

be permitted to follow a standard different from the codified standard having general applicability. If carried to an extreme, a multitude of separate, individual rules, or waivers would result. Of course, this situation would be administratively unmanageable, unenforceable, and contrary to the policy of general rulemaking. The proper course for achieving these savings is to petition for a rule change that will permit the activity or operation that results in such savings. It is clearly the only reasonable and fair choice from the standpoint of sound rulemaking policy in that it would afford all interested persons the opportunity to question the safety implications of the rule change during the proposal stage and to benefit from lower compliance costs if the rule change is adopted.

Further, OPSO has evaluated MWPLC's assertion that the repaired welds "equal or exceed the quality and integrity of original production welds and replacements pursuant to 49 CFR 192.245." While that evaluation shows that the radiographs of the repaired welds do not exhibit unacceptable weld defects, OPSO believes that this finding alone is not sufficient to determine the level of safety. Also, there is no evidence to show that the hydrostatic testing of repaired cracked welds to a level of 100 percent of SMYS is by itself, or in combination with radiography, sufficient to guarantee the integrity of repairs. Instead, the following factors indicate that the level of safety of the 56 welds is uncertain:

1. The evidence submitted by MWPLC in support of the repair procedure used on the 56 welds does not include any duration response testing results or studies to show that repairing cracks in welds in accordance with the procedures used will not jeopardize the welds or the pipelines over their projected service life. As a result, the reliability of the repaired welds and the pipelines is not evident.

2. Similarly, the repair procedures outlined in the 13th edition of API 1104 do not appear to have a duration response testing basis and appear to be a consensus standard developed because of the difficulties in removing cracked welds during installation offshore.

3. Even if the limited testing performed by MWPLC was satisfactory, the number of weld specimens tested by MWPLC to qualify the crack repair procedure was insufficient to provide a high statistical confidence level regarding the safety of welds repaired.

4. The repair procedure followed by MWPLC did not provide for post heat treatment as recommended by the API 1104 procedures.

CONCLUSION

In consideration of the foregoing and after reviewing all available relevant information, OPSO finds that MWPLC has not presented any compelling reason why the requirement of § 192.245 for removal of cracked welds should be waived. Moreover, OPSO finds that the level of safety provided by the repairs made on

the 56 welds in question is uncertain. Therefore, the petition by MWPLC for waiver from § 192.245 is hereby denied.

This decision is without prejudice, however, to MWPLC's submitting a petition for rulemaking based on sound technical information to permit the repair of cracked welds onshore as an alternative to their being cut out and replaced.

(Sec. 3, Pub. L. 90-481, 82 Stat. 721, 49 USC 1672; 40 FR 43901, 49 CFR 1.53.)

Issued in Washington, D.C. on January 4, 1977.

CESAR DELEON,
Acting Director, Office of
Pipeline Safety Operations.

[FR Doc. 77-746 Filed 1-7-77; 8:45 am]

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Office of the Secretary

[Treasury Department Order No. 150-86]

COMMISSIONER OF INTERNAL REVENUE

Delegation of Authority With Respect to Northern Mariana Islands Social Security Tax

The purpose of this order is to delegate authority to the Commissioner of Internal Revenue to perform functions with respect to the administration, collection and enforcement, (and assessment of the Northern Mariana Islands Social Security Tax.

The authority necessary to perform all functions on behalf of the government of the Northern Mariana Islands with respect to the administration, collection and enforcement, and assessment of the taxes (including interest and penalties) imposed by the Northern Mariana Islands Social Security Act, heretofore delegated to the Secretary of the Treasury by a Memorandum of Agreement and Delegation made effective as of January 1, 1977, is hereby delegated to the Commissioner of Internal Revenue.

The Commissioner of Internal Revenue may redelegate such authority to any officer or employee of the Internal Revenue Service.

WILLIAM E. SIMON,
Secretary of the Treasury.

DECEMBER 31, 1976.

[FR Doc. 77-740 Filed 1-7-77; 8:45 am]

VETERANS ADMINISTRATION

ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Renewals

In accordance with section 14 of Pub. L. 92-463, Federal Advisory Committee Act, the Veterans Administration has determined that renewal of the following advisory committees, for a period of two years, is in the public interest:

Committee	Expiration Date
Education and Training Review Panel.	Dec. 31, 1978
Career Development Committee.	Jan. 4, 1979
Geriatric Research, Education and Clinical Centers Advisory Committee.	Jan. 17, 1979

New charters for these committees have been filed in accordance with Pub. L. 92-463.

By direction of the Administrator.

Dated: December 30, 1976.

A. J. SCHULTZ,
Associate Deputy Administrator.
[FR Doc. 77-720 Filed 1-7-77; 8:45 am]

NATIONAL FOUNDATION ON THE ARTS AND THE HUMANITIES

FEDERAL-STATE PARTNERSHIP ADVISORY PANEL

Renewal

In accordance with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463); the NFAH Act of 1965, as amended (20 U.S.C. 959); and paragraph 9 of OMB Circular A-63; notice is hereby given that renewal of the Federal-State Partnership Advisory Panel has been approved by the Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts for a period of two years, until January 15, 1979.

The Federal-State Partnership Advisory Panel reviews grant applications and makes recommendations to the National Council on the Arts and the Chairman, National Endowment for the Arts, regarding financial support of quality arts projects.

The charter for the Federal-State Partnership Advisory Panel will be filed with standing committees of the Senate and House of Representatives having legislative jurisdiction over the Endowment and with the Library of Congress.

Signed on January 5, 1977, in Washington, D.C.

ROBERT M. SIMS,
Administrative Officer, National
Endowment for the Arts, National
Foundation on the Arts
and the Humanities.

[FR Doc. 77-814 Filed 1-7-77; 8:45 am]

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION

[Notice No. 300]

ASSIGNMENT OF HEARINGS

JANUARY 5, 1977.

Cases assigned for hearing, postponement, cancellation or oral argument appear below and will be published only once. This list contains prospective assignments only and does not include cases previously assigned hearing dates. The hearings will be on the issues as presently reflected in the Official Docket of the Commission. An attempt will be made to publish notices of cancellation of hearings as promptly as possible, but interested parties should take appropriate steps to insure that they are notified of cancellation or postponements of hearings in which they are interested.

MC 82492 (Sub-No. 134), Michigan & Nebraska Transit Co., Inc. now assigned February 10, 1977, at Chicago, Ill. is canceled.