

Applications may be hand delivered between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except for Federal holidays; for confirmation of mail delivery, a stamped, self-addressed post card must be included.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jim Barr or Julie Atkins, Office of Planning and Environment, Federal Transit Administration, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., Room E45-130, Washington, DC 20590. Telephone: (202) 366-1568.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Environmental Management Systems

Environmental management systems are designed to develop a systematic management approach to the environmental concerns of an organization. Evidence suggests that adoption of environmental management systems results in advantages in financing, insurance, marketing, regulatory compliance, and other areas of operations. Perhaps the most recognized and widely employed environmental management system is ISO [International Organization for Standardization] 14001, a model for implementing environmental management systems used by tens of thousands of organizations in more than 100 countries.

In January 2006, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) concluded a successful Environmental Management Systems (EMS) training and technical assistance program based on ISO 14001 for ten public transit agencies. The results of the final audit and the responses of the participating transit agencies, documented in a report entitled, "Environmental Management Systems Training & Assistance Final Report" (January 2006), available online at http://www.fta.dot.gov/library/FTA_EMS/index.htm, were impressive. Nine of the ten participating transit agencies achieved an overall rating of 93 per cent or higher, and four of those agencies achieved an overall rating in excess of 97 per cent. Cost savings could not be easily quantified in the abbreviated implementation period, but one participating transit agency reported an annualized savings of \$66,000 in fuel and labor costs alone. So impressed were two of the participating transit agencies with ISO 14001 as a framework that inspires and channels the creative thinking of all their employees that they elected to become ISO certified.

FTA is now prepared to provide an opportunity for up to ten more public transit agencies to receive similar EMS training and assistance.

EMS Training and Assistance

FTA will provide assistance in the form of training workshops, on-site technical support visits and electronic materials and consultation. FTA is currently selecting a skilled contractor to carry out EMS training and assistance under a cooperative agreement. Training will be designed to help transit agencies develop and implement an environmental management system based on ISO 14001 which provides a structured process for the achievement of continual improvement, the rate and extent of which are determined by the organization in light of economic factors and other circumstances.

The EMS training program will include:

- EMS training and assistance for up to ten transit agency teams, consisting of three to four members each, over a two-year period;
- A curriculum designed specifically for transit agency implementation of an EMS with a possible emphasis on the implementation of an EMS for a transit capital program;
- A pre-workshop site evaluation visit to each agency by the contractor team;
- A training "tool-kit," including guidebooks and software, as necessary;
- Four three-day workshops at the site of the contractor's choosing which would include all transit teams; participants are responsible for travel and accommodation costs for these workshops;
- Two site visits and progress reviews by the contractor for each participant; and
- Monthly conference calls with the contractor, FTA, and all program participants.

At the conclusion of training, and following a period of implementation, FTA will assemble a final report that includes the participating transit agencies' case studies and an assessment of training results.

How To Apply for the Program

Interested transit agencies should submit a letter, signed by the head of the public transportation organization, that contains the following information:

- A brief description of the transit organization and its responsibilities;
- The name of a high-ranking transit agency management representative who will have the responsibility and the authority for ensuring that the EMS is developed based on the program provided above. The transit agency's representative should be available to travel and participate in workshops with other transit participants over the life of the project; and

- A clear assurance that senior management in the organization will provide the necessary visibility, staff time, and other resources necessary to successfully develop and implement the EMS through its implementation team. Ongoing top management support is the most critical factor for ensuring a successful and sustainable EMS.

Judging Applications

Once all applications are received, FTA will conduct follow-up interviews with each applicant to discuss the information contained in the letter of application in more detail and to obtain any other necessary information. FTA will give preference to agencies that are particularly interested in the implementation of an EMS for a transit capital program. FTA may consult with the contractor before final decisions are made.

FTA will use a number of criteria to select participants, including:

- Organizational commitment by transit agency leadership to EMS implementation;
- Geographical diversity;
- Previous environmental experiences; and
- Environmental challenges from operations and/or pending capital projects.

The first program workshop should occur in early 2008.

Issued in Washington, DC this 7th day of August 2007.

James S. Simpson,

Administrator.

[FR Doc. E7-15754 Filed 8-10-07; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-57-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Maritime Administration

Voluntary Intermodal Sealift Agreement (VISA)

AGENCY: Maritime Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of open season for enrollment in the VISA program.

Introduction

The VISA program was established pursuant to section 708 of the Defense Production Act of 1950, as amended (DPA), which provides for voluntary agreements for emergency preparedness programs. VISA was approved for a two year term on January 30, 1997, and published in the **Federal Register** on February 13, 1997, (62 FR 6837). Approval is currently extended through September 30, 2007, as published in the **Federal Register** on September 23, 2005 (70 FR 55947).

As implemented, the VISA program is open to U.S.-flag vessel operators of oceangoing militarily useful vessels. Operators include vessel owners and bareboat charter operators if satisfactory signed agreements are in place committing the assets of the owner to the bareboat charterer for purposes of VISA. While tug/barge operators must own or bareboat charter barges committed to the VISA program, it is not required that these operators commit tug services through bareboat charter or ownership arrangements. Time charters of U.S.-flag tugs will satisfy tug commitments to the VISA program. However, participation in the VISA program is not satisfied by tug commitment only. Tug/barge VISA participants must commit capacity of at least one barge to the VISA program. Voyage and space charterers are not considered U.S.-flag vessel operators for purposes of VISA eligibility.

VISA Concept

The mission of VISA is to provide commercial sealift and intermodal shipping services and systems, including vessels, vessel space, intermodal systems and equipment, terminal facilities, and related management services, to the Department of Defense (DOD), as necessary, to meet national defense contingency requirements or national emergencies.

VISA provides for the staged, time-phased availability of participants' shipping services/systems to meet contingency requirements through prenegotiated contracts between the Government and participants. Such arrangements are jointly planned with the Maritime Administration, U.S. Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM), and participants in peacetime to allow effective and best valued use of commercial sealift capacity, to provide DOD assured contingency access, and to minimize commercial disruption, whenever possible.

There are three time-phased stages in the event of VISA activation. VISA Stages I and II provide for prenegotiated contracts between DOD and participants to provide sealift capacity to meet all projected DOD contingency requirements. These contracts are executed in accordance with approved DOD contracting methodologies. VISA Stage III will provide for additional capacity to DOD when Stages I and II commitments or volunteered capacity are insufficient to meet contingency requirements, and adequate shipping services from non-participants are not available through established DOD

contracting practices or U.S. Government treaty agreements.

VISA Enrollment Open Season

The purpose of this notice is to invite interested, qualified U.S.-flag vessel operators that are not currently enrolled in the VISA program to participate. This is the tenth annual enrollment period since the commencement of the VISA program. The annual enrollment is intended to link the VISA enrollment cycle with DOD's peacetime cargo contracting to ensure eligible participants priority consideration for DOD awards of cargo.

New VISA applicants are required to submit their applications for the VISA program as described in this Notice no later than August 31, 2007. Applicants must provide copies of loadline documents from a recognized classification society to validate oceangoing vessel capability, and U.S. Coast Guard Certificates of Documentation for all vessels in their fleet. If vessels are bareboat chartered or time chartered (applicable to tugs only) by the applicant, charter agreements shall be provided along with the application. Bareboat charter and time charter agreements must, at a minimum, be valid from the time of application through September 30, 2008. Bareboat charter agreements must also state that the owner will not interfere with the charterer's obligation to commit chartered vessel(s) to the VISA program for the duration of the charter. Approved VISA participants will be responsible for assuring that information submitted with their application remains up to date beyond the approval process. Any changes to VISA commitments must be reported to the Maritime Administration and USTRANSCOM not later than seven days after the change. If charter agreements are due to expire, participants must provide the Maritime Administration with charters that extend the charter duration for another 12 months or longer.

Alignment of VISA enrollment and eligibility for VISA priority will solidify the linkage between commitment of contingency assets by VISA participants and receiving VISA priority consideration for the award of DOD peacetime cargo. This is the only planned enrollment period for carriers to join the VISA program and derive benefits for DOD peacetime contracts during the time frame of October 1, 2007 through September 30, 2008. The only exception to this open season period for VISA enrollment will be for a non-VISA carrier that reflags a vessel into U.S. registry. That carrier may submit an

application to participate in the VISA program at any time upon completion of reflagging.

Advantages of Peacetime Participation

Because enrollment of carriers in the VISA program provides DOD with assured access to sealift services during contingencies based on a level of commitment, as well as a mechanism for joint planning, DOD awards peacetime cargo contracts to VISA participants on a priority basis. This applies to liner trades and charter contracts alike. Award of DOD cargoes to meet DOD peacetime and contingency requirements is made on the basis of the following priorities:

- U.S.-flag vessel capacity operated by VISA participants and U.S.-flag Vessel Sharing Agreement (VSA) capacity held by VISA participants.
- U.S.-flag vessel capacity operated by non-participants.
- Combination U.S.-flag/foreign-flag vessel capacity operated by VISA participants, and combination U.S.-flag/foreign-flag VSA capacity held by VISA participants.
- Combination U.S.-flag/foreign-flag vessel capacity operated by non-participants.
- U.S.-owned or operated foreign-flag vessel capacity and VSA capacity held by VISA participants.
- U.S.-owned or operated foreign-flag vessel capacity and VSA capacity held by non-participants.
- Foreign-owned or operated foreign-flag vessel capacity of non-participants.

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. The term "operator" is defined in the VISA document as "an ocean common carrier or contract carrier that owns, controls or manages vessels by which ocean transportation is provided". Applicants wishing to become participants must provide satisfactory evidence that the vessels being committed to the VISA program are operational and that vessels are intended to be operated by the applicant in the carriage of commercial or government preference cargoes. While vessel brokers, freight forwarders 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. However, brokers, freight forwarders and agents should encourage the carriers they represent to join the program.

Commitment

Any U.S.-flag vessel operator desiring to receive priority consideration 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. Participants operating vessels in international trade and desiring to bid on DOD peacetime contracts will be required to provide commitment levels to meet DOD-established Stages I and/or II minimum percentages of the participant's militarily useful, oceangoing U.S.-flag international trading fleet capacity on an annual basis. USTRANSCOM and the Maritime Administration 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 exclusively 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 (CCAs) to satisfy commercial or DOD requirements. VISA provides a defense against antitrust laws in accordance with the DPA. CCAs must be submitted to the Maritime Administration 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, a participant will receive compensation during contingency activation. During enrollment, each participant may choose a compensation methodology which is commensurate with risk and service provided. The compensation methodology selection will be completed with the appropriate DOD agency.

Enrollment

New applicants may enroll by obtaining a VISA application package (Form MA-1020 (OMB Approval No. 2133-0532)) from the Director, Office of Sealift Support, at the address indicated

below. Form MA-1020 includes 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 company. A copy of the VISA document as published in the **Federal Register** on September 23, 2005, will also be provided with the package. This information is needed in order to assist the Maritime Administration in making a determination of the applicant's eligibility. An applicant company must provide an affidavit that demonstrates that the company is qualified to document a vessel under 46 U.S.C., section 12103, and that it owns, or bareboat charters and controls, oceangoing, militarily useful vessel(s) for purposes of committing assets to the VISA program. As previously mentioned, VISA applicants must return the completed VISA application documents to the Maritime Administration not later than August 31, 2007. Once the Maritime Administration has reviewed the application and determined VISA eligibility, the Maritime Administration will sign the VISA application document which completes the eligibility phase of the VISA enrollment process.

After VISA eligibility is approved by the Maritime Administration, approved applicants are required to execute a joint VISA Enrollment Contract (VEC) with DOD [USTRANSCOM and the Military Sealift Command (MSC)] which will specify the participant's Stage III commitment for the period October 1, 2007 through September 30, 2008. 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 if applicable, a VISA Contingency Contract (VCC) with USTRANSCOM (for Liner Operators). The Maritime Administration reserves the right to revalidate all eligibility requirements without notice.

For Additional Information and Applications Contact: Taylor E. Jones II, Director, Office of Sealift Support, U.S. Maritime Administration, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., Washington, DC 20590. Telephone (202) 366-2323. Fax (202) 366-3128. Other information about the VISA can be found on the Maritime Administration's Internet Web Page at <http://www.marad.dot.gov>.

(Authority: 49 CFR 1.66)

Dated: August 6, 2007.

By order of the Maritime Administrator.
Daron Threet,
Secretary, Maritime Administration.
[FR Doc. E7-15825 Filed 8-10-07; 8:45 am]
BILLING CODE 4910-81-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Reports, Forms and Recordkeeping Requirements Agency Information Collection Activity Under OMB Review

AGENCY: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*), this notice announces that the Information Collection Request (ICR) abstracted below has been forwarded to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and comment. The ICR describes the nature of the information collection and its expected burden. A **Federal Register** Notice soliciting public comment on the ICR, with a 60-day comment period, was published on May 15, 2007 at 72 FR 27354.

DATES: Comments must be submitted on or before September 12, 2007.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Coleman Sachs, Office of Vehicle Safety Compliance (NVS-223), West Building—Room W45-311, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., Washington, DC 20590 (202-366-3151).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Title: Importation of Vehicles and Equipment Subject to the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety, Bumper, and Theft Prevention Standards.

OMB Number: 2127-0002.

Type of Request: Extension of a Currently Approved Collection.

Abstract: The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has requested OMB to extend that agency's approval of the information collection that is incident to NHTSA's administration of the regulations at 49 CFR parts 591, 592, and 593 that govern the importation of motor vehicles and motor vehicle equipment. The information collection includes declarations that are filed (on the HS-7 Declaration form) with U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) upon the importation of motor vehicles or motor vehicle equipment that is subject to the Federal motor vehicle safety, bumper,