

Traffic Safety Administration, Room 5109, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20590. It is requested but not required that 10 copies be submitted.

All comments received before the close of business on the closing date indicated above will be considered, and will be available for examination in the docket at the above address both before and after that date. To the extent possible, comments filed after the closing date will also be considered. Notice of final action on the petition will be published in the **Federal Register** pursuant to the authority indicated below.

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 30141 (a)(1)(A) and (b)(1); 49 CFR 593.8; delegations of authority at 49 CFR 1.50 and 501.8.

Issued on: July 9, 1997.

Marilynne Jacobs,
Director, Office of Vehicle Safety Compliance.
 [FR Doc. 97-18468 Filed 7-14-97; 8:45 am]
 BILLING CODE 4910-59-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

Indexing the Annual Operating Revenues of Railroads

This Notice sets forth the annual inflation adjusting index numbers which are used to adjust gross annual operating revenues of railroads for classification purposes. This indexing methodology will insure that regulated carriers are classified based on real business expansion and not from the effects of inflation. Classification is important because it determines the extent of reporting for each carrier.

The railroad's inflation factors are based on the annual average Railroad's Freight Price Index. This index is developed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

The base year for railroads is 1991. The inflation index factors are presented as follows:

RAILROAD FREIGHT INDEX

	Index	Deflator percent
1991	409.5	¹ 100.00
1992	411.8	99.45
1993	415.5	98.55
1994	418.8	97.70
1995	418.17	97.85

RAILROAD FREIGHT INDEX—Continued

	Index	Deflator percent
1996	417.46	98.02

¹ Ex Parte No. 492, *Montana Rail Link, Inc., and Wisconsin Central Ltd., Joint Petition For Rulemaking With Respect To 49 CFR 1201, 8 I.C.C. 2d 625 (1992)*, raised the revenue classification level for Class I railroads from \$50 million to \$250 million (1991 dollars), effective for the reporting year beginning January 1, 1992. The Class II threshold was also revised to reflect a rebasing from \$10 million (1978 dollars) to \$20 million (1991 dollars).

Effective Date: January 1, 1996.

For Further Information Contact: Scott Decker (202) 565-1531. (TDD for the hearing impaired: (202) 565-1695).

By the Board, Vernon A. Williams, Secretary.

Vernon A. Williams,
Secretary.
 [FR Doc. 97-18542 Filed 7-14-97; 8:45 am]
 BILLING CODE 4915-00-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Finance Docket No. 32963]

Steuben County Industrial Development Agency—Acquisition Exemption—Line of Bath and Hammondspport Railroad Company

AGENCY: Surface Transportation Board, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of exemption.

SUMMARY: The Board, under 49 U.S.C. 10502, exempts from the prior approval requirements of 49 U.S.C. 10902, the acquisition by Steuben County Industrial Development Agency of 7.83 miles of rail line belonging to Bath and Hammondspport Railroad Company, between milepost 0.85 at Bath, NY, and milepost 8.68 at Hammondspport, NY.

DATES: This exemption will be effective on August 14, 1997. Petitions to stay must be filed by July 30, 1997, and petitions to reopen must be filed by August 11, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Send pleadings referring to STB Finance Docket No. 32963 to: (1) Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Unit, 1925 K Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20423-0001; and (2) Petitioner's representative: John F. Leyden, Sullivan & Leyden, P.C., 110 North Main St., Wayland, NY 14572.

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

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Additional information is contained in the Board's decision. To purchase a copy of the full decision, write to, call, or pick up in person from: DC News & Data, Inc., 1925 K Street, N.W., Suite 210, Washington, DC 20006. Telephone: (202) 289-4357/4359. (Assistance for the hearing impaired is available through TDD services (202) 565-1695.)

Decided: July 1, 1997.

By the Board, Chairman Morgan and Vice Chairman Owen.

Vernon A. Williams,
Secretary.
 [FR Doc. 97-18543 Filed 7-14-97; 8:45 am]
 BILLING CODE 4915-00-P

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Summary of Precedent Opinions of the General Counsel

AGENCY: Department of Veterans Affairs.
ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is publishing a summary of legal interpretations issued by the Department's General Counsel involving veterans' benefits under laws administered by VA. These interpretations are considered precedential by VA and will be followed by VA officials and employees in future claim matters. The summary is published to provide the public, and, in particular, veterans' benefit claimants and their representatives, with notice of VA's interpretation regarding the legal matter at issue.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jane L. Lehman, Chief, Law Library, Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20420, (202) 273-6558.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: VA regulations at 38 CFR 2.6(e)(9) and 14.507 authorize the Department's General Counsel to issue written legal opinions having precedential effect in adjudications and appeals involving veterans' benefits under laws administered by VA. The General Counsel's interpretations on legal matters, contained in such opinions, are conclusive as to all VA officials and employees not only in the matter at issue but also in future adjudications and appeals, in the absence of a change in controlling statute or regulation or a superseding written legal opinion of the General Counsel.

VA publishes summaries of such opinions in order to provide the public with notice of those interpretations of