

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT**  
**U.S. Department of Commerce**  
**International Trade Administration**  
**Steel Import License**  
**OMB Control No. 0625-0245**

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT PART A - (Questions and Guidance for Responses) General Instructions**

**PLEASE NOTE: Once the collection is approved, any actions performed that are not covered in the Supporting Statement are PRA violations.**

**Abstract**

The President’s Proclamation on Steel Safeguards mandated that the Departments of Commerce and Treasury institute an import licensing system to facilitate the monitoring of certain steel imports in 2002. In 2005, Commerce enacted regulations that implemented the Steel Import Monitoring and Analysis (SIMA) System and expanded on the licensing system for steel that was part of those safeguards. Most recently, in October 2020, Commerce modified its SIMA regulations to require that steel import license applicants identify the country of melt and pour as an additional field on the steel import license application and expanded the licensing requirement to apply to all steel products.

The import license information is necessary to assess import trends of steel products. In order to effectively monitor steel imports, Commerce must collect and provide timely aggregated summaries about the imports. The Steel Import License is the tool used to collect the necessary information. The Census Bureau currently collects import data and disseminates aggregate information about steel imports. However, the time required to collect, process, and disseminate this information through Census can take up to 45 days after importation of the product, giving interested parties and the public far less time to respond to injurious sales.

**Justification**

**1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. Identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection. Attach a copy of the appropriate section of each statute and regulation mandating or authorizing the collection of information.**

The SIMA system is vital to facilitate the real-time monitoring of steel imports in a volatile market. This is a continuation of the licensing and monitoring system which began as part of the 201 steel safeguards. Commerce administers the SIMA system under the authority of the Census Act (13 U.S.C. § 301(a) and 302) and 19 CFR 351 Part 360. These authorities are attached.

In order to monitor steel imports in real-time and to provide the public with real-time data, Commerce must collect and provide timely aggregated summaries about imports of certain steel products. The collection requirements are set forth by regulation at 19 CFR Part 360. The Steel Import License form (ITA-4141P) collects the information required by regulation. The Census Bureau currently collects import data and disseminates aggregate information about steel imports. However, the time required to collect, process, and disseminate this information through Census can take up to 45 days after importation of the product, giving interested parties and the public far less time to respond to injurious sales.

In 2009, ITA’s request for a reusable low-value “opt-out” license (Request for a Low-Value Steel Import License Number) defined as “covering imports valued at less than \$5,000 per entry” was approved. This is a certification document.

**2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used. Except for a new collection, indicate the actual use the agency has made of the information received from the current collection.**

The import steel license information is necessary for the U.S. Government (USG) to assess import trends of covered products in real time and to share summary level information with the public via a website:

<https://trade.gov/steel>.

The information listed on the Steel Import License form (ITA-4141P) is required of all importers of subject merchandise prior to, or at the time of, entry into the United States and has been deemed necessary by Commerce and the Administration to adequately assess potential surges in imports of covered steel products. All entries for consumption of covered steel products, other than informal entries, require an import license prior to the filing of Customs entry summary documents (*see* 19 CFR 360.101(b)). Steel import licenses are issued to registered importers, customs brokers, or their agents through an online automatic steel import licensing system (19 CFR 360.103(a)). The license application can be submitted electronically via the Commerce website (<https://trade.gov/steel>) or completed electronically and emailed to Commerce. Note that the collection requirements for the SIMA system have not changed since Commerce's last certification.

Commerce uses the information collected in an online monitoring system to display aggregate statistical trends to the public. Standard Census Bureau procedures are followed for handling business proprietary information.

The licensing system uses information already required of an importer. Commerce does not charge a fee for the license. The U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) requires the license number generated by the successful submission of the license form when a broker or importer files his/her CBP entry summary (which happens within 10 business days of importation). The license can be obtained up to 60-days prior to importation or on the date of Customs summary filing (Form 7501). If the license number is not submitted to CBP with the summary documents, CBP will consider the entry summary to be incomplete and may request that the shipment be redelivered.

**3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses, and the basis for the decision for adopting this means of collection. Also, describe any consideration of using information technology to reduce burden.**

The Steel Import License is available to all importers through an Internet website. While importers without an Internet hookup can contact Commerce for further instructions, all license applications can be filled out electronically through the online licensing system. Using electronic submission as the basis for this system allows for the quickest and most efficient means for collecting the required information and aggregating the information submitted in the form.

**4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purposes described in Question 2**

The Census Bureau reports similar official import statistics that are issued on a monthly basis, but with a significant lag time after the products have entered the United States. The lag time could be up to 45 days after importation of the covered products. The domestic steel industry has stated repeatedly that any remedy against injurious sales of steel can only be effective if information about these sales is made available quickly. The

domestic steel industry has claimed that although the Census Bureau information is reliable, it is released too late. When the Census information is released, those sales have already had an impact on the market.

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

The vast majority of applicants are major steel importers, producers and brokers. There are very few small businesses that are users of the licensing system; however, for importers bringing in small amounts of steel, there is a low value license option which is less burdensome.

**6. Describe the consequence to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.**

Failure to collect information about steel imports before or just after importation would disrupt the goals and objectives of the President's mandate. As a result of unmonitored surges, U.S. steel producers could continue to be injured by surges of imports.

**7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner:**

**requiring respondents to report information to the agency more often than quarterly;**

Respondents must obtain an import license for each consumption entry into the United States, which may be more or less frequent than quarterly.

**requiring respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it;**

There are no such special circumstances.

**requiring respondents to submit more than an original and two copies of any document;**

There are no such special circumstances.

**requiring respondents to retain records, other than health, medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records for more than three years;**

Respondents are not required to retain records under the SIMA system, although U.S. Customs and Border Protection may impose record retention requirements independent of this information collection.

**in connection with a statistical survey, that is not designed to produce valid and reliable results that can be generalized to the universe of study;**

This is not a statistical survey and, as such, no special circumstances apply.

**requiring the use of a statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by OMB;**

This is not a statistical data classification and, as such, no special circumstances apply.

**that includes a pledge of confidentiality that is not supported by authority established in statute or regulation, that is not supported by disclosure and data security policies that are consistent with the**

**pledge, or which unnecessarily impedes sharing of data with other agencies for compatible confidential use; or**

Confidential treatment of the information collected on the Steel Import License is supported by relevant legal authority.

**requiring respondents to submit proprietary trade secret, or other confidential information unless the agency can demonstrate that it has instituted procedures to protect the information's confidentiality to the extent permitted by law.**

Commerce has imposed procedures that protect the information's confidentiality.

**8. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publications in the Federal Register of the agency's notice, required by 5 CFR 1320.8 (d), soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB. Summarize public comments received in response to that notice and describe actions taken by the agency in response to these comments. Specifically address comments received on cost and hour burden.**

A Federal Register Notice was recently published on September 26, 2023 (Volume 88, Number 185, pg. 65,951), which provided 60 days for public comment on the information collection. Commerce received 2 comments from: (1) the American Wire Producers Association (AWPA); and (2) the American Institute of Steel Construction, American Iron and Steel Institute, Committee on Pipe and Tube Imports, Specialty Steel Industry of North America, Steel Manufacturers Association, and United Steelworkers (Steel Industry).

The comments received from the AWPA and the Steel Industry endorsed the utility and value of the SIMA system and the data collected thereunder, as well as the continued support of the SIMA system. In addition, the AWPA urged Commerce to extend coverage of SIMA to include steel wire products.

The International Trade Administration notes that the comments submitted by AWPA and the Steel Industry underscore the practical utility of the aggregate information presented to the public under the SIMA system. As set forth above, the Steel Import License is the tool used to collect the information that is summarized and presented in aggregate format to the public. We also acknowledge AWPA's request that Commerce expands the SIMA regulations to include collection requirements for steel wire products. However, this request is unrelated to Commerce's information collection requirements under the existing SIMA system.

We did not receive any comments specifically focused on the cost or burden hour estimates provided in the 60-day notice.

**9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.**

No payments or gifts are being offered to the respondents.

**10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy. If the collection requires a systems of records notice (SORN) or privacy impact assessment (PIA), those should be cited and described here.**

To the extent that the information submitted by the parties contains trade secrets, the Department will protect such information from disclosure, including disclosure pursuant to requests under the Freedom of Information Act, as

required by the Trade Secrets Act, 18 U.S.C. § 1905. Such assurance is not provided in writing, but general information regarding confidentiality and the Trade Secrets Act is available upon request. To process the license online, at the bottom of the license form the applicant acknowledges that he recognizes this information will be aggregated and posted on the website to supplement other information publicly available about steel imports.

**11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior or attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private. This justification should include the reasons why the agency considers the questions necessary, the specific uses to be made of the information, the explanation to be given to persons from whom the information is requested, and any steps to be taken to obtain their consent.**

No questions of a sensitive nature are asked.

**12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information.**

It is estimated that 4,250 major brokers and importers will fill out the Steel Import License form. Each importer or broker must fill out the form for each entry of the subject merchandise.

We estimate that 470,421 regular licenses will be issued each year. On average, each broker would apply for approximately 112 licenses each year. The average time to complete the form is estimated to be less than 10 minutes. This estimate includes the time necessary to complete the form using information that is necessary for the completion of the other documents required for entry of the product into the United States. We do not expect the response time to vary widely because some of the same information is used to fill out other Customs documents filed at the time of entry. The low-value “opt-out” form information is also listed below.

<b>Form Used</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Time to Complete</b>	<b>Total Number of Responses</b>	<b>Total Hours</b>
License	4,250	10 min/license	470,421	78,404 hours
Opt-out Form	550	5 min/form	5,000	416 hours

**TOTAL RESPONDENTS = 4,250    TOTAL RESPONSES = 475,421**

**TOTAL BURDEN HOURS = 78,820 hours**

**13. Provide an estimate for the total annual cost burden to respondents or record keepers resulting from the collection of information. (Do not include the cost of any hour burden already reflected on the burden worksheet).**

There are no capital/start-up or ongoing operation/maintenance costs associated with this information collection.

**14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government. Also, provide a description of the method used to estimate cost, which should include quantification of hours, operational expenses (such as equipment, overhead, printing, and support staff), and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information.**

**Agencies may also aggregate cost estimates from Question 12, 13, and 14 in a single table.**

The average public sector salary for processing the licenses is \$25.00 per hour.

<b>Form</b>	<b>Time to</b>	<b>Number of</b>	<b>Total</b>
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<b>Used</b>	<b>Process</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Hours</b>
License	30 seconds	470,421	3,920 hours
Opt-out Form	5 seconds	5,000	7 hours

Cost to Government: Total Hours (3,927 hours) x Avg. Salary (\$25/hour) = \$98,175  
 Processing and issuance of the license is done electronically.

**15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in ROCIS.**

There are no changes to the information collection since the last OMB approval.

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

The agency plans to display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection on all instruments.

**17. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in “Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions.”**

The agency certifies compliance with [5 C.F.R. § 1320.9](#) and the related provisions of 5 C.F.R. § [1320.8\(b\)\(3\)](#).

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT PART B - (Questions and guidance for Responses)**

Agencies are instructed to complete Supporting Statement Part B if they are using statistical methods, such as sampling, imputation, or other statistical estimation techniques; most research collections or program evaluations should also complete Part B. If an agency is planning to conduct a sample survey as part of its information collection, Part B of the ICR supporting statement must be completed, and an agency should also complete relevant portions of Part B when conducting a census survey (collections that are sent to the entire universe or population under study). For example, an agency doing a census of a small, well- defined population may not need to describe sampling procedures requested in Part B, but it should address what pretesting has taken place, what its data collection procedures are, how it will maximize response rates, and how it will deal with missing unit and item data.

Agencies conducting qualitative research studies or program evaluations, including case studies or focus groups, should also complete the relevant sections of Part B to provide a more complete description of the use of the information and the methods for collecting the information.

**B. Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods**

The collection does not employ statistical methods.