

(d) through (g), and add paragraph (c) to read as follows:

§ 351.502 Specificity of domestic subsidies.

* * * * *

(c) *Traded goods sector.* In determining whether a subsidy is being provided to a “group” of enterprises or industries within the meaning of section 771(5A)(D) of the Act, the Secretary may consider enterprises that primarily buy or sell goods internationally to comprise such a group.

* * * * *

■ 3. In § 351.503, add paragraph (b)(3) to read as follows:

§ 351.503 Benefit.

* * * * *

(b) * * *

(3) *Special rule for currency undervaluation.* In determining whether a benefit is conferred when a firm exchanges United States dollars for the domestic currency of a country under a unified exchange rate system, the Secretary normally will consider a benefit to be conferred when the domestic currency of the country is undervalued in relation to the United States dollar. In applying this rule, the Secretary will request that the Secretary of the Treasury provide Treasury’s evaluation and conclusion as to whether the currency of a country is undervalued as a result of government action on the exchange rate and the extent of any such undervaluation.

* * * * *

[FR Doc. 2019–11197 Filed 5–23–19; 4:15 pm]

BILLING CODE 3510–DS–P

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

24 CFR Part 982

[Docket No. FR–5928–N–02]

Notice of Continuation of Demonstration To Test Proposed New Method of Assessing the Physical Conditions of Voucher-Assisted Housing

AGENCY: Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public and Indian Housing, HUD.

ACTION: Demonstration continuation.

SUMMARY: Through this document, HUD solicits comment on the continuation of a demonstration designed to test the new method of assessing the physical condition of housing assisted by HUD vouchers (voucher-assisted housing). The original announcement of the Demonstration was published in the

Federal Register on May 4, 2016. In the Joint Explanatory Statement accompanying the act appropriating funds for HUD in Fiscal Year (FY 2016), Congress directed HUD to implement a single inspection protocol for public housing and voucher units. The continuation of this demonstration is necessary to meet that requirement. The demonstration commenced the process for implementing that single inspection protocol.

DATES: Comments Due Date: July 29, 2019.

ADDRESSES: Interested persons are invited to submit comments to the Office of the General Counsel, Regulations Division, Department of Housing and Urban Development, 451 7th Street SW, Room 10276, Washington, DC 20410–0500. Communications should refer to the above docket number. There are two methods for submitting public comments.

1. *Submission of Comments by Mail.* Comments may be submitted by mail to the Regulations Division, Office of General Counsel, Department of Housing and Urban Development, 451 7th Street SW, Room 10276, Washington, DC 20410–0500. Due to security measures at all federal agencies, however, submission of comments by mail often results in delayed delivery. To ensure timely receipt of comments, HUD recommends that comments submitted by mail be submitted at least two weeks in advance of the public comment deadline.

2. *Electronic Submission of Comments.* Interested persons may submit comments electronically through the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov>. HUD strongly encourages commenters to submit comments electronically. Electronic submission of comments allows the commenter maximum time to prepare and submit a comment, ensures timely receipt by HUD, and enables HUD to make comments immediately available to the public. Comments submitted electronically through the <http://www.regulations.gov> website can be viewed by other commenters and interested members of the public. Commenters should follow instructions provided on that site to submit comments electronically.

Note: To receive consideration as public comments, comments must be submitted using one of the two methods specified above. Again, all submissions must refer to the docket number and title of the notice.

No Facsimile Comments. Facsimile (fax) comments are not acceptable.

Public Inspection of Comments. All comments and communications submitted to HUD will be available, for public inspection and copying between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. weekdays at the above address. Due to security measures at the HUD Headquarters building, an advance appointment to review the public comments must be scheduled by calling the Regulations Division at (202) 708–3055 (this is not a toll-free number). Copies of all comments submitted are available for inspection and downloading at <http://www.regulations.gov>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: George Forbes, Inspection Standards and Data—Vouchers Division, Real Estate Assessment Center, Office of Public and Indian Housing, Department of Housing and Urban Development, 550 12th Street SW, Suite 100, Washington, DC 20410–4000; telephone number (202) 475–8735 (this is not a toll-free number). Persons with hearing or speech impairments may contact this number via TTY by calling the toll-free Federal Relay Service at 800–877–8339.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Structure of the Notice

This document discusses the background, goals, and comments received during the demonstration and the reasons for continuing the demonstration. Section II provides background on the origins of the Uniform Physical Condition Standards for Vouchers (UPCS–V) and progress of the demonstration. Section III discusses the impact of comments on the test plan for the demonstration and reframed goals based on those comments. Section IV describes what HUD is looking to accomplish in the next phase of the demonstration.

II. Background

Information on the Housing Choice Voucher program and the current Housing Quality Standards (HQS), codified at 24 CFR 982.401, was presented in the May 4, 2016 Demonstration Notice.¹ The HUD Office of Inspector General (OIG) released several audit reports and evaluations identifying weakness in the current HCV inspection program.² Additionally, the Senate Committee on Appropriations issued Report 113–045, accompanying the Senate bill for HUD’s

¹ Notice of Demonstration to Test Proposed New Method of Assessing the Physical Conditions of Voucher-Assisted Housing, 81 FR 26759 (May 4, 2016).

² See e.g., HUD OIG Reports: 2018–PH–1002; 2017–PH–1007; 2016–AT–1005; 2015–CH–1007; 2014–NY–1003; 2012–BO–1005.

2014 appropriations, directing HUD to “. . . move to a consistent inspection standard across housing assistance programs, as well as [for] oversight of Section 8 units.”³ In the Joint Explanatory Statement accompanying the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2016, Public Law 114–113, approved December 18, 2015, Congress again directed HUD to implement a single inspection protocol for public housing and voucher units.⁴ Based on these findings and directives, HUD commenced the development of the UPCS–V inspection standard. Congress provided HUD with funding to improve its oversight of the HCV inspection program and to move the inspection standard for the HCV program to a standard consistent with other affordable housing programs, incorporating modern health and safety practices.⁵

HUD is developing a single inspection standard for all units under the Public Housing, Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) and Multifamily programs, called National Standards for the Physical Inspection of Real Estate (NSPIRE). NSPIRE will leverage the infrastructure of UPCS–V to demonstrate, test, and validate NSPIRE protocols. HUD envisions NSPIRE being used for all housing inspections.

Demonstration Progress

Under the demonstration, HUD trained numerous public housing agencies (PHAs) and continues to train PHAs on a regular basis. Currently over 200 PHAs are actively participating in the program. This participation has been critical to the development of a viable inspection protocol. Active PHA participation in the demonstration allows HUD to conduct analysis on a statistically valid number of inspections using the UPCS–V Protocol version 2.5.⁶ In addition to training on the protocol and inspection process, HUD provided devices to some demonstration participants to mitigate the potential cost of off-the-shelf devices.

UPCS–V Protocol version 2.5 is currently active in the field. The much improved, streamlined, and alphabetized Defect Dictionary of UPCS–V Beta was drafted while version 2.5 was active in the field. In order to

validate the changes made to the inspection protocol, HUD must field test UPCS–V Beta over the next two years. Further, HUD hopes to increase demonstration participation to gather more representative and informative data. HUD continues to recruit PHAs to participate. Contact ISDV@HUD.GOV for more information on becoming a demonstration participant. HUD welcomes additional PHA participation.

III. Impact of Comments and Demonstration Goals

A. Impact of Comments

The initial demonstration was tailored to allow a variety of PHAs to participate. Many PHAs commented they wanted to participate but did not meet the initial selection criteria of the original demonstration notice, including PHA size, geographical spread, and/or number of inspections per week. HUD considered these comments and deemed it beneficial to allow some PHAs to participate in the demonstration that did not meet the initial criteria because it allowed stress testing in diverse environments and provided a more representative sample of inspections and issues. HUD also agreed with commenters with respect to allowing the participation of PHAs who use contract inspectors to conduct their inspections. Public comments supported the expansion of the selection criteria.

As a result of the ongoing demonstration, HUD developed, tested, and fielded a mobile inspection application that has received increasingly positive feedback from PHAs. PHA feedback has been critical throughout the demonstration, resulting in a significantly improved user experience for PHAs and increased data flow to HUD.

HUD’s published list of Life-Threatening Conditions was an area of concern for several commenters.⁷ As many commenters noted, the expansion of UPCS–V will be easier to adopt by PHAs if the existing management applications is an integrated UPCS–V Protocol; to that end, HUD formatted the system to allow stakeholders to familiarize themselves with the progress of HUD’s software development.⁸

⁷ Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act of 2016 (HOTMA)—Housing Quality Standard (HQS) Implementation Guidance [Notice PIH 2017–20 (HA)], HUD.GOV (Oct. 27, 2017). See also, Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act of 2016: Implementation of Various Section 8 Voucher Provisions, 82 FR 5458 (Jan. 18, 2017).

⁸ See https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/public_indian_housing/reac/isdv/it/vedga.

B. Demonstration Goals

Decent, safe, and sanitary housing is the objective of National Housing Policy, 42 U.S.C. 12702, and the primary goal of UPCS–V. HUD seeks to provide PHAs with an inspection protocol that gives them insight into the housing quality of subsidized units so they can use data-driven decisions to guide their program administration. The protocol itself is objective, accurate, and consistent in order to realize the goals of insightful data, which ensures PHAs provide decent, safe, and sanitary housing.

The three components of the demonstration, (1) evaluation of the revised inspection model (UPCS–V), (2) data standardization and information exchange, and (3) insight for improvement have made significant progress during the demonstration.⁹ UPCS–V Beta is awaiting validation in the field. By standardizing inspection procedures with participating PHAs, HUD seeks to provide access to incisive inspection data unavailable before. HUD’s work with software vendors represents the first step in honing data standardization and information exchange to facilitate PHA access to meaningful data metrics. The third component of the demonstration provides insight for improvement. HUD’s increasing capacity to analyze data provides PHAs with insight needed to improve their detailed understanding of the condition of voucher-assisted housing available through their program.

IV. The Next Phase of the Demonstration

To gather additional data and allow increased PHA participation, while avoiding the burden of defaulting to their original inspection models by current participants, HUD recognized the need to continue the UPCS–V Demonstration.

HUD welcomes input from every sector of the stakeholder population including tenants, landlords, and 3rd party software developers. HUD received positive feedback with respect to the streamlined and alphabetized defect dictionary of UPCS–V Beta. The current inspection application has significant improvements based on user feedback. HUD’s software development team continues to communicate with stakeholders. These achievements are

⁹ 81 FR 26760 (May 4, 2016) (the three components of the Demonstration were originally identified as: Evaluation of Revised Inspection Model (UPCS–V); Data Standardization and Information Exchange; and Oversight and Performance Improvement).

³ See page 100 of <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CRPT-113srpt45/pdf/CRPT-113srpt45.pdf>.

⁴ See page 41 of Division L of the FY2016 Joint Explanatory Statement. See <https://rules.house.gov/bill/114/hr-2029-sa>.

⁵ See Title II of Division K of the FY2015 Joint Explanatory Statement. See <https://www.congress.gov/congressional-record/2014/12/11/house-section/article/H9307-1>.

⁶ See <https://www.hud.gov/sites/documents/UPCSV-PROTOCOLREV.PDF>.

the groundwork for successfully modernizing the voucher-assisted housing inspection standard.

HUD must consider several factors of significance in evaluating UPCS-V for successful completion. Does the protocol meet PHA needs? Is UPCS-V clear, accurate, objective, and consistent? Is it practical for all inspectors, from entry level to experienced? Does it provide valuable insight to PHAs, and is it cost effective for them to use? Inspection application development, training, and user acceptance testing are all critical components of providing stakeholders a quality product. The demonstration must encompass all these necessary components to provide stakeholders with a tool that meets their needs. To meet PHA needs and thoroughly address the above questions, a two-year continuation of the UPCS-V demonstration is necessary.

Dated: May 8, 2019.

R. Hunter Kurtz,

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Public and Indian Housing.

[FR Doc. 2019-11059 Filed 5-24-19; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4210-67-P

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Coast Guard

33 CFR Part 165

[Docket Number USCG-2019-0296]

RIN 1625-AA11

Regulated Navigation Area; Lake Washington, Seattle, WA

AGENCY: Coast Guard, DHS.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking.

SUMMARY: The Coast Guard is proposing to establish a permanent regulated navigation area for certain waters of Lake Washington. The regulated navigation area is intended to protect personnel and vessels from potential hazards created by excessive vessel wake prior to and following high traffic Seafair events. We invite your comments on this proposed rulemaking.

DATES: Comments and related material must be received by the Coast Guard on or before June 27, 2019.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments identified by docket number USCG-2019-0296 using the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <https://www.regulations.gov>. See the "Public Participation and Request for Comments" portion of the

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION section for further instructions on submitting comments.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: If you have questions about this proposed rulemaking, call or email Petty Officer Amy Hamilton, Sector Puget Sound Waterways Management, Coast Guard; telephone 206-217-6051, SectorPugetSoundWWM@uscg.mil.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Table of Abbreviations

CFR Code of Federal Regulations
DHS Department of Homeland Security
FR Federal Register
NPRM Notice of proposed rulemaking
§ Section
U.S.C. United States Code

II. Background, Purpose, and Legal Basis

The Coast Guard was notified by the Mercer Island Police Department of hazardous conditions associated with increased vessel and swimmer congestion after high traffic Seafair marine events, which can make routine navigation for persons and vessels unsafe. The Seafair event draws an extraordinary amount of boaters and persons to the waterway to observe several high traffic events, such as the Seafair Hydroplane Races and Seafair Air Shows. The wakes created by transiting vessels near the vicinity of vessels moored to the log boom during high traffic events pose a safety concern to vessels and swimmers in the area. Coast Guard action is needed to restrict vessel movement prior to and after Seafair events where significant marine traffic endanger the safety of swimmers and vessels proximate to the log boom.

The purpose of this rulemaking is to ensure the safety of persons and vessels on the navigable waters of Lake Washington within the regulated navigation area from excessive vessel wake occurring prior to and after Seafair events. The Coast Guard is proposing this rulemaking under authority in 46 U.S.C. 70034 (previously 33 U.S.C. 1231).

III. Discussion of Proposed Rule

The District Commander is proposing to establish a regulated navigation area prior to and after Seafair activities, which usually occur during the last week of July and the first two weeks of August. The regulated navigation area would cover all navigable waters within Lake Washington south of the Interstate 90 floating Bridge and north of a line between Bailey Peninsula and Mercer Island. The duration of the regulated navigation area is intended to protect personnel and vessels in these navigable

waters from excessive wake associated with vessels before and after high traffic Seafair events. Vessels transiting the area will be required to create minimum wake at speeds of less than 7 miles per hour, unless a higher minimum speed is necessary to maintain bare steerageway. Enforcement periods for this rule will occur daily prior to and immediately following Seafair activities. The regulatory text we are proposing appears at the end of this document.

IV. Regulatory Analyses

We developed this proposed rule after considering numerous statutes and Executive orders related to rulemaking. Below we summarize our analyses based on a number of these statutes and Executive orders and we discuss First Amendment rights of protestors.

A. Regulatory Planning and Review

Executive Orders 12866 and 13563 direct agencies to assess the costs and benefits of available regulatory alternatives and, if regulation is necessary, to select regulatory approaches that maximize net benefits. Executive Order 13771 directs agencies to control regulatory costs through a budgeting process. This NPRM has not been designated a "significant regulatory action," under Executive Order 12866. Accordingly, the NPRM has not been reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and pursuant to OMB guidance it is exempt from the requirements of Executive Order 13771.

This regulatory action determination is based on the size, location, duration and time-of-day of the regulated navigation area. Vessel traffic will be able to transit through the regulated navigation area, and the regulation will only impact a small designated area of Lake Washington for less than three days. Moreover, the Coast Guard would issue a Broadcast Notice to Mariners via VHF-FM marine channel 16 about the regulated navigation area.

B. Impact on Small Entities

The Regulatory Flexibility Act of 1980, 5 U.S.C. 601-612, as amended, requires Federal agencies to consider the potential impact of regulations on small entities during rulemaking. The term "small entities" comprises small businesses, not-for-profit organizations that are independently owned and operated and are not dominant in their fields, and governmental jurisdictions with populations of less than 50,000. The Coast Guard certifies under 5 U.S.C. 605(b) that this proposed rule would not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities.