

Date: January 26, 2010

To: Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs
Office of Management and Budget (OMB)

Thru: Reports Clearance Officer, DHHS
Project Clearance Chief, NIH
Project Clearance Liaison, NLM

From: Director, National Library of Medicine

Subject: Emergency Clearance for NLM/Bethesda Hospitals Emergency Preparedness Partnership Lost Person Finder

As the Director, National Library of Medicine (NLM), I submit this request for emergency clearance of the information collection for the Bethesda Hospitals Emergency Preparedness Partnership (BHEPP) Lost Person Finder (LPF). Development of the LPF system has been greatly accelerated to enable its use in the US Government's ongoing efforts to respond to the recent earthquake in Haiti. As such, I have determined, in accordance with 5 CFR 1320.13, that the collection of the information for the Lost Person Finder:

- a) is needed prior to the expiration of time periods established under 5 CFR 1320;
- b) is consistent with the mission of the agency;
- c) is needed to respond to circumstances that could not be foreseen; and
- d) the agency cannot reasonably comply with the normal clearance procedures because the use of the normal clearance procedures could result in significant harm to the public or the program.

The LPF was developed by NLM for possible future use by BHEPP during emergencies in the National Capitol Region. BHEPP was established to improve community disaster preparedness and response in Bethesda, Maryland and includes the National Naval Medical Center, the National Institutes of Health Clinical Center, and Suburban Hospital/Johns Hopkins Medicine. Multi-agency exercises identified a need for a tool to help reunify families during a crisis, in particular as disaster victims are brought to medical facilities for care.

The LPF system is designed to allow first responders to submit photographs and descriptive information about disaster victims (name (if known), age group, gender, status, and location) to a Web site that other family members can search to locate loved ones. The system has been designed to share data with other lost-person finder systems, including the system established by Google, but it provides additional functionality not available in these other systems, including the capability to upload photographs from camera-equipped cell phones and to search by information other than name.

The January 2010 earthquake in Haiti presents an urgent need for a family reunification system. In response to the President's call for agencies to contribute to the recovery effort, NLM has accelerated its development of the LPF to enable its use in Haiti.

Due to the extreme gravity of the situation in Haiti and benefits that timely deployment of the system could bring to the relief effort, this request for approval of the information collection is forwarded to the Office of Management and Budget, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs for emergency processing.

Donald A.B. Lindberg, M.D.