

submission of additional grants under this program based on the Notice of Funding Availability published by FRA on 10/13/2013 and the emergency clearance request approved by OMB on 11/05/2013. Any grants submitted as part of this previous ICR were due by December 9, 2013. Therefore, this revision no longer includes any burden hours for the application process, as no new applications are being accepted at this time.

Due to the nature of these disaster assistance funds, current economic conditions, and the various States need for immediate assistance to vital freight transportation pathways and the important role these sectors of transportation play in the overall national economy, FRA is requesting OMB to extend this ICR in order to manage the current grants obligated under this program until the remaining grants have properly closed-out and are completed.

Form Number(s): SF-425, SF-271, SF-270.

Affected Public: Railroads, Businesses, States/Local governments.

Reporting Burden: Close-out Procedures.

Respondent Universe: 49.

Total Annual Responses: 6.

Average time per response: 84.

Total Annual Burden Hours: 504.

Pursuant to 44 U.S.C. 3507(a) and 5 CFR 1320.5(b), 1320.8(b)(3)(vi), FRA informs all interested parties that it may not conduct or sponsor, and a respondent is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Authority: 44 U.S.C. 3501–3520.

Issued in Washington, DC, on December 3, 2013.

Rebecca Pennington,
Chief Financial Officer.

[FR Doc. 2013-29769 Filed 12-13-13; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Railroad Administration

[Safety Advisory 2013-08]

Operational Tests and Inspections for Compliance With Maximum Authorized Train Speeds and Other Speed Restrictions

AGENCY: Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Notice of safety advisory; Operational tests and inspections for compliance with maximum authorized

train speeds and other speed restrictions.

SUMMARY: FRA is issuing Safety Advisory 2013-08 to stress to railroads and their employees the importance of compliance with Federal regulations and applicable railroad operating rules regarding maximum authorized train speed limits and any relevant speed restrictions. This safety advisory contains five recommendations to railroads to ensure that compliance with maximum authorized speeds and other speed restrictions are addressed by appropriate railroad operating policies and procedures and to ensure that those policies and procedures are effectively implemented.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Thomas Herrmann, Acting Director, Office of Safety Assurance and Compliance, Office of Railroad Safety, FRA, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590, telephone (202) 493-6037.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The overall safety of railroad operations has improved in recent years. However, the recent fatal accident in Spuyten Duyvil, Bronx, New York, which is the subject of FRA's Emergency Order No. 29, highlights the need to ensure that speed restrictions mandated by Federal regulation and those imposed by a railroad's own operating rules are adhered to. That accident also demonstrates the importance of operational testing that pertains to ensuring employee compliance with applicable speed limitations and restrictions.

Metro-North Spuyten Duyvil Derailment

On Sunday, December 1, 2013, Metro-North passenger train 8808 (Train 8808) was traveling south from Poughkeepsie, New York, to Grand Central Terminal in New York City when, at approximately 7:20 a.m., the train derailed as it approached the Spuyten Duyvil Station. The train consisted of seven passenger coach cars, including a control cab locomotive in the lead position, and a conventional locomotive at the rear of the train, operating in a push-pull configuration (a control cab locomotive is both a passenger car, in that it has seats for passengers, and a locomotive, in that it has a control cab from which the engineer can operate the train). Each of the seven cars derailed along with the trailing locomotive. As of December 6, the derailment has resulted in four fatalities and more than 60 reported injuries.

As is customary, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) has

taken the lead role in conducting the investigation of this accident pursuant to its legal authority. 49 U.S.C. 1101 *et seq.*; 49 CFR 800.3(a), 831.2(b). FRA is also investigating the accident. As Train 8808 approached the Spuyten Duyvil Station from the north, it traveled over a straightaway with a maximum authorized passenger train speed of 70 mph before reaching a sharp curve in the track where, by the railroad's own rules, the maximum authorized speed was reduced to 30 mph. A preliminary review of the information on the locomotive event recorders by NTSB indicates that the train was traveling approximately 82 mph as it entered the curve's 30-mph speed restriction. This means Train 8808 was exceeding the maximum authorized speed on the straightaway by 12 mph and traveling nearly three times the railroad's maximum authorized speed as it entered the curve. Information obtained from the train's event recorders also indicates that approximately six seconds before the locomotive came to a stop, the locomotive throttle was placed in idle and an application of the train's brake system was made.

FRA's accident statistics reveal that the railroad industry's recent safety record with regard to this area of compliance on main tracks is good, but FRA believes the December 1 accident highlights the need to remain vigilant in ensuring employee compliance with operational speed limits and restrictions for trains and locomotives. As such, FRA intends to focus its inspections on railroad operational testing activity over the next several months on compliance with maximum authorized train speeds and relevant speed restrictions. FRA strongly encourages railroads and other industry members to re-emphasize the importance of compliance with maximum authorized train speeds and any applicable speed restrictions, and to conduct operational testing at a level that will ensure compliance with all posted speed restrictions.

Recommended Railroad Action: In light of the recent accident discussed above, and in an effort to ensure the safety of the Nation's railroads, their employees, and the general public, FRA recommends that railroads do each of the following:

(1) Review the circumstances of the December 1, 2013, Spuyten Duyvil derailment with each of their operating employees.

(2) Provide instruction to their employees during training classes and safety briefings on the importance of compliance with maximum authorized train speed limits and other speed restrictions. This training should

include discussion of the railroad's absolute speed limits, speed restrictions based on physical characteristics, temporary speed restrictions, and any other restrictions commonly encountered.

(3) Remind their employees that Federal railroad safety regulation, at 49 CFR 240.305(a)(2) and 242.403(e)(2), prohibits the operation of a locomotive or train at a speed which exceeds the maximum authorized speed by at least 10 mph.

(4) Evaluate quarterly and 6-month reviews of operational testing data as required by 49 CFR 217.9. A railroad should consider increasing the frequency of operational testing where its reviews show any non-compliance with maximum authorized train speeds. A significant number of operational tests should be conducted on trains that are required to reduce speed by more than 20 mph from the maximum authorized train speed. Operational tests should use the reliable methods available, such as reviewing locomotive event recorder data and testing by radar to verify compliance with maximum authorized speeds.

(5) Reinforce the importance of communication between train crewmembers located in the controlling locomotive, particularly during safety critical periods when multiple tasks are occurring (e.g., copying mandatory directives, closely approaching or passing fixed signals and/or cab signals at a reduced speed, approaching locations where the train's movement authority is being restricted, during radio conversations with other employees or job briefings about track characteristics) and during extended periods of inactivity.

FRA encourages all railroad industry members to take actions consistent with the preceding recommendations. FRA may modify this Safety Advisory 2013-08, issue additional safety advisories, or take other appropriate action necessary to ensure the highest level of safety on the Nation's railroads, including pursuing other corrective measures under its rail safety authority.

Issued in Washington, DC on December 10, 2013.

Robert C. Lauby,

Associate Administrator for Railroad Safety and Chief Safety Officer.

[FR Doc. 2013-29762 Filed 12-13-13; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[Docket No. AB 290 (Sub-No. 359X)]

Norfolk Southern Railway Company— Discontinuance of Service Exemption—in Isle of Wight, Southampton, Greensville, and Brunswick Counties, VA.

On November 26, 2013, Norfolk Southern Railway Company (NSR) filed with the Surface Transportation Board (Board) a petition under 49 U.S.C. 10502 for exemption from the provisions of 49 U.S.C. 10903 to discontinue service over approximately 53.2 miles of rail line, extending from milepost FD 37.0 near Franklin to the end of the line at milepost FD 90.2 at Edgerton, in Isle of Wight, Southampton (including the independent City of Franklin), Greensville (including the independent City of Emporia), and Brunswick Counties, Va. (the Line). The Line traverses United States Postal Service Zip Codes 23829, 23837, 23844, 23847, 23851, 23856, and 23868, and includes the stations of Lawrenceville, Edgerton, Kingsberry, Emporia, Green Plain, Drewryville, Capron, and Courtland. According to the petition, the Line is stub-ended and therefore not capable of handling overhead traffic.

NSR states that, based on information in its possession, the Line does not contain federally granted rights-of-way. Any documentation in NSR's possession will be made available promptly to those requesting it.

The interest of railroad employees will be protected by the conditions set forth in *Oregon Short Line Railroad—Abandonment Portion Goshen Branch Between Firth & Ammon, in Bingham & Bonneville Counties, Idaho*, 360 I.C.C. 91 (1979).

By issuance of this notice, the Board is instituting an exemption proceeding pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 10502(b). A final decision will be issued by March 14, 2014.

Because this is a discontinuance proceeding and not an abandonment proceeding, interim trail use/rail banking and public use conditions are not appropriate. Similarly, no environmental or historic documentation is required under 49 CFR 1105.6(c)(2) and 1105.8(b).

Any offer of financial assistance under 49 CFR 1152.27(b)(2) to subsidize continued rail service will be due no later than March 24, 2014, or 10 days after service of a decision granting the petition for exemption, whichever occurs sooner. Each offer must be

accompanied by a \$1,600 filing fee. See 49 CFR 1002.2(f)(25).

All filings in response to this notice must refer to Docket No. AB 290 (Sub-No. 359X) and must be sent to: (1) Surface Transportation Board, 395 E Street, SW., Washington, DC 20423-0001; and (2) Robert A. Wimbish, Baker & Miller PLLC, 2401 Pennsylvania Avenue NW., Suite 300, Washington, DC 20037. Replies to the petition are due on or before January 6, 2014.

Persons seeking further information concerning discontinuance procedures may contact the Board's Office of Public Assistance, Governmental Affairs, and Compliance at (202) 245-0238 or refer to the full abandonment and discontinuance regulations at 49 C.F.R. pt. 1152. Questions concerning environmental issues may be directed to the Board's Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) at (202) 245-0305. [Assistance for the hearing impaired is available through Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339.]

Board decisions and notices are available on our Web site at "WWW.STB.DOT.GOV."

Decided: December 10, 2013.

By the Board, Rachel D. Campbell,
Director, Office of Proceedings.

Derrick A. Gardner,
Clearance Clerk.

[FR Doc. 2013-29781 Filed 12-13-13; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

[OMB Control No. 2900-0783]

Agency Information Collection Activities Under OMB Review

AGENCY: Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501-3521), this notice announces that the Veterans Health Administration (VHA), Department of Veterans Affairs, has submitted the collection of information abstracted below to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and comment. The PRA submission describes the nature of the information collection and its expected cost and burden and includes the actual data collection instrument.

DATES: Comments must be submitted on or before January 15, 2014.