

waiver of compliance with certain requirements of Title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 213: Track Safety Standards.

The purpose of the petition is to request of the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) relief from compliance with the provisions of 49 CFR 213.233(c) of the Federal Track Safety Standards. The petitioner requests approval to eliminate one of two weekly visual track inspections required by this section for track carrying passenger traffic. Petitioner proposes, in the interest of equivalent safety, to substitute for the eliminated visual inspection the operation of a track geometry measuring vehicle over the affected main track and sidings on a quarterly basis. Such equipment does not operate over the tracks of the petitioner today.

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 (e.g., Waiver Petition Number RST-97-5 and must be submitted in triplicate to the Docket Clerk, Office of Chief Counsel, Federal Railroad Administration, 400 Seventh Street, SW, Washington, DC 20590. Communications received within 30 days of publication of this notice will be considered by FRA before final action is taken. Comments received after that date will be considered as far as practicable. All written communications concerning these proceedings are available for examination during regular business hours (9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) in Room 7051, 1120 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC, 20005.

Issued in Washington, D.C. on May 4, 1998.

Grady C. Cothen, Jr.,

Deputy Associate Administrator for Safety Standards and Program Development.

[FR Doc. 98-12768 Filed 5-13-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Docket Nos. AB-32 (Sub-No. 86X) and AB-355 (Sub-No. 24X)]

Boston and Maine Corporation— Abandonment Exemption—in Middlesex County, MA and Springfield Terminal Railway Company— Discontinuance of Service Exemption—in Middlesex County, MA

Boston & Maine Corporation (B&M) and Springfield Terminal Railway Company (ST) have filed a notice of exemption under 49 CFR Part 1152 Subpart F—*Exempt Abandonments and Discontinuances* for B&M to abandon and ST to discontinue service over a 1.82-mile line of railroad known as the Watertown Branch from milepost 5.85 (Engineering Station 87+90) to milepost 7.67 (Engineering Station 184+25) in Middlesex County, MA. The line traverses United States Postal Service Zip Code 02172.¹

B&M and ST have certified that: (1) No local traffic has moved over the line for at least 2 years; (2) any overhead traffic has been rerouted over other lines; (3) no formal complaint filed by a user of rail service on the line (or by a state or local government entity acting on behalf of such user) regarding cessation of service over the line either is pending with the Surface Transportation Board (Board) or with any U.S. District Court or has been decided in favor of complainant within the 2-year period; and (4) the requirements at 49 CFR 1105.7 (environmental reports), 49 CFR 1105.8 (historic reports), 49 CFR 1105.11 (transmittal letter), 49 CFR 1105.12 (newspaper publication), and 49 CFR 1152.50(d)(1) (notice to governmental agencies) have been met.

As a condition to this exemption, any employee adversely affected by the abandonment shall be protected under *Oregon Short Line R. Co.—Abandonment—Goshen*, 360 I.C.C. 91 (1979). To address whether this condition adequately protects affected employees, a petition for partial revocation under 49 U.S.C. 10502(d) must be filed. Provided no formal expression of intent to file an offer of financial assistance (OFA) has been received, this exemption will be effective on June 13, 1998, unless stayed pending reconsideration. Petitions to stay that do not involve environmental

issues,² formal expressions of intent to file an OFA under 49 CFR 1152.27(c)(2),³ and trail use/rail banking requests under 49 CFR 1152.29 must be filed by May 26, 1998. Petitions to reopen or requests for public use conditions under 49 CFR 1152.28 must be filed by June 3, 1998, with: Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Unit, 1925 K Street, NW., Washington, DC 20423.

A copy of any petition filed with the Board should be sent to applicant representative: John R. Nadolny, Esq., Boston and Maine Corporation, Law Department, Iron Horse Park, North Billerica, MA 01862.

If the verified notice contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void *ab initio*.

B&M and ST have filed an environmental report which addresses the effects of the abandonment and discontinuance, if any, on the environment and historic resources. The Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA) will issue an environmental assessment (EA) by May 19, 1998. Interested persons may obtain a copy of the EA by writing to SEA (Room 500, Surface Transportation Board, Washington, DC 20423) or by calling SEA, at (202) 565-1545. Comments on environmental and historic preservation matters must be filed within 15 days after the EA becomes available to the public.

Environmental, historic preservation, public use, or trail use/rail banking conditions will be imposed, where appropriate, in a subsequent decision.

Pursuant to the provisions of 49 CFR 1152.29(e)(2), B&M shall file a notice of consummation with the Board to signify that it has exercised the authority granted and fully abandoned the line. If consummation has not been effected by B&M's filing of a notice of consummation by May 14, 1999, and there are no legal or regulatory barriers to consummation, the authority to abandon will automatically expire.

Decided: May 6, 1998.

² The Board will grant a stay if an informed decision on environmental issues (whether raised by a party or by the Board's Section of Environmental Analysis in its independent investigation) cannot be made before the exemption's effective date. See *Exemption of Out-of-Service Rail Lines*, 5 I.C.C.2d 377 (1989). Any request for a stay should be filed as soon as possible so that the Board may take appropriate action before the exemption's effective date.

³ Each offer of financial assistance must be accompanied by the filing fee, which currently is set at \$1,000. See 49 CFR 1002.2(f)(25).

¹ On May 1, 1998, B&M informed the Board of the actual mileposts in addition to the Engineering Stations identified in its verified notice.

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

Vernon A. Williams,

Secretary.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Office of Thrift Supervision

[AC-17: OTS No. 0325]

First Kansas Federal Savings Association, Osawatomie, KS; Approval of Conversion Application

Notice is hereby given that on May 4, 1998, the Director, Corporate Activities, Office of Thrift Supervision, or her designee, acting pursuant to delegated authority, approved the application of First Kansas Federal Savings Association, Osawatomie, Kansas, to convert to the stock form of organization. Copies of the application are available for inspection at the Dissemination Branch, Office of Thrift Supervision, 1700 G Street, NW, Washington, DC 20552, and the Midwest Regional Office, Office of Thrift Supervision, 122 W. John Carpenter Freeway, Suite 600, Irving, Texas 75039-2010.

Dated: May 8, 1998.

By the Office of Thrift Supervision.

Nadine Y. Washington,

Corporate Secretary.

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