

(3) Improve the effectiveness, efficiency, and realism of the oversight process by implementing a process of continuous improvement.

(4) Reduce unnecessary regulatory burden through the consistent application of the process and incorporation of lessons learned.

Key elements of the ROP include revised NRC inspection procedures, plant performance indicators, a significance determination process, and an assessment program that incorporates various risk-informed thresholds to help determine the level of NRC oversight and enforcement. Since process development began in 1998, the NRC has frequently communicated with the public by various means. These have included conducting public meetings in the vicinity of each licensed commercial nuclear power plant, issuing FRNs soliciting feedback on the process, publishing press releases about the new process, conducting multiple public workshops, placing pertinent background information in the NRC's Public Document Room, and establishing an NRC web site containing easily accessible information about the new program and licensee performance.

#### NRC Public Stakeholder Comments

The NRC continues to be interested in receiving feedback from members of the public, various public stakeholders, and industry groups on their insights regarding the second year of implementation of the ROP. In particular, the NRC is seeking responses to the questions listed below, which will provide important information that the NRC can use in ongoing program improvement. A summary of the feedback obtained will be provided to the Commission and included in the annual ROP self-assessment report.

#### Questions

##### *Questions Related to the Efficacy of the Overall Reactor Oversight Process (ROP)*

(As appropriate, please provide specific examples and suggestions for improvement.)

(1) Are the ROP oversight activities predictable (i.e., controlled by the process) and objective (i.e., based on supported facts, rather than relying on subjective judgement)?

(2) Is the ROP risk-informed, in that the NRC's actions are graduated on the basis of increased significance?

(3) Is the ROP understandable and are the procedures and output products clear and written in plain English?

(4) Does the ROP provide adequate assurance that plants are being operated and maintained safely?

(5) Does the ROP improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and realism of the regulatory process?

(6) Does the ROP enhance public confidence?

(7) Has the public been afforded adequate opportunity to participate in the ROP and to provide inputs and comments?

(8) Has the NRC been responsive to public inputs and comments on the ROP?

(9) Has the NRC implemented the ROP as defined by program documents?

(10) Does the ROP reduce unnecessary regulatory burden on licensees?

(11) Does the ROP result in unintended consequences?

##### *Questions Related to Specific ROP Program Areas*

(As appropriate, please provide specific examples and suggestions for improvement.)

(12) Does the ROP take appropriate actions to address performance issues for those licensees that fall outside of the Licensee Response Column of the Action Matrix?

(13) Is the information contained in assessment reports relevant, useful, and written in plain language?

(14) Is the information in the inspection reports useful to you?

(15) Does the Performance Indicator Program minimize the potential for licensees to take actions that adversely impact plant safety?

(16) Does appropriate overlap exist between the Performance Indicator Program and the Inspection Program?

(17) Do reporting conflicts exist, or is there unnecessary overlap between reporting requirements of the ROP and those associated with the Institute of Nuclear Power Operations, the World Association of Nuclear Operations, or the Maintenance Rule?

(18) Does NEI 99-02, "Regulatory Assessment Performance Indicator Guideline" provide clear guidance regarding Performance Indicators?

(19) Does the Significance Determination Process yield equivalent results for issues of similar significance in all ROP cornerstones?

(20) Please provide any additional information or comments on other program areas related to the Reactor Oversight Process. Other areas of interest may include the treatment of cross-cutting issues in the ROP, the risk-based evaluation process associated with determining event response, and the reduced subjectivity and elevated threshold for documenting issues in inspection reports.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 15th day of November 2001.

For the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

**Michael R. Johnson,**

*Inspection Program Branch, Division of Inspection Program Management, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.*

[FR Doc. 01-29132 Filed 11-20-01; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 7590-01-P**

#### POSTAL SERVICE

##### **United States Postal Service Board of Governors; Sunshine Act Meeting**

##### **Board Votes to Close November 13 and 15, 2001, Meeting**

By telephone vote on November 13 and 15, 2001, the Board of Governors of the United States Postal Service voted unanimously to close to public observation its meeting held in Washington, D.C., via teleconference. The Board determined that prior public notice was not possible.

##### **ITEMS CONSIDERED:**

1. Strategic Planning.
2. Rate Case Update, Docket No.

R2001-1.

**GENERAL COUNSEL CERTIFICATION:** The General Counsel of the United States Postal Service has certified that the meeting was properly closed under the Government in the Sunshine Act.

##### **CONTACT PERSON FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

Requests for information about the meeting should be addressed to the Secretary of the Board, David G. Hunter, at (202) 268-4800.

**David G. Hunter,**

*Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 01-29292 Filed 11-19-01; 2:45 pm]

**BILLING CODE 7710-12-M**

#### RAILROAD RETIREMENT BOARD

##### **Proposed Collection; Comment Request**

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the requirement of section 3506 (c)(2)(A) of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 which provides opportunity for public comment on new or revised data collections, the Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) will public periodic summaries of proposed data collections.

*Comments are invited on:* (a) Whether the proposed information collection is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information has practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the RRB's estimate of the burden of the collection of the information; (c) ways to enhance

the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden related to the collection of information on respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

*Title and purpose of information collection:*

Application for Spouse Annuity Under the Railroad Retirement Act; OMB 3220-0042 section 2(c) of the Railroad Retirement Act (RRA), provides for the payment of annuities to spouses of railroad retirement annuitants who meet the requirements under the RRA. The age requirements for a spouse annuity depend on the employee's age and date of retirement and the employee's years of railroad service. The requirements relating to the annuities are prescribed in 20 CFR parts 216, 218, 219, 232, 234, and 295.

The RRB currently uses Form AA-3, Application for Spouse/Divorced

Spouse Annuity, to obtain the information needed to determine an applicant's entitlement to an annuity and the amount of the annuity.

The RRB is proposing the addition of an electronic equivalent of Form AA-3 of the collection. The information collected will include all information obtained on the current manual form AA-3. The electronic equivalent, which will be available for completion over the Internet, will also, depending on circumstances, incorporate information currently collected on RRB Form AA-6, Employee Application for Medicare, Form AA-7, Spouse/Divorce Spouse Application for Medicare, and Form AA-8, Widow/Widower Application for Medicare (OMB approved 3220-0082), Form G-19L, Annual Earnings Questionnaire, Last Pre-Retirement Non-Railroad Employment (OMB approved 3220-0179), and Form G-208, Public Service Pension Questionnaire (OMB approved 3220-0136). Future plans will

include the incorporation of information currently collected on RRB Form AA-4, Self-Employment and Substantial Service Questionnaire (OMB approved 3220-0138).

Upon completion of the electronic AA-3 process, the applicant will receive proposed Form AA-3cert, Application Summary and Certification for review and signature. The proposed AA-3cert will summarize information provided by/or verified by the applicant during the application process. Implementation of the AA-3cert will largely eliminate the need for the manual version of AA-3. However, the RRB will continue to use the manual version of the form in instances where the RRB representative is unable to contact the applicant in person or by telephone, *i.e.*, the applicant lives in another country and/or does not wish to use the Internet.

The RRB estimates the burden for the collection as follows:

ESTIMATED BURDEN

Form #	Estimated annual responses	Estimated completion time (per response)	Estimated annual burden (hours)
AA-3 manual (without assistance) .....	100	58	97
AA-3cert (Internet without assistance) .....	400	58	387
AA-3cert (with assistance) .....	8,000	35	4,667
Total .....	8,500	.....	5,151

No changes are proposed to manual Form AA-3. Completion is required to obtain a benefit. One response is requested of each respondent.

**Additional Information or Comments**

To request more information or to obtain a copy of the information collection justification, forms, and/or supporting material, please call the RRB Clearance Officer at (312) 751-3363. Comments regarding the information collection should be addressed to Ronald J. Hodapp, Railroad Retirement Board, 844 N. Rush Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611-2092. Written comments should be received within 60 days of this notice.

**Chuck Mierzwa,**  
Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. 01-29053 Filed 11-20-01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7905-01-M

**RAILROAD RETIREMENT BOARD**

**Proposed Collection; Comment Request**

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the requirement of section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995

which provides opportunity for public comment on new or revised data collections, the Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) will publish periodic summaries of proposed data collections.

*Comments are invited on:* (a) Whether the proposed information collection is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information has practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the RRB's estimate of the burden of the collection of the information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden related to the collection of information on respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

*Title and purpose of information collection:*

Application for Employee Annuity Under the Railroad Retirement Act; OMB 3220-0002 section 2 of the Railroad Retirement Act (RRA), provides for payment of age and service, disability and supplemental annuities to qualified employees. The basic requirements for a regular employee annuity retirement annuity under the RRA is 120 months (10 years) of

creditable railroad service. Benefits then become payable after the employee meets certain other requirements, which depend, in turn, on the type of annuity payable. The requirements relating to the annuities are prescribed in 20 CFR parts 216, and 220.

The forms currently used by the RRB to collect information needed for determining entitlement to and the amount of, an employee retirement annuity follow: Form AA-1, Application for Employee Annuity Under the Railroad Retirement Act, is completed by an applicant for either an age and service or disability annuity. It obtains information about an applicant's marital history, work history, military service, benefits from other governmental agencies and railroad pensions. Form AA-1d, Application for Determination of Employee Disability, is completed by an employee who is filing for a disability annuity under the RRA, or a disability freeze under the Social Security Act for early Medicare based on a disability. Form G-204, Verification of Workers Compensation/Public Disability Benefit Information, is used to obtain and verify information concerning worker's compensation or