

in Executive Order 12851 of June 11, 1993.

Dated: August 6, 1997.

Thomas E. McNamara,

Assistant Secretary of State for Political-Military Affairs.

[FR Doc. 97-22077 Filed 8-19-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4710-25-M

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

[Public Notice 2591]

Bureau of Political-Military Affairs

AGENCY: Department of State.

ACTION: Determination Under the Arms Export Control Act.

Pursuant to Section 654(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, notice hereby is given that the Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security Affairs has made a determination pursuant to Section 73 of the Arms Export Control Act and has concluded that publication of the determination would be harmful to the national security of the United States.

Dated: August 6, 1997.

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[FR Doc. 97-22078 Filed 8-19-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4710-25-M

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

[Public Notice No. 2590]

Bureau of Oceans, Environment and Science; Public Meeting on an International Agreement on Prior Informed Consent for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides

SUMMARY: This public meeting will provide an overview of ongoing negotiations through the U.N. Environment Program and the Food and Agriculture Organization to develop a binding agreement on the application of a prior informed consent procedure for certain hazardous chemicals and pesticides. The meeting will take place from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. on September 24 in Room 6909, State Department, 2201 C Street Northwest, Washington, D.C. Attendees should use the entrance at C Street, and should provide Eunice Mourning (202-647-9266) with their date of birth and social security number by noon on September 23. Attendees should bring picture identification.

For further information, please contact Mr. Trigg Talley, U.S. Department of State, OES/ENV, Room

4325, 2201 C Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20520. Phone 202-647-5808, fax 202-647-5947.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The United States, through an interagency working group chaired by the State Department, is involved in negotiations through the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the U.N. Environment Programme (UNEP) on an agreement that would set into place a procedure for prior informed consent (PIC) for trade in certain especially hazardous chemicals and pesticides. Three negotiating sessions have taken place thus far, with two more sessions planned.

The agreement would make binding a currently voluntary scheme contained in the FAO International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides and the UNEP London Guidelines for the Exchange of Information on Chemicals in International Trade. The PIC procedure was developed in recognition of the fact that many countries in the developing world have inadequate capacity to generate information necessary to make decisions regarding how to effectively manage risks of especially hazardous chemicals, and in certain cases to ensure adequate compliance with risk management decisions. The procedure assists countries in learning more about the characteristics of certain especially hazardous chemicals that may be shipped to them, initiates a decision making process on the future import of these chemicals by the countries themselves, and facilitates the dissemination of this decision to other countries.

The voluntary PIC regime has been in place since 1991. 151 countries participate in the current scheme, which is jointly administered by the Plant Protection Division of FAO (for pesticides) and the UNEP International Registry for Potentially Toxic Chemicals (for other chemicals). Most major industrial chemical and pesticide associations support and participate in the system. Under the procedure, each country establishes a designated national authority to administer the procedure. In the United States, the Environmental Protection Agency's Assistant Administrator for Pesticides, Prevention and Toxic Substances acts as the designated national authority.

Chemicals eligible for the PIC procedure include those which have been banned or severely restricted by participating countries, as well as certain acutely hazardous pesticides which—even though they are not eligible on the basis of bans or severe

restrictions—are likely to pose particular problems in developing countries lacking the ability to impose the kinds of rigorous handling requirements available in developed countries.

Under the PIC procedure, countries notify the UNEP/FAO secretariat of domestic control actions to ban or severely restrict chemicals. A UNEP/FAO Group of Experts meets annually to prioritize among those chemicals eligible for the PIC procedure, and gives direction regarding the development of Decision Guidance Documents (DGDs) to provide information relating to each of the chemicals to be included in the procedure. DGDs describe the chemical and associated toxicological properties, as well as government control actions and the reasons for them. Once approved, the Decision Guidance Documents are circulated to participating countries for decision. In their decision, countries indicate whether they will permit use and importation, prohibit use and importation, or permit importation only under specified conditions. The response may be final, or countries may provide an interim response. Importing countries are expected to ensure that their decisions are applied to all sources of import and to domestic production for domestic use; exporting countries are expected to ensure that exports do not occur contrary to the decisions of importing countries. So far, 16 chemicals have been included in the procedure, and DGDs for a number of others are under development.

In order to enhance participation in the system, governments agreed in 1994 through FAO and UNEP to undertake negotiations to replace the voluntary process with a treaty-based regime. Negotiations have been underway since 1996, with three negotiating sessions occurring so far. Two more sessions are planned, with one session October 20-24, 1997, and one for January 1998. A signing conference is planned for sometime next spring.

The current negotiating text, as well as more complete information on the voluntary procedure and the negotiations generally, is located on the internet on the PIC Home Page (<http://irptc.unep.ch/pic/h2.html>), which can also be accessed through the UNEP Home Page (www.unep.ch).

The United States has advocated that the binding agreement reflect the scope and intent of the voluntary prior informed consent procedure. We have advocated greater formality in the procedures for consideration of additional chemicals to the list, reflecting the more formal nature of the

agreement. The Administration expects that the Agreement will be a treaty, which will be submitted to the Senate for advice and consent necessary for ratification, and that certain changes would need to be made to Section 12 of the Toxic Substances Control Act and Section 17 of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act to meet an obligation to ensure that exports of PIC-listed chemicals do not occur contrary to decisions regarding those chemicals by importing countries.

In the negotiations, other countries have made proposals which would make eligible a somewhat broader range of chemicals than under the voluntary guidelines, and which would include information exchange provisions which, if accepted, could require other changes to TSCA and FIFRA, as well as the Federal Hazardous Substances Act. In particular, there are proposals to include provisions requiring notifications for exports of chemicals which are banned or severely restricted under national law (Article 11 of the proposed text), as well as certain proposals regarding labeling and material safety data sheets for chemicals (Article 12 of the proposed text).

The Department of State is issuing this notice to help ensure that potentially affected parties are aware of and knowledgeable about the parameters of these negotiations. In the future, we will be contacting interested organizations about planned briefings by mail or fax. Those organizations which cannot attend the meeting, but wish to remain informed, should provide Mr. Trigg Talley of the Department of State with their address, telephone and fax numbers.

Dated: August 14, 1997.

Trigg Talley,

Foreign Affairs Officer, Office of Environmental Policy.

[FR Doc. 97-22025 Filed 8-19-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4710-09-M

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Internal Revenue Service

Proposed Collection; Comment Request for Form 8554

AGENCY: Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Treasury.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Department of the Treasury, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and

other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13 (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)). Currently, the IRS is soliciting comments concerning Form 8554, Application for Renewal of Enrollment to Practice Before the Internal Revenue Service.

DATES: Written comments should be received on or before October 20, 1997 to be assured of consideration.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to Garrick R. Shear, Internal Revenue Service, room 5571, 1111 Constitution Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20224.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection should be directed to Carol Savage, (202) 622-3945, Internal Revenue Service, room 5569, 1111 Constitution Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20224.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Application for Renewal of Enrollment to Practice Before the Internal Revenue Service.

OMB Number: 1545-0946.

Form Number: Form 8554.

Abstract: The information obtained from Form 8554 relates to the approval of continuing professional education programs and the renewal of the enrollment status for those individuals admitted (enrolled) to practice before the Internal Revenue Service. The information will be used by the Director of Practice to determine the qualifications of individuals who apply for renewal of enrollment.

Current Actions: Changes to Form 8554.

Line 5a was rewritten to clarify the circumstances for earning continuing professional education credits by passing the Special Enrollment Examination. Also, Item D was deleted because the information is no longer needed.

Affected Public: Individuals or households.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 39,500.

Estimated Time Per Respondent: 1 hour, 12 minutes.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 47,400.

The following paragraph applies to all of the collections of information covered by this notice:

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information

unless the collection of information displays a valid OMB control number.

Books or records relating to a collection of information must be retained as long as their contents may become material in the administration of any internal revenue law. Generally, tax returns and tax return information are confidential, as required by 26 U.S.C. 6103.

REQUEST FOR COMMENTS: Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval. All comments will become a matter of public record. Comments are invited on: (a) whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the collection 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; and (e) estimates of capital or start-up costs and costs of operation, maintenance, and purchase of services to provide information.

Approved: August 13, 1997.

Garrick R. Shear,

IRS Reports Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. 97-22018 Filed 8-19-97; 8:45am]

BILLING CODE 4830-01-U

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Privacy Act of 1974; Computer Matching Program Between the Department of Veterans Affairs and the United States Postal Service

AGENCY: Department of Veterans Affairs.

ACTION: Notice of computer matching program.

Notice is hereby given that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the United States Postal Service (USPS) propose to conduct a computer matching program. The purpose of the program is to identify and locate USPS employees who owe delinquent debts to the Federal Government as a result of their participation in benefit programs