As a response to the opening of High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes in the Washington, D.C., metro area in the mid-1970s, a unique commuting phenomenon developed: “slugging.” This type of single-trip dynamic carpooling evolved from drivers and passengers coming together to fulfill each party’s needs (i.e., allowing drivers to meet HOV requirements and thus use the express travel lanes and riders to enjoy a free, fast trip to work). Academic and entrepreneurial types alike are looking at ways to facilitate dynamic ridesharing through technological means. Some suggestions for enhancing dynamic ridesharing include website forums that connect drivers with riders and Smartphone applications that would allow drivers and riders to register and connect with each other. These efforts build off of the success of three meeting-place based dynamic ridesharing systems that exist in Houston, San Francisco, and Washington, DC. These three systems have no formal leadership or management; rather they have evolved to fulfill a need for carpools created by the presence of HOV lanes. These naturally occurring dynamic ridesharing systems operate by having drivers and riders meet at central, easily accessible locations such as park and ride lots where they create instantaneous carpools based on desired destinations.

The lines are highly successful and have existed for a long time (30+ years in the case of DC), and they are a critical component to these robust dynamic ridesharing systems which serve thousands of commuters each weekday. Despite their success and interesting nature, they have been severely understudied by academics and transportation professionals. Focus group participants will be recruited based on a number of criteria. The primary factor is whether participants have utilized dynamic carpooling, then the frequency of their use and finally whether they work for the federal government or private sector. Participants would not be representing their place of work, and they would be asked to participate as members of the public on their own time outside of work hours.

Respondents: The Focus Group will send approximately 108 participants on a three-city tour (Washington, DC; San Francisco, CA; and Houston, TX) to study the informal, dynamic carpooling systems in each city. The government expects the contractor to recruit slugging/casual carpooling participants in each city.

Frequency: Annually.
NSRT, which has fallen from 18,775 to 14,007.

DATES: The effective date is December 29, 2010.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Ronald Ries, Office of Railroad Safety, FRA, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., Washington, DC 20590, (202) 493–6299, or Ronald.Ries@dot.gov; or Kathryn Shelton, Office of Chief Counsel, FRA, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., Washington, DC 20590, (202) 493–6038, or Kathryn.Shelton@dot.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The NSRT is an average of the risk indexes for gated public crossings nationwide where train horns are routinely sounded. FRA developed this risk index to serve as one threshold of permissible risk for quiet zones established under this rule across the nation. Thus, a community that is trying to establish and/or maintain its quiet zone, pursuant to 49 CFR part 222, can compare the Quiet Zone Risk Index calculated for its specific crossing corridor to the NSRT to determine whether sufficient measures have been taken to compensate for the excess risk that results from prohibiting routine sounding of the locomotive horn. (In the alternative, a community can establish its quiet zone in comparison to the Risk Index With Horns, which is a corridor-specific measure of risk to the motoring public when locomotive horns are routinely sounded at every public highway-rail grade crossing within the quiet zone.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fatalities</th>
<th>347</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fatality Rate =</td>
<td>Fatal Incidents = 275 = 1.2618</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Injuries in Injury-Only Incidents</th>
<th>970</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Injury Rate =</td>
<td>Injury-Only Incidents = 661 = 1.4674</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Applying the fatality rate and injury rate to the probable number of fatalities and casualties predicted to occur at each of the 41,326 identified crossings and the predicted cost of the associated injuries and fatalities, FRA calculates the NSRT to be 14,007.

Issued in Washington, DC, on December 22, 2010.

Jo Strang,
Associate Administrator for Railroad Safety/Chief Safety Officer.

[FR Doc. 2010–32778 Filed 12–28–10; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–06–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Railroad Administration

Notice of Application for Approval of Discontinuance or Modification of a Railroad Signal System

Pursuant to Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 235 and 49 U.S.C. 20502(a), the following railroad has petitioned the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) seeking approval for the discontinuance or modification of a signal system, as detailed below.

Docket Number FRA–2010–0175

Applicant: Elgin, Joliet and Eastern Railway Company, Mr. Timothy Luhm, Manager S&C, 17641 South Ashland Avenue, Homewood, IL 60430.

The Elgin, Joliet and Eastern Railway Company (EJ&E) seeks approval of the proposed discontinuance of the traffic control system (TCS) on the Chicago Division near Gary, Indiana. The proposed discontinuance is from control point (CP) Kirk Yard Junction to, but not including, CP Stockton 2 on the Matteson Subdivision Main 1 and Main 2; and from CP Kirk Yard Junction to, but not including, Stockton 1 on the Lake Front Subdivision Main Track.

The discontinuance consist of the removal of the TCS on Main Track 1 and 2 between milepost (MP) 44.44 and MP 45.41 on the Chicago Division, Matteson Subdivision, and Main Track also known as the Lake Front Line between MP 11.19 and MP 12.10 on the Chicago Division, Lakefront Subdivision, as well as all tracks contained with CP Kirk Yard Junction between MP 45.41 and MP 45.66 on the Chicago Division, Matteson Subdivision.

The reason given for the proposed change is that the TCS impedes train operation on these tracks due to the congestion in the area from the Kirk Yard operations. There are plans in place to change track and switch arrangements in this area to facilitate future operations at Kirk Yard.

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 Docket Number FRA–2010–1075) and may be submitted by any of the following methods:

- Web site: http://www.regulations.gov. Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.
- Hand Delivery: 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., Room W12–140, Washington, DC 20590, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

Communications received within 45 days of the date of this notice will be considered by FRA before final action is taken. Comments received after that