

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[FRL-8332-9; Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-ORD-2007-0517]

Integrated Science Assessment for Particulate Matter

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency.

ACTION: Notice; call for information.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Office of Research and Development National Center for Environmental Assessment (NCEA) is preparing an Integrated Science Assessment (ISA) as part of the review of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for particulate matter (PM). This ISA is intended to update and revise, where appropriate, the scientific assessment presented in the Air Quality Criteria for Particulate Matter (PM), EPA/600/P-99/002aF-bF, published in October 2004. Interested parties are invited to assist the EPA in developing and refining the scientific information base for PM by submitting research studies that have been published, accepted for publication, or presented at a public scientific meeting.

DATES: All communications and information should be submitted by August 27, 2007.

ADDRESSES: Information may be submitted electronically, by mail, by facsimile, or by hand delivery/courier. Please follow the detailed instructions as provided in the section of this notice entitled **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For details on submitting research information from the public, contact the Office of Environmental Information (OEI) Docket; telephone: 202-566-1752; facsimile: 202-566-1753; or e-mail: ORD.Docket@epa.gov. For technical information, contact Lori White, PhD, NCEA; telephone: 919-541-3146; facsimile: 919-541-1818; or e-mail: white.lori@epa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Information About the Project

Section 108(a) of the Clean Air Act (CAA) directs the Administrator to identify certain pollutants which "in his judgment, may reasonably be anticipated to endanger public health and welfare" and whose "presence * * * in the ambient air results from numerous or diverse mobile or stationary sources" and to issue air quality criteria for them. These air quality criteria are to "accurately reflect the latest scientific knowledge useful in

indicating the kind and extent of all identifiable effects on public health or welfare which may be expected from the presence of [a] pollutant in the ambient air. * * *" Under section 109 of the CAA, EPA establishes National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for each pollutant for which EPA has issued criteria. Section 109(d) requires periodic review and, if appropriate, revision of existing air quality criteria to reflect advances in scientific knowledge on the effects of the pollutant on public health and welfare. EPA is then to revise the NAAQS, if appropriate, based on the revised air quality criteria.

Particulate matter is one of six principal (or "criteria") pollutants for which EPA has established NAAQS. Periodically, EPA reviews the scientific basis for these standards by preparing an Integrated Science Assessment (ISA), historically referred to as an Air Quality Criteria Document (AQCD). The ISA and supplementary annexes are the scientific bases for the additional technical and policy assessments that form the basis for EPA decisions on the adequacy of a current NAAQS and the appropriateness of new or revised standards. Early steps in this process include announcing the beginning of this periodic NAAQS review and the development of the ISA and requesting that the public submit scientific literature that they want to bring to the attention of the Agency as it begins this process. The Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee (CASAC), an independent science advisory committee whose function is mandated by section 109(d)(2) of the CAA, is charged with independent expert scientific review of EPA's draft ISAs. As the process proceeds, the public will have opportunities to review and comment on the draft PM ISA. These opportunities will also be announced in the **Federal Register**. Since completion of the 2004 Air Quality Criteria for PM, EPA has continued to follow the scientific research on PM exposure and its effects on health and the environment. On July 21, 2006, EPA published a Provisional Assessment of Recent Studies on Health Effects of Particulate Matter Exposure (EPA/600/R-06/063) which presents findings of EPA's survey and provisional assessment of studies relevant to assessing the health effects of PM that were published too recently to be included in the 2004 PM AQCD. (71 FR 41409-10)

The Agency is interested in obtaining additional new information relevant to this review of the NAAQS for PM. We are especially interested in information concerning: (a) Toxicological studies of

effects of controlled exposure to PM on laboratory animals, humans, and in vitro systems; (b) epidemiologic (observational) studies of health effects associated with ambient exposures of human populations to PM; and (c) ecological studies of the effects on agricultural crops and natural terrestrial and/or aquatic ecosystems of ambient exposures to PM. EPA also seeks recent information in other areas of PM research such as chemistry and physics, sources and emissions, analytical methodology, transport and transformation in the environment, and ambient concentrations. This and other selected literature relevant to a review of the NAAQS for PM will be assessed in the forthcoming PM ISA. One or more drafts of the PM ISA are expected to be made available by EPA for public comment and CASAC review during 2008 and 2009. Other opportunities for submission of new peer-reviewed, published (or in-press) papers will be possible as part of public comment on the additional draft documents that will be reviewed by CASAC. As part of this review of the PM NAAQS, EPA is also sponsoring a workshop entitled, "Workshop to Discuss Policy-Relevant Science to Inform EPA's Integrated Plan for the Review of the Primary Particulate Matter (PM) National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS)" to highlight significant new and emerging PM research, and to make recommendations to the Agency regarding the design and scope of the review for the primary (health-based) PM standards to ensure that it addresses key policy-relevant issues and considers the new science that is relevant to informing our understanding of these issues. (72 FR 34003-04).

II. How To Submit Information to the Docket at www.regulations.gov.

Submit your materials, identified by Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-ORD-2007-0517 by one of the following methods:

- <http://www.regulations.gov>: Follow the on-line instructions for submitting information.
- *E-mail*: ORD.Docket@epa.gov.
- *Fax*: 202-566-1753.
- *Mail*: Office of Environmental Information (OEI) Docket (Mail Code: 2822T), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW., Washington, DC 20460. The phone number is 202-566-1752.

- *Hand Delivery*: The OEI Docket is located in the EPA Headquarters Docket Center, Room 3334 EPA West Building, 1301 Constitution Ave., NW., Washington, DC. The EPA Docket Center Public Reading Room is open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday

through Friday, excluding legal holidays. The telephone number for the Public Reading Room is 202-566-1744. Such deliveries are only accepted during the docket's normal hours of operation, and special arrangements should be made for deliveries of boxed information.

If you provide information by mail or hand delivery, please submit three copies of the materials. For attachments, provide an index, number pages consecutively, and submit an unbound original and three copies.

Instructions: Direct your materials to Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-ORD-2007-0517. It is EPA's policy to include all submitted materials in the public docket without change and to make the information available online at <http://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information provided, unless it includes information claimed to be Confidential Business Information (CBI) or other information whose disclosure is restricted by statute. Do not submit information that you consider to be CBI or otherwise protected through <http://www.regulations.gov> or e-mail. The <http://www.regulations.gov> Web site is an "anonymous access" system, which means EPA will not know your identity or contact information unless you provide it within the submitted materials. If you submit information directly to EPA by e-mail without going through <http://www.regulations.gov>, your e-mail address will be automatically captured and included as part of the information that is placed in the public docket and made available on the Internet. If you submit materials electronically, EPA recommends that you include your name and other contact information in the body of your comment and with any disk or CD-ROM you submit. If EPA cannot read your submitted material due to technical difficulties and cannot contact you for clarification, EPA may not be able to consider your submission. Electronic files should avoid the use of special characters, any form of encryption, and be free of any defects or viruses. For additional information about EPA's public docket visit the EPA Docket Center homepage at <http://www.epa.gov/epahome/dockets.htm>.

Docket: Documents in the docket are listed in the <http://www.regulations.gov> index. Although listed in the index, some information is not publicly available, e.g., CBI or other information whose disclosure is restricted by statute. Certain other materials, such as copyrighted material, are publicly available only in hard copy. Publicly available docket materials are available either electronically in <http://>

www.regulations.gov or in hard copy at the OEI Docket in the EPA Headquarters Docket Center.

Dated: June 22, 2007.

Peter W. Preuss,

Director, National Center for Environmental Assessment.

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[FRL-8332-7]

Science Advisory Board Staff Office; Request for Nominations for Science Advisory Board Panels on Uncertainty Analysis and Expert Elicitation

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The EPA Science Advisory Board (SAB) Staff Office announces the formation of SAB Panels to address issues related to uncertainty analysis and expert elicitation and is soliciting nominations for members of the Panels.

DATES: Nominations should be submitted by July 19, 2007 per the instructions below.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Members of the public who wish to obtain further information regarding this announcement may contact Dr. Angela Nugent, Designated Federal Officer, via telephone at: (202) 343-9981 or e-mail at: nugent.angela@epa.gov. The SAB mailing address is: U.S. EPA Science Advisory Board (1400F), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW., Washington, DC 20460. General information about the SAB as well as any updates concerning this request for nominations may be found on the SAB Web site at: <http://www.epa.gov/sab>.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: There has been a recent increase in interest in the use of uncertainty analysis and expert elicitation as tools to be used in regulatory analyses and in support of EPA decision-making. At the request of EPA's Office of Air and Radiation and Office of the Science Advisor, the SAB plans to form several expert panels, as needed, to provide technical advice to EPA through the chartered SAB regarding the Agency's ongoing work in uncertainty analyses and expert elicitation. The SAB is a chartered Federal Advisory Committee, established by 42 U.S.C. 4365, to provide independent scientific and technical advice, consultation, and recommendations to the EPA

Administrator on the technical bases for EPA policies and actions. The SAB expert panels to be formed to address scientific issues related to uncertainty analysis and expert elicitation will comply with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) and all appropriate SAB procedural policies.

Several specific reports have called for increased attention to quantitative uncertainty analysis and expert elicitation. In 2002, the National Research Council (NRC) published a Report to Congress, titled "Estimating the Health-Risk-Reduction Benefits of Proposed Air Pollution Regulations." One of the recommendations of the NRC was that "EPA should begin to move the assessment of uncertainties from its ancillary analyses into the primary analysis by conducting probabilistic, multiple-source uncertainty analyses. This shift will require specification of probability distributions for major sources of uncertainty. These distributions should be based on available data and expert judgment." More recently, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) suggested using expert elicitation as a tool in addressing Circular A-4 requirements (OMB, 2004) for probabilistic uncertainty analysis and also discussed its use in a Proposed Risk Assessment Bulletin (OMB, 2006). Provisions for expert elicitation were also included in EPA's recently revised cancer guidelines (2005). EPA's experience conducting expert elicitations has been limited, with the majority of experience in the Office of Air and Radiation.

The SAB Staff Office has received requests for advice from the SAB on four new advisory activities related to implementation of methods related to uncertainty analysis and expert elicitation. These four activities are summarized below.

EPA's Office of Air and Radiation has requested SAB review of a draft document, "Hierarchy of Methods Report," that catalogues quantitative and qualitative methods available for characterizing uncertainty in risk assessments and regulatory impact analyses. The document provides guidance for selecting methods, given the type of uncertainty being addressed, the quantity and type of available evidence or data, and the ability to gather additional data. The document summarizes data requirements associated with different methods, resource needs, experience and acceptability, and other considerations on their use to support regulatory decisions. The Office of Air and