

## **Supporting Statement**

### **USCIS Case Status Service Online**

**(No Agency Form Number; File No. OMB-33)**

**OMB No. 1615-0080**

#### **A. Justification**

1. After an individual submits an application for a USCIS service or benefit, the individual or organization acting on behalf of the individual will request the status of the application. The requests are made to Immigration Officers at the National Customer Service Center and at local USCIS offices throughout the world. In many instances, applicants wait in long lines to request case status at local offices. Applicants also call in to already overloaded phone answering systems. To decrease inquiry response times and improve customer service capability, USCIS developed an Internet solution for case status inquiries. This internet solution is called USCIS Case Status Service Online and was developed to permit individuals and organizations to electronically request the status of their application or action.

The Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) receives in excess of 24 million annual requests for status information from individuals and organizations. Of this figure USCIS Case Status Service Online receives 20 million status requests.

The collection of this information is necessary to identify and match the requestor with an application or action. USCIS Case Status Service Online can be accessed at:

<http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis>

**Authority:** Section 461 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, Public Law 107-296.

2. The data entered into the website permits the USCIS to match the requestor with the status of an application or action. The data is only entered the first time that an individual logs into the website. The system retains the requestor's log identifying information and performs the match when that individual makes subsequent visits to the website. On subsequent visits the requestor only needs to enter the log number or case number.
3. The collection of information involves electronic responses through the Internet. Using a website to collect a minimal amount of information to identify the requestor is the most efficient and timely method of providing status information to the public. Storing a respondent's profile reduces the public's burden when subsequent visits are made to the system. Other methodologies for case status requests include telephone calls and office visits. Telephone communications are constrained by the number of lines and staff. Local office interaction is constrained by the number of staff and hours available in the business day. The use of the website is only constrained by access to a computer.  
To view data elements see screenshots.
4. Since a respondent's information is collected via the Internet, it is possible to use similar data previously submitted. Implementation of the online service eliminates the duplication that occurs with each redundant telephone request.

5. The collection of information reduces the existing burden on small businesses and organizations that support USCIS customers. Through the internet small businesses or small entities (law firms or advocacy groups) receive instant responses to their inquiries and no longer have to wait in long lines or wait for a telephone response on a case status request. This electronic method of data collection may impact those individuals without access to computers; however, individuals without computers can still request status information through the call centers and the local offices.
6. Without this information collection the applicants will not have access to their case status.
7. The special circumstances contained in item 7 are not applicable to this information collection.
8. USCIS published a notice in the Federal Register on December 29, 2008, at 73 FR 79502, allowing for a 60-day comment period. USCIS did not receive any comments from the public.
9. The USCIS does not provide payments or gifts to respondents in exchange for a benefit sought.
10. The Privacy Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-589) mandates that personal information solicited from individuals completing Federal records and forms shall be kept confidential. The respondent is informed that the response is voluntary.
11. There are no questions of a sensitive nature.
12. Annual Reporting Burden:

a. Number of Respondents	20,000,000
b. Number of Responses per each Respondent	1

c. Total Annual Responses	20,000,000
d. Hours per Response	.072
e. Total Annual Reporting Burden (hours)	1,440,000

**Annual Reporting Burden**

The total annual reporting burden hours are 1,440,000. This estimate was derived by multiplying the number of respondents (20,000,000) by the frequency of response (1), by the hours per response 4 1/2 minutes (.072). This estimate is based on USCIS experience in monitoring the system’s use during the past several years.

- 13. There are no capital or start-up costs associated with this information collection. Any cost burdens to respondents as a result of this collection are identified in item 14.

14. **Government Cost.**

**The estimated cost of the program to the Government is \$3,120.** This figure is based on the number of hours to update the status database multiplied by average hourly rate of a GS-11 employee. This calculation is:

$$\text{GS-11 rate of } \$30 \text{ (approx. average)} \times 104 \text{ hours} = \$3,120$$

**Annual Public Cost**

The total public cost is \$14,400,000. This estimate is based on the number of respondents (20,000,000) multiplied by 4 1/2 minutes (.072 hours) per response, multiplied by \$10 (average hourly rate).

- 15. There has been an increase of 888,000 burden hours. This increase can be attributed to the popularity of the USCIS Case Status Service Online compared with a 2005 review and 2003 initial estimate. Initially it was estimated that there would be

1,000,000 respondents a year. The initial estimate was far to low and was based on the following assumptions in 2003:

Of the 18 million calls received by the National Customer Service Center per year it was estimated that approximately 38% were repeat callers or redials. Internal reviews indicated that 35% of the repeat callers or redials were for case status requests (the subject of this justification) that could be served by Case Status Service Online. Thus, it was initially estimated that 3.91 million inquiries were to be supported by Case Status Service Online:

$(18,000,000 \text{ calls per year} \times 38\% \text{ (repeat callers)}) = 11,160,000 \times 35\% \text{ (case status requests)} = 3,906,000.$

Of the 3.91 million inquiries estimated to be supported by USCIS Case Status Service Online it was further determined that the figure could be reduced to one million inquiries. This was determined by:

Dividing 3.91 million by 50% (an assumption was made that 50% of the inquiries would be by Internet), reducing the Case Status Online requirement to 1.95 million customer inquiries per year. Since the Case Status Service Online application can automatically generate email responses to requestors, it was further assumed that 50% of the requestors would not visit the Case Status Online site but instead would accept automatic notification. Of the 1.95 million possible inquiries per year, the number was halved to approximately 1 million.

Since 2005, it has been observed, that the Case Status Online feature has become very popular with USCIS applicants and companies filing as representative organizations. The site continues to grow in visitors per month and averages approximately 1.6 million

visitors each month. The Case Status Online feature is now used by the National Customer Service Center's on each phone call for live assistance to review the most current action taken for the customer calling in for support.

- 16. USCIS does not intend to employ the use of statistics or the publication thereof for this collection of information.
- 17. USCIS will display the expiration date for OMB approval of this information collection on the first page of the website.
- 18. USCIS does not request an exception to the certification of this information collection.
- B. Collection of Information Employing Statistical Methods  
Not Applicable
- C. Certification and Signatures

**Paperwork Certification**

In submitting this request for OMB approval, I certify that the requirements of the Privacy Act and OMB directives have been complied with including paperwork regulations, statistical standards or directives, and any other information policy directives promulgated under 5 CFR 1320.

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Sunday Aigbe,

Chief,

Regulatory Management Division,

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**Date**

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.