

**OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES
TRADE REPRESENTATIVE**

[Docket No. 301-117]

**Initiation of Section 301 Investigation
and Request for Public Comment:
Intellectual Property Laws and
Practices of the Government of
Paraguay**

AGENCY: Office of the United States Trade Representative.

ACTION: Notice of initiation of investigation; request for written comments.

SUMMARY: The United States Trade Representative (USTR) has initiated a Section 301 investigation with respect to certain acts, policies and practices of the Government of Paraguay that deny adequate and effective protection of intellectual property rights. USTR invites written comments from the public on the matters being investigated.

DATES: This investigation was initiated on Tuesday, February 17, 1998. Written comments from the public are due on or before noon on Monday, March 23, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Office of the United States Trade Representative, 600 17th Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20508.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Claude Burcky, Director for Intellectual Property, (202) 395-6864; Kellie Meiman, Director for Southern Cone Affairs, (202) 395-5190; or GERALYN S. Ritter, Assistant General Counsel, (202) 395-6800.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 182 of the Trade Act (19 U.S.C. 2242) requires the USTR to identify foreign countries that deny adequate and effective protection of intellectual property rights or that deny fair and equitable market access to persons that rely on intellectual property protection. Accordingly, on January 16, 1998, the USTR identified Paraguay as a Priority Foreign Country under that provision. In identifying Paraguay as a Priority Foreign Country, the USTR noted deficiencies in Paraguay's acts, policies and practices regarding intellectual property, including a lack of effective action to enforce intellectual property rights, as evidenced by the alarming levels of piracy and counterfeiting within the country and along its borders with Argentina and Brazil. The USTR also observed that the Government of Paraguay has failed to enact adequate and effective intellectual property legislation covering patents, copyrights and trademarks.

Investigation and Consultations

Section 302(b)(2)(A) of the Trade Act (19 U.S.C. 2412(b)(2)(A)), requires the USTR to initiate an investigation of any act, policy or practice that was the basis of the identification of a country as a Priority Foreign Country under section 182(a)(2) of the Trade Act, unless such acts, policies and practices are already subject to investigation or action under the Section 301 chapter of the Trade Act, or the investigation is not in the national economic interest. The purpose of the investigation initiated under Section 302 is to determine whether such act, policy or practice is actionable under Section 301 of the Trade Act.

As required by Section 303(a) of the Trade Act, the USTR has requested consultations with the Government of Paraguay regarding the issues under investigation. USTR will seek information and advice from appropriate representatives provided for under Section 135 of the Trade Act in preparing the U.S. presentations for such consultations.

Within 6 months after the date on which this investigation was initiated, (i.e., on or before August 16, 1998), pursuant to Section 304 of the Trade Act, the USTR must determine on the basis of the investigation and the consultations, whether any act, policy or practice described in Section 301 of the Trade Act exists. If that determination is affirmative, the USTR must decide what action, if any, to take under Section 301 of the Trade Act. The deadline for making these determinations may, however, be extended to 9 months after the date of initiation of this investigation if the USTR determines that certain conditions are met.

Public Comment: Requirements for Submissions

Interested persons are invited to submit written comments concerning the acts, policies and practices of the Government of Paraguay which are the subject of this investigation; the amount of burden or restriction on U.S. commerce caused by these acts, policies and practices; and the determinations required under Section 304 of the Trade Act regarding whether they are actionable under Section 301 and, if affirmative, the appropriate action to take in response. Comments must be filed in accordance with the requirements set forth in 15 CFR 2006.8(b) (55 FR 20,593) and must be filed on or before noon on Monday, March 23, 1998. Comments must be in English and provided in twenty copies to: Sybia Harrison, Staff Assistant to the

Section 301 Committee, Room 416, Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, 600 17th Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20508.

Comments will be placed in a file (Docket 301-117) open to public inspection pursuant to 15 CFR 2006.13, except confidential business information exempt from public inspection in accordance with 15 CFR 2006.15. Confidential business information submitted in accordance with 15 CFR 2006.15 must be clearly marked "BUSINESS CONFIDENTIAL" in a contrasting color ink at the top of each page on each of 20 copies, and must be accompanied by a nonconfidential summary of the confidential information. The nonconfidential summary shall be placed in the file that is open to public inspection. An appointment to review the docket (Docket No. 301-117) may be made by calling Brenda Webb (202) 395-6186. The USTR Reading Room is open to the public from 9:30 a.m. to 12 noon and 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and is located in Room 101.

Irving A. Williamson,

Chairman, Section 301 Committee.

[FR Doc. 98-4680 Filed 2-23-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3190-01-M

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Office of the Secretary

**Reports, Forms and Recordkeeping
Requirements Agency Information
Collection Activity Under OMB Review**

AGENCY: Office of the Secretary, DOT.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*), this notice announces that the Information Collection Request (ICR) abstracted below has been forwarded to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for extension of a currently approved collection. The ICR describes the nature of the information collection and its expected burden. The **Federal Register** Notice with a 60-day comment period soliciting comments on the following collection of information was published on December 2, 1997 (62 FR, 63745).

DATES: Comments must be submitted on or before March 30, 1998.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Richard Weaver, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, D.C. 20590. Telephone 202-366-2811.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: