

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR**Bureau of Labor Statistics****Proposed Collection, Comment Request****ACTION:** Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Labor, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, conducts a pre-clearance consultation program to provide the general public and Federal agencies with an opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing collections of information in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA95) [44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)]. This program helps to ensure that requested data can be provided in the desired format, reporting burden (time and financial resources) is minimized, collection instruments are clearly understood, and the impact of collection requirements on respondents can be properly assessed. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) is soliciting comments concerning the proposed extension of the "Report on Occupational Employment." A copy of the proposed information collection request (ICR) can be obtained by contacting the individual listed below in the **ADDRESSES** section of this notice.

DATES: Written comments must be submitted to the office listed in the **ADDRESSES** section of this notice on or before April 13, 2004.

ADDRESSES: Send comments to Amy A. Hobby, BLS Clearance Officer, Division of Management Systems, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Room 4080, 2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE., Washington, DC 20212, telephone number (202) 691-7628 (this is not a toll free number).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Amy A. Hobby, BLS Clearance Officer, telephone number (202) 691-7628, (*See ADDRESSES* section).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**I. Background**

The Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey is a Federal/State establishment survey of wage and salary workers designed to produce data on current occupational employment and wages. OES survey data assist in the development of employment and training programs established by the 1998 Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and the Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1984.

The OES program operates a periodic mail survey of a sample of non-farm establishments conducted by all fifty

States, Guam, Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia, and the Virgin Islands. Over three-year periods, data on occupational employment and wages are collected by industry at the four- and five-digit North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) levels. The Department of Labor uses OES data in the administration of the Alien Labor Certification process under the Immigration Act of 1990.

II. Desired Focus of Comments

The Bureau of Labor Statistics is particularly interested in comments that:

- Evaluate whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility;
- Evaluate the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;
- Enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and
- Minimize the burden of the 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 submissions of responses.

III. Current Action

Office of Management and Budget clearance is being sought for the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) program. Occupational employment data obtained by the OES survey are used to develop information regarding current and projected employment needs and job opportunities. These data assist in the development of state vocational education plans. OES wage data provide a significant source of information to support a number of different Federal, State, and local efforts. The BLS plans to have email data collection in place in all States in 2004 or in early 2005. At this time, six volunteer States are testing the procedures and software of email data collection. OES is enhancing the State Survey Processing and Management (SPAM) computer system to improve the quality and timeliness of the data. OES will convert to the June 6, 2003, definitions of Metropolitan Statistical Areas by 2005.

Type of Review: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Agency: Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Title: Report on Occupational Employment.

OMB Number: 1220-0042.

Affected Public: Business or other for-profit; not-for-profit institutions; Federal Government; State, Local, or Tribal Government.

Total Respondents: 315,900.

Frequency: Semi-annually.

Total Responses: 315,900.

Average Time Per Response: 45 minutes.

Estimated Total Burden Hours: 236,925 hours.

Total Burden Cost (capital/startup): \$0.

Total Burden Cost (operating/maintenance): \$0.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for Office of Management and Budget approval of the information collection request; they also will become a matter of public record.

Signed at Washington, DC, this 30th day of January, 2004.

Cathy Kazanowski,

Chief, Division of Management Systems, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

[FR Doc. 04-3184 Filed 2-12-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4510-28-M

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR**Occupational Safety and Health Administration****Maritime Advisory Committee for Occupational Safety and Health; Notice of Meeting**

AGENCY: Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Labor.

ACTION: Maritime Advisory Committee for Occupational Safety and Health (MACOSH); notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The Maritime Advisory Committee for Occupational Safety and Health (MACOSH) was established to advise the Assistant Secretary of Labor for OSHA on issues relating to occupational safety and health in the maritime industries. The purpose of this **Federal Register** notice is to announce the March 2004 meeting of the committee.

DATES: The committee will meet on March 2 through 4, 2004. On March 2, the MACOSH work groups will meet from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m.; on March 3, the full committee will meet from 8:30 a.m. until 5 p.m.; on March 4, the full committee will meet from 8 a.m. until approximately 2 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The committee will meet at the Washington Court Hotel, 525 New Jersey Avenue, NW., Washington, DC

20001. On March 2 the work groups will meet in the Madison Room II and the Monticello Room. On March 3 and 4, the committee will meet in the Springwood I Room.

Mail comments, views, or statements in response to this notice to Jim Maddux, Acting Director, Office of Maritime Standards, OSHA, U.S. Department of Labor, Room N-3609, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20210. Phone: (202) 693-2086; fax: (202) 693-1663.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For general information about MACOSH and this meeting: Jim Maddux, Acting Director, Office of Maritime, OSHA, U.S. Department of Labor, room N-3609, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20210; phone: (202) 693-2086. For information about the submission of comments, and requests to speak: Vanessa L. Welch, Office of Maritime, OSHA, U.S. Department of Labor, Room N-3609, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20210; phone: (202) 693-2086. Individuals with disabilities wishing to attend the meeting should contact Vanessa L. Welch at (202) 693-2086 no later than February 23, 2004, to obtain appropriate accommodations.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: All MACOSH meetings are open to the public. All interested persons are invited to attend MACOSH at the times and places listed above. This meeting will include presentations and discussion of OSHA's standard and guidance activities, maritime enforcement, alliances and partnerships, outreach activities, and MACOSH work group reports. MACOSH has formed five work groups to deal with health issues, container safety, traffic safety, outreach, and safety culture.

Public Participation

Written data, views or comments for consideration by MACOSH on the various agenda items listed above may be submitted to Vanessa Welch at the address listed above. Submissions received by February 23, 2004, will be provided to committee members and will be included in the record of the meeting. Requests to make oral presentations to the Committee may be granted as time permits. Anyone wishing to make an oral presentation to the Committee on any of the agenda items listed above should notify Vanessa Welch by February 23, 2004. The request should state the amount of time desired, the capacity in which the person will appear, and a brief outline of the content of the presentation.

Authority: John L. Henshaw, Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health, directed the preparation of this notice under the authority granted by 6(b)(1) and 7(b) of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (29 U.S.C. 655, 656), the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App. 2), and 29 CFR part 1912.

Signed in Washington, DC, this 9th day of February, 2004.

John L. Henshaw,

Assistant Secretary of Labor.

[FR Doc. 04-3213 Filed 2-12-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4510-26-M

PENSION BENEFIT GUARANTY CORPORATION

Required Interest Rate Assumption For Determining Variable-Rate Premium; Interest Assumptions for Multiemployer Plan Valuations Following Mass Withdrawal

AGENCY: Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation.

ACTION: Notice of interest rates and assumptions.

SUMMARY: This notice informs the public of the interest rates and assumptions to be used under certain Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation regulations. These rates and assumptions are published elsewhere (or can be derived from rates published elsewhere), but are collected and published in this notice for the convenience of the public. Interest rates are also published on the PBGC's Web site (<http://www.pbgc.gov>).

The PBGC notes that the provisions of the Job Creation and Worker Assistance Act of 2002 that temporarily increased the required interest rate to be used to determine the PBGC's variable-rate premium to 100% (from 85%) of the annual yield on 30-year Treasury securities expired at the end of 2003. Thus, the required interest rate announced in this notice for plan years beginning in February 2004 has been determined under prior law. Legislation has been proposed that would further change the rules for determining the required interest rate. If such legislation is adopted, and the change affects the required interest rate for plan years beginning in February 2004, the PBGC will promptly publish a **Federal Register** notice with the new required interest rate and post the change on the PBGC's Web site.

DATES: The required interest rate for determining the variable-rate premium under part 4006 applies to premium payment years beginning in February 2004. The interest assumptions for performing multiemployer plan

valuations following mass withdrawal under part 4281 apply to valuation dates occurring in March 2004.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Harold J. Ashner, Assistant General Counsel, Office of the General Counsel, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, 1200 K Street, NW., Washington, DC 20005, 202-326-4024. (TTY/TDD users may call the Federal relay service toll-free at 1-800-877-8339 and ask to be connected to 202-326-4024.)

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Variable-Rate Premiums

Section 4006(a)(3)(E)(iii)(II) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA) and § 4006.4(b)(1) of the PBGC's regulation on Premium Rates (29 CFR part 4006) prescribe use of an assumed interest rate (the "required interest rate") in determining a single-employer plan's variable-rate premium. The required interest rate is the "applicable percentage" (currently 85 percent) of the annual yield on 30-year Treasury securities for the month preceding the beginning of the plan year for which premiums are being paid (the "premium payment year"). (Although the Treasury Department has ceased issuing 30-year securities, the Internal Revenue Service announces a surrogate yield figure each month—based on the 30-year Treasury bond maturing in February 2031—which the PBGC uses to determine the required interest rate.) The required interest rate to be used in determining variable-rate premiums for premium payment years beginning in February 2004 is 4.23 percent (*i.e.*, 85 percent of the 4.98 percent yield figure for January 2004).

The PBGC notes that the provisions of the Job Creation and Worker Assistance Act of 2002 that temporarily increased the required interest rate to be used to determine the PBGC's variable-rate premium to 100% (from 85%) of the annual yield on 30-year Treasury securities expired at the end of 2003. Thus, the required interest rate announced in this notice for plan years beginning in February 2004 has been determined under prior law. Legislation has been proposed that would further change the rules for determining the required interest rate. If such legislation is adopted, and the change affects the required interest rate for plan years beginning in February 2004, the PBGC will promptly publish a **Federal Register** notice with the new required interest rate and post the change on the PBGC's Web site.

The following table lists the required interest rates to be used in determining variable-rate premiums for premium