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DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

6 CFR Part 5

[Docket No. DHS-2008-0183]

Privacy Act of 1974: Implementation of Exemptions; Customs and Border Protection Advanced Passenger Information System

AGENCY: Privacy Office, DHS.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: The Department of Homeland Security is issuing a final rule to amend its regulations to exempt portions of the system of records entitled the Advanced Passenger Information System from certain provisions of the Privacy Act. Specifically, the Department proposes to exempt portions of the Advanced Passenger Information System from one or more provisions of the Privacy Act because of criminal, civil, and administrative enforcement requirements.

DATES: *Effective Date:* This final rule is effective November 18, 2008.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Hugo Teufel III, Chief Privacy Officer, Privacy Office, Department of Homeland Security, Washington, DC 20528; telephone 703-235-0780; facsimile: 866-466-5370.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS), elsewhere in this edition of the **Federal Register**, published a Privacy Act system of records notice describing records in the Advance Passenger Information System (APIS). APIS performs screening of both inbound and outbound passengers and crew and, in the commercial air environment, crew members overflying the United States. As part of this screening function and to facilitate

DHS's border enforcement mission, APIS data is compared with information in other CBP law enforcement systems, as well as with information from the TSDB, information on individuals with outstanding wants or warrants, and information from other government agencies regarding high risk parties and queries based on law enforcement data, intelligence, and past case experience to assess persons seeking to cross (or in the case of crew, overfly) the U.S. border using a means of transport covered by CBP's APIS regulations.

APIS contains records pertaining to various categories of individuals, including: Passengers and crew who arrive, transit through or depart the United States by air or sea (and includes the U.S. domestic portions of international travel for passengers and crew flying into or out of the United States) and crew members on aircraft that overfly the United States.

No exemption shall be asserted with respect to information maintained in the system that is collected from a person and submitted by that person's air or vessel carrier, if that person, or his or her agent, seeks access or amendment of such information.

This system, however, may contain records or information recompiled from or created from information contained in other systems of records, which are exempt from certain provisions of the Privacy Act. This system may also contain accountings of disclosures made with respect to information maintained in the system. For these records or information only, in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552a(j)(2), and (k)(2), DHS will also claim the original exemptions for these records or information from subsections (c)(3) and (4); (d)(1), (2), (3), and (4); (e)(1), (2), (3), (4)(G) through (I), (5), and (8); (f), and (g) of the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, as necessary and appropriate to protect such information. Moreover, DHS will add these exemptions to Appendix C to 6 CFR Part 5, DHS Systems of Records Exempt from the Privacy Act. Such exempt records or information may be law enforcement or national security investigation records, law enforcement activity and encounter records, or terrorist screening records.

DHS needs these exemptions in order to protect information relating to law enforcement investigations from disclosure to subjects of investigations

and others who could interfere with investigatory and law enforcement activities. Specifically, the exemptions are required to: Preclude subjects of investigations from frustrating the investigative process; avoid disclosure of investigative techniques; protect the identities and physical safety of confidential informants and of law enforcement personnel; ensure DHS's and other federal agencies' ability to obtain information from third parties and other sources; protect the privacy of third parties; and safeguard sensitive information. The exemptions proposed here are standard law enforcement exemptions exercised by a large number of federal law enforcement agencies.

Nonetheless, DHS will examine each request on a case-by-case basis, and, after conferring with the appropriate component or agency, may waive applicable exemptions in appropriate circumstances and where it would not appear to interfere with or adversely affect the law enforcement purposes of the systems from which the information is recompiled or in which it is contained.

Again, DHS will not assert any exemption with respect to information maintained in the system that is collected from a person and submitted by that person's air or vessel carrier, if that person, or his or her agent, seeks access or amendment of such information.

Public Comments

We received two comments; neither was specific to the Notice of Proposed Rule Making Privacy Act Exemptions.

Regulatory Requirements

A. Regulatory Impact Analyses

Changes to Federal regulations must undergo several analyses. In conducting these analyses, DHS has determined:

1. Executive Order 12866 Assessment

This rule is not a significant regulatory action under Executive Order 12866, "Regulatory Planning and Review" (as amended). Accordingly, this rule has not been reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Nevertheless, DHS has reviewed this rulemaking, and concluded that there will not be any significant economic impact.

2. Regulatory Flexibility Act Assessment

Pursuant to section 605 of the Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA), 5 U.S.C. 605(b), as amended by the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement and Fairness Act of 1996 (SBREFA), DHS certifies that this rule will not have a significant impact on a substantial number of small entities. The rule would impose no duties or obligations on small entities. Further, the exemptions to the Privacy Act apply to individuals, and individuals are not covered entities under the RFA.

3. International Trade Impact Assessment

This rulemaking will not constitute a barrier to international trade. The exemptions relate to criminal investigations and agency documentation and, therefore, do not create any new costs or barriers to trade.

4. Unfunded Mandates Assessment

Title II of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (UMRA), (Pub. L. 104-4, 109 Stat. 48), requires Federal agencies to assess the effects of certain regulatory actions on State, local, and tribal governments, and the private sector. This rulemaking will not impose an unfunded mandate on State, local, or tribal governments, or on the private sector.

B. Paperwork Reduction Act

The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA) (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*) requires that DHS consider the impact of paperwork and other information collection burdens imposed on the public and, under the provisions of PRA section 3507(d), obtain approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for each collection of information it conducts, sponsors, or requires through regulations. DHS has determined that there are no current or new information collection requirements associated with this rule.

C. Executive Order 13132, Federalism

This action will not have a substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the national Government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government, and therefore will not have federalism implications.

D. Environmental Analysis

DHS has reviewed this action for purposes of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. 4321-4347) and has determined that this action will not have a significant effect on the human environment.

E. Energy Impact

The energy impact of this action has been assessed in accordance with the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (EPCA) Public Law 94-163, as amended (42 U.S.C. 6362). This rulemaking is not a major regulatory action under the provisions of the EPCA.

List of Subjects in 6 CFR Part 5

Freedom of information; Privacy.

■ For the reasons stated in the preamble, DHS amends Chapter I of Title 6, Code of Federal Regulations, as follows:

PART 5—DISCLOSURE OF RECORDS AND INFORMATION

■ 1. The authority citation for Part 5 continues to read as follows:

Authority: Public Law 107-296, 116 Stat. 2135, 6 U.S.C. 101 *et seq.*; 5 U.S.C. 301. Subpart A also issued under 5 U.S.C. 552.

■ 2. At the end of Appendix C to Part 5, add the following new paragraph “12” to read as follows:

Appendix C to Part 5—DHS Systems of Records Exempt From the Privacy Act

* * * * *

12. DHS/CBP-005, Advanced Passenger Information System. A portion of the following system of records is exempt from 5 U.S.C. 552a(c)(3) and (4); (d)(1), (2), (3), and (4); (e)(1), (2), (3), (4)(G) through (I), (5), and (8); (f), and (g); however, these exemptions apply only to the extent that information in this system records is recompiled or is created from information contained in other systems of records subject to such exemptions pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552a(j)(2), and (k)(2). Further, no exemption shall be asserted with respect to information submitted by and collected from the individual or the individual's representative in the course of any redress process associated with this system of records. After conferring with the appropriate component or agency, DHS may waive applicable exemptions in appropriate circumstances and where it would not appear to interfere with or adversely affect the law enforcement or national security purposes of the systems from which the information is recompiled or in which it is contained. Exemptions from the above particular subsections are justified, on a case-by-case basis to be determined at the time a request is made, when information in this system records is recompiled or is created from information contained in other systems of records subject to exemptions for the following reasons:

(a) From subsection (c)(3) (Accounting for Disclosure) because making available to a record subject the accounting of disclosures from records concerning him or her would specifically reveal any investigative interest in the individual. Revealing this information could reasonably be expected to compromise ongoing efforts to investigate a known or suspected terrorist by notifying the record subject that he or she is under investigation.

This information could also permit the record subject to take measures to impede the investigation, *e.g.*, destroy evidence, intimidate potential witnesses, or flee the area to avoid or impede the investigation.

(b) From subsection (c)(4) (Accounting for Disclosure, notice of dispute) because portions of this system are exempt from the access and amendment provisions of subsection (d).

(c) From subsections (d)(1), (2), (3), and (4) (Access to Records) because these provisions concern individual access to and amendment of certain records contained in this system, including law enforcement counterterrorism, investigatory, and intelligence records. Compliance with these provisions could alert the subject of an investigation of the fact and nature of the investigation, and/or the investigative interest of intelligence or law enforcement agencies; compromise sensitive information related to national security; interfere with the overall law enforcement process by leading to the destruction of evidence, improper influencing of witnesses, fabrication of testimony, and/or flight of the subject; could identify a confidential source or disclose information which would constitute an unwarranted invasion of another's personal privacy; reveal a sensitive investigative or intelligence technique; or constitute a potential danger to the health or safety of law enforcement personnel, confidential informants, and witnesses. Amendment of these records would interfere with ongoing counterterrorism, law enforcement, or intelligence investigations and analysis activities and impose an impossible administrative burden by requiring investigations, analyses, and reports to be continuously reinvestigated and revised.

(d) From subsection (e)(1) (Relevancy and Necessity of Information) because it is not always possible for DHS or other agencies to know in advance what information is relevant and necessary for it to complete an identity comparison between the individual seeking redress and a known or suspected terrorist. Also, because DHS and other agencies may not always know what information about an encounter with a known or suspected terrorist will be relevant to law enforcement for the purpose of conducting an operational response.

(e) From subsection (e)(2) (Collection of Information from Individuals) because application of this provision could present a serious impediment to counterterrorism, law enforcement, or intelligence efforts in that it would put the subject of an investigation, study, or analysis on notice of that fact, thereby permitting the subject to engage in conduct designed to frustrate or impede that activity. The nature of counterterrorism, law enforcement, or intelligence investigations is such that vital information about an individual frequently can be obtained only from other persons who are familiar with such individual and his/her activities. In such investigations it is not feasible to rely upon information furnished by the individual concerning his own activities.

(f) From subsection (e)(3) (Notice to Subjects), to the extent that this subsection is interpreted to require DHS to provide notice

to an individual if DHS or another agency receives or collects information about that individual during an investigation or from a third party. Should the subsection be so interpreted, exemption from this provision is necessary to avoid impeding counterterrorism, law enforcement, or intelligence efforts by putting the subject of an investigation, study, or analysis on notice of that fact, thereby permitting the subject to engage in conduct intended to frustrate or impede that activity.

(g) From subsections (e)(4)(G), (H) and (I) (Agency Requirements) because portions of this system are exempt from the access and amendment provisions of subsection (d).

(h) From subsection (e)(5) (Collection of Information) because many of the records in this system coming from other system of records are derived from other domestic and foreign agency record systems and therefore it is not possible for DHS to vouch for their compliance with this provision; however, the DHS has implemented internal quality assurance procedures to ensure that data used in the redress process is as thorough, accurate, and current as possible. In addition, in the collection of information for law enforcement, counterterrorism, and intelligence purposes, it is impossible to determine in advance what information is accurate, relevant, timely, and complete. With the passage of time, seemingly irrelevant or untimely information may acquire new significance as further investigation brings new details to light. The restrictions imposed by (e)(5) would limit the ability of those agencies' trained investigators and intelligence analysts to exercise their judgment in conducting investigations and impede the development of intelligence necessary for effective law enforcement and counterterrorism efforts. The DHS has, however, implemented internal quality assurance procedures to ensure that the data used in the redress process is as thorough, accurate, and current as possible.

(i) From subsection (e)(8) (Notice on Individuals) because to require individual notice of disclosure of information due to compulsory legal process would pose an impossible administrative burden on DHS and other agencies and could alert the subjects of counterterrorism, law enforcement, or intelligence investigations to the fact of those investigations when not previously known.

(j) From subsection (f) (Agency Rules) because portions of this system are exempt from the access and amendment provisions of subsection (d).

(k) From subsection (g) (Civil Remedies) to the extent that the system is exempt from other specific subsections of the Privacy Act.

Dated: November 10, 2008.

Hugo Teufel III,

Chief Privacy Officer, Department of Homeland Security.

[FR Doc. E8-27206 Filed 11-17-08; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4410-10-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Utilities Service

7 CFR Part 1776

RIN 0572-AC12

Amending the Household Water Well System Grant Program Regulations

AGENCY: Rural Utilities Service, USDA.

ACTION: Direct final rule.

SUMMARY: The Rural Utilities Service (RUS), an agency delivering the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Development Utilities Programs, hereinafter referred to as Rural Development or the Agency, is amending its regulations to administer the Household Water Well System Grant Program. This action implements provisions of the 2008 Farm Bill for limits on loans that nonprofit organizations may make to homeowners for private well systems. The 2008 Farm Bill raises the loan limit to \$11,000 from \$8,000. The intended effect is to make part 1776 current with statutory authority. The Agency will also amend the regulation to enable existing grant recipients to amend their grant agreements for the new \$11,000 loan limit. No adverse comments are expected.

DATES: This rule will become effective January 2, 2009 unless the Agency receives written adverse comments or a written notice of intent to submit adverse comments on or before December 18, 2008. If we receive adverse comments or notices, the Agency will publish a timely document in the **Federal Register** withdrawing the rule. Comments received will be considered under the proposed rule published in this edition of the **Federal Register** in the proposed rule section. A second public comment period will not be held. Written comments must be received by the Agency or carry a postmark or equivalent no later than December 18, 2008.

ADDRESSES: Submit adverse comments or notice of intent to submit adverse comments by any of the following methods:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* Go to <http://www.regulations.gov>. In the "Search Documents" box, enter RUS-08-WATER-03, check the box under the Search box labeled "Select to find documents accepting comments or submissions," and click on the GO>> key. To submit a comment, choose "Send a comment or submission," under the Docket Title. In order to submit your comment, the information

requested on the "Public Comment and Submission Form," must be completed. (If you click on the hyperlink of the docket when the search returns it, you will see the docket details. Click on the yellow balloon to receive the "Public Comment and Submission Form.") Information on using Regulations.gov, including instructions for accessing documents, submitting comments, and viewing the docket after the close of the comment period, is available through the site's "How to Use this Site" link.

- *Postal Mail/Commercial Delivery:* Please send your comment addressed to Michele Brooks, Director, Program Development and Regulatory Analysis, USDA Rural Development, STOP 1522, Room 5159, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250-1522. Please state that your comment refers to Docket No. RUS 08-WATER-03.

Other Information: Additional information about Rural Development and its programs is available at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/index.html>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Cheryl Francis, Loan Specialist, Water and Environmental Programs, USDA Rural Development, 1400 Independence Avenue, STOP 1570, Room 2229 South Building, Washington, DC 20250-1570. Telephone: (202) 720-9589; Fax: (202) 690-0649; e-mail: cheryl.francis@wdc.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Executive Order 12866

This rule has been determined to be not significant for purposes of Executive Order 12866 and, therefore has not been reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

Executive Order 12372

The program is not subject to the provisions of Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Consultation," as implemented under USDA's regulations at 7 CFR part 3015.

Executive Order 12988

This rule has been reviewed under Executive Order 12988, Civil Justice Reform. The Agency has determined that this rule meets the applicable standards provided in section 3 of the Executive Order. In addition, all state and local laws and regulations that are in conflict with this rule will be preempted; no retroactive effect will be given to the rule; and in accordance with section 212(e) of the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994, [7 U.S.C. 6912(e)], administrative appeal procedures, if any, must be exhausted before litigation against the Department or its agencies may be initiated.