

Railroad Company, Inc. (FWWR), of St. Louis Southwestern Railway Company's (SSW) Hodge Yard, located between North Fort Worth and Carrollton, TX, at milepost 630.20.³

DATES: This exemption is effective on October 5, 1996. Petitions to stay must be filed by September 20, 1996. Petitions to reopen must be filed by September 30, 1996.

ADDRESSES: Send pleadings, referring to STB Finance Docket No. 32955, to: (1) Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Branch, 1201 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20423; and (2) Kevin M. Sheys, 1020 Nineteenth Street, N.W., Suite 400, Washington, DC 20036-6105.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Beryl Gordon, (202) 927-5660. [TDD for the hearing impaired: (202) 927-5721.]

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Additional information is contained in the Board's decision. To purchase a copy of the full decision, write to, call, or pick up in person from: DC Data & News, Inc., Room 2229, 1201 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20423. Telephone: (202) 289-4357/4359. [Assistance for the hearing impaired is available through TDD services (202) 927-5721.]

Decided: August 27, 1996.

By the Board, Chairman Morgan, Vice Chairman Simmons, and Commissioner Owen.

Vernon A. Williams,
Secretary.
[FR Doc. 96-22638 Filed 9-4-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915-00-P

under former 49 U.S.C. 11343 of the Interstate Commerce Act, the ICC normally also exempted the operation of the line, if requested, but the exemption to operate was not necessary. The status of the purchaser or lessor, as a carrier, coupled with the purchase agreement or lease, constituted sufficient authority to conduct operations. Similarly, authority or an exemption for a carrier to purchase or lease a line under 49 U.S.C. 10902 of the ICCTA provides the necessary authority to conduct operations.

³ FWWR plans to operate on track owned by Dallas Area Rapid Transit Property Acquisition Company (DARTPAC). In *Fort Worth and Western Railroad Company, Inc.—Trackage Rights Exemption—St. Louis Southwestern Railway Company*, STB Finance Docket No. 32956 (STB served June 6, 1996), SSW assigned its local and overhead trackage rights over DARTPAC's 28.77-mile rail line, between milepost 632.27 at North Fort Worth and milepost 603.5 at Carrollton, to FWWR.

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Customs Service

Announcement of Program Test: General Aviation Telephonic Entry (GATE)

AGENCY: Customs Service, Treasury.

ACTION: General notice.

SUMMARY: This notice announces Customs plan to conduct a general test to evaluate the effectiveness of a new operations procedure regarding the telephonic entry of certain pre-registered, passenger-carrying, general aviation aircraft flights entering the United States directly from Canada. This notice invites public comments concerning any aspect of the test, informs interested members of the public of the eligibility requirements for voluntary participation in the test, and describes the basis on which Customs will select participants for the test.

EFFECTIVE DATES: Applications will be available and accepted at local Customs offices beginning September 5, 1996. The test will commence no earlier than November 4, 1996, and will be evaluated after 1 year. Comments must be received on or before September 30, 1996. Anyone interested in participating in the test should contact the nearest Customs office.

ADDRESSES: Written comments regarding this notice and information submitted to be considered for voluntary participation in the test should be addressed to the Process Owner, Passenger Operations Division, Room 4413, Washington, DC 20229-0001.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Robert Jacksta (202) 927-0530.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

At the February 24, 1995, Summit in Ottawa, Canada, President Clinton and Canadian Prime Minister Chretien announced the signing of the United States/Canada Accord on our Shared Border for enhancing the management of the U.S.-Canada border. 31 Weekly Comp.Pres.Doc. 305. The Shared Border Accord sets out initiatives to promote trade, tourism, and travel between the two countries by reducing barriers for legitimate importers, exporters, and travelers, while strengthening enforcement capabilities to stop the flow of illegal or irregular movement of goods and people and reducing costs for both governments and users. One of the specific initiatives in the Shared Border Accord is a frequent traveler program known as General Aviation Telephonic

Entry (GATE), which is intended to facilitate the entry of certain pre-registered, passenger-carrying, general aviation aircraft flights entering the United States directly from Canada, while still preserving security by maintaining random checks of incoming private aircraft.

Customs is ready to begin testing the GATE program. For programs designed to evaluate the effectiveness of new technology or operations procedures regarding the processing of passengers, vessels, or merchandise, § 101.9(a) of the Customs Regulations (19 CFR 101.9(a)), implements the general testing procedures. This test is established pursuant to that regulation.

I. Description of Proposed Test

The Concept of Telephonic Entry

Any aircraft arriving in the United States from a foreign airport or place is required to (1) give advance notification of its arrival, (2) immediately report its arrival to Customs, and (3) land at the airport designated by Customs for entry. See, 19 U.S.C. 1433(c) and implementing Customs Regulations at 19 CFR Part 122, subparts C and D. Individual passengers are also required to report their arrival to Customs. See, 19 U.S.C. 1459 and implementing Customs Regulations at 19 CFR 123.1. Because historical data on certain general aviation aircraft (aircraft comprising private and corporate aircraft, and air ambulances that have a seating capacity of fifteen or fewer passengers) indicates a high degree of compliance with Customs and other federal agency reporting laws, Customs has developed the GATE program to allow certain pre-registered, passenger-carrying, flights of such aircraft to report their entry telephonically when entering the United States directly from Canada. To provide a means for measuring the effectiveness of GATE, random inspections will be built into the program. Thus, the GATE program would combine the proven benefits of facilitation and selectivity, thereby freeing valuable Customs resources for use in other areas.

The test will be implemented at designated airports of entry located nation-wide. During the test period, pilots will give advance notice of their arrival—from a minimum of 3 hours up to a maximum of 72 hours in advance—to Customs by calling 1-800-98-CLEAR, and may receive advance clearance to land at airports that are not staffed by Customs, but which have been designated by a port director for program use, provided that they receive a telephonic entry number.

Regulatory Provisions Affected

During the GATE test, participants will be provided with a telephonic entry number in lieu of normal inspection requirements. Accordingly, the normal arrival reporting and landing requirements of Part 122 of the Customs Regulations (19 CFR Part 122) will not be followed. However, participants will still be subject to civil and criminal penalties and sanctions for any violations of U.S. Customs laws.

II. Eligibility Criteria

A. Aircraft and Airports of Entry

Only U.S.- and Canadian-registered general aviation aircraft that will arrive in the United States directly from Canada are eligible to participate in the GATE test. For purposes of this test, the term "general aviation aircraft" means aircraft comprising private and corporate aircraft, and air ambulances returning to the U.S. with crew members only, that have a seating capacity of fifteen or fewer passengers.

Aircraft transiting Canada are not eligible for this test. Further, aircraft that will carry cargo, merchandise requiring the payment of Customs duties, restricted or prohibited food products or other articles, or monetary instruments in excess of \$10,000, will not qualify for this test.

Qualified flights selected to participate in the GATE test will be allowed to land at most airports of entry located within a reasonable commuting distance of a port serviced by Customs, provided that the approving port director has designated the airport for GATE test use. Most municipally-owned airports and other airports located outside a particular port's limits may be selected for landing under the GATE test. The port director approving the application for GATE participation will designate, on a case-by-case basis, which airports of entry may be used for landing. Factors that will be considered include:

- Willingness of an airport operator to participate in the GATE test;
- The distance to the airport from the nearest Customs port, commuting time required for Customs officers, and Customs officer safety;
- Whether a secure place to work is provided at the airport; and
- Whether communications equipment is accessible.

B. Persons

Participation in the GATE test is voluntary. Only U.S. citizens, permanent resident aliens of the United States, Canadian citizens, or landed immigrants in Canada from

Commonwealth countries, and who are regular passengers or flight crews of pre-registered flights, will be considered for this test. Each applicant should have had (during the past year) a "face to face" inspection by either a U.S. Immigration or Customs officer, which clearly demonstrates the person's right to legally enter the United States, and must agree to carry all necessary personal identification and immigration documents. Persons who have not had a "face to face" inspection during the past year may, nonetheless, meet this requirement by reporting to the nearest Customs office with proof of citizenship.

Persons with evidence of a pending or past investigation which establishes illegal or dishonest conduct, persons involved in a violation of Customs laws (civil, narcotic violations, smuggling), and persons found to be inadmissible under the Immigration laws of the United States are not eligible for this test.

Participation in this test will not constitute confidential information, and lists of participants will be made available to the public upon written request.

III. Test Application Procedure

General aviation aircraft owners, operators, and pilots who wish to have their passenger-carrying flights considered for participation in the GATE test should contact the Customs office nearest the airport where they normally land for Customs inspection after the effective date for this notice specified above, to request an application for General Aviation Telephonic Entry Program form (Customs Form 442). Applications must be filed with Customs 45 days prior to the date of the scheduled flight in order to be considered for participation in the GATE test.

Selection Standards

Flights will be approved/denied for the GATE test based on whether the personnel/aircraft information provided on the CF 442 by an applicant meets all the above eligibility criteria. The local port office will determine the qualifications of all passengers/pilots/aircraft, and a letter approving or denying the test application will be sent to the applicant. Aircraft owners/operators must agree not to allow their general aviation aircraft to carry passengers who are not listed and approved on the application. (To allow for the proper accounting of last-minute personnel changes to an application already on file with Customs, an Application Addendum form must be

completed and sent to the port where the original application was submitted). Further, aircraft owners/operators must agree not to allow persons to carry dutiable/commercial merchandise, restricted or prohibited food products or other articles, or monetary instruments of \$10,000 or more on test flights.

If an application is denied for any reason other than by reason of a request by the applicant to land at a particular airport (for example, a denial based on information concerning passengers, pilots, or the aircraft), the applicant may appeal the decision to the port director within 10 working days from receipt of the denial letter. If the appeal to the port director results in another denial, then the applicant may appeal directly to the Passenger Process Owner at Customs' Headquarters within 10 working days from receipt of the second denial letter.

IV. Test Evaluation Criteria

Customs will review all public comments received concerning any aspect of the test program or procedures, finalize procedures in light of those comments, form problem-solving teams, and establish baseline measures and evaluation methods and criteria. Approximately 120 days after conclusion of the test, evaluations of the test will be conducted and final results will be made available to the public upon request.

Dated: August 29, 1996.

Samuel H. Banks,

Assistant Commissioner, Office of Field Operations.

[FR Doc. 96-22576 Filed 9-4-96; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Advisory Committee on Prosthetics and Special-Disabilities Programs; Notice of Charter Renewal

This gives notice under the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Public Law 92-463) of October 6, 1972, that the Department of Veterans Affairs' Advisory Committee on Prosthetics and Special-Disabilities Programs has been renewed for a 2-year period beginning August 16, 1996, through August 16, 1998.

Dated: August 22, 1996.

By direction of the Secretary.

Eugene A. Brickhouse,

Committee Management Officer.

[FR Doc. 96-22589 Filed 9-4-96; 8:45 am]

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