

Extranet Connectivity

The IRS is capable of supporting a moderate number of Trading Partners who wish to use an encryption technology termed "IPSec", with a shared secret key from their facilities, over the Internet to IRS selected ISPs handling IRS EXTRANET termination points. These termination points will contain only IRS equipment. The protocol within this connection would be the same as the current dedicated line filers, but would not guarantee any level of performance. Transmitters wishing to use this method would need to notify the IRS, following procedures outlined in IRS Publication 1346.

Cost Impacts and Taxpayer Burdens

The cost impact of the Internet SSL method to IRS e-filers is expected to be minimal. The transmitters will incur the cost of the ISP, however, many of them already have and use an ISP. Currently the e-filers must pay for the long distance telephone call to the IRS front-end sites, and must make multiple calls if their transmission volume is high. Historic technologies also incur "dropped" calls. These occurrences are expected to be reduced when the Internet is used. Calls now would be to the usually local ISP phone number and its alternates.

Implementation Schedule

The Internal Revenue Service will make known to the registered trading partners and software developers the software standards and scripting opportunities on or before March 31, 2004, to allow completion of any software changes in their products. The IRS will attempt to ensure that those standards are generally compliant to those adopted by other IRS e-commerce Internet interfaces. The Internal Revenue Service will make known to the registered trading partners and software developers the URLs for the "Secure Web" service model by July 31, 2004. The Internal Revenue Service will make a "Secure Web" test facility available to its registered users on or about July 31, 2004, and have a production Assurance Testing (ATS) facility for the "Secure Web" method by November 1, 2004.

The Internal Revenue Service encourages all current and prospective e-filers to begin using one or both of the two new encryption methods by November 1, 2004. Dedicated line filers are encouraged to implement encryption at their earliest convenience and at a time that is mutually agreeable to both the trading partner and the Internal

Revenue Service, prior to November 1, 2004.

Discontinuance of Existing Dial-Up Analog and Dial-Up ISDN Service

Effective December 1, 2003, the Service is no longer accepting requests for support of IRS dial-up ISDN services. During 2005, the IRS will phase down the number of its existing analog, PSTN dial-up line services and its companion existing ISDN dial-up line services, and will discontinue them on November 30, 2005.

ADDRESSES: Carolyn E. Davis, Senior Program Analyst, IRS, Electronic Tax Administration, OS:CIO:I:ET:S:SP, 5000 Ellin Road, Room C4-187, Lanham, MD 20706.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Questions or concerns will also be taken over the telephone. Call Carolyn Davis—202-283-0589 (not a toll-free number). You may e-mail responses entitled *e-file Transmission Encryption* to efile.transmission.encryption@irs.gov.

Dated: December 18, 2003.

Jo Ann Bass,

*Director Strategic Services Division,
Electronic Tax Administration.*

[FR Doc. 03-31825 Filed 12-24-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4830-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Internal Revenue Service

Open Meeting of the Area 4 Taxpayer Advocacy Panel (Including the States of Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, West Virginia, and Wisconsin)

AGENCY: Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Treasury.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: An open meeting of the Area 4 Taxpayer Advocacy Panel will be conducted (via teleconference). The Taxpayer Advocacy Panel is soliciting public comment, ideas, and suggestions on improving customer service at the Internal Revenue Service.

DATES: The meeting will be held Wednesday, January 21, 2004, at 8 a.m., central time.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Mary Ann Delzer at 1-888-912-1227, or (414) 297-1604.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Notice is hereby given pursuant to section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. App. (1988) that an open meeting of the Area 4 Taxpayer Advocacy Panel will be held Wednesday, January 21, 2004, at 8 a.m., central time via a telephone conference

call. You can submit written comments to the panel by faxing to (414) 297-1623, or by mail to Taxpayer Advocacy Panel, Stop1006MIL, 310 West Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53203-2221. Public comments will also be welcome during the meeting. Please contact Mary Ann Delzer at 1-888-912-1227 or (414) 297-1604 for dial-in information.

The agenda will include the following: Various IRS issues.

Dated: December 19, 2003.

Bernard Coston,

Director, Taxpayer Advocacy Panel.

[FR Doc. 03-31826 Filed 12-24-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4830-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Internal Revenue Service

Open Meeting of the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel Earned Income Tax Credit Issue Committee

AGENCY: Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Treasury.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: An open meeting of the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel Earned Income Tax Credit Issue Committee will be conducted (via teleconference). The committee is soliciting public comments, ideas and suggestions on improving the administration of the Earned Income Tax Credit by the IRS.

DATES: The meeting will be held Wednesday, January 21, 2004.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Audrey Y. Jenkins at 1-888-912-1227 (toll-free), or 718-488-2085 (non toll-free).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Notice is hereby given pursuant to section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. App. (1988) that an open meeting of the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel Earned Income Tax Credit Issue Committee will be held Wednesday, January 21, 2004, from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. e.t. via a telephone conference call. The public is invited to make oral comments. Individual comments will be limited to 5 minutes. If you would like to have the TAP consider a written statement, please call 1-888-912-1227 or 718-488-2085, or write Audrey Y. Jenkins, TAP Office, 10 MetroTech Center, 625 Fulton Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201. Due to limited conference lines, notification of intent to participate in the telephone conference call meeting must be made with Audrey Y. Jenkins.