

Proposed Rules

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This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains notices to the public of the proposed issuance of rules and regulations. The purpose of these notices is to give interested persons an opportunity to participate in the rule making prior to the adoption of the final rules.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Bureau of Economic Analysis

15 CFR Part 801

[Docket No. 030929241-3241-01]

RIN 0691-AA55

International Services Surveys: BE-9, Quarterly Survey of Foreign Airline Operators' Revenues and Expenses in the United States

AGENCY: Bureau of Economic Analysis, Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking.

SUMMARY: This document sets forth proposed rules to amend regulations to institute a new survey, BE-9, Quarterly Survey of Foreign Airline Operators' Revenues and Expenses in the United States, to be conducted by the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), U.S. Department of Commerce.

The Department of Commerce, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to comment on proposed and/or continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. The proposed survey is mandatory and will be conducted quarterly under the International Investment and Trade in Services Survey Act. The first BE-9 quarterly survey conducted if these proposed rules are adopted cover transactions in the first quarter of 2004. BEA would send the survey to potential respondents in January of 2004; responses would be due 50 days after the end of the calendar quarter. Data from the proposed BE-9 survey are needed for the compilation of the U.S. balance of payments accounts. The information collected in this survey will be used in developing the "transportation" portion of the U.S. balance of payments accounts. The balance of payments accounts, which are published quarterly in the Survey of Current Business, are one of the major

statistical products of BEA. They are used extensively by both government and private organizations. Without the information collected in this survey, quarterly data needed for estimating an integral component of the transportation account would be unavailable. The data are utilized by private organizations and numerous government agencies for analyzing economic trends. The data collected are also used for compiling the U.S. national income and product accounts, and for reporting to international organizations such as the International Monetary Fund.

Foreign air carriers with total annual covered revenues or total annual covered expenses incurred in the U.S. of \$5 million or more would be required to respond to the survey if this rule is adopted.

DATES: Comments on these proposed rules will receive consideration if submitted in writing on or before December 16, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Mail comments to the Office of the Chief, Balance of Payments Division (BE-58), Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce, Washington, DC 20230, or hand deliver comments to room M-100, 1441 L Street, NW., Washington, DC 20005. Comments will be available for public inspection in room 8013, 1441 L Street, NW., between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Edward Dozier, Balance of Payments Division (BE-58), Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce, Washington, DC 20230; via the Internet at edward.dozier@bea.gov; or via telephone at 202-606-9559.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: These proposed rules amend 15 CFR part 801.9 to set forth the reporting requirements for the BE-9, Quarterly Survey of Foreign Airline Operators' Revenues and Expenses in the United States. The Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), U.S. Department of Commerce, will conduct the survey under the International Investment and Trade in Services Survey Act, 22 U.S.C. 3101-3108 (hereinafter "the Act"). Section 4(a) of the Act (22 U.S.C. 3103(a)) provides that "The President shall, to the extent he deems necessary and feasible— * * * (1) conduct a regular data collection program to secure current information * * *

related to international investment and trade in services * * * ; and (5) publish for the use of the general public and United States Government agencies periodic, regular, and comprehensive statistical information collected pursuant to this subsection * * * " In section 3 of Executive Order 11961, the President delegated authority granted under the Act as concerns international trade in services to the Secretary of Commerce, who has redelegated it to BEA.

The major purpose of the survey is for the compilation of the U.S. balance of payments accounts. The information collected in this survey is used in developing the "transportation" portion of the U.S. balance of payments accounts. The balance of payments accounts, which are published quarterly in the Survey of Current Business, are one of the major statistical products of BEA. They are used extensively by both Government and private organizations. Without the information collected in this survey, quarterly data needed for estimating an integral component of the transportation account would be unavailable. The data are utilized by private organizations and numerous government agencies for analyzing economic trends. The data collected are also used for compiling the U.S. national income and product accounts, and for reporting to international organizations such as the International Monetary Fund.

As proposed, BEA will conduct the BE-9 survey on a quarterly basis beginning with the first quarter of 2004. The survey requests information from foreign air carriers operating in the United States. Information is collected on a quarterly basis from foreign air carriers with total annual covered revenues or total annual covered expenses incurred in the United States of \$5 million or more. Foreign air carriers with total annual covered revenues and expenses below \$5 million are exempt from reporting.

The exemption criterion is based on the annual revenues or expenses covered by the survey for both the current and previous year. Thus, if a foreign airline operator had revenues or expenses covered by the survey of \$5 million or more during the previous year or if the company expects its revenues or expenses will be \$5 million or more during the current year, then it