

Dated: April 18, 2016.

John F. Kerry,

Secretary of State.

[FR Doc. 2016-11281 Filed 5-11-16; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4710-42-P

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

[Docket No. AB 290 (Sub-No. 381X)]

Norfolk Southern Railway Company— Abandonment Exemption—in Hamilton County, Ohio

On April 22, 2016, Norfolk Southern Railway Company (NSR) filed with the Surface Transportation Board (Board) a petition under 49 U.S.C. 10502 for exemption from the prior approval requirements of 49 U.S.C. 10903 to abandon approximately 4.10 miles of rail line extending from milepost CT 3.7 to milepost CT 7.8 in Hamilton County, Ohio (the Line). The Line traverses U.S. Postal Zip Codes 45207, 45212, 45208, 45209, 45226, and 45227.

According to NSR, no traffic has moved over the Line in more than five years. NSR further states that there is no potential for new traffic. NSR seeks to abandon the Line and sell the property to the City of Cincinnati (City) for a public redevelopment project. NSR states that the City is undertaking a plan that would reduce/reroute vehicular traffic, create greenways, and provide alternative modal access to five major development sites, including sites at Xavier University and near Uptown. NSR asserts that the City would take ownership of, and assume responsibility for, the safety and maintenance of the 10 bridges on the Line.

In addition to an exemption from the provisions of 49 U.S.C. 10903, NSR also seeks an exemption from the offer of financial assistance (OFA) procedures of 49 U.S.C. 10904. In support, NSR states that the Line is needed for a public purpose, as it is of critical significance to the City's redevelopment plans. NSR further asserts that there is no overriding public need for continued freight rail service. NSR's request for exemption from § 10904 will be addressed in the final decision.

According to NSR, the Line does not contain federally granted rights-of-way. Any documentation in NSR's possession will be made available promptly to those requesting it.

The interest of railroad employees will be protected by the conditions set forth in *Oregon Short Line Railroad—Abandonment Portion Goshen Branch Between Firth & Ammon, in Bingham & Bonneville Counties, Idaho*, 360 I.C.C. 91 (1979).

By issuing this notice, the Board is instituting an exemption proceeding pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 10502(b). A final decision will be issued by August 10, 2016.

Any OFA under 49 CFR 1152.27(b)(2) to subsidize continued rail service will be due by August 19, 2016, or 10 days after service of a decision granting the petition for exemption, whichever occurs first. Each OFA must be accompanied by a \$1,600 filing fee. *See* 49 CFR 1002.2(f)(25).

All interested persons should be aware that, following abandonment, the Line may be suitable for other public use, including interim trail use. Any request for a public use condition under 49 CFR 1152.28 or for interim trail use/rail banking under 49 CFR 1152.29 will be due no later than June 1, 2016. Each interim trail use request must be accompanied by a \$300 filing fee. *See* 49 CFR 1002.2(f)(27). However, NSR states that, because it seeks abandonment to allow the City to purchase the land for a public use, NSR is unwilling to negotiate interim trail use/rail banking.

All filings in response to this notice must refer to Docket No. AB 290 (Sub-No. 381X) and must be sent to: (1) Surface Transportation Board, 395 E Street SW., Washington, DC 20423-0001; and (2) William A Mullins, Baker & Miller PLLC, 2401 Pennsylvania Ave. NW., Suite 300, Washington, DC 20037. Replies to the petition are due on or before June 1, 2016.

Persons seeking further information concerning abandonment procedures may contact the Board's Office of Public Assistance, Governmental Affairs, and Compliance at (202) 245-0238 or refer to the full abandonment or discontinuance regulations at 49 CFR part 1152. Questions concerning environmental issues may be directed to the Board's Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) at (202) 245-0305. Assistance for the hearing impaired is available through the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339.

An environmental assessment (EA) (or environmental impact statement (EIS), if necessary) prepared by OEA will be served upon all parties of record and upon any agencies or other persons who commented during its preparation. Other interested persons may contact OEA to obtain a copy of the EA (or EIS). EAs in abandonment proceedings normally will be made available within 60 days of the filing of the petition. The deadline for submission of comments on the EA generally will be within 30 days of its service.

Board decisions and notices are available on our Web site at "WWW.STB.DOT.GOV."

Decided: May 9, 2016.

By the Board, Rachel D. Campbell,
Director, Office of Proceedings.

Jeffrey Herzig,

Clearance Clerk.

[FR Doc. 2016-11189 Filed 5-11-16; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee—New Task

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of a new task assignment for the Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee (ARAC).

SUMMARY: The FAA has assigned the Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee (ARAC) a new task to provide recommendations regarding the certification of persons engaged in operations involving the loading of special cargo. Assignment of this task is in response to National Transportation Safety Board Recommendation A-15-014 which recommended that the FAA create a certification for personnel responsible for the loading, restraint, and documentation of special cargo loads on transport-category airplanes. This notice informs the public of the new ARAC activity and solicits membership for the new Loadmaster Certification Working Group.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Stephen Grota Cargo Focus Team, AFS-340 Federal Aviation Administration, 950 L'Enfant Plaza SW., 5th Floor, Washington, DC 20024, stephen.grota@faa.gov, phone number (781) 238-7528.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

ARAC Acceptance of Task

As a result of its March 23, 2016, ARAC meeting, the ARAC accepted this tasking to establish the Loadmaster Certification Working Group. The Loadmaster Certification Working Group will serve as staff to the ARAC and provide advice and recommendations on the assigned task. The ARAC will review and accept the recommendation report and will submit it to the FAA.

Background

The FAA established the ARAC to provide information, advice, and recommendations on aviation related

issues that could result in rulemaking to the FAA Administrator, through the Associate Administrator for Aviation Safety.

On April 29, 2013, a Boeing 747-400 BCF operated by an air carrier conducting all-cargo operations crashed shortly after takeoff from Bagram Air Base, Bagram, Afghanistan. The airplane was destroyed from impact forces and post-crash fire. The flight was a supplemental operation conducted under part 121 of Title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) and was being conducted under a multimodal contract with the US Transportation Command. The intended destination for the flight was Dubai World Central—Al Maktoum International Airport, Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

The airplane's cargo included five mine-resistant ambush-protected (MRAP) vehicles secured onto pallets with shoring. Two vehicles were 12-ton MRAP all-terrain vehicles (M-ATVs) and three were 18-ton Cougars. These vehicles were considered special cargo because they could not be placed in unit load devices (ULDs) and restrained in the airplane using the locking capabilities of the airplane's main deck cargo handling system. Instead, the vehicles were secured to centerline-loaded floating pallets and restrained to the airplane's main deck using tie-down straps. Special cargo is defined in appendix C of AC 120-85A, Air Cargo Operations, as "cargo not contained in a ULD certified for the airplane cargo loading system (CLS) or not enclosed in a cargo compartment certified for bulk loading. This type of cargo requires special handling and securing/restraining procedures."

During takeoff, the airplane immediately climbed steeply, then descended in a manner consistent with an aerodynamic stall. The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigation found strong evidence that at least one of the rear MRAP vehicles moved aft into the tail section of the airplane, damaging hydraulic systems and horizontal stabilizer components and making it impossible for the flightcrew to maintain pitch control of the airplane. The NTSB determined that the probable cause of this accident was the air carrier's inadequate procedures for restraining special cargo loads, which resulted in the loadmaster's improper restraint of the cargo, which moved aft and damaged hydraulic systems numbers 1 and 2 and horizontal stabilizer drive mechanism components, rendering the airplane uncontrollable (NTSB Aircraft Accident Report NTSB/AAR-15/01 PB2015-104951).

As a result of this accident, the NTSB issued Safety Recommendation A-15-14 which recommended, in part, that the FAA "[c]reate a certification for personnel responsible for the loading, restraint, and documentation of special cargo loads on transport-category airplanes." Currently, there is no certified position for the loading of special cargo specified in the FAA's regulations. Therefore, there are no specific individual standards or training requirements to ensure adherence to operational limitations. Additionally, there is no specific FAA oversight of these personnel outside of that normally conducted of a certificate holder's operations. The FAA believes that such oversight is especially critical when special cargo is carried in an aircraft.

Persons performing special cargo loading functions typically prepare and validate the accuracy of aircraft load manifests and ensure the aircraft is loaded according to an approved schedule that ensures the aircraft's center of gravity is within approved limits. Proper performance of these functions is critical to ensure the flight characteristics of an aircraft are not adversely affected and that its structural limitations are not exceeded.

The Task

The Loadmaster Certification Working Group is tasked to:

1. Provide advice and recommendations to the ARAC on whether safety would be enhanced if persons engaged in the loading and supervision of the loading of special cargo, to include the preparation and accuracy of special cargo load plans, be certificated. If the Working Group recommends certification of these persons, it should also provide recommendations regarding which specific operations should require the use of these certificated persons. Additionally, it should also recommend appropriate knowledge, experience, and skill requirements for the issuance of the certificates and appropriate privileges and limitations.

2. Determine the effect of its recommendations on impacted parties.

3. Develop a report containing recommendations based upon its analysis and findings. The report should document both majority and dissenting positions on its recommendations and findings and the rationale for each position. Any disagreements should be documented, including the rationale for each position and the reasons for the disagreement.

In developing this report the Working Group shall familiarize itself with:

1. NTSB Aircraft Accident Report NTSB/AAR-15/01 PB2015-104951 NTSB, with particular attention provided to Safety Recommendation A-15-14.

2. AC 120-85A, Air Cargo Operations.
3. Minutes of the June 30, 2015 B747 Special Cargo Load Meeting.

The working group may be reinstated to assist the ARAC by responding to FAA's questions or concerns after its recommendations have been submitted.

Schedule

The recommendation report should be submitted to the FAA for review and acceptance no later than 24 months from the publication date of this notice in the **Federal Register**.

Working Group Activity

The Loadmaster Certification Working Group must comply with the procedures adopted by the ARAC and:

1. Conduct a review and analysis of the assigned tasks and any other related materials or documents.

2. Draft and submit a work plan for completion of the task, including the rationale supporting such a plan, for consideration by the ARAC.

3. Provide a status report at each ARAC meeting.

4. Draft and submit the recommendation report based on the review and analysis of the assigned tasks.

5. Present the recommendation report at the ARAC meeting.

Participation in the Working Group

The Loadmaster Certification Working Group will be comprised of technical experts having an interest in the assigned task. A working group member need not be a member representative of the ARAC. The FAA would like a wide range of members to ensure all aspects of the tasks are considered in development of the recommendations. The provisions of the August 13, 2014, Office of Management and Budget guidance, "Revised Guidance on Appointment of Lobbyists to Federal Advisory Committees, Boards, and Commissions" (79 FR 47482), continues the ban on registered lobbyists participating on Agency Boards and Commissions if participating in their "individual capacity." The revised guidance now allows registered lobbyists to participate on Agency Boards and Commissions in a "representative capacity" for the "express purpose of providing a committee with the views of a nongovernmental entity, a recognizable group of persons or nongovernmental entities (an industry, sector, labor

unions, or environmental groups, etc.) or state or local government” (For further information, see the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 (LDA) as amended, 2 U.S.C. 1603, 1604, and 1605).

If you wish to become a member of the Loadmaster Certification Working Group, contact the person listed under the caption **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** expressing that desire. Describe your interest in the task and state the expertise you would bring to the working group. The FAA must receive all requests by June 13, 2016. The ARAC and the FAA will review the requests and advise you whether or not your request is approved.

If you are chosen for membership on the working group, you must actively participate in the working group, attend all meetings, and provide written comments when requested. You must devote the resources necessary to support the working group in meeting any assigned deadlines. You must keep your management and those you may represent advised of working group activities and decisions to ensure the proposed technical solutions do not conflict with the position of those you represent. Once the working group has begun deliberations, members will not be added or substituted without the approval of the ARAC Chair, the FAA, including the Designated Federal Officer, and the Working Group Chair.

The Secretary of Transportation determined the formation and use of the ARAC is necessary and in the public interest in connection with the performance of duties imposed on the FAA by law. The ARAC meetings are open to the public. However, meetings of the Loadmaster Certification Working Group are not open to the public, except to the extent individuals with an interest and expertise are selected to participate. The FAA will make no public announcement of working group meetings.

Issued in Washington, DC, on May 4, 2016.

Lirio Liu,

Designated Federal Officer, Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee.

[FR Doc. 2016-11104 Filed 5-11-16; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

Sunshine Act Meetings; Unified Carrier Registration Plan Board of Directors

AGENCY: Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of Unified Carrier Registration Plan Board of Directors Meeting.

TIME AND DATE: The meeting will be held on June 8, 2016, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time.

PLACE: The meetings will be open to the public at the Courtyard Providence Downtown by Marriott, 32 Exchange Terrace at Memorial Blvd., Providence, RI 02903, and via conference call. Those not attending the meetings in person may call 1-877-422-1931, passcode 2855443940, to listen and participate in the meetings.

STATUS: Open to the public.

MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED: The Unified Carrier Registration Plan Board of Directors (the Board) will continue its work in developing and implementing the Unified Carrier Registration Plan and Agreement and to that end, may consider matters properly before the Board.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Avelino Gutierrez, Chair, Unified Carrier Registration Board of Directors at (505) 827-4565.

Issued on: May 6, 2016.

Larry W. Minor,

Associate Administrator, Office of Policy, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration.

[FR Doc. 2016-11312 Filed 5-10-16; 4:15 pm]

BILLING CODE 4910-EX-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Railroad Administration

[Docket Number FRA-2016-0046]

Petition for Waiver of Compliance

In accordance with part 211 of title 49 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), this document provides the public notice that by a document dated April 28, 2016, Union Railroad (UR) petitioned the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) for renewal of a waiver of compliance from certain provisions of the Federal railroad safety regulations contained at 49 CFR part 229—Railroad Locomotive Safety Standards. This regulatory relief was initially granted by FRA in 1980 and is due to expire in 2017 under the “sunset clause” added to 49 CFR 229.19—*Prior waivers*, in 2012. This relief was formerly handled under Docket Number LI-80-24; however FRA has updated the docket numbering system and assigned this petition Docket Number FRA-2016-0046.

The waiver in Docket Number LI-80-24 granted UR relief from the requirement of 49 CFR 229.123—*Pilots,*

snowplows, end plates, that locomotives be equipped with a pilot, snowplow, or end plate extending across both rails for 121 locomotives, 32 of which remain in service. These locomotives are not equipped with a pilot, snowplow, or end plate but have hose boxes or brackets above the rails with open space between. UR states that these locomotives operate over yard and mainline track, within and between three steel mills. The total track length of UR is 20 miles, with three public grade crossings (two with gates and flashers, one with flashers only) and trains are limited to 20 mph. UR reports that there have been no known safety-related incidents or operating difficulties associated with this waiver.

A copy of the petition, as well as any written communications concerning the petition, is available for review online at www.regulations.gov and in person at the U.S. Department of Transportation’s (DOT) Docket Operations Facility, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., W12-140, Washington, DC 20590. The Docket Operations Facility is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal Holidays.

Interested parties are invited to participate in these proceedings by submitting written views, data, or comments. FRA does not anticipate scheduling a public hearing in connection with these proceedings since the facts do not appear to warrant a hearing. If any interested party desires an opportunity for oral comment, they should notify FRA, in writing, before the end of the comment period and specify the basis for their request.

All communications concerning these proceedings should identify the appropriate docket number and may be submitted by any of the following methods:

- *Web site:* <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.
- *Fax:* 202-493-2251.
- *Mail:* Docket Operations Facility, U.S. Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., W12-140, Washington, DC 20590.
- *Hand Delivery:* 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Room W12-140, Washington, DC 20590, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal Holidays.

Communications received by June 27, 2016 will be considered by FRA before final action is taken. Comments received after that date will be considered as far as practicable.

Anyone is able to search the electronic form of any written communications and comments received into any of our dockets by the