OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

Standard Occupational Classification Revision Policy Committee's Proposals for Revising the SOC's Principles of Classification, Purpose and Scope, and Conceptual Framework

AGENCY: Office of Management and Budget, Executive Office of the President.

ACTION: Notice of solicitation of comments.

SUMMARY: Under title 44 U.S.C. 3504, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) is seeking public comment on the Standard Occupational Classification Revision Policy Committee's (SOCRPC) proposals for revising the 1980 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) Manual's principles of classification, purpose and scope, and conceptual framework. In a prior Federal Register notice (February 28, 1995, 60 FR 10998-11002), the public was provided the opportunity to comment on the uses of occupational data; propose changes to the existing 1980 SOC classification principles, purpose and scope, and conceptual options; and review the SOCRPC's proposed revision process. OMB plans another public comment period on the SOCRPC's final recommendations in the fall of 1996 when the SOCRPC will propose changes to the existing SOC Manual at the detailed occupation level based on an agreed upon set of classification principles, purpose and scope, and unified conceptual framework. The SOC revision is tentatively scheduled for implementation beginning in July 1997. All Federal agencies that collect occupational data are expected to utilize the new system.

Request for Comments

The SOCRPC welcomes comments with respect to any topic related to occupational classification, but is specifically interested in comments concerning:

- (1) The classification principles underlying the new SOC,
- (2) The purpose and scope of the new SOC,
- (3) The unified conceptual framework used to guide the revision, and
- (4) Public proposals for changes to the existing SOC at the detailed 4-digit level based on the principles, purpose and scope, and conceptual framework presented in this notice.

DATES: To ensure consideration in the development of the SOC, all comments

must be in writing and received on or before November 17, 1995.

ADDRESSES: Please send comments to Thomas J. Plewes, Chairman, Standard Occupational Classification Revision Policy Committee, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Suite 4945, 2 Massachusetts Avenue, N.E., Washington, DC 20212.

Electronic Availability and Comment

This document is available on the Internet from the Bureau of Labor Statistics via World Wide Web (WWW) browser and E-mail. To obtain this document via WWW browser, connect to "http://stats.bls.gov/blshome.html" then select "Surveys and Programs," then select "Occupational Employment Statistics," then select "Standard Occupational Classification Documents." To obtain this document via E-mail or to submit comments, send a message to socrevision@bls.gov (use only lower case letters). Comments received at this address by the date specified above will be included as part of the official record.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Paul Hadlock, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, E-mail Hadlock—@bls.gov, telephone number (202) 606–6502, FAX (202) 606–6645.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) Manual was last revised in 1980. Furthermore, it has not been fully utilized by Federal occupational data gathering agencies which have frequently departed from the standard over the years as new occupations have emerged and opportunities for improvements have presented themselves. In view of these circumstances, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has acknowledged the need to develop a new SOC and obtain the cooperation of all Federal occupational data collection agencies in using the new standard.

In its February 28, 1995, Federal Register notice, OMB announced the formation of the Standard Occupational Revision Policy Committee, chaired by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), with representatives from the Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce; the Employment and Training Administration (ETA), U.S. Department of Labor; the Office of Personnel Management; and the Defense Manpower Data Center, U.S. Department of Defense. Ex officio members include the Office of Management and Budget, the National Science Foundation, and the National Occupational Information Coordinating

Committee. The SOCRPC reports to OMB, which has responsibility for all economic classification systems (other than those for international trade).

Following the issuance of the first Federal Register notice, the **Employment and Training** Administration and the Bureau of Labor Statistics sponsored a Seminar on Research Findings in April 1995, on behalf of the SOCRPC. The seminar papers provided insights useful in the decisionmaking process concerning conceptual issues, principles of classification, compatibility with existing databases, and measurability. The seminar provided a forum for discussion of key issues related to the development of the new SOC. These were separated into three main topics: (1) user needs, (2) conceptual options, and (3) measurement issues. In addition to the authors who presented their papers, the seminar was attended by representatives of agencies involved directly with the SOC revision and by other interested parties from government, private industry, and research organizations. The papers from the seminar were published in the SOCRPC's Seminar on Research Findings, April 11, 1995 and are available through the BLS information contact.

As a result of responses to the previous Federal Register notice and the Committee's other activities, the SOCRPC, with the concurrence of OMB, has agreed that a common occupational classification system for the United States is needed and should be put in place.

Part 1: Standard Occupational Classification Principles

The SOCRPC recommends that the new Standard Occupational Classification system should conform to a set of common principles, the immediate purpose of which would be to guide the development of the new classification structure:

- (1) The Classification should cover all occupations in which work is performed for pay or profit, including work performed in family-operated enterprises by family members who are not directly compensated. It should exclude occupations unique to volunteers.
- (2) The Classification should reflect the current occupational structure of the United States and have sufficient flexibility to assimilate new occupations into the structure as they become known.
- (3) While striving to reflect the current occupational structure, the Classification should maintain linkage