

Dated: June 25, 2008.

Condoleezza Rice,

Secretary of State, Department of State.

[FR Doc. E8-15862 Filed 7-10-08; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

[Public Notice: 6284]

Exchange Visitor Program— Termination of Flight Training Programs

ACTION: Statement of Policy.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Stanley S. Colvin, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Office of Private Sector Exchange, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State, SA-44, 301 4th St., SW., Room 734, Washington, DC 20547. E-mail: jexchanges@state.gov; FAX: 202-203-5087.

SUMMARY: Since 1949 the Department of State (Department) has designated private sector and governmental entities to conduct training programs for eligible foreign nationals. For the past twenty years, such programs have included flight training activities. Currently, eight organizations facilitate the entry into the United States of approximately 350 foreign nationals annually for the purpose of flight training under the aegis of the Exchange Visitor Program and its J-visa. Regulations dealing specifically with flight training programs appear at 22 CFR 62.22(o).

These eight Department of State designated flight schools are also certified by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to issue the Form I-20, which is needed to obtain an M visa. Regulations governing the M visa appear at 8 CFR 214.2(m). DHS is also responsible for the security-related screening of all alien flight training candidates. Regulations governing flight training candidate screening appear at 49 CFR 1552. In January 2006, the Department issued a Statement of Policy on J-1 Flight Training Programs (71 FR 3913, January 24, 2006) providing notice that it would henceforth not designate any new J visa flight training program sponsors; nor would it allow currently-designated flight training programs to expand their programs, pending a determination as to which Federal agency ultimately would assume sole responsibility for administering and monitoring these programs.

In April 2006, the Department published proposed modifications to its regulations governing the Exchange Visitor Program's trainee category,

including flight training. In response to this proposed rule and by letter dated May 30, 2006, the Office of Advocacy of the Small Business Administration opined, that if adopted, the Department's proposed modifications to 22 CFR 62.22(o), could have significant impact on a substantial number of small entities, in particular, flight training schools that sponsor alien flight candidates entering the United States on the J visa. Given this comment, the Department did not modify then existing flight training regulations when it adopted its Interim Final rule (72 FR 33669, June 19, 2007).

In December 2007, the Department published a Final Rule (72 FR 72245, December 20, 2007) that permits the termination of designated programs that the Department determines no longer further its public diplomacy mission or compromises the national security of the United States (22 CFR 62.62). In adopting this provision, the Department explained that the Exchange Visitor Program is the cornerstone of the Department's public diplomacy efforts and integral to the furtherance of the President's Constitutional prerogatives in conducting foreign affairs (72 FR 62112). Pursuant to this regulatory authority, the Department hereby determines that all flight training programs no longer further the public diplomacy mission of the Department, and accordingly, effective June 1, 2010, the Department will terminate the Exchange Visitor Program sponsor designations of all eight sponsors of flight training programs.

The Department's decision to eliminate flight training from the Exchange Visitor Program is based on thorough consideration and deliberation. As explained in its January 2006 Statement of Policy, the Department does not have the expertise and resources to monitor fully flight training programs and ensure their compliance with the national security concerns that underlie the Patriot Act (Pub. L. 107-56). Further, the Aviation and Transportation Security Act of 2001 (49 U.S.C. 44939), assigns to the Attorney General discretion to request a wide variety of information from alien flight candidates in order to determine whether such flight candidates present a threat to aviation or national security. In light of this statutory directive, DHS issued an Interim Final Rule on September 20, 2004, assigning full responsibility for the screening of alien flight training candidates to DHS. Finally, all Department designated flight training sponsors are certified by the Department of Homeland Security to issue the Form I-20 and thereby permit

foreign nationals to participate in flight training programs under the M visa. As all eight existing Department of State designated sponsors may continue, without interruption, the administration of flight training programs for foreign nationals, the Department believes that concerns raised by the Office of Advocacy of the Small Business Administration are outweighed by the security interests of the Government. The Department's position is sound given the expertise of DHS to administer and monitor such programs, efficiencies of government operation, and the security issues inherent in flight training.

The flight training sponsors will continue to have obligations to their exchange visitors pursuant to 22 CFR 62.63: they must fulfill their responsibilities to all exchange visitors who are in the United States at the time of their program termination until the individual's exchange program is completed. Also, sponsors must notify prospective exchange visitors who have not yet entered the United States that the program has been terminated. Such sponsors will have access to SEVIS to manage their existing program participants, but will not be able to initiate new programs after December 31, 2009.

Dated: June 30, 2008.

Stanley S. Colvin,

Deputy Assistant Secretary, Office of Private Sector Exchange, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Department of State.

[FR Doc. E8-15454 Filed 7-10-08; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Office of the Secretary

[Docket Number: OST-95-179 and OST-95-623]

Notice of Request for Extension of a Previously Approved Collection

AGENCY: Office of the Secretary.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13, this notice announces the Department of Transportation's (DOT) intention to request extension of a previously approved information collection.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received on or before September 9, 2008.

ADDRESSES: You may submit a comment (identified by DOT Docket Numbers

OST-95-179 and OST-95-623) by any of the following methods:

- *Web site:* <http://regulations.gov>.

Follow the instructions for submitting comments on the DOT electronic docket site.

- *Fax:* 1-202-493-2251.

- *Mail:* Docket Management Facility; U.S. Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., West Building, Room W12-140, Washington, DC 20590-001.

- *Hand Delivery:* Room W12-140 on the ground level of the West Building, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Wednesday and Federal Holidays.

Instructions: All comments must include the agency name and Docket Numbers OST-95-179 and OST-95-623. Note that all comments received will be posted without change to <http://regulations.gov>, including and personal information provided. You should know that anyone is able to search the electronic form of all comments received into any of our dockets by the name of the individual submitting the comment (or signing the comment, if submitted on behalf of an association, business, labor union, etc.).

Docket: For access to the docket to read background documents or comments, go to <http://regulations.gov> at any time or to Room W12-140 on the ground level of the West Building, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 a.m., Monday through Friday, except Wednesday and federal holidays.

If you wish to receive confirmation of receipt of your written comments, please include a self-addressed, stamped postcard with the following statement: "Comments on Docket OST-95-179 and OST-95-623". The Docket Clerk will date stamp the postcard prior to returning it to you via the U.S. mail. Please note that due to delays in the delivery of U.S. mail to Federal offices in Washington, DC, we recommend that persons consider an alternative method (Internet, fax, or professional delivery service) to submit comments to the docket and ensure their timely receipt at U.S. DOT.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Aleta Best, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Aviation and International Affairs, Office of the Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., Washington, DC, 20590, (202) 493-0797.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Disclosure of Codesharing.

OMB Control Number: 2105-0537.

Expiration Date: November 30, 2008.

Type of Request: Extension of a previously approved collection.

Abstract: Codesharing is the name given to a common airline industry marketing practice where, by mutual agreement between cooperating carriers, at least one of the airline designator codes used on a flight is different from that of the airline operating the aircraft. In one version, two or more airlines each use their own designator codes on the same aircraft operation. Although only one airline operates the flight, each airline in a codesharing arrangement may hold out, market, and sell the flight as its own in published schedules. Codesharing also refers to other arrangements, such as when a code on a passenger's ticket is not that of the operator of the flight, but where the operator does not also hold out the service in its own name. Such codesharing arrangements are common between commuter air carriers and their larger affiliates, and the number of arrangements between U.S. air carriers and foreign air carriers has also been increasing. Arrangements falling into this category are similar to leases of aircraft with crew (wet leases).

The Department recognizes the strong preference of air travelers for on-line service (service by a single carrier) on connecting flights over interline service (service by multiple carriers). Codesharing arrangements are, in part, a marketing response to this demand for on-line service. Often, codesharing partners offer services similar to those available for on-line connections with the goal of offering "seamless" service (i.e., service where the transfers from flight to flight or airline to airline are facilitated). For example, they may locate gates near each other to make connections more convenient or coordinate baggage handling to give greater assurance that baggage will be properly handled.

Codesharing arrangements can help airlines operate more efficiently because they can reduce costs by providing a joint service with one aircraft rather than operating separate services with two aircraft. Particularly in thin markets, this efficiency can lead to increased price and service options for consumers or enable the use of equipment sized appropriately for the market. Therefore, the Department recognizes that codesharing, as well as long-term wet leases, can offer significant economic benefits.

Although codesharing and wet-lease arrangements can offer significant consumer benefits, they can also be misleading unless consumers know that the transportation they are considering for purchase will not be provided by the

airline whose designator code is shown on the ticket, schedule, or itinerary and unless they know the identity of the airline on which they will be flying. The growth in the use of codesharing, wet-leasing, and similar marketing tools, particularly in international air transportation, had given the Department concern about whether the then-current disclosure rules (14 CFR 399.88) protected the public interest adequately and led the Department to adopt specific regulations requiring the disclosure of code-sharing arrangements and long-term wet leases on March 15, 1999. (14 CFR part 257)

These regulations required U.S. airlines, foreign airlines and travel agents doing business in the United States, to notify passengers of the existence of code-sharing or long-term wet lease arrangements. It also required U.S. airlines, foreign airlines and travel agents to tell prospective consumers, in all oral communications before booking transportation, that the transporting airline is not the airline whose designator code will appear on travel documents and identify the transporting airline by its corporate name and any other name under which that service is held out to the public.

Respondents: All U.S. air carriers, foreign air carriers, computer reservations systems (CRSs), and travel agents doing business in the United States, and the traveling public.

Estimated Total Annual Burden: Annual reporting burden for this data collection is estimated at 653,183 hours for all travel agents and airline ticket agents and 653,183 hours for air travelers, based on 15 seconds per phone call and an average of 1.5 phone calls per trip, for the approximately 33% of codeshare itineraries that involve personal contact. Most of this data collection (third party notification) is accomplished through highly automated computerized systems.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 16,000, excluding travelers.

Estimated Time per Response: At 15 seconds per call and an average of 1.5 calls per trip, a total of 22.5 seconds per respondent or traveler, for the approximately 33% of codeshare itineraries that involve personal contact.

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether this collection of information (third party notification) is necessary for the proper performance of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of burden of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the

collection of information on the respondents, including through the use of automated techniques or other forms of information technology.

All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for OMB approval. All comments will also become a matter of public record.

Issued in Washington, DC.

Todd M. Homan,

Director, Office of Aviation Analysis.

[FR Doc. E8-15783 Filed 7-10-08; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-9X-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)

Notice of Approval of Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) on a Short Form Environmental Assessment (EA); Chicago/Rockford International Airport, Rockford, IL

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of Approval of Documents.

SUMMARY: The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is issuing this notice to advise the public of the approval of a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) on an Environmental Assessment for proposed Federal actions at Chicago/Rockford International Airport, Rockford, Illinois. The FONSI specifies that the proposed federal actions and local development projects are consistent with existing environmental policies and objectives as set forth in the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and will not significantly affect the quality of the environment.

A description of the proposed Federal actions is: (a) To issue an environmental finding to allow approval of the Airport Layout Plan (ALP) for the development items listed below.

The items in the local airport development project are to: Acquire approximately 18 acres of vacant land, in fee simple title, in the Runway 25 Approach and Runway Protection Zone.

Copies of the environmental decision and the Short Form EA are available for public information review during regular business hours at the following locations:

1. Chicago/Rockford International Airport, 60 Airport Drive, Rockford, IL 61109.

2. Division of Aeronautics—Illinois Department of Transportation, One Langhorne Bond Drive, Capital Airport, Springfield, IL 62707.

3. Federal Aviation Administration, Chicago Airports District Office, 2300 East Devon Avenue, Room 320, Des Plaines, Illinois 60018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Amy B. Hanson, Environmental Protection Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Chicago Airports District Office, Room 320, 2300 East Devon Avenue, Des Plaines, Illinois 60018. Ms. Hanson can be contacted at (847) 294-7354 (voice), (847) 294-7046 (facsimile) or by e-mail at amy.hanson@faa.gov.

Issued in Des Plaines, Illinois, on June 19, 2008.

James G. Keefer,

Manager, Chicago Airports District Office, FAA, Great Lakes Region.

[FR Doc. E8-15551 Filed 7-10-08; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement and Hold Scoping Meeting; Gness Field, Novato, Marin County, CA

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of intent and notice of scoping meeting.

SUMMARY: The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is issuing this notice to advise the public that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be prepared and considered for the proposed extension of a runway, corresponding taxiway extension, associated levee construction and realignment of drainage, and reprogramming of the GPS Instrument Approach for the extended runway. To ensure that all significant issues related to the proposed action are identified, a public scoping meeting will be held.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Barry Franklin, Environmental Protection Specialist, San Francisco Airports District Office, Federal Aviation Administration, Western-Pacific Region, 831 Mitten Road, Room 210, Burlingame, California 94010-1303, Telephone: (650) 876-2778, extension 614.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Lead Agency for the preparation of the EIS is the FAA. The FAA will prepare an EIS to evaluate the following development alternatives and the No Action Alternative as described below. The EIS will determine all environmental impacts, such as and not limited to, noise impacts, impacts on air and water

quality, wetlands, ecological resources, floodplains, historic resources, hazardous wastes, socioeconomic, and economic factors.

Alternative One—Sponsor's Proposed Project

Runway 13/31 would be extended 1,100 feet to the north from 3,300 linear feet to 4,400 linear feet. This length would maintain the airport's ability to accommodate current and projected airport operations.

To compliment the runway extension, the corresponding taxiway for Runway 13/31 would be extended to the north from 3,300 linear feet to 4,400 linear feet. There would be associated levee construction and major realignment of drainage in order to protect the runway extension against flooding. The GPS instrument approach for Runway 13/31 would be reprogrammed to accommodate the extension of the runway.

Alternative Two

Runway 13/31 would be extended 1,100 feet to the south from 3,300 linear feet to 4,400 linear feet. This length would maintain the airport's ability to accommodate current and projected airport operations.

To compliment the runway extension, the corresponding taxiway for Runway 13/31 would be extended to the south from 3,300 linear feet to 4,400 linear feet. There would be associated levee construction and major realignment of drainage in order to protect the runway extension against flooding. The GPS instrument approach for Runway 13/31 would be reprogrammed to accommodate the extension of the runway.

Alternative Three

Runway 13/31 would be extended to the north and to the south to bring the runway length from 3,300 linear feet to 4,400 linear feet. This length would maintain the airport's ability to accommodate current and projected airport operations.

To compliment the runway extension, the corresponding taxiway for Runway 13/31 would be extended to the north and to the south to bring the total taxiway length from 3,300 linear feet to 4,400 linear feet. There would be associated levee construction and major realignment of drainage in order to protect the runway extension against flooding. The GPS instrument approach for Runway 13/31 would be reprogrammed to accommodate the extension of the runway.