user's status may be denied or revoked if the criteria are not met. This rule would help maintain the integrity of the Board's quality control program.

This proposed change is not expected to impact handlers, other than to clarify to them that accepted user's status may be denied or revoked. Handlers are provided a listing of approved accepted users so they know who they can deliver inedible material to and receive credit against their obligation. In the event an application for accepted user status is denied or an accepted user's status is revoked, handlers would be notified by Board staff and provided an updated listing.

This rule would only impact applicants for accepted user status, or accepted users in the sense that it would clarify that accepted user status may be denied or revoked if the terms and conditions set forth in the rules and regulations and the accepted user application are not met. Accepted users are approved entities to which handlers may deliver inedible almonds and receive credit against their inedible disposition obligation. Accepted users voluntarily agree to meet certain terms and conditions so the Board may be assured that inedible almonds do not enter human consumption channels. If these dealers in inedible almonds do not agree to the terms and conditions, they are not approved by the Board. However, they may still operate in the business, although handlers do not receive credit against their inedible disposition obligation if they deliver product to such non-approved entities. Situations have occurred in the past wherein accepted users have failed to completely meet these conditions, and the Board could not be assured the inedible almonds were being disposed of in non-human consumption outlets.

One alternative to the proposal would be to maintain the regulatory language as it currently exists, in which case there would be no clarification. Another alternative would be to specify at length all possible reasons for denying or revoking an accepted user's status. The first alternative fails to address the issue, and the second would require unnecessary lengthy additions to regulatory language, and may be incomplete.

This proposed rule would not impose any additional reporting or recordkeeping requirements on either small or large almond handlers. As with all Federal marketing order programs, reports and forms are periodically reviewed to reduce information requirements and duplication by industry and public sector agencies.

In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35), the information collection requirements that are contained in this rule have been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and have been assigned OMB No. 0581–0071.

The Department has not identified any relevant Federal rules that duplicate, overlap or conflict with this proposed rule.

In addition, the Board's meeting was widely publicized throughout the almond industry and all interested persons were invited to attend the meeting and participate in Board deliberations. Like all Board meetings, the March 25, 1998, meeting was a public meeting and all entities, both large and small, were able to express their views on this issue. The Board itself is composed of ten members, of which five are producers and five are handlers.

Also, the Board has a number of appointed committees to review certain issues and make recommendations to the Board. The Board's Quality Control Committee met on February 25, 1998, and discussed this issue. That meeting was also a public meeting and both large and small entities were able to participate and express their views. Finally, interested persons are invited to submit information on the regulatory and informational impacts of this action on small businesses.

A 30-day comment period is provided to allow interested persons to respond to this proposal. Thirty days is deemed appropriate because this rule would need to be in effect prior to the 1998–99 crop year, which begins August 1, 1998. All written comments timely received will be considered before a final determination is made on this matter.

List of Subjects in 7 CFR Part 981

Almonds, Marketing agreements, Nuts, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

For the reasons set forth in the preamble, 7 CFR part 981 is proposed to be amended as follows:

PART 981—ALMONDS GROWN IN CALIFORNIA

1. The authority citation for 7 CFR part 981 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 601–674.

2. Section 981.442 is amended by adding a new paragraph (a)(7)(iv) to read as follows:

§ 981.442 Quality Control.

(a) * * *

(7) * * *

(iv) The Board may deny or revoke accepted user status at any time if the applicant or accepted user fails to meet the terms and conditions of § 981.442, or if the applicant or accepted user fails to meet the terms and conditions set forth in the accepted user application (ABC Form 34).

* * * * *

Dated: June 11, 1998.

Robert C. Keeney,

Deputy Administrator, Fruit and Vegetable Programs.

[FR Doc. 98–16011 Filed 6–16–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–02–P

FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION

11 CFR Parts 9003 and 9033

[Notice 1998–11]

Electronic Filing of Reports by Publicly Financed Presidential Primary and General Election Candidates

AGENCY: Federal Election Commission.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking.

SUMMARY: The Federal Election Commission requests comments on proposed changes to its regulations to address the electronic filing of reports by publicly financed Presidential primary and general election candidates. The proposed rules would specify that if Presidential candidates and their authorized committees have computerized their campaign finance records, they must agree to participate in the Commission's recently established electronic filing program as a condition of voluntarily accepting federal funding. These regulations would implement the provisions of the Presidential Election Campaign Fund Act (''Fund Act'') and the Presidential Primary Matching Payment Account Act (''Matching Payment Act''), which establish eligibility requirements for Presidential candidates seeking public financing, as well as Public Law 104–97, which amended the reporting provisions of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (''FECA''). No final decisions have been made by the Commission on the proposed revisions in this Notice. Further information is provided in the supplementary information which follows.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before July 17, 1998.

ADDRESSES: All comments should be addressed to Ms. Susan E. Propper, Assistant General Counsel, and must be submitted in either written or electronic form. Written comments should be sent

to the Federal Election Commission, 999 E Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20463. Faxed comments should be sent to (202) 219–3923, with printed copy follow up. Electronic mail comments should be sent to elecfiling@fec.gov. Commenters sending comments by electronic mail should include their full name and postal service address within the text of their comments. Electronic comments that do not contain the full name, electronic mail address and postal service address of the commenter will not be considered.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Susan E. Propper, Assistant General Counsel, or Ms. Rosemary C. Smith, Senior Attorney, at (202) 694–1650 or toll free (800) 424–9530.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Recently, the Federal Election Commission implemented a system permitting political committees and other persons to file reports of campaign finance activity via computer diskettes and direct transmission of electronic data. *See* Explanation and Justification of 11 CFR 104.18, 61 FR 42371 (Aug. 15, 1996). The Commission was required to make the electronic filing option available for all ''report[s], designation[s], or statement[s] required by this Act to be filed with the Commission.'' Public Law 104–79, 109 Stat. 791 (1995), (adding 2 U.S.C. 434(a)(11)). While the Commission encourages all political committees and other persons to file their reports electronically, no committee or person is required to do so. Under Public Law 104–79, participation in the Commission's electronic filing program is voluntary. The goals of the new system include enhancement of on-line access to reports on file with the Commission, reduction of paper filing and manual processing, and increased efficiency and cost-effective methods of operation for the filers and for the Commission.

With the advent of the first Presidential election cycle since the implementation of the new electronic filing system, the question has arisen as to whether it would be advisable to modify the Commission's regulations at 11 CFR 9003.1 and 9033.1 to provide that certain Presidential committees must agree to file their campaign finance reports electronically as a condition of receiving public funding. Currently, the authorized committees of presidential candidates, like other political committees, have the option of submitting electronic reports should they wish to do so. *See* 11 CFR 104.18. The proposed changes to the candidate agreement regulations which follow would establish electronic filing as an additional prerequisite for the receipt of public funding. Please, note, however, this new language would only apply to those primary and general election candidate committees that decide to rely upon a computer system to maintain and use their campaign finance data. Thus, the draft rules would not burden campaign committees with new requirements if they are not computerized.

Electronic filing of Presidential committees' reports is intended to save a substantial amount of time and Commission resources that would otherwise be devoted to inputting these reports into the FEC's database. Although the number of political committees affected by the requirement would be relatively small, their reports can be voluminous given the substantial number of contributions and expenditures listed in each report. Thus, these proposed changes to the candidate agreement rules are expected to speed the reporting of campaign finance information and enhance public disclosure.

Previously, the Commission issued technical specifications for reports filed electronically in its Electronic Filing Specification Requirements (EFSR), which is available free of charge. The EFSR contains technical specifications, including file requirements, for reports filed by Presidential campaign committees. However, the electronic filing software available from the FEC at no charge will not generate the forms used by Presidential committees. The Commission's Data System Development Division would work with committees to assist them in generating the proper output. Any additional costs entailed may be treated and paid for like any other compliance cost pursuant to 11 CFR 9003.3(a)(2)(i)(B) and (F) and 9035.1(c)(1) if incurred after January 1, 1999. The Commission notes that there are a number of differences between the specifications contained in the EFSR and those found in the Computerized Magnetic Media Requirements (CMMR) used by publicly financed committees to submit financial data for the Commission's audit. These differences are necessitated, in part, by the different purposes for which each of these databases are used. Nevertheless, comments are requested as to ways in which these two standards could be better synchronized.

The proposed revisions to the candidate agreement regulations do not require electronic filing for statements of candidacy or statements of organization. While Presidential candidates and their authorized committees may file these statements electronically, if they wish, these forms have not been included in the free software available from the FEC. Also please note that the candidate agreements, themselves, would not be submitted in electronic form under the changes to 11 CFR 9003.1 and 9033.1 which follow.

Congress intended the new system of electronic filing to be voluntary. 141 Cong. Rec. H 12140–41 (daily ed. Nov. 13, 1995) (statements of Reps. Thomas, Hoyer, Fazio and Livingston). The Commission believes that a candidate's agreement to file campaign finance reports electronically in exchange for public funding is a voluntary decision materially indistinguishable from the candidate's voluntary decision to abide by the spending limits in exchange for federal funds. For this reason, it appears that the Commission has the authority to promulgate the regulation set forth below. Nevertheless, commenters are encouraged to express their views on whether the rules set out in this notice are within the scope of the Commission's authority under the Fund Act, the Matching Payment Act, the FECA, and Public Law 104–79.

The Commission welcomes comments on the foregoing proposed amendments to the candidate agreement regulations. Other aspects of the public financing process will be addressed separately in a forthcoming Notice of Proposed Rulemaking. No final decision has been made by the Commission concerning the proposals contained in this notice.

Certification of No Effect Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 605(b) (Regulatory Flexibility Act)

These proposed rules will not, if promulgated, have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities. The basis for this certification is that very few small entities will be affected by these proposed rules, and the cost is not expected to be significant. Further, any small entities affected have voluntarily chosen to receive public funding and to comply with the requirements of the Presidential Election Campaign Fund Act or the Presidential Primary Matching Payment Account Act.

List of Subjects in 11 CFR Parts 9003 and 9033

Campaign funds, Elections, Political candidates.

For the reasons set out in the preamble, it is proposed to amend Subchapters E and F of Chapter I of Title 11 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* as follows:

PART 9003—ELIGIBILITY FOR PAYMENTS

1. The authority citation for part 9003 would continue to read as follows:

Authority: 26 U.S.C. 9003 and 9009(b).

2. In § 9003.1, paragraph (b) introductory text is republished and new paragraph (b)(11) would be added to read as follows:

§ 9003.1 Candidate and committee agreements.

* * * * *

(b) *Conditions.* The candidates shall:

* * * * *

(11) Agree that they and their authorized committee(s) shall file all reports with the Commission in an electronic format that meets the requirements of 11 CFR 104.18 if the candidate or the candidate's authorized committee(s) maintain or use computerized information containing any of the information described in 11 CFR 104.3.

PART 9033—ELIGIBILITY FOR PAYMENTS

3. The authority citation for Part 9033 would continue to read as follows:

Authority: 26 U.S.C. 9003(e), 9033 and 9039(b).

4. In section 9033.1, paragraph (b) introductory text is republished and new paragraph (b)(13) would be added to read as follows:

§ 9033.1 Candidate and committee agreements.

* * * * *

(b) *Conditions.* The candidate shall agree that:

* * * * *

(13) The candidate and the candidate's authorized committee(s) will file all reports with the Commission in an electronic format that meets the requirements of 11 CFR 104.18 if the candidate or the candidate's authorized committee(s) maintain or use computerized information containing any of the information described in 11 CFR 104.3.

Dated: June 11, 1998.

Joan D. Aikens,

Chairman, Federal Election Commission.

[FR Doc. 98–16006 Filed 6–16–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6715–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 98–CE–52–AD]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Schempp-Hirth K.G. Models Standard-Cirrus, Nimbus-2, JANUS, and Mini-Nimbus HS–7 Sailplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: This document proposes to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) that would apply to certain Schempp-Hirth K.G. (Schempp-Hirth) Models Standard-Cirrus, Nimbus-2, JANUS, and Mini-Nimbus HS–7 sailplanes. The proposed AD would require installing a safety device for the tailplane locking hook. The proposed AD is the result of mandatory continuing airworthiness information (MCAI) issued by the airworthiness authority for Germany. The actions specified by the proposed AD are intended to prevent the locking hook on the tailplane attachment bracket from disengaging, which could result in the horizontal tailplane coming loose from the fin with possible loss of longitudinal control of the sailplane.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before July 21, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Central Region, Office of the Regional Counsel, Attention: Rules Docket No. 98–CE–52–AD, Room 1558, 601 E. 12th Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64106. Comments may be inspected at this location between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, holidays excepted.

Service information that applies to the proposed AD may be obtained from Schempp-Hirth Flugzeugbau GmbH, Postbox 14 43, D–73222 Kirchheim unter Teck, Federal Republic of Germany. This information also may be examined at the Rules Docket at the address above.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Mike Kiesov, Aerospace Engineer, FAA, Small Airplane Directorate, 1201 Walnut, suite 900, Kansas City, Missouri 64106; telephone: (816) 426–6934; facsimile: (816) 426–2169.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

Interested persons are invited to participate in the making of the proposed rule by submitting such written data, views, or arguments as they may desire. Communications should identify the Rules Docket number and be submitted in triplicate to the address specified above. All communications received on or before the closing date for comments, specified above, will be considered before taking action on the proposed rule. The proposals contained in this notice may be changed in light of the comments received.

Comments are specifically invited on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of the proposed rule. All comments submitted will be available, both before and after the closing date for comments, in the Rules Docket for examination by interested persons. A report that summarizes each FAA-public contact concerned with the substance of this proposal will be filed in the Rules Docket.

Commenters wishing the FAA to acknowledge receipt of their comments submitted in response to this notice must submit a self-addressed, stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: ''Comments to Docket No. 98–CE–52–AD.'' The postcard will be date stamped and returned to the commenter.

Availability of NPRMs

Any person may obtain a copy of this NPRM by submitting a request to the FAA, Central Region, Office of the Regional Counsel, Attention: Rules Docket No. 98–CE–52–AD, Room 1558, 601 E. 12th Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64106.

Discussion

The Luftfahrt-Bundesamt (LBA), which is the airworthiness authority for Germany, notified the FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on certain Schempp-Hirth Models Standard-Cirrus, Nimbus-2, JANUS, and Mini-Nimbus HS–7 sailplanes. The LBA reports instances where the locking hook on the tailplane attachment bracket disengaged to the point that the horizontal tailplane was no longer securely attached to the fin.

This condition, if not corrected, could result in the horizontal tailplane coming loose from the fin with possible loss of longitudinal control of the sailplane.

Relevant Service Information

Schempp-Hirth has issued Technical Note No. 278–36, 286–33, 295–26, 328–11, 798–3, dated November 11, 1994,