

confidential treatment (5 U.S.C. 552(b)(4) and (b)(8)). The FFIEC 009a information collection is not given confidential treatment. Small businesses (*i.e.*, small banks) are not affected.

Abstract

The Country Exposure Report (FFIEC 009) is filed quarterly with the agencies and provides information on international claims of U.S. banks and bank holding companies that is used for supervisory and analytical purposes. The information is used to monitor country exposure of banks to determine the degree of risk in their portfolios and the possible impact on U.S. banks of adverse developments in particular countries. The Country Exposure Information Report (FFIEC 009a) is a supplement to the FFIEC 009 and provides publicly available information on material foreign country exposures (all exposures to a country in excess of one percent of total assets or 20 percent of capital, whichever is less) of U.S. banks and bank holding companies that file the FFIEC 009 report. As part of the Country Exposure Information Report, reporting institutions must also furnish a list of countries in which they have lending exposures above 0.75 percent of total assets or 15 percent of total capital, whichever is less.

Current Action

On November 8, 2002, the OCC, the Board, and the FDIC jointly published a notice soliciting comments for 60 days on proposed revisions to the FFIEC 009 and FFIEC 009a (67 FR 68228). The agencies proposed to require electronic submission of all FFIEC 009 and 009a reports effective with the March 31, 2003, report date. The agencies proposed to have the Board collect and process the FFIEC 009 and 009a reports on their behalf via the Federal Reserve System's Internet Electronic Submission (IESUB) system. Electronic filing capability via IESUB is available on the Internet through the use of data entry or a file transfer feature. These methods are secure and result in a minimal burden to banks and bank holding companies. The agencies would no longer accept paper (hard copy) reports from banks and bank holding companies after the December 31, 2002, report date. The submission deadline would remain 45 calendar days after the report date. No other changes to the FFIEC 009 reporting forms or the FFIEC 009a reporting forms and instructions were proposed.

Type of Review: Revision of a currently approved collection.

Comments Received on the Agencies' Proposal

In response to the November 8, 2002, notice, the agencies received 2 comment letters, one from a banking organization and one from a bankers' association. The two commenters alluded to their familiarity with the IESUB system filing requirements and supported the proposed submission method. However, the commenters expressed concern about the start-up time and effort required to initially submit their FFIEC 009 and 009a reports electronically. The commenters specifically cited the lack of currently approved FFIEC 009 and 009a vendor software applications as a concern. The commenters recommended the agencies investigate the possibility of providing a standardized pre-formatted form for file transfer submission to alleviate this concern.

The FFIEC and the agencies have considered the comments received and determined that it would not be practical or necessary for the Board, or the Federal Reserve district banks, to create a specific pre-formatted form for filing the FFIEC 009 and 009a via IESUB using the file transfer method. Rather than developing a pre-formatted form for file transfer submissions, the Federal Reserve district banks will provide technical assistance to any respondent who needs assistance creating files for their initial FFIEC 009 and 009a submission via IESUB. Any FFIEC 009 and 009a respondent who needs assistance is encouraged to visit the Federal Reserve System Web site <http://www.reportingandreserves.org/req.html> for additional information on IESUB. The Web site also includes a link that respondents may use to contact their local Federal Reserve district bank for assistance with IESUB.

Request for Comment

Comments are invited on:

- Whether the information collections are necessary for the proper performance of the agencies' functions, including whether the information has practical utility;
- The accuracy of the agencies' estimates of the burden of the information collections, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;
- Ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected;
- Ways to minimize the burden of information collections 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.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be shared among the agencies. All comments will become a matter of public record. Written comments should address the accuracy of the burden estimates and ways to minimize burden including the use of automated collection techniques or the use of other forms of information technology as well as other relevant aspects of the information collection request.

Dated: February 24, 2003.

Mark J. Tenhundfeld,

Assistant Director, Legislative and Regulatory Activities Division, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency.

Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, February 25, 2003.

Jennifer J. Johnson,

Secretary of the Board.

Dated at Washington, DC, this 24th day of February, 2003.

Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

Robert E. Feldman,

Executive Secretary.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Internal Revenue Service

Open Meeting of the Area 2 Taxpayer Advocacy Panel (Including the States of Delaware, North Carolina, South Carolina, New Jersey, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia and the District of Columbia)

AGENCY: Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Treasury.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: An open meeting of the Area 2 Taxpayer Advocacy Panel will be conducted (via teleconference).

DATES: The meeting will be held Tuesday, April 1, 2003.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Inez E. De Jesus at 1-888-912-1227, or 954-423-7977.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Notice is hereby given pursuant to section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. App. (1988) that an open meeting of the Area 2 Taxpayer Advocacy Panel will be held Tuesday, April 1, 2003, from 3 p.m. e.s.t. to 4:30 p.m. e.s.t. via a telephone conference call. The Taxpayer Advocacy Panel is soliciting public comments, ideas and suggestions on improving