

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
U.S. Department of Commerce
International Trade Administration
Certified Trade Mission: Application for Status
OMB CONTROL NO. 0625-0215

A. JUSTIFICATION

This is a request to extend the Office of Management and Budget approval.

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.

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 ten 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. The 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.

This collection 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. Explain how, by whom, how frequently, and for what purpose the information will be used. If the information collected will be disseminated to the public or used to support information that will be disseminated to the public, then explain how the collection complies with all applicable Information Quality Guidelines.

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.

A prospective Certified Trade Mission Applicant will either contact (1) CS posts located in trade mission destinations of interest; or (2) CS Headquarters (which will then assist the applicant with contacting posts in destinations of interest) to discuss the possibility of obtaining trade mission certification status. After an initial discussion with CS posts in locations of interest, the posts will provide the applicant with the Certified Trade Mission Application via e-mail. The posts will also provide the applicant with e-mail, fax and mailing instructions.

The information requested on the Application 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 for the CS to mount a meaningful event.

3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological techniques or other forms of information technology.

The CS provides applicants with three options for submitting the requested information. After preparing the application and supporting information, applicants may select the most convenient submission option:

- Scan the application materials and e-mail them to the appropriate post(s), or
- Fax the materials to the appropriate post(s), or
- Mail the materials to the appropriate post(s).

The CS has thoroughly reviewed the content and the method of collection to be sure that the process is as streamlined and easy as possible for applicants, while providing the CS with the details needed to evaluate the merit of the application and arrange appropriate match-making meetings for mission participants. The information needed from applicants is narrative in nature, and therefore electronic forms are not as appropriate as the above options.

4. Describe efforts to identify 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. If the collection of information involves small businesses or other small entities, describe the methods used to minimize burden.

The use of standardized form, criteria, instructions and certifications 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. Describe the consequences to the Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently.

If the information was not collected, CS would not be able to effectively carry out the trade mission requests.

7. Explain any special circumstances that require the collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with OMB guidelines.

The collection will be conducted in a manner consistent with OMB guidelines.

8. Provide information for the PRA Federal Register notice that solicited public comments on the information collection prior to this submission. Summarize the public comments received in response to that notice and describe the actions taken by the agency in response to those comments. Describe the efforts to consult with persons outside the agency to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instructions and recordkeeping, disclosure, or reporting format (if any), and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported.

The Federal Register Notice soliciting public comment was published on October 13, 2009 (Volume 74, Number 196, pg. 52451). No comments were received.

In evaluating the application form and process, the CS reached out to frontline staff for input. These staff members work directly with applicants and support the trade missions for their input. Based upon input from staff and an evaluation of customer satisfaction with CS certified trade missions, a decision was made to maintain the current application and trade mission certification process.

9. Explain any decisions to provide payments or gifts to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.

Not applicable.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.

There is no assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents. The applicants' information will be used internally and the International Trade Administration does not intend to make this information available to the public.

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private.

No questions of a sensitive nature are asked.

12. Provide an estimate in hours of the burden of the collection of information.

Document	Estimated annual no. of respondents	Estimated burden per response	Estimated annual total burden hours
Certified Trade Mission Application	60	1	60

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to the respondents or record-keepers resulting from the collection (excluding the value of the burden hours in #12 above).

Not applicable.

14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government.

Data review/Processing (2 hours) * (60 responses) = 120 hours.
(120 hrs.) * (\$25/hr avg. labor cost) = \$3,000.

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments.

Not applicable.

16. For collections whose results will be published, outline the plans for tabulation and publication.

Not applicable.

17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons why display would be inappropriate.

The expiration date for OMB approval will be displayed.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement.

Not applicable.

B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

Not applicable.