

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
ITA – 4127P; OMB 0625-0215
Certified Trade Mission: Application for Status

Section A. Justification

1. Necessity of Information Collection

Certified Trade Missions are overseas events planned, organized and led by federal and non-federal government export promotion agencies such as industry trade associations, agencies of state and local governments, Congressional representatives, chambers of commerce, regional groups and other export-oriented groups. During the course of the fiscal year, the Commercial Service grants certification to and assists approximately 60 trade missions. An average delegation has 10 participants. Within the trade mission's framework, the Commercial Service managers in Washington, D.C. as well as those at U.S. Export Assistance Centers (USEACs) provide guidance and support to participating groups, and coordinate initial communications with the commercial sections at U.S. embassies and consulates on the mission's schedule. Participating firms pay a fee to cover the costs of the event to the mission organizer and inform the organizer of the delegation's goals and objectives for each target market. Each overseas post visited by the mission sets up a schedule of appointments for the participating companies and prepares company profiles on the overseas firms with whom they will meet. A market briefing is also arranged prior to the scheduled meetings. Other services are available through the overseas posts at the request of the organizer, such as the facilitation and co-hosting of receptions, suggesting appropriate invitation lists for receptions, issuing invitations, arranging site visits or seminars, etc.

The ITA-4127P is the Certified Trade Mission Application for Status questionnaire that is prepared by an organizer to begin the certification process after reading and agreeing to abide by the terms and conditions of participation.

2. Description and Practical Utility of the Information Collection Activity

The information is used by the Commercial Service managers in Washington, D.C. or at U.S. Export Assistance Centers, and the Commercial Service Officers and Foreign Service Nationals (FSNs) at the U.S. Embassies to evaluate applicants' mission goals, the marketability of product categories/industry in the local market, and to develop meeting schedules appropriate to these.

The collected information is critical to developing overseas on site visits and meetings with potential business partners. Without the ability to collect this information weeks in advance, it would be impossible to mount a meaningful event.

3. Minimizing Burden

Information requested may be submitted by the applicant via e-mail or facsimile, but because the information requested is narrative in nature, electronic forms are not as yet available.

4. Non-Duplication

There is no duplication of information within DOC or any other government entity. Participating U.S. firms are not asked to provide similar information for this same purpose.

5. Minimizing the Burden for Small Business

The use of standardized form, criteria, instructions and certifications are utilized to help ensure that the burden on small businesses is minimized. In addition, the amount of information requested has been reduced to the minimum necessary to evaluate viable applications.

6. Consideration of Alternatives

There is no similar information or service available that facilitates trade missions led by non-DOC organizers other than the Certified Trade Mission program.

7. Paperwork Reduction Act Guidelines

The information will be collected consistent with the Paperwork Reduction Act.

8. Consultations

Staff regularly consult with trade mission organizers to determine areas where improvements to the application process can be made. The organizers have expressed no problem with the format, and have in many instances expressed appreciation for the easy to understand and straightforward instructions. There are no unresolved substantive or material issues stemming from these consultation efforts.

In addition, a 60-day request for comments from the public was recently announced in the Federal Register, February 24, 2005 (Volume 70, Number 36). No comments from the public were generated from this announcement.

9. Incentives to Respondents

None. ITA makes no payments or gifts to remunerate applicants.

10. Assurances of Confidentiality

None. The information collected will remain business confidential and will be used only by ITA staff in assessing the applicants' abilities, experience and needs. No personal data of a private nature is required. As a general agency policy, proprietary company information is kept confidential within the strictures of all applicable law.

11. Justification for Sensitive Information

No questions of a sensitive nature are asked.

12. Estimation of Government and Respondent's Burden Hours and Costs.

It is estimated that 60 Certified Trade Missions will be completed per year. Government employees will spend approximately two hours reviewing and processing each response, or 120 total hours. At an average labor cost of \$25.00 per hour this will result in a cost to the Government of \$3,000. It is estimated that a respondent will spend one hour completing the Application for Status, or a total of 60 hours for all respondents. At an average labor cost of \$35.00 per hour this will result in a cost to respondents of \$2,100. The combined cost to both the Government and respondents is therefore estimated to be \$5,100.

13. Estimate of Government Burden (Hours and Cost)

<u>Form Number</u>	<u>Time to Complete</u>	<u>Number of Respondents</u>	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Total Hours</u>
ITA-4127P	2 hours (Govt.)	60	60 (1 each)	120

Cost to the Federal Government:

Data review/Processing (2 hours) * (60 responses)
=(120 Hours) * (\$25/hr avg. labor cost) \$3,000.00

14. Estimate of Respondent Burden (Hours and Cost)

<u>Form Number</u>	<u>Time to Complete</u>	<u>Number of Respondents</u>	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Total Hours</u>
ITA-4127P	1 hour (Respondent)	60	60 (1 each)	60

Cost to Private Sector Respondents

Completion by Management
(1.0 hrs @\$35/per hour) * (60 hours) \$2,100.00

Total Estimated cost for Government and Respondents: \$5,100.00

Number of Respondents: 60

Annual Burden Hours: 60 hours

15. Rationale for Program Change or Adjustments

None.

16. Use of Analytical Methodology

N/A. The result of the information collected is used to administer trade missions. The results are not tabulated or published.

17. Reasons for not Displaying Expiration Date

The OMB number and expiration date will be displayed on the form.

18. Rationale for Exceptions to Certification Statement

N/A.

SECTION B: COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS.

This collection of information does not employ statistical methodologies.

LEGAL AUTHORITY: PUBLIC LAW 15 U.S.C. 1513 et seq and 15 U.S.C. 171 et seq.