

annual review. The Trade Policy Staff Committee (TPSC) is conducting a preliminary review of these petitions. 15 CFR 2016.2(b) provides for announcement of the results of the preliminary review on or about December 1. 15 CFR 2016.2 also provides for modification of the schedule if specified by **Federal Register** notice. This notice specifies that the results of the preliminary review will be announced March 31, 2004. The results of the preliminary review will be published in the **Federal Register** on or about that date.

Bennett M. Harman,

Deputy Assistant United States Trade Representative for Latin America.

[FR Doc. 03-31927 Filed 12-29-03; 8:45 am]

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OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE

Trade Policy Staff Committee; Notice of Availability and Request for Public Comment on Interim Environmental Review of United States-Australia Free Trade Agreement

AGENCY: Office of the United States Trade Representative.

ACTION: Notice of availability and request for public comment.

SUMMARY: The Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR), on behalf of the Trade Policy Staff Committee (TPSC), seeks comment on the interim environmental review of the proposed U.S.-Australia Free Trade Agreement (FTA). The interim environmental review is available at <http://www.ustr.gov/environment/environmental.shtml>. Copies of the review will also be sent to interested members of the public by mail upon request.

DATES: Comments on the draft environmental review are requested by January 16, 2004 to inform negotiations. Comments received after January 16, 2004 will be taken into account in the preparation of the review of the final agreement.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For procedural questions concerning public comments, contact Gloria Blue, Executive Secretary, TPSC, Office of the USTR, 1724 F Street, NW., Washington, DC 20508, telephone (202) 395-3475. Questions concerning the environmental review, or requests for copies, should be addressed to David Brooks, Environment and Natural Resources Section, Office of the USTR, telephone (202) 395-7320.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Trade Act of 2002, signed by the President on August 6, 2002, provides that the President shall conduct environmental reviews of [certain] trade agreements consistent with Executive Order 13121—*Environmental Review of Trade Agreements* (64 FR 63,169, Nov. 18, 1999) and its implementing guidelines (65 FR 79,442, Dec. 19, 2000) and report on such reviews to the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Finance of the Senate. The Order and guidelines are available at <http://www.ustr.gov/environment/environmental.shtml>.

The purpose of environmental reviews is to ensure that policymakers and the public are informed about reasonably foreseeable environmental impacts of trade agreements (both positive and negative), to identify complementarities between trade and environmental objectives, and to help shape appropriate responses if environmental impacts are identified. Reviews are intended to be one tool, among others, for integrating environmental information and analysis into the fluid, dynamic process of trade negotiations. USTR and the Council on Environmental Quality jointly oversee implementation of the Order and Guidelines. USTR, through the Trade Policy Staff Committee (TPSC), is responsible for conducting the individual reviews.

Written Comments

In order to facilitate prompt processing of submissions of comments, the Office of the United States Trade Representative strongly urges and prefers e-mail submissions in response to this notice. Persons submitting comments by e-mail should use the following e-mail address: FR0407@ustr.gov with the subject line: "Australia Interim Environmental Review." Documents should be submitted as either WordPerfect, MSWord, or text (.TXT) files. Persons who make submissions by e-mail should not provide separate cover letters; information that might appear in a cover letter should be included in the submission itself. To the extent possible, any attachments to the submission should be included in the same file as the submission itself, and not as separate files. If submission by e-mail is impossible, comments should be made by facsimile to (202) 395-6143, attention: Gloria Blue.

Written comments will be placed in a file open to public inspection in the USTR Reading Room at 1724 F Street, NW., Washington DC. An appointment

to review the file may be made by calling (202) 395-6186. The Reading Room is open to the public from 10-12 a.m. and from 1-4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

General information concerning the Office of the United States Trade Representative may be obtained by accessing its Internet Web site (<http://www.ustr.gov>).

Carmen Suro-Bredie,

Chair, Trade Policy Staff Committee.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Fiscal Service

Renegotiation Board Interest Rate, Prompt Payment Interest Rate, Contract Disputes Act

AGENCY: Bureau of the Public Debt, Fiscal Service, Treasury

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: For the period beginning January 1, 2004 and ending on June 30, 2004, the prompt payment interest rate is 4.000 per centum per annum.

ADDRESSES: Comments or inquiries may be mailed to Crystal Hanna, Team Leader, Borrowings Accounting Team, Office of Public Debt Accounting, Bureau of the Public Debt, Parkersburg, West Virginia, 26106-1328. A copy of this Notice will be available to download from <http://www.publicdebt.treas.gov>.

DATES: This notice announces the applicable interest rate for the January 1, 2004 to June 30, 2004 period.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Stephanie Brown, Manager, Division of Accounting Operations, Office of Public Debt Accounting, Bureau of the Public Debt, Parkersburg, West Virginia, 26106-1328, (304) 480-5181; Crystal Hanna, Team Leader, Borrowings Accounting Team, Office of Public Debt Accounting, Bureau of the Public Debt, (304) 480-5139, Edward C. Gronseth, Deputy Chief Counsel, Office of the Chief Counsel, Bureau of the Public Debt, (304) 480-8692; or Geraldine J. Porco-Hubenko, Attorney-Adviser, Office of the Chief Counsel, Bureau of the Public Debt, (202) 691-3708.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Although the Renegotiation Board is no longer in existence, other Federal agencies are required to use interest rates computed under the criteria established by the Renegotiation Act of 1971 Sec. 2, Public Law 92-41, 85 Stat. 97. For example, the Contract Disputes Act of 1978 Sec. 12,

Public Law 95-563, 92 Stat. 2389 and, indirectly, the Prompt Payment Act of 1982, 31 U.S.C. 3902(a), provide for the calculation of interest due on claims at a rate established by the Secretary of the Treasury for the Renegotiation Board under Public Law 92-41.

Therefore, notice is given that the Secretary of the Treasury has determined that the rate of interest applicable, for the period beginning January 1, 2004 and ending on June 30, 2004, is 4.000 *per centum per annum*. This rate is determined pursuant to the

above-mentioned sections for the purpose of said sections.

Dated: December 22, 2003.

Donald V. Hammond,

Fiscal Assistant Secretary.

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