

**REGULATORY INFORMATION SERVICE CENTER**

**Introduction to The Regulatory Plan and the Unified Agenda of Federal Regulatory and Deregulatory Actions**

**AGENCY:** Regulatory Information Service Center.

**ACTION:** Introduction to The Regulatory Plan and the Unified Agenda of Federal Regulatory and Deregulatory Actions.

**SUMMARY:** The Regulatory Flexibility Act requires that agencies publish semiannual regulatory agendas describing regulatory actions they are developing (5 U.S.C. 602). Executive Order 12866 "Regulatory Planning and Review," signed September 30, 1993 (58 FR 51735) and Office of Management and Budget memoranda implementing section 4 of that Order establish minimum standards for agencies' agendas, including specific types of information for each entry. Section 4 of Executive Order 12866 also directs that each agency prepare, as part of its submission to the fall edition of the Unified Agenda, a regulatory plan of the most important significant regulatory actions that the agency reasonably expects to issue in proposed or final form during the upcoming fiscal year.

The Regulatory Plan (Plan) and the Unified Agenda of Federal Regulatory and Deregulatory Actions (Unified Agenda) help agencies fulfill these requirements. This publication contains the plans of 28 Federal agencies and the regulatory agendas for these and 30 other Federal agencies.

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**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For further information about specific regulatory actions, please refer to the Agency Contact listed for each entry.

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**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>Introduction to The Regulatory Plan and the Unified Agenda of Federal Regulatory and Deregulatory Actions</b>	
I. What Are The Regulatory Plan and the Unified Agenda? ...	72720
II. Why Are The Regulatory Plan and the Unified Agenda Published? .....	72720
III. How Are The Regulatory Plan and the Unified Agenda Organized? .....	72721
IV. What Information Appears for Each Entry? .....	72722
V. Abbreviations .....	72723
VI. How Can Users Get Copies of the Plan and the Agenda? .....	72724
<b>Introduction to the Fall 2006 Regulatory Plan</b> .....	72725

**AGENCY REGULATORY PLANS**

**Cabinet Departments**

Department of Agriculture .....	72736
Department of Commerce .....	72761

Department of Defense .....	72768
Department of Education .....	72775
Department of Energy .....	72777
Department of Health and Human Services .....	72783
Department of Homeland Security .....	72795
Department of Housing and Urban Development .....	72809
Department of the Interior .....	72813
Department of Justice .....	72823
Department of Labor .....	72828
Department of Transportation .....	72845
Department of the Treasury .....	72858
Department of Veterans Affairs .....	72869

**Other Executive Agencies**

Environmental Protection Agency .....	72870
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission .....	72907
General Services Administration .....	72909
National Aeronautics and Space Administration .....	72910
National Archives and Records Administration .....	72911
Office of Personnel Management .....	72913
Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation .....	72915
Small Business Administration .....	72917
Social Security Administration .....	72920

**Independent Regulatory Agencies**

Consumer Product Safety Commission .....	72926
Federal Housing Finance Board .....	72928
Federal Maritime Commission .....	72929
Federal Trade Commission .....	72930
National Indian Gaming Commission .....	72936

**AGENCY AGENDAS**

**Cabinet Departments**

Department of Agriculture .....	72939
Department of Commerce .....	73033
Department of Defense .....	73125
Department of Education .....	73167
Department of Energy .....	73177
Department of Health and Human Services .....	73195
Department of Homeland Security .....	73277
Department of Housing and Urban Development .....	73385
Department of the Interior .....	73415
Department of Justice .....	73491
Department of Labor .....	73539
Department of State .....	73575
Department of Transportation .....	73583
Department of the Treasury .....	73675
Department of Veterans Affairs .....	73799

**Other Executive Agencies**

Agency for International Development .....	73823
Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board .....	73827
Commission on Civil Rights .....	73831
Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled .....	73833
Corporation for National and Community Service .....	73839
Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency for the District of Columbia .....	73843
Environmental Protection Agency .....	73847
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission .....	73983
Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service .....	73987
General Services Administration .....	73989
National Aeronautics and Space Administration .....	74003
National Archives and Records Administration .....	74009
National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities	
Institute of Museum and Library Services .....	74017
National Endowment for the Arts .....	74019
National Endowment for the Humanities .....	74021
National Science Foundation .....	74025
Office of Federal Housing Enterprise Oversight .....	74029
Office of Government Ethics .....	74033
Office of Management and Budget .....	74041

Office of Personnel Management .....	74045
Peace Corps .....	74069
Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation .....	74073
Railroad Retirement Board .....	74079
Selective Service System .....	74083
Small Business Administration .....	74085
Social Security Administration .....	74097

**Joint Authority**

Department of Defense/General Services Administration/National Aeronautics and Space Administration (Federal Acquisition Regulation) .....	74113
--	-------

**Independent Regulatory Agencies**

Commodity Futures Trading Commission .....	74125
Consumer Product Safety Commission .....	74133
Farm Credit Administration .....	74145
Farm Credit System Insurance Corporation .....	74153
Federal Communications Commission .....	74155
Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation .....	74219
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission .....	74229
Federal Housing Finance Board .....	74241
Federal Maritime Commission .....	74245
Federal Reserve System .....	74249
Federal Trade Commission .....	74257
National Credit Union Administration .....	74271
National Indian Gaming Commission .....	74281
Nuclear Regulatory Commission .....	74287
Securities and Exchange Commission .....	74303
Surface Transportation Board .....	74329

**INDEXES TO UNIFIED AGENDA ENTRIES**

A. Regulatory Flexibility Act Section 610 Review Index .....	74333
B. Regulatory Flexibility Analysis Index .....	74335
C. Small Entities Index (Regulatory Flexibility Analysis Not Required) .....	74345
D. Government Levels Index .....	74355
E. Federalism Index .....	74389
F. Subject Index .....	74391

**INTRODUCTION TO THE REGULATORY PLAN AND THE UNIFIED AGENDA OF FEDERAL REGULATORY AND DEREGULATORY ACTIONS**

**I. What Are The Regulatory Plan and the Unified Agenda?**

The Regulatory Plan serves as a defining statement of the Administration’s regulatory and deregulatory policies and priorities. The Plan is part of the fall edition of the Unified Agenda. Each participating agency’s regulatory plan contains: (1) A narrative statement of the agency’s regulatory priorities and, for most agencies, (2) a description of the most important significant regulatory and deregulatory actions that the agency reasonably expects to issue in proposed or final form during the upcoming fiscal year. This edition includes the regulatory plans of 28 agencies.

The Unified Agenda provides information, in a uniform format, about regulations that the Government is considering or reviewing. The Unified Agenda has appeared in the **Federal Register** twice each year since 1983. This edition includes regulatory agendas from 58 Federal agencies. Agencies of the United States Congress are not included.

The Regulatory Information Service Center (the Center) compiles the Plan and the Unified Agenda for the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA), part of the Office of Management and Budget. OIRA is responsible for overseeing the Federal Government’s regulatory, paperwork, and information resource management activities, including implementation of Executive Order 12866. The Center also provides information about Federal regulatory activity to the President and his Executive Office, the Congress, agency managers, and the public.

The activities included in the Agenda are, in general, those that will have a regulatory action within the next 12 months. Agencies may choose to include activities that will have a longer timeframe than 12 months. Agency agendas also show actions or reviews completed or withdrawn since the last Unified Agenda. Executive Order 12866 does not require agencies to include regulations concerning military or foreign affairs functions or regulations related to agency organization, management, or personnel matters.

Agencies prepared entries for this publication to give the public notice of their plans to review, propose, and issue regulations. They have tried to predict their activities over the next 12 months as accurately as possible, but dates and schedules are subject to change. Agencies may withdraw some of the regulations now under development, and they may issue or propose other regulations not included in their agendas. Agency actions in the rulemaking process may occur before or after the dates they have listed. **The Regulatory Plan** and the Unified Agenda do not create a legal obligation on agencies to adhere to schedules in this publication or to confine their regulatory activities to those regulations that appear within it.

**II. Why Are The Regulatory Plan and the Unified Agenda Published?**

The Regulatory Plan and the Unified Agenda help agencies comply with their obligations under the Regulatory Flexibility Act and various Executive orders and other statutes.

*Regulatory Flexibility Act*

The *Regulatory Flexibility Act* requires agencies to identify those rules that may have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities (5 U.S.C. 602). Agencies meet that requirement by including the information in their submissions for the Unified Agenda. Agencies may also indicate those regulations that they are reviewing as part of their periodic review of existing rules under the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 610). Executive Order 13272 entitled “Proper Consideration of Small Entities in Agency Rulemaking,” signed August 13, 2002 (67 FR 53461) provides additional guidance on compliance with the Act.

*Executive Order 12866*

*Executive Order 12866* entitled “Regulatory Planning and Review,” signed September 30, 1993 (58 FR 51735) requires covered agencies to prepare an agenda of all regulations under development or review. The Order also requires that certain agencies prepare annually a regulatory plan of their “most important significant regulatory actions,” which appears as part of the fall Unified Agenda.

*Executive Order 13132*

*Executive Order 13132* entitled “Federalism,” signed August 4, 1999 (64 FR 43255) directs agencies to have an accountable process to ensure meaningful and timely input by State and local officials in the development of regulatory policies that have “federalism implications” as defined in the Order. Under the Order, an agency that is proposing regulations with federalism implications, which either preempt State law or impose nonstatutory unfunded substantial direct compliance costs on State and local governments, must consult with State and local officials early in the process of developing the regulation. In addition, the agency must provide to the Director of the Office of Management and Budget a federalism summary impact statement for such regulations, which consists of a description of the extent of the agency’s prior consultation

with State and local officials, a summary of their concerns and the agency's position supporting the need to issue the regulation, and a statement of the extent to which those concerns have been met. As part of this effort, agencies include in their submissions for the Unified Agenda information on whether their regulatory actions may have an effect on the various levels of government and whether those actions have federalism implications.

#### *Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995*

The *Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995* (Pub. L. 104-4, title II) requires agencies to prepare written assessments of the costs and benefits of significant regulatory actions "that may result in the expenditure by State, local, and tribal governments, in the aggregate, or by the private sector, of \$100,000,000 or more . . . in any 1 year . . ." The requirement does not apply to independent regulatory agencies, nor does it apply to certain subject areas excluded by section 4 of the Act. Affected agencies identify in the Unified Agenda those regulatory actions they believe are subject to title II of the Act.

#### *Executive Order 13211*

*Executive Order 13211* entitled "Actions Concerning Regulations That Significantly Affect Energy Supply, Distribution, or Use," signed May 18, 2001 (66 FR 28355) directs agencies to provide, to the extent possible, information regarding the adverse effects that agency actions may have on the supply, distribution, and use of energy. Under the Order, the agency must prepare and submit a Statement of Energy Effects to the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, for "those matters identified as significant energy actions." As part of this effort, agencies may optionally include in their submissions for the Unified Agenda information on whether they have prepared or plan to prepare a Statement of Energy Effects for their regulatory actions.

#### *Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act*

The *Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act* (Pub. L. 104-121, title II) established a procedure for congressional review of rules (5 U.S.C. 801 et seq.), which defers, unless exempted, the effective date of a "major" rule for at least 60 days from the publication of the final rule in the **Federal Register**. The Act specifies that a rule is "major" if it has resulted or is likely to result in an annual effect on the economy of \$100 million or more or meets other criteria specified in that Act. The Act provides that the Administrator of OIRA will make the final determination as to whether a rule is major.

### **III. How Are The Regulatory Plan and the Unified Agenda Organized?**

The **Regulatory Plan** appears in part II of this edition of the **Federal Register**. The Plan is a single document beginning with an introduction, followed by a table of contents, followed by each agency's section of the Plan. Following the Plan, each agency's agenda appears as a separate part. The sections of the Plan and the parts of the Unified Agenda are organized alphabetically in four groups: Cabinet departments; other executive agencies; the Federal Acquisition Regulation, a joint authority (Agenda only); and independent regulatory agencies. Agencies may in turn be divided into subagencies.

Each agency's section of the Plan contains a narrative statement of regulatory priorities and, for most agencies, a description of the agency's most important significant regulatory and deregulatory actions. Each agency's part of

the Agenda begins with a preamble providing information specific to that part followed by a table of contents. Following the table of contents is a description of the agency's regulatory and deregulatory actions.

In the Agenda, each agency presents its entries under one of five headings according to the rulemaking stage of the entry. In the Plan, only the first three stages are applicable. The stages are:

1. *Prerule Stage* — actions agencies will undertake to determine whether or how to initiate rulemaking. Such actions occur prior to a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) and may include Advance Notices of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRMs) and reviews of existing regulations.
2. *Proposed Rule Stage* — actions for which agencies plan to publish a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking as the next step in their rulemaking process or for which the closing date of the NPRM Comment Period is the next step.
3. *Final Rule Stage* — actions for which agencies plan to publish a final rule or an interim final rule or to take other final action as the next step.
4. *Long-Term Actions* — items under development but for which the agency does not expect to have a regulatory action within the 12 months after publication of this edition of the Unified Agenda. Some of the entries in this section may contain abbreviated information.
5. *Completed Actions* — actions or reviews the agency has completed or withdrawn since publishing its last agenda. This section also includes items the agency began and completed between issues of the Agenda.

In the Agenda, an agency may use subheadings to identify regulations that it has grouped according to particular topics. When these subheadings are used, they appear above the title of the first regulation in each group.

A bullet (•) preceding the title of an entry indicates that the entry is appearing in the Unified Agenda for the first time.

All entries are numbered sequentially from the beginning to the end of the publication. The sequence number preceding the title of each entry identifies the location of the entry in this edition. This sequence number is used as the reference in the table of contents and in all indexes to enable readers to find entries. Entries in the Plan are also in the Unified Agenda with the same Regulation Identifier Number (RIN) but with different sequence numbers. For these entries, the Plan sequence number is used as the reference in all indexes.

This publication contains six indexes.

- Index A lists regulatory actions for which agencies have indicated that they are conducting a periodic review under section 610(c) of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.
- Index B lists the regulatory actions for which agencies believe that the Regulatory Flexibility Act may require a Regulatory Flexibility Analysis.
- Index C lists additional regulatory actions for which agencies have chosen to indicate that some impact on small entities is likely even though a Regulatory Flexibility Analysis may not be required.
- Index D lists regulatory actions that agencies believe may have effects on levels of government.
- Index E lists regulatory actions that agencies believe may have federalism implications as defined in Executive Order 13132.
- Index F is a subject index based on the **Federal Register Thesaurus of Indexing Terms**.

#### IV. What Information Appears for Each Entry?

All entries in the Unified Agenda contain uniform data elements including, at a minimum, the following information:

*Title of the Regulation* — a brief description of the subject of the regulation, possibly including section 610 review designation. The notation “Section 610 Review” following the title indicates that the agency has selected the rule for its periodic review of existing rules under the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 610(c)). Some agencies have indicated completions of section 610 reviews or rulemaking actions resulting from completed section 610 reviews.

*Priority* — an indication of the significance of the regulation. Agencies assign each entry to one of the following five categories of significance.

##### (1) Economically Significant

As defined in Executive Order 12866, a rulemaking action that will have an annual effect on the economy of \$100 million or more or will adversely affect in a material way the economy, a sector of the economy, productivity, competition, jobs, the environment, public health or safety, or State, local, or tribal governments or communities. The definition of an “economically significant” rule is similar but not identical to the definition of a “major” rule under 5 U.S.C. 801 (Pub. L. 104-121). (See below.)

##### (2) Other Significant

A rulemaking that is not Economically Significant but is considered Significant by the agency. This category includes rules that the agency anticipates will be reviewed under Executive Order 12866 or rules that are a priority of the agency head. These rules may or may not be included in the agency’s regulatory plan.

##### (3) Substantive, Nonsignificant

A rulemaking that has substantive impacts but is neither Significant, nor Routine and Frequent, nor Informational/Administrative/Other.

##### (4) Routine and Frequent

A rulemaking that is a specific case of a multiple recurring application of a regulatory program in the Code of Federal Regulations and that does not alter the body of the regulation.

##### (5) Informational/Administrative/Other

A rulemaking that is primarily informational or pertains to agency matters not central to accomplishing the agency’s regulatory mandate but that the agency places in the Unified Agenda to inform the public of the activity.

In addition, if a rule is “major” under 5 U.S.C. 801 (Pub. L. 104-121) because it has resulted or is likely to result in an annual effect on the economy of \$100 million or more or meets other criteria specified in that Act, this is indicated under the “Priority” heading. The Act provides that the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs will make the final determination as to whether a rule is major.

*Unfunded Mandates* — whether the rule is covered by section 202 of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-4). The Act requires that, before issuing an NPRM likely to result in a mandate that may result in expenditures by State, local, and tribal governments, in the

aggregate, or by the private sector of more than \$100 million in 1 year, agencies, other than independent regulatory agencies, shall prepare a written statement containing an assessment of the anticipated costs and benefits of the Federal mandate. If the agency believes the entry is not subject to the Act, this data element will not be printed.

*Legal Authority* — the section(s) of the United States Code (U.S.C.) or Public Law (Pub. L.) or the Executive order (E.O.) that authorize(s) the regulatory action. Agencies may provide popular name references to laws in addition to these citations.

*CFR Citation* — the section(s) of the Code of Federal Regulations that will be affected by the action.

*Legal Deadline* — whether the action is subject to a statutory or judicial deadline, the date of that deadline, and whether the deadline pertains to an NPRM, a Final Action, or some other action.

*Abstract* — a brief description of the problem the regulation will address; the need for a Federal solution; to the extent available, alternatives that the agency is considering to address the problem; and potential costs and benefits of the action.

*Timetable* — the dates and citations (if available) for all past steps and a projected date for at least the next step for the regulatory action. A date printed in the form 02/00/07 means the agency is predicting the month and year the action will take place but not the day it will occur. In some instances, agencies may indicate what the next action will be, but the date of that action is “To Be Determined.” “Next Action Undetermined” indicates the agency does not know what action it will take next.

*Regulatory Flexibility Analysis Required* — whether an analysis is required by the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) because the rulemaking action is likely to have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities as defined by the Act.

*Small Entities Affected* — the types of small entities (businesses, governmental jurisdictions, or organizations) on which the rulemaking action is likely to have an impact as defined by the Regulatory Flexibility Act. Some agencies have chosen to indicate likely effects on small entities even though they believe that a Regulatory Flexibility Analysis will not be required.

*Government Levels Affected* — whether the action is expected to affect levels of government and, if so, whether the governments are State, local, tribal, or Federal.

*Federalism* — whether the action has “federalism implications” as defined in Executive Order 13132. This term refers to actions “that have substantial direct effects on the States, on the relationship between the national government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government.” If the action does not have federalism implications, this data element will not be printed. Independent regulatory agencies are not required to supply this information.

*Agency Contact* — the name and phone number of at least one person in the agency who is knowledgeable about the rulemaking action. The agency may also provide the title, address, fax number, e-mail address, and TDD for each agency contact.

Some agencies have provided the following optional information:

*URL for More Information* — the Internet address of a site that provides more information about the entry.

*URL for Public Comments* — the Internet address of a site that will accept public comments on the entry. Alternatively, timely public comments may be submitted at the governmentwide e-rulemaking site, <http://www.regulations.gov>.

*Additional Information* — any information an agency wishes to include that does not have a specific data element.

*Compliance Cost to the Public* — the estimated gross compliance cost of the action.

*Affected Sectors* — the industrial sectors that the action may most affect, either directly or indirectly. Affected Sectors are identified by North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes.

*Energy Effects* — an indication of whether the agency has prepared or plans to prepare a Statement of Energy Effects for the action, as required by Executive Order 13211 “Actions Concerning Regulations That Significantly Affect Energy Supply, Distribution, or Use,” signed May 18, 2001 (66 FR 28355).

*Related RINs* — one or more past or current RINs associated with activity related to this action, such as merged RINs, split RINs, new activity for previously completed RINs, or duplicate RINs.

Entries appearing in **The Regulatory Plan** include one or more of the following additional data elements, but will, at a minimum, include information in Statement of Need:

*Statement of Need* — a description of the need for the regulatory action.

*Summary of the Legal Basis* — a description of the legal basis for the action, including whether any aspect of the action is required by statute or court order.

*Alternatives* — a description of the alternatives the agency has considered or will consider as required by section 4(c)(1)(B) of Executive Order 12866.

*Anticipated Costs and Benefits* — a description of preliminary estimates of the anticipated costs and benefits of the action.

*Risks* — a description of the magnitude of the risk the action addresses, the amount by which the agency expects the action to reduce this risk, and the relation of the risk and this risk reduction effort to other risks and risk reduction efforts within the agency’s jurisdiction.

## V. Abbreviations

The following abbreviations appear throughout this publication:

*ANPRM* — An Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking is a preliminary notice, published in the **Federal Register**, announcing that an agency is considering a regulatory action. An agency may issue an ANPRM before it develops a detailed proposed rule. An ANPRM describes the general area that may be subject to regulation and usually asks for public comment on the issues and options being discussed. An ANPRM is issued only when an agency believes it needs to gather more information before proceeding to a notice of proposed rulemaking.

*CFR* — The Code of Federal Regulations is an annual codification of the general and permanent regulations published in the **Federal Register** by the agencies of the Federal Government. The Code is divided into 50 titles, each title covering a broad area subject to Federal regulation. The

CFR is keyed to and kept up to date by the daily issues of the **Federal Register**.

*EO* — An Executive order is a directive from the President to Executive agencies, issued under constitutional or statutory authority. Executive orders are published in the **Federal Register** and in title 3 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

*FR* — The **Federal Register** is a daily Federal Government publication that provides a uniform system for publishing Presidential documents, all proposed and final regulations, notices of meetings, and other official documents issued by Federal agencies.

*FY* — The Federal fiscal year runs from October 1 to September 30.

*NPRM* — A Notice of Proposed Rulemaking is the document an agency issues and publishes in the **Federal Register** that describes and solicits public comments on a proposed regulatory action. Under the Administrative Procedure Act (5 U.S.C. 553), an NPRM must include, at a minimum:

- a statement of the time, place, and nature of the public rulemaking proceeding;
- a reference to the legal authority under which the rule is proposed; and
- either the terms or substance of the proposed rule or a description of the subjects and issues involved.

*PL (or Pub. L.)* — A Public Law is a law passed by Congress and signed by the President or enacted over his veto. It has general applicability, unlike a private law that applies only to those persons or entities specifically designated. Public laws are numbered in sequence throughout the 2-year life of each Congress; for example, PL 109-4 is the fourth public law of the 109th Congress.

*RFA* — A Regulatory Flexibility Analysis is a description and analysis of the impact of a rule on small entities, including small businesses, small governmental jurisdictions, and certain small not-for-profit organizations. The Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) requires each agency to prepare an initial RFA for public comment when it is required to publish an NPRM and to make available a final RFA when the final rule is published, unless the agency head certifies that the rule would not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities.

*RIN* — The Regulation Identifier Number is assigned by the Regulatory Information Service Center to identify each regulatory action listed in **The Regulatory Plan** and the Unified Agenda, as directed by Executive Order 12866 (section 4(b)). Additionally, OMB has asked agencies to include RINs in the headings of their Rule and Proposed Rule documents when publishing them in the **Federal Register**, to make it easier for the public and agency officials to track the publication history of regulatory actions throughout their development.

*Seq. No.* — The Sequence Number identifies the location of an entry in this publication. Note that a specific regulatory action will have the same RIN throughout its development but will generally have different sequence numbers in different editions of **The Regulatory Plan** and the Unified Agenda.

*USC* — The United States Code is a consolidation and codification of all general and permanent laws of the United States. The USC is divided into 50 titles, each title covering a broad area of Federal law.

**VI. How Can Users Get Copies of the Plan and the Agenda?**

Printed copies of this edition of the **Federal Register** are available from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, P.O. Box 371954, Pittsburgh, PA 15250-7954. Telephone: (202) 512-1800 or 1-866-512-1800 (toll-free).

Copies of individual agency materials may be available directly from the agency or may be found on the agency's website. Please contact the particular agency for further information.

All editions of **The Regulatory Plan** and the **Unified Agenda of Federal Regulatory and Deregulatory Actions**

since fall 1995 are also available in electronic form. You can search the Agenda and the Plan at:

**<http://reginfo.gov>**

You may also search the Agenda and the Plan on the Government Printing Office's GPO Access website at:

**<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/ua/index.html>**

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**John C. Thomas,**

*Executive Director.*