

Registered apprenticeship is a time-tested training method, involving hands-on instruction by experienced workers, a jobsite mentor, and related classroom instruction, all within a framework that identifies needed skills and provides recognized credentials. Apprenticeship programs are financed, sponsored, and implemented primarily by private sector employers and their workers, thus presenting minimal costs to the taxpayer. Programs may be sponsored unilaterally by employers or jointly by employers and unions. There are currently about 28,800 programs with an estimated 413,000 registered apprentices in the U.S.

DOL in accordance with the 1937 National Apprenticeship Act, is responsible for promoting the apprenticeship concept, assisting interested employers in developing apprenticeship programs, recognizing State Apprenticeship Agencies and Councils, registering apprenticeship programs and agreements, certifying registered apprentices, and monitoring registered programs and apprentices. In the last five years, the Department has focused on expanding use of registered apprenticeship in high-growth industries and new occupations. These promotional efforts have been an important element in the broader DOL initiative to create a demand-driven workforce system responsive to employer needs and successful in developing worker talent.

The proposed survey will be conducted by telephone and Internet with about 1,400 sponsors, of whom 80 percent, or 1,100 individuals, are expected to respond. A random stratified sample will be used to ensure broad representation nationally and to permit detailed information on the views of sponsors in clusters of industries, including those identified in the President's High Growth Job Training (HGJT) Initiative. Examples of newer industries identified in this initiative are Aerospace, Geospatial, and Health Services, among many others.

The information from the survey will provide a thorough and systematic understanding of sponsors' views, identifying what they value, dislike, or would like changed about registered apprenticeship; what they see as its main benefits and costs; what data they maintain on it; and how they interface with other parts of the workforce system. The data will show how, if at all, views differ by type of industry, number of apprentices, by type of program (unilateral or joint), or region.

The data collection will fill a gap in knowledge, since there is no systematic information on the views of sponsors in

general nor of sponsors in high-growth industries who have recently embraced apprenticeship as a training method. The survey is part of a larger evaluation that will also involve on-site discussions in five states with key stakeholders. In each state, the contractor will talk in depth with apprentices, sponsors, state apprenticeship administrators, One-Stop Career Center directors, and community college officials involved in providing related instruction to apprentices.

The information collected in the survey, combined with findings from the site visits, will be used by the Department to inform policy development on registered apprenticeship, including how to make the system more responsive to employers and to further expand registered apprenticeship in high growth industries. The information will also be used to determine what data is available for possible impact or benefit-cost studies.

Section 172 of WIA is the authority under which the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) will collect the information proposed in this evaluation.

## II. Desired Focus of Comments

Currently, ETA is soliciting comments, concerning the proposed survey of registered apprenticeship sponsors, that:

(a) 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;

(b) 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;

(c) Enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and

(d) 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.

A copy of the proposed information collection request (ICR) can be obtained by contacting the office listed above in the addressee section of this notice.

## III. Current Actions

*Type of Review: New*

*Agency:* Employment and Training Administration.

*Title:* Survey of Registered Apprenticeship Program Sponsors.

*OMB Number:* New collection.

*Affected Public:* Sponsors of registered apprenticeship training programs, which may include small businesses.

*Respondents and Burden Hours:* The number of respondents who complete the interview is expected to be 1,144. The annual hour burden is calculated to be 324 hours, based on 1,144 respondents and a survey length of 17 minutes.

*Total Burden Cost for capital and startup:* \$0.

*Total Burden Cost for operation and maintenance:* \$0.

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

Dated: July 31, 2006.

**Emily Stover DeRocco,**

*Assistant Secretary, Employment and Training Administration.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

### Occupational Safety and Health Administration

[Docket No. ICR-1218-ONEW-(2006)-01]

### Peer Review, Conflict of Interest and Disclosure Form; Request for the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) Approval of Information Collection (Paperwork) Requirements

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

**ACTION:** Request for public comment.

**SUMMARY:** OSHA solicits public comment on the proposed Conflict of Interest and Disclosure Form (COI) form, which will be used to determine whether or not a conflict of interest exists for a potential peer review panel member.

**DATES:** Comments must be submitted by the following dates:

*Hard copy:* Your comments must be submitted (postmarked or received) by October 6, 2006.

*Facsimile and electronic transmission:* Your comments must be received by October 6, 2006.

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit comments, identified by OSHA Docket No. ICR–1218–0NEW–01–(2006), by any of the following methods:

*Regular mail, express delivery, hand delivery, and messenger service:* Submit your comments and attachments to the OSHA Docket Office, Room N–2625, U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20210; telephone (202) 693–2350 (OSHA's TTY number is (877) 889–5627). OSHA Docket Office and Department of Labor hours are 8:15 to 4:45 p.m., e.t.

*Facsimile:* If your comments are 10 pages or fewer, including attachments, you may fax them to the OSHA Docket Office at (202) 693–1648.

*Electronic:* You may submit comments through the Internet at <http://ecomments.osha.gov>. Follow instructions on the OSHA Web page for submitting comments.

*Docket:* For access to the docket to read or download comments or background materials, such as the complete Information Collection Request (ICR) (containing the Supporting Statement, OMB–83–I Form, and attachments), go to OSHA's Web page at <http://www.OSHA.gov>. In addition, the ICR, comments and submissions are available for inspection and copying at the OSHA Docket Office at the address above. You may also contact Todd Owen at the address below to obtain a copy of the ICR. For additional information on submitting comments, please see the "Public Participation" section in **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION.**

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Todd Owen, Directorate of Standards and Guidance, OSHA, Room N–3609, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20210; telephone (202) 693–2222.

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

##### **I. Background**

The Department of Labor, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent (i.e., employer) burden, conducts a preclearance consultation program to provide the public with an opportunity to comment on proposed and continuing information collection requirements in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)). This program ensures that information is in the desired format, reporting burden (time and costs) is minimal, collection instruments are clearly understood, and OSHA's estimate of the information collection burden is accurate. The Occupational Safety and Health

Administration conducts peer reviews to review a draft product for quality by specialists in the field who were not involved in producing the draft. The selection of participants in a peer review is based on expertise, with due consideration of independence. The Office of Management and Budget published the Final Information Quality Bulletin for Peer Review on December 15, 2004. The Bulletin states " \* \* the agency must address reviewers' potential conflicts of interest (including those stemming from ties to regulated businesses and other stakeholders) and independence from the agency." The Bulletin requires agencies to adopt or adapt the committee selection policies employed by the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) when selecting peer reviewers who are not government employees. To fulfill this requirement OSHA has developed a Conflict of Interest and Disclosure Form, based on NAS, Conflict of Interest Disclosure form. This form will be used to determine whether or not a conflict exists for a potential peer review panel member.

##### **II. Special Issues for Comment**

OSHA has a particular interest in comments on the following issues:

- Whether the proposed information collection requirements are necessary for the proper performance of the Agency's functions, including whether the information is useful;
- The accuracy of OSHA's estimate of the burden (time and costs) of the information collection requirements, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;
- The quality, utility, and clarity of the information collected; and
- Ways to minimize the burden on employers who must comply; for example, by using automated or other technological information collection and transmission techniques.

##### **III. Proposed Actions**

OSHA is requesting OMB to approve OSHA's COI form. The COI form would add 27 hours to OSHA's 114 million burden hour inventory. The Agency will summarize the comments submitted in response to this notice, and will include this summary in its request to OMB.

*Type of Review:* New information collection requirements.

*Title:* OSHA's Conflict of Interest and Disclosure Form (COI) form.

*OMB Number:* 1218–0NEW.

*Affected Public:* Individuals or households.

*Number of Respondents:* 36.

*Frequency:* On occasion.

*Average Time Per Response:* One half hour for respondents to complete Tier 1

for "influential scientific assessments;" and 1 hour for respondent to complete both Tier 1 and Tier 2 for "highly influential scientific assessments."

*Estimated Total Burden Hours:* 27 hours.

*Estimated Cost (Operation and Maintenance):* \$0

##### **IV. Public Participation—Submission of Comments on this Notice and Internet Access to Comments and Submissions.**

You may submit comments and supporting materials in response to this notice by (1) hardy copy, (2) FAX transmission (facsimile), or (3) electronically through the OSHA Web page. Because of security-related problems, there may be a significant delay in the receipt of comments by regular mail. Please contact the OSHA Docket Office at (202) 693–2350 (FFY (877) 889–5627) for information about security procedures concerning the delivery of submissions by express delivery, hand delivery, and courier service.

All comments, submissions, and background documents are available for inspection and copying at the OSHA Docket Office at the above address. Comments and submissions posted on OSHA's Web page are available at <http://www.OSHA.gov>. Contact the OSHA Docket Office for information about materials not available through the OSHA Web page and for assistance using the Web page to locate docket submissions.

Electronic copies of this **Federal Register** notice as well as other relevant documents are available on OSHA's Web page. Since all submissions become public, private information such as social security numbers should not be submitted.

##### **V. Authority and Signature**

Edwin G. Foulke, Jr., Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health, directed the preparation of this notice. The authority for this notice is the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3506 *et seq.*) and Secretary of Labor's Order No. 5–2002 (67 FR 65008).

Signed at Washington, DC, on July 31, 2006.

**Edwin G. Foulke, Jr.,**

*Assistant Secretary of Labor.*

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