

be powered-down immediately. The observer(s) will continue to maintain watch to determine when the animal is outside the safety radius. If the airguns are powered-down, observers will continue to maintain watch to determine when the animal is outside the safety radius. Airgun operations will not resume until the animal is outside the safety radius or until the specified intervals (15 or 30 min) have passed without a resighting.

If ramp-up procedures must be performed at night, two observers will be on duty 30 minutes prior to the start of airgun operations and during the subsequent ramp-up procedures. Ramp-up procedures for the 20-gun array will not commence at night unless the seismic source has been maintained.

### Reporting

A report will be submitted to NMFS within 90 days after the end of the cruise. The end of the Caribbean cruise is predicted to occur on approximately 21 February 2004. The report will describe the operations that were conducted and the marine mammals that were detected. The report will be submitted to NMFS, providing full documentation of methods, results, and interpretation pertaining to all monitoring tasks. The 90-day report will summarize the dates and locations of seismic operations, marine mammal sightings (dates, times, locations, activities, associated seismic survey activities), and estimates of the amount and nature of potential take of marine mammals by harassment or in other ways.

### Endangered Species Act (ESA)

Under section 7 of the ESA, NMFS has begun consultation on the proposed issuance of an IHA under section 101(a)(5)(D) of the MMPA for this activity. Consultation will be concluded prior to the issuance of an IHA. LDEO has initiated consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on West Indian Manatees.

### National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

The NSF has prepared an EA for the Southeast Caribbean surveys. NMFS is reviewing this EA and will either adopt it or prepare its own NEPA document before making a determination on the issuance of an IHA. A copy of the NSF EA for this activity is available upon request (see ADDRESSES).

### Preliminary Conclusions

NMFS has preliminarily determined that the impact of conducting the seismic survey in the Southeast

Caribbean Sea and Adjacent Atlantic Ocean, off the coast of Venezuela, will result, at worst, in a temporary modification in behavior by certain species of marine mammals. This activity is expected to result in no more than a negligible impact on the affected species or stocks.

While the number of potential incidental harassment takes will depend on the distribution and abundance of marine mammals in the vicinity of the survey activity, the number of potential harassment takings is estimated to be small. In addition, no take by injury and/or death is anticipated, and the potential for temporary or permanent hearing impairment is low and will be avoided through the incorporation of the mitigation measures mentioned in this document. In addition, the proposed seismic program is not expected to interfere with any subsistence hunts, since operations in the whaling and sealing areas will be limited.

### Proposed Authorization

NMFS proposes to issue an IHA to LDEO for conducting a seismic surveys in the Southeast Caribbean Sea and Adjacent Atlantic Ocean, off the coast of Venezuela, provided the previously mentioned mitigation, monitoring, and reporting requirements are incorporated. NMFS has preliminarily determined that the proposed activity would result in the harassment of small numbers of marine mammals; would have no more than a negligible impact on the affected marine mammal stocks; and would not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of species or stocks for subsistence uses.

### Information Solicited

NMFS requests interested persons to submit comments and information concerning this request (see ADDRESSES).

Dated: October 14, 2003.

**Donna Wieting,**

*Deputy Director, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.*  
[FR Doc. 03-26549 Filed 10-20-03; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510-22-S**

## DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

### Office of the Secretary

### Proposed Collection; Comment Request

**AGENCY:** Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), DoD.

**ACTION:** Notice.

In compliance with Section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) announces the following proposed reinstatement of a public information collection and seeks public comment on the provisions thereof. Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the function of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of burden of the proposed information collection; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the information collection on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

**DATES:** Consideration will be given to all comments received by December 22, 2003.

**ADDRESSES:** Written comments and recommendations on the proposed information collection should be sent to the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) (Military Community and Family Policy/Educational Opportunities Directorate), ATTN: Mr. Otto Thomas, 4000 Defense Pentagon, Washington, DC 20301-4000).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** To request more information on the proposed information collection or to obtain a copy of the proposed and associated collection instruments, please write to the above address or call at (703) 602-4949, ext. 160.

*Title, Associated Form, and OMB Control Number:* Department of Defense Public and Community Service (PACS) Program, DD Forms 2581 and 2581-1, OMB Number 0704-0324.

*Needs and Uses:* This information collection requirement is necessary to allow for the continued implementation of the Public and Community Service (PACS) Program. The PACS Program encourages eligible Service members to work in the public or community service arena upon separation from active duty. Employers with job openings in the public and community service arena will complete the one-time DD Form 2581, "Operation Transition Employer Registration," to register in the PACS employer database. The DD Form 2581 and allows PACS employers to post employment opportunities on the Operation Transition Bulletin Board (TBB). Employers hiring separated Service members under the Temporary Early Retirement ACT (TERA) are