

paper version was given as 10,000 and the number of respondents using the EDCS modality was listed as 1,956,667. Since

publishing the Notice, the Agency has realized those numbers should actually be

reversed, and they are published correctly in the chart below.

Collection format	Number of respondents	Frequency of response	Average burden per response (hours)	Estimated annual burden (hours)
SSA-3368 (Paper version)	10,000	1	1	10,000
Field office/Electronic Disability Collection System (EDCS)	1,956,667	1	1	1,956,667
i3368 (Internet version; Hour burden varies from 1½–3 hours, depending on information required)	66,000	1	2½	165,000
i3368-PRO	84,000	1	1½	126,000
Totals	2,116,667	2,257,667

Dated: December 22, 2004.

Elizabeth A. Davidson,
Reports Clearance Officer, Social Security Administration.

[FR Doc. 04-28562 Filed 12-29-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4191-02-P

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

[Public Notice 4945]

Deployment of the Biometric Visa Program for the Collection of Biometric Identifiers of Nonimmigrant and Immigrant Visa Applicants

This public notice announces the Biometric Visa Program, which has been operating in a pilot mode since September 22, 2003, which became a permanent program effective October 26, 2004.

Section 303 of the "Enhanced Border Security and Visa Entry Reform Act" (The Border Security Act) (Pub. L. 107-173, 116 Stat. 543), requires that "not later than October 26, 2004, the Attorney General [now the Secretary of Homeland Security] and the Secretary of State shall issue to aliens only machine-readable, tamper-resistant visas and travel and entry documents that use biometric identifiers." In order to fulfill the requirement for biometric identifiers, we established the Biometric Visa Program, by which immigrant and nonimmigrant visa applicants enroll fingerscans of their two index fingers and submit photographs with visa applications.

In establishing the Biometric Visa Program, we coordinated closely with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The Biometric Visa Program is a partner program to the DHS US-VISIT Program that is in effect at U.S. ports of entry and that uses the same biometric identifiers, two index fingerscans and a photograph. By coordinating these two programs, the two departments have ensured the integrity of the U.S. visa. This is accomplished by sending the fingerscans and photos of visa

applicants to DHS databases. When a person to whom a visa has been issued arrives at a port of entry, his or her photo is retrieved from a database and projected on the computer screen of the Customs and Border Protection officer. The person's fingerscans are compared to the fingerscans in the database to ensure that the person presenting the visa is the same as the person to whom the visa was issued.

Certain exemptions to the fingerscans under the Biometric Visa Program were also coordinated with the Department of Homeland Security to coincide with the exemptions to fingerscans under the US-VISIT Program. Under the Biometric Visa Program, applicants for diplomatic or official visas, for visas to represent their governments at recognized international organizations such as the United Nations or for visas to serve as employees of such organizations, for NATO visas, or for government officials on official transit through the U.S. are exempt from the fingerscans. The aforementioned are represented by visa categories: A-1, A-2, G-1, G-2, G-3, G-4, NATO-1, NATO-2, NATO-3, NATO-4, NATO-5, NATO-6 and C-3 (except for attendants, servants, or personal employees of accredited officials). In addition, persons under age 14 and persons age 80 or above are exempt from the fingerscans, unless the person is applying for a nonimmigrant visa at a consular post in Mexico. In Mexico, we have been requiring fingerscans for applicants age 7 and above under the program for issuance of biometric Border Crossing Cards (commonly known as "laser visas"), which began in 1998. We will continue to require fingerscans for any nonimmigrant visa applicant age 7 and above at our posts in Mexico. These age exemptions are being put into effect for operational efficiencies; however, the Secretary of State retains the authority to require fingerscans of children under age 14 or adults age 80 or above. All visa applicants are required to submit a photograph with the visa application,

except at consular posts in Mexico where most nonimmigrant visa applicants have a live-capture photo taken at post.

By checking fingerscans against a biometric watchlist, the Biometric Visa Program enables consular officers to deny visas to persons on the watchlist who are ineligible for visas. For the great majority of travelers, the Biometric Visa Program performs a travel facilitation function by allowing for biometric identity verification at ports of entry, which serves to facilitate admission to the United States.

Dated: December 17, 2004.

Maura Harty,

Assistant Secretary for Consular Affairs,
Department of State.

[FR Doc. 04-28566 Filed 12-29-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4710-06-P

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

[Public Notice 4927]

Notice of Meeting; United States International Telecommunication Advisory Committee Meeting on Preparations for the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Study Group 2 Meeting and Preparations for the CITEL Permanent Consultative Committee II Meeting in Guatemala

The Department of State announces the following meetings of the International Telecommunication Advisory Committee (ITAC) to prepare for the ITU-T Study Group 2 (Service Definitions, Numbering, Routing, and Global Mobility) meeting. This Study Group 2 meeting will be held February 16-24, 2005, in Geneva, Switzerland. In addition, five preparatory meetings of the ITAC will be held to prepare for the OAS Inter-American Telecommunication Commission (CITEL) Permanent Consultative Committee II meeting in Guatemala from April 26-19, 2005.

The ITAC will meet as follows with an agenda for preparations for the ITU-T Study Group 2 meeting on January 14 and February 2, 2005 from 9:30–12 p.m.; these meetings will be held in the Washington, DC area. People desiring to attend may find the actual location and the call-in numbers for a teleconference bridge by e-mailing the secretariat at minardje@state.gov.

The ITAC will meet as follows with an agenda for preparations for the CITELE Permanent Consultative Committee II meeting in Guatemala. These meetings will be held from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. on January 25, February 22, March 8, March 22 and April 5, 2005 at a location to be determined in the Washington, DC area. For information on the location of these meetings, please contact Cecily Holiday at holidaycc@state.gov or Anne Jillson at jillsonad@state.gov.

Dated: December 22, 2004.

Anne Jillson,

Foreign Affairs Officer, International Communications and Information Policy, Department of State.

[FR Doc. 04–28564 Filed 12–29–04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4710–07–P

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

[Public Notice 4944]

Notice of Receipt of Application for Residential Permit To Expand the Mariposa Port of Entry at Nogales, Arizona

Notice is hereby given that the Department of State has received an application for a permit authorizing the construction, operation and maintenance of two additional commercial cargo lanes at the Mariposa Port of Entry at Nogales, Arizona. The application has been filed by the Border Trade Association Foundation of Phoenix, Arizona. The expansion project to be carried out in conjunction with the Department of Homeland Security and the Arizona Department of Transportation will enable reconfiguration of the Mariposa Port of Entry and the construction of two Free and Secure Trade (FAST) lanes. FAST lanes are dedicated commercial traffic lanes capable of rapidly screening and clearing trucks operated by certified low-risk shippers.

The Department's jurisdiction with respect to this application is based upon Executive Order 11423, dated August 16, 1968, as amended.

As required by E.O. 11423, the Department is circulating this application to concerned agencies for comment.

Interested persons may submit their views regarding this application in writing by January 30, 2005 to Mr. John A. Ritchie, Coordinator, U.S.-Mexico Border Affairs, Room 4258, Department of State, 2201 C St. NW., Washington, DC 20520.

The application and related documents made part of the record to be considered by the Department of State in connection with this application are available for review in the Office of Mexican Affairs during normal business hours throughout the comment period.

Any questions related to this notice may be addressed to Mr. Ritchie at the above address or by fax at (202) 647–5752.

Dated: July 15, 2003.

John A. Ritchie,

Coordinator US-Mexico Border Affairs.

Roberta S. Jacobson,

Director, Office of Mexican Affairs, Department of State.

Editorial Note: This document was received in the Office of the Federal Register on December 23, 2004.

[FR Doc. 04–28565 Filed 12–29–04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4710–29–P

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE

Petitions Under Section 302 on the Valuation of Chinese Currency; Decisions Not to Initiate Investigations

AGENCY: Office of the United States Trade Representative.

ACTION: Decisions not to initiate investigations.

SUMMARY: The United States Trade Representative (USTR) has determined not to initiate investigations under section 302 of the Trade Act of 1974 with respect to petitions addressed to the valuation of Chinese currency because initiation of investigations would not be effective in addressing the issues raised in the petitions.

EFFECTIVE DATES: With respect to the petition filed by the China Currency Coalition: September 9, 2004. With respect to the petition filed by the Congressional China Currency Action Coalition: November 12, 2004.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Terrence McCartin, Senior Director of Monitoring and Enforcement for China, (202) 395–3900; or William Busis, Associate General Counsel, (202) 395–3150.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On September 9, 2004, the China Currency Coalition filed a petition pursuant to

section 302(a)(1) of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (the Trade Act), alleging that certain acts, policies and practices of the Government of China with respect to the valuation of Chinese currency deny and violate international legal rights of the United States, are unjustifiable, and burden or restrict U.S. commerce. In particular, the petition alleged that China's acts, policies and practices that maintain a fixed exchange rate vis a vis the U.S. dollar have resulted in a significant undervaluation of Chinese currency. The petition alleged that these acts, policies and practices: amount to a prohibited export subsidy under the Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures and articles VI and XVI of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade 1994 (GATT 1994); amount—under article XV of the GATT 1994—to exchange action that frustrates the intent of articles I, II, III, and XI of the GATT 1994; and amount to subsidies that are inconsistent with China's obligations under articles 3, 9, and 10 of the Agreement on Agriculture. The petition also alleged that these acts, policies and practices of China violate international legal rights of the United States under articles IV and VIII of the Articles of Agreement of the International Monetary Fund, and that they burden or restrict U.S. commerce by, among other things, suppressing U.S. manufacturing for domestic consumption and the growth in U.S. exports.

Upon receipt of the petition, the USTR determined not to initiate an investigation under section 302 of the Trade Act because an investigation would not be effective in addressing the acts, policies, and practices covered in the petition. The Administration is currently involved in efforts to address with the Government of China the currency valuation issues raised in the petition. The USTR believes that initiation of an investigation under section 302 would hamper, rather than advance, Administration efforts to address Chinese currency valuation policies.

Subsequent to the USTR's decision not to initiate an investigation in response to the petition filed by the China Currency Coalition, a different petitioner—the Congressional China Currency Action Coalition—filed a petition on September 30, 2004 with respect to Chinese currency valuation. As compared to the earlier petition, the second petition addressed the same acts, policies and practices of China, and contained substantially the same allegations that those acts, policies, and practices deny and violate international legal rights of the United States, are