

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
U.S. Department of Commerce
International Trade Administration
Application for Export Trade Certificate of Review
OMB Control No. 0625-0125

A. JUSTIFICATION

This is a request for approval to renew information collection.

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

Title III of the Export Trading Company Act (hereinafter “the Act”) of 1982 (P.L. No. 97-290, 15 U.S.C. §§ 4001 et seq), authorizes the Secretary of Commerce to issue, with the concurrence of the Attorney General, an Export Trade Certificate of Review to any person that establishes that its proposed export trade, export trade activities, and methods of operation meet the four standards found in Section 303 (a) of the Act, 15 U.S.C. §§ 4001 et seq. An Export Trade Certificate of Review provides the certificate holder and its members with limited antitrust preclearance for specified export-related activities. The information to be collected is found at 15 C.F.R. part 325--Export Trade Certificates of Review. The collection of information is necessary for both the Department of Commerce and the Department of Justice (Departments) to conduct an antitrust analysis, in order to determine whether the applicant’s proposed export-related conduct meets the four standards found in Section 303(a) of the Act. The collection of information constitutes the essential basis of the statutory determinations to be made by the Secretary of Commerce and the Attorney General. This information is collected via the Export Trade Certificate of Review Application Form (ITA-4093P). Prior to the one year anniversary of when the original certificate is issued, the applicant is provided a list of questions which is the annual report and is due within 45 days after the anniversary date of the issuance. This reporting requirement updates the information under which the certificate was granted. If the applicant does not comply with this requirement, the certificate can be revoked.

Changes made to the Application for an Export Trade Certificate of Review form ITA-4093P have been made to reflect streamlined case tracking needs (see elimination of “date received” and “date deemed submitted” on page one), updated website addresses (see website change on page one), administrating office locations (see mailing address change on page one), and updated acceptable application submission practices (see email submission addition on page one). Similarly, the applicant is now requested to submit email information in addition to physical mailing address contact information (see additional “Email” lines on page 2). For ease of reference, and numbering consistency the formatting has been slightly altered on the overall application form. Aside from the additional email contact information request, all the data collected in this form is identical to its predecessor. Geographic data formerly requested in Item 8(A) and 8(B) was reorganized for ease of reference to Item7A(ii), Item7A(iii), and Item7D(i)5.

The following Item numbering was corrected to reflect the new, reduced number of requested Item responses.

Changes made to the Annual Report Questions similarly reflect updated program administrator contact information and an updated approved email submission option. The only departure from the previous annual report questions is the explicit breakout of requested reporting under the Certificate from both the Certificate holder as well as each Certificate member.

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 contained in the application will be used by the Departments in performing the antitrust analysis required by Title III of the Act. In the Department of Commerce, the economic and legal analysis will be performed by the Office of Trade and Economic Analysis (“OTEA”) and the Office of the General Counsel, respectively. The Department of Justice analysis will be conducted by its Antitrust Division. The purpose of such analysis is to make a determination as to whether or not to issue the certificate. A certificate provides its holder and members named in the certificate: (a) protection from government actions under state and Federal antitrust laws for the export conduct specified in the certificate; (b) some protection from frivolous private suits by limiting their liability in private actions to actual damages when the challenged activities are covered by an Export Certificate of Review. Title III was enacted to reduce uncertainty regarding application of U.S. antitrust laws to export activities – especially those involving actions by domestic competitors.

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 subject application form is available via the Internet and via email from Export Trade Certificate of Review staff and the form can be printed by the applicant for their use. The application form and annual report can be submitted to Export Trade Certificate of Review staff via mail or email communication to etca@trade.gov. Each item requires the applicant’s signature.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.

No duplication was identified. The information is available only from the applicants and is unique to their trade activities.

5. If the collection of information involves small businesses or other small entities, describe the methods used to minimize burden.

The collection of information often involves small businesses. The application is restricted to information, which is both required for the antitrust analysis and exclusively in the possession of the applicant and its members. The requested information is needed no matter the size of the business.

It may not be necessary for every applicant to respond to every question on the application form. If an applicant believes that certain information requested is not necessary for a determination on the application, the applicant may request a waiver prior to submitting the application by contacting Export Trading Company Affairs at telephone (202) 482-5131 or via email at etca@trade.gov.

6. Describe the consequences to the Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently.

If this information is not collected, the antitrust analysis cannot be performed and without that analysis no certificate can be issued.

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

The information will be collected consistent with OMB guidelines.

8. Provide information of 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.

A 60-day request for comments from the public was announced in the Federal Register on December 18, 2014 (Volume 79, Number 243, pg. 75532). No comments were generated from this announcement.

The OTEA staff regularly consults with respondents and prospective clients to determine areas where improvements to the application and application process can be made. The OTEA staff provides confidential counseling to persons and firms interested in seeking Title III certification. These counseling sessions involve a detailed discussion of the application process and the

information required to be included in the application. These counseling sessions have been a valuable means of consultation about the collection of information. Because these counseling sessions are confidential and were conducted on that basis, the names of those counseled cannot be revealed. There are no unresolved or material issues stemming from these consultation efforts.

In addition to respondents and prospective clients, ETCA staff routinely consults with the Chief Counsel for International Commerce to determine areas of improvement for the application and application 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.

Information submitted by any person in connection with the issuance, amendment, or revocation of a certificate of review is exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, Section 552, Title 5, United States Code. Except as provided under Section 309(b)(2) of the Export Trading Company Act (“Act”) and 15 CFR 325.16(b)(3), no officer or employee of the United States shall disclose commercial or financial information submitted pursuant to the Act if the information is privileged or confidential and if disclosure of the information would cause harm to the person who submitted the information.

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.

It is estimated that OTEA will receive approximately 9 applications per year. It is also estimated that an applicant will expend 32 hours in preparing an application for submission. Therefore, the total estimated hours of the burden are **288**.

The annual report questions was not included as part of the previous submission. It is estimated that the report will take 2 hours to complete, for a total of **152 hours**.

TOTAL BURDEN HOURS = 440

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 Question 12 above).

Not applicable.

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

OTEA staff salaries allocated to the program total approximately \$90,823. An additional estimated \$10,000 in related costs, such as publication in the Federal Register, computer time, travel, and supplies, are attributed to the statutory review of applications for an Export Trade Certificate of Review.

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

The adjustment decrease of 9 responses and increase of 26 burden hours is due to enhanced reporting and administration of historical cases.

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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.

Not applicable.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement.

Not applicable.

B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

This collection of information does not employ statistical methodologies.