage vitamins, in Mexico. However, Mexican authorities refuse to inspect U.S.-based manufacturing facilities. Denying U.S. exporters the ability to have their facilities inspected and approved on the same basis as their Mexican counterparts raises serious concerns about Mexico's adherence to its trade obligations under the NAFTA and the WTO. The United States has raised these concerns with Mexico and has requested further consultations with Mexico. If this problem is not resolved in a timely manner that will allow U.S. companies without Mexican-based production facilities to resume exporting nutritional products to Mexico, the United States will consider proceeding to dispute settlement.

A. Jane Bradley,

Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for Monitoring and Enforcement.

[FR Doc. 00-11289 Filed 5-4-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3190-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee Meeting on Noise Certification Issues

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The FAA is issuing this notice to advise the public of a meeting of the Federal Aviation Administration Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee to discuss noise certification issues.

DATES: The meeting will be held on May 18, 2000, at 10 a.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the General Aviation Manufacturers Association, 1400 K Street NW, Washington, DC

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Angela O. Anderson, (202) 267-9681, Office of Rulemaking (ARM-204), 800 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20591.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Pursuant to section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463; 5 U.S.C. App. II), notice is hereby given of a meeting of the Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee (ARAC) to discuss noise certification issues. This meeting will be held May 18, 2000, at 10 a.m., at the General Aviation Manufacturers Association. The agenda for this meeting will include the presentation and vote on the NPRM from FAR/JAR Harmonization Working Group for Subsonic Transport Airplanes. Members of the public may obtain copies of this NPRM by contacting the person listed above under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**

Attendance is open to the interested public but may be limited to the space available. The public must make arrangements in advance to present oral statements at the meeting or may present statements to the committee at any time. Written statements may be presented to the committee at any time by providing 16 copies to the Assistant Chair or by providing the copies at the meeting. If you are in need of assistance or require a reasonable accommodation for the meeting, please contact the person listed under the heading **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**. In addition, sign and oral interpretation can be made available at the meeting, as well as an assistive listening device, is requested 10 calendar days before the meeting. Arrangements may be made by contacting the person listed under the heading **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

Issued in Washington, DC, on April 27, 2000.

Paul Dykeman,

Assistant Executive Director for Noise Certification Issues, Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee.

[FR Doc. 00-11326 Filed 5-4-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-M

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

RTCA Special Committee 196 Night Vision Goggle (NVG) Appliances and Equipment

Pursuant to section 10(a) (2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (P.L. 92-463, 5 U.S.C., Appendix 2), notice is hereby given for Special Committee (SC)-196 meeting to be held March 28-29, 2000, starting at 9:00 a.m. each day. The meeting will be held at RTCA Inc., 1140 Connecticut Avenue, NW., Suite 1020, Washington, DC 20036.

The agenda will include: May 31: (1) Welcome and Introductory Remarks; (2) Agenda Overview; (3) Review/Approval of Previous Minutes; (4) Action Item Status Review; (5) Overview SC-196 Working Group (WG) Activities: (a) WG-1, Operational Concept/Requirements; (b) WG-2, Night Vision Goggles Minimum Operational Performance Standards; (c) WG-3, Night Vision Imaging System Lighting; (d) WG-4, Maintenance/Serviceability; (e) WG-5, Training Guidelines/Considerations; (6) WG Breakout Sessions. June 1: (7) Night vision Imaging Systems Terminology Review; (8) Technical Standard Order Process; (9) RTCA Ballot Process; (10) Risk and System Safety Assessment Discussion; (11) Working Group Breakout Sessions. June 2: (12) Status of SC-196 WG Activities: (a) WG-1, Operational Concept/Requirements; (b) WG-2, Night Vision Goggles Minimum Operational Performance Standards; (c) WG-3, Night Vision Imaging System Lighting; (d) WG-4, Maintenance/Serviceability; (e) WG-5, Training Guidelines/Considerations; (13) Other Business; (14) Establish Agenda for Next Meeting; (15) Date and Location of Next Meeting; (16) Workgroup Breakout Sessions; (17) Working Group Chairpersons Meeting; (18) Closing.

Attendance is open to the interested public but limited to space availability. With the approval of the chairman, members of the public may present oral statements at the meeting. Persons wishing to present statements or obtain information should contact the RTCA Secretariat, 1140 Connecticut Avenue, NW., Suite 1020, Washington, DC, 20036; (202) 833-9339 (phone); (202) 833-9434 (fax); or <http://www.rtca.org> (web site). Members of the public may present a written statement to the committee at any time.

Issued in Washington, DC, on May 1, 2000.

Jane P. Caldwell,

Designated Official.

[FR Doc. 00-11327 Filed 5-4-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-M

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Highway Administration

[Docket No. FHWA-2000-7315]

Notice of Request for Renewal of Five Currently Approved Information Collections

AGENCY: Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

ACTION: Notice and request for public comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the requirements in section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice announces the intention of the FHWA to request the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to renew its clearances for the five currently approved FHWA collections of information identified below under Supplementary Information.

DATES: Comments must be submitted on or before July 5, 2000.

ADDRESSES: All signed, written comments should refer to the docket number that appears in the heading of this document and must be submitted to the Docket Clerk, U.S. DOT Dockets, Room PL-401, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington DC 20590-0001. Commenters should refer to the OMB control number to specify the information collection they are commenting on. All comments received will be available for examination at the above address between 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., et., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. Those desiring notification of receipt of comments must include a self-addressed, stamped envelope or postcard.

Public Comments Invited

Interested parties are invited to send comments regarding any aspect of these five information collections, including, but not limited to: (1) The necessity and utility of the information collection for the proper performance of the functions of the FHWA; (2) the accuracy of the estimated burdens; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the collected information; and (4) ways to minimize the collection burden without reducing the quality of the collected information. Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the requests for OMB's clearance of the following five collections of information.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: (1) *Title:* Federal-aid Highway Construction Equal Employment Opportunity.

OMB Control Number: 2125-0019 (Expiration Date: December 31, 2000). *Affected Public:* State highway agencies.

Abstract: Title 23, part 140(a), requires the FHWA to ensure equal opportunity regarding contractors' employment practices on Federal-aid highway projects. To carry out this requirement the contractors must submit to the State highway agencies an annual report providing employment