

DATES: The exemption granted by this notice is effective at the beginning of the 2003 model year.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Rosalind Proctor, Office of Planning and Consumer Standards, NHTSA, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590. Ms. Proctor's telephone number is (202) 366-0846. Her fax number is (202) 493-2290.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On July 26, 1993, NHTSA published in the **Federal Register** a notice granting a petition from Saab for an exemption from the parts marking requirements of the vehicle theft prevention standard for the Saab 900 car line beginning with MY 1994 (See 58 FR 39853). By letters dated September 8 and 12, 1994, Saab petitioned for the first modification to its device. The agency determined that the proposed changes made on Saab 900's antitheft device for MY 1995 were *de minimis* changes and did not require it to submit a petition to modify its exemption pursuant to 49 CFR Part 543.9(c)(2).

On June 20, 1997, Saab submitted a second petition for modification of its previously approved antitheft system for MY 1999. On October 24, 1997, NHTSA published in the **Federal Register** a notice granting in full Saab's second petition for modification for the MY 1999 9-3 vehicle line (See 62 FR 55453).

Saab's submission of May 8, 2002 is a complete petition, as required by 49 CFR part 543.9(d), in that it meets the general requirements contained in 49 CFR part 543.5 and the specific content requirements of 49 CFR part 543.6. Saab's petition provides a detailed description of the identity, design and location of the components of the antitheft system in the vehicle beginning with the 2003 model year. On July 3, 2002, the agency contacted Saab by telephone and obtained additional information which clarified the nature of the changes to its antitheft system for its MY 2003 9-3 vehicle line.

In its MY 2003 petition for modification, Saab stated that for MY 2003 its immobilizer system has been improved. Specifically, the system incorporates several electronic control units (ECU's) in the immobilizer chain for component theft protection. This improvement will prevent stolen components from working if they are mounted in other vehicles. Another improvement is the elimination of the conventional ignition key. A transponder unit with remote arm/disarm features has replaced the traditional mechanical key, unlike the previous antitheft system in which the remote transmitter would not arm or

disarm the starter immobilization feature of the system. This is a change from the previously approved system, in which the driver/operator will be able to arm the system, activate the central-locking feature and monitor the protected areas of the vehicle from unauthorized tampering either by using the remote transmitter or locking the driver's or passenger's door with the correct ignition key.

Saab also stated that for MY 2003, there is only one exterior accessible mechanical door lock on the 2003 Saab 9-3. The exterior locking mechanism is capped with a plastic cover and is only meant to be used in emergency situations in which the vehicle or remote battery is dead. In these situations, the plastic cap can be removed and the vehicle can be locked/unlocked with a mechanical key found within the transponder unit. However, using the emergency key will not arm/disarm the alarm.

In order to ensure reliability and durability of the device, Saab stated that its system is designed to work maintenance free throughout the life of the vehicle. Necessary precaution has been taken with regard to electromagnetic compatibility such that radiation from an external source will not render the system inoperative. Saab has used similar systems in the United States since 1997.

The modified system is armed whenever the vehicle is locked using the transponder/ignition key unit. It is disarmed when unlocking using the same unit. In case of an emergency in which the vehicle must be unlocked using the emergency mechanical key, the alarm will be activated and will only deactivate when the transponder/ignition key unit is placed in the ignition slot and turned to the on position. At this point, the system recognizes the security code within the transponder unit and deactivates the alarm.

Saab states that in the Highway Loss Data Institute (HLDI) data published in September 2001, the 4-door 1998-2000 Saab 900/9-3 had a theft index of 65 (100 being the average result).

Saab believes that the antitheft system for model years 2003 and later will provide essentially the same functions and features as found on its MY 1999-2002 systems and therefore, its modified system will provide at least the same level of theft prevention as parts-marking. Saab believes that the antitheft system proposed for installation on its MY 2003 9-3 line is likely to be as effective in reducing thefts as compliance with the parts-marking requirements of part 541.

The agency has evaluated Saab's MY 2003 petition for modification of the exemption for the 9-3 vehicle line from the parts-marking requirements of 49 CFR part 541, and has decided to grant it. It has determined that the system is likely to be as effective as parts-marking in preventing and deterring theft of these vehicles, and therefore qualifies for an exemption under 49 CFR part 543. The agency believes that the modified device will continue to provide five types of performance listed in Section 543.6(b)(3): Promoting activation; preventing defeat or circumventing of the device by unauthorized persons; preventing operation of the vehicle by unauthorized entrants; attracting attention to the efforts of an unauthorized person; and ensuring the reliability and durability of the device.

NHTSA suggests that if the manufacturer contemplates making any changes the effects of which might be characterized as *de minimis*, it should consult the agency before preparing and submitting a petition to modify.

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 33106; delegation of authority at 49 CFR 1.50.

Issued on: October 8, 2002.

Stephen R. Kratzke,

Associate Administrator for Rulemaking.

[FR Doc. 02-26288 Filed 10-15-02; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Docket No. AB-55 (Sub-No. 623X)]

CSX Transportation, Inc.— Abandonment Exemption—in Putnam County, IN

CSX Transportation, Inc. (CSXT) has filed a notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1152 Subpart F—*Exempt Abandonments* to abandon a 0.47-mile line of railroad between milepost O0Q-189.18 (north side of Grant Street) and the end of track at milepost O0Q-189.65, in Cloverdale, Putnam County, IN. The line traverses United States Postal Service Zip Code 46120.

CSXT has certified that: (1) No local traffic has moved over the line for at least 2 years; (2) there is no overhead traffic on the line; (3) no formal complaint filed by a user of rail service on the line (or by a state or local government entity acting on behalf of such user) regarding cessation of service over the line either is pending with the Surface Transportation Board (Board) or with any U.S. District Court or has been decided in favor of complainant within

the 2-year period; and (4) the requirements at 49 CFR 1105.7 (environmental reports), 49 CFR 1105.8 (historic reports), 49 CFR 1105.11 (transmittal letter), 49 CFR 1105.12 (newspaper publication), and 49 CFR 1152.50(d)(1) (notice to governmental agencies) have been met.

As a condition to this exemption, any employee adversely affected by the abandonment shall be protected under *Oregon Short Line R.Co.—Abandonment—Goshen*, 360 I.C.C. 91 (1979). To address whether this condition adequately protects affected employees, a petition for partial revocation under 49 U.S.C. 10502(d) must be filed.

Provided no formal expression of intent to file an offer of financial assistance (OFA) has been received, this exemption will be effective on November 15, 2002, unless stayed pending reconsideration. Petitions to stay that do not involve environmental issues,¹ formal expressions of intent to file an OFA under 49 CFR 1152.27(c)(2),² and trail use/rail banking requests under 49 CFR 1152.29 must be filed by October 28, 2002. Petitions to reopen or requests for public use conditions under 49 CFR 1152.28 must be filed by November 5, 2002, with: Surface Transportation Board, 1925 K Street, NW., Washington, DC 20423.

A copy of any petition filed with the Board should be sent to CSXT's representative: Natalie S. Rosenberg, CSX Transportation, Inc., 500 Water Street, J150, Jacksonville, FL 32202.

If the verified notice contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void *ab initio*.

CSXT has filed an environmental report which addresses the abandonment's effects, if any, on the environment and historic resources. SEA will issue an environmental assessment (EA) by October 21, 2002. Interested persons may obtain a copy of the EA by writing to SEA (Room 500, Surface Transportation Board, Washington, DC 20423) or by calling SEA, at (202) 565-1552. [Assistance for the hearing impaired is available through the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339.]

¹ The Board will grant a stay if an informed decision on environmental issues (whether raised by a party or by the Board's Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA) in its independent investigation) cannot be made before the exemption's effective date. See *Exemption of Out-of-Service Rail Lines*, 5 I.C.C.2d 377 (1989). Any request for a stay should be filed as soon as possible so that the Board may take appropriate action before the exemption's effective date.

² Each offer of financial assistance must be accompanied by the filing fee, which currently is set at \$1,100. See 49 CFR 1002.2(f)(25).

Comments on environmental and historic preservation matters must be filed within 15 days after the EA becomes available to the public.

Environmental, historic preservation, public use, or trail use/rail banking conditions will be imposed, where appropriate, in a subsequent decision.

Pursuant to the provisions of 49 CFR 1152.29(e)(2), CSXT shall file a notice of consummation with the Board to signify that it has exercised the authority granted and fully abandoned its line. If consummation has not been effected by CSXT's filing of a notice of consummation by October 16, 2003, and there are no legal or regulatory barriers to consummation, the authority to abandon will automatically expire.

Board decisions and notices are available on our Web site at "WWW.STB.DOT.GOV."

Decided: October 8, 2002.

By the Board, David M. Konschnik, Director, Office of Proceedings.

Vernon A. Williams, Secretary.

[FR Doc. 02-26272 Filed 10-15-02; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Docket No. AB-471 (Sub-No. 6X)]

South Kansas and Oklahoma Railroad Company—Abandonment Exemption—in Crawford County, KS

South Kansas and Oklahoma Railroad Company (SKO) has filed a notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1152 subpart F—*Exempt Abandonments* to abandon a 0.4-mile line of railroad between milepost 134.3 and milepost 134.7, within the city of Pittsburg, in Crawford County, KS. The line traverses United States Postal Service Zip Code 66762.

SKO has certified that: (1) No local traffic has moved over the line for at least 2 years; (2) any overhead traffic can be rerouted over other lines; (3) no formal complaint filed by a user of rail service on the line (or by a state or local government entity acting on behalf of such user) regarding cessation of service over the line either is pending with the Surface Transportation Board (Board) or with any U.S. District Court or has been decided in favor of complainant within the 2-year period; and (4) the requirements at 49 CFR 1105.7 (environmental reports), 49 CFR 1105.8 (historic reports), 49 CFR 1105.11 (transmittal letter), 49 CFR 1105.12 (newspaper publication), and 49 CFR 1152.50(d)(1) (notice to governmental agencies) have been met.

As a condition to this exemption, any employee adversely affected by the abandonment shall be protected under *Oregon Short Line R. Co.—Abandonment—Goshen*, 360 I.C.C. 91 (1979). To address whether this condition adequately protects affected employees, a petition for partial revocation under 49 U.S.C. 10502(d) must be filed.

Provided no formal expression of intent to file an offer of financial assistance (OFA) has been received, this exemption will be effective on November 15, 2002, unless stayed pending reconsideration. Petitions to stay that do not involve environmental issues,¹ formal expressions of intent to file an OFA under 49 CFR 1152.27(c)(2),² and trail use/rail banking requests under 49 CFR 1152.29 must be filed by October 28, 2002. Petitions to reopen or requests for public use conditions under 49 CFR 1152.28 must be filed by November 5, 2002, with: Surface Transportation Board, 1925 K Street, NW., Washington, DC 20423.

A copy of any petition filed with the Board should be sent to SKO's representative: Karl Morell, Ball Janik LLP, 1455 F Street, NW., Suite 225, Washington, DC 20005.

If the verified notice contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void *ab initio*.

SKO has filed an environmental report which addresses the abandonment's effects, if any, on the environment and historic resources. SEA will issue an environmental assessment (EA) by October 21, 2002. Interested persons may obtain a copy of the EA by writing to SEA (Room 500, Surface Transportation Board, Washington, DC 20423) or by calling SEA, at (202) 565-1552. Assistance for the hearing impaired is available through the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339. Comments on environmental and historic preservation matters must be filed within 15 days after the EA becomes available to the public.

Environmental, historic preservation, public use, or trail use/rail banking conditions will be imposed, where appropriate, in a subsequent decision.

¹ The Board will grant a stay if an informed decision on environmental issues (whether raised by a party or by the Board's Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA) in its independent investigation) cannot be made before the exemption's effective date. See *Exemption of Out-of-Service Rail Lines*, 5 I.C.C.2d 377 (1989). Any request for a stay should be filed as soon as possible so that the Board may take appropriate action before the exemption's effective date.

² Each offer of financial assistance must be accompanied by the filing fee, which currently is set at \$1,100. See 49 CFR 1002.2(f)(25).