

for the cargo weight rating should be located. Part 575.105 (Utility vehicles) requires that manufacturers of utility vehicles affix a sticker in a prominent location alerting drivers that the particular handling and maneuvering characteristics of utility vehicles require special driving practices when these vehicles are operated.

Need and Use of the Information: In order to ensure that motor vehicle manufacturers are complying with 49 CFR Part 575, and to provide performance and safety information to new vehicle purchases.

Annual Estimated Burden: The total estimated annual burden is 225 hours.

ADDRESSES: Send comments to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, 725-17th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20503, Attention DOT Desk Officer.

Comments are invited on: whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Department, including whether the information will have practical utility; the accuracy of the Department's estimate of the burden of the proposed information collection; ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; and ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Issued in Washington, DC, on December 23, 1996.

Phillip A. Leach,

Clearance Officer, United States Department of Transportation.

[FR Doc. 96-33297 Filed 12-30-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-62-P

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Docket No. AB-480X]

K & E Railway Company— Abandonment Exemption—in Alfalfa, Garfield, and Grant Counties, OK, and Barber County, KS

AGENCY: Surface Transportation Board, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of exemption.

SUMMARY: Under 49 U.S.C. 10502, the Board exempts the abandonment by K & E Railway Company of its entire 57.69-mile rail line, between milepost 0.60, at or near Kiowa, in Barber County, KS, and milepost 56.98, at or near Blanton, in Garfield County, OK, and between milepost 299.88 and milepost 301.19, near Cherokee, in Alfalfa County, OK,

from the prior approval requirements of 49 U.S.C. 10903, and the abandonment of 5.69 miles of the right-of-way between milepost 18.82 and milepost 23.20, and between milepost 299.88 and milepost 301.19, from the offer of financial assistance (OFA) requirements of 49 U.S.C. 10904 and the public use requirements of 49 U.S.C. 10905, subject to historic preservation and environmental conditions.

DATES: With respect to the two line segments exempted from 49 U.S.C. 10904-05, the exemption will be effective on December 31, 1996, and petitions to reopen must be filed by January 27, 1997. With respect to the remainder of the line, provided no formal expression of intent to file an OFA is received, this exemption will be effective on January 30, 1997, formal expressions of intent to file an OFA¹ under 49 CFR 1152.27(c)(2) and requests for a notice of interim trail use/rail banking under 49 CFR 1152.29 must be filed by January 10, 1997; petitions to stay must be filed by January 10, 1997; requests for public use conditions in conformity with 49 CFR 1152.28(a)(2) must be filed by January 21, 1997; and petitions to reopen must be filed by January 27, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Send pleadings referring to STB Docket No. AB-480X to: (1) Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Branch, 1201 Constitution Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20423, and (2) Petitioner's representative: Karl Morell, Ball Janik LLP, Suite 225, 1455 F St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005.

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 News & Data, 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: December 23, 1996.

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

Vernon A. Williams,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 96-33275 Filed 12-30-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915-00-P

¹ See *Exempt. of Rail Abandonment—Offers of Finan. Assist.*, 4 I.C.C.2d 164 (1987).

[STB Docket Nos. AB-3 (Sub-No. 139X);
STB Docket No. AB-423 (Sub-No. 2X)]

Missouri Pacific Railroad Company— Abandonment and Discontinuance Of Operations Exemption—in Houston, Harris County, TX; Houston Belt & Terminal Railway Company— Discontinuance of Operations Exemption—in Houston, Harris County TX

AGENCY: Surface Transportation Board, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of exemption.

SUMMARY: Under 49 U.S.C. 10502, the Board exempts Missouri Pacific Railroad Company and Houston Belt & Terminal Railway Company from the prior approval requirements of 49 U.S.C. 10903 to permit them, respectively, to abandon and discontinue operations and discontinue operations over a 0.52-mile rail segment of the Columbia Tap Branch (Columbia Tap) extending from the end of the line at E.S. 261+00 to E.S. 288+60 near Houston,¹ and from the offer of financial assistance requirements of 49 U.S.C. 10904 and the public use requirements of 49 U.S.C. 10905, subject to standard employee protective conditions.

DATES: This exemption is effective December 31, 1996. Formal expressions of intent to file an OFA and requests for public use and trail use will not be accepted. Petitions to reopen must be filed by January 21, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Send pleadings referring to STB Docket Nos. AB-3 (Sub-No. 139X) and AB-423 (Sub-No. 2X) to: (1) Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Branch, 1201 Constitution Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20423, and (2) Petitioners' representatives: Joseph D. Anthofer, 1416 Dodge St., Omaha, NE, 68179-0830, and J. B. Mathis, 501 Crawford, Houston, TX 77002-2192.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Beryl Gordon, (202) 927-7513. [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 News & Data, Inc., Room 2229, 1201 Constitution Ave., N.W., Washington,

¹ MP is operated under common control and management with Union Pacific Railroad Company and Southern Pacific Transportation Company. HB&T is owned by MP and Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad Company. HB&T leases and operates property owned by its parent railroads. HB&T operates over and MP owns the line segment proposed for abandonment.

DC 20423. Telephone: (202) 289-4357/4359. [Assistance for the hearing impaired is available through TDD services (202) 927-5721.]

Decided: December 23, 1996.

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

Vernon A. Williams,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 96-33276 Filed 12-30-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915-00-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Customs Service

Extension of National Customs Automation Test Regarding Electronic Protest Filing

AGENCY: U.S. Customs Service, Department of the Treasury.

ACTION: General notice.

SUMMARY: This notice announces Customs plan to extend the test of its electronic filing of protests and to expand the number of test ports. The test will not be opened to new participants at this time. The notice invites public comments concerning any aspect of the test.

EFFECTIVE DATE: The test of electronic filing of protests, which was scheduled to end on October 31, 1996, is now scheduled to extend through April, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Written comments regarding this notice or any aspect of the test of the electronic protest system should be addressed to the Chief, Commercial Compliance Branch, U.S. Customs Service, 1301 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Room 1313, Washington, D.C. 20229-0001.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For operational or policy issues: Neil Shannon (202)927-0300. For protest system or automation issues: Steve Linnemann (202) 927-0436.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

On January 30, 1996, a document was published by Customs in the Federal Register (61 FR 3086) announcing, as part of the National Customs Automation Program (NCAP), a test regarding the electronic filing of protests. The test, which began on May 1, 1996 and was to last six months, involved transaction sets for the Automated Broker Interface (ABI) allowing the following to be filed electronically and their status to be tracked electronically:

(1) Protests against decisions of the Customs Service under 19 U.S.C. 1514;

(2) Claims for refunds of Customs duties or corrections of errors requiring reliquidation pursuant to 19 U.S.C. 1520(c) and (d); and

(3) Interventions in an importer's protest by an exporter or producer of merchandise from a country that is a party to the North American Free Trade Agreement under § 181.115 of the Customs Regulations.

A total of seventeen entities, consisting of importers, brokers, legal firms and sureties, volunteered to participate in the test. Six of these volunteers are currently operational. Eight ports were originally selected for the tests: Baltimore, Buffalo, Chicago, Los Angeles, Laredo, Los Angeles Airport, New York and Philadelphia.

Extension of Test

The purpose of this notice is to inform the public that Customs has extended the test of electronic filing and query of protests. The test is now extended through April 1997. While the test will not be opened to new participants at this time, Customs will consider expanding the number of ports at which electronic protests may be filed. Customs is considering expanding the test to one or more of the following ports: Charleston (South Carolina), Dallas, El Paso, Houston, Seattle, Miami and New Orleans.

Dated: December 24, 1996.

Albert W. Tennant,

Acting Assistant Commissioner, Office of Field Operations.

[FR Doc. 96-33107 Filed 12-30-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4820-02-P

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Agency Information Collection Activities: Proposed Collection; Comment

AGENCY: Veterans Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: As part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) invites the general public and other Federal agencies to comment on this information collection. 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)). Comments should address the accuracy of the burden estimates and ways to

minimize the burden including the use of automated collection techniques or the use of other forms of information technology, as well as other relevant aspects of the information collection.

DATES: Written comments and recommendations on the proposal for the collection of information should be received on or before March 3, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to Nancy J. Kessinger, Veterans Benefits Administration (20S52), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420. All comments will become a matter of public record and will be summarized in the VBA request for Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval. In this document VBA is soliciting comments concerning the following information collection:

OMB Control Number: 2900-0132.

Title and Form Number: Veteran's Application in Acquiring Specially Adapted Housing or Special Home Adaptation Grant, VA Form 26-4555.

Type of Review: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Need and Uses: The form is used to gather the necessary information to determine the veteran's eligibility to specially adapted housing or the special home adaptation grant.

Current Actions: Title 38, U.S.C., Sections 2101(a) and (b), authorizes VA grants for specially adapted housing and special housing adaptations for disabled veterans. The sections specifically outline those determinations that must be made by the VA before such a grant is approved for a particular veteran. VA Form 26-4555 is used to collect information that is necessary for VBA to meet the requirements.

Affected Public: Individuals or households.

Estimated Annual Burden: 133 hours.

Estimated Average Burden Per Respondent: 10 minutes.

Frequency of Response: On occasion.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 800.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or copies of the form should be directed to Department of Veterans Affairs, Attn: Nancy J. Kessinger, Veterans Benefits Administration (20S52), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420, Telephone (202) 273-7079 or FAX (202) 275-4884.

Dated: December 16, 1996.

By direction of the Secretary:

Donald L. Neilson,

Director, Information Management Service.

[FR Doc. 96-33082 Filed 12-30-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8320-01-P