

MFL signal generation and analysis methods to establish a baseline from which today's tools can be evaluated and tomorrow's advances measured. Then, it will develop improvements to signal analysis methods and verify them through testing under realistic pipeline conditions. Finally, it will build an experience base and defect sets to generalize the results from individual tools and analysis methods to the full range of practical applications.

Task 2 is to evaluate two inspection technologies for detecting stress corrosion cracks. The focus in Task 2 is on electromagnetic techniques that have been developed in recent years and that could be used on or as a modification to existing MFL tools. Three subtasks will evaluate velocity-induced remote-field techniques, remote-field eddy-current techniques, and external techniques for sizing stress corrosion cracks.

A Task 3 is being considered for an option year to the contract. Task 3, if done, will verify the results from Tasks 1 and 2 by tests under realistic pipeline conditions. Task 3 will (1) extend the mechanical damage detection, signal decoupling, and sizing algorithms developed in the basic program to include the effects of pressure, (2) verify the algorithms under pressurized conditions in GRI's 4,700 foot, 24-inch diameter Pipeline Simulation Facility (PSF) flow loop, and (3) evaluate the use of eddy-current techniques for characterizing cold working within mechanical damage.

A drawback of present pig technology is the lack of a reliable pig performance verification procedure that is generally accepted by the pipeline industry and RSPA. The experience gained by the pipeline industry and RSPA with the use of the PSF flow loop in this project will provide a framework to develop procedures for evaluating pig performance. Defect detection reliability is critical if instrumented pigging is to be used as an in-line inspection tool in pipeline industry risk management programs.

The ultimate benefits of the project could be more efficient and cost-effective operations, maintenance programs to monitor and enhance the safety of gas transmission and hazardous liquid pipelines. Pipeline companies will benefit from having access to inspection technologies for detecting critical mechanical damage and stress-corrosion cracks. Inspection tool vendors will benefit by understanding where improvements are beneficial and needed. These benefits will support RSPA's long-range objective of ensuring the safety and

reliability of the gas transmission and hazardous liquid pipeline infrastructure.

Issued in Washington, D.C. on April 15, 1997.

Richard D. Huriaux,

Acting Associate Administrator for Pipeline Safety.

[FR Doc. 97-10196 Filed 4-18-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-60-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Finance Docket No. 33346]

Soo Line Railroad Company— Temporary Trackage Rights Exemption—I&M Rail Link, LLC

I&M Rail Link, LLC (I&M) has agreed to grant temporary local and overhead trackage rights to Soo Line Railroad Company d/b/a/ Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) over I&M's trackage between milepost 123.8 near Comus and milepost 100.5 near Owatonna, in Rice and Steele Counties, MN.

This notice is related to I&M Rail Link, LLC—Acquisition and Operation Exemption—Certain Lines of Soo Line Railroad Company D/B/A/ Canadian Pacific Railway, STB Finance Docket No. 33326 (STB served April 2, 1997). The purpose of the trackage rights is to permit CPR to provide continuous service on the line until I&M commences operations on the line. CPR has submitted a filing in support of the notice. The temporary trackage rights will be effective on April 12, 1997, and will terminate automatically on April 12, 1999.¹

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 it 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.

¹ The Board has previously authorized temporary or limited term trackage rights. Limiting the term of the trackage rights is consistent with the limited scope of the transaction. See, e.g., Union Pacific Railroad Company—Trackage Rights Exemption—Chicago, Central & Pacific Railroad Company, STB Finance Docket No. 32959 (Sub-No. 1) (STB served July 25, 1996).

An original and 10 copies of all pleadings, referring to STB Finance Docket No. 33346, 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 Larry D. Starns, Esq., Leonard, Street and Deinard, 150 South Fifth Street, Minneapolis, MN 55402.

Decided: April 15, 1997.

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

Vernon A. Williams,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 97-10235 Filed 4-18-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915-00-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Finance Docket No. 33388]

CSX Corporation and CSX Transportation, Inc., Norfolk Southern Corporation and Norfolk Southern Railway Company—Control and Operating Leases/Agreements— Conrail Inc. and Consolidated Rail Corporation

AGENCY: Surface Transportation Board, DOT.

ACTION: Decision No. 2; Notice of pre-filing notification and request for comments.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to 49 CFR 1180.4(b), CSX Corporation (CSXC), CSX Transportation, Inc. (CSXT), Norfolk Southern Corporation (NSC), Norfolk Southern Railway Company (NSR), Conrail Inc. (CRI), and Consolidated Rail Corporation (CRC)¹ have notified the Surface Transportation Board (Board) of their intent to file a joint application seeking authority under 49 U.S.C. 11323-25 for: (1) The acquisition of control, by CSX and NS, of CRI, which is to be jointly owned by CSXC and NSC, by and through a special purpose limited liability company (LLC) and LLC's wholly owned subsidiary, Green Acquisition Corporation (Acquisition); and (2) as soon as practicable after the authorization and exercise of such control, the division of Conrail's assets into (a) certain assets which will continue to be held by CRI and CRC or their subsidiaries and operated for Conrail's account and that

¹ CSXC and CSXT are referred to collectively as CSX. NSC and NSR are referred to collectively as NS. CRI and CRC are referred to collectively as Conrail. CSX, NS, and Conrail are referred to collectively as applicants.