

RECORD ACCESS PROCEDURES:

Requests for access must be made in accordance with notification procedure above and the Postal Service Privacy Act regulations regarding access to records and verification of identity under 39 CFR 266.6.

CONTESTING RECORD PROCEDURES:

See Notification and Record Access Procedures above.

RECORDS SOURCE CATEGORIES:

Information is received from ADR provider completing survey.

Stanley F. Mires,

Chief Counsel, Legislative.

[FR Doc. 99-30069 Filed 11-17-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7710-12-P

RAILROAD RETIREMENT BOARD**2000 Railroad Experience Rating Proclamations, Monthly Compensation Base and Other Determinations**

AGENCY: Railroad Retirement Board.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to section 8(c)(2) and section 12(r)(3) of the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act (Act) (45 U.S.C. 358(c)(2) and 45 U.S.C. 362(r)(3), respectively), the Board gives notice of the following:

1. The balance to the credit of the Railroad Unemployment Insurance (RUI) Account, as of June 30, 1999, is \$118,691,628.59;
2. The September 30, 1999, balance of any new loans to the RUI Account, including accrued interest, is zero;
3. The system compensation base is \$3,029,230,161.91 as of June 30, 1999;
4. The cumulative system unallocated charge balance is (\$213,332,043.71) as of June 30, 1999;
5. The pooled credit ratio for calendar year 2000 is zero;
6. The pooled charged ratio for calendar year 2000 is zero;
7. The surcharge rate for calendar year 2000 is zero;
8. The monthly compensation base under section 1(i) of the Act is \$1,005 for months in calendar year 2000;
9. The amount described in section 1(k) of the Act as "2.5 times the monthly compensation base" is \$2,512.50 for base year (calendar year) 2000;
10. The amount described in section 2(c) of the Act as "an amount that bears the same ratio to \$775 as the monthly compensation base for that year as computed under section 1(i) of this Act bears to \$600" is \$1,298 for months in calendar year 2000;
11. The amount described in section 3 of the Act as "2.5 times the monthly

compensation base" is \$2,512.50 for base year (calendar year) 2000;

12. The amount described in section 4(a-2)(i)(A) of the Act as "2.5 times the monthly compensation base" is \$2,512.50 with respect to disqualifications ending in calendar year 2000;

13. The maximum daily benefit rate under section 2(a)(3) of the Act is \$48 with respect to days of unemployment and days of sickness in registration periods beginning after June 30, 2000.

DATES: The balance in notice (1) and the determinations made in notices (3) through (7) are based on data as of June 30, 1999. The balance in notice (2) is based on data as of September 30, 1999. The determinations made in notices (5) through (7) apply to the calculation, under section 8(a)(1)(C) of the Act, of employer contribution rates for 2000. The determinations made in notices (8) through (12) are effective January 1, 2000. The determination made in notice (13) is effective for registration periods beginning after June 30, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Secretary to the Board, Railroad Retirement Board, 844 Rush Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611-2092.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Marla L. Huddleston, Bureau of the Actuary, Railroad Retirement Board, 844 Rush Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611-2092, telephone (312) 751-4779.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The RRB is required by section 8(c)(1) of the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act (Act) (45 U.S.C. 358(c)(1)) as amended by Public Law 100-647, to proclaim by October 15 of each year certain system-wide factors used in calculating experience-based employer contribution rates for the following year. The RRB is further required by section 8(c)(2) of the Act (45 U.S.C. 358(c)(2)) to publish the amounts so determined and proclaimed. The RRB is required by section 12(r)(3) of the Act (45 U.S.C. 362(r)(3)) to publish by December 11, 1999, the computation of the calendar year 2000 monthly compensation base (section 1(i) of the Act) and amounts described in sections 1(k), 2(c), 3 and 4(a-2)(i)(A) of the Act which are related to changes in the monthly compensation base. Also, the RRB is required to publish, by June 11, 2000, the maximum daily benefit rate under section 2(a)(3) of the Act for days of unemployment and days of sickness in registration periods beginning after June 30, 2000.

Surcharge Rate

A surcharge is added in the calculation of each employer's contribution rate, subject to the applicable maximum rate, for a calendar

year whenever the balance to the credit of the RUI Account on the preceding June 30 is less than the greater of \$100 million or the amount that bears the same ratio to \$100 million as the system compensation base for that June 30 bears to the system compensation base as of June 30, 1991. If the RUI Account balance is less than \$100 million (as indexed), but at least \$50 million (as indexed), the surcharge will be 1.5 percent. If the RUI Account balance is less than \$50 million (as indexed), but greater than zero, the surcharge will be 2.5 percent. The maximum surcharge of 3.5 percent applies if the RUI Account balance is less than zero.

The system compensation base as of June 30, 1991 was \$2,799,430,259.23. The system compensation base for June 30, 1999 was \$3,029,230,161.91. The ratio of \$3,029,230,161.91 to \$2,799,430,259.23 is 1.08208810. Multiplying 1.08208810 by \$100 million yields \$108,208,810. Multiplying \$50 million by 1.08208810 produces \$54,104,405. The Account balance on June 30, 1999, was \$118,691,628.59. Accordingly, the surcharge rate for calendar year 2000 is zero.

Monthly Compensation Base

For years after 1988, section 1(i) of the Act contains a formula for determining the monthly compensation base. Under the prescribed formula, the monthly compensation base increases by approximately two-thirds of the cumulative growth in average national wages since 1984. The monthly compensation base for months in calendar year 2000 shall be equal to the greater of (a) \$600 or (b) $\$600 [1 + \{(A - 37,800)/56,700\}]$, where A equals the amount of the applicable base with respect to tier 1 taxes for 2000 under section 3231(e)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986. Section 1(i) further provides that if the amount so determined is not a multiple of \$5, it shall be rounded to the nearest multiple of \$5.

The calendar year 2000 tier 1 tax base is \$76,200. Subtracting \$37,800 from \$76,200 produces \$38,400. Dividing \$38,400 by \$56,700 yields a ratio of 0.67724868. Adding one gives 1.67724868. Multiplying \$600 by the amount 1.67724868 produces the amount of \$1,006.35, which must then be rounded to \$1,005. Accordingly, the monthly compensation base is determined to be \$1,005 for months in calendar year 2000.

Amounts Related to Changes in Monthly Compensation Base

For years after 1988, sections 1(k), 2(c), 3 and 4(a-2)(i)(A) of the Act

contain formulas for determining amounts related to the monthly compensation base.

Under section 1(k), remuneration earned from employment covered under the Act cannot be considered subsidiary remuneration if the employee's base year compensation is less than 2.5 times the monthly compensation base for months in such base year. Multiplying 2.5 by the calendar year 2000 monthly compensation base of \$1,005 produces \$2,512.50. Accordingly, the amount determined under section 1(k) is \$2,512.50 for calendar year 2000.

Under section 2(c), the maximum amount of normal benefits paid for days of unemployment within a benefit year and the maximum amount of normal benefits paid for days of sickness within a benefit year shall not exceed an employee's compensation in the base year. In determining an employee's base year compensation, any money remuneration in a month not in excess of an amount that bears the same ratio to \$775 as the monthly compensation base for that year bears to \$600 shall be taken into account. The calendar year 2000 monthly compensation base is \$1,005. The ratio of \$1,005 to \$600 is 1.67500000. Multiplying 1.67500000 by \$775 produces \$1,298. Accordingly, the amount determined under section 2(c) is \$1,298 for months in calendar year 2000.

Under section 3, an employee shall be a "qualified employee" if his/her base year compensation is not less than 2.5 times the monthly compensation base for months in such base year. Multiplying 2.5 by the calendar year 2000 monthly compensation base of \$1,005 produces \$2,512.50. Accordingly, the amount determined under section 3 is \$2,512.50 for calendar year 2000.

Under section 4(a-2)(i)(A), an employee who leaves work voluntarily without good cause is disqualified from receiving unemployment benefits until he has been paid compensation of not less than 2.5 times the monthly compensation base for months in the calendar year in which the disqualification ends. Multiplying 2.5 by the calendar year 2000 monthly compensation base of \$1,005 produces \$2,512.50. Accordingly, the amount determined under section 4(a-2)(i)(A) is \$2,512.50 for calendar year 2000.

Maximum Daily Benefit Rate

Section 2(a)(3) contains a formula for determining the maximum daily benefit rate for registration periods beginning after June 30, 1989, and after each June 30 thereafter. Legislation enacted on October 9, 1996, revised the formula for

indexing maximum daily benefit rates. Under the prescribed formula, the maximum daily benefit rate increases by approximately two-thirds of the cumulative growth in average national wages since 1984. The maximum daily benefit rate for registration periods beginning after June 30, 2000, shall be equal to 5 percent of the monthly compensation base for the base year immediately preceding the beginning of the benefit year. Section 2(a)(3) further provides that if the amount so computed is not a multiple of \$1, it shall be rounded down to the nearest multiple of \$1.

The calendar year 1999 monthly compensation base is \$970. Multiplying \$970 by 0.05 yields \$48.50, which must then be rounded down to \$48. Accordingly, the maximum daily benefit rate for days of unemployment and days of sickness beginning in registration periods after June 30, 2000, is determined to be \$48.

By Authority of the Board.

Dated: November 10, 1999.

Beatrice Ezerski,

Secretary to the Board.

[FR Doc. 99-30075 Filed 11-17-99; 8:45 am]

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SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[Release No. 34-42126; File No. SR-Amex-99-40; SR-PCX-99-41; SR-CBOE-99-59]

Self-Regulatory Organizations; Notice of Filing of Proposed Rule Change by the American Stock Exchange LLC; Pacific Exchange, Inc.; and Chicago Board Options Exchange, Inc. Relating to Permanent Approval of the Elimination of Position and Exercise Limits for Flex Equity Options

November 10, 1999.

Pursuant to Section 19(b)(1) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 ("Exchange Act" or "Act")¹ and Rule 19b-4 thereunder,² notice is hereby given that on October 5, 1999, October 13, 1999, and November 4, 1999, the American Stock Exchange LLC ("Amex"), Pacific Exchange, Inc. ("PCX") and the Chicago Board Options Exchange, Inc. ("CBOE") (collectively, the "Exchanges") filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission ("Commission" or "SEC") the proposed rule change as described in Items I, II and III below, which Items have been prepared by the self-regulatory organization. The PCX filed an

amendment to the proposed rule change on October 28, 1999.³ The Commission is publishing this notice to solicit comments on the proposed rule change from interested persons.

I. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement of the Terms of Substance of the Proposed Rule Change

The Exchanges propose to make permanent their pilot programs to eliminate position and exercise limits for FLEX Equity options.

II. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement of the Purpose of, and Statutory Basis for, the Proposed Rule Change

In its filing with the Commission, the self-regulatory organizations included statements concerning the purpose of and basis for the proposed rule change and discussed any comments it received on the proposed rule change. The text of these statements may be examined at the places specified in Item IV below. The self-regulatory organizations have prepared summaries, set forth in sections A, B and C below, of the most significant aspects of such statements.

A. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement of the Purpose of, and Statutory Basis for, the Proposed Rule Change

1. Purpose

The purpose of the proposed rule filings is to approve permanently the Exchanges' pilot programs allowing for the elimination of position and exercise limits for FLEX Equity options. On September 9, 1997, the Commission approved separate proposals by the Exchanges to eliminate position and exercise limits for FLEX Equity options under a 2-year pilot program.⁴ On September 9, 1999, the Commission approved an extension of the pilot programs for another 3 months.⁵

The Approval Order required the Exchanges to report to the Commission on the status of the programs so that the Commission could use this information to evaluate the consequences of the programs and to determine whether to approve the elimination of position and exercise limits for these products on a

³ See Letter to Richard Strasser, Commission, from Robert Pacileo, PCX, dated October 27, 1999 ("PCX Amendment No. 1"). PCX Amendment No. 1 clarifies that the rule filing is being filed pursuant to Section 19(b)(4) of the Exchange Act, not Section 19(b)(3).

⁴ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 39032 (September 9, 1997), 62 FR 48683 (September 16, 1997) (approving SR-CBOE-96-79, SR-Amex-96-19, and SR-PCX-97-09) ("Approval Order").

⁵ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 41848 (September 9, 1999), 62 FR 50846 (September 20, 1999).

¹ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

² 17 CFR 240.19b-4.