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Dated at Rockville, MD this 21st day of November 2003.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.  
**Ashok C. Thadani,**  
*Director, Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research.*

[FR Doc. 03-29900 Filed 12-1-03; 8:45 am]

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## NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

### Pilot Program on the Use of Alternative Dispute Resolution in the Enforcement Program; Request for Comments and Announcement of Public Meeting

**AGENCY:** Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

**ACTION:** Request for comments and announcement of public meeting.

**SUMMARY:** The Commission has recently approved an NRC staff proposal to develop a pilot program on the use of "Alternative Dispute Resolution" (ADR) in cases involving the NRC's enforcement activities concerning allegations or findings of discrimination and other wrongdoing. See SECY-03-0115. "ADR" is a term that refers to a number of processes that can be used in assisting parties in resolving disputes and potential conflicts. Most of these processes are voluntary, where the parties to the dispute are in control of the decision on whether to participate in the process and whether to agree to any resolution of the dispute. The parties are assisted in their efforts to reach agreement by a neutral third party. The NRC staff is now proceeding to develop the policies and procedures for implementation of the pilot program. As an initial step in the development of the pilot program, the NRC will be holding a public workshop on December 10, 2003, at One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, Room 014B6, Rockville, Maryland, from 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. to discuss multiple issues. These issues include: (1) How should cases be selected for the use of ADR?, (2) What ADR processes should be used?, (3) What is the appropriate NRC involvement in the early ADR process?, (4) Who Should Participate in the ADR Process?, (5) How Should Neutrals Be

Selected?, (6) How Should Confidentiality Be Handled?, (7) What Information Concerning ADR Sessions Should Be Public?, (8) How Will NRC internal management procedures Be Impacted?, (9) How Will The Program Be Coordinated with NRC Enforcement Process? (10) What Training Will Be Done?, and (11) How Will The Program Be Evaluated? These issues are addressed in a document for comment on the NRC's Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov>: select What We Do, Enforcement, then Alternative Dispute Resolution. This document is also available in ADAMS at ML033290248.

**DATES:** The comment period expires December 31, 2003.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit written responses to the issues addressed in the "ADR Pilot Program Discussion Issues" document included on the ADR Web page to Chief, Rules and Directives Branch, Division of Administrative Services, Office of Administration, Mail Stop T-6D59, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001. Hand deliver comments to: 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland, between 7:30 a.m. and 4:15 p.m., Federal workdays. Comments may be submitted by e-mail to [nrcprep@nrc.gov](mailto:nrcprep@nrc.gov). Copies of comments received may be examined at the NRC's Public Document Room, located at One White Flint North (O1-F21), Rockville, Maryland, 20852-2738.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Nick Hilton, Enforcement Specialist, Office of Enforcement, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, (301) 415-2741, e-mail [ndh@nrc.gov](mailto:ndh@nrc.gov).

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 25th day of November, 2003.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.  
**Frank J. Congel,**  
*Director, Office of Enforcement.*  
[FR Doc. 03-29902 Filed 12-1-03; 8:45 am]

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## SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

### Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

*Upon Written Request, Copies Available From:* Securities and Exchange Commission, Office of Filings and Information Services, Washington, DC 20549.

**Extension:**

Rule 17Ad-4(b) and (c), SEC File No. 270-264, OMB Control No. 3235-0341.

Notice is hereby given that pursuant to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.), the Securities and Exchange Commission

("Commission") has submitted to the Office of Management and Budget a request for extension of the previously approved collection of information discussed below.

### Rule 17Ad-4(b) and (c) Notices Regarding Exempt Transfer Agent Status

Rule 17Ad-4(b) and (c) are used to document when transfer agents are exempt, or no longer exempt, from the minimum performance standards and certain recordkeeping provisions of the Commission's transfer agent rules. Rule 17Ad-4(c) sets forth the conditions under which a registered transfer agent loses its exempt status. Once the conditions for exemption no longer exist, the transfer agent, to keep the appropriate regulatory authority ("ARA") apprised of its current status, must prepare, and file if the ARA for the transfer agent is the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System ("BGFERS") or the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation ("FDIC"), a notice of loss of exempt status under paragraph (c). The transfer agent then cannot claim exempt status under Rule 17Ad-4(b) again until it remains subject to the minimum performance standards for non-exempt transfer agents for six consecutive months. The ARAs use the information contained in the notice to determine whether a registered transfer agent qualifies for the exemption, to determine when a registered transfer agent no longer qualifies for the exemption, and to determine the extent to which that transfer agent is subject to regulation.

The BGFERS receives approximately twelve notices of exempt status and six notices of loss of exempt status annually. The FDIC receives approximately eighteen notices of exempt status and three notices of loss of exempt status annually. The Commission and the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency ("OCC") do not require transfer agent to file notice of exempt status or loss of exempt status. Instead, transfer agents whose ARA is the Commission or OCC need only to prepare and maintain these notices. The Commission estimates that approximately sixteen notices of exempt status and loss of exempt status are prepared annually by transfer agents whose ARA is the Commission. Similarly, the OCC estimates that the transfer agents for which it is the ARA prepare and maintain approximately fifteen notices of exempt status and loss of exempt status annually. Thus, a total of approximately seventy notices of exempt status and loss of exempt status are prepared and maintained by transfer