

the entire list will fail to be processed through the system. In such a case, the information for the container must be corrected or included on the list and the list re-transmitted to Customs in its entirety.

Release of Empty Containers Unladen at a Port

Any empty containers that are unladen at a United States port will be considered automatically released from Customs custody, unless the local Customs office indicates by physical means (by telephone or facsimile notification) that some empty containers are to be held. No electronic status notifications will be generated related to the empty container list transmitted. The AMS Empty Container Module does not allow electronic holds to be placed on empty containers.

Evaluations of Carrier Compliance; Checklists

In implementing the program test, Customs developed a paperless manifest standards checklist for determining carrier compliance with all test parameters and operating procedures required under the program test. However, this paperless manifest standards checklist and associated reviews that were established to evaluate carrier performance in the program test are being discontinued.

Anyone interested in participating in the test should refer to the test notice published in the September 10, 1996, **Federal Register** for eligibility and application information.

Dated: November 26, 2002.

Jayson P. Ahern,

Assistant Commissioner, Office of Field Operations.

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DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

[OMB Control No. 2900-0018]

Proposed Information Collection Activity: Proposed Collection; Comment Request

AGENCY: Office of General Counsel, Department of Veterans Affairs.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Office of General Counsel (OGC), Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), is announcing an opportunity for public comment on the proposed collection of certain information by the agency. Under the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995, Federal agencies are

required to publish notice in the **Federal Register** concerning each proposed collection of information, including each proposed extension of a currently approved collection, and allow 60 days for public comment in response to the notice. This notice solicits comments on the information needed to apply for accreditation to represent claimants for benefits before VA and to confer power of attorney on an attorney, agent or individual service organization representative for claim representation purposes.

DATES: Written comments and recommendations on the proposed collection of information should be received on or before February 18, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Submit written comments on the collection of information to James T. Dehn (022G2), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20420 or e-mail to: *James.Dehn@mail.va.gov*. Please refer to "OMB Control No. 2900-0018" in any correspondence.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: James T. Dehn at (202) 273-6331 or FAX (202) 273-6404.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Under the PRA of 1995 (Public Law 104-13; 44 U.S.C., 3501-3520), Federal agencies must obtain approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for each collection of information they conduct or sponsor. This request for comment is being made pursuant to section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the PRA.

With respect to the following collection of information, OGC invites comments on: (1) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of OGC's functions, including whether the information will have practical utility; (2) the accuracy of OGC's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (4) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or the use of other forms of information technology.

Titles and Form Numbers

a. Application for Accreditation as Service Organization Representative, VA Form 21.

b. Appointment of Individual as Claimant's Representative, VA Form 22a.

OMB Control Number: 2900-0018

Type of Review: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Abstract: VA Form 21 is used to obtain basic information necessary to determine whether an individual may be accredited as a service organization representative for the purposes of representation of claimants before the VA. The information is used to evaluate qualifications, ensure against conflicts of interest, and allow appropriate organization officials to certify the character and qualifications applicants. It is designed to ensure that regulatory standards for accreditation have been met so that claimants for VA benefits have available a pool of qualified claims representatives to assist them in the preparation, presentation, and prosecution of their claims.

VA Form 22a is used by a claimant for VA benefits to confer power of attorney upon an attorney, agent, or individual service organization representative in order that the attorney, agent, or individual representative may represent the claimant in proceedings before VA. Generally, this power of attorney permits VA to release to the attorney, agent, or individual representative records pertinent to the benefit claim. The form contains a release to be completed by the claimant, which permits the claimant to authorize or prohibit VA from disclosing medical records specifically protected by 38 U.S.C. 7332.

Affected Public: Individuals and households, Business or other for-profit, Not-for-profit institutions, and State, Local or Tribal Government.

Estimated Annual Burden

- a. VA Form 21—600 hours.
- b. VA Form 22a—1,600 hours.

Estimated Average Burden Per Respondent

- a. VA Form 21—15 minutes.
- b. VA Form 22a—15 minutes.

Frequency of Response: On occasion.

Estimated Number of Respondents:

- a. VA Form 21—2,400.
- b. VA Form 22a—6,400.

Dated: December 4, 2002.

By direction of the Secretary:

Loise Russell,

Computer Specialist, Records Management Service.

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