

specification requirements. Based on additional research by EPA's consulting contractor (Cadmus) and to the best of the Region's knowledge at this time, there does not appear to be any other manufacturers capable of meeting the City's specifications.

Furthermore, the purpose of the ARRA provisions was to stimulate economic recovery by funding current infrastructure construction, not to delay projects that are already shovel ready by requiring entities, like the City, to revise their design and potentially choose a more costly and less effective project. The imposition of ARRA Buy American requirements on such projects eligible for DWSRF assistance would result in unreasonable delay and thus displace the "shovel ready" status for this project. To further delay construction is in direct conflict with the most fundamental economic purposes of ARRA; to create or retain jobs.

The Drinking Water Unit has reviewed this waiver request and has determined that the supporting documentation provided by the City is sufficient to meet the following criteria listed under Section 1605(b) and in the April 28, 2009, Implementation of Buy American provisions of Public Law 111-5, the "American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009" Memorandum: Iron, steel, and the manufactured goods are not produced in the United States in sufficient and reasonably available quantities and of a satisfactory quality.

The basis for this project waiver is the authorization provided in Section 1605(b)(2), due to the lack of production of this product in the United States in sufficient and reasonably available quantities and of a satisfactory quality in order to meet the City's design specifications.

The March 31, 2009 Delegation of Authority Memorandum provided Regional Administrators with the authority to issue exceptions to Section 1605 of ARRA within the geographic boundaries of their respective regions and with respect to requests by individual grant recipients.

Having established both a proper basis to specify the particular good required for this project, and that this manufactured good was not available from a producer in the United States, the City is hereby granted a waiver from the Buy American requirements of Section 1605(a) of Public Law 111-5 for the purchase semi-rigid protection boards for a hot applied membrane waterproofing system (15,600 sheets each measuring 39½" × 80") for a reservoir cover, manufactured in Surrey, British Columbia, specified in the City's

waiver request of November 10, 2010. This supplementary information constitutes the detailed written justification required by Section 1605(c) for waivers based on a finding under subsection (b).

**Authority:** Public Law 111-5, section 1605.

Issued on: Dated: January 31, 2011.

**Dennis J. McLerran,**

*Regional Administrator, EPA, Region 10.*

[FR Doc. 2011-2606 Filed 2-4-11; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 6560-50-P**

## FARM CREDIT ADMINISTRATION

### Farm Credit Administration Board; Sunshine Act Meeting

**AGENCY:** Farm Credit Administration.

**SUMMARY:** Notice is hereby given, pursuant to the Government in the Sunshine Act (5 U.S.C. 552b(e)(3)), of the regular meeting of the Farm Credit Administration Board (Board).

**DATE AND TIME:** The regular meeting of the Board will be held at the offices of the Farm Credit Administration in McLean, Virginia, on February 10, 2011, from 9 a.m. until such time as the Board concludes its business.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Dale L. Aultman, Secretary to the Farm Credit Administration Board, (703) 883-4009, TTY (703) 883-4056.

**ADDRESSES:** Farm Credit Administration, 1501 Farm Credit Drive, McLean, Virginia 22102-5090.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** This meeting of the Board will be open to the public (limited space available). In order to increase the accessibility to Board meetings, persons requiring assistance should make arrangements in advance. The matters to be considered at the meeting are:

#### Open Session

##### A. Approval of Minutes

- January 13, 2011

##### B. New Business

- Spring 2011 Abstract of the Unified Agenda of Federal Regulatory and Deregulatory Actions and Spring 2011 Regulatory Performance Plan
- Request of Farm Credit Services of America, et al., to Form a Limited Liability Partnership to Facilitate Agricultural Equipment Financing Activities

##### C. Reports

- Office of Management Services Quarterly Report

Dated: February 3, 2011.

**Dale L. Aultman,**

*Secretary, Farm Credit Administration Board.*

[FR Doc. 2011-2749 Filed 2-3-11; 4:15 pm]

**BILLING CODE 6705-01-P**

## FEDERAL MARITIME COMMISSION

### Notice of Inquiry; Solicitation of Views on the Impact of Slow Steaming

**AGENCY:** Federal Maritime Commission.

**ACTION:** Notice of Inquiry.

**SUMMARY:** The Federal Maritime Commission ("FMC" or "Commission") is issuing this Notice of Inquiry ("NOI") to solicit public comment on the impact of slow steaming on U.S. ocean liner commerce. Generally, the Commission seeks public comment as to how the practice of slow steaming has (1) Impacted ocean liner carrier operations and shippers' international supply chains; (2) affected the cost and/or price of ocean liner service; and (3) mitigated greenhouse gas emissions.

**DATES:** Responses are due on or before April 5, 2011.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit comments to: Karen V. Gregory, Secretary, Federal Maritime Commission, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., Room 1046, Washington, DC 20573-0001.

Or e-mail non-confidential comments to: [secretary@fmc.gov](mailto:secretary@fmc.gov) (e-mail comments as attachments preferably in Microsoft Word or PDF).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Austin L. Schmitt, Director, Bureau of Trade Analysis, Federal Maritime Commission, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., Washington, DC 20573-0001, Telephone: (202) 523-5796, E-mail: [aschmitt@fmc.gov](mailto:aschmitt@fmc.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** *Submit Comments:* Non-confidential filings may be submitted in hard copy or by e-mail as an attachment (preferably in Microsoft Word or PDF) addressed to [secretary@fmc.gov](mailto:secretary@fmc.gov) on or before April 5, 2011. Include in the subject line: "FMC Slow Steaming—Response to NOI". Responses to this inquiry that seek confidential treatment must be submitted in hard copy by U.S. mail or courier. Confidential filings must be accompanied by a transmittal letter that identifies the filing as "confidential" and describes the nature and extent of the confidential treatment requested, e.g., commercially sensitive data. When submitting documents in response to the NOI that contain confidential information, the confidential copy of the filing must consist of the complete filing and be marked by the filer as

“Confidential- Restricted,” with the confidential material clearly marked on each page. When a confidential filing is submitted, an original and one additional copy of the public version of the filing must be submitted. The public version of the filing should exclude confidential materials, and be clearly marked on each affected page, “confidential materials excluded.” Questions regarding filing or treatment of confidential responses to this inquiry should be directed to the Commission’s Secretary, Karen V. Gregory, at the telephone number or e-mail provided above.

## Background

Over the past two years most ocean liner carriers regulated by the Commission have implemented the practice of slow steaming by which the normal service speed of ships is reduced in an effort to reduce bunker fuel costs which account for a high proportion of ship operating costs. Initially, ocean carriers took these measures in response to severely depressed international trade conditions, but slow steaming also is used to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions in response to new environmental initiatives and concerns.<sup>1</sup> By slow steaming, ocean liner carriers address both of these problems by significantly reducing total bunker fuel consumption and the associated emissions.<sup>2</sup>

In the U.S. ocean liner trades, the practice of slow steaming appears to be most prevalent in the transpacific trade. Data derived from Alphaliner, for example, shows that more than half of the 45 weekly services operating between U.S. west coast ports and Asia are currently slow steaming, while more than three-fourths of the 15 weekly services operating between U.S. east

coast ports and Asia are doing so.<sup>3</sup> In contrast, just 20 percent of the 15 weekly services operating between the United States and North Europe are currently slow steaming.

This time last year, the Transpacific Stabilization Agreement (“TSA”) added authority to its basic agreement that allowed its member lines to discuss and reach agreement on programs to reduce sources of environmental pollution caused by ocean liner operations.<sup>4</sup> So far, however, no specific TSA program has materialized under this authority, even though slow steaming has become more prevalent during this time in the transpacific trade and in other U.S. trades.

Slow steaming is a complex issue with advantages and disadvantages for both carriers and shippers depending on trade conditions and commodity transported. For example, when carriers are experiencing high bunker costs and low charter rates, slow steaming becomes more attractive to the carrier. When these conditions do not exist, slow steaming does not offer the carrier the same advantages. Thus, in the coming years, potential increases in fuel costs and planned vessel deliveries will weigh in favor of carriers continuing or expanding slow steaming, but a continued recovery in demand and rates will tend to mitigate the trend.

While a good deal of commentary and analysis have appeared in the trade press regarding the benefits that carriers derive from slow steaming services, information about how this practice has affected American exporters and importers is limited. In cases where shippers of low-value commodities receive lower rates as a result of the carrier passing along some of the fuel savings achieved through slow steaming, the additional time for transport may not be an issue for these shippers. On the other hand, shippers of high-value commodities may not find slow steaming advantageous because a potentially lower freight rate may not outweigh the added delay in accessing payments for goods rendered. Likewise, shippers of chilled meat and fresh produce may find slow steaming disadvantageous because the resulting longer transit times could lead to increased spoilage and less shelf-time in grocery stores.

These tradeoffs for U.S. importers and exporters assume that carriers pass at least a portion of the cost savings from slow steaming on to their customers. In the U.S. trades, where the vast majority of liner cargo travels under annual service contracts, it is unclear whether ocean carriers’ customers have received those savings—either through adjustments to bunker fuel surcharges or the underlying rates.

Finally, slow steaming has efficiency and environmental benefits that should be factored into both carriers’ and shippers’ equations. But an accurate analysis of the impact requires reliable methods to measure and quantify those environmental benefits. Better information and more transparency on emissions savings from slow steaming would allow carriers and their customers to make shipping choices that reduce their carbon emissions—and receive full credit for those measures.

The Commission, therefore, has decided to request public comment on the effects of slow steaming practices on ocean liner operations, shippers’ supply chains and their underlying businesses, capacity availability, container availability, ocean freight rates, fuel surcharges, and greenhouse gas emissions. Although slow steaming primarily affects the operations of shippers, carriers and rate discussion agreements, the Commission encourages all interested parties, including ports, maritime terminal operators, trade associations, environmental groups, and other governmental entities to submit comments or to identify any economic and environmental data and studies related to slow steaming. The questions below seek to solicit comments on how slow steaming has affected shippers’ and carrier’s business operations and the environment. Commenters may address any or all of the questions and are welcome to submit comments on the effects of slow steaming not addressed by any of these questions.

## Questions Directed to Shippers

1. What do you see as the advantages and disadvantages of slow steaming?

2. How has slow steaming of ocean liner services impacted your overall business costs? How significant are those costs? What measures, if any, has your company taken to mitigate any negative cost impact on your business arising from slow steaming?

3. Has your company benefited from the fuel cost savings that slow steaming makes possible by obtaining, for example, lower freight rates or bunker adjustment surcharges? If so, identify those benefits and explain how significant they are.

<sup>1</sup> International shipping reportedly generates about three percent of global carbon emissions. See International Maritime Organization, Marine Environment Protection Committee, *Second IMO GHG Study 2009*, at 7, U.N. Doc. MEPC 59/INF. 10 (Apr. 9, 2009), available at [http://www5.imo.org/SharePoint/blastDataHelper.asp/data\\_id%3D26047/INF-10.pdf](http://www5.imo.org/SharePoint/blastDataHelper.asp/data_id%3D26047/INF-10.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, a 10 percent reduction in speed will reduce emissions by 19 percent per ton-mile. See United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, *Review of Maritime Transport 2010*, at 66, U.N. Doc. UNCTAD/RMT/2010 (Dec. 20, 2010), available at <http://www.unctad.org/Templates/webflyer.asp?docid=14218&intItemID=&lang=1&mode=downloads>. Similarly, one ocean carrier has found that reducing a ship’s average operating speed by 20 percent may lower its daily fuel consumption by as much as 40 percent. See Press Release, Maersk, Slow Steaming Here to Stay (Sept. 1, 2010), available at <http://www.maersk.com/AboutMaersk/News/Pages/20100901-145240.aspx>.

<sup>3</sup> In addition to the weekly services that call exclusively at either the U.S. west coast or east coast, an additional six pendulum services call at ports on both coasts; two-thirds of these latter services are slow steaming.

<sup>4</sup> See Article 5(d) of the TSA’s basic agreement available at [http://www2.fmc.gov/agreement\\_lib/011223-045-MC.pdf](http://www2.fmc.gov/agreement_lib/011223-045-MC.pdf). (Agreement No. 011223-45)

4. Describe how, and to what extent, the slow steaming of ocean liner services has impacted your company's supply chain, space availability, and container availability.

5. Are different services, i.e., slow steaming vs. normal steaming, available to your company from different ocean carriers over the same trade lane? Alternately, do any individual ocean carriers offer your company different transit times over the same trade lane with varying rates or other service features?

6. In the past year or so, have ocean transit times lengthened between the major port-pairs used in your company's ocean shipping operations on account of the slow steaming of services? If so, how much longer have those transit times become and between which port pairs?

7. Do ocean transit times vary significantly among the different services that link the major port-pairs used in your company's ocean shipping operations? When arranging shipments, what role do differences in transit time play in your carrier or service selection process?

8. If you have service contracts with ocean carriers, were transit times or slow steaming provisions included in those contracts? Was slow steaming consistent with your governing service contract provisions?

9. As a U.S. exporter, has the slow steaming of ocean liner services in the U.S. trades put your company at a competitive disadvantage in overseas markets? If so, please explain.

10. Identify and describe what benefits your company has derived from slow steaming (e.g., more reliable and predictable sailing schedules, a more stable supply chain, etc.).

11. Do you believe slow steaming is sustainable over the long-run? Please explain why or why not.

12. Do ocean carriers provide you with information on fuel, cost, or emissions savings that allow you to calculate and consider the benefits of slow steaming in choosing among transportation options?

13. Discuss whether your company uses slow steaming services to help reduce its carbon footprint on the goods it sells? If so, how substantial are these reductions? How do you measure or quantify these reductions? What type or form of information would better assist you in making choices that reduce your carbon footprint?

#### Questions Directed to Ocean Liner Carriers

1. What does your company see as the advantages and disadvantages of slow steaming?

2. What proportion of the ships your company operates in the U.S. trades slow steam? What proportion slow steam outbound from the United States? What proportion slow steam inbound to the United States? Please break this information down by trade lane.

3. Do you have plans to increase or decrease slow steaming during 2011 and/or the years that follow?

4. What factors help your company decide to slow steam any given service string? What factors cause your company to decide whether to slow steam in one direction only?

5. In the past year, by how much (*i.e.*, absolute amount and as a percent of the total) has your company reduced its bunker consumption, bunker fuel expenses, and carbon emissions as a result of slow steaming ships in U.S. ocean liner services?

6. Do you make this information on fuel, cost, and emissions savings available and transparent to your customers? If not, do you have plans to, and what is your goal date? If not, why not?

7. Do you offer shippers, over the same trade lane, different transit times by reason of slow steaming vs. normal steaming?

8. Have you passed cost savings along to shippers through adjustments to any bunker surcharge formulas, or by lowering rates? If not, do you have plans to, and what is your goal date? If not, why not?

9. Are there any costs incurred by the ships your company is slow steaming that would not accrue if they were operating at normal service speed and, if so, what are these costs and how significant are they?

10. What factors constrain your company's ability to slow steam more services or to further slow down ships that are already slow steaming (*i.e.*, super-slow steaming)?

11. How many vessels do you add to service loops that begin slow steaming for part or all of the loop? Are there instances where vessels are not added?

12. Is your company adding new vessels to your fleet to accommodate slow steaming?

13. Are new ship designs incorporating hull and propulsion engine innovations to better accommodate slow steaming?

14. How has slow steaming impacted your company's on time performance of sailing schedules?

15. Are some shipper accounts more affected by slow steaming than others? If so, please explain. What measures has your company taken to try to mitigate any adverse impact of slow steaming on specific shipper accounts?

16. To what extent has slow steaming affected your company's ability to maintain or expand capacity in the U.S. trades and/or its ability to maintain adequate availability of containers at appropriate inland locations?

17. Do you believe slow steaming is sustainable over the long-run? Please explain why or why not.

18. If your company participates in one or more vessel sharing arrangements ("VSAs"), describe whether and to what extent VSAs are positively or negatively impacted by slow steaming.

#### Questions Directed to Rate Agreements That Establish a Bunker Surcharge Guideline

1. Within the geographic scope of your agreement, what proportion of the ships used by your members slow steam? What proportion slow steam outbound from the United States? What proportion slow steam inbound to the United States? Please break this information down by trade lane.

2. Please explain your method used for developing the bunker surcharge guideline. How can the formula be modified to reflect the savings realized from slow steaming?

3. Has your agreement discussed possible ways to pass cost savings along to shippers? If not, do you have plans to, and what is your goal date? If not, why not?

4. What measures has your agreement taken to try to mitigate any adverse impact of slow steaming on the trade?

5. To what extent has the prevalence of slow steaming within the geographic scope of your agreement influenced the type of discussions that take place or the type of information exchanged under the authorities contained in your agreement?

#### Questions Directed to All Interested Parties

1. What are the major benefits and costs associated with slow steaming?

2. To what extent has the slow steaming of services in the U.S. ocean liner trades reduced greenhouse gas emissions?

3. Discuss the likely long-term prevalence of slow steaming and its potential impacts on the economy and/or the environment.

4. How important is slow steaming in the overall effort to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other air pollutants arising from ocean liner operations?

5. What data sources are available to measure the economic and environmental impacts of slow steaming?

Along with comments, respondents should provide their name, their title/position, contact information (e.g., telephone number and/or e-mail address), name and address of company or other entity and type of company or entity (e.g., carrier, exporter, importer, trade association, etc.).

Responses to the NOI will help the Commission ascertain more precisely the impact of slow steaming on U.S. ocean liner commerce, the ocean liner industry, the economy, and the global environment with a view to determining whether, and if so, what additional analyses or action by the Commission may be necessary.

To promote maximum participation, the NOI questions will be made available via the **Federal Register** and on the Commission's Web site at <http://www.fmc.gov> in a downloadable text or pdf file. They can also be obtained by contacting the Commission's Secretary, Karen V. Gregory, by telephone at (202) 523-5725 or by e-mail at [secretary@fmc.gov](mailto:secretary@fmc.gov). Please indicate whether you would prefer a hard copy or an e-mail copy of the NOI questions. Non-confidential comments may be sent to [secretary@fmc.gov](mailto:secretary@fmc.gov) as an attachment to an e-mail submission. Such attachments should be submitted preferably in Microsoft Word or text-searchable PDF.

The Commission anticipates that most filed NOI comments will be made publicly available. The Commission believes that public availability of NOI comments is to be encouraged because it could improve public awareness of the impact of slow steaming on the environment and various segments of the maritime industry. Nevertheless, some commenting parties may wish to include commercially sensitive information as relevant or necessary in their responses by way of explaining

their liner shipping experiences or detailing their responses in practical terms. To help assure that all potential respondents will provide usefully detailed information in their submissions, the Commission will provide confidential treatment to the extent allowed by law for those submissions, or parts of submissions, for which the parties request confidentiality.

By the Commission.  
**Karen V. Gregory**,  
*Secretary*.  
 [FR Doc. 2011-2482 Filed 2-4-11; 8:45 am]  
**BILLING CODE P**

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

**Administration for Children and Families**

**Proposed Information Collection Activity; Comment Request**

*Title:* Project LAUNCH Cross-Site Evaluation.

*OMB No.:* 0970-0373.

*Billing Accounting Code (SAC):* 418422 (0994426).

*Description:* The Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, is planning to collect data as part of a cross-site evaluation of a new initiative called Project LAUNCH (Linking Actions for Unmet Needs in Children's Health). Project LAUNCH is intended to promote the healthy development and wellness of children ages birth to eight years. A total of 24 Project LAUNCH grantees are funded to improve coordination among child-serving systems, build infrastructure, and improve methods for providing services. Grantees will also implement a range of public health strategies to

support young child wellness in a designated locality.

Data for the cross-site evaluation of Project LAUNCH will be collected through: (1) Interviews conducted either via telephone or during site-visits to Project LAUNCH grantees, and (2) semi-annual reports that will be submitted electronically on a Web-based data-entry system. Information will be collected from all Project LAUNCH grantees.

During either telephone interviews or the site visits, researchers will conduct interviews with Project LAUNCH service providers and collaborators in States/Tribes and local communities of focus. Interviewers will ask program administrators questions about all Project LAUNCH activities, including: Infrastructure development; collaboration and coordination among partner agencies, organizations, and service providers; and development, implementation, and refinement of service strategies.

As part of the proposed data collection, Project LAUNCH staff will be asked to submit semi-annual electronic reports on State/Tribal and local systems development and on services that children and families receive. The electronic data reports also will collect data about other Project LAUNCH-funded service enhancements, such as trainings, Project LAUNCH systems change activities, and changes in provider settings. Information provided in these reports will be aggregated on a quarterly basis, and reported semi-annually.

*Respondents:* State/Tribal Child Wellness Coordinator, State/Tribal Wellness Council Members, State ECCS Project Director, Local Child Wellness Coordinator, Local Wellness Council Members, Local Evaluator, and Local Service Providers.

**ANNUAL BURDEN ESTIMATES**

Instrument	Annual number of respondents	Number of responses per respondent	Average burden hours per response	Total annual burden hours
Telephone or Site Visit Interview guide .....	240	1	1.25	300
Electronic Data Reporting: Systems Measures .....	24	2	4	192
Electronic Data Reporting: Services Measures .....	24	2	8	384

*Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours:* 876.

In compliance with the requirements of Section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, the Administration for Children and Families is soliciting public comment on the specific aspects of the

information collection described above. Copies of the proposed collection of information can be obtained and comments may be forwarded by writing to the Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, 370 L'Enfant Promenade, SW., Washington, DC

20447, Attn: OPRE Reports Clearance Officer. E-mail address: [OPREinfocollection@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:OPREinfocollection@acf.hhs.gov). All requests should be identified by the title of the information collection.

The Department specifically requests comments on (a) whether the proposed collection of information is necessary