

transportation needs of certain areas of the country, particularly along the Mexican and Canadian borders and the North-South corridors that serve them, that will facilitate trade resulting from NAFTA. Programs will be considered that are designed to improve the flow of trade and traffic across the borders.

Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS): Consideration is being given to investments in ITS technologies that hold the promise of increasing the carrying capacity and efficiency of our current infrastructure. ITS is expected to increase the capacity of our transportation system at a fraction of the cost of traditional infrastructure building. ITS also is expected to provide substantial safety and environmental benefits. One major element of this program—particularly focused on freight transportation—is the Commercial Vehicles Information System and Networks (CVISN) which will develop standards and protocols to allow freight carriers to electronically exchange information required by regulatory authorities using commercially available communications infrastructure. The goal of the CVISN is to provide greater compatibility of the information systems owned and operated by state/local governments, carriers, and other stakeholders.

Rail-Highway Grade Crossings: The current program under ISTEA will be considered for continuation as part of the reauthorization effort. The program provides funds for rail-highway grade crossing improvements and for the conduct of studies and dissemination of information on better grade crossing designs and construction safety measures that will, in part, improve the safety performance of the freight transportation system.

Implementation of the NAFTA Agreement: We will continue working with our Canadian and Mexican partners to improve the safety, efficiency, and productivity of freight transportation among the three nations while protecting U.S. safety standards, including the improvement of enforcement of cross-border truck safety requirements.

Deploy Global Positioning System for Transportation Purposes: The DOT is the designated lead agency for all Federal civil GPS matters and will coordinate the development and implementation of Federal augmentation measures to the basic GPS for civil transportation applications. We will coordinate activities to minimize cost and duplication. The DOT will work to augment GPS to: improve aviation navigation during adverse weather conditions and increase

airways capacity and efficiency; facilitate railroads' ability to implement positive train control systems increasing safety and capacity; be a component of the Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) reducing congestion and improving railroad grade crossing safety; improve harbor approach and intra-harbor safety nationwide and track movement of tankers through Prince William Sound; improve safety and efficiency of ships moving through the St. Lawrence Seaway and Panama Canal; and more rapidly locate and respond to motor vehicle accidents, hazardous materials spills and vessels in distress.

Pipeline Risk-based Programs: The DOT will continue the examination of gas and hazardous liquid pipeline regulations to incorporate up-to-date technology and to more fully incorporate risk-based factors in the prioritization and selection of safety requirements.

Conclude Additional International Aviation Agreements: We will continue efforts to reach new agreements with other nations that open new and improved opportunities for U.S. airlines in international passenger and air cargo markets, and strengthen and expand the competitive international aviation marketplace.

Shipyards Revitalization Initiative: Assist efforts within the shipbuilding and repair industry to compete internationally by helping firms convert from defense to civilian markets. This includes ensuring fair international competition, improving competitiveness through technology transfer and applied research, eliminating unnecessary regulations, financing ship sales for both export and U.S. flag operations, and assisting in international marketing.

National Dredging Policy: We are implementing the report of the Interagency Working Group on the Dredging Process, by working with Federal and State agencies to resolve impediments to dredging projects that are necessary to maintain shipping channels in the major U.S. ports.

Voluntary Intermodal Sealift Agreement: We will continue development of this program in partnership with U.S. flag carriers and the Department of Defense to achieve agreement from carriers to commit intermodal sealift capacity in time of war or national emergency and to maximize DOD's use of the U.S. maritime industry's intermodal capacity.

Issued in Washington, DC on December 27, 1996.

Federico Peña,
Secretary of Transportation.
[FR Doc. 97-139 Filed 1-3-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-62-P

Federal Aviation Administration

Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee Meeting on Transport Airplane and Engine Issues

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The FAA is issuing this notice to advise the public of a meeting of the Federal Aviation Administration's Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee to discuss transport airplane and engine issues.

DATES: The meeting will be held on January 22 and 23, 1997 beginning at 8:30 a.m. on January 22. Arrange for oral presentations by January 15, 1997.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at Allied Signal Engines, 111 South 34th, Phoenix, Arizona 85034 in the Kachina Conference Room.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jackie Smith, Office of Rulemaking, FAA, 800 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20591, telephone (202) 267-9682.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Pursuant to section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463; 5 U.S.C. App. II), notice is given of a meeting of the Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee to be held January 22 and 23, 1997 at Allied Signal Engines, 111 South 34th, Phoenix, Arizona.

The agenda for the meeting will include:

- Opening remarks.
- FAA Report.
- Joint Aviation Authorities Report.
- Review Action Items.
- Executive Committee (EXCOM) Report.
- Significant Regulatory Differences Discussion.
- Flight Test Harmonization Working Group (HWG) Report.
- Engine HWG Report and Vote.

Thursday, January 23, 1997

- Powerplant Installation HWG Report.
 - Electromagnetic Effects HWG Report.
- HIRF
—Lightning
- Loads and Dynamics HWG Report and Vote.

- General Structures HWG Report.
- Braking Systems HWG Report.
- Airworthiness Assurance Working Group Report and Vote
 - Systems Design and Analysis (25.1309) HWG Report.
 - Closure

—Action Items

—Schedule for Future Meetings

—Draft Agenda for Next Meeting

The Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee will vote on the following documents during the January 1997 meeting:

- Bird Strike (Engines HWG)
- Repairs (Airworthiness Assurance Working Group)
- Revised Landing Gear Shock Absorption Test Requirements (Loads and Dynamics HWG)

Anyone interested in obtaining a copy of these documents should contact the individual listed under the heading **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

Attendance is open to the interested public, but will be limited to the space available. The public must make arrangements by January 15, 1997, to present oral statements at the meeting. The public may present written statements to the committee at any time by providing 25 copies to the Assistant Executive Director for Transport Airplane and Engine Issues or by bringing the copies to the meeting. In addition, sign and oral interpretation can be made available at the meeting, as well as an assistive listening device, if requested 10 calendar days before the meeting. Arrangements may be made by contacting the person listed under the heading **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

Issued in Washington, DC, on December 30, 1996.

Joseph A. Hawkins,

Executive Director, Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee.

[FR Doc. 97-174 Filed 1-3-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-M

Federal Highway Administration

[FHWA Docket No. 96-49]

Achieving Interoperability With Dedicated Short Range Communication

AGENCY: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice; request for comments.

SUMMARY: With this notice the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is requesting comments on three items of concern relating to the implementation of dedicated short range communication

(DSRC) systems specified in the Intelligent Transportation Systems National Architecture. These issues are as follows:

(1) Should the FHWA require that DSRC systems purchased with Federal-aid highway funds and ITS Federal funds meet draft standard specifications, such as that of the American Society for Testing Materials (ASTM) proposed Draft #6 standard and the Committee for European Normalisation (CEN) draft documents N473, N474, and N505 prior to their formal adoption as industry standards in an effort to reduce the proliferation of non-interoperable systems? Should the FHWA also include message set requirements, such as the Commercial Vehicle Information Systems and Networks (CVISN) Dedicated Short Range Communications Interface Requirements of April 2, 1996 (Johns Hopkins University-Applied Physics Lab)? Should compliance with specific draft standards be required for Commercial Vehicle Operations (CVO) applications only; for both CVO and Electronic Toll and Traffic Management (ETTM) applications; or for CVO, ETTM, and additional applications?

(2) Should the FHWA require that DSRC systems purchased with Federal-aid highway funds and ITS Federal funds meet an escalating interoperability formula? An example would be that first, all CVO applications must be nationally interoperable; second, all new (after specified date) and upgrading electronic toll collection systems and other DSRC applications must be interoperable with CVO applications.

(3) Should a single standard be developed for all applications, or should separate standards be developed with an assumption that trucks and buses, and perhaps other users, would likely require separate technology to perform those functions?

DATES: The FHWA requests comments by February 1, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Submit written, signed comments to FHWA Docket No. 96-49, Room 4232, HCC-10, Office of the Chief Counsel, Federal Highway Administration, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, D.C. 20590. All comments received will be available for examination at the above address from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., e.t., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. Those desiring notification of receipt of comments must include a self-addressed, stamped postcard.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Michael P. Onder, Intelligent Transportation Systems Joint Program

Office, (202) 366-2639; Ms. Beverly M. Russell, Office of Chief Counsel, (202) 366-1355, Federal Highway Administration, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, D.C. 20590. Office hours are from 7:45 a.m. to 4:15, e.t., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

In the 1980's a novel approach to facilitating transportation developed. The dedicated short range communication (DSRC) industry, as it came to be known, utilized radio frequency systems to facilitate hands-off data communication between vehicles and electronic reading devices on the roadside. This application of communications technology to transportation has enabled motorists to pay highway tolls and commercial motor vehicles to clear weigh stations and ports of entry without stopping. The main hardware components of the DSRC system consist of a transponder, or tag, mounted on a vehicle, communicating wirelessly with a roadside reading device. The transponder, or tag, stores at a minimum a unique ID number that is received by the reading device and is matched to a corresponding record on a computer system that identifies the vehicle/container/rolling stock and its associated records. The benefits derived from installation of this new technology reflect a significant return on investment; especially in the toll and fleet management business.

The Department of Transportation's Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) program was established by Congress in the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) (Pub. L. 102-240, 105 Stat. 1914). In the ISTEA, Congress directed the Department to develop and implement standards and protocols to promote widespread use of ITS. See Pub. L. 102-240, § 6053(b), 105 Stat. at 2190 (as codified at 23 U.S.C. 307 note). A precursor to the development of standards has been the formation of a National System Architecture which provides a framework that describes how system components should work and interact. A system architecture addresses how system data flows, how various traffic and traveler information message formats are structured, how electrical interfaces are formed, and which communication system mediums are used for data transmission. The Department began an intensive ITS National Architecture Program in December 1994, and concluded with 29 user services in July, 1996. The 29 user