Annual Update of Filing Fees

(Issued March 20, 2014)

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (Commission) is issuing this notice to update filing fees that the Commission assesses for specific services and benefits provided to identifiable beneficiaries. Pursuant to 18 CFR 381.104, the Commission is establishing updated fees on the basis of the Commission’s Fiscal Year 2013 costs. The adjusted fees announced in this notice are effective April 28, 2014. The Commission has determined, with the concurrence of the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs of the Office of Management and Budget, that this final rule is not a major rule within the meaning of section 251 of Subtitle E of Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act, 5 U.S.C. 804(2). The Commission is submitting this final rule to both houses of the United States Congress and to the Comptroller General of the United States.

The new fee schedule is as follows:

Fees Applicable to the Natural Gas Policy Act

1. Petitions for rate approval pursuant to 18 CFR 284.123(b)(2). (18 CFR 381.403) ................................................................. $ 12,070

2. Review of a Department of Energy remedial order. 
   
   
   Amount in controversy
   
   
   $ 0–9,999. (18 CFR 381.303(b)) ................................................................. $ 100
   
   $ 10,000–29,999. (18 CFR 381.303(b)) ................................................................. $ 600
   
   $ 30,000 or more. (18 CFR 381.303(a)) ................................................................. $ 35,410

3. Review of a Department of Energy denial of adjustment: 
   
   
   Amount in controversy
   
   
   $ 0–9,999. (18 CFR 381.304(b)) ................................................................. $ 100
   
   $ 10,000–29,999. (18 CFR 381.304(b)) ................................................................. $ 600
   
   $ 30,000 or more. (18 CFR 381.304(a)) ................................................................. $ 18,570

4. Written legal interpretations by the Office of General Counsel. (18 CFR 381.305(a)) ................................................................. $ 6,960

Fees Applicable to Natural Gas Pipelines

1. Pipeline certificate applications pursuant to 18 CFR 284.224. (18 CFR 381.207(b)) ................................................................. * $ 1,000

2. Certification of qualifying status as a small power production facility. (18 CFR 381.505(a)) ................................................................. $ 20,860

3. Review of a Department of Energy denial of adjustment: 
   
   
   Amount in controversy
   
   
   $ 0–9,999. (18 CFR 381.304(b)) ................................................................. $ 100
   
   $ 10,000–29,999. (18 CFR 381.304(b)) ................................................................. $ 600
   
   $ 30,000 or more. (18 CFR 381.304(a)) ................................................................. $ 18,570

4. Written legal interpretations by the Office of General Counsel. (18 CFR 381.305(a)) ................................................................. $ 6,960

Fees Applicable to Cogenerators and Small Power Producers

1. Certification of qualifying status as a cogeneration facility. (18 CFR 381.505(a)) ................................................................. $ 23,610

List of Subjects in 18 CFR Part 381

Electric power plants, Electric utilities, Natural gas, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

Anton C. Porter,
Executive Director.

In consideration of the foregoing, the Commission amends Part 381, Chapter I, Title 18, Code of Federal Regulations, as set forth below.

PART 381—FEES

§381.302 [Amended]
2. In 381.302, paragraph (a) is amended by removing "$ 24,370" and adding "$ 24,260" in its place.

§381.303 [Amended]
3. In 381.303, paragraph (a) is amended by removing "$ 35,580" and adding "$ 35,410" in its place.

§381.304 [Amended]
4. In 381.304, paragraph (a) is amended by removing "$ 18,650" and adding "$ 18,570" in its place.

§381.305 [Amended]
5. In 381.305, paragraph (a) is amended by removing "$ 6,990" and adding "$ 6,960" in its place.

§381.403 [Amended]
6. Section 381.403 is amended by removing "$ 12,130" and adding "$ 12,070" in its place.

§381.505 [Amended]
7. In 381.505, paragraph (a) is amended by removing "$ 20,960" and adding "$ 20,860" in its place and by removing "$ 23,720" and adding "$ 23,610" in its place.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives

27 CFR Part 447


RIN 1140–AA45


AGENCY: Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF), Department of Justice.

ACTION: Interim final rule with request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Department of Justice is amending Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) regulations to remove those defense articles currently on the U.S. Munitions Import List that ATF by delegation has determined no longer warrant import control under the Arms Export Control Act.

DATES: Effective date: This interim final rule is effective April 28, 2014.
II. The President's Export Control Reform Initiative

In August 2009, the President directed a broad-based interagency review of the United States export control system in part to identify additional ways to enhance national security, better focus resources on protecting items for export that need to be protected, and provide clarity to make it easier for exporters to comply with regulations and for the United States Government to administer and enforce the regulations. As the result of a comprehensive review of export controls, it was determined that certain defense articles and defense services listed on the USML no longer warrant control for export purposes by the Secretary of State pursuant to the AECA. Pursuant to section 38(f) of the Arms Export Control Act, those defense articles are being transferred to the Department of Commerce’s Commerce Control List (CCL) for export control under the authority of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.

In effecting the President’s export control reform initiative, the export control reform interagency task force identified a way to improve the United States import control system to enhance national security and focus resources on protecting items for import that need to be protected. Accordingly, the task force requested ATF to identify those defense articles that no longer warrant control on the USMIL.

III. Interim Final Rule

ATF reviewed the USMIL in accordance with Executive Order 13563, “Improving Regulation and Regulatory Review,” and the export control reform interagency task force request. Those defense articles on the USMIL that ATF (acting through authority delegated from the President to the Attorney General, and in turn delegated by the Attorney General to ATF) has determined no longer warrant import control under the AECA are being removed from the USMIL. Controlling the permanent import of defense articles furthers United States foreign policy and national security interests and is a foreign affairs function of the U.S. Government. This interim final rule amends the regulations at 27 CFR part 447.

The Attorney General delegated administration of the import provisions of the AECA to the Director of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF), subject to the direction of the Attorney General and the Deputy Attorney General. 28 CFR 0.130(a). ATF promulgated regulations that implement the provisions of section 38 of the AECA in 27 CFR part 447. With guidance from the Department of State and concurrence from the Departments of State and Defense pursuant to Executive Order 13637, ATF administers the list of items subject to import control under the USMIL, at 27 CFR 447.21.
thereof.” The defense articles currently covered by Category I, paragraph (e) are readily available through diverse domestic commercial sources and they do not present a significant concern for trafficking or diversion into illicit channels. The defense articles currently covered by Category I, paragraph (e) do not warrant import control under the AECA. The Department reserves this paragraph.

In Category III—Ammunition, the Department is removing and then reserving paragraphs (c), “Ammunition belting and linking machines,” and (d), “Ammunition manufacturing machines and ammunition loading machines (except handloading ones).” These defense articles are costly, difficult to maintain, too heavy for easy transport, and readily available from domestic vendors in the United States. These defense articles do not pose a trafficking and diversion threat warranting import control under the AECA.

In addition, in Category IV—Launch Vehicles, Missiles, Ballistic Missiles, Rockets, Torpedoes, Bombs and Mines, the Department is removing and reserving paragraph (f), “Ablative materials fabricated or semi-fabricated from advanced composites (e.g., silica, graphite, carbon, carbon/carbon, and boron filaments) for the articles in this category that are derived directly from or specifically developed or modified for defense articles.” Such materials are a low threat to domestic security and are readily available in the domestic market.

In Category VI—Vessels of War and Special Naval Equipment, the Department is clarifying paragraph (a) to read: “Vessels of War, if they are armed and equipped with offensive or defensive weapons systems, including but not limited to amphibious warfare vessels, landing craft, mine warfare vessels, patrol vessels, auxiliary vessels, service craft, experimental types of naval ships, and any vessels specifically designed or modified for military purposes or other surface vessels equipped with offensive or defensive military systems.” The new text focuses precisely on defense articles that might threaten domestic security or enable terrorist activities.

Further in Category VI—Vessels of War and Special Naval Equipment, the Department is revising paragraph (b) to read: “Turrets and gun mounts, special weapons systems, protective systems, and other components, parts, attachments, and accessories specifically designed or modified for such armament systems.” The new language focuses on defense articles that might threaten domestic security or enable terrorist activities. Also in Category VI, the Department is removing and reserving paragraphs (c) and (d). Mine sweeping equipment, harbor entrance detection devices, and related components and controls have numerous domestic suppliers and are low threats to domestic security.

Additionally, the Department is revising the note in Category VI to clarify that the examples of vessels of war provided in Category VI must be armed and equipped with offensive or defensive weapon systems to be considered a defense article on the USMIL.

The Department is updating Category VII—Tanks and Military Vehicles by removing and reserving paragraph (g), “Engines specifically designed or modified for the vehicles in paragraphs (a), (b), (c), and (f) of this category.” The defense articles listed in Category VII, paragraph (g) are substantially the same as those commercially available in the domestic market and not likely to be diverted for criminal use. The Department is revising paragraph (h) and including two explanatory notes. The Department is also adding a new paragraph (i), with a corresponding new note to Category VII to clarify that this category includes within its scope other ground vehicles that meet four technical parameters in the Wassenaar Arrangement’s Munitions List Category 6.

In Category XIV—Toxicological Agents and Equipment and Radiological Equipment, the Department is removing and reserving paragraph (b) (biological agents) and revising paragraph (c) to limit regulation to all specifically designed or modified equipment, including components, parts, accessories, and attachments, for disseminating the articles in paragraph (a) of this category. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Agriculture regulate the import and use of biological agents under such acts as the United and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act of 2001, Public Law 107–56, and the Public Health Security and Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Act of 2002, Public Law 107–188. Therefore, continued inclusion of these items on the USMIL is unnecessary to ensure domestic security. Further, by removing and reserving paragraph (d) (nuclear radiation detection and measuring devices manufactured to military specification) and paragraph (e) (components, parts, accessories, attachments associated equipment specifically designed or modified for the articles in paragraphs (c) and (d) of this category), the Department recognizes the domestic availability of these articles and the associated low threat to domestic security.

Finally, the Department is updating policies related to Category XVI—Nuclear Weapons Design and Test Equipment, to the extent that imports of these defense articles are under the control of the Department of Energy pursuant to the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, and the Nuclear Non-proliferation Act of 1978, as amended, or are government transfers authorized pursuant to these Acts. The Department is removing and reserving paragraph (a), (any article, material, equipment, or device, which is specifically designed or modified for use in the design, development, or fabrication of nuclear weapons or nuclear explosive devices), revising paragraph (b) to include modeling or simulation tools that model or simulate the environments generated by nuclear detonation or the effects of these environments on systems, subsystems, components, structures, or humans, and adding an explanatory note after paragraph (b) to indicate that Category XVI does not include equipment, technical data, or services controlled by the Department of Energy pursuant to the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act of 1978, as amended, or are government transfers authorized pursuant to these Acts.

Pursuant to Executive Order 13637, the Department of State and the Department of Defense have concurred on this interim final rule amending the USMIL.

IV. Statutory and Executive Order Review

A. Executive Order 12866

Because the amendments to 27 CFR part 447 involve a foreign affairs function of the United States, Executive Order 12866 does not apply.

B. Executive Order 13132

This regulation will not have substantial direct effects on the States, on the relationship between the Federal Government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government. Therefore, in accordance with section 6 of Executive Order 13132, “Federalism”, the Attorney General has determined that this regulation does not have sufficient federalism implications to warrant the preparation of a federalism summary impact statement.
C. Executive Order 12988

This regulation meets the applicable standards set forth in subsections (a) and (b)(2) of Executive Order 12988, “Civil Justice Reform.”

D. Administrative Procedure Act

As reflected in 27 CFR 447.54, amendments made to 27 CFR part 447 are exempt from the rulemaking provisions of 5 U.S.C. 553 because this part involves a foreign affairs function of the United States. See 5 U.S.C. 553(a)(1). Accordingly, it is not necessary to issue this rule using the notice and public procedure set forth in 5 U.S.C. 553(b), and the requirement of a delayed effective date in 5 U.S.C. 553(d) does not apply. The Department of Justice nevertheless wishes to provide the public with an opportunity to participate in the regulatory process and provide feedback pursuant to Executive Order 13563, “Improving Regulation and Regulatory Review.” Accordingly, the Department is publishing this rule as an interim final rule with a 90-day provision for public comment and, without prejudice to its determination that controlling the import of defense articles is a foreign affairs function of the United States Government.

E. Regulatory Flexibility Act

The provisions of the Regulatory Flexibility Act relating to an initial and final regulatory flexibility analysis are not applicable to this interim final rule because the Department is not publishing the rule as a general notice of proposed rulemaking under 5 U.S.C. 553 or any other law. See 5 U.S.C. 601 et seq.

F. Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996

This rule is not a major rule as defined by section 251 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996. 5 U.S.C. 804. This rule is not likely to result in an annual effect on the economy of $100 million or more; a major increase in costs or prices; or significant adverse effects on competition, employment, investment, productivity, innovation, or the ability of United States-based enterprises to compete with foreign-based enterprises in domestic and export markets.

G. Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995

This rule will not result in the expenditure by State, local and tribal governments, in the aggregate, or by the private sector, of $100 million or more in any one year, and it will not significantly or uniquely affect small governments. Therefore, no actions were deemed necessary under the provisions of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995. See 2 U.S.C. 1501 et seq.

H. Paperwork Reduction Act

The provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104–13, 44 U.S.C. Chapter 35, and its implementing regulations, 5 CFR part 1320, do not apply to this rule because there are no reporting or recordkeeping requirements.

Public Participation

A. Comments Sought

The Department is requesting comments on the interim final rule from all interested persons. The Department is also specifically requesting comments on the clarity of this interim final rule and how it may be made easier to understand.

All comments must reference this document docket number (ATF 25I), be legible, and include your name and mailing address. The Department will treat all comments as originals and will not acknowledge receipt of comments. Comments received on or before the closing date will be carefully considered. Comments received after that date will be given the same consideration if it is practical to do so, but assurance of consideration cannot be given except as to comments received on or before the closing date.

B. Confidentiality

Comments, whether submitted electronically or on paper, will be made available for public viewing at ATF, and on the Internet as part of the eRulemaking initiative, and are subject to the Freedom of Information Act. Commenters who do not want their name or other personal identifying information posted on the Internet should submit their comment by mail or facsimile, along with a separate cover sheet that contains their personal identifying information. Both the cover sheet and comment must reference this docket number. Information contained in the cover sheet will not be posted on the Internet. Any personal identifying information that appears within the comment will be posted on the Internet and will not be redacted by ATF.

Any material that the commenter considers to be inappropriate for disclosure to the public should not be included in the comment. Any person submitting a comment shall specifically designate that portion (if any) of the comment that contains material that is confidential under law (e.g., trade secrets, processes, etc.). Any portion of a comment that is confidential under law shall be set forth on pages separate from the balance of the comment and shall be prominently marked “confidential” at the top of each page. Confidential information will be included in the rulemaking record but will not be disclosed to the public. Any comments containing material that is not confidential under law may be disclosed to the public. In any event, the name of the person submitting a comment is not exempt from disclosure.

C. Submitting Comments

Comments may be submitted in any of three ways:

• Mail: Send written comments to the address listed in the ADDRESSES section of this document. Written comments must appear in minimum 12 point font size (.17 inches), include your mailing address, and be signed, and may be of any length.

• Facsimile: You may submit comments by facsimile transmission to (202) 648–9741. Faxed comments must:

  (1) Be legible and appear in minimum 12 point font size (.17 inches);
  (2) Be on 8½” x 11” paper;
  (3) Contain a legible, written signature; and
  (4) Be no more than five pages long.

ATF will not accept faxed comments that exceed five pages.

• Federal eRulemaking Portal: To submit comments to ATF via the federal eRulemaking portal, visit http://www.regulations.gov and follow the instructions for submitting comments.

Disclosure

Copies of this interim rule and the comments received will be available for public inspection online at www.regulations.gov and by appointment during normal business hours at: ATF Reading Room, Room 1E–062, 99 New York Avenue NE., Washington, DC 20226, telephone (202) 648–8740.

Drafting Information

The author of this document is George M. Fodor, Office of Regulatory Affairs, Enforcement Programs and Services, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives.

List of Subjects in 27 CFR Part 447

Administrative practice and procedure, Arms control, Arms and munitions, Authority delegation, Chemicals, Customs duties and inspection, Imports, Penalties, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Scientific equipment, Seizures and forfeitures.
PART 447—IMPORTATION OF ARMS, AMMUNITION AND DEFENSE ARTICLES

§ 447.21 The U.S. Munitions Import List.

(1) Remove and reserve paragraph (a);

(2) Revise paragraph (c) and (d);

(3) Remove and reserve paragraphs (c) and (d); and

(4) Revise the introductory text of the “Note” after paragraph (e).

(5) Add a second “Note” and a third “Note” after the newly inserted paragraph (i); and

(6) Add a second “Note” and a third “Note” after the newly inserted paragraph (i).

(7) Revise paragraph (g);

(8) Revise paragraph (h);

(9) Revise paragraph (i).


2. Amend § 447.21 as follows:

a. In Category I, remove and reserve paragraph (e).

b. In Category III, remove and reserve paragraphs (c) and (d).

c. In Category IV, remove and reserve paragraph (f).

d. In Category VI:

(1) Revise paragraph (a);

(2) Revise paragraph (b);

(3) Remove and reserve paragraphs (c) and (d); and

(4) Revise the introductory text of the “Note” after paragraph (e).

e. In Category VII:

(1) Remove and reserve paragraph (g);

(2) Revise paragraph (h);

(3) Add a new paragraph (i) after paragraph (b);

(4) Revise the “Note” that now appears after the newly inserted paragraph (i); and

(5) Add a second “Note” and a third “Note” after the newly inserted paragraph (i).

f. In Category XIV:

(1) Remove and reserve paragraph (b);

(2) Revise paragraph (c) and (d);

(3) Remove and reserve paragraphs (d) and (e).

g. In Category XVI:

(1) Remove and reserve paragraph (a);

(2) Revise paragraph (b); and

(3) Add a “Note” after paragraph (b).

These amendments to § 447.21 read as follows:

§ 447.21 The U.S. Munitions Import List.

* * * * *

CATEGORY I—FIRESAMS

* * * * *

(f) [Reserved]

* * * * *

CATEGORY VI—VESSELS OF WAR AND SPECIAL NAVAL EQUIPMENT

(a) Vessels of War, if they are armed and equipped with offensive or defensive weapon systems, including but not limited to amphibious warfare vessels, landing craft, mine warfare vessels, patrol vessels, auxiliary vessels, service craft, experimental types of naval ships, and any vessels specifically designed or modified for military purposes or other surface vessels equipped with offensive or defensive military systems.

(b) Turrets and gun mounts, special weapons systems, protective systems, and other components, parts, attachments, and accessories specifically designed or modified for such articles on combatant vessels.

(c) [Reserved]

(d) [Reserved]

(e) * * *

Note: The term ‘‘vessels of war’’ includes, but is not limited to, the following, if armed and equipped with offensive or defensive weapon systems:*

* * * * *

CATEGORY VII—TANKS AND MILITARY VEHICLES

* * * * *

(g) [Reserved]

(h) Tank and military vehicle parts, components, accessories, attachments, and associated equipment for offensive or defensive systems for the articles in this category, as follows:

(1) Armored hulls, armored turrets and turret support rings;

(2) Active protection systems (i.e., defensive systems that actively detect and track incoming threats and launch a ballistic, explosive, energy or electromagnetic countermeasure(s) to neutralize the threat prior to contact with a vehicle);

(3) Composite armor parts and components;

(4) Spaced armor components and parts, including slat armor parts and components;

(5) Reactive armor and components;

(6) Electromagnetic armor parts and components, including pulsed power;

(7) Gun mount, stabilization, turret drive, and automatic elevating systems;

(8) Kits specifically designed to convert a vehicle in this category into either an unmanned or a driver-optional vehicle. For a kit to be controlled by this paragraph it must include all of the following:

(i) Remote or autonomous steering;

(ii) Acceleration and braking; and

(iii) A control system;

(9) Fire control computers, stored management systems, armaments control processors, vehicle weapon interface units and computers;

(10) Electro-optical sighting systems; and

(11) Laser rangefinder or target designating devices.

Note: An “amphibious vehicle” in Category VII(f) is a vehicle or chassis that is equipped to meet special military requirements, and that is designed or adapted for operation on or under water, as well as on land.

Note: Engines and engine parts are not included in paragraph (h) of Category VII.

Note: Paragraph (i) of Category VII does not apply to civilian vehicles designed or modified for transporting money or valuables.

* * * * *

CATEGORY XIV—TOXICOLOGICAL AGENTS AND EQUIPMENT AND RADIOLOGICAL EQUIPMENT

* * * * *

(b) [Reserved]

(c) [Reserved]

(d) [Reserved]

(e) [Reserved]

CATEGORY XVI—NUCLEAR WEAPONS DESIGN AND TEST EQUIPMENT

(a) [Reserved]

(b) Modeling or simulation tools that model or simulate the environments generated by nuclear detonations or the effects of these environments on systems, subsystems, components, structures, or humans.

Note: Category XVI does not include equipment, technical data, or services controlled by the Department of Energy pursuant to the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, and the Nuclear Non-
Proliferation Act of 1978, as amended, or are government transfers authorized pursuant to these Acts.

* * * * *


Eric H. Holder, Jr.,
Attorney General.

[FR Doc. 2014–06778 Filed 3–26–14; 8:45 am]
BILLING CODE 4410–FY–P

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau

27 CFR Parts 19, 26, 27, and 73

[Docket No. TTB–2014–0004; T.D. TTB–119]
RIN 1513–AB97

Electronic Submission of Forms, the Finished Products Records for Distilled Spirits Plants, and Closures on Certain Distilled Spirits Products

AGENCY: Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau, Treasury.

ACTION: Direct final rule; Treasury decision.

SUMMARY: The Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB) is amending its regulations regarding the electronic submission of forms to provide for the electronic submission to TTB of copies of certain forms, where the original is to be retained by the submitter along with other records. This amendment removes a barrier that industry members have faced when trying to apply for permits completely by electronic means. TTB is also amending its regulations to address circumstances where TTB requires certain information to be submitted to other agencies. Specifically, the amendments provide that TTB requirements for information to be submitted to another agency may be met by the electronic submission of the information, as long as the other agency has provided for such a submission of information by electronic means.

In addition, TTB is amending its regulations governing the records that distilled spirits plant (DSP) proprietors must keep of finished products. Specifically, TTB is removing the requirement that DSP proprietors keep a daily summary record of the kind of distilled spirits bottled or packaged.

Finally, TTB is amending its regulations regarding closures that must be affixed to containers of imported distilled spirits products or of such products brought into the United States from Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands. The amendments remove a requirement that a part of the closure remain attached to the container when opened. This amendment will align the regulations for such products with those applicable to domestic distilled spirits products.

DATES: Effective Date: April 28, 2014.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kate M. Bresnahan, Regulations and Rulings Division, Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau, at 202–453–1039, ext. 151.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

TTB Authority

The Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (IRC), at 26 U.S.C. chapters 51 and 52, provides for the regulation of certain alcohol- and tobacco-related businesses. In addition, the Federal Alcohol Administration Act (FAA Act), at 27 U.S.C. chapter 8, provides for the regulation of certain operations of beverage alcohol businesses. Chapters 51 and 52 of the IRC and sections 103 and 104 of the FAA Act (27 U.S.C. 203 and 204) vest the Secretary of the Treasury with authority to prescribe regulations related to the issuance of permits, registrations, and notices for such businesses. The IRC provisions also include requirements for persons operating in certain alcohol and tobacco industries to obtain bonds and to submit reports and other documents related to regulated operations. In addition, section 4222 of the IRC (26 U.S.C. 4222) establishes registration requirements for persons who make tax-free sales of firearms and ammunition.

The Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB) administers these provisions, pursuant to section 1111(d) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, codified at 6 U.S.C. 531(d). The Secretary has delegated various authorities through Treasury Department Order 120–01 (Revised), dated December 10, 2013, to the TTB Administrator to perform the functions and duties in administration and enforcement of these laws.

Electronic Submission of Forms and Use of Electronic Signatures on Forms

TTB regulations implementing the permit, registration, and notice requirements of the IRC and the FAA Act are promulgated in chapter I of title 27 of the Code of Federal Regulations (27 CFR chapter I). These regulations require certain current and prospective industry members to obtain approval before commencing a new TTB-regulated industry operation and to update permit information for an existing TTB-regulated business. These regulations also require that certain forms, reports, and other documents be submitted to TTB, depending on the operation. These documents may include operational reports, bonds, and powers of attorney, where applicable. In addition, some provisions require that the regulated industry members submit documents to other agencies. For example, provisions relating to the importation of the regulated commodities require that, in some circumstances, documents must be submitted to U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) during the entry process.

The TTB regulations currently implementing those requirements generally provide for the submission to TTB of applications and other documents in paper form. Under certain conditions, forms may be submitted electronically through an electronic document receiving system. The electronic submission of forms to TTB is governed by the TTB regulations at part 73 (27 CFR part 73). Part 73 sets forth the conditions under which TTB will allow current and prospective industry members to submit forms to TTB electronically, and to use electronic signatures or digital signatures to sign those forms, in lieu of submitting paper forms with handwritten signatures. These regulations do not currently address the electronic submission of TTB-required forms and documents to other agencies.

Pursuant to the TTB regulations at 27 CFR 73.31, TTB-regulated industry members may submit an electronic form instead of a paper form to satisfy any reporting requirement in chapter I of Title 27 CFR under certain conditions. Currently, the conditions are as follows: (1) TTB has published a notice in the Federal Register and on its Web site (http://www.ttb.gov) announcing that it is prepared to receive a particular form electronically; (2) the person required to submit the form has registered to do so, pursuant to the instructions in that notice; (3) that person submits the electronic form to an electronic document receiving system that TTB has designated for the receipt of that specific form; and (4) the electronic form bears valid electronic signatures, as provided in subpart B of part 73, to the same extent that the paper form for which it substitutes would bear handwritten signatures.

Amendments to Part 73

Recently, TTB has facilitated electronic communications and transactions in many ways. For example, TTB has made a number of