

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**Federal Railroad Administration**

[Docket No. FRA-2012-0033]

Notice of Intent To Grant a Buy America Waiver to the Rhode Island Department of Transportation and the National Railroad Passenger Corporation for the Purchase of Two Turnouts and One Crossover

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

ACTION: Notice of intent to grant Buy America waiver.

SUMMARY: FRA is issuing this notice to advise the public that it intends to grant the Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) and the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak), a waiver from FRA's Buy America requirement under 49 U.S.C. 24405(a)(2)(B) for the purchase of one No. 20 RH 136RE Turnout, one No. 20 LH 136RE Turnout, and one No. 20 LH Crossover 136RE (Turnouts and Crossover) manufactured by VAE Nortrak North America, Inc. at its plant in Birmingham, Alabama, for use in the Kingston Track Capacity and Platform Improvements Project (Kingston Project). Nortrak will manufacture the Turnouts and Crossover at its plant in Birmingham, Alabama. The Turnouts and Crossover will contain four components (ZUI-60 steel left and right switch point rail sections and Schwihag roller assemblies and plates) not produced in the U.S. The roller assemblies and plates are manufactured in Switzerland, and the ZUI-60 steel switch point rail sections are manufactured in Austria. The total amount of foreign material under this waiver request amounts to approximately \$126,000. The foreign material comprises approximately 8 percent of the Turnouts' \$350,000 cost or approximately \$56,000 and 10 percent of the Crossover's \$700,000 cost or approximately \$70,000. FRA believes a waiver is appropriate under 49 U.S.C. 24405(a)(2)(B) for the ZUI-60 steel switch point rail sections and roller assemblies and plates because domestically-produced components meeting the specific needs of RIDOT and Amtrak are not currently produced in the U.S.

DATES: Written comments on FRA's determination to grant RIDOT's and Amtrak's Buy America waiver request should be provided to the FRA on or before July 6, 2015.

ADDRESSES: Please submit your comments by one of the following

means, identifying your submissions by docket number FRA-2012-0033. All electronic submissions must be made to the U.S. Government electronic site at <http://www.regulations.gov>. Commenters should follow the instructions below for mailed and hand-delivered comments.

(1) *Web site:* <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments on the U.S. Government electronic docket site;

(2) *Fax:* (202) 493-2251;

(3) *Mail:* U.S. Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Docket Operations, M-30, Room W12-140, Washington, DC 20590-0001; or

(4) *Hand Delivery:* Room W12-140 on the first floor of the West Building, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC 20590, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

Instructions: All submissions must make reference to the "Federal Railroad Administration" and include docket number FRA-2012-0033. Due to security procedures in effect since October 2001, mail received through the U.S. Postal Service may be subject to delays. Parties making submissions responsive to this notice should consider using an express mail firm to ensure the prompt filing of any submissions not filed electronically or by hand. Note that all submissions received, including any personal information therein, will be posted without change or alteration to <http://www.regulations.gov>. For more information, you may review DOT's complete Privacy Act Statement in the **Federal Register** published on April 11, 2000 (65 FR 19477), or visit <http://www.regulations.gov>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. John Johnson, Attorney-Advisor, FRA Office of Chief Counsel, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Mail Stop 25, Washington, DC 20590, (202) 493-0078, John.Johnson@dot.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The letter granting RIDOT's and Amtrak's request is quoted below:

Mr. Bernard Reynolds
Vice President and Chief Procurement Officer
National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak)
60 Massachusetts Avenue NE
Washington, D.C.

Mr. Michael Lewis
Director
Rhode Island Department of Transportation

Two Capitol Hill
Providence, RI 02903

Re: Request for Waiver of Buy America Requirement

Dear Mr. Reynolds and Mr. Lewis:

On January 26, 2015, the Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) and the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak) requested a waiver from FRA's Buy America requirement to purchase one (1) No. 20 RH 136RE turnout, one (1) No. 20 LH 136RE Turnout, and one (1) No. 20 LH Crossover 136RE (Turnouts and Crossover) manufactured by VAE Nortrak North America, Inc. (Nortrak) for use in the Kingston Track Capacity and Platform Improvements Project (Kingston Project). Nortrak will manufacture the Turnouts and Crossover at its plant in Birmingham, Alabama, but the Turnouts and Crossover will contain several components (ZUI-60 steel left and right switch point rail sections and Schwihag roller assemblies and plates) not produced in the United States. The total amount of foreign material is approximately \$126,000. For the reasons set forth below, FRA is granting a waiver for the purchase of the Turnouts and Crossover.

FRA believes a waiver is appropriate under 49 U.S.C. 24405(a)(2)(B) for the ZUI-60 steel switch point rail sections and Schwihag roller assemblies and plates because domestically-produced components meeting the specific needs of RIDOT and Amtrak for this application are not currently "produced in sufficient and reasonably available amount or are not of a satisfactory quality."

Amtrak has conducted significant market research to locate 100 percent compliant turnouts. Further, Nortrak has advised Amtrak that it is in the process of designing 100% domestic replacements for the Schwihag rollers and plates, and expects to have them fully tested and approved in one to two years. However, Nortrak will not complete the testing and approval process in time for use in the Kingston Project. In addition, Amtrak issued a competitive solicitation for the Turnouts and Crossover and received no Buy America compliant bids.

On January 30, 2015, FRA provided public notice of this waiver request and a 15-day opportunity for comment on its Web site. FRA also sent an email notice to over 6,000 persons who have signed up for Buy America notices through "GovDelivery." See <http://www.fra.dot.gov/Page/P0782>. FRA received no comments.

This waiver applies only to the ZUI-60 steel switch point rail sections and

Schwihag roller assemblies and plates used in the Turnouts and Crossover installed in the Kingston Project. Pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 24405(a)(4), FRA will publish this letter granting Amtrak's and RIDOT's request in the **Federal Register** and provide notice of such finding and an opportunity for public comment after which this waiver will become effective.

Questions about this letter can be directed to, John Johnson, Attorney-Advisor, at John.Johnson@dot.gov or (202) 493-0078.

Sincerely,

Sarah Feinberg
Acting Administrator

Issued in Washington, DC, on June 22, 2015.

Sarah L. Inderbitzin,
Deputy Chief Counsel.

[FR Doc. 2015-16064 Filed 6-30-15; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-06-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Maritime Administration

[Docket Number MARAD-2015-0086]

Maritime Environmental and Technical Assistance (META) Program Forum

AGENCY: Maritime Administration, Department of Transportation.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Maritime Administration (MARAD), in cooperation with the Maryland Environmental Resource Center, will hold an open forum to solicit individual input to MARAD on the Agency's Maritime Environmental and Technical Assistance (META) Program and key environmental issues facing maritime transportation. Input received will enable the Agency to assess the effectiveness and utility of the Program thus far, and will inform MARAD and Department of Transportation decision making regarding possible future research, development and demonstration projects.

DATES: The forum will be held on Wednesday, July 22, 2015, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. EDT.

ADDRESSES: The event will be held at the Conference Center of the Maritime Institute of Technology and Graduate Studies (MITAGS), 692 Maritime Blvd., Linthicum Heights, Maryland 21090 (Telephone 866-656-5568). The facility has overnight accommodations. For those interested in reserving MITAGS accommodations please feel free to call 410-859-5700.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: You may contact Daniel Yuska, Office of Environment, U.S. Department of Transportation, Maritime Administration, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC 20590. Telephone (202) 366-0714. You may send electronic mail to Daniel.Yuska@dot.gov.

For access to the docket, go to <http://www.regulations.gov> at any time or to Room W12-140 of the Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC 20590, between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal Holidays. To view the docket electronically, type the docket number "MARAD-2015-0086" in the "SEARCH" box and click "Search." Click and Open Docket Folder on the line associated with this forum.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The META program seeks to foster collaborative efforts among Federal agencies, academia, industry and the public to address critical marine transportation environmental issues. Among the areas of current focus are aquatic invasive species, ballast water and underwater hull growth, port and vessel air emissions, and alternative fuels and energy technologies. Through META, MARAD supports research, development and demonstration of innovative technologies for practical applications to balance freight, passenger and environmental concerns with sustainable solutions. This support includes financial support for research and development activities, and fostering the exchange of information and best practices.

MARAD is holding this forum to provide information on the META concept, gather public input on identifying the key environmental issues on which the META program should focus its activities, and on how MARAD might best structure the program for the future. Specific topics of discussion will include how MARAD might be able to better focus requests for proposals, and how to address various levels of technology readiness.

During the forum, MARAD representatives will explain the META program and discuss current areas of focus and projects, followed by small group discussions. Minutes will be kept of the discussion and posted by MARAD.

MARAD will release further details on this public forum, including times and agenda, on its Web page at <http://marad.dot.gov> and on the DOT docket as they become available.

Privacy Act Statement

All input received at the forum will be recorded and attributable to the individual commenter and where appropriate on behalf of an association, business, labor union, etc. This information will be placed on the DOT public docket. You may review DOT's complete Privacy Act Statement in the **Federal Register** published on April 11, 2000 (65 FR 19476, 04/11/2011) or at <http://www.dot.gov/privacy.html>.

Authority: 49 CFR 1.93.

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Dated: June 25, 2015.

By Order of the Maritime Administrator.

T. Mitchell Hudson, Jr.,
Secretary, Maritime Administration.

[FR Doc. 2015-16180 Filed 6-30-15; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-81-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Maritime Administration

Voluntary Intermodal Sealift Agreement/Joint Planning Advisory Group Table Top Exercise

AGENCY: Maritime Administration, Department of Transportation.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Voluntary Intermodal Sealift Agreement (VISA) program requires a notice of the time, place, and nature of each Joint Planning Advisory Group (JPAG) meeting be published in the **Federal Register**. The full text of the VISA program, including these requirements, is published in **Federal Register**/Vol. 79, No. 209, 64462-64470, dated October 29, 2014.

On June 2-3, 2015, the Maritime Administration and the U.S. Transportation Command co-hosted the 2015 Voluntary Intermodal Sealift Agreement Joint Planning Advisory Group Table-Top Exercise at Scott Air Force Base, Illinois. Participants of the Table Top Exercise (TTX) were required to possess a secret clearance due to the classified nature of the meeting and attendance was by invitation only. The Maritime Administrator invited VISA carriers, Maritime Labor Unions, Longshoreman Labor and designated U.S. Strategic Seaport personnel. In addition, representatives from the Department of Transportation, the Maritime Administration and the Department of Defense (DOD) to include the Office of the Secretary of Defense, U.S. Transportation Command, the Military Sealift Command and the Surface Deployment and Distribution Command attended the meeting.