

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
U.S. Department of Commerce
International Trade Administration
U.S. Government Trade Information Request
OMB Control Number: 0625-0238

SECTION A. JUSTIFICATION

1. Necessity of Information Collection

Expanding U.S. exports is a national priority essential to improving U.S. trade performance. The International Trade Administration's (ITA) Advocacy Center marshals federal resources to assist U.S. firms competing for foreign government procurements worldwide. The Advocacy Center works closely with the Trade Promotion Coordination Committee, which is chaired by the Secretary of Commerce and includes 19 federal agencies involved in export promotion. The purpose of the U.S. Government Trade Event Information request is to collect the necessary information to make an evaluation as to whether a firm qualifies for senior-level U.S. government (USG) support, in the form of attendance at an event including witnessing the signing of a commercial agreement (e.g., most often a contract).

2. Description and Practical Utility of the Information Collection Activity

Form ITA-4136P is sent to any firm that requests senior-level USG witnessing of a commercial milestone, e.g., an announcement, contract, or business agreement signing, at a public event designed to highlight a company's commercial success in an overseas project or procurement competition. The Advocacy Center, appropriate ITA officials, U.S. Embassies/Consulates worldwide, and other federal government agencies that provide advocacy support to U.S. firms, will request firm(s) seeking USG advocacy support to complete the Information Request Form. This information is needed to ensure that the subject milestone to be witnessed is either a legally binding contract or a commercially significant announcement, which includes highlighted U.S. export content. Furthermore, the information contained on the form helps the U.S. Department of Commerce (USDOC) staff determine if USG association with the event or activity is in the best interest of the USG. The information collected permits staff to review details of the milestone to be witnessed, and to make an evaluation on: (a) whether the contract or announcement is actually ready for final signature or public disclosure; (b) whether additional USG advocacy may be required prior to the event in question; (c) whether the level of U.S. company participation and foreign government official participation, if appropriate, is at a level high enough to recommend senior-level USG participation; and (d) where U.S. export content associated with the contract/announcement would be sourced. If this information were not collected, staff could not make the appropriate evaluation prior to USG involvement.

3. Minimizing Burden

U.S. firms requesting USG representation at a commercial milestone event may submit the completed Questionnaire to the Advocacy Center via fax or via e-mail as long as an official electronic signature is available.

4. Non-Duplication

The Information Request Form is—and will continue to be—used by all USG agencies that consider senior-level USG witnessing at a commercial international trade event. The lead agency or office for a particular project, will submit a copy of the form to the Advocacy Center. The Advocacy Center will ensure that other agencies receive a copy of the information, as appropriate.

5. Minimizing the Burden for Small Businesses

There will be a minimal burden placed on small businesses. The amount of information requested is the minimum necessary to evaluate a specific company's request for senior-level USG witnessing of a commercial milestone at an international trade event.

6. Consideration of Alternatives

No similar information collection is available.

7. Paperwork Reduction Act Guidelines

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

8. Consultations

The Information Request Form was developed and revised by the Advocacy Center in conjunction with the USG Advocacy network and selected U.S. firms. The attached Information Request Form incorporates input from ITA organizational units, with sister USDOC agencies (e.g., the Bureau of Industry and Security), with the Advocacy Network (e.g., the TPCC agencies), and with selected U.S. firms and trade associations. There are no unresolved substantive or material issues stemming from these consultations.

In addition, a 60-day request for comments from the public was published December 6, 2006, in the Federal Register [Volume 71, Number 236]. No comments were received.

9. Incentives to Respondents

None. ITA makes no payments or gifts to applicants.

10. Assurance of Confidentiality

The U.S. firms are informed that the information is for internal USG use only and that it will be considered *business confidential* (as stated in the Trade Information Request). Some of the information collected may be subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act.

11. Justification for Sensitive Information

No questions of a sensitive nature are asked of respondents.

12. Estimated Burden Hours to Respondents for Collection of Information

Senior-level USG officials witnessing contract signings are generally undertaken at the request of U.S. companies to highlight commercial milestones pertaining to projects/procurements

overseas. Based on the number of senior-level USG trips overseas and the status of major projects in respective countries, ITA estimates that approximately 20 firms in key industry sectors will submit a request for USG advocacy support annually. Each request will be for a different project/procurement that would result in significant U.S. exports and U.S. job creation were the American bidder was awarded the transaction. The estimated average private sector salary for persons completing the Advocacy Questionnaire is \$50/hour, and the average public sector salary for persons responding is \$50.00/hour. It will take an estimated 1-hour for respondent companies to complete the form.

Total estimated respondent burden:

| <u>Form No.</u> | <u>Time to Complete</u> | <u>No. Respondents</u> | <u>No. Responses</u> | <u>Total Hours</u> |
|-----------------|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| 1 hr | 20 | 20 | 20 hrs. | |

13. Estimated Respondent Burden Costs:

Cost to Respondents: Total Hours (20) x Average Salary (\$50/hr.) = \$1,000

14. Estimated Government Burden Costs:

The cost to the federal government is \$800.00.

15. Rationale for Program Change or Adjustments

Since the previous request to authorize this form, ITA-4136P, there have been fewer requests for senior U.S. Government official to witness commercial milestones highlighted at public international trade events.

16. Uses of Analytical Methodology

This collection of information does not employ statistical methods. The Advocacy Center will collect the data from each company that submits a request for such support.

17. Reasons for not Displaying Expiration Data

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

18. Rationale for Exceptions to Certification Statement

N/A