defensible determinations; (3) minimizing burdens to all participants; and (4) minimizing cost of process to the Commission. These changes are as follows:

- 1. Preliminary phase investigation conferences. As in hearings held in conjunction with final phase investigations, allow questioning by opposing parties; the time spent on questions (but not responses) and rebuttal/closing statements would come out of overall time allocations.
- 2. Questionnaires. Adopt a new format for and revise the basic content of Commission questionnaires to reduce respondent burden and better tailor questions to investigative issues. Copies of the proposed new generic producer, importer, and purchaser questionnaires may be obtained for comment from the Commission's Office of Investigations (202–205–3160). Representative of the changes being proposed, the new producer questionnaire is about half the length of the current one and incorporates the following changes:
- a. The questionnaire would be in two parts, the first consisting of general instructions/definitions, and the second consisting of the data requests (a transmittal letter, a "fact sheet" on Title VII investigations, and the Commission's institution notice would also accompany each questionnaire);
- b. Questions on capacity, production, shipments, inventories, channels of distribution, and employment are combined onto one page;
- c. Current questions seeking employment and financial data on overall establishment operations are eliminated (certain overall establishment financial data requests may be added if deemed necessary by the Commission, or if respondents are unable to provide product-line data);
- d. Only the total quantity and value of sales are requested for questions seeking pricing data for particular products, as opposed to that information plus largest sale value, quantity, and shipping costs in current questionnaires (this proposal initially applies to questionnaires for preliminary phase investigations; it may be appropriate to request more information in final phase investigations if deemed necessary by the Commission); and
- e. The current requests for lost sales and revenue allegations are eliminated in questionnaires sent in preliminary phase investigations to petitioners, and eliminated altogether in questionnaires for final phase investigations. As explained above, petitioners would be required to furnish their allegations in the petition, thus allowing the

Commission more time to investigate them.

The new producer questionnaire for use in preliminary phase investigations contains provisions for providing certain information to Commerce, on its request, if it has questions concerning domestic industry support for the petition. Questionnaires for final phase investigations would not contain those provisions.

The Commission also solicits comments on other possible changes to questionnaires, such as: (1) requesting only half-year "interim-period" data as opposed to the current practice of requesting quarterly interim-period data; (2) electronic transmission, preparation, and submission of questionnaires; (3) a mechanism that would allow firms to not repeat information provided in preliminary questionnaires in final questionnaires if the questions are the same and the information originally provided was correct; and (4) increased use of sampling in developing mailing lists of questionnaire recipients in appropriate circumstances (i.e., agricultural domestic industry with multiple producers).

Finally, the Commission will endeavor to increase coordination and cooperation with the Department of Commerce with respect to data collection, such as exploring the possibility of "piggy-backing" on Commerce's questionnaire to collect foreign-industry data directly from the exporting companies investigated by Commerce, and using joint telegrams to U.S. embassies.

3. Briefing. The Commission solicits comments on its proposed plans to reduce by two days the period between the Commission hearing and the submission of posthearing briefs in order to provide the Commission more time to consider these briefs, prior to the closing of the record. In particular, the Commission solicits comments on how significantly this scheduling change will affect the parties' ability to prepare their posthearing briefs, including responding to Commissioners' and Commission staff's questions from the hearing.

4. Reports. Eliminate the separate financial memorandum on variance analysis and incorporate the analysis into staff reports when appropriate.

Eliminate the separate economics memorandum and incorporate the analysis into staff reports.

Release the public version of the staff report to parties at the conclusion of the investigation but publish only the Commission's determination and Commissioners' opinions.

Determinations and opinions are

currently made available electronically on the Internet. As soon as certain technical problems related to the transmission of graphic presentations are resolved, the Commission would make public versions of reports similarly available.

The Commission also solicits comments on whether or not it is useful to parties and/or the public to include its own and Commerce's Federal Register notices and conference/hearing witness lists in staff reports, and whether the public version of the staff report should continue to be included in its published report.

5. Verification policies. The Commission solicits comments on the following policies related to on-site verification of data received during the course of investigations:

a. General—Verifications will normally be conducted in final phase investigations. In preliminary phase Title VII investigations, no on-site verifications will be attempted except under exceptional circumstances.

b. Questionnaire type—The extent and scope of the on-site verification efforts will focus mainly on producer questionnaire responses, with verifications of importer, purchaser, and foreign producer questionnaire responses as appropriate.

c. Company selection—The guidelines for the selection of companies to be verified is documented in the updated Verification Handbook. The criteria include such factors as inclusion of the petitioner(s), market share, data discrepancies, and submissions from APO parties.

d. Scheduling of the verification— Best efforts will be made to complete producer questionnaire verifications and formally release Verification Reports to APO parties and the Commission prior to the hearing date.

e. Procedures—The verification covers all questionnaire data, including trade, production, employment, pricing, and financial data. The Verification Handbook covers the detailed procedures for the on-site verification of companies.

- f. Verification report—A detailed verification report will be prepared after verification. The report, which will be signed and dated, will indicate both the verification procedures utilized as well as the results. Additional information collected at verification may be included in the report. Dating and initialing the Verification Handbook is not necessary, but may be done in verifications involving new Commission auditors.
- g. Documentation—The collection of company documents will only be