**WorkforceGPS**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**USITC-Related Petitions for TAA Program**

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JONATHAN VEHLOW: Welcome to ITC-related petitions. So without further ado, I'm going to kick things off to our moderator today, Susan Worden, program analyst, USDOL/ETA/OTAA. Susan?

SUSAN WORDEN: Thanks so much, John. My name is Susan Worden. I am in charge of the unit, performance management and data reporting unit that has been overseeing the ITC notification process for the last year and a half or so. Today we're going to be talking about why ITC-related petitions is an advantage with regard to issuing the fastest possible group eligibility decisions and also the unique features of the ITC notification and petition filing process so that you in the states can collaborate with us to ensure a smooth and speedy investigation.

First of all, we're going to ask you a question that will help us to kind of maybe shape what we've already got planned to talk about today, and that question is, for those of you that have filed petitions – and it looks like the majority of the folks in the audience today have not, which is OK because we're going to give you all the tips you need in order to file to help you understand why it's important. For those of you that have filed an ITC-related petition, we'd like you to give us a one-word response as to what you consider the greatest challenge in ITC petition filing.

And we've got some examples on the screen to help you along, and if you didn't have any challenges at all, you can say none. We're going to create a word cloud that will magnify the repetitions to be the largest words in the group and the less frequent responses will be smaller. So go ahead and type into that box and if you have encountered challenges or not, if you filed an ITC petition, type a one-word answer in terms of what you find challenging.

We're going to give this a couple minutes. Looking like 39 of you in the audience have filed an ITC petition. So you can write none if you found it an easy and effortless process, but if it's been a challenge, let us know. OK. So it looks like many of you have encountered no challenges at all, which is great news, but it looks like the biggest challenge was contact. And by that we're assuming it's the company contact which we're going to be talking about a lot during today's presentation. So for those of you that indicate that company contact information is a challenge, we've got some help for you today.

Before I turn it over to some of our subject matter experts, I just want to remind everybody that ITC-related petition filing yields good results. So those of you who have not had the opportunity to file an ITC-related petition, those of you that have, please know that our staffing does provide for expedited processing through the ITC-related petition filing process, and that shows up in the data.

You look at the average number of days to certify for an ITC-related petition – that is on the blue bar – is a good 20 days plus faster than it is for all petitions. If we look at it another way for median days, it's still statistically significantly faster. So buckle up, and please pay attention today – (inaudible) – because we're looking to collaborate with you to get as many ITC-related petitions out the door.

And with that last note I am now going to – oh, look at what our objectives are for today. Not yet ready to turn it over. OK. So today we're going to be looking at what is the USITC? What does it do? We're going to be doing an overview of the notification process. OTAA sends regular transmissions out to states where production facilities that are ITC determined to have been injured are located.

We're going to offer tips for filing effective ITC-related petitions, remembering that this provides for expedited processing but it requires that initially we have all the right information on the petition. And then we're going to talk about those unique worker eligibility requirements and certification timelines for the ITC process, including looking at company contact, which we've already noted can be one of the biggest challenges for those of you in the audience that have filed an ITC-related petition.

And with that I'm going to turn it over to Megan Wilkins. Megan has been working with our team in PMBR (sp) OTAA for the last three months with a special assignment to help us with improving customer assistance and processing in the ITC-related petition filing area. And we have benefited greatly from her research skills. She comes to us from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and sadly, will soon be returning. But you'll get the benefit of all her hard work and research today, and with that I'll hand it over to you, Megan.

MEGAN WILKINS: Hi. Thank you so much, Susan. It's a pleasure to be here, and I'm Megan Wilkins. And this first section I'll be talking you through is all about United States International Trade Commission, what it is, what they do, what type of decisions and determinations that they make, and then most importantly for our audience here today, how these ITC decisions relate to TAA.

So the International Trade Commission is an independent federal agency. They investigate the effect of dumping subsidized imports on domestic industry, and they also investigate the infringement of intellectual property rights. In many cases the ITC will conduct an investigation when a company has previously brought a complaint before the Department of Commerce. Department of Commerce will investigate and determine if that complaint has some merit to it, and then often ITC will pick up that investigation and determine if there has been an injury to the domestic industry. Furthermore, the ITC analyzes trade data and makes recommendations for trade policy.

So ITC makes three types of determinations that are of interest to us here in the trade program. The first trade basis that I'll talk you through is antidumping, and this will be denoted by a 731-TA number. You'll see that when the notifications come out, and Bunmi will talk you through that later.

So dumping occurs when imports are sold at a lower price than in the home market or below the cost of their production. The second trade basis that the ITC makes decisions on is countervailing duty, and that's denoted by a 701-TA investigation number. And this becomes relevant when a foreign government provides financial assistance to benefit the production or export of goods.

So when ITC makes determinations on either of these trade bases, they can be given an injury status of either materially injured or not materially injured, and this status is assigned at the industry level, not for a specific company. So just to give you an example, if the ITC determines that the battery production industry has been materially injured, that determination would not just be for Energizer who might have made the initial complaint but also for Rayovac and for all other producers of batteries in the United States, something like that.

The third trade basis of interest here today is a safeguard investigation, and that's denoted by a 201-TA investigation number. And so a safeguard investigation determines whether such increasing quantities of certain articles are being imported to the U.S. that the domestic industry cannot compete.

So a case like this a foreign – (inaudible) – is just flooding the U.S. market with goods, such that the U.S. producers cannot compete. And in this case the injury status that could be assigned is either seriously injured or not seriously injured. And once again, the status is assigned at the industry level, not for a particular company.

Once the ITC has made its determination, it will publish that decision in the Federal Register. This is a screenshot of the Federal Register posting. The top box that's outlined in red shows the volume number and page number and date of the Federal Register Notice, and then the second red box that you'll see a little bit lower on the screen, it highlights the words materially injured. And that's how we know the injury status that's been assigned to this particular industry. This case is – the case is Ripe Olives from Spain. You probably received a notification about that just a couple of months ago.

So having said all that, what you probably really want to know is how does this relate to the Trade Adjustment Assistance program. We have a statute, Section 222(e) of Trade Act of 1974, as amended, gives us the ability to make worker eligibility certifications based on an ITC finding of either material injury or serious injury. As you probably know, there are more than a dozen paths or reasons to certify a TAA petition.

An ITC finding of material injury or serious injury is just one of those paths, but its real advantage is that we get this opportunity to expedite the reviews, the investigation. You don't have to explore all paths. You don't have to establish whether or not a company or a worker group has been adversely affected by trade. That has already been established through this ITC determination.

And with that being said, I'm going to turn it over to our next presenter, Bunmi Sanusi, and she'll walk you through the notification process.

BUNMI SANUSI: Thank you very much, Megan, for that. My name is Bunmi Sanusi, and I am a program analyst in OTAA. I am responsible for transmitting the notification e-mail in regards to the option of filing ITC-related petitions on behalf of workers. So now, let's talk about the notification process.

Well, first of all, how do ITC petitions get published? These are made available on USITC website. OTAA reviews the website weekly to identify if new decisions have been issued. In addition, OTAA sometimes receives directly from the ITC investigator notifying us of newly published decisions. Once we have the finding, OTAA verifies the information through Federal Register, which was previously shown in the previous slide. Federal Register of course that was during Megan's presentation.

Now, let's talk about who gets notified. By statute OTAA must notify company officials, unions, and governors' offices. If a governor – if the governor's office wishes to file a petition, they should work with an authorized petition filer, usually, the state workforce office. In addition, OTAA notifies the state of their option to file ITC-related petitions on behalf of workers group. Over 99 percent of ITC-related petitions do come from states.

Next, we want to talk about the information that OTAA communicates in notifications that it sends to states regarding their option to file ITC-related petition. These notifications contain both an e-mail message and a letter attachment. First, we will cover what's in the e-mail. E-mail contains petition filing deadline, which is always a year after the Federal Register date, and that's the – (inaudible) – when the determination was published.

Next is the range of separation date, which is the time window within which workers were laid off in order to be eligible. Next is the information regarding the investigation which would need to be – which would need to be included in section three of petition, which is where you will explicitly reference the USITC numbers as identified in the ITC finding. Next is the list of the specific locations that are affected through the finding.

This e-mail will include in the e-mail – will include the notification letter and company contacts, if available. The USITC company contacts of course, because it can require – (inaudible) – officials to check the file and – (inaudible) – trade investigations. However, USITC can only pass this info to OTAA if the company has agreed to its release.

This slide gives a view – visualization of what I previously said. As you can see, the number one is the petition filing deadline date, and we have the range of separation date of worker group. And next is the instruction for section three of petition for trade effects worker, which will be a lot more – (inaudible) – the next presenter Hope Kinglock. And number four is where we will list the states of the eligible workers, where they're located – (inaudible) – the city and state. And also I just want us to pay attention because there's a letter attached to this e-mail.

Next, we have the company contacts. As you can see in the red box, we provide company contacts if they are available, and if there is no company contact, Megan will speak in reference to that – (inaudible) – the next slides.

So the important information is also contained in the notification letter of course that's attached to the e-mail. So let's talk about the notification letter. OK. We have the investigative numbers which are provided for reference in the petition. Next is the investigation title which explains the product name which must also be included in the petition. Next is the Federal Register publication date which is the date the determination was published.

It also includes volume and page number of the Federal Register Notice. It restates the petition filing deadline which is also in the e-mail and provides the list of production facilities and – (inaudible) – and states that are affected by the determination. We emphasize this final information because it is used in the investigation process. This is crucial to the investigator working on the case.

Next, we have a visual of what the letter looks like. Just as we had mentioned, the highlighted part I mentioned of course in this letter where we have the investigation number and we have the investigation title. Also, we have the Federal Register publication date with the volume page and number of the Federal Register Notice. Next, we have the petition filing deadline, and as you can see below the signature highlighted is where we have the list of affected companies with city and state locations.

Not that we have talked about all the required – all that is required in the notification e-mail, first, the information you will provide is the form for petition filing, which is the OMB Number 1205-0342. Please remember to use the information for company contact to provide a quality ITC-related petition filing. Lastly but not – certainly not the least, use the company contact that we have provided, if available, and if not, please pay attention to upcoming Megan that will be speaking on those sticky notice – notation later in the presentation. Of course we use the same petition form, but just make sure that you specify if it's indeed an ITC-related case.

At this point I'm going to transfer it now to Hope Kinglock, which is the supervisory program analyst in OTAA. Thank you.

HOPE KINGLOCK: Thank you, Bunmi. As Bunmi indicated, my name is Hope Kinglock. I am one of the two supervisory program analysts within the Office of Trade Adjustment Assistance. For the most part my main duty centers around making workers with eligibility determinations.

Before I get into my presentation, there was a question that came up when Bunmi was speaking that spoke to if it's possible to provide the address of the ITC locations instead of just city and state in the notification e-mail and attached letter that comes out from the PMBR unit. Unfortunately, this is not information that we have available to us.

What we provide to – within the notification to the states is exactly what we get from the ICT. The determination that they make is not specific to or at least it doesn't specifically address a street location. It's literally just the city and state. The information that they provide, we provide to you as it relates to the industry that the facility lies within the location and the company contact is all that we have.

Hopefully, that information is to be used in conjunction with each other so that we can – you can have a good indication of where exactly the facility is located, conversations with the company officials, going on the website, that sort of thing to get down to the specifics as it relates to the physical address of the facility in question. I hope that answers your question.

Moving forward, you've already heard about what ITC is, why it matters to us within OTAA, and how we take that information that we receive from the ITC and notify our state petitioners of these determinations that are made. With all that said, we're moving forward into the investigation phase of this presentation. Tips for filing an ITC-related petition.

So we're looking at here is the worker group description. As you're familiar with the petition, there is a section within Section 1, part i, to be exact, in which you can provide information regarding the worker group. Because this is an ITC based petition, within the section you can include the industry title, for example, Softwood Lumber.

You can also provide as many descriptions regarding the product lines that are produced at the subject location as well as the worker groups. Furthermore, any additional information that you gather from your conversations with company contacts, what you garner from the local news, websites, et cetera would be useful in your petition filing and providing that information.

What you see here is a snapshot of that section of the petition, as I indicated, in which you can provide as much information as you can within that line. Now, it is a very small line. So feel free to provide additional information via attachments that the investigator can use as they conduct their investigation.

Now, we're going over to the trade effects side of the petition, Section 3, questions 1 and 2. Here it would be helpful if you would cite the ITC investigation number and industry title that's provided in the e-mail and notification letter that you've received from the PMBR unit. Once again, it's a great practice just to attach the notification letter.

It makes it very clear that the basis of this filing is due to a notification that we sent to you as it relates to a affirmative final determination that the ITC made or a affirmative determination if we're looking at materially injured or serious injured. If that information is attached, it's very clear cut what we're looking at and how the investigation should go.

The next slide once again is a snapshot of the trade effects section, Section 3. You want to use that to not only provide information regarding how the worker separations have to do with foreign trade but all that additional information that you've received as it relates to the ITC investigation that we're looking at.

A question has just popped up. "Is it possible to obtain the FDIN for the employer?" This is not information that is within the public determination that the ITC makes. It's not supposed to be on the Federal Register Notice, nor in the 100-plus page publication that's put out. So it wouldn't be information that we already received and could just transmit to you per this ITC filing, but as it relates to not only ITC based filings but other filings as well, it's something that we can look into and circle back to see whether or not this is a possibility or not. So I believe that answers your question.

Company contacts. So Section 3, question 3 of the petition allows you to provide two company contacts. With ITC based petition filing, the great news is that we do have access to company contacts when the firm that works with the ITC agrees for that information to be released. Bunmi had already presented that in her presentation. You can take those contacts, make sure they've been verified, and stick them in the section of the petition without any further investigation that's needed. So I would strongly urge you still to reach out to them to ensure that there are worker separations there for the basis of this filing.

Now, if the contact is not provided, as you would do with normal petition filing, do research. Reach out to the – (inaudible) – their website, however you currently – whatever your current practice is in getting this information. It is important that that still holds firm. This will allow us to conduct an expedited investigation because, as Megan already conveyed, the trade impact has already been determined when we look at ITC based petitions. So the basis of having a quickly determined investigation is due to having a good company contact.

We have a couple of more questions. "To get the contact name, does DOL actually contact the individual companies?" I'm sorry. So to get the contact name, does DOL contact the individual companies? When we provide the company contact to you, that's information that we've received from the ITC. The ITC conducts their investigation for serious injury or material injury. They work with these same companies and company officials to collect somewhat live information, at least as it relates to the normal path to certification – (inaudible) – normal in collection sales and production and import information.

All that information that they collect, they work with these company officials. So when we provide company officials, it is from the ITC. These companies work with the ITC, provide them with information for their investigation, and it's with that understanding when they agree to release that information to DOL, that DOL in turn will use the company contacts to collect the information as it relates to our TAA investigation. Hopefully, that answers that as well.

So we talked about how to file an ITC petition, what information that would be helpful to the investigator to get this going on the right track. Let's talk about now the ITC-related petition certification process. We have a petition. How do our workers get certified?

We still use the same – (inaudible) – form, the BDR. The good news is is that fewer details are needed in order for us to make a determination, which is great news for the employers completing this form. As some of you know, it's eight-plus pages long. We're only looking for information to basically confirm the worker group that was already indicated. The trade impact has already been established.

The only certain essential data is stated in order for us to make a determination. Official company name, we want to make sure that we have the official name articulated in our determination, that it's not XYZ when it's actually Xylophone Yoga Zoo. We want to make sure we have alternative names articulated within our determination, formerly known as XYZ or also known as XYZ. We want to make sure that all the worker groups the subject of the ITC filing are articulated within the determination is collected from the company.

If there is a presence of leased workers, we want to make sure that they are added to the determination, as they are a part of the worker group. We want to know all the products that are a subject of the activities within the location that we're looking at, all the articles, as well as NAICS information. If it's available to the company, we want to make sure that we collect that as well. What that all allows is for an expedited process in determining worker group eligibility.

The investigator will take that information and verify the ITC section. They will contact the petitioner, which they normally do at the start of the investigation. They will request information via the BDR. They will write the report out, and then it will be submitted to the certifying officer for review.

Now, the certification period. Unlike other paths of certification, for an ITC based determination the certification period pivots around the Federal Register Notice that is sent out by the ITC regarding the determination of material injury or serious injury. The period runs starting from the Federal Register date. It goes one year prior from that date and one year after that date. So it's a two-year period of certification all based upon that data.

A good example is if the ITC published their affirmative final determination as it relates to olives on December 20th, 2018, the certification period runs one year prior to that date, December 20th, 2017, and one year forward from that date, December 20th, 2019. Workers that are separated from 12/2017 through 12/2019 would be covered under this certification. They would have to be totally or partially separated and not – (inaudible) – with separation, which is different from other path certification in which it is a longer period that we're looking for.

The next slide shows a great illustration of kind of what I just conveyed. You have the Federal Register Notice at the center, and the impact date, the beginning of eligibility, and the end of eligibility all centers around this particular notice date. The notice date in essence is the – (inaudible) – revolves around it. If you hadn't noticed that the petition filing period also starts when the final affirmative determination is published in the Federal Register, it ends one year from that date.

You cannot file prior to that date in order for an ITC based determination to be rendered. As it relates to the separation period, workers would need to be separated within the period of time to actually apply for benefits under an ITC based certification, but in order for the investigator to recommend a determination of eligibility to the certifying officer, there has to actually be separations at the time of the investigation.

This illustration provides you with a regular petition timeline. Now that you understand what – (inaudible) – an ITC timeframe, this brings it back to what you're used to seeing, whereas you have two pivotal dates that determine the scope of certification period. You have most of the time one year prior to the petition date and then you have two years after the certification date that rounds up to about three years of a window which workers are covered, which is different from ITC based determinations.

Now that you've gotten your head wrapped around what ITC is, what they do, why that matters to TAA, and what we do in response to that with the notifications that we send out to the states and how internally we investigate those petitions that come in, Megan will bring us back to what was alluded earlier which is sticky situations that you may encounter as it relates to the petition filing as well as notifications that you receive from our office. Megan?

MS. WILKINS: Hi. Thank you so much. So as she said, I'll be walking you through some of these sticky situations, instances in which you might want to file an ITC-related petition but you encounter something unexpected or you feel that you don't have enough information to file. So we'll talk through some of those situations.

First is when you have no company contacts. Some of you earlier indicated that was your biggest difficulty in filing ITC-related petitions. So I just want to open that up for a little bit of chat, and you can respond in the chat box there. When OTAA is not able to provide the company contacts, how do you find them? What's your best source?

MS. WORDEN: We are waiting for responses in the chat room, in case you guys are wondering. So to speed up the process, we just put something in there for those of you that have filed where you didn't have company contacts.

MS. WILKINS: All right. I see some responses. Some people choose to call the company. Others use the manufacturer's directory or looks like we've got some people who love Google. Some people have access to tax records, which can be a great, great resource. Right. STUI information, yes. State labor exchanges and a rapid response team. Yes. Another wonderful resource that can be used. All right. Thanks, guys. I really appreciate all these great responses in the chat box.

MS. WORDEN: (Inaudible) – in addition to what Megan's going to recap, it's going to include many of these suggestions. The chat archive will also be made available with the recorded session.

MS. WILKINS: Yes. Thank you. All right. I think these suggestions are continuing to come in, and that's wonderful. A couple weeks ago I had the opportunity to have calls with a few of the state representatives, and I got some great ideas from them. So here's – you see some of them on your screen. Some of these ideas are available to anyone. You can use internet search engines like Google, as you mentioned. Just check the company's website.

Use LinkedIn, if you're a member there. Your local chamber of commerce will likely have some great personal contacts or just information on how to get you started. And then one that I think was mentioned in the chat is the state manufacturer's registry, and I have a link there for after the webinar today. You can visit that link if you're not familiar with it.

This company publishes a resource book for every state listing the manufacturers in that state with all of their addresses, company contact information, what their principle products are. It's just a real wealth of information there, and the good news is is that, even though this does have a cost to it, this book that's published, you can use your case management funds to purchase a resource like that to help you out in finding a company contact.

And then on the other side of the screen you'll see some things that are state dependent. It will really depend on what your local area or your state allows. Some of you might have access to the state tax records and UI filings. You might have contact within your state labor council or in other state agencies. The business, economic development unit will likely have some information, or if you have a state workforce database, maybe you can find a worker who is employed at one of these companies and get some good information from them.

The next situation I want to talk through is filing deadlines. We know that for ITC-related petitions the window in which to file petitions is much shorter. It's only one year, unlike other types of petitions. So if the deadline to file an ITC-related petition has already passed, so you got the notification but you just – you weren't able to file it on time, or if members of an affected worker group continue to have separations after an ITC certification expires, well, what do you do then? And my advice would be just to file a regular petition and this will be subject to the full investigation but you will still have an opportunity to assist workers who might be certified as eligible and get them some benefits.

Our next situation to work through is multiple worker groups. So you might come across a situation in which there are multiple trade-affected worker groups working at the same firm and location. However, only some of them are covered by an ITC decision. For example, if a production facility has production line A and production line B, perhaps a determination was issued from ITC about the product made on production line A.

So what you could do in this situation is file an ITC-related petition for that production line A, and then file a regular petition for production line B, if they are also adversely affected by trade. So that's your first option. Your second option is to file a regular petition that would cover all of the worker groups, and this would, again, require a full investigation and so some of those workers on production line A might be waiting a few extra weeks for certification and for benefits to come through. But again, these are your two options here.

All right. And then another sticky situation is what if there are multiple Federal Register Notices that affect the same company? And this has happened recently, and we'll talk through that piece. So the cause of having multiple Federal Register Notices is the material injury to an industry is declared on more than one trade basis. For example, on the basis of both antidumping and countervailing duty, and these decisions are published on two different dates, or the cause could be that there has been a serious injury determination through that safeguard investigation plus either antidumping or countervailing duty determination.

And then the effects of this are that it would extend the worker separation eligibility period. So it would run one year prior to the first Federal Register Notice through one year after the last Federal Register Notice, and this also extends the petition filing period. So you have from the first Federal Register Notice date through one year after the last Federal Register Notice date.

So a case that came out recently and I sent the notification last Friday for this case is the stainless steel flanges. The first Federal Register Notice was published on June the 4th of this year, and that was countervailing duties in China, and the second Federal Register Notice was published on July the 30th, which was antidumping from China. So here we have two timelines, and as you can see the first one, the countervailing duty started on – the eligibility period started on June 4th, 2017 and runs through June 4th, 2019. And then you have almost over a month overlap with that second determination, which is the antidumping which runs from July 30th, 2017 through July 30th of 2019.

MS. WORDEN: And at this point, Megan, I'd just like to step in. We need some assistance from states because, in fact, what you're seeing up here on the screen is suggestion that OTAA would be issuing two group eligibility determinations with overlapping eligibility periods. Now, this is not something we've ever done before, and we have yet to formally implement it.

Before we do we would like to get your feedback, given that we don't operate in the state with your often unique systems – IT systems that help process the eligibility process, and just ask you if you see any issues with the concept of having to process two group eligibility determinations that identify the same worker group where there is overlapping eligibility periods. There may in fact be no implications in your system, but we don't want to take for granted that we know what you deal with in terms of how your systems are programmed.

So if you can please think about this for a minute, and if you can think of anything off the top of your head, go ahead and put it into that chat window. And you may need a little more time to wrap your head around this. You may need to talk to other people in the state who are responsible for entering the information in the system and may have more context. That being the case, please follow up with me directly.

My direct contact information is at the end of this presentation, Susan Worden, because we are very interested in implementing a policy that's going to work for states and want to know if there are any hiccups on the more state level that we may not be aware of before we implement this policy. Again, it's not something we've done before. So we have the wisdom to ask you first before we make anything formal. Please think about that and follow up. Thanks, Megan.

MS. WILKINS: All right. Thanks, Susan. So the final situation I want to present to you is, well, what if there are no worker separations? So if you have been in contact with the company before you're submitting your petition and you can verify that no workers were submitted during – were separated during eligibility period, then there's no need to file an ITC-related petition because in order to be eligible under the ITC-related petition, a worker does need to be separated.

We don't consider those adversely affected incumbent workers. However, if there are workers who are threatened with separation at this company, you may submit a regular petition on their behalf, and that would be subject to the full investigation.

So to sum up the differences between an ITC-related petition and a regular petition, I just want to reiterate that ITC cases have already established the adverse effects of trade. This allows them to conduct an expedited investigation. We don't have to investigate all the other paths. We're looking at a much easier path certification that's going to take generally a lot less time than a regular petition and investigation.

However, you do need to know that there is a much shorter window for petition filing and for worker eligibility, and it all hinges around that Federal Register Notice publication date. And then finally, as I said just a moment ago, only separated workers are eligible under an ITC-related petition. No adversely affected incumbent workers.

So you must be thinking, OK. Well, this is great information. Now, what do I do with it? So here's some action steps. Here at OTAA what we'll do is continue to research published ITC determinations, and once we find those determinations that have a finding of either serious injury or material injury, we will send notifications to you through that process that Bunmi discussed for all the affirmative decisions.

You'll receive the e-mails with the letter attached and company contacts, if those are available, and then you in the states, once you receive those notifications, please look at them and review them in a timely manner. Do some research if we're not able to give you those company contacts. Reach out to the companies. Educate them about what TAA is and how they can help their separated workers, and then go ahead and submit your complete petition form in advance of that deadline.

So with that said, I'm going to turn it over to Susan Worden for some final thoughts.

MS. WORDEN: Thanks, Megan. Before I – (inaudible) – what you see on the slide – (inaudible) – I see we've got a question that I'd like to address. "How did you deal with the scenario we are proposing regarding having group eligibility determinations with overlapping periods of eligibility?" This scenario is specifically designed to talk about where the same worker group has an eligibility under two different determinations at the same time.

So this particular scenario we're talking about, we're talking about where the same workers are eligible under two different determinations with possibly significantly overlapping but also unique eligibility periods. So under this scenario a state could decide to serve the person through certification A, and once they began serving them through certification A, they could not move to certification B. So that's one of the implications of the state role in handling that situation.

So I hope that – (inaudible) – the question about whether or not there would only be – a worker would only be eligible under one of those two. It is hypothetically possible because, although the eligibility periods are overlapping, the only time we would do this is if there were some difference in the eligibility period. In other words, if we got two affirmative ITC decisions that have the same FRN date but was on the basis of – one was on countervailing and the other was antidumping, we would only issue one determination. We're only looking to handle this in a situation where the period of eligibility is not the same.

OK. And we – continue to put those questions in there. I'm just going to proceed with the slides as planned. Just want to remind folks or let folks know that we have an upcoming webinar in January focusing on the topic of a section of the PIRL report, the quarterly PIRL where states report out on TAA activities regarding benefits and services as well as outcomes. There is a very important but unfortunately often underutilized element – (inaudible) – allowing for reporting on efforts to improve outcomes.

This is a statutorily required element for states to report out on, and it gives states an opportunity to share their best practices, their spotlight, the new tools that they've developed that they think could be useful for other states as well. It's your chance to shine really, and in the past we've used a lot of the information that has been provided by states to create dedicated webinars and other presentation forums. So if you've got something that you're proud of, this is the place to put it in there. So next month we'll be giving you a webinar that gives you instructions on where to report it and how to report it for maximum effect.

Resources. These are all resources that deal with group eligibility and petition filing. First of all, I want to let folks know, if you haven't been to the TAA website lately, it has gone over a major overhaul that hopefully streamlines the navigation in a way that makes finding things a lot more intuitive. It includes a dedicated TAA petitioner's webpage that provides details on the petition process and associated FAQs.

We also have a dedicated page for company officials. It includes details on the investigative process and forms, including the BDR. Those proactive states out there who are interested in learning more about what gets collected in the group eligibility process, this is the place for you.

Next, we also have links that provide connection to ITC webpages. This includes the locations that we use to identify affirmative determinations that allow for expedited processing under ITC-related petitions.

And then the second column we have a webinar that's an oldie but a goodie. If you have not already accessed this webinar and you are involved in the petition filing process at all, I highly recommend that you view this webinar. The title is how to file a TAA petition online, and certainly, there are lots of good tips and tricks with regard to how to use the online application.

But primarily what this is is it tells you not only what you need to put into a TAA petition but why it's important. It will really help those of you who file TAA petitions understand what we need here in the national office and help you mastermind your collaboration with us in expediting petition processing.

Last but not least, we have a couple of state best practices that were provided in a webinar that deal with group eligibility and use of case management funds to create those resources and processes. Also highly recommended.

Sorry. I'm just processing here. Looks like we got a question. "When will the upcoming webinar be available for registration?" I would say stay tuned. I think we might be able to give you something before the new year.

All right. The next question is a rather long one. So I just take a second, a question about whether or not it would be possible to modify the online petition to check indicators. We will certainly take that into account. We have our own bureaucracy to deal with, but that's an excellent suggestion that we will definitely take into account and see if – what the possibilities are. We appreciate that feedback and suggestion.

OK. So any questions? This is generally the point at which we ask if you have any questions that you haven't already asked, please ask them, but I'm going to ask you an additional question before we close. And that question is, given the topic of group eligibility, given that this represents such a significant part of the eligibility process, what is it we can provide you with regard to technical assistance, collaboration, or clarification? Now, I know everybody in the room, include those working in the national office, have said the number one challenge is how long the group eligibility processing takes.

We do appreciate that. We're looking – always looking for ways to improve on that process. Having said that, there is a lot of statutory requirements built into group eligibility that we cannot – (inaudible) – through. But we would like to get feedback from you, if you have specific suggestions for how you think we can help you, aside from the challenges that are somewhat unavoidable. How can we help you partner with us more effectively, whether that be increase technical assistance in certain areas or suggestions of how we can collaborate together more effectively?

Anyone have any suggestions for that, please feel free to make use of the chat box or follow up after the presentation, if you think of things after the fact. We're always looking for ways to collaborate with you in the states. The bottom line is you folks are much closer to the ground than we are here in the national office, and we want to partner more effectively to expedite the process so that we can get workers through faster. And stats show the faster we can serve workers, the better they.

OK. And in closing I'm just going to review the contact information, including my contact information. We have Bunmi Sanusi who you will see in the signature bar – (inaudible) – ITC-related petition filing. Megan has temporarily taken over and is about to return to Bunmi – return home to her. Hope Kinglock, who you just heard presenting who is one of the managing certifying officers here at OTAA, and last but not least, me, my contact information.

Please do follow up specifically regarding to the question having to do with the proposal to have overlapping group eligibility determinations and also any suggestions, recommendations, or questions you may have with regard to the group eligibility process which we can potentially work on together.

And with that, if there are no other questions, I'll turn it back over to John to close it out.

MR. VEHLOW: Well, thank you very much, Susan.

(END)