

3. BSAI Crab Issues: Report from Crab Committee; Refine problem statement and elements/options for analysis of 90/10 modifications; BSAI Crab Arbitrator Immunity discussion paper; Final action on BSAI Crab Arbitration Regulations; Final action on BSAI "C" Share active participation; Final action on St. George protection measures.

4. Gulf of Alaska Groundfish Issues: Initial review of GOA sideboards for BSAI Crab vessels.

5. License Limitation Program (LLP) Trawl Recency: Final action to eliminate latent trawl licenses/area endorsements.

6. Observer Program: Receive Observer Advisory Committee report; Final action on Observer Program regulation package.

7. Halibut Charter Management: Initial review of Charter Halibut 2C/3A Catch Sharing Plan analysis; Report on the Charter Halibut Logbook Program.

8. Bycatch Issues: Preliminary review of BSAI Salmon Bycatch Environmental Impact Statement; receive scoping report; refine problem statement/alternatives; Discussion paper on GOA Crab and Salmon Bycatch.

9. Groundfish Management: Review EFP application for Trawl Salmon Excluder; Review EFP application for CGOA Rockfish Electronic Monitoring (Phase II); Initial review of Vessel Monitoring System Exemption for dinglebar gear; Final action on GOA 'Other Species' ABC/OFL specifications; Initial review of 4E Seabird Avoidance measures (T).

10. AFA Issue: Receive action on Amendment 62/62 (single geographic location) and affirm or repeal. (T)

11. Scallop Management: Review Stock Assessment Fishery Evaluation report.

12. Ecosystem Based Management: Report from Ecosystem Committee; preliminary review of Arctic FMP. (Council only)

13. Staff Tasking: Review Committees and tasking.

14. Other Business

The SSC agenda will include the following issues:

1. Steller Sea lions
2. GOA Sideboards
3. Halibut Charter
4. Salmon Bycatch
5. Groundfish Management
6. Scallop SAFE
7. Ecosystem Management
8. Crab Model Review

The Advisory Panel will address most of the same agenda issues as the Council, except for 1 reports. The Agenda is subject to change, and the latest version will be posted at <http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/npfmc/>.

### Special Accommodations

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Gail Bendixen at (907) 271-2809 at least 7 working days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: March 11, 2008.

**Tracey L. Thompson,**

*Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.*

[FR Doc. E8-5207 Filed 3-14-08; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510-22-S**

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### Patent and Trademark Office

#### Patent Examiner Employment Application (Formerly Patent Examiner Employment Application—Job Application Rating System (JARS))

**ACTION:** Proposed collection; comment request.

**SUMMARY:** The United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on the revision of a continuing information collection, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13 (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)).

**DATES:** Written comments must be submitted on or before May 16, 2008.

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit comments by any of the following methods:

- *E-mail:* [Susan.Fawcett@uspto.gov](mailto:Susan.Fawcett@uspto.gov).

Include "0651-0042 comment" in the subject line of the message.

- *Fax:* 571-273-0112; marked to the attention of Susan K. Fawcett.

*Mail:* Susan K. Fawcett, Records Officer, Office of the Chief Information Officer, Customer Information Services Group, Public Information Services Division, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

- *Federal Rulemaking Portal:* <http://www.regulations.gov>.

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Requests for additional information should be directed to the attention of Howard Staik, Chief of the Workforce Employment Division, Office of Human Resources, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450; by telephone at 571-272-2846; or by e-mail to [Howard.Staik@uspto.gov](mailto:Howard.Staik@uspto.gov).

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

### I. Abstract

The USA Staffing system provided by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is an automated on-line system that allows the USPTO to rapidly review applications for employment of entry-level patent examiners. The Office of Human Resources (OHR), armed with a recommendation from a Supervisory Patent Examiner (SPE), can use the system to rapidly make an offer of employment and take the necessary administrative action to support the hiring process. In FY 2007, USA Staffing enabled the Patent Corps to hire more than 1,216 entry-level patent examiners.

Since the inception of USA Staffing in January 2007, the hiring process has become more effective and compliant with the examining requirements established by OPM. In the current employment environment, information technology professionals and engineering graduates are in great demand. The USPTO is in direct competition with private industry for the same caliber of candidates with the requisite knowledge and skills to perform patent examination work. Consequently, it is imperative that every available technology be employed if the USPTO is to remain competitive, meet hiring goals, and fulfill the agency's Congressional commitment to reduce the pendency rate for the examination of patent applications. The information supplied by an applicant seeking a patent examiner position with the USPTO assists the Human Resources Specialists and hiring managers in determining whether an applicant possesses the basic qualification requirements for the patent examiner position.

USA Staffing provides the USPTO with a user-friendly on-line employment application process for applicants and enables the USPTO to process hiring actions in an efficient and timely manner. The on-line application creates an electronic real-time candidate inventory that allows the USPTO to review applications from potential applicants almost instantaneously. Given the immediate hiring need of the Patent Examining Corps, time consumed in the mail distribution system or paper review of applications delays the decision-making process by several weeks. The USA Staffing system results in increased speed and accuracy in the employment process, in addition to streamlining labor and reducing costs.

The use of the USA Staffing on-line application fully complies with 5 U.S.C. 2301, which requires adequate public notice to assure open competition by

guaranteeing that necessary employment information will be accessible and available to the public on inquiry. It is also fully compliant with Section 508 (29 U.S.C. 794(d)), which requires agencies to provide disabled employees and members of the public access to information that is comparable to the access available to others.

**II. Method of Collection**

With the use of USA Staffing, the application information is collected electronically from the applicant. Applicants contact the OPM USA Jobs Web site where they will find the on-line job announcement that links them

to the application. The application is completed on-line and then transmitted to the USPTO via the Internet. For those applicants who do not have access to a personal computer, applications may be faxed to the OPM computer facility for processing.

**III. Data**

*OMB Number:* 0651-0042.

*Form Number(s):* N/A.

*Type of Review:* Revision of a currently approved collection.

*Affected Public:* Individuals or households.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 7,000 responses per year.

*Estimated Time per Response:* The USPTO estimates that it will take the public approximately 30 minutes (0.5 hours) to complete the employment application, depending upon the situation.

*Estimated Total Annual Respondent Burden Hours:* 3,500 hours per year.

*Estimated Total Annual Respondent Cost Burden:* \$134,540. Using the median hourly rate for scientists and engineers of \$38.44 as listed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the USPTO estimates \$134,540 per year in cost burden associated with respondents. This is a fully-loaded hourly rate.

Item	Estimated time for response	Estimated annual responses	Estimated annual burden hours
Patent Examiner Employment Application .....	30 minutes .....	7,000	3,500
Total .....	.....	7,000	3,500

*Estimated Total Annual (Non-hour) Respondent Cost Burden:* \$0. There are no capital start-up, maintenance, or record keeping costs, as well as no filing fees associated with this information collection. However there are annual (non-hour) costs in the form of postage costs.

Not every applicant can supply all of the required information electronically. The applicant does have the option to submit a 'Paper Qualifications Questionnaire' and any supporting documents, such as resumes to the USPTO either by fax, mail or in person. The transcripts and other supporting materials are submitted to the USPTO the same way. These additional documents may be submitted to the USPTO by first-class mail through the United States Postal Service. The USPTO estimates that the average first-class postage is 97 cents. Therefore the USPTO estimates that it will receive 7,000 responses per year, for a total cost of \$6,790 (7,000 × \$0.97) in postage fees.

**IV. Request for Comments**

*Comments are invited on:* (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden (including hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the

use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized or included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection; they will also become a matter of public record.

Dated: March 10, 2008.

**Susan K. Fawcett,**

*Records Officer, USPTO, Office of the Chief Information Officer, Customer Information Services Group, Public Information Services Division.*

[FR Doc. E8-5277 Filed 3-14-08; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510-16-P**

**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**

**Office of the Secretary of Defense**

**Renewal of Department of Defense Federal Advisory Committees**

**AGENCY:** DoD.

**ACTION:** Renewal of Federal Advisory Committee.

**SUMMARY:** Under the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972, (5 U.S.C. Appendix, as amended), the Government in the Sunshine Act of 1976 (5 U.S.C. 552b, as amended), and 41 CFR 102-3.65, the Department of Defense gives notice that it is renewing the charter for the Army Education Advisory Committee (hereafter referred to as the Committee).

The Committee is a discretionary federal advisory committee established by the Secretary of Defense to provide

the Department of Defense, the Secretary of the Army and the Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army independent advice and recommendations in matters pertaining to the educational, doctrinal, and research policies and activities of the U.S. Army's educational programs, including activities of the U.S. Army's joint professional military education programs. The Committee, in accomplishing its mission: (a) Provides advice to their supported schools; (b) assist in the maintenance of the highest academic standards; and (c) ensure that Army educational policies and techniques are current and equal to those used in the finest institutions of higher education.

The Committee shall be composed of not more than 15 members, who are distinguished members of the field of defense, management, leadership, and academia. Committee members appointed by the Secretary of Defense, who are not federal officers or employees, shall serve as Special Government Employees under the authority of 5 U.S.C. 3109. Committee members shall be appointed on an annual basis by the Secretary of Defense. The Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs or designated representative shall serve as the Chairperson, and shall serve at the discretion of the Secretary of Army or designated representative. In addition, the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Army or designated representative may invite other distinguished Government officers to serve as non-voting observers of the Committee, and appoint consultants