

to the authorities, a report should be generated that includes the following:

(1) An analysis of the threat of fuel tank explosion due to internal and external tank ignition sources for the major fuel system designs making up the transport fleet, including transport airplanes with heat sources adjacent to or within the fuel tanks. The SAFER data presented to the FAA in 1978, which includes evaluation of fuel tank safety in both operational and post crash conditions, should be used as a starting point for determining the level of safety.

(2) An analysis of various means of reducing or eliminating exposure to operation of transport airplane fuel tanks with explosive fuel air mixtures (e.g. inerting, cooling of lower center tank surfaces, combination of cooling and modified fuel properties, etc.) or eliminating the resultant hazard if ignition does occur (installation of selective/voided/full tank reticulating foam, explosion suppression systems). Technical discussion of the feasibility, including cost/benefit analysis, of implementing each of the options on a fleet retrofit, current production, and new type design airplanes should also be provided.

(3) An analysis of the cost/benefit of modified fuel properties that reduce exposure to explosive vapors within fuel tanks. The FAA has asked industry through the American Petroleum Institute to provide pertinent information on fuel properties. The degree of modification to fuel properties necessary to eliminate or significantly reduce exposure to explosive fuel tank ullage spaces in fleet operation must be determined by the group. Factors that may enhance the benefits of modified fuels, such as cooling provisions incorporated to reduce fuel tank temperatures, should be considered. Cost information for the various options should be developed. Information regarding the effects of modified fuel properties on airplane operations, such as engine air/ground starting at low temperatures, maintenance impact, emissions and fuel freeze point, should be analyzed by the group and be provided.

(4) Review comments to the April 3, 1997, **Federal register** notice (62 FR 16014) and any additional information such that validated cost benefit data of a certifiable system is provided for the various options proposed by commenters. This information will be used in preparing regulatory action.

**Note:** In many cases specific cost data provided in the comments to the notice was competition sensitive; therefore the ARAC group should contact commenters directly and request participation in the group.

(5) Recommended objective regulatory actions that will eliminate, significantly reduce or control the hazards associated with explosive fuel air mixtures in all transport airplane fuel tanks to the extent that there could not be a catastrophic event.

In addition to the above task, the working group should support the FAA in evaluation of application of the proposed regulation to the various types of transport airplanes (turbopropeller, business jets, large transports, and other turbine-powered aircraft types which may be affected by a change in fuel properties/availability) and any impact on small businesses.

This activity will be tasked for a 6-month time limit to complete the task defined above. The FAA will consider the recommendations produced by ARAC and initiate future FAA regulatory action. However, if the group is unable to provide the FAA with proposed regulatory language within this time period, the FAA will initiate rulemaking independently. Participants of the ARAC should be prepared to participate on a full-time basis for a 6-month period if necessary.

#### **ARAC Acceptance of Task**

ARAC has accepted this task and has chosen to assign it to a new Fuel Tank Harmonization Working Group. The new working group will serve as staff to the ARAC Executive Committee to assist ARAC in the analysis of the assigned task. Working group recommendations must be reviewed and approved by ARAC. If ARAC accepts the working group's recommendations, it will forward them to the FAA as ARAC recommendations.

The Fuel Tank Harmonization Working Group should coordinate with other harmonization working groups, organizations, and specialists as appropriate. The working group will identify to ARAC the need for additional new working groups when existing groups do not have the appropriate expertise to address certain tasks.

#### **Working Group Activity**

The Fuel Tank Harmonization Working Group is expected to comply with the procedures adopted by ARAC. As part of the procedures, the working group is expected to:

1. Recommend a work plan for completion of the task, including the rationale supporting such a plan, for consideration at the ARAC Executive Committee meeting held following publication of this notice.
2. Give a detailed conceptual presentation of the proposed

recommendations, prior to proceeding with the work stated in item 3 below.

3. Draft a report and/or any other collateral documents the working group determines to be appropriate.

4. Provide a status report at each meeting of the ARAC Executive Committee.

#### **Participation in the Working Group**

The Fuel Tank Harmonization Working Group will be composed of experts having an interest in the assigned task. A working group member need not be a representative of a member of the full committee.

An individual who has expertise in the subject matter and wishes to become a member of the working group should write to the person listed under the caption **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** expressing that desire, describing his or her interest in the tasks, and stating the expertise he or she would bring to the working group. All requests to participate must be received no later than February 2, 1998. The requests will be reviewed by the ARAC chair, the executive director, and the working group chair, and the individuals will be advised whether or not the request can be accommodated.

The Secretary of Transportation has determined that the formation and use of ARAC are necessary and in the public interest in connection with the performance of duties imposed on the FAA by law.

Meetings of the ARAC Executive Committee will be open to the public. Meetings of the Fuel Tank Harmonization Working Group will not be open to the public, except to the extent that individuals with an interest and expertise are selected to participate. No public announcement of working group meetings will be made.

Issued in Washington, DC, on January 20, 1998.

**Joseph A. Hawkins,**

*Executive Director, Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee.*

[FR Doc. 98-1743 Filed 1-21-98; 1:48 pm]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-M

#### **DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

##### **Surface Transportation Board**

[STB Finance Docket No. 33540]

##### **Blue Mountain Railroad, Inc.— Trackage Rights Exemption—Union Pacific Railroad Company**

Union Pacific Railroad Company (UP) will agree to grant local trackage rights to Blue Mountain Railroad, Inc. (BMR) between: (1) UP milepost 210.0 at

Juniper, OR, and UP milepost 218.0 at Wallula Heights, WA; and (2) UP milepost 0.0 at Wallula, WA, and UP milepost 2.0 near Attilia, WA, a total distance of 10 miles. BMR will be permitted to provide local switching service only to Boise Cascade Corporation, Ponderosa Fibers, and WATCO, Inc., at Wallula, WA.

The transaction is expected to be consummated on or shortly after January 15, 1998, the effective date of the exemption.

As a condition to this exemption, any employees affected by the trackage rights will be protected by the conditions imposed in *Norfolk and Western Ry. Co.—Trackage Rights—BN*, 354 I.C.C. 605 (1978), as modified in *Mendocino Coast Ry., Inc.—Lease and Operate*, 360 I.C.C. 653 (1980).

This notice is filed under 49 CFR 1180.2(d)(7). If the notice contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void *ab initio*. Petitions to revoke the exemption under 49 U.S.C. 10502(d) may be filed at any time. The filing of a petition to revoke will not automatically stay the transaction.

An original and 10 copies of all pleadings, referring to STB Finance Docket No. 33540, must be filed with the Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Unit, 1925 K Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20423-0001. In addition, a copy of each pleading must be served on: Karl Morell, Ball Janik LLP, Suite 225, 1455 F Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20005.

Decided: January 15, 1998.

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

Vernon A. Williams,  
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 98-1638 Filed 1-22-98; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Surface Transportation Board

[STB Finance Docket No. 33474]

#### Iowa Interstate Railroad, Ltd.—Lease and Operation Exemption—Union Pacific Railroad Company

**AGENCY:** Surface Transportation Board.

**ACTION:** Notice of Exemption.

**SUMMARY:** Under 49 U.S.C. 10502, the Board exempts from the requirements of 49 U.S.C. 10902 the lease by Iowa Interstate Railroad, Ltd. (IAIS) and operation of 6.4 miles of railroad owned by Union Pacific Railroad Company between milepost 358.568 at Des Moines, IA, and milepost 365.0 at West

Des Moines, IA, in Polk County, IA, subject to labor protective conditions.

**DATES:** The exemption will be effective 60 days after IAIS certifies to the Board that it has posted at the workplace of the employees on the affected line, and served on the national offices of the labor unions with employees on the affected line, a notice of the transaction, setting forth the types and numbers of jobs expected to be available, the terms of employment and principles of employee selection, and the line that is to be leased. Petitions to stay must be filed by February 23, 1998. Petitions to reopen must be filed by March 16, 1998.<sup>1</sup>

**ADDRESSES:** An original and 10 copies of all pleadings referring to STB Finance Docket No. 33474 must be filed with the Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Unit, 1925 K Street, NW., Washington, DC 20423-0001; in addition, a copy of all pleadings must be served on petitioner's representative: T. Scott Bannister, 1300 Des Moines Building, 405-6th Avenue, Des Moines, IA 50309.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Joseph H. Dettmar (202) 565-1600. [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., 1925 K Street, N.W., Suite 210, Washington, DC 20006. Telephone: (202) 289-4357. [Assistance for the hearing impaired is available through TDD services (202) 565-1695.]

Decided: January 12, 1998.

By the Board, Chairman Morgan and Vice Chairman Owen.

Vernon A. Williams,  
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 98-1637 Filed 1-22-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915-00-P

## UNITED STATES INFORMATION AGENCY

### Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

**AGENCY:** United States Information Agency.

**ACTION:** Submission for OMB Review; comment request.

**SUMMARY:** Under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35), this notice announces that the following information collection activity has been forwarded to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and comment. USIA is requesting approval of an information collection entitled "Applications for Administrative and Teaching Exchanges/Seminars Abroad" under OMB control number 3116-0181 which is scheduled to expire on February 28, 1998. 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 the program is conducted pursuant to the mandate given to the United States Information Agency under the terms and conditions of the Mutual and Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, P.L. 87-256.

**DATES:** Comments are due on or before February 23, 1998.

**COPIES:** Copies of the Request for Clearance (OMB 83-I), supporting statement, and other documents that have been 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:** Agency Clearance Officer, Ms. Jeannette Giovetti, United States Information Agency, M/AOL, 301 Fourth Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20547, telephone (202) 619-4408, internet address JGiovett@USIA.GOV; and OMB review: Ms. Victoria Wassmer, Officer of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, New Executive Office Building, Docket Library, Room 1002, NEOB, Washington, D.C. 20503, Telephone (202) 395-5871.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** An Agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The **Federal Register** notice with a 60-day comment period soliciting comments on this collection of information was published on November 25, 1997 (vol. 62, no. 227). Public reporting burden for this collection of information (Paper Work Reduction Project: OMB No. 3116-0181) is estimated to average two (2) hours per response. Responses are voluntary and

<sup>1</sup> The due dates for petitions for stay and reopening presuppose that IAIS will promptly certify that the required notice to employees has been given, and that the employees therefore have a reasonable period of time in which to file any petition. Should IAIS be delayed for a significant period of time in making that certification, we will entertain requests to extend the period of time for filing petitions to stay or reopen.