

ESIGN on consumers, insurers, practitioners, and state electronic transactions laws. The following questions are intended to provide guidance as to the specific subject areas to be examined as a part of the evaluation. Commenters are invited to discuss any relevant issue, regardless of whether it is identified below.

1. What methods, if any, are available to protect health and life insurance consumers if the exception for life and health insurance cancellation notices is eliminated from the ESIGN Act? Discuss.

2. Discuss state and municipal health and life insurance regulations, laws, and ordinances that require written notice to consumers for cancellation or termination of insurance benefits.

3. Discuss any state regulations that allow companies to transmit health and life insurance cancellation notices by electronic methods.

4. How would the removal of the insurance cancellation notices exception to ESIGN affect health and life insurance consumers? How would the removal of the exception affect the provision of notice by health and life insurance companies to their customers? Please discuss.

5. What effect would the removal of the exception have on current state and Federal policies concerning cancellations of life and health insurance? Discuss.

6. If the ESIGN Act is amended to eliminate the health and life insurance cancellation notice exception, what other changes, if any, should be made to the Act to maintain consumer protection laws? What changes would be necessary, if any, to maintain current state and Federal policies concerning the content and timing of health and life insurance termination and cancellation notices?

7. What are the benefits for health and life insurance customers, and insurance companies that may result from electronic notice of cancellation of insurance benefits?

8. List any issues regarding delivery, timing, authentication, and privacy for health and life insurance benefits cancellation notices that can and should be resolved prior to removal of the exception from the Act?

9. Discuss current electronic methods that are used to provide life and health insurance information to customers (e.g., executed contracts, quotes provided, benefits statements).

10. Describe any consumer protection mechanisms employed by companies that use electronic methods to transmit health and life insurance information to consumers.

11. Have states and companies developed electronic notification procedures for the transmission of health and life insurance information? If so, discuss:

- a. the receipt verification procedures that have been implemented;
- b. regulations that have been updated to reflect electronic signature technologies; and
- c. current state regulations that require the retention of a separate paper copy.

12. Discuss any other issues (such as privacy and state consumer protection laws) that may be affected if insurance cancellation notices are included under the requirements of section 101 of the ESIGN Act.

Please provide copies of studies, reports, opinions, research or other empirical data referenced in the responses.

Dated: December 4, 2002.

Kathy D. Smith,

Chief Counsel, National Telecommunications and Information Administration.

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Army

Notice of Availability of the Draft Mission Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG), Maryland

AGENCY: Department of the Army, DoD.

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: The Department of the Army announces the availability of the APG Draft Mission EIS for public review and comment. The EIS provides APG and its stakeholders an analysis of the environmental impacts resulting from all reasonably foreseeable future mission activities at APG, located in northeastern Maryland.

DATES: The public comment period will end 45 days after the publication of the notice of availability in the **Federal Register** by the Environmental Protection Agency.

ADDRESSES: Anyone wishing to receive a copy of the Draft EIS or the EIS Executive Summary may send a postcard or letter with their name and address to: U.S. Army Garrison Aberdeen Proving Ground, Directorate of Safety, Health and Environment, ATTN: AMSSB-GSH-ER (Buddy Keese) at 21005.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Buddy Keese at (410)-278-6755, or via

email at buddy.keese@usag.apg.army.mil.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Army proposes to provide for the future operation of APG, located in Maryland at the northern end of the Chesapeake Bay. APG is composed of two principal areas separated by the Bush River: the Aberdeen Area situated north of the river and the Edgewood Area to the south. Three alternatives have been identified and assessed for the future operation of APG: (1) Alternative A: future planned activities plus mitigation alternative (proposed action), (2) Alternative B: future planned activities alternative, and (3) Alternative C: no action alternative. The future planned activities plus mitigation alternative (Alternative A) would provide for the Army's future operation of APG through the adoption of a comprehensive environmental baseline assessment of APG mission activities for use in environmental management decision-making, to include the analysis of cumulative effects, as well as the implementation of a mitigation program to nullify any potential adverse impacts of all reasonable foreseeable future mission activities. Alternative A is distinct from the other alternatives as it represents a comprehensive approach to the management of the APG environment. The future planned activities alternative (Alternative B) would encompass all reasonable foreseeable future mission activities. However, individual actions requiring National Environmental Policy Act documentation would be implemented piecemeal and a means for comprehensive environmental management, including a current environmental baseline, would not be established. The no action alternative (Alternative C) is defined as the continuation of current ongoing mission activities at approximately the same levels, intensities, rates, and conditions as they currently exist (*i.e.*, status quo). Under no action, the baseline established by the 1978 installation-wide EIS would be the only comprehensive point of reference for the analysis of environmental effects, including cumulative effects. Mitigation measures would be implemented on a project-by-project basis.

The analysis in the Draft Mission EIS indicates that no significant adverse impacts that cannot be avoided, minimized, or mitigated are anticipated to occur under the proposed action (Alternative A) or the no action alternative (Alternative C). Although there is an opportunity to mitigate future adverse impacts under the

proposed action and current adverse impacts under the no action alternative, there is a fundamental difference in the approach. Under the proposed action, a means for comprehensive environmental management, including a current environmental baseline, would be established. Mitigation may be applied comprehensively within this context. In the case of the no action alternative, environmental consideration and documentation will be performed on a project-by-project basis with the baseline established by the 1978 installation-wide EIS. A comprehensive mitigation program would not be implemented.

When requesting copies of the EIS, please specify whether you wish to receive only the Executive Summary or the full document including the appendices.

Comments received after the 45-day comment period will be considered to the extent practicable. The Army will use the comments received to help prepare the the APG Final Mission EIS. Public information meetings on the Draft EIS will be held in Harford, Baltimore and Kent Counties in Maryland. The meetings will provide opportunities for information exchange and discussion among members of the Army, APG, and the public. Exact dates and locations will be advertised in the local media at least 15 days prior to the meetings. Additional information on the public meetings can also be obtained from the DPG Public Affairs Office at (410) 278-1147.

Persons and organizations wishing to comment on the Draft EIS may attend the public meetings or may send written comments to: Commander, U.S. Army Garrison Aberdeen Proving Ground, ATTN: AMSSB-GSH-ER (Draft APG EIS), Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD 21005.

The full Draft EIS and EIS Executive Summary will be available at the following public reading rooms: Harford County Library (Aberdeen Branch), 21 Franklin Street, Aberdeen; Harford County Library (Edgewood Branch), 2205 Hanson Road, Edgewood; Kent County Public Library, 408 High Street, Chestertown. Copies at the public reading rooms are for review purposes only and extra copies of the documents will not be available at these locations.

Dated: December 2, 2002.

Raymond J. Fatz,

Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army, (Environment, Safety and Occupational Health), OASA (I&E).

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

AGENCY: Department of Education.

SUMMARY: The Leader, Regulatory Management Group, Office of the Chief Information Officer invites comments on the submission for OMB review as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

DATES: Interested persons are invited to submit comments on or before January 8, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Written comments should be addressed to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Attention: Karen Lee, Desk Officer, Department of Education, Office of Management and Budget, 725 17th Street, NW., Room 10235, New Executive Office Building, Washington, DC 20503 or should be electronically mailed to the internet address Karen_F_Lee@omb.eop.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 3506 of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35) requires that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) provide interested Federal agencies and the public an early opportunity to comment on information collection requests. OMB may amend or waive the requirement for public consultation to the extent that public participation in the approval process would defeat the purpose of the information collection, violate State or Federal law, or substantially interfere with any agency's ability to perform its statutory obligations. The Leader, Regulatory Management Group, Office of the Chief Information Officer, publishes that notice containing proposed information collection requests prior to submission of these requests to OMB. Each proposed information collection, grouped by office, contains the following: (1) Type of review requested, e.g. new, revision, extension, existing or reinstatement; (2) Title; (3) Summary of the collection; (4) Description of the need for, and proposed use of, the information; (5) Respondents and frequency of collection; and (6) Reporting and/or Recordkeeping burden. OMB invites public comment.

Dated: December 4, 2002.

John Tressler,

Leader, Regulatory Management Group, Office of the Chief Information Officer.

Office of Educational Research and Improvement

Type of Review: Reinstatement.

Title: National Postsecondary Student Aid Study: 2004.

Frequency: One time.

Affected Public: Individuals or household; business or other for-profit; not-for-profit institutions.

Reporting and Recordkeeping Hour Burden: Responses: 1,204. Burden Hours: 4,125.

Abstract: The 2004 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study is being conducted to meet the continuing need for national-level data about significant financial aid issues for students enrolling in postsecondary education. Information about financial aid policies and postsecondary affordability is critical to policymakers who determine the need analysis formulas for Pell Grants, maximum amounts for student loans and other need-based federal programs, and estimate the continuing and future burden that ensuring federal aid places on the Federal government. For the first time this study will also collect representative data on state aid and tuition policies which have been previously unavailable at the student level. This clearance request covers field test and full-scale activities. This interview will collect information on background, program of study, enrollment status, federal aid amounts, state aid amounts, other types of aid, tuition, school-related expenses, student and parent finances, student employment, credit card usage, and educational expectations.

Written requests for information should be addressed to Vivian Reese, Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., Room 4050, Regional Office Building 3, Washington, DC 20202-4651 or directed to her e-mail address Vivian.Reese@ed.gov. Requests may also be faxed to 202-708-9346. Please specify the complete title of the information collection when making your request. Comments regarding burden and/or the collection activity requirements should be directed to Kathy Axt at her e-mail address Kathy.Axt@ed.gov. Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339.

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

AGENCY: Department of Education.