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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Institute of Standards and Technology

Proposed Information Collection; Comment Request; Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) Management Information Reporting

AGENCY: National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), COMMERCE.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Commerce, 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 proposed and/or continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before [Insert date 60 days after date of publication in the FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to Jennifer Jessup, Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 6616, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20230 (or via the Internet at jjessup@doc.gov).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or copies

of the information collection instrument and instructions should be directed to Deirdre McMahon, National Institute of Standards and Technology – Manufacturing Extension Partnership, 100 Bureau Drive, Stop 4800, 301-975-8328 (phone). In addition, written comments may be sent via email to Deirdre.mcmahon@nist.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

Sponsored by NIST, the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) is a national network of locally-based manufacturing extension centers working with small manufacturers to assist them improve their productivity, improve profitability and enhance their economic competitiveness. The information collected will provide the MEP with information regarding MEP Center performance regarding the delivery of technology, and business solutions to U.S.-based manufacturers. The collected information will assist in determining the performance of the MEP Centers at both local and national levels, provide information critical to monitoring and reporting on MEP programmatic performance, and assist management in policy decisions. Responses to the collection of information are mandatory per the regulations governing the operation of the MEP Program (15 CFR parts 290, 291, 292, and H.R. 1274 – section 2). The information collected will include center inputs and activities including services delivered, clients served, center staff, quarterly expenses and revenues, partners, strategic plan, operation plans, and client success stories. No confidentiality for information submitted is promised or provided.

In order to reflect new initiatives and new data needs, NIST MEP has identified a need to revise its existing reporting processes by modifying existing reporting elements and adding

additional elements that will enable NIST MEP to better monitor and assess the extent to which the Centers are meeting program goals and milestones.

II. Method of Collection

The information will be collected from the MEP Centers through the MEP Enterprise Information System (MEIS), <https://meis.nist.gov>.

III. Data

OMB Control Number: 0693-0032.

Form Number: None.

Type of Review: Regular submission (revision of a currently approved information collection).

Affected Public: Business or other for-profit organizations.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 60.

Estimated Time Per Response: 160 hours.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 9,600.

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: \$0.

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 and/or included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection; they also will become a matter of public record.

Dated: April 16, 2012

Gwellnar Banks,

Management Analyst, Office of the Chief Information Officer.

Billing Code: 3510-13-P

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