

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250

DEPARTMENTAL REGULATION		NUMBER: 3410-001
SUBJECT: Information Collection Activities	DATE: April 8, 1985	
	OPI: Information Management Division, Office of Information Resources Management	

1 PURPOSE

This regulation provides instructions concerning the preparation, review and clearance associated with the collection of information and recordkeeping requirements imposed by USDA agencies on individuals, businesses and other private institutions, and state and local governments.

2 POLICY

It is the policy of this Department to collect only essential information with practical utility in the most efficient, effective, and economical manner possible.

Subject to the exceptions contained in 5 CFR section 1320.3, an agency will not engage in a collection of information from the public without first obtaining OMB approval and displaying a valid OMB control number (and unless OMB determines to be inappropriate, an expiration date).

3 SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS/CANCELLATIONS

This regulation replaces 1 AR 553, Chapter 9, Section 7.

4 REFERENCES

a Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980 (Public Law 96-511).

b OMB Regulation 5 CFR 1320, Controlling Paperwork Burdens on the Public.

c Executive Order 12291 of February 1, 1981.

d Departmental Regulation 1512-1, USDA Regulatory Decisionmaking Requirements.

5 ABBREVIATIONS

ICB - Information Collection Budget

IMD - Information Management Division

IRM - Information Resources Management

OIRM - Office of Information Resources Management

OMB - Office of Management and Budget

6 DEFINITIONS

a Burden. The total time, effort, or financial resources expended by persons to provide information to a Federal agency. This includes the time to read or hear, develop, modify, construct or assemble; to conduct tests, inspections, polls, observations necessary to obtain the information; to organize, review, maintain, disclose, or report the information; and to store, file or maintain the information.

b Collection of Information. Obtaining or soliciting the facts or opinions by an agency through the use of written report forms, application forms, schedules, questionnaires, reporting or recordkeeping requirements, or other similar methods calling for either:

(1) Answers to identical questions posed to, or identical reporting or recordkeeping requirements imposed on, ten or more persons, other than agencies, instrumentalities, or employees of the United States; or

(2) Answers to questions posed to agencies, instrumentalities, or employees of the United States which are to be used for general statistical purposes.

c Federal Information Locator System. A government-wide automated information system used to detect duplications in information collections.

d Information Collection Budget. A limit imposed annually by OMB allowing the Department to conduct information collection activities. The figure is expressed in hours of burden on the public.

e Information Collection Request. A written report form, application form, schedule, questionnaire, reporting or recordkeeping requirement, or similar method calling for the collection of information.

f Practical Utility. The ability of an agency to use the information it collects, particularly the capability to process such information in a timely and useful fashion.

g Recordkeeping Requirement. Requirement imposed by an agency on persons or businesses to maintain specified records that are not customarily kept as ordinary business records. These records are not necessarily provided to an agency.

h Senior IRM Official. The Assistant Secretary for Administration is the Senior IRM Official for the Department. Each agency within the Department is also required to name a Senior IRM Official.

7 FORMS

Form SF-83. - Request for OMB Review. Appendix A contains instructions for completing this form. Appendix B is a sample of a completed form.

8 RESPONSIBILITIES

a The Information Management Division.
Office of Information Resources Management,
serves as the focal point for all Departmentwide
matters relating to information collection and
paperwork reduction. IMD will:

- (1) Review each information collection submission to assure consistency with USDA and OMB policy, adequacy of analysis, and statistical validity of the survey methods and the information being collected.
- (2) Provide training and technical assistance to agency personnel in the development and clearance of information collection submissions.
- (3) Coordinate the clearance of information collections for USDA including responding to inquiries from OMB, maintaining records of transmittals and clearances, and notifying agencies of OMB action.
- (4) Coordinate the annual submission of an Information Collection Budget for the Department.
- (5) Serve as the Department's focal point in implementing and operating the Federal Information Locator System.
- (6) Prepare and forward a notice to the Federal Register of the information collections submitted to OMB for review and approval.
- (7) Encourage consolidation of forms when practical.

b Senior Agency IRM Officials will:

- (1) Designate agency clearance officers who will serve as a single contact point within their agency on information collection matters. The name, title, and telephone number of the designee are to be reported to IMD within 90 days of this regulation. Any

changes should be reported immediately to IMD.

(2) CERTIFY AND SIGN EACH SF-83 BEFORE SUBMISSION TO IMD. This certification will assure that the information desired is not attainable from any other source and is essential for the agency to carry out its mission.

(3) Assure that information collection needs within their agency are analyzed, including a periodic review of all rules and regulations which result in paperwork burden. Departmental Regulation 1512-1 contains more specific information regarding regulatory review.

c Agency Clearance Officers will:

(1) Assure that each information collection meets the requirements of this regulation and 5 CFR 1320.

(2) Assure that an up-to-date inventory is maintained for all agency information collections, submissions, approvals, burden hours, total responses, and supporting materials.

(3) Work with agency program specialists to keep public burden to a minimum.

9 DEVELOPING INFORMATION COLLECTIONS

a Before developing an information collection, the initiating organization needs to assure that it can justify the practical utility of the collection and that it has made plans for how it will use the information. The initiating organization must be able to answer the types of questions raised in Appendix D and also make sure that they have:

(1) minimized reporting frequency,

- (2) minimized the respondent universe,
- (3) utilized sampling to the extent practicable,
- (4) reduced recordkeeping requirements,
- (5) reduced monitoring requirements, and
- (6) requested information in a format in which the respondents customarily keep that information

b In determining the burden associated with the information collection, unless directed to do so, do not conduct special surveys on which to base estimates of burden. Use informal consultations with less than 10 respondents or base the estimate on experience gained with a pretest or with related forms.

c Many information collections are related to or part of agency regulations and procedures. These regulations also need to be reviewed to insure that they are easy to understand and levy the least burden possible. (See DR 1512-1.)

d When developing information collection requirements, agencies should consult with known interested parties and trade associations within that subject area.

e Agencies and IMD share responsibility for assuring that the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the Department's functions and is not unnecessarily duplicated elsewhere.

f IMD is available to work with agency personnel as they develop their information collection packages. IMD will also act as liaison between the Department and OMB in obtaining clearance.

a OMB regulations allow them up to 90 calendar days for their review process. IMD needs 10 calendar days for its review of the completed package prior to submission to OMB. Therefore, agency submissions must be submitted to IMD 100 calendar days prior to the expiration date of currently approved collections or in advance of the beginning of a new collection.

b Each information collection package submitted for approval should include the following items:

(1) Five copies of the SF-83 with parts I and II completed. The Agency Senior IRM Official will sign and date the SF-83 in the line on the lower part of the second page of the form entitled "Signature of Program Official." (See Appendix B.)

(2) Five copies of a supporting statement which highlights the justification for collecting the information and the use that will be made of it. Page 4 of Appendix A contains specific instructions for preparing these justifications. Appendix C is a sample of a supporting statement.

(3) Five copies of any questionnaires, forms, instructions, transmittal letters, or other related documents to be used in the collection of the information.

(4) Five copies of current rules and regulations related to the collection, previous summaries, burden worksheets, and similar documents to give the reviewer as much knowledge on the subject matter as possible. Appendix E shows a sample of one agency's grid-type worksheet that has proved to be helpful to both OIRM and OMB reviewers. This type of worksheet is especially

useful when reviewing rules and regulations.

c During its review process, IMD will work with agency contacts to resolve any areas of concern.

d After review and concurrence, IMD will forward three copies of the completed package to OMB. One copy is kept for the official Departmental files and one copy is available for public distribution upon request.

11 INFORMATION COLLECTION BUDGET

a OMB requires each Department to submit annual exhibits estimating the hours of burden to be imposed on the public in the next fiscal year and verification of accomplishments in prior years. Formats, reduction goals, and methods for computations are determined by OMB each year.

b The current OMB instructions require a five percent reduction in the Department's burden each year. This reduction must be accomplished by program changes, (A thorough explanation of program change may be found in Appendix A, page 2, section 19-4. All changes not classified as program changes are categorized as adjustments.) To achieve these reductions, agencies must carefully review their rules and regulations and follow the steps outlined in section 9a. They must also be prepared to offset increases in some collections by identifying decreases in others.

c One required exhibit in the ICB submission identifies the new information collections proposed for the upcoming fiscal year. Agencies should plan their information collection needs far in advance and expect strict adherence to the estimates for new information collections that were submitted in the Information Collection Budget. They must be prepared to reduce other new proposed or existing collections if unexpected new collections are needed during the fiscal year to keep the new burden at or below the approved levels.

d IMO will assume responsibility for submitting final ICB exhibits and narrative explanations to OMB in time to meet assigned due dates. Agency clearance contacts will be notified by IMD of their assigned requirements, their participation in training sessions on current procedures for ICB exhibit preparations, and participation in ICB hearings at OMB.

-END-

Appendix A

Appendix B

Appendix C

Appendix D

Appendix E

For a copy of the Appendices, contact Ruth Brown, Information Management Division, OCIO, at 202-720-8958, or by e-mail at ruth.brown@usda.gov