EXPORT-IMPORT BANK OF THE UNITED STATES

[Public Notice 57]

Agency Information Collection Activities; Proposed Collection, Comment Request

AGENCY: Export-Import Bank of the United States (Ex-Im Bank).

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: Under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, the Export-Import Bank of the United States will be submitting to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) a request to review and approve a revised exporter and banker survey. The purpose of the survey is to fulfill a statutory mandate (The Export-Import Bank Act of 1945, as amended, 12 U.S.C. 635) which directs Ex-Im Bank to report annually to the U.S. Congress any action taken toward providing export credit programs that are competitive with those offered by official foreign export credit agencies. The Act further stipulates that the annual report on competitiveness should include the results of a survey of U.S. exporters and U.S. commercial lending institutions which provide export credit to determine their experience in meeting financial competition from other countries whose exporters compete with U.S. exporters.

Accordingly, Ex-Im Bank is requesting that the proposed survey (EIB No. 00–02 be sent to approximately 50 respondents, split equally between bankers and exporters. The revised survey is similar to the previous survey, as it asks bankers and exporters to evaluate the competitiveness of Ex-Im Bank's programs vis-á-vis foreign export credit agencies. However, it has been modified in order to account for newer policies and to capture enough information to provide a better analysis of our competitiveness. In addition, the survey will be available on Ex-Im Bank's Website, *http://www.exim.gov,* with recipients encouraged to respond on-line as well.

DATES: Written comments should be received on or before January 9, 2004 to be assured of consideration.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments and requests for additional information to Alan Jensen, Export-Import Bank of the U.S., 811 Vermont Avenue, NW., room 1279, Washington, DC 20571, (202) 565–3767.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: With respect to the proposed collection of information, Ex-Im Bank invites comments as to

—Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of Ex-Im Bank, including whether the information will have a practical use;

—The accuracy of Ex-Im Bank's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;

—Ways to enhance the quality, usefulness, and clarity of the information to be collected; and

—Ways to minimize the burden of collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology; *e.g.,* permitting electronic submission of responses.

Title and Form Number: 2003 Exporter & Banker Survey of Ex-Im Bank Competitiveness, EIB Form 00–02.

OMB Number: 3048–0004.

Type of Review: Revision of a currently approved collection.

Annual Number of Respondents: 50.

Annual Burden Hours: 50.

Frequency of Reporting or Use: Annual Survey.

Dated: November 4, 2003.

Solomon Bush,

Agency Clearance Officer.

BILLING CODE 6690–01–M

PART 1 – EXPORTER/BANKER COMPANY PROFILE

[Note: See "Part 1 Attachment" for answer choices to questions 1-6 below.]

Company Name _____ Address _____

Years in Business [ ] Years in Exporting/Trade Finance [ ]

Person Completing the Survey _____ Title _____

Phone Number _____ Fax Number _____ Email _____

Have you used Ex-Im Bank's medium-term or long-term program in the previous calendar year? [ ]

Which medium/long-term programs did you use? Check all that apply:

☐ Insurance ☐ Loans ☐ Guarantee

Compared to 2002, my 2003 volume of exports/trade finance was: [1.]

EXPORTERS

2003 total sales volume [2.] 2003 total U.S. export sales volume [3.]

% of total export sales volume that was Ex-Im Bank supported [4.]

BANKERS

2003 total export credit extended with a term over one year [5.]

% of 2003 total export credit extended with a term over one year that was Ex-Im Bank supported [6.]

PART 2–EXPERIENCE WITH FOREIGN EXPORT CREDIT AGENCIES (ECAs)

[Note: See "Part 2 Attachment" for the possible answer choices to the questions below.]

Please indicate your experience in the previous calendar year in using, receiving support from or working with other official ECAs. Please select the appropriate answer for each ECA listed.

1.

Canada (EDC)		Japan (NEXI)	
France (Coface)		UK (ECGD)	
Germany (Hermes)		Other (identify)	
Italy (SACE)		Other (identify)	
Japan (JBIC)		Other (identify)	

Please indicate your experience in the previous calendar year in facing competitors that received support from foreign official ECAs. Please select the appropriate answer for each ECA listed.

1.

Canada (EDC)		Japan (NEXI)	
France (Coface)		UK (ECGD)	
Germany (Hermes)		Other (identify)	
Italy (SACE)		Other (identify)	
Japan (JBIC)		Other (identify)	

PART 2 (Continued)

Why do you approach Ex-Im Bank for support? Please indicate the approximate frequency with which each of the following challenges or needs arise, as well as a typical region or situation that presents such a challenge/need.

[Note: When the survey is being completed on-line, if the cursor is placed over the question further explanation of that question will "pop up." The more detailed explanations are found in the "Part 2 Attachment."]

2.

Challenge/Need	%	Typical Region or Situation
Face competition from companies that receive ECA support:	_____	_____
Find a lack of useful private market financing available:	_____	_____
Need continuing U.S. government involvement:	_____	_____
Other (Please identify):	_____	_____
Other (Please identify):	_____	_____

PART 3 – EXPERIENCE WITH EX-IM BANK AS COMPARED TO FOREIGN ECAs

Using the guide below, please grade Ex-Im Bank as it compares to other ECAs in the following categories:

[Note: When the survey is being completed on-line, if the cursor is placed over an element in which Ex-Im Bank is to be graded then the definition of that element will "pop up." The definitions for each of the elements are found in the "Part 3 Attachment."]

A+	= Fully competitive. Consistently equal to the (or is the sole) ECA offering the most competitive position on this element. Levels the playing field on this element with the most competitive offer from any of the major ECAs.
A	= Generally competitive. Consistently offers terms on this element equal to the average terms of the typical major ECA. Levels the playing field on this element with the typical offer from the major ECAs.
A-/B+	= In between A and B
B	= Modestly competitive. Consistently offers terms on this element equal to the least competitive of the major ECAs. Does not quite level the playing field on this element with most of the major ECAs.
B-/C+	= In between B and C
C	= Barely competitive. Consistently offers terms on this element that are a notch below those offered by any of the major ECAs. Puts exporter at financing disadvantage on this element that may, to a certain extent, be compensated for in other elements or by exporter concessions.
C-/D+	= In between C and D
D	= Uncompetitive. Consistently offers terms on this element that are far below those offered by other major ECAs. Puts exporter at financing disadvantage on this element so significant that it is difficult to compensate for and may be enough to lose a deal.
F	= Does not provide program or element

CORE BUSINESS POLICIES AND PRACTICES

Ex-Im Bank's Cover Policy		**Interest Rate Provided by Ex-Im Bank**	
Scope of country risk		Loans (CIRR)	
Depth of non-sovereign risk		Insurance cover	
Breadth of availibity (e.g., restrictions)		Guarantee cover	

Ex-Im Bank's Risk Premia on		**Ex-Im Bank's Co-financing**	
Sovereign		# and utility of bilateral agreements	
Non-sovereign		Flexibility in one-off deals	

PART 3 (Continued)

Do you have any comments on Ex-Im Bank's cover policy, interest rates, risk premia or co-financing as they compare to those offered by other ECAs? For example, what core business policies and practices, if changed, would impact your competitiveness? Please be as specific as possible.

MAJOR PROGRAMS AND PERFORMANCE

Ex-Im Bank's Medium-Term Program

Pricing	
% of cover	
Risk capacity	

Ex-Im Bank's Long-Term Program

Pricing	
% of cover	
Risk capacity	

Ex-Im Bank's Large Aircraft Program

Interest rate	
% of cover	
Risk capacity	

Ex-Im Bank's Project Finance

Core program features	
Repayment flexibilities	

Ex-Im Bank's Foreign Currency Guarantee

Availability of hard currency cover	
Availability of local currency cover	
Pricing	

Ex-Im Bank's Support for Service Exports

Availability	
Repayment terms	

Do you have any comments on Ex-Im Bank's programs for medium- and long-term financing, large aircraft, project finance, or foreign currency guarantees as compared to those of other ECAs? Do you have any comments on the support Ex-Im Bank offers for services exports as compared to that offered by other ECAs? What programs or performance, if changed, would impact your competitiveness? Please be as specific as possible.

PART 3 (Continued)

Using the guide below, please indicate the competitive impact of the following economic philosophies and public policies on Ex-Im Bank's support.

+	Positive	Philosophy, policy or program has a positive impact on Ex-Im Bank's competitiveness (moves Ex-Im Bank's competitiveness grade up one notch)
*	Neutral	Philosophy, policy or program has a neutral impact on Ex-Im Bank's competitiveness (no impact on Ex-Im Bank's competitiveness grade)
-	Negative	Philosophy, policy or program has a negative impact on Ex-Im Bank's competitiveness (moves Ex-Im Bank's competitiveness grade down one notch)

ECONOMIC PHILOSOPHY

Tied aid [ ] Market windows [ ]

Do you have any comments on Ex-Im Bank's competitiveness with regard to tied aid or market windows? For example, have you seen competition supported by market windows or tied aid financing? Please be as specific as possible. You may also provide case specific data in Part 4.

[ ]

PART 3 (Continued)

PUBLIC POLICIES

Economic impact		Foreign content		Local costs	
PR 17/Shipping		Environment			

Do you have any comments on Ex-Im Bank's policies as they compare with other ECAs concerning economic impact, foreign content, local costs, shipping or the environment? Where other ECAs do not have a comparable public policy, such as economic impact and shipping, do you have comments on the impact of these public policies to Ex-Im Bank's competitiveness? For example, what public policies, if changed, would impact your competitiveness? Please be as specific as possible.

COMPETITIVENESS WEIGHTING

Now that you have graded Ex-Im Bank in several areas, please weight the overall importance of each of the four broad categories listed above to Ex-Im Bank's overall competitiveness. Please ensure that the sum of your weights equals 100%.

Core Business Policies and Practices	[0 – 100%)]
Major Programs and Performance	[0 – 100%]
Economic Philosophy	[0 – 100%]
Public Policies	[0 – 100%]

[Note: The online survey will ensure that the sum of the four percentage weightings equals 100%.]

PART 4 – EX-IM BANK PROJECTS

This template is provided as an opportunity for you to flesh out some of the grades that you gave in Part 3 by detailing any adverse impacts of Ex-Im Bank program features in specific transactions.

Ex.	Cost/Policy/ Program	ECA	Market	Project Description	Describe the competition you faced and the effect that it had on your business (eg forced to change sourcing; lost jobs; lower exports). If possible, please quantify.
	Cover	EDC	Iran	Power Plant	As a result of Ex-Im Bank's lack of cover for Iran, we were forced to source from outside the U.S. This resulted in a loss of over $100 million in U.S. export sales.
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					

PART 5 – GENERAL COMMENTS

This space is provided for you to express your views on the general competitive environment, trends of specific competitors, etc. You may also use this space to comment on aspects of Ex-Im Bank programs, particularly those not addressed in the above questions.

[FR Doc. 03–28135 Filed 11–7–03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6690–01–C

FARM CREDIT ADMINISTRATION

Sunshine Act Meeting; Farm Credit Administration Board; Regular Meeting

AGENCY: Farm Credit Administration.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given, pursuant to the Government in the Sunshine Act (5 U.S.C. 552b(e)(3)), of the regular meeting of the Farm Credit Administration Board (Board).

DATE AND TIME: The regular meeting of the Board will be held at the offices of the Farm Credit Administration in McLean, Virginia, on November 13, 2003, from 9 a.m. until such time as the Board concludes its business.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jeanette C. Brinkley, Secretary to the Farm Credit Administration Board, (703) 883–4009, TTY (703) 883–4056.

ADDRESSES: Farm Credit Administration, 1501 Farm Credit Drive, McLean, Virginia 22102–5090.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Parts of this meeting of the Board will be open to the public (limited space available), and parts will be closed to the public. In order to increase the accessibility to Board meetings, persons requiring assistance should make arrangements in advance. The matters to be considered at the meeting are:

Open Session

A. Approval of Minutes

—October 9, 2003 (Open)

B. Reports

- Corporate/Non-corporate Approvals
- Financial Institution Rating System (FIRS)—Sensitivity to Risk
- Capital Markets Specialist Program
- Human Development Investment Group—Update
- Rotational Assignments as Training and Development
- Loan Syndications—Update
- Rural Home Lending—Request for Regulatory Exception

C. New Business—Regulations

- YBS Proposed Rule—Reopening of Comment Period

Closed Session*

Reports

- Allowance for Loan Losses—Update

Dated: November 6, 2003.

Jeanette C. Brinkley,

Secretary, Farm Credit Administration Board.

[FR Doc. 03–28292 Filed 11–6–03; 11:12 am]

BILLING CODE 6705–01–P

FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM

Formations of, Acquisitions by, and Mergers of Bank Holding Companies

The companies listed in this notice have applied to the Board for approval, pursuant to the Bank Holding Company Act of 1956 (12 U.S.C. 1841 *et seq.*) (BHC Act), Regulation Y (12 CFR Part 225), and all other applicable statutes and regulations to become a bank holding company and/or to acquire the assets or the ownership of, control of, or the power to vote shares of a bank or bank holding company and all of the banks and nonbanking companies owned by the bank holding company, including the companies listed below.

The applications listed below, as well as other related filings required by the Board, are available for immediate inspection at the Federal Reserve Bank indicated. The application also will be available for inspection at the offices of the Board of Governors. Interested persons may express their views in writing on the standards enumerated in the BHC Act (12 U.S.C. 1842(c)). If the proposal also involves the acquisition of a nonbanking company, the review also includes whether the acquisition of the nonbanking company complies with the standards in section 4 of the BHC Act (12 U.S.C. 1843). Unless otherwise noted, nonbanking activities will be conducted throughout the United States. Additional information on all bank holding companies may be obtained from the National Information Center website at *www.ffiec.gov/nic/*.

Unless otherwise noted, comments regarding each of these applications must be received at the Reserve Bank indicated or the offices of the Board of Governors not later than December 4, 2003.

A. Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta (Sue Costello, Vice President) 1000 Peachtree Street, N.E., Atlanta, Georgia 30303:

1. KSB Bancorp, Inc., Kaplan, Louisiana; to merge with Teche Bancshares, Inc., and thereby indirectly acquire Teche Bank and Trust Co., both of St. Martinville, Louisiana.

Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, November 4, 2003.

Robert deV. Frierson,

Deputy Secretary of the Board.

[FR Doc. 03–28150 Filed 11–7–03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6210–01–S

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Announcement of Anticipated Availability of Funds for Family Planning Services Grants

AGENCY: Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Secretary, Office of Public Health and Science, Office of Population Affairs.

* Session Closed-Exempt pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552b(c)(4), (8) and (9).