

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT FOR
PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT SUBMISSION
Foreign Service Officer Test Registration Form
OMB Number 1405-0008
Form DS-1998E**

A. JUSTIFICATION

1. The Foreign Service Officer Test Registration Form is the form used by all individuals who wish to register for the Foreign Service Officer Test. The collection of information is authorized by section 301(b) of the Foreign Service Act of 1980, as amended (22 U.S.C. § 3941(b)), which provides that the Secretary of State “[s]hall prescribe, as appropriate, written, oral, physical, foreign language, and other examination for appointment to the [Foreign] Service (other than as chief of mission or ambassador at large).” Information on race, national origin, and sex of applicants is collected in accordance with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended and Federal Sector Equal Employment Opportunities Regulations (29 C.F.R. § 1614.601). Collection of Social Security numbers is pursuant to Executive Order 9397, which required federal agencies to use Social Security numbers “whenever [an agency head] finds it advisable to establish a new system of permanent account numbers pertaining to individual persons.” Information on disabilities is collected pursuant to 29 C.F.R. §§ 1614.601(a), (f), and (g); 29 C.F.R. §§ 1614.203(d)(6) – (8); Executive Orders 13078, 13163, and 13164; and the EEOC Management Directive 715, consistent with Sections 501 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. §§ 791 and 794.
2. Pearson VUE will collect the information on behalf of the U.S. Department of State via electronic form transfer. As is the case regarding information received from the current collection of information, the information collected will be used to register individuals for the Foreign Service Officer Test, to help improve future tests, and to conduct research based on test results for test registrants, takers, and passers. The Department of State will use the data to collect generic applicant information.
3. The online registration form is accessible at www.pearsonvue.com/fsot/ (DS-1998E.) It is submitted via electronic form transfer; registration data is transferred into the contractor's master database.
4. Form DS-1998E will be used only to register for the Foreign Service Officer Test. The information collected is not a duplicate of information maintained elsewhere by or otherwise available to the Department.
5. This collection does not impact small businesses or other small entities.
6. The collection of information through the Foreign Service Officer Test Registration Form is vital for the recruitment of new Foreign Service Officers. This is the only

form that may be used to register for the Foreign Service Officer Test, which is the first of the assessments that must be passed to be considered for employment as a Foreign Service Officer. The information is collected in preparation for administering the Foreign Service Officer Test. Department of State hiring needs dictate test administration.

7. There are no special circumstances regarding this information collection.
8. The State Department (Bureau of Human Resources) will publish a 60-day notice requesting public comments.
9. The Department of State does not provide any payment or gifts to the respondents.
10. The Registration Form solicits information pursuant to the authority granted to the Secretary of State under the Foreign Service Act of 1980, as amended, and is governed by the applicable sections of the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 USC 552a) and the Freedom of Information Act (5 USC 552) as amended. There have been no other assurances of confidentiality.
11. This collection does not request sensitive information.
12. The Bureau of Global Talent Management estimates that the average time required for this information collection is two hours per response. Therefore, the estimated total annual burden for the collection is: 12,000 (estimated number of respondents) x 2 (hours) = 24,000 hours per year. To estimate the cost to respondents based on hourly wage and weighted wage multiplier, the Department of State calculated the following:

\$35.62 (mean hourly earning based on the estimated income per hour from the Bureau of Labor Statistics¹) x 1.4 (weighted wage multiplier) = \$49.90 weighted wage
12,000 (annual hours) x \$49.90 (weighted wage) = \$598,800 (hour burden cost). The estimate of number of hours required per response is based on a sampling of the time required to search existing data sources, gather the necessary information, provide the information required, review the final collection, and submit the collection to Pearson VUE for processing.
13. There is no cost to the applicant to complete this form.
14. The Department of State contracted with Pearson VUE for the design of the Foreign Service Officer Test Registration Form and the administration of the Foreign Service Officer Test. The following costs are based on the statements that Pearson VUE has provided the United States Department of State regarding FSOT registration and administration.

¹ "Employment and Average Annual Earnings by Industry," last modified January 2021, [bls.gov/charts/employment-situation/employment-and-average-hourly-earnings-by-industry-bubble.htm](https://www.bls.gov/charts/employment-situation/employment-and-average-hourly-earnings-by-industry-bubble.htm)

The estimated annualized cost to the federal government is \$1,570,937. The base year cost for the FSOT instrument development, test registration, test center administration, online proctoring, web monitoring, and score reports is \$1,523,870. The estimated cost for these services in contract year two is \$1,664,870 and \$1,524,070 in year three. ($\$1,523,870 + \$1,664,870 + \$1,524,070 = \$4,712,810 / 3 = \$1,570,937$)

15. There were an estimated 12,000 respondents reported at the last renewal of this collection. There are now an estimated 7,538 respondents for the Foreign Service Officer Test resulting in a corresponding decrease in burden hours.
16. The data gathered by this collection will not be published.
17. The Department will display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection.
18. The Department is not requesting any exception to the certification statement.

B. COLLECTION OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

1. The Department of State is only concerned with those individuals who submit the registration form; non-respondents are of no concern.
2. The Department of State uses the information from the registration material to assess the effectiveness of its recruitment process. Demographic data, schools and other registrant information are analyzed to assess the recruitment effort in the past year, as well as to project the recruitment effort that is needed for the future. This statistical analysis is critical to the ongoing development of the recruitment strategy and the assessment of the recruitment process to achieve the goals and objective of the United States Department of State Five Year Recruitment Plan. We have not had to use sampling procedures; all results of our data collected can be described as reliable data.
3. Non-response is not an issue because the only way an applicant can take the Foreign Service Officer Test is to complete this test registration form.
4. Policy procedures already in place and have been tested previously.
5. Pearson VUE will collect the statistical data on behalf of the United States Department of State. The chief contact at Pearson VUE on the statistical process is Theresa Wolken, project director, reachable at 952-258-9868.