

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 proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Proposed Renewal Project: The current National Science Foundation Applicant Survey has been in use for 3 years. Data were collected from applicant pools to examine the racial/sexual/disability composition and to determine the source of information about NSF vacancies.

Use of the information: Analysis of the applicant pools is necessary to determine if NSF's targeted recruitment efforts are reaching groups that are underrepresented in the Agency's workforce and/or to defend the Foundation's practices in discrimination cases.

Burden on the public: The Foundation estimates about 5,000 responses annually at 3 minutes per response; this computes to approximately 250 hours annually.

Please send comments to Gail A. McHenry, Reports Clearance Officer, National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 245, Arlington, Virginia 22230 or send email to gmchenry@nsf.gov. Written comments should be received within 60 days of the date of this notice.

Dated: April 11, 1997.

Gail A. McHenry,
Reports Clearance Officer.

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NATIONAL SKILL STANDARDS BOARD

Request for Comments; Notice of Public Hearing

The National Skill Standards Board (NSSB) announces a public hearing to stimulate public dialogue on key issues relevant to the decision-making of the NSSB, and notifies the public of the date, location, and time of the hearing. This public hearing will solicit the public's views on the NSSB's proposed criteria necessary to receive NSSB recognition as a Voluntary Partnership, the entity that will develop skill standards systems in accordance with the 1994 National Skill Standards Act. The NSSB's proposed criteria cover: roles and governance of a Voluntary

Partnership' voting leadership; and diversity requirements.

DATE AND ADDRESS:

Hearing Date and Address

Monday, May 12, 1997, Hyatt Regency on Capitol Hill, 400 New Jersey Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20001, (202) 737-1234.

Comment Date for Public Hearing

Comments and notices of intent to present oral statements at the hearing must be received 5 business days before the hearing by the NSSB Public Hearing Coordinator at the address below.

Written comments may be submitted through the hearing date, May 12, to the National Skill Standards Board office. The requirements for the comments are set forth in the "Additional Information" section below.

TO SUBMIT WRITTEN TESTIMONY OR FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: NSSB Public Hearing Coordinator, National Skill Standards Board, 1441 L Street, NW, Suite 9000, Washington, DC 20005-3512, (202)-254-8628 (voice) (202)-254-8646 (fax).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Form of Public Comment

The hearing will begin at 9:00 a.m. and adjourn at 3:00 p.m. To assist the NSSB in scheduling speakers, the written notice of intent to present oral comments should include the following information: 1) the name, address, and telephone number of each person to appear; 2) title and affiliation; and 3) the specific questions, issues or concerns that will be addressed.

Individuals who do not register in advance will be permitted to register and speak, if time permits, in order of registration. Speakers should limit their oral remarks to no more than 10 minutes. Although it is anticipated that all persons desiring to speak will have an opportunity to do so, time limits may not allow this to occur. However, all written statements will be accepted and incorporated into the public record. The proceedings will be audit-taped and transcribed.

Meeting Procedure

Members of the National Skill Standards Board will comprise the hearing panel. A designated member of the NSSB will preside at the hearing. The Presiding Board Member will:

- (1) Regulate the course of the meeting, including the order of appearance of persons presenting oral statements;
- (2) Dispose of procedural matters; and

- (3) Limit the presentations to matters pertinent to the issues raised in this notice.

Background: National Skill Standards Board

The National Skill Standards Board was created by The National Skill Standards Act of 1994 (108 Stat 192,20 U.S.C. 5933), signed into law by President Clinton on March 31, 1994. The Board's purpose as stated in the Act is "to serve as a catalyst in stimulating the development and adoption of a voluntary national system of skill standards and of assessment and certification of attainment of skill standards: (1) that will serve as a cornerstone of the national strategy to enhance workforce skills; (2) that will result in increased productivity, economic growth, and American economic competitiveness; and (3) that can be used consistent with civil rights laws" by the stakeholders enumerated in the Act: the nation, industries, employers, labor organizations, workers, students, entry-level workers, training providers, educators and government.

This hearing is one in a series of activities conducted by the NSSB to engage in extensive public consultation as it deliberates the creation of a national voluntary skill standards system. At prior public hearings held in 1996 at numerous locations throughout the country, the Board gathered input from employers, professional associations, trade associations, unions, educators, parents, community organizations, state government agencies, and others. Their views provided a framework for the Board's development of a voluntary system of skill standards. The National Skill Standards Board will continue to develop its policies and approaches by sharing its preliminary thinking with the public before the Board's final adoption of policies.

The Board also published in the December 19, 1996 **Federal Register** its Proposal to Establish a Voluntary National Skill Standard System and requested comments from the public. The Proposal described the grouping of jobs for the purpose of creating skill standards, as required by the National Skill Standards Act, and the framework to guide the establishment of a skill standards system.

Background: Voluntary Partnerships

To create these skill standards, the enabling legislation charges the NSSB with the encouragement of the establishment of voluntary Partnerships within each cluster. These Voluntary Partnerships will establish the

standards, subject to NSSB approval, for basic skill certificates. They will also review and endorse the standards for specialty certificates established for more narrowly defined occupations within the occupational cluster by groups other than the voluntary Partnership.

The enabling legislation requires representation of all key stakeholders groups as described herein:

Excerpted from the National Skill Standards Act of 1994

Establishment of Voluntary Partnerships to Develop Standards.—

(1) In General—For each of the occupational clusters identified pursuant to subsection (a), the National Board shall encourage and facilitate the establishment of voluntary partnerships to develop a skill standards system in accordance with subsection (d).

(2) Representatives—Such voluntary partnerships shall include the full and balanced participation of—

(A)(i) representatives of business (including representatives of large employers and representatives of small employers) who have expertise in the area of workforce skill requirements, and who are recommended by national business organizations or trade associations representing employers in the occupation or industry for which a standard is being developed; and

(ii) representatives of trade associations that have received grants from the Department of Labor or the Department of Education to establish skill standards prior to the date of enactment of this title;

(B) employee representatives who have expertise in the area of workforce skill requirements and who shall be—

(i) individuals recommended by recognized national labor organizations representing employees in the occupation or industry for which a standard is being developed; and

(ii) such other individuals who are nonmanagerial employees with significant experience and tenure in such occupation or industry as are appropriate given the nature and structure of employment in the occupation or industry;

(C) representatives of—

(i) educational institutions;

(ii) community-based organizations;

(iii) State and local agencies with administrative control or direction over education, vocational-technical education, or employment and training;

(iv) other policy development organizations with expertise in the area of workforce skill requirements; and

(v) non-governmental organizations with a demonstrated history of

successfully protecting the rights of racial, ethnic, or religious minorities, women, individuals with disabilities, or older persons; and

(D) individuals with expertise in measurement and assessment, including relevant experience in designing unbiased assessments and performance-based assessments.

(3) Experts—The partnerships described in paragraph (1) may also include such other individuals who are independent, qualified experts in their fields.

The NSSB Proposed Criteria in Addition to Statutory Criteria Necessary for Recognition as a Voluntary Partnership

The NSSB proposes that there will be two levels of participation in the Voluntary Partnerships; (1) general membership; and (2) voting membership.

General membership will be open to all individuals interested in participating in the discussion and receiving communications about the development of a voluntary skill standards system for the cluster. Representatives from the trade associations that have received grants from the Department of Labor or the Department of Education to establish skill standards prior to the date of enactment of the National Skill Standards Act of 1994 are specifically invited to participate at this level, and may participate in the voting membership as well.

Voting membership will be determined by the general membership through a democratic process. The voting membership will make decisions regarding the cluster's skill standards systems. The voting leadership must reflect, to the extent possible, the criteria defined below.

The NSSB mission statement indicates that "voluntary skill standards will be developed by industry in full partnership with education, labor and community stakeholders." The NSSB expects that, in keeping with its mission statement, the Voluntary Partnerships will demonstrate employer leadership, but will make every effort to include equal numbers from each of the following three broadly defined groups of stakeholders in the voting leadership:

(1) Employer representatives from large, medium, small companies, public and private employers, and trade associations.

(2) Worker representatives from recognized national labor organizations and expert workers who are representatives of employee associations.

(3) Community representatives from education and training institutions, community-based organizations, relevant state and local agencies, other policy development organizations with expertise in the area of workforce skill requirements, individuals with expertise in measurement and assessment, and non-governmental organizations with a demonstrated history of successfully protecting the rights of women, individuals with disabilities, older persons, and racial, ethnic or religious minorities.

Specific representation from community members and institutions will be determined as is logical for the cluster, e.g. if training is primarily delivered in community and career colleges, then representation should include individuals from that community.

The voting members of the Voluntary Partnerships shall also, to the extent feasible, be geographically representative of the United States and reflect the racial, ethnic, and gender diversity of the United States.

A copy of the authorizing legislation will be available at the hearing. Interested parties may access a copy on the National Skill Standards Board web site, www.nssb.org or call (202) 254-8628 to request a copy.

Signed at Washington, DC, this 14th day of April, 1997.

Edie West,

Executive Director, National Skill Standards Board.

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Abnormal Occurrence Reports: Implementation of Section 208 Energy Reorganization Act of 1974; Revision to Policy Statement

AGENCY: Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

ACTION: Revise policy statement.

SUMMARY: This policy statement presents the revised criteria the Commission will use in submitting the annual abnormal occurrence (AO) reports to Congress and the public in a timely manner as stated in Section 208 of the Energy Reorganization Act of 1974, as amended. The AO policy statement incorporates minor changes to implement the Commission's direction to develop conforming changes as necessary and revise criteria III., "For Fuel Cycle Licensees," to include facilities that are not licensed but are