

comment period. In addition to late comments, the FHWA will also continue to file in the docket relevant information which becomes available after the closing date. Interested persons should continue to examine the docket for new material.

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 31136 and 31315; 23 U.S.C. 315; 49 CFR 1.48.

Issued on: September 29, 1999.

Kenneth R. Wykle,

Federal Highway Administrator.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Research and Special Programs Administration

[Docket No. RSPA-99-5143, Notice No. 99-10]

Study of the Applicability of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) or Similar Methodologies to the Transportation of Hazardous Materials

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

ACTION: Notice of public meeting; request for comments.

SUMMARY: This notice advises interested persons of an exploratory meeting with stakeholders in industry, government, and the public to obtain input concerning a study on the applicability of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) or similar methodologies for managing risks posed by hazardous materials transportation. RSPA anticipates that the study will lead to voluntary, "best-practices" risk management techniques applicable to the various parties involved in hazardous materials transportation, and may eventually identify a need for changes to the current regulatory system.

DATES: Public Meeting Date: RSPA's contractor, ICF Consulting, will host the public meeting on November 4-5, 1999. The meeting will be held on November 4 from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. and on November 5 from 8:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Comment Date: Comments or suggestions should be submitted on or before November 30, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Public Meeting: The public meeting will be held at the Transportation Research Board, Green Building, 2001 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C.

Written Comments: Address comments to the Dockets Unit, U.S. Department of Transportation, Room PL

401, 400 Seventh St., SW, Washington, D.C. 20590-0001. Comments should identify the docket and notice numbers (Docket No. RSPA-99-5143; Notice No. 99-10) and be submitted in two copies. Persons wishing to receive confirmation of receipt of their comments should include a self-addressed stamped postcard. Comments may also be submitted to the docket electronically by logging onto the Dockets Management System website at <http://dms.dot.gov>. Click on "Help & Information" to obtain instructions for filing the document electronically. In every case, the comment should refer to the Document number "RSPA-99-5413".

The Dockets Unit is located on the Plaza Level of the Nassif Building at the U.S. Department of Transportation at the above address. Public dockets may be reviewed between the hours of 10 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on Federal holidays. Internet users may access all comments received by the U.S. Department of Transportation by using the Universal Resource Locator (URL) at <http://dms.dot.gov>. An electronic copy of the document may be downloaded using modem and suitable communications software from the Government Printing Office's Electronic Bulletin Board Service at (202) 512-1661.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jean Hoff, ICF Consulting, telephone number (703) 934-3045 or via email at jhoff@icfconsulting.com; or A. Douglas Reeves, Research and Special Programs Administration, telephone number (202) 366-4545 or via email at douglas.reeves@rspa.dot.gov.

For information on facilities or services for individuals with disabilities or to request special assistance at the meeting, contact Scott Holland at (202) 366-0002 as soon as possible.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) system, first developed by the Pillsbury Company in cooperation with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, consists of the following steps: (1) Analyze hazards, (2) identify critical control points, (3) establish preventive measures with critical limits for each control point, (4) establish procedures to monitor critical control points, (5) establish corrective actions to take when monitoring shows that a critical limit has not been met, (6) establish procedures to verify that the system is working properly, and (7) establish effective recordkeeping. While the most

recent experience in broadening the application of the concept occurs with respect to food safety, the HACCP approach may have relevance in other safety systems, including hazardous materials transportation. In addition, other risk management techniques may prove to have potential for adaptation in the latter context.

The Vice President's National Performance Review urged implementation of HACCP based systems to ensure food manufacturers identify points where contamination is likely to occur and implement process controls to prevent it. On December 18, 1995, the Food and Drug Administration published a final rule, effective on December 18, 1997, that requires processors of fish and fishery products to develop HACCP systems for their operations. The Department of Agriculture also has applied this methodology to the meat and poultry industry effective January 26, 1998.

Study Description

RSPA has contracted with ICF Consulting, Fairfax, VA, to study the applicability of HACCP or similar methodologies to the transportation of hazardous materials. The study encompasses two overriding goals: (1) To examine the risk management aspects of hazardous materials transportation to determine how HACCP or similar methodologies might play a role, and (2) To undertake one or two pilot applications of HACCP or similar methodologies to better understand their practical applicability and usefulness in promoting the safe transportation of hazardous materials. Performance of the contract will be over a one-year period.

The work being performed by ICF Consulting for RSPA consists of the following tasks, which RSPA expects may be refined as efforts proceed and as a result of public input:

(1) *Exploratory Meeting.* Conduct an open meeting with stakeholders in industry, government, and the public to solicit ideas, input, and support.

(2) *Current System Evaluation.* Characterize elements of hazardous materials transportation that involve hazard analysis and generically identify control points within the program. Perform this task from the perspective of the various participants: industry (shippers, carriers, and associations), government (regulators and emergency response personnel), and the public. Look at variations depending on mode of transportation and materials involved. Compare on-going programs and efforts, including those of the Chemical Manufacturers Association

(Distribution Code) and the nuclear industry. Assess the degree of coverage of these efforts.

(3) *Structural Definition.* Define a theoretical structure for HACCP or similar methodologies relative to hazardous materials transportation. Determine what types of data are necessary to support any methodology developed. Catalog the sources and types of currently available data. Identify data that might need to be developed or collected. Describe performance measures that could be used in conjunction with such methodologies. Develop models for the application of concepts in the various segments of the hazardous material transportation system. Theoretical examples of its use might include a framework for carrier analysis of undeclared hazardous materials in air transportation and a model of regulated medical waste from the standpoint of a shipper.

(4) *Panel of Experts.* Convene a panel of experts to evaluate and help refine concepts. Analyze significant incidents in recent years where changes or decisions at one or more of a series of control points might have prevented the incidents or mitigated effects. Identify elements of greatest risk in the current hazardous material transportation system where use of HACCP or similar methodologies might be beneficial.

(5) *Pilot Applications.* Seek out industry participants and use the models developed in one or two prototype real-world applications for hazardous materials transportation.

(6) *Guidebook.* Complete a guidebook on methodologies developed in the course of this study. Include a series of examples of how concepts can be applied in various situations. To the extent possible, work with industry in completing a series of actual practical demonstrations based on these examples.

(7) *Implementation Strategy.* Evaluate how HACCP or similar methodologies adapted to hazardous materials transportation can best be employed. Should it be offered as a guideline and used voluntarily? Should it be required by regulation in certain instances? What are the advantages and disadvantages of each approach?

(Note that Task 6 and Task 7 are optional and a decision on whether to proceed with these will be made upon the completion of previous tasks.)

Objectives

The objectives of the exploratory meeting include:

(1) Informing stakeholders on the purpose and the importance of this project to RSPA;

(2) Educating participants about the HACCP concept;

(3) Identifying other risk management tools besides HACCP that might be considered;

(4) Enumerating major issues that need to be resolved before developing an approach;

(5) Developing a framework for Task 2 analysis and the identification of hazards and critical control points from the perspective of each of the major stakeholder segments B industry, government, and the public;

(6) Identifying potential pilot applications; and

(7) Obtaining recommendations for the Panel of Experts.

Meeting Agenda

The November 4 session will cover general information and objectives. The November 5 session will consist of workshops addressing specific topics. The meeting will be structured so that a balanced group of stakeholders are the primary participants. Those wishing to make a short presentation on industry segment or government risk management programs on November 4 or those wishing to participate in the workshops on November 5 should contact Jean Hoff, ICF Consulting, telephone number (703) 934-3045 or via email at jhoff@icfconsulting.com, as far in advance of the meeting as possible. The entire meeting is open for observation without prior arrangement. The latest version of the agenda for this exploratory meeting also may be obtained by contacting Jean Hoff.

Comments on RSPA's overall approach to the area or on specifics that should be considered in conjunction with what is developed at the exploratory meeting are welcome.

Alan I. Roberts,

Associate Administrator for Hazardous Materials Safety.

[FR Doc. 99-26395 Filed 10-7-99; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Docket No. MC-F-20953]

Gonzalez, Inc., d/b/a Golden State Transportation Company—Merger—Los Rapiidos, Inc., d/b/a Crucero

AGENCY: Surface Transportation Board.

ACTION: Notice tentatively approving finance transaction.

SUMMARY: Gonzalez, Inc., d/b/a Golden State Transportation Company (Golden State or applicant), a motor carrier of passengers, has filed an application under 49 U.S.C. 14303 for the acquisition by merger of its affiliate, Los Rapiidos, Inc., d/b/a Crucero (Los Rapiidos), also a motor carrier of passengers. Persons wishing to oppose the application must follow the rules at 49 CFR 1182.5 and 1182.8. The Board has tentatively approved the transaction, and, if no opposing comments are timely filed, this notice will be the final Board action.

DATES: Comments must be filed by November 22, 1999. Applicant may file a reply by December 7, 1999. If no comments are filed by November 22, 1999, this notice is effective on that date.

ADDRESSES: Send an original and 10 copies of any comments referring to STB Docket No. MC-F-20953 to: Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Unit, 1925 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20423-0001. In addition, send one copy of any comments to applicant's representative: Fritz R. Kahn, Suite 750 West, 1100 New York Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20005-3934.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Beryl Gordon, (202) 565-1600. [TDD for the hearing impaired: (202) 565-1695.]

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Golden State is a regular-route regional passenger carrier operating principally in the Southwest pursuant to authority granted in Docket No. MC-173837.¹ Los Rapiidos is a regular-route regional passenger carrier operating in the Southwest pursuant to authority granted in Docket No. MC-293638.² According to applicant, the operations of the two bus lines to some extent have duplicated but in larger measure have complemented each other, with Golden State's operations directed at the domestic market and Los Rapiidos specializing in the international cross-border market with Mexico.

Pursuant to a merger agreement, Los Rapiidos will be merged into Golden State, with Golden State being the surviving corporation. Golden State will continue to be managed by its president, Mr. Antonio Gonzalez. By application thereafter to be filed with the Federal Highway Administration, the operating authority held by Los Rapiidos is expected to be transferred to, and be

¹ Golden State is authorized to operate in Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Texas, and Washington.

² Los Rapiidos is authorized to operate in Arizona and California.