

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**Surface Transportation Board**

[STB Ex Parte No. 290 (Sub No. 5) (99-1)]

Quarterly Rail Cost Adjustment Factor

AGENCY: Surface Transportation Board, DOT.

ACTION: Approval of rail cost adjustment factor.

SUMMARY: The Board has approved the first quarter 1999 rail cost adjustment factor (RCAF) and cost index filed by the Association of American Railroads. The first quarter 1999 RCAF (Unadjusted) is 0.996. The first quarter 1999 RCAF (Adjusted) is 0.599. The first quarter 1999 RCAF-5 is 0.603.

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 1999.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: H. Jeff Warren, (202) 565-1549. TDD for the hearing impaired: (202) 565-1695.

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 NEWS & DATA, INC., Suite 210, 1925 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20423-0001, telephone (202) 289-4357. [Assistance for the hearing impaired is available through TDD services (202) 565-1695.]

This action will not significantly affect either the quality of the human environment or energy conservation.

Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 605(b), we conclude that our action will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities within the meaning of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

Decided: December 10, 1998.

By the Board, Chairman Morgan and Vice Chairman Owen.

Vernon A. Williams,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 98-33462 Filed 12-17-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915-00-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**Surface Transportation Board**

[STB Docket No. AB-103 (Sub-No. 14)]

The Kansas City Southern Railway Company—Adverse Discontinuance Application—A Line of Arkansas and Missouri Railroad Company

On November 30, 1998, Arkansas and Missouri Railroad Company (AMR) filed an application under 49 U.S.C. 10903 requesting that the Surface Transportation Board (Board) find that

the public convenience and necessity require and permit the discontinuance of trackage rights held by The Kansas City Southern Railroad Company (KCS) over a line of railroad owned by AMR, extending from AMR milepost 417.0 near the crossing of Navy Road in Fort Smith, AR, to AMR milepost 422.5 near the overpass of Arkansas Highway 540 in Fort Smith, AR, a distance of approximately 5.5 miles, in Sebastian County, AR, and LeFlore County, OK. The line includes the station of South Fort Smith, AR, at milepost 422.5 and traverses United States Postal Service Zip Codes 72901 and 74901.

AMR states that it is filing this application because it contends that KCS has breached the terms of their trackage rights agreement by failing to properly maintain the line. It argues, however, that no service will be lost and that there will be no adverse impact on overhead shippers or communities because all bridge traffic formerly handled by KCS can be handled by AMR crews. In a decision served November 24, 1998, AMR was granted a waiver of certain filing requirements in 49 CFR 1152.22, except to the extent the filing requirements concern information about service to overhead shippers. In a separate decision served December 14, 1998, AMR's motion for a protective order covering certain traffic data and contractual terms was granted.

In an application by a third party for a determination that the public convenience and necessity permits the discontinuance of operations over a line, the issue before the Board is whether the public interest requires that the service in question be retained.

The line does not contain federally granted rights-of-way. Any documentation AMR's possession will be made available promptly to those requesting it. AMR's entire case for adverse discontinuance was filed with the application.

The interest of railroad employees will be protected by the conditions set forth in *Oregon Short Line R. Co.—Abandonment—Goshen*, 360 I.C.C. 91 (1979).

Persons opposing the proposed adverse discontinuance who wish to participate actively and fully in the process should file a protest by January 14, 1999. Persons who may oppose the discontinuance but who do not wish to participate fully in the process by submitting verified statements of witnesses containing detailed evidence should file comments by January 14, 1999. Parties seeking information concerning the filing of protests should refer to section 1152.25. AMR's reply to any opposing statements is due January

29, 1999. Because this is a discontinuance proceeding and not an abandonment, trail use/rail banking and public use requests are not appropriate. Likewise, the proceeding is exempt from environmental reporting requirements under 49 CFR 1105.6(c)(6) and from historic reporting requirements under 49 CFR 1105.8(b)(3).

Written comments and protests must indicate the proceeding designation STB Docket No. AB-103 (Sub-No. 14) and must be sent to: (1) Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Unit, 1925 K Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20423-0001; and (2) Mark H. Sidman, 1350 New York Avenue, N.W., Suite 800, Washington, D.C. 20005-4797. The original and 10 copies of all comments or protests shall be filed with the Board with a certificate of service. Except as otherwise set forth in part 1152, every document filed with the Board must be served on all parties to the adverse discontinuance proceeding. 49 CFR 1104.12(a).

Persons seeking further information concerning the adverse discontinuance procedures may contact the Board's Office of Public Services at (202) 565-1592 or refer to the full abandonment or discontinuance regulations at 49 CFR part 1152. [TDD for the hearing impaired is available at (202) 565-1695.]

A copy of the application will be available for public inspection at 306 E. Emma, Springdale, AR 72764 and 1301 N. 4th Street, Fort Smith, AR 72901.

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

Decided: December 14, 1998.

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

Vernon A. Williams,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 98-33463 Filed 12-17-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915-00-P

UNITED STATES INFORMATION AGENCY
Proposed Collection; Comment Request

AGENCY: United States Information Agency.

ACTION: Proposed Collection; Comment Request.

SUMMARY: The United States Information Agency, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to comment on an information collection requirement

concerning the public use form entitled "College and University Affiliations Program," under OMB control number 3116-0179. This request for comment is being made pursuant to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 [Pub. L. 104-13; 44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)]. The information collection activity involved with this program is conducted pursuant to the mandate given to the United States Information Agency (USIA) under the terms and conditions of the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, Public Law 87-256.

DATES: Comments are due on or before February 16, 1999.

COPIES: Copies of the Request for Clearance (OMB 83-I), supporting statement, and other documents that will be submitted to OMB for approval may be obtained from the USIA Clearance Officer. Comments should be submitted to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs of OMB, Attention: Desk Officer for USIA, and also to the USIA Clearance Officer.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: The Agency Clearance Officer, Ms. Jeannette Giovetti, United States Information Agency, M/AOL, 301 Fourth Street, SW, Washington, DC 20547, internet address: JGiovettiUSIA.GOV, telephone: (202) 619-4408; and for OMB review: Ms. Victoria Wassmer, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, New Executive Office Building, Docket Library, Room 10202, NEOB, Washington, DC 20503, Telephone (202) 395-5871.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Public reporting burden for this collection of information (Paper Work Reduction Project: OMB No. 3116-0179) is estimated to average thirty (30) hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Responses are voluntary and respondents will be required to respond only one time.

Comments are requested concerning (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the agency, including whether the information has practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the Agency's burden estimates; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on the respondents, including the use of automated

collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information to the United States Information Agency, M/AOL, 301 Fourth Street, SW, Washington, DC 20547; and to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, New Executive Office Building, Docket Library, Room 10202, NEOB, Washington, DC 20503.

Title: "College and University Affiliations Program."

Current Action: USIA is requesting approval for a revision to the total annual burden hours and three-year extension of the information collection entitled, "College and University Affiliations Program," under OMB control number 3116-0179 which expires March 31, 1999.

Form Numbers: None.

Abstract: Under the College and University Affiliations Program, USIA offers grants-in-aid to support the development or enhancement of institutional partnerships between U.S. and foreign colleges and universities. The program promotes mutual understanding, strengthens research and teaching capabilities, and improves the academic curricula.

Proposed Frequency of Responses:

No. of Respondents: 86.

Recordkeeping Hours: 30.

Total Annual Burden Hours: 2,580.

Dated: December 15, 1998.

Rose Royal,

Federal Register Liaison.

[FR Doc. 98-33570 Filed 12-17-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8230-01-M

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

[OMB Control No. 2900-0501]

Proposed Information Collection Activity: Proposed Collection; Comment Request

AGENCY: Veterans Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), is announcing an opportunity for public comment on the proposed collection of certain information by the agency. Under the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995, Federal agencies are required to publish notice in the **Federal Register** concerning each proposed collection of

information, including each proposed reinstatement, without change, of a previously approved collection for which approval has expired, and allow 60 days for public comment in response to the notice. This notice solicits comments for information needed to properly maintain Veterans Mortgage Life Insurance accounts.

DATES: Written comments and recommendations on the proposed collection of information should be received on or before February 16, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Submit written comments on the collection of information to Nancy J. Kessinger, Veterans Benefits Administration (20S52), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420. Please refer to "OMB Control No. 2900-0501" in any correspondence.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Nancy J. Kessinger at (202) 273-7079 or FAX (202) 275-5947.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Under the PRA of 1995 (Public Law 104-13; 44 U.S.C., 3501-3520), Federal agencies must obtain approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for each collection of information they conduct or sponsor. This request for comment is being made pursuant to Section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the PRA.

With respect to the following collection of information, VBA invites comments on: (1) whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of VBA's functions, including whether the information will have practical utility; (2) the accuracy of VBA's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (4) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or the use of other forms of information technology.

Title and Form Numbers: Veterans Mortgage Life Insurance Inquiry, VA Form 29-0543.

OMB Control Number: 2900-0501.

Type of Review: Reinstatement, without change, of a previously approved collection for which approval has expired.

Abstract: The information collected from the veteran is used by VBA in the maintenance of Veterans Mortgage Life Insurance accounts.

Affected Public: Individuals or households.

Estimated Annual Burden: 45 hours.

Estimated Average Burden Per Respondent: 5 minutes.