

users' needs for credible, reliable, and timely energy information that will improve and broaden understanding of petroleum supply in the United States.

DATES: Comments must be filed by December 22, 2003. If you anticipate difficulty in submitting comments within that period, contact the person listed below as soon as possible.

ADDRESSES: Comments on this policy should be directed to Stefanie Palumbo, Petroleum Division. To ensure receipt of the comments by the due date, submission by FAX (202-586-5846) or e-mail (stefanie.palumbo@eia.doe.gov) is recommended. The mailing address is Petroleum Division, EI-42, Forrestal Building, U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Ave., SW., Washington, DC 20585. Alternatively, Stefanie Palumbo may be contacted by telephone at (202) 586-6866.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Requests for additional information should be directed to Ms. Palumbo at the address listed above.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

- I. Background
- II. Current Actions
- III. Request for Comments

I. Background

The Federal Energy Administration Act of 1974 (Pub. L. 93-275, 15 U.S.C. 761 *et seq.*) and the DOE Organization Act (Pub. L. 95-91, 42 U.S.C. 7101 *et seq.*) require the EIA to carry out a centralized, comprehensive, and unified energy information program. This program collects, evaluates, assembles, analyzes, and disseminates information on energy resource reserves, production, demand, technology, and related economic and statistical information. This information is used to assess the adequacy of energy resources to meet near and longer-term domestic demands.

The EIA provides the public and other Federal agencies with opportunities to comment on collections of energy information conducted by EIA. As appropriate, EIA also requests comments on important issues relevant to the dissemination of energy information. Comments received help the EIA when preparing information collections and information products necessary to support EIA's mission.

The purpose of the Petroleum Supply Reporting System (PSRS) surveys is to collect data to meet EIA's mandates and energy data users' needs for credible, reliable, and timely energy information on the petroleum industry. Adequate evaluation of the industry requires detailed, comprehensive data on production, receipts, inputs, regional

movements, imports, and stocks of crude oil, petroleum products, and natural gas liquids in the United States. The survey information is used to create statistics disseminated by EIA in various information products including the *Weekly Petroleum Status Report*, *This Week in Petroleum*, the *Petroleum Supply Monthly*, and the *Petroleum Supply Annual* available on EIA's Web site at http://www.eia.doe.gov/oil_gas/petroleum/info_glance/petroleum.html.

EIA's petroleum supply program provides Congress, other government agencies, businesses, trade associations, and private research and consulting organizations with statistics for analysis, projections, and monitoring purposes. To be most effective, EIA's petroleum supply statistical information must be available by product detail at sub-U.S. geographic breakdowns such as by Petroleum Administration for Defense (PAD) District, Refining District, and State.

The types of information collected in the PSRS surveys and the level of detail in statistical information disseminated by EIA follow a pattern first established by the Bureau of Mines in 1917. The PSRS surveys include weekly, monthly, and annual surveys designed to provide information on petroleum supply at various levels of detail given tradeoffs between timeliness and improved accuracy. For 2004, the PSRS surveys are expected to include the following forms:

- EIA-800, Weekly Refinery and Fractionator Report,
- EIA-801, Weekly Bulk Terminal Report,
- EIA-802, Weekly Product Pipeline Report,
- EIA-803, Weekly Crude Oil Stocks Report,
- EIA-804, Weekly Imports Report,
- EIA-805, Weekly Terminal Blenders Report,
- EIA-810, Monthly Refinery Report,
- EIA-811, Monthly Bulk Terminal Report,
- EIA-812, Monthly Product Pipeline Report,
- EIA-813, Monthly Crude Oil Report,
- EIA-814, Monthly Imports Report,
- EIA-815, Monthly Terminal Blenders Report,
- EIA-816, Monthly Natural Gas Liquids Report,
- EIA-817, Monthly Tanker and Barge Movement Report,
- EIA-819, Monthly Oxygenate Report, and
- EIA-820, Annual Refinery Report.

The specific forms and data elements in the PSRS surveys change over time to reflect the industry. However, the

overall purpose of the PSRS continues to be providing credible, reliable, and timely information on the petroleum industry. The information is integral to adequately understanding the U.S. petroleum supply situation. Detailed information at low level geographic breakdowns is needed on production, receipts, inputs, regional movements, imports, and stocks of crude oil, petroleum products, and natural gas liquids.

Most PSRS survey information is collected under a pledge of confidentiality. For information collected under a pledge of confidentiality, EIA does not publicly release names or other identifiers of survey respondents linked to their submitted data. However, for many data items, EIA does not apply disclosure limitation to statistics based on the survey data.

Disclosure limitation involves methods used to avoid the possibility that individually-identifiable information reported by a survey respondent may be inferred from published statistics. In accordance with EIA's existing policy for PSRS statistical information, most petroleum supply statistical information disseminated by EIA has not been subjected to disclosure limitation methods (the policy of not using disclosure limitation on petroleum supply statistical information has been in effect since EIA's creation in 1977 and was announced in the **Federal Register** on August 7, 1986 (61 FR 28415)). Therefore, when statistics are based on PSRS data from fewer than three respondents or are dominated by data from one or two large respondents and are not subjected to disclosure limitation methods, it may be possible for a knowledgeable person to estimate the data reported by a specific respondent.

While disclosure limitation has not been used on the majority of statistics based on the PSRS survey data, disclosure limitation has been used for statistics based on new products or product breakdowns that have occurred since 1986. Petroleum Supply Monthly (and corresponding Petroleum Supply Annual) tables that use currently use disclosure limitation are: Table 28, "Refinery Input of Crude Oil and Petroleum Products by PAD and Refining Districts," Table 29, "Refinery Net Production of Finished Petroleum Products by PAD and Refining Districts," Table 30, "Refinery Stocks of Crude Oil and Petroleum Products by PAD and Refining Districts," Table 51, "Stocks of Crude Oil and Petroleum Products by PAD District," Table 52, "Refinery, Bulk Terminal, and Natural