

Participants

Any U.S.-Flag Vessel Operator organized under the laws of a state of the United States, or the District of Columbia, who is able and willing to commit militarily useful sealift assets and assume the related consequential risks of commercial disruption, may be eligible to participate in the VISA program. While vessel brokers and agents play an important role as a conduit to locate and secure appropriate vessels for the carriage of DoD cargo, they may not become participants in the VISA program due to lack of requisite vessel ownership or operation. Brokers and agents should encourage the carriers they represent, however, to join the program.

Commitment

Any U.S.-Flag Vessel Operator desiring to receive preference in the award of DoD peacetime contracts must commit no less than 50 percent of its total U.S.-flag militarily useful capacity in Stage III of the VISA program. A participant desiring to bid on DoD peacetime contracts will be required to provide commitment levels to meet DoD-established Stage I and/or II minimum percentages of the participant's military useful, oceangoing U.S.-flag fleet capacity on an annual basis. The United States Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM) and MARAD will coordinate to ensure that the amount of sealift assets committed to Stages I and II will not have an adverse national economic impact. To minimize domestic commercial disruption, participants operating vessels in the domestic Jones Act trades are not required to commit the capacity of those U.S. domestic trading vessels to VISA Stages I and II. Overall VISA commitment requirements are based on annual enrollment.

In order to protect a U.S.-Flag Vessel Operator's market share during contingency activation, VISA allows participants to join with other vessel operators in Carrier Coordination Agreements (CCA's) to satisfy commercial or DoD requirements. VISA provides a defense against antitrust laws in accordance with section 708 of the Defense Production Act of 1950. CCA's must be submitted to MARAD for coordination with the Department of Justice for approval, before they can be utilized.

Compensation

In addition to receiving priority in the award of DoD peacetime cargo, compensation during contingency activation provides multiple

methodologies that each participant may choose during enrollment which are commensurate with risk and service provided. The rate methodology determinations for liners and charters are undergoing development, but will be available for use at the commencement of the FY 1999 VISA participation period.

Enrollment

Immediately following publication of this Notice, current VISA participants will receive a re-enrollment package from the Director, Office of Sealift Support, which will also include VISA Stage III capacity calculation worksheets to review and approve. These documents must be returned to MARAD no later than August 31, 1998, to allow processing time for the October 1, 1998, commencement date of the FY 1999 VISA participation period.

New applicants may enroll by obtaining a VISA application package from the Director, Office of Sealift Support. The application package will include the February 13, 1997 VISA Agreement, instructions for completing and submitting the application, blank VISA Application forms, and a request for information regarding the operations and U.S. citizenship of the applicant in order to assist MARAD in making a determination of the applicant's eligibility. An applicant must be able to provide an affidavit that demonstrates that it is at least a citizen of the United States, for purposes of vessel documentation, within the meaning of 46 U.S.C., section 12102, and that it owns, or bareboat charters and controls, oceangoing, militarily useful vessel(s) for purposes of committing assets to VISA. New VISA applicants must return completed FY 1999 VISA application documents to MARAD not later than August 31, 1998. Once MARAD has reviewed the application and determined VISA eligibility, MARAD will sign the VISA application document which completes the eligibility phase of the VISA enrollment process; however, the applicant is not yet a VISA participant, due to the remaining requirement to enter into contingency contracts with DoD.

For the FY 1999 VISA open season, and prior to being re-enrolled in VISA, all current VISA participants and eligible new VISA applicants will be required to execute a joint Voluntary Enrollment Contract (VEC) with the DoD [Military Traffic Management Command (MTMC) and Military Sealift Command (MSC)] which will specify the participant's Stage III commitment for FY 1999. Once the VEC is completed, the applicant completes the DoD

contracting process by executing a Drytime Contingency Contract (DCC) with MSC (for Charter Operators) and/or as applicable, a VISA Contingency Contract (VCC) with MTMC (for Liner Operators). Once the DoD contingency contract(s) are completed, the Maritime Administrator will confirm the participant's enrollment/re-enrollment by letter agreement, with a copy to all appropriate parties.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND APPLICATIONS CONTACT: Raymond Barberesi, Director, Office of Sealift Support, U.S. Maritime Administration, Room 7307, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590. Telephone (202) 366-2323. Fax (202) 493-2180. The full text of this **Federal Register** Notice and other information about the VISA can be found on MARAD's Internet Web Page at <http://www.marad.dot.gov>.

By Order of the Maritime Administrator.

Dated: August 13, 1998.

Joel C. Richard,

Secretary, Maritime Administration.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Internal Revenue Service

Proposed Collection; Comment Request for Form 3911

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 3911, Taxpayer Statement Regarding Refund.

DATES: Written comments should be received on or before October 16, 1998 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 form should be directed to Carol Savage, (202) 622-3945, Internal Revenue Service, room 5569, 1111

Constitution Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20224.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Taxpayer Statement Regarding Refund.

OMB Number: 1545-1384.

Form Number: Form 3911.

Abstract: Form 3911 is used by taxpayers to notify the IRS that a tax refund previously claimed has not been received. The form is normally completed by the taxpayer as the result of an inquiry in which the taxpayer claims non-receipt, loss, theft or destruction of a tax refund, and IRS research shows that the refund has been issued. The information on the form is needed to clearly identify the refund to be traced.

Current Actions: There are no changes being made to the form at this time.

Type of Review: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Affected Public: Individuals or households, business or other for-profit organizations, and not-for-profit institutions.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 520,000.

Estimated Time Per Respondent: 5 minutes.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 43,160.

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 11, 1998.

Garrick R. Shear,

IRS Reports Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. 98-21953 Filed 8-14-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Internal Revenue Service

Proposed Collection; Comment Request for Form 4996

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 4996, Electronic/Magnetic Media Filing Transmittal for Wage and Withholding Tax Returns.

DATES: Written comments should be received on or before October 16, 1998 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 form should be directed to Carol Savage, (202) 622-3945, Internal Revenue Service, room 5569, 1111 Constitution Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20224.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Electronic/Magnetic Media Filing Transmittal for Wage and Withholding Tax Returns.

OMB Number: 1545-1463.

Form Number: Form 4996.

Abstract: Form 4996 is required in accordance with regulation section 31.6011(a)-8 as part of a "composite return" when employment tax returns are submitted electronically or magnetic media. The composite return consists of Form 4996, which identifies the specific

transmission or magnetic tape and the type of tax returns being submitted, and an attachment of magnetic tape or approved media. The reporting agent signs Form 4996 and this serves as the legal signature for each return submitted.

Current Actions: There are no changes being made to the form at this time.

Type of Review: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Affected Public: Businesses or other for-profit organizations.

Estimated Number of Responses: 1,700.

Estimated Time Per Response: 6 minutes.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 170.

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 11, 1998.

Garrick R. Shear,

IRS Reports Clearance Officer.

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