

A notice was published in the Federal Register on August 23, 1996 (61 FR 43474), extending the time to file comments to the tentative partial final decision regulating the handling of milk in the Carolina, Southeast, Tennessee Valley and Louisville-Lexington-Evansville marketing areas from August 17 to October 16, 1996. Notice is hereby given that the time for filing comments to the tentative partial decision regulating the handling of milk in the aforesaid marketing areas is hereby further extended from October 16 to November 30, 1996.

The initial comment period was extended, from August 16 to October 17, 1996, at the request of Carolina Virginia Milk Producers Association, to allow interested persons to comment more accurately on the amendments. The cooperative has asked that the comment period be extended an additional forty-five (45) days to November 30, 1996, to allow more observation time to evaluate the amendments. The cooperative stated that the amendments went into effect on August 10, 1996, and it has only observed the amendments for one Federal order pool.

It should be noted that any finalization of the tentative partial decision, with or without modification, may only be based on the factual record received in evidence at the oral hearing on May 15-16, 1996. To the extent that any comments will be based on subsequent factual occurrences, the Secretary would have to reopen the oral hearing if he believed consideration of such subsequent facts to be warranted. Nonetheless, the Secretary welcomes full participation by all interested persons in the rulemaking process. Thus, the comment period is further extended from October 16 to November 30, 1996.

This notice is issued pursuant to the provisions of the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937, as amended (7 U.S.C. 601-674), and the applicable rules of practice and procedure governing the formulation of marketing agreements and marketing orders (7 CFR Part 900).

List of Subjects in 7 CFR Parts 1005, 1007, 1011, and 1046

Milk marketing orders.

Dated: October 18, 1996.

Lon Hatamiya,  
Administrator.

[FR Doc. 96-27458 Filed 10-24-96; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

### 10 CFR Part 708

#### Contractor Employee Protection Program

**AGENCY:** Department of Energy.

**ACTION:** Notice of inquiry.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Energy's contractor employee protection program provides recourse to DOE contractor employees who believe that they have been retaliated against for such activities as disclosing information regarding mismanagement of environmental, safety, health, and other matters, for participating in Congressional proceedings, or for refusing to engage in illegal or dangerous activities. Under this program, the Department has been investigating and adjudicating cases for the past four and one half years. As part of Secretary Hazel R. O'Leary's policy of "zero tolerance for reprisal" against employees who raise workplace concerns, the DOE invites members of the public, particularly those persons with experience under this process (e.g., claimants, contractors, attorneys), to recommend any regulatory changes that might help to streamline the process and make it more responsive to the needs of both claimants and contractors.

**DATES:** Comments are due on December 24, 1996.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments (5 copies) may be submitted to: William A. Lewis, Jr., Director, Office of Employee Concerns, Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20585, Att: Contractor Employee Protection NOI.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Jeffrey C. Crater, Office of the Under Secretary, Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20585, 202-586-6479.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Pursuant to the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 (Act) [42 U.S.C. 2011 *et seq.*] and the Department of Energy Organization Act, the Department of Energy (Department) carries out numerous programs, including research, development, production, and environmental cleanup. These programs are carried out by contractors under the supervision of the Department at various Department-owned and/or operated facilities around the United States.

As part of a comprehensive set of health and safety policies, the Department has promulgated a regulation on contractor employee protection, which is codified at 10 CFR part 708. This regulation, promulgated

in 1992, 57 FR 7541 (March 3, 1992), provides a remedy for a contractor employee who has been discriminated against as a result of having disclosed information about waste, fraud, abuse, or mismanagement of health, safety, or environmental related matters, or about violations of law or regulation, for participating in Congressional proceedings, or for having in good faith refused to engage in illegal or dangerous activities. Since its inception, the Department has received comments and suggestions on how to improve the contractor employee protection program. In November 1995, the Office of Contractor Employee Protection was transferred to the Office of Inspector General. In response to congressional directive, the Office of Contractor Employee Protection was disestablished through a reorganization effective October 1, 1996. The Office of Inspector General will continue to investigate allegations of retaliation against contractor employees covered by Part 708.

Accordingly, the Department plans to amend part 708 to enhance its effectiveness and to address the reorganization of the contractor employee protection program. Although the Department has consulted with various stakeholders about this subject, the Department hereby invites public input from any interested person who thinks that part 708 should be revised and has suggestions for particular amendments. It will be followed eventually by a notice of proposed rulemaking that will give interested members of the public an opportunity to comment on the Department's formal proposal to amend part 708.

Issued in Washington, D.C., on October 11, 1996.

William A. Lewis, Jr.,

Director, Office of Employee Concerns.

[FR Doc. 96-27418 Filed 10-24-96; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### 14 CFR Chapter I

[Summary Notice No. PR-96-7]

#### Petition for Rulemaking; Summary of Petitions Received; Dispositions of Petitions Issued

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of petitions for rulemaking received and of dispositions of prior petitions.

**SUMMARY:** Pursuant to FAA's rulemaking provisions governing the application, processing, and disposition of petitions for rulemaking (14 CFR Part 11), this notice contains a summary of certain petitions requesting the initiation of rulemaking procedures for the amendment of specified provisions of the Federal Aviation Regulations and of denials or withdrawals of certain petitions previously received. The purpose of this notice is to improve the public's awareness of, and participation in, this aspect of FAA's regulatory activities. Neither publication of this notice nor the inclusion or omission of information in the summary is intended to affect the legal status of any petition or its final disposition.

**DATES:** Comments on petitions received must identify the petition docket number involved and must be received December 24, 1996.

**ADDRESSES:** Send comments on any petition in triplicate to: Federal Aviation Administration, Office of the Chief Counsel, Attn: Rules Docket No. \_\_\_\_\_, 800 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20591. Comments may also be sent electronically to the following internet address: nprmcmtsfaa.dot.gov.

The petition, any comments received, and copy of any final disposition are filed in the assigned regulatory docket and are available for examination in the Rules Docket (AGC-200), Room 915G, FAA Headquarters Building (FOB 10A), 800 Independence Ave., SW., Washington, DC 20591; telephone (202) 267-3132.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Fred Haynes, (202) 267-3939, or Marisa Mullen, (202) 267-9681, Office of Rulemaking (ARM-1), Federal Aviation Administration, 800 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20591.

This notice is published pursuant to paragraphs (b) and (f) of § 11.27 of Part 11 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR Part 11).

Issued in Washington, DC on October 22, 1996.

Donald P. Byrne,  
Assistant Chief Counsel for Regulations.

Petitions for Rulemaking

*Docket No.:* 28678

*Petitioner:* Independent Pilots Association

*Regulations Affected:* 14 CFR 121.356

*Description of Rulechange Sought:* To require Traffic Alert and collision Avoidance System II on all transport category airplanes flown in all-cargo part 121 operations, not just those airplanes with more than 30 passenger seats. The petitioner feels

that such change would significantly enhance aviation safety by reducing the risk of cargo planes colliding with each other and with passenger aircraft operating in the same airspace.

*Docket No.:* 28712

*Petitioner:* Independent Pilots Association

*Regulations Affected:* 14 CFR 25.810 and 121.310

*Description of Rulechange Sought:* To require automatically deployable exit slides or their equivalent at the crew entry door for transport category airplanes manufactured for or flown in all-cargo operations, and to eliminate the acceptability of providing only ropes at any emergency exit. The petitioner feels that such change would provide a level of safety for cargo-only flightcrew that is consistent with that available for passenger, supernumeraries, and flight crew on passenger carrying aircraft.

[FR Doc. 96-27492 Filed 10-24-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-M

#### 14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 96-SW-17-AD]

#### Airworthiness Directives; Bell Helicopter Textron, Inc. Model 412 Helicopters

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

**SUMMARY:** This document proposes the superseding of an existing priority letter airworthiness directive (AD), applicable to certain Bell Helicopter Textron, Inc. Model 412 helicopters, that currently requires a daily inspection of certain swashplate support assemblies. It also requires a reduction in  $V_{NE}$ , and installation of appropriate airspeed indicator markings and a placard. This action would require the same actions required by the existing Priority Letter AD, but would restrict the applicability to the Model 412 helicopters with a certain steel main rotor control swashplate support assembly (steel swashplate support assembly) installed. This AD also proposes to allow the installation of an improved main rotor control swashplate assembly that terminates the requirements of this AD. This proposal is prompted by reported cracks and in-service failures of certain steel swashplate support assemblies. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent failure of the steel swashplate support assembly that could result in loss of main rotor control

and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter.

**DATES:** Comments must be received by December 24, 1996.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Office of the Assistant Chief Counsel, Attention: Rules Docket No. 96-SW-17-AD, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Room 663, Fort Worth, Texas 76137. Comments may be inspected at this location between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

The service information referenced in the proposed rule may be obtained from Bell Helicopter Textron, Inc., P.O. Box 482, Fort Worth, Texas 76101. This information may be examined at the FAA, Office of the Assistant Chief Counsel, 2601 Meacham Blvd., Room 663, Fort Worth, Texas.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. Charles Harrison, Federal Aviation Administration, Southwest Region, Rotorcraft Certification Office, ASW-170, Fort Worth, Texas 76193-0170, telephone (817) 222-5447, FAX (817) 222-5959.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

Interested persons are invited to participate in the making of the proposed rule by submitting such written data, views, or arguments as they may desire. Communications should identify the Rules Docket number and be submitted in triplicate to the address specified above. All communications received on or before the closing date for comments, specified above, will be considered before taking action on the proposed rule. The proposals contained in this notice may be changed in light of the comments received.

Comments are specifically invited on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of the proposed rule. All comments submitted will be available, both before and after the closing date for comments, in the Rules Docket for examination by interested persons. A report summarizing each FAA-public contact concerned with the substance of this proposal will be filed in the Rules Docket.

Commenters wishing the FAA to acknowledge receipt of their comments submitted in response to this notice must submit a self-addressed, stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: "Comments to Docket No. 96-SW-17-AD." The postcard will be date stamped and returned to the commenter.