

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**[EPA-HQ-OARM-2014-0857; FRL – 9922-64-OARM]****Proposed Information Collection Request; Comment Request; Background Checks for Contractor Employees (Renewal)****AGENCY:** Environmental Protection Agency.**ACTION:** Notice.

SUMMARY: The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is planning to submit an information collection request (ICR), “Background Checks for Contractor Employees (Renewal)” (EPA ICR No. 2159.06, OMB Control No. 2030-0043) to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and approval in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*). Before doing so, EPA is soliciting public comments on specific aspects of the proposed information collection as described below. This is a proposed extension of the ICR, which is currently approved through April 30, 2015. An Agency may not conduct or sponsor and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

DATES: Comments must be submitted on or before [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES: Submit your comments, referencing Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OARM-2014-0857 online using www.regulations.gov (our preferred method), by email to oei.docket@epa.gov, or by mail to: EPA Docket Center, Environmental Protection Agency, Mail Code 28221T, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20460

EPA's policy is that all comments received will be included in the public docket without change including any personal information provided, unless the comment includes profanity, threats, information claimed to be Confidential Business Information (CBI) or other information

whose disclosure is restricted by statute.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dianne Lyles, Policy Training and Oversight Division, Office of Acquisition Management (3802R), Environmental Protection Agency, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20460; telephone number: (202) 564-6111; email address: lyles.dianne@epa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Supporting documents which explain in detail the information that the EPA will be collecting are available in the public docket for this ICR. The docket can be viewed online at www.regulations.gov or in person at the EPA Docket Center, WJC West, Room 3334, 1301 Constitution Ave., NW, Washington DC. The telephone number for the Docket Center is 202-566-1744. For additional information about EPA's public docket, visit <http://www.epa.gov/dockets>.

Pursuant to section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the PRA, EPA is soliciting comments and information to enable it to: (i) evaluate whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Agency, including whether the information will have practical utility; (ii) evaluate the accuracy of the Agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (iii) enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (iv) minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses. EPA will consider the comments received and amend the ICR as appropriate. The final ICR package will then be submitted to OMB for review and approval. At that time, EPA will issue another Federal Register notice to announce the

submission of the ICR to OMB and the opportunity to submit additional comments to OMB.

Abstract: The EPA uses contractors to perform services throughout the nation with regard to environmental emergencies involving the release, or threatened release, of oil, radioactive materials, or hazardous chemicals that may potentially affect communities and the surrounding environment. The Agency may request contractors responding to any of these types of incidents to conduct background checks and apply Government-established suitability criteria in Title 5 CFR Administrative Personnel 731.104 Appointments Subject to Investigation, 732.201 Sensitivity Level Designations and Investigative Requirements, and 736.102 Notice to Investigative Sources when determining whether employees are acceptable to perform on given sites or on specific projects. In addition to emergency response contractors, EPA may require background checks for contractor personnel working in sensitive sites or sensitive projects. The background checks and application of the Government's suitability criteria must be completed prior to contract employee performance. The contractor shall maintain records associated with all background checks. Background checks cover citizenship or valid visa status, criminal convictions, weapons offenses, felony convictions, and parties prohibited from receiving federal contracts.

Form numbers: None.

Respondents/affected entities: Private Contractors.

Respondent's obligation to respond: required to obtain a benefit per Title 5 CFR Administrative Personnel 731.104 Appointments Subject to Investigation, 732.201 Sensitivity Level Designations and Investigative Requirements, and 736.102 Notice to Investigative Sources.

Estimated number of respondents: 1,000

Frequency of response: Annual

Total estimated burden: 1,000 hours (per year). Burden is defined at 5 CFR 1320.03(b).

Total estimated cost: \$186,730 (per year), includes \$0 annualized capital or operation & maintenance (O&M) costs.

Changes in Estimates: There is no change in the hours in the total estimated respondent burden compared with the ICR currently approved by OMB.

Dated: January 28, 2015.

John R. Bashista, Director, Office of Acquisition Management.

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