

Crashworthiness has been actively reviewing collision history and design options and has commissioned additional research that is being guided toward completion over the next few months. Contact: Sean Mehrvazi (202) 493-6237.

Task 97-2—Evaluating the extent to which environmental, sanitary, and other working conditions in locomotive cabs affect the crew's health and the safe operation of locomotives, proposing standards where appropriate. This Task was accepted June 24, 1997. The Working Group on Cab Working Conditions is meeting to draft a standard for locomotive sanitary conditions. Task forces on noise and temperature have been formed and are actively meeting to identify and address issues. Contact: Brenda Hattery (202) 493-6326.

Task 97-3—Developing event recorder data survivability standards. This Task was accepted on June 24, 1997. An Event Recorder Working Group and Task Force have been established and are actively meeting. Contact: Edward English (202) 493-6321.

Task 97-4 and Task 97-5—Defining Positive Train Control (PTC) functionalities, describing available technologies, evaluating costs and benefits of potential systems, and considering implementation opportunities and challenges, including demonstration and deployment.

Task 97-6—Revising various regulations to address the safety implications of processor-based signal and train control technologies, including communications-based operating systems. These three tasks were accepted on September 30, 1997, and assigned to a single Working Group. A Data and Implementation Task Force was formed to address issues such as assessment of costs and benefits and technical readiness. A Standards Task Force was formed to develop PTC standards. The Working Group and task forces are actively meeting. Contact: Grady Cothen (202) 493-6302.

Task 97-7—Determining damages qualifying an event as a reportable train accident. This Task was accepted on September 30, 1997. A working group has been formed to address this task and will conduct their initial meeting in February 1999. Contact: Robert Finkelstein (202) 493-6280.

Please refer to the notice published in the **Federal Register** on March 11, 1996 (61 FR 9740) for more information about the RSAC.

Issued in Washington, DC on December 23, 1998.

George A. Gavalla,

Acting Associate Administrator for Safety.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Railroad Administration

[Docket No. RSAC-96-1, Notice No. 15]

Railroad Safety Advisory Committee; Notice of Meeting

AGENCY: Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Notice of Railroad Safety Advisory Committee ("RSAC") meeting.

SUMMARY: FRA announces the next meeting of the RSAC, a Federal Advisory Committee that develops railroad safety regulations through a consensus process. The meeting will address a wide range of topics, including possible adoption of specific recommendations for regulatory action.

DATES: The meeting of the RSAC is scheduled to commence at 9:30 a.m. and conclude at 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 28, 1999.

ADDRESSES: The meeting of the RSAC will be held at The Ronald Reagan Building, The International Trade Center, Polaris Suite, 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC. The meeting is open to the public on a first-come, first-served basis and is accessible to individuals with disabilities. Sign language interpreters will be available for individuals with hearing impediments.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Vicky McCully, RSAC Coordinator, FRA, 400 7th Street, SW., Stop 25, Washington, DC 20590, (202) 493-6305 or Grady Cothen, Deputy Associate Administrator for Safety Standards and Program Development, FRA, 400 7th Street, SW., Stop 25, Washington, DC 20590, (202) 493-6302.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Pursuant to section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463), FRA is giving notice of a meeting of the Railroad Safety Advisory Committee ("RSAC"). The meeting is scheduled to begin at 9:30 a.m. and conclude at 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 28, 1999. The meeting will be held at The Ronald Reagan Building, The International Trade Center, Polaris Suite, 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC. All times noted are Eastern Standard Time.

RSAC was established to provide advice and recommendations to the FRA on railroad safety matters. The Committee consists of 48 individual representatives, drawn from among 27 organizations representing various rail industry perspectives, and 2 associate non-voting representatives from the agencies with railroad safety regulatory responsibility in Canada and Mexico. Staff of the National Transportation Safety Board and Federal Transit Administration also participate in an advisory capacity.

During this meeting, the RSAC will receive status reports, containing progress information, from the Locomotive Crashworthiness Working Group, the Locomotive Cab Working Conditions Working Group, and the Event Recorder Working Group. A status report will also be received from the Positive Train Control (PTC) Working Group, tasked with: (1) facilitating understanding of current PTC technologies, definitions, and capabilities; (2) addressing issues regarding the feasibility of implementing fully integrated PTC systems; and (3) facilitating implementation of software based signal and operating systems through consideration of revisions to the Rules, Standards and Instructions to address processor-based technology and communication-based architectures.

Please refer to the notice published in the **Federal Register** on March 11, 1996 (61 FR 9740) for more information about the RSAC.

Issued in Washington, DC on December 23, 1998.

George A. Gavalla,

Acting Associate Administrator for Safety.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Research and Special Programs Administration

[Notice No. 98-11]

Safety Advisory: Unauthorized Marking of Compressed Gas Cylinders

AGENCY: Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA), DOT.

ACTION: Safety advisory notice concerning unsafe cylinders.

SUMMARY: This is to notify the public that RSPA is investigating the unauthorized marking of high-pressure compressed gas cylinders by Fire Protection Service (FPS), in Canton, Ohio. RSPA has determined that FPS has marked cylinders indicating they

had been retested when they had not been retested.

Failure to properly conduct hydrostatic retests can result in unsafe cylinders being returned to service. Serious personal injury, death, and property damage could result from the rupture of a cylinder. Cylinders that have not been retested in accordance with the Hazardous Materials Regulations (HMR) may not be charged or filled with a hazardous material for transportation in commerce.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: N. Stewart Skeggs, Hazardous Materials Enforcement Specialist, Central Region, telephone (847) 294-8580, Fax (847) 294-8590, Office of Hazardous Materials Enforcement, Research and Special Programs Administration, Department of Transportation, 2350 East Devon Avenue, Suite 136, Des Plaines, IL 60018.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: During an inspection at Fire Protection Service (FPS), 1022 Dueber Avenue, S.W., Canton, Ohio, RSPA determined that FPS had marked an undetermined number of cylinders as having been properly retested in accordance with the HMR without retesting the cylinders as required. RSPA also determined that FPS had marked cylinders as tested in accordance with the HMR without holding a Retester Identification Number (RIN) issued by RSPA as required by the HMR.

Failure to properly conduct hydrostatic retests can result in cylinders that should be condemned being returned to service. Serious personal injury, death, and property damage could result from rupture of a cylinder. Cylinders that have not been retested in accordance with the HMR may not be charged or filled with a hazardous material.

RSPA has determined that FPS had been servicing cylinders without holding a RIN since at least 1993. In addition, the condition of the retest equipment at FPS indicated to the inspectors that FPS had not been capable of hydrostatically retesting cylinders for quite some time. Because FPS failed to keep accurate retest and reinspection records, it is impossible to determine the number of cylinders that FPS has marked without retesting, or has retested without possessing a valid RIN.

Some cylinders serviced by FPS may be marked on their shoulders with the month and year of alleged hydrostatic retest dates (for example, 3-98). Any person who has a cylinder that was last serviced by FPS should not charge or fill the cylinder without first having it

inspected and retested by a DOT-authorized retest facility. Filled cylinders (if filled with an atmospheric gas) described in this safety advisory should be vented or otherwise properly and safely evacuated and purged, and taken to a DOT-authorized cylinder retest facility for visual reinspection and retest to determine if they qualify for continued use in accordance with the HMR.

Under no circumstances should a cylinder described in this safety advisory be filled, refilled or used to contain a hazardous material until it has been requalified by a DOT-authorized retest facility. It is further recommended that persons finding or possessing cylinders described in this safety notice contact Mr. Skeggs for further information.

Issued in Washington, DC, on December 22, 1998.

Alan I. Roberts,

Associate Administrator for Hazardous Materials Safety.

[FR Doc. 98-34405 Filed 12-28-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-60-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Ex Parte No. 558 (Sub-No. 2)]

Railroad Cost of Capital—1998

AGENCY: Surface Transportation Board.

ACTION: Notice of decision instituting a proceeding to determine the railroads' 1997 cost of capital.

SUMMARY: The Board is instituting a proceeding to determine the railroad industry's cost of capital for 1998. The decision solicits comments on: (1) the railroads' 1998 cost of debt capital; (2) the railroads' 1998 current cost of preferred stock equity capital; (3) the railroads' 1998 cost of common stock equity capital; and (4) the 1998 capital structure mix of the railroad industry on a market value basis.

DATES: Notices of intent to participate are due no later than January 11, 1999. A service list will then be prepared and issued by January 25, 1999. Statements of the railroads are due by March 26, 1999. Statements of other interested persons are due by April 16, 1999. Rebuttal statements by the railroads are due by April 30, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Send an original and 10 copies of statements and a copy of the statement on a 3.5 inch disk in WordPerfect 6.1, and an original and 1 copy of the notice of intent to participate to: Surface Transportation

Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Branch, 1925 K Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20423.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Leonard J. Blistein, (202) 565-1529. [TDD for the hearing impaired: (202) 565-1695.]

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Additional information is contained in the Board's decision. To obtain a copy of the full decision, write to, call, or pick up in person from: Office of the Secretary, Surface Transportation Board, 1925 K Street, N.W., Room 700, Washington, DC 20423. Telephone: (202) 565-1650. [Assistance for the hearing impaired is available through TDD services (202) 565-1695.] A copy of the decision can also be obtained from the Board's internet site (www.stb.dot.gov).

We preliminarily conclude that the proposed action will not significantly affect either the quality of the human environment or the conservation of energy resources.

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 10704(a).

Decided: December 18, 1998.

By the Board, Chairman Morgan and Vice Chairman Owen.

Vernon A. Williams,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 98-34444 Filed 12-28-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915-00-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Docket No. AB-402 (Sub-No. 6X)]

Fox Valley & Western Ltd.— Abandonment Exemption—in Waupaca County, WI

On December 10, 1998, Fox Valley & Western Ltd. (FVW), filed with the Surface Transportation Board (Board) a petition under 49 U.S.C. 10502 for exemption from the provisions of 49 U.S.C. 10903-10905¹ to abandon a 10.7-mile line of railroad known as the Manawa-Scandinavia Line, extending from milepost 50.3 near Manawa to the end of the line at milepost 61.0 in Scandinavia, in Waupaca County, WI. The line traverses U.S. Postal Service Zip Codes 54949, 54962, and 54977, and includes the station of Scandinavia at milepost 61.0.

The line does not contain federally granted rights-of-way. Any documentation in FVW's possession

¹ In addition to an exemption from 49 U.S.C. 10903, FVW seeks exemption from 49 U.S.C. 10904 (offer of financial assistance procedures) and 49 U.S.C. 10905 (public use conditions). These requests will be addressed in the final decision.