

DATE: February 13, 2003

SUBJECT: U. S. Treasury to Reinstate USA PATRIOT Act Section 314(a)
Information Requests (SR Letter 03-3)

HIGHLIGHTS: On November 26, 2002, the Treasury Department announced a brief moratorium on information requests related to Section 314(a) of the USA PATRIOT Act. Section 314(a) authorizes law enforcement authorities to communicate with banking organizations and financial institutions about suspected money launderers and terrorists.

The U.S. Department of the Treasury's Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) developed an electronic system to implement Section 314(a). FinCEN sent out its first request over the electronic network on November 4, 2002. Due to problems associated with the mass distribution of information requests, the moratorium was put in place for all new and existing requests until certain logistical issues were addressed and additional guidance could be developed.

On February 6, 2003, FinCEN issued a press release advising financial institutions that 314(a) information requests would be reinstated during the week of February 17, 2003.

Significant changes to the 314(a) process are described in the SR letter.

DOCUMENT LOCATION: The February 10, 2003 SR letter, which includes FinCEN's announcement and reporting instructions, is available at:
<http://www.federalreserve.gov/boarddocs/SRLETTERS/2003/sr0303.htm>

FURTHER INFORMATION: Tim Bosch, Vice President (314) 444-8440
(or 1-800-333-0810, ext. 44-8440)
Banking Supervision and Regulation Department