

Patent and Trademark Office, Mail Stop Comments—Patents, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313–1450, marked to the attention of Pinchus M. Laufer and Kenneth M. Schor; or by electronic mail (e-mail) message over the Internet addressed to pinchus.laufer@uspto.gov or kenneth.schor@uspto.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) published a notice in the **Federal Register** seeking public comment directed to this focus with respect to methods that may be employed by applicants and the USPTO to enhance the quality of issued patents, to identify appropriate indicia of quality, and to establish metrics for the measurement of the indicia. *See Request for Comments on Enhancement in the Quality of Patents*, 74 FR 65093 (Dec. 9, 2009), 1350 *Off. Gaz. Pat. Office* 46 (Jan. 5, 2010). The USPTO indicated that to be ensured of consideration, written comments must be received on or before February 8, 2010. *See Request for Comments on Enhancement in the Quality of Patents*, 74 FR at 65094, 1350 *Off. Gaz. Pat. Office* at 46. The USPTO is extending the period for submission of public comments until March 8, 2010.

Dated: January 26, 2010.

David J. Kappos,

Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office.

[FR Doc. 2010–2036 Filed 1–29–10; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–16–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Patent and Trademark Office

[Docket No.: PTO–P–2010–0003]

Extension of the Patent Application Backlog Reduction Stimulus Plan

AGENCY: United States Patent and Trademark Office, Commerce.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) published a notice in the **Federal Register** providing an additional temporary basis (the Patent Application Backlog Reduction Stimulus Plan) under which a small entity applicant may have an application accorded special status for examination if the applicant expressly abandons another copending unexamined application. The Patent Application Backlog Reduction Stimulus Plan allows small entity applicants having multiple applications

currently pending before the USPTO to have greater control over the priority with which their applications are examined while also stimulating a reduction of the backlog of unexamined patent applications pending before the USPTO. The USPTO is extending Patent Application Backlog Reduction Stimulus Plan until June 30, 2010.

DATES: *Effective Date:* February 1, 2010. The Patent Application Backlog Reduction Stimulus Plan became effective on November 27, 2009.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Pinchus M. Laufer, Office of the Deputy Commissioner for Patent Examination Policy, by telephone at 571–272–7726; or via e-mail addressed to Pinchus.Laufer@uspto.gov; or by mail addressed to: Box Comments Patents, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313–1450.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The USPTO published a notice in the **Federal Register** providing an additional temporary basis (the Patent Application Backlog Reduction Stimulus Plan) under which a small entity applicant may have an application accorded special status for examination if the applicant expressly abandons another copending unexamined application. *See Patent Application Backlog Reduction Stimulus Program*, 74 FR 62285 (Nov. 27, 2009), 1349 *Off. Gaz. Pat. Off.* 304 (Dec. 22, 2009) (notice). The Patent Application Backlog Reduction Stimulus Plan allows small entity applicants having multiple applications currently pending before the USPTO to have greater control over the priority with which their applications are examined while also stimulating a reduction of the backlog of unexamined patent applications pending before the USPTO. The USPTO indicated that the program would last for a period ending on February 28, 2010, but may be extended for an additional time period thereafter. *See Patent Application Backlog Reduction Stimulus Program*, 74 FR at 62287, 1349 *Off. Gaz. Pat. Off.* at 306.

The USPTO is extending Patent Application Backlog Reduction Stimulus Plan until June 30, 2010. The USPTO may further extend the procedures under Patent Application Backlog Reduction Stimulus Plan to all applicants (on either a temporary or permanent basis), or may also discontinue the procedures after June 30, 2010, depending upon the results of the Patent Application Backlog Reduction Stimulus Plan. For a petition under 37 CFR 1.102 to be granted under the Patent Application Backlog

Reduction Stimulus Plan (unless the Patent Application Backlog Reduction Stimulus Plan is extended by a subsequent notice), the petition under 37 CFR 1.102 and the letter of express abandonment and its accompanying statement must be filed on or before June 30, 2010.

Dated: January 26, 2010.

David J. Kappos,

Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office.

[FR Doc. 2010–2033 Filed 1–29–10; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Foreign–Trade Zones Board

[Order No. 1658]

Grant of Authority for Subzone Status, Excalibar Minerals LLC (Barite Milling), New Iberia, Louisiana

Pursuant to its authority under the Foreign–Trade Zones Act of June 18, 1934, as amended (19 U.S.C. 81a–81u), the Foreign–Trade Zones Board (the Board) adopts the following Order:

Whereas, the Foreign–Trade Zones Act provides for “...the establishment... of foreign–trade zones in ports of entry of the United States, to expedite and encourage foreign commerce, and for other purposes,” and authorizes the Foreign–Trade Zones Board to grant to qualified corporations the privilege of establishing foreign–trade zones in or adjacent to U.S. Customs and Border Protection ports of entry;

Whereas, the Board’s regulations (15 CFR Part 400) provide for the establishment of special–purpose subzones when existing zone facilities cannot serve the specific use involved, and when the activity results in a significant public benefit and is in the public interest;

Whereas, the Port of South Louisiana, grantee of Foreign–Trade Zone 124, has made application to the Board for authority to establish a special–purpose subzone at the barite manufacturing and distribution facility of Excalibar Minerals LLC, located in New Iberia, Louisiana, (FTZ Docket 21–2009, filed 5/6/09);

Whereas, notice inviting public comment has been given in the **Federal Register** (74 FR 23394, 5/19/09) and the application has been processed pursuant to the FTZ Act and the Board’s regulations; and,

Whereas, the Board adopts the findings and recommendations of the examiner’s report, and finds that the requirements of the FTZ Act and