

Control Rearward Displacement, 205
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216 *Roof Crush Resistance*, 219
Windshield Zone Intrusion, 301 *Fuel
System Integrity*, and 302 *Flammability
of Interior Materials*.

Additionally, the petitioner states that non-U.S. certified 1994–1999 Mercedes-Benz E320 station wagons comply with the Bumper Standard found in 49 CFR part 581.

Petitioner also contends that the vehicles are capable of being readily altered to meet the following standards, in the manner indicated:

Standard No. 101 *Controls and Displays*: (a) Substitution of a lens marked "Brake" for a lens with a noncomplying symbol on the brake failure indicator lamp; (b) replacement of the speedometer with one calibrated in miles per hour.

Standard No. 108 *Lamps, Reflective Devices and Associated Equipment*: (a) Installation of U.S.-model headlamps and front sidemarker lamps; (b) installation of U.S.-model taillamp assemblies which incorporate rear sidemarker lights; (c) installation of a U.S.-model high mounted stop lamp on vehicles that are not already so equipped.

Standard No. 110 *Tire Selection and Rims*: Installation of a tire information placard.

Standard No. 111 *Rearview Mirror*: Replacement of the passenger side rearview mirror with a U.S.-model component.

Standard No. 114 *Theft Protection*: Installation of a warning buzzer and a warning buzzer microswitch in the steering lock assembly.

Standard No. 118 *Power Window Systems*: Installation of a relay in the power window system so that the window transport is inoperative when the ignition is switched off.

Standard No. 208 *Occupant Crash Protection*: (a) Installation of a safety belt warning buzzer, wired to the driver's seat belt latch; (b) replacement of the driver's and passenger's side air bags, control units, sensors, seat belts and knee bolsters with U.S.-model components on vehicles that are not already so equipped. The petitioner states that the vehicles are equipped at the front and rear outboard seating positions with combination lap and shoulder belts that are self tensioning and capable of being released by means of a single red push-button, and with a lap belt in the rear center designated seating position.

Standard No. 214 *Side Impact Protection*: Installation of U.S.-model doorbars in vehicles that are not already so equipped.

The petitioner also states that a vehicle identification plate must be affixed to the vehicle near the left windshield post and a reference and certification label must be affixed in the area of the left front door post to meet the requirements of 49 CFR part 565.

Additionally, the petitioner states that all vehicles will be inspected prior to importation to ensure that they are equipped with anti-theft devices that comply with the Theft Prevention Standard at 49 CFR part 541.

Interested persons are invited to submit comments on the petition described above. Comments should refer to the docket number and be submitted to: Docket Management, Room PL-401, 400 Seventh St., SW, Washington, DC 20590. (Docket hours are from 9 am to 5 pm). 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: October 15, 1999.

Marilynne Jacobs,

Director, Office of Vehicle Safety Compliance.
[FR Doc. 99-27408 Filed 10-19-99; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Research and Special Programs Administration

[Docket No. RSPA-98-4029; Notice 4]

Pipeline Safety: Damage Prevention "Path Forward"

AGENCY: Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA); Office of Pipeline Safety (OPS).

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: This notice is to announce a public meeting on RSPA's continuing efforts to prevent damage to underground facilities. RSPA is facilitating the establishment of a non-profit organization to advance underground facility damage

prevention. Participation from all stakeholder organizations in the damage prevention community will be necessary to ensure the most effective forum to share information. Interested parties include excavators, facility locators, railroads, local, state and federal government agencies, and owners and operators of underground facilities, as well as the general public.

DATES: The public meeting will be held on Thursday, October 28, 1999, from 9:00 am to 4:30 pm.

ADDRESSES: The public meeting will be held at the Omni Inner Harbor Hotel, 101 West Fayette Street, Baltimore, MD 21202. A block of rooms is being held for the "U.S. DOT Damage Prevention Meeting."

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Eben M. Wyman, (202) 366-0918, or by e-mail at eben.wyman@rspa.dot.gov, regarding the subject matter of this notice.

Information on Services for Individuals With Disabilities

For information on facilities or services for individuals with disabilities or to request special assistance at the meetings, contact Eben Wyman at the address or phone number listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** as soon as possible.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On June 30, 1999, RSPA held a public meeting in Washington, DC, to present to the Secretary of Transportation a report on damage prevention best practices, as required by the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). The "Common Ground Study" was developed by over 160 volunteers who worked for nearly a year to produce this report on best practices in damage prevention. The study identifies and evaluates existing underground damage prevention practices that are most effective in protecting the public, excavators, and the environment. These practices prevent disruptions to public services and damage to underground facilities, such as water, sewer, natural gas and hazardous liquid pipelines, as well as copper and fiber optic telecommunications cables and electric ductwork and cables. A major point of interest at the June 30th meeting was on the next steps to be taken in damage prevention, also referred to as the "path forward."

A key lesson of Common Ground Study was that full representation and motivated commitment from all key stakeholders is essential. To effectively develop a "path forward," we need input from the full spectrum of stakeholders to ensure that all affected

parties are provided with the opportunity to contribute and participate. Following the Common Ground Study model, RSPA believes that all stakeholder organizations should participate in this public meeting to share their ideas and express their interest in the "path forward" in damage prevention.

Topics of Discussion

RSPA asks attendees at the meeting to identify those organizations and industry leaders whose high level commitment, leadership, and influence are essential to complete planning for establishment of the damage prevention non-profit organization. RSPA also seeks comment on the mission, goals, functions, and organizational structure of the non-profit organization. Interested stakeholders are encouraged to propose guiding principles to shape the formation of the organization to best address the many issues involved in protecting the nation's underground infrastructure from outside force damage.

RSPA strongly supports the need for an organized effort to address damage prevention challenges in the years ahead. With the support of Congress and the Department of Transportation, we are committed to provide resources to the effort. However, RSPA believes the future of damage prevention lies in the hands of the private sector. RSPA is working to assist the initial creation of a self-sustaining private sector, non-profit organization on a temporary basis only, to ensure the participation of all affected stakeholders. The U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee report on Fiscal Year 2000 appropriations directed RSPA to "support the formation and initial operation" of the organization. Once the organization is formed, the federal government's role will become much less significant.

We enjoyed our role in organizing, facilitating, and managing the Common Ground Study Team and we plan to support this effort. RSPA welcomes all interested parties to attend and participate in this public meeting to take the next steps necessary in promoting and encouraging underground facility damage prevention.

Issued in Washington, DC on October 14, 1999.

Richard B. Felder,

Associate Administrator for Pipeline Safety,
[FR Doc. 99-27320 Filed 10-19-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-60-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Docket No. MC-F-20956]¹

Northwest Motor Coach L.L.C.— Control—Evergreen Stage Line, Inc. and Evergreen Bus Company, Inc.

AGENCY: Surface Transportation Board.

ACTION: Notice tentatively approving finance application and granting interim approval.²

SUMMARY: Northwest Motor Coach L.L.C. (Northwest) and L & K Acquisition Corp. (L & K), two noncarrier holding companies, and Evergreen Stage Line, Inc. (ESL) and Evergreen Bus Company, Inc. (EBC), two regulated motor passenger carriers, all of Portland, OR (collectively, applicants), have filed: (1) An application under 49 U.S.C. 14303(a) for Northwest to acquire control of ESL and EBC; and (2) a request for interim approval of the transaction under 49 U.S.C. 14303(i) pending determination of the application. Persons wishing to oppose the application must follow the rules at 49 CFR part 1182, subpart B. The Board has tentatively approved the application. If no opposing comments are timely filed, this notice will be the final Board action.

DATES: Comments are due by December 6, 1999. Applicants may reply by December 21, 1999. If no comments are received by December 6, 1999, this approval is effective on that date.

ADDRESSES: Send an original and 10 copies of any comments referring to STB Docket No. MC-F-20956 to: Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Unit, 1925 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20423-0001. In addition, send one copy of any comments to applicants' representative: Jeremy Kahn, Kahn & Kahn, 1730 Rhode Island Ave., NW, Suite 810, Washington, DC 20036.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Joseph H. Dettmar, (202) 565-1600. (TDD for the hearing impaired: (202) 565-1695.)

¹ This proceeding embraces STB Docket No. MC-F-20956 TA.

² Interim approval will be effective on October 18, 1999.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Applicants state that ESL³ and EBC⁴ are currently controlled by L & K; Northwest is controlled by Larry S. Black and Jerry L. Kilb. L & K owns all of the stock of ESL, and ESL, in turn, owns all of the stock of EBC. Applicants state that none of the entities involved in this proceeding is affiliated with any other motor carrier, except that Jerry L. Kilb, a principal in L & K and president of ESL and EBC, is a principal of Northwest and will remain president of ESL and EBC following the proposed transaction.

Applicants state that: (1) L & K has agreed to sell Northwest all of its assets (including its stock in ESL) and all of its liabilities; (2) upon consummation of the transaction, Northwest will control two regulated passenger carriers and the previous shareholders of L & K will own approximately 7.5% of the shares of Northwest; and (3) L & K will no longer have any control of any regulated passenger carriers.

Applicants state that the proposed transaction will have no impact on the adequacy of transportation services available to the public. The proposal involves only a sale of the two carriers from one holding company to a second, and there will be no change in carrier operations. Applicants assert that Northwest's acquisition of control, with a new infusion of funds, will assure the continued viability of ESL and EBC and result in the continued availability of adequate service to the public.

According to applicants, the transaction includes a fixed payment to L & K shareholders which can readily be paid from Northwest's equity investment and third party financing without affecting carrier operations. Applicants add that no carrier employees will be adversely affected by the transaction, as the carriers will continue to perform the same operations with the same employees.

Applicants certify that: (1) ESL and EBC hold a satisfactory safety rating

³ ESL holds federally-issued operating authority in Docket No. MC-29839, authorizing the transportation of passengers in charter and special operations, between points in the United States. It also holds Motor Carrier Permit No. 118436 issued by the Oregon Public Utility Commission authorizing certain intrastate operations. ESL had gross operating revenues of \$1,860,000 for the 12-month period ending June 30, 1999.

⁴ EBC holds federally-issued operating authority in Docket No. MC-39416, authorizing the transportation of passengers, in charter and special operations, between points in the United States. It also holds a Motor Carrier Certificate in File No. 237, Class 1P, MEP 960003 issued by the Oregon Department of Transportation, authorizing certain intrastate operations. EBC had gross operating revenues of \$4,450,000 for the 12-month period ending June 30, 1999.