

• “I wanted to suggest that the Air Office, at least at EPA and perhaps some other agencies, have a bad habit of establishing databases to indicate both paperwork and actual regulatory compliance costs and on some small business areas it's left blank. If you don't know any better and you read that, it look like there's no regulatory requirement * * * it sort of leads one to believe that they're not being regulated when they will be regulated.” Theresa Pugh, American Public Power Association, p. 93.

8. Miscellaneous Comments

• “* * * I sat through an IRS paperwork reduction meeting. It was part of their normal review of forms and instructions. This one happened to be on taxes filed by small farmers and they devoted, I think, about 25 minutes of their eight-hour session on this particular set of forms to paperwork reduction * * * But what we found is that the IRS, in figuring out who to put together in terms of a meeting to talk about paperwork reduction, they didn't have a single farmer, they didn't have a single representative from a farm trades or any other small group. They put together a group of practitioners who essentially were accountants * * * they start with the assumption that no small business and no farm is actually going to fill out their own taxes * * * and when they start from that basic assumption, they assume that the types of corrections and the types of things they want to do or make clarifications to are from a practitioner's standpoint rather than from the individual standpoint.” Rosario Palmeri, House Committee on Small Business, p. 51–2.

• “If there were some way we could come up with a clever way of rewarding employees in various agencies * * * if there was a way that the regulatory agencies * * * would recognize the leadership of employees for taking a creative approach in trying to reduce regulatory burden in a responsible way * * *.” Theresa Pugh, American Public Power Association, p. 66.

• “And I wanted to comment briefly on the same-time reporting option on your list * * * I hear negative feedback about that. Companies like that things are spaced out through the year so that they can spread the workload over the one or two or three people or however many they have who handle the reporting requirements, and that if it were all due at one time of the year, they couldn't have that one person.” Fern Abrams, IPC, p. 85.

Appendix 5—Federal Government Initiatives To Reduce or Streamline Reporting Requirements for Businesses

Currently there are a substantial number of Federal government efforts in operation or in development that use one or more of the approaches to reduce paperwork burden for businesses, as described in the task one section of this report. Several examples follow:

1. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has harmonized its new drug application and biologics application forms which can be submitted electronically. Previously, there had been 21 different application forms. A second FDA example is

its work underway with the European Union and Japan to harmonize product approval application requirements and adverse event reporting. As a result of this work, businesses will be able to collect and submit essentially the same information in the same format to satisfy many countries' pre-approval and post-marketing requirements for drugs and biologics.

2. Below are two examples of cross agency consolidations of reporting requirements are instructive.

(a) The Single Source Coal Reporting project, which involves several Federal agencies plus at least 1 state, consolidate reporting by coal producers on their production activity to a single point; using one form, common data definitions where practical and beneficial, and synchronized reporting with respect to timing.

(b) The Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA), the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC), and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) jointly collect data from businesses on benefit plan operations using a single form. In the year 2000 the 3 agencies together streamlined the information required to be reported on the form and implemented an electronic filing and processing system. The single report is filed with a contractor who then distributes the appropriate information to each of the 3 agencies.

3. The IRS has expanded the use of the Internet and web-based technology to reduce burden on small businesses. The Small Business Community Web Site provides a variety of information, tools and products to make it easier for small businesses to comply with tax laws.

4. The Social Security Administration for many years has received Forms W–3, Transmittal of Wage and Tax Statements, and Forms W–2, Wage and Tax Statement, on behalf of both SSA and the Internal Revenue Service. SSA collects the data from employers, transcribes the paper documents not filed electronically, posts the data to their own files and provides the data to the IRS.

5. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) collect occupational injury and illness data from individual employers in annual sample surveys. By law, BLS cannot share micro-data collected from businesses with non-statistical agencies. Although BLS is barred from sharing data with OSHA, the two agencies have developed sampling methodology and reporting procedures designed to reduce the burden on businesses in both surveys by minimizing overlap between the 2 surveys and providing businesses the opportunity to use a single form for reporting if they so choose.

6. The Department of Transportation (DOT) currently has two initiatives for consolidating reporting requirements. The first initiative consolidates reporting requirements for six of its agencies into a 1 page form for businesses to report the results of safety-related drug and alcohol tests for nearly 10 million safety-sensitive employees. This new form also reduces the number of data elements. The Coast Guard will continue to participate in this system after it is transitioned to the Department of Homeland Security.

Another noteworthy effort underway at DOT is the creation of a new application form and uniform reporting requirements for the disadvantaged business enterprise (DBE) program. At this time a business seeking certification as a DBE must fill out a different form for three DOT agencies and for multiple state and local agencies. The new form will be used by federal, state and local agencies.

Appendix 6—The Business Compliance One Stop as a Platform for Regulatory Burden Reduction

Background

SBA is the managing partner for the Business Compliance One Stop (BCOS), an initiative that is a framework for achieving the goals of the (SBPRA) Task Force.

The goal of the BCOS is to reduce the burden on business owners by making it easy to find, understand, and comply with governmental laws and regulations. The BCOS solution is to provide businesses with a single point of access to information and tools that will make it easy for them to comply. The portal offers value to the business community in three areas:

(1) *Find*: efficient access to laws and regulations at all levels of government (helps you find what applies to you as a business owner, where you live);

(2) *Understand*: compliance assistance digital guides that will help businesses determine if they are in compliance and how to comply;

(3) *Comply*: online transactions, such as allowing businesses to register their business, apply for licenses and permits, and file information electronically.

As the advocate and supporter of small businesses, SBA is the managing partner for the following reasons:

• **Core Mission**—Small businesses comprise 99 percent of all business. With its legislative mandate to help small businesses succeed, SBA “owns” the relationship with the intended beneficiaries of the initiative.

• **Outreach**—The intergovernmental scope of the project gives SBA another advantage, as no other federal agency has the breadth and depth of grassroots partnerships and experience with business development entities in over 1500 locations.

• **Relationship with the Regulatory Community**—SBA works more closely with the federal regulatory community than any other agency through its congressionally created offices of Advocacy and National Regulatory Ombudsman. Building appropriate compliance assistance tools is a natural complement to its role of “being a voice” for small businesses.

• **Experience in Cross-Agency Web Portals**—SBA is the creator and manager of Businesslaw.gov, a legal and regulatory information gateway to all 50 states and the platform for BCOS.

• **Focal Point**—SBA is willing and able to forge the necessary partnerships to manage this effort, and offers the Executive and Legislative branches a focal point for cost effective stewardship and accountability for e-government expenditures.

Current Partners

We presently have partnerships with nine Federal agencies, (i.e., DOT, DOI, DOE, EPA,