

propose improvements to the current Voluntary Reporting of Greenhouse Gases Program required under section 1605(b) of the Energy Policy Act of 1992. These improvements are to enhance measurement accuracy, reliability, and verifiability, working with and taking into account emerging domestic and international approaches. The President also directed the Secretary of Energy to recommend reforms to ensure that businesses and individuals that register reductions are not penalized under a future climate policy and to give transferable credits to companies that can show real emissions reductions.

The purposes of the proposed revised Guidelines are to: (1) establish revised procedures and reporting requirements for filing voluntary reports, and (2) encourage corporations, Government agencies, non-profit organizations, individuals and other private and public entities to submit annual reports of their total entity-wide greenhouse gas emissions, net emission reductions, and carbon sequestration activities that are complete, reliable and consistent.

On May 6, 2002 (67 FR 30370), the Department of Energy solicited public comments on various issues relevant to its efforts to implement the President's directives. After consideration of these public comments, the Secretaries of Energy, Commerce and Agriculture, and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency wrote the President on July 8, 2002, stating that improvements to the existing Voluntary Greenhouse Gas Reporting Program should:

1. Develop fair, objective, and practical methods for reporting baselines, reporting boundaries, calculating real results, and awarding transferable credits for actions that lead to real reductions.
2. Standardize widely accepted, transparent accounting methods.
3. Support independent verification registry reports.
4. Encourage reporters to report greenhouse gas intensity (emissions unit of output) as well as emissions reductions.
5. Encourage corporate or entity-wide reporting.
6. Provide credits for actions to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere as well as for actions to reduce emissions.
7. Develop a process for evaluating the extent to which past reductions may qualify for credits.
8. Develop a process for evaluating the extent to which past reductions may qualify for credits.

9. Factor in international strategies as well as State-level efforts.

10. Minimize transactions costs for reporters and administrative costs for the Government, where possible, without compromising the foregoing recommendations.

The DOE also held four public workshops (67 FR 64106) in the fall of 2002 to enable interested persons to discuss and provide comments on possible improvements to the program guidelines. Public comments submitted to DOE's Office of Policy and International Affairs on possible revisions to the Voluntary Reporting of Greenhouse Gases Program Guidelines are available at <http://www.pi.energy.gov/enhancingGHGregistry/index.html>.

#### *Process for Finalizing and Implementing Revised Program Guidelines*

DOE's Office of Policy and International Affairs plans to issue proposed revised general guidelines for public comment during the fall of 2003. In parallel with this effort, DOE's Office of Policy and International Affairs intends to issue for public comment proposed technical guidelines in the fall of 2003. The technical guidelines will specify the methods and factors to be used in measuring and estimating greenhouse gas emissions and emission reductions under the revised general guidelines. DOE plans to issue in final form all necessary guidelines during 2004. Upon finalization and issuance of the revised guidelines, EIA plans to develop and issue new reporting forms and instructions for reporting under the revised program guidelines. It is important to note here that it is not the intent of this notice to solicit comment on the guideline revision process above, but rather to merely extend the expiration date on the existing data collection, forms EIA-1605 and EIA-1605-EZ, so that EIA has an existing data collection instrument in place while the guideline revision process is on-going.

### **III. Request for Comments**

Prospective respondents and other interested parties should comment on the actions discussed in item II. The following guidelines are provided to assist in the preparation of comments. Please indicate to which form(s) your comments apply.

#### *General Issues*

A. Is the proposed collection of information necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency and does the information have practical utility? Practical utility is

defined as the actual usefulness of information to or for an agency, taking into account its accuracy, adequacy, reliability, timeliness, and the agency's ability to process the information it collects.

B. What enhancements can be made to the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected?

#### *As a Potential Respondent to the Request for Information*

A. What actions could be taken to help ensure and maximize the quality, objectivity, utility, and integrity of the information to be collected?

B. Are the instructions and definitions clear and sufficient? If not, which instructions need clarification?

C. Can the information be submitted by the due date?

D. Public reporting burden for this collection is estimated to average 40 hours per response on Form EIA-1605 (long form) and 4 hours per response on Form EIA-1605EZ (short form). The estimated burden includes the total time necessary to provide the requested information. In your opinion, how accurate is this estimate?

E. The agency estimates that the only cost to a respondent is for the time it will take to complete the collection. Will a respondent incur any start-up costs for reporting, or any recurring annual costs for operation, maintenance, and purchase of services associated with the information collection?

F. What additional actions could be taken to minimize the burden of this collection of information? Such actions may involve the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

G. Does any other Federal, State, or local agency collect similar information? If so, specify the agency, the data element(s), and the methods of collection.

#### *As a Potential User of the Information To Be Collected*

A. What actions could be taken to help ensure and maximize the quality, objectivity, utility, and integrity of the information disseminated?

B. Is the information useful at the levels of detail to be collected?

C. For what purpose(s) would the information be used? Be specific.

D. Are there alternate sources for the information and are they useful? If so, what are their weaknesses and/or strengths?

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval of the form. They also will become a matter of public record.