

notified of the Council's intent to take action to address the emergency.

### Special Accommodations

The meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aid should be directed to Kathy Pereira, (813) 348-1630, at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

*Authority:* 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: August 29, 2023.

### Rey Israel Marquez,

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

[FR Doc. 2023-19002 Filed 9-1-23; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### Patent and Trademark Office

[Docket No. PTO-T-2023-0037]

### Requiring Identity Verification for Attorney-Sponsored Accounts

**AGENCY:** United States Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) announces that beginning on January 20, 2024, all existing and new attorney support staff with an attorney-sponsored *USPTO.gov* account will be required to verify their identity to access trademark filing systems. The USPTO is making this change after discovering that some U.S.-licensed attorneys have sponsored accounts for individuals who are not directly supervised attorney support staff, and that many of these sponsored accounts appear to be shared by multiple foreign agents and attorneys. These actions violate the Trademark Verified *USPTO.gov* Account Agreement (Agreement).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Robert Lavache, Office of the Deputy Commissioner for Trademark Examination Policy, USPTO, at 571-272-5881. You can also send inquiries to [TMFRNotices@uspto.gov](mailto:TMFRNotices@uspto.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** In late 2019, as part of the USPTO's continuing efforts to protect the integrity of the U.S. trademark register, and to better protect its customers from scams and other fraudulent activities related to the trademark register, the USPTO began requiring customers to create a *USPTO.gov* account to access and submit electronic trademark forms. This enabled the USPTO to monitor trademark filing behavior and aided in

enforcing the USPTO Trademark Rules of Practice regarding submissions in trademark matters. On August 6, 2022, the USPTO began requiring existing and new account holders who occupy one of the appropriate user roles, including owner, U.S.-licensed attorney, Canadian attorney, or Canadian agent, to verify their identity. *See* Trademarks *USPTO.gov* Account ID Verification Program (87 FR 41114). The USPTO also offered a user role for sponsored attorney support staff to establish *USPTO.gov* accounts when sponsored by a supervising U.S.-licensed (or a reciprocally recognized Canadian) attorney, and at the time did not require identity verification for sponsored support staff accounts. *See* 87 FR 41114.

Since establishing the sponsored staff user roles, the USPTO has discovered that some U.S.-licensed attorneys have sponsored accounts for individuals who are not directly supervised attorney support staff, which violates the Agreement that applies to all *USPTO.gov* account holders. Many of these sponsored accounts appear to be used by multiple foreign agents and attorneys who file thousands of trademark applications involving violations of the USPTO's Trademark Rules of Practice, including the rules on signatures and certifications. Because the sponsored account user role has been subject to abuse that has undermined the integrity of the trademark register and such abuse can be significantly curtailed by requiring identity verification of sponsored account holders, the USPTO will now require all existing and new attorney support staff who are *USPTO.gov* account holders to verify their identity. On October 14, 2023, the USPTO will make identity verification available to attorney support staff account holders. It will become mandatory for such account holders on January 20, 2024. Requiring identity verification of sponsored accounts will help enforce the "one person, one account" rule, better enable the USPTO to restrict non-attorneys from submitting trademark filings, and prevent rule violations by filing entities and other unauthorized users. It will also allow the USPTO to better track and eliminate the use of sponsored accounts created for unsupervised use by non-attorney entities.

Trademark applicants and registrants, or their attorneys and support staff, must register for and use a *USPTO.gov* account to access and submit trademark application and maintenance filings with the USPTO. Users of a *USPTO.gov* account and any other USPTO web page or system are required to comply with

the Terms of Use for USPTO web pages. Further, to file trademark documents electronically, users must have their identities verified, and are further bound by the Agreement. A verified account can only be connected to one *USPTO.gov* trademark account.

Once qualified U.S.-licensed attorneys have a trademark verified *USPTO.gov* account, they may sponsor the *USPTO.gov* accounts of directly supervised support staff. Attorneys who abuse the terms of sponsorship may have their sponsorship privileges—and potentially their own verified accounts—revoked. However, under the current system, support staff can simply create new accounts using unverified information and seek attorney sponsorship again, sometimes by the same attorney. Requiring identity verification of sponsored accounts will allow the USPTO to consistently enforce the Agreement and ensure that a user of a sponsored account cannot create multiple accounts or create a new account and again be sponsored.

The following examples demonstrate the impact of the problems caused by the inappropriate use of sponsored accounts. In one instance of abuse, an attorney sponsored more than 30 different accounts used by individuals not under their direct supervision, and perhaps not even personally known to the attorney. In another example, an attorney sponsored multiple accounts for use by non-attorney trademark preparation or filing entities, which are not authorized to practice law, file submissions for clients, or represent parties before the USPTO in trademark matters. Several of these accounts have also been connected to known scams that have defrauded many trademark applicants. Each of these behaviors violates the terms of the Agreement to which each of these attorneys consented. In addition, some law firms are creating institutional accounts that appear to be intended for use by multiple people under generic names such as "Admin Support." This practice impedes the ability of the USPTO to maintain an accurate filing history and violates the Agreement, even if no improper activities are intended.

Under the revised procedures, both existing and new sponsored attorney support staff *USPTO.gov* account holders will need to verify their identity, using either the electronic or paper process, to access the Trademark Electronic Application System (TEAS). Identity verification will become available on October 14, 2023, for attorney support staff account holders to verify their identities. Existing unverified sponsored attorney support

staff *USPTO.gov* accounts will remain active, but will not be able to be used to access or submit trademark forms beginning on January 20, 2024, when identity verification will become mandatory for all users. As of January 20, 2024, only verified account holders will be able to access and submit trademark forms.

The USPTO reminds attorneys that 37 CFR 11.503 establishes duties with respect to the supervision of non-practitioner assistants, and 37 CFR 11.505 forbids a practitioner from assisting in the unauthorized practice of law.

**Katherine K. Vidal,**

*Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office.*

[FR Doc. 2023-19000 Filed 9-1-23; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510-16-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

### Department of the Navy

#### Education for Seapower Advisory Board; Notice of Federal Advisory Committee Meeting

**AGENCY:** Department of the Navy (DoN), Department of Defense (DoD).

**ACTION:** Notice of Federal advisory committee meeting. **SUMMARY:** The DoD is publishing this notice to announce that the following Federal Advisory Committee meeting of the Education for Seapower Advisory Board (E4SAB) will take place.

**DATES:** The meeting is open to the public and will be held on Friday, September 15, 2023 from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time Zone (ET).

**ADDRESSES:** The open meeting will be held at the Admiral Gooding Center, Navy Yard, Washington, DC. The meeting will be handicap accessible. Escort is required.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Dr. Kendy Vierling, Designated Federal Officer (DFO), Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower and Reserve Affairs), Pentagon, Washington, DC 20350-1000, 703-695-4589, [kendy.k.vierling.civ@us.navy.mil](mailto:kendy.k.vierling.civ@us.navy.mil).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** This meeting is being held under the provisions of chapter 10 of title 5, United States Code (U.S.C.) (commonly known as the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) (formerly 5 U.S.C. app.), as amended), the Government in the Sunshine Act of 1976 (5 U.S.C. 552b, as amended), and

title 41 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 102-3.140 and 102-3.150.

**Purpose of the Meeting:** The purpose of the meeting is to discuss naval education programs, strategy and implementation, organizational management, and other matters of interest to the DoD, as determined by the Secretary of Defense, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, or the Secretary of the Navy (SECNAV).

**Agenda:** On September 15, 2023, SECNAV may provide comments or guidance on naval education programs and the Department of the Navy's Naval Education Strategy 2023. Discussions will be held on the Naval Education Strategy and implementation, and applicable lessons learned from the Education for Seapower Study (2018). The E4SAB will receive updates and recommendations from its three subcommittees, pertaining to aspects of accreditation requirements, operations, and administrative policies of the U.S. Naval War College, Naval Postgraduate School, and U.S. Naval Community College.

**Availability of Materials for the Meeting:** A copy of the agenda or any updates to the agenda for the September 15, 2023 meeting, as well as supporting documents, can be found on the website: <https://www.secnav.navy.mil/mra/e4sab>.

**Meeting Accessibility:** Pursuant to section 1009(a)(1) of title 5 U.S.C. and 41 CFR 102-3.140 through 102-3.165, this meeting is open to the public from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (ET) on September 15, 2023. Members of the public who wish to attend the meeting in person may attend on a space available basis from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (ET). Persons desiring to attend the meeting are required to submit their name, organization, email address, and telephone contact information to Ms. Tiphany Morales at [tiphany.e.morales.civ@us.navy.mil](mailto:tiphany.e.morales.civ@us.navy.mil) no later than Tuesday, September 5, 2023.

**Special Accommodations:** Individuals requiring special accommodations to access the public meeting should contact Ms. Tiphany Morales at [tiphany.e.morales.civ@us.navy.mil](mailto:tiphany.e.morales.civ@us.navy.mil) no later than Tuesday, September 5, 2023 (by 5:00 p.m. ET) so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

**Written Statements:** Pursuant to 41 CFR 102-3.105 and 102-3.140, and section 1009(a)(3) of title 5 U.S.C., written statements to the committee may be submitted at any time or in response to a stated planned meeting agenda by email to Dr. Kendy Vierling at [kendy.k.vierling.civ@us.navy.mil](mailto:kendy.k.vierling.civ@us.navy.mil) with the subject line, "Comments for E4SAB Meeting." Written comments pertaining

to a specific topic being discussed at the planned meeting received no later than 5:00 p.m. (ET) on Monday, September 11, 2023 will be distributed to the E4SAB, in the order received.

Comments pertaining to the agenda items will be discussed during the public meeting. Any written statements received after the deadline may not be provided to, or considered by, the Committee during the September 15, 2023 meeting, but will be provided to the members of the E4SAB prior to the next scheduled meeting. Any comments received by the E4SAB will be posted on the website <https://www.secnav.navy.mil/mra/e4sab>.

Dated: August 29, 2023.

**J.E. Koningsor,**

*Lieutenant Commander, Judge Advocate General's Corps, U.S. Navy, Federal Register Liaison Officer.*

[FR Doc. 2023-19007 Filed 9-1-23; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3810-FF-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

### Department of the Navy

#### Notice of Availability of Record of Decision for the Disposal of Decommissioned, Defueled Ex-Enterprise (CVN 65) and its Associated Naval Reactor Plants Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement

**AGENCY:** Department of the Navy (DoN), Department of Defense (DoD).

**ACTION:** Notice of availability.

**SUMMARY:** After carefully weighing the environmental, strategic, and operational consequences of the Proposed Action, DoN announces its decision to select Alternative 3 (Commercial Dismantlement), the Preferred Alternative, from the Disposal of Decommissioned, Defueled Ex-Enterprise (CVN 65) and its Associated Naval Reactor Plants Final Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (EIS/OEIS), published in the **Federal Register** on June 30, 2023.

**ADDRESSES:** The complete text of the Record of Decision (ROD) is available on the project website at: [www.carrierdisposaleis.com](http://www.carrierdisposaleis.com), along with the Final EIS/OEIS and supporting documents. Printed copies of the Final EIS/OEIS and ROD are also available for viewing at these public libraries:

1. Kitsap Regional Library, Downtown Bremerton Branch, 612 Fifth St., Bremerton, WA 98337.
2. Richland Public Library, 955 Northgate Dr., Richland, WA 99352.