

Extranet Connectivity

The IRS is capable of supporting a moderate number of Trading Partners who wish to use an encryption technology termed "IPSec", with a shared secret key from their facilities, over the Internet to IRS selected ISPs handling IRS EXTRANET termination points. These termination points will contain only IRS equipment. The protocol within this connection would be the same as the current dedicated line filers, but would not guarantee any level of performance. Transmitters wishing to use this method would need to notify the IRS, following procedures outlined in IRS Publication 1346.

Cost Impacts and Taxpayer Burdens

The cost impact of the Internet SSL method to IRS e-filers is expected to be minimal. The transmitters will incur the cost of the ISP, however, many of them already have and use an ISP. Currently the e-filers must pay for the long distance telephone call to the IRS front-end sites, and must make multiple calls if their transmission volume is high. Historic technologies also incur "dropped" calls. These occurrences are expected to be reduced when the Internet is used. Calls now would be to the usually local ISP phone number and its alternates.

Implementation Schedule

The Internal Revenue Service will make known to the registered trading partners and software developers the software standards and scripting opportunities on or before March 31, 2004, to allow completion of any software changes in their products. The IRS will attempt to ensure that those standards are generally compliant to those adopted by other IRS e-commerce Internet interfaces. The Internal Revenue Service will make known to the registered trading partners and software developers the URLs for the "Secure Web" service model by July 31, 2004. The Internal Revenue Service will make a "Secure Web" test facility available to its registered users on or about July 31, 2004, and have a production Assurance Testing (ATS) facility for the "Secure Web" method by November 1, 2004.

The Internal Revenue Service encourages all current and prospective e-filers to begin using one or both of the two new encryption methods by November 1, 2004. Dedicated line filers are encouraged to implement encryption at their earliest convenience and at a time that is mutually agreeable to both the trading partner and the Internal

Revenue Service, prior to November 1, 2004.

Discontinuance of Existing Dial-Up Analog and Dial-Up ISDN Service

Effective December 1, 2003, the Service is no longer accepting requests for support of IRS dial-up ISDN services. During 2005, the IRS will phase down the number of its existing analog, PSTN dial-up line services and its companion existing ISDN dial-up line services, and will discontinue them on November 30, 2005.

ADDRESSES: Carolyn E. Davis, Senior Program Analyst, IRS, Electronic Tax Administration, OS:CIO:I:ET:S:SP, 5000 Ellin Road, Room C4-187, Lanham, MD 20706.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Questions or concerns will also be taken over the telephone. Call Carolyn Davis—202-283-0589 (not a toll-free number). You may e-mail responses entitled *e-file Transmission Encryption* to efile.transmission.encryption@irs.gov.

Dated: December 18, 2003.

Jo Ann Bass,

*Director Strategic Services Division,
Electronic Tax Administration.*

[FR Doc. 03-31825 Filed 12-24-03; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Internal Revenue Service

Open Meeting of the Area 4 Taxpayer Advocacy Panel (Including the States of Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, West Virginia, and Wisconsin)

AGENCY: Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Treasury.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: An open meeting of the Area 4 Taxpayer Advocacy Panel will be conducted (via teleconference). The Taxpayer Advocacy Panel is soliciting public comment, ideas, and suggestions on improving customer service at the Internal Revenue Service.

DATES: The meeting will be held Wednesday, January 21, 2004, at 8 a.m., central time.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Mary Ann Delzer at 1-888-912-1227, or (414) 297-1604.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Notice is hereby given pursuant to section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. App. (1988) that an open meeting of the Area 4 Taxpayer Advocacy Panel will be held Wednesday, January 21, 2004, at 8 a.m., central time via a telephone conference

call. You can submit written comments to the panel by faxing to (414) 297-1623, or by mail to Taxpayer Advocacy Panel, Stop1006MIL, 310 West Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53203-2221. Public comments will also be welcome during the meeting. Please contact Mary Ann Delzer at 1-888-912-1227 or (414) 297-1604 for dial-in information.

The agenda will include the following: Various IRS issues.

Dated: December 19, 2003.

Bernard Coston,

Director, Taxpayer Advocacy Panel.

[FR Doc. 03-31826 Filed 12-24-03; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Internal Revenue Service

Open Meeting of the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel Earned Income Tax Credit Issue Committee

AGENCY: Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Treasury.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: An open meeting of the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel Earned Income Tax Credit Issue Committee will be conducted (via teleconference). The committee is soliciting public comments, ideas and suggestions on improving the administration of the Earned Income Tax Credit by the IRS.

DATES: The meeting will be held Wednesday, January 21, 2004.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Audrey Y. Jenkins at 1-888-912-1227 (toll-free), or 718-488-2085 (non toll-free).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Notice is hereby given pursuant to section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. App. (1988) that an open meeting of the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel Earned Income Tax Credit Issue Committee will be held Wednesday, January 21, 2004, from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. e.t. via a telephone conference call. The public is invited to make oral comments. Individual comments will be limited to 5 minutes. If you would like to have the TAP consider a written statement, please call 1-888-912-1227 or 718-488-2085, or write Audrey Y. Jenkins, TAP Office, 10 MetroTech Center, 625 Fulton Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201. Due to limited conference lines, notification of intent to participate in the telephone conference call meeting must be made with Audrey Y. Jenkins.

The agenda will include various Earned Income Tax Credit issues.

Dated: December 19, 2003.

Bernard Coston,

Director, Taxpayer Advocacy Panel.

[FR Doc. 03-31827 Filed 12-24-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4830-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Internal Revenue Service

Open Meeting of the Area 1 Taxpayer Advocacy Panel (Including the States of New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Vermont and Maine)

AGENCY: Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Treasury.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: An open meeting of the Area 1 Taxpayer Advocacy Panel will be conducted (via teleconference). The Taxpayer Advocacy Panel is soliciting public comments, ideas and suggestions on improving customer service at the Internal Revenue Service.

DATES: The meeting will be held Tuesday, January 20, 2004.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Marisa Knispel at 1-888-912-1227 (toll-free), or 718-488-3557 (non toll-free).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Notice is hereby given pursuant to section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. App. (1988) that an open meeting of the Area 1 Taxpayer Advocacy Panel will be held Tuesday, January 20, 2004, from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. e.s.t. via a telephone conference call. Individual comments will be limited to 5 minutes. If you would like to have the TAP consider a written statement, please call 1-888-912-1227 or 718-488-3557, or write Marisa Knispel, TAP Office, 10 MetroTech Center, 625 Fulton Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201. Due to limited conference lines, notification of intent to participate in the telephone conference call meeting must be made with Marisa Knispel.

The agenda will include the following: Various IRS issues.

Dated: December 19, 2003.

Bernard Coston,

Director, Taxpayer Advocacy Panel.

[FR Doc. 03-31828 Filed 12-24-03; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Internal Revenue Service

Open Meeting of the Joint Committee of the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel

AGENCY: Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Treasury.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: An open meeting of the Joint Committee of the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel will be conducted via teleconference.

DATES: The meeting will be held Tuesday, January 20, 2004, at 1:30 p.m., eastern time.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Barbara Toy at 1-888-912-1227, or 414-297-1611.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Notice is hereby given pursuant to section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. App. (1988) that an open meeting of the Joint Committee of the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel (TAP) will be held Tuesday, January 20, 2004, from 1:30 to 3 p.m. Eastern time via a telephone conference call. If you would like to have the Joint Committee of TAP consider a written statement, please call 1-888-912-1227 or 414-297-1611, or write Barbara Toy, TAP Office, MS-1006-MIL, 310 West Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53203-2221, or FAX to 414-297-1623. Due to limited conference lines, notification of intent to participate in the telephone conference call meeting must be made with Barbara Toy. Ms. Toy can be reached at 1-888-912-1227 or 414-297-1611, or FAX 414-297-1623.

The agenda will include the following: monthly committee summary report, discussion of issues brought to the joint committee, office report and discussion of next meeting.

Dated: December 19, 2003.

Bernard Coston,

Director, Taxpayer Advocacy Panel.

[FR Doc. 03-31829 Filed 12-24-03; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Medical Research Service Merit Review Committee, Notice of Meetings

The Department of Veterans Affairs gives notice under the Public Law 92-463 (Federal Advisory Committee Act) that the Medical Research Service Merit Review Committee will meet from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on January 13, 2004, at

the Governor's House Hotel, 1615 Rhode Island Avenue, NW., Washington, DC.

The purpose of the Committee is to provide advice to the Under Secretary for Health on the review of the scientific merit of research conducted in each specialty by Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) investigators working in VA Medical Centers and Clinics.

The meeting will be open to the public for approximately one hour at the start to discuss the general status of the program. The remaining portion of the meeting will be closed to the public for discussion and evaluation of the scientific review of initial and renewal projects.

The closed portion of the meeting involves discussion, examination, reference to and oral review of site visits, staff and consultant critiques of research protocols and similar documents. During the portion of the meeting, discussion and recommendations will deal with qualifications of personnel conducting the studies, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy, as well as research information, the premature disclosure of which could significantly frustrate implementation of proposed agency action regarding such research projects.

As provided by subsection 10(d) of Public Law 92-463, as amended, closing a portion of the meeting is in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552b(c)(b) and (9)(B). Those who plan to attend or would like to obtain a copy of minutes of the meeting should contact LeRoy G. Frey, Ph.D., Chief, Program Review Division, Medical Research Service (121F), Department of Veterans Affairs, Washington, DC, (202) 254-0288.

Dated: December 19, 2003.

By Direction of the Secretary.

E. Philip Riggins,

Committee Management Officer.

[FR Doc. 03-31815 Filed 12-24-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8320-01-M

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Advisory Committee on Women Veterans; Notice of Meeting

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) gives notice under Public Law 92-463 (Federal Advisory Committee Act) that the Advisory Committee on Women Veterans will meet January 27-29, 2004, from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., in VA Central Office, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20420. On January 27 and 29, the meeting will be held in room C-7 and on January 28, the