By the Board, Scott M. Zimmerman, Acting Director, Office of Proceedings.

Jeffrey Herzig,

Clearance Clerk.

[FR Doc. 2018–00043 Filed 1–4–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915–01–P

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

[Docket No. FD 36160]

Great Lakes Terminal Railroad, LLC—Lease and Operation Exemption—Rail Line of Great Lakes Reloading, LLC

Great Lakes Terminal Railroad, LLC (GLTRR), a noncarrier,[1] has filed a verified notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1150.31 to sublease from Great Lakes Reloading, LLC (GLR), and to operate,[2] approximately 12,500 feet (2.37 miles) of railroad right-of-way and trackage and transloading facilities located at 13535 S. Torrence Avenue, in Chicago, Ill. (the Chicago Transload Facility Trackage).

According to GLTRR, there are no mileposts associated with the Chicago Transload Facility Trackage. GLTRR states that Centerpoint Chicago Enterprise, LLC, owns the Chicago Transload Facility Trackage, and leases it to GLR. GLTRR further states that the trackage is used to transload steel rebar, steel pipe, and agriculture and construction equipment from truck to rail. According to GLTRR, the trackage is used in conjunction with interchanging with the Indiana Harbor Belt Railroad Company.

GLTRR asserts that, because the trackage in question will constitute the entire line of railroad of GLTRR, this trackage is a line of railroad under 49 U.S.C. 10901, rather than spur, switching, or side tracks excepted from Board acquisition and operation authority under 49 U.S.C. 10906.[3]

Although GLTRR states in its verified notice that the operations were proposed to be consummated on or about December 1, 2017, this transaction may not be consummated until January 19, 2018 (30 days after the verified notice was filed).[4]

GLTRR certifies that its projected annual revenues as a result of this transaction do not exceed those that would qualify it as a Class III rail carrier and will not exceed $5 million. GLTRR also certifies that there are no provisions or agreements that may limit future interchange with a third-party connecting carrier.

If the verified notice contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void ab initio. Petitions to revoke the exemption under 49 U.S.C. 10502(d) may be filed at any time. The filing of a petition to revoke will not automatically stay the effectiveness of the exemption. Petitions to stay must be filed no later than January 12, 2018 (at least seven days before the exemption becomes effective).

An original and 10 copies of all pleadings, referring to Docket No. FD 36160, must be filed with the Surface Transportation Board, 395 E Street SW, Washington, DC 20423–0001. In addition, a copy of each pleading must be served on GLTRR's representative, David C. Dillon, Dillon & Nash, Ltd., 3100 Dundee Road, Suite 508, Northbrook, IL 60062.

According to GLTRR, this action is categorically excluded from environmental review under 49 CFR 1105.6(c) and from historic reporting under 49 CFR 1105.8(b).

Board decisions and notices are available on our website at ''*WWW.STB.GOV.*''

Decided: January 2, 2018.

By the Board, Scott M. Zimmerman, Acting Director, Office of Proceedings.

Jeffrey Herzig,

Clearance Clerk.

[FR Doc. 2018–00020 Filed 1–4–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915–01–P

[1] GLTRR states that the transaction described here is its initial railroad acquisition.

[2] A draft copy of the operating agreement was submitted with the notice of exemption.

[3] *See Effingham R.R.—Pet. for Declaratory Order—Constr. at Effingham, Ill.,* NOR 41986 et al., slip op. at 5 (STB served Sept. 18, 1998), *aff'd sub nom. United Transp. Union-Ill. Legislative Bd.* v. *STB,* 183 F.3d 606 (7th Cir. 1999).

[4] GLTRR initially submitted its verified notice of exemption on December 8, 2017, but the notice is deemed officially filed on December 20, 2017, when the Board received the appropriate filing fee.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

[Docket No. FMCSA–2016–0325]

Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program Multi-Year Plans

AGENCY: Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act), requires the Secretary to prescribe procedures for a State to submit multiple-year commercial vehicle safety plans (''multi-year plans'') and annual updates for the Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program (MCSAP) grants. In a prior notice, FMCSA requested information and posed specific questions to improve the Agency's development and implementation of multi-year plans. This notice announces FMCSA's voluntary implementation of multi-year plans.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Thomas Liberatore, Chief, State Programs Division, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590, Telephone (202) 366–3030 or by email at *Thomas.Liberatore@dot.gov*. Office hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., E.T., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. If you have questions regarding viewing or submitting material to the docket, contact Docket Services, telephone (202) 366–9826.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The goal of the MCSAP is to ensure that there is a partnership between the U.S. Department of Transportation and the States to establish programs to improve motor carrier, commercial motor vehicle (CMV), and driver safety to support a safe and efficient surface transportation system. MCSAP makes targeted investments to promote CMV safety, including the transportation of passengers and hazardous materials. FMCSA encourages the States and Territories to invest in activities likely to maximize reductions in the number and severity of CMV crashes and fatalities resulting from such crashes. This is accomplished by adopting and enforcing effective motor carrier, CMV, and driver safety regulations and practices consistent with Federal requirements, assessing and improving statewide performance by setting program goals, and meeting performance standards, measures, and benchmarks.

FMCSA amended its regulations to conform to 49 U.S.C. 31102(c)(1), as amended by the FAST Act, Public Law 114–94 (2015), section 5101, and removed the requirements for the annual plans in the final rule titled, ''Amendments to Implement Grants Provisions of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act.'' FMCSA published this rule in the **Federal Register** on October 14, 2016 [81 FR 71010]. These changes allow States to use a multi-year plan, but do not require it.

The FAST Act section 5101, amending 49 U.S.C. 31102, required significant changes to the Agency's grant programs, including moving the border enforcement and new entrant programs into the MCSAP for allocation via the formula. In addition, section

5106 required a working group to develop recommendations for a new distribution formula for the MCSAP funds. The MCSAP Working Group has met four times, to date, and FMCSA received the group's funding formula recommendations on April 7, 2017. Some States expressed concern about moving to a multi-year plan before knowing the new formula. With these complex changes in progress, FMCSA developed a phased, voluntary implementation plan for multi-year state plans as described below.

Responses to October 2016 Notice

In a notice published October 27, 2016, FMCSA asked 14 questions that would assist the Agency in developing an information technology system form and procedures for submission of a multiple-year plan, *see* (81 FR 74862). Twenty-three States and the Owner Operator Independent Driver Association provided responses.

Regarding questions on the length of the multi-year plan, responses to this question varied with some States indicating that they are not interested in a multi-year plan and some States expressing interest in a 5-year plan. However, the largest number of States recommended a 3-year period. In addition, this time period is the best fit for FMCSA's implementation as explained below.

The majority of the States agreed that the multi-year plan length should be the same for all States. FMCSA agrees that this is the easiest implementation and maintenance solution. In addition, while States indicated that their Strategic Highway Safety Plans (SHSP) vary in length from 1 year to 5 years, almost all respondents commented that there was no safety benefit from aligning the length of these two planning documents because the programs are already aligned through the States' SHSP development processes.

Regarding the accuracy of available data, all States confidently reported that they can provide complete and accurate data, with many States recommending 2 or 3 years for the multi-year plan. These States advised that their responses were specific to their recommended timeframes. These responses confirmed FMCSA's expectations.

Many States recommended changes to the requirements in 49 CFR part 350 and to the electronic Commercial Vehicle Safety Plan (eCVSP) to allow grant application forms to be submitted in one system. FMCSA's goal is one access point for quarterly reporting and eCVSP submissions. The Agency intends to complete these changes as funds are available.

The States were divided about their confidence in multi-year plans that will extend beyond the expiration of the MCSAP authorization. While some States advised that an expiring authorization would not cause them concern, as long as there was an opportunity to adjust the multi-year plan based on any unanticipated impacts, other States responded that they would not be confident in a multi-year plan that went beyond a MCSAP authorization period. However, it seemed that these commenters did not anticipate that there would be required annual updates to the multi-year plan. The Agency clarifies this in this notice.

The number of responses supporting a phased implementation proposal was nearly equal to the responses supporting all States concurrently instituting a multi-year plan. However, FMCSA believes that a phased-in approach will best allow the Agency to test the new eCVSP and make needed modifications as States start using the revised application and updated modules.

The States requested additional elements and features in the multi-year plan. FMCSA will consider these for the FY 2019 eCVSP process. FMCSA determined which eCVSP data fields States must validate or update annually, which include prior-year activity objectives, current-year activity goals, current-year spending plans, etc.

With the exception of the few States that currently want to remain with a 1-year plan; the majority of States agreed that there is no benefit to an annual plan. As described in the Agency's implementation information below, the multi-year plan will be a 3-year plan with information carrying over from one year to the next, where appropriate.

Regarding the requirement for States/Territories to provide detailed spending plans or estimate their costs utilizing the SF–424A budget categories for the multi-year plan and annual update in the eCVSP tool, all of the States' comments supported the use of the SF–424A. Several States commented that the existing requirements for detailed budgets is impractical and results in more changes.

Several States requested changes that require statutory or regulatory updates, such as the period of time the funds are available, the order the funds must be expensed, and the percentage of budget changes allowed without formal Agency approval. These issues are not within the scope of this notice.

Implementation

Phased-In Schedule

FMCSA considered the October 27, 2016, **Federal Register** Notice comments, the status of the FAST Act Formula Working Group's recommendations, and necessary eCVSP tool modifications. As a result, FMCSA decided that the FY 2018 eCVSP would allow at least 18 States and Territories to complete a multi-year plan based on the States that volunteered. The 3-year plan for this group of States will include FYs 2018, 2019, and 2020. All other States will submit 1-year eCVSP for the FY 2018 MCSAP applications.

Using the experience and feedback of the FY 2018 users, FMCSA intends to make any necessary modifications prior to the FY 2019 eCVSP process. As a result, FMCSA will then solicit another group of States to volunteer to start their 3-year plans by August 1, 2018. The 3-year plan for these States will include FYs 2019, 2020, and 2021. States that did not move to the 3-year plan in FY 2018 or FY 2019 will have the option to complete the 1-year eCVSP.

FMCSA expects that the remaining States will move to the 3-year eCVSP by August 1, 2019. This group of States will complete their 3-year plans for FYs 2020, 2021, and 2022. If a State is unable to transition to a 3-year plan, States can continue to submit 1-year eCVSP until FMCSA decides whether or not to require the multi-year plan.

FMCSA expects that States will remain on one of these 3-year planning cycles, with the States that begin submitting multi-year plans in FY 2017 for FY 2018 grants to submit a complete a 3-year plan again in 2020 for the FY 2021 grants. As a result of distributing State's complete plans across three years and only requiring annual updates, FMCSA anticipates the workload of the States to decrease by 40 percent, as information will carry over (unless authorization requires changes). Additionally, FMCSA expects that this change will improve and expedite the Agency's eCVSP reviews.

First Year of the 3-Year Plan

FMCSA is modifying the eCVSP to allow States to submit the following information/documentation in the first year of the 3-year plan:

1. eCVSP with program goals for all 3 years;
2. Certification of MCSAP Conformance;
3. Annual Certification of Compatibility;
4. New Laws and Regulations; and
5. Substantiation of Maintenance of Effort (MOE) Calculations.

States will submit the following documentation in the *Grants.gov* system:

1. SF–424 Application for Federal Assistance;
2. SF–424A Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs;
3. SF–424B Assurances for Non-Construction Programs;
4. *Grants.gov* Lobbying Form;
5. SF–LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities, as required;
6. Key Contacts Form;
7. Indirect Cost Rate Agreement;
8. Title VI Assurance; and
9. Supplemental Attachments.

Second and Third Years of 3-Year Plan

In the second and third years of the 3-year plan, FMCSA is planning for States to revise budgets to reflect current costs and revise program goals and certifications, if needed, as part of the annual update and to submit the Substantiation of MOE Calculations.

Unanticipated Funding or Program Changes

FMCSA will require States to update their 3-year plan if there are unexpected changes in funding or authorization resulting in different requirements and will notify States accordingly.

Additional Information

For other information on this program, please see *https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/grants/mcsap-basic-incentive-grant/motor-carrier-safety-assistance-program-mcsap-grant.*

Issued on: December 20, 2017.

Cathy F Gautreaux,

Deputy Administrator.

[FR Doc. 2018–00014 Filed 1–4–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–EX–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

[Docket No. FMCSA–2017–0319]

Parts and Accessories Necessary for Safe Operation; Application for an Exemption From the Agricultural and Food Transporters Conference of American Trucking Associations

AGENCY: Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of application for exemption; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) requests public comment on an application for exemption from the Agricultural and Food Transporters Conference (AFTC) of the American Trucking Associations (ATA) to allow certain alternate methods for the securement of agricultural commodities transported in wood and plastic boxes and bins and large fiberglass tubs, and hay, straw, and cotton bales that are grouped together into large singular units. The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSR) generally require loads to be secured by a minimum number of tiedowns based on article length, and the aggregate working load limit of those tiedowns must be at least one-half times the weight of the article or group of articles being transported. Based on the results of a comprehensive test program conducted by FMCSA in collaboration with the California Highway Patrol (CHP), the California Department of Food and Agriculture, the California Trucking Association, and others, AFTC believes that use of certain alternate cargo securement methods will maintain a level of safety that is equivalent to, or greater than, the level of safety achieved without the exemption because the test results confirmed that the performance requirements of the regulations are met when using the alternate securement methods.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before February 5, 2018.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments bearing the Federal Docket Management System (FDMS) Docket ID FMCSA–2017–0319 using any of the following methods:

- *Website: http://www.regulations.gov.* Follow the instructions for submitting comments on the Federal electronic docket site.
- *Fax:* 1–202–493–2251.
- *Mail:* Docket Management Facility, U.S. Department of Transportation, Room W12–140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590–0001.
- *Hand Delivery:* Ground Floor, Room W12–140, DOT Building, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. e.t., Monday–Friday, except Federal holidays.

Instructions: All submissions must include the Agency name and docket number for this notice. For detailed instructions on submitting comments and additional information on the exemption process, see the ''Public Participation'' heading below. Note that all comments received will be posted without change to *http://www.regulations.gov,* including any personal information provided. Please see the ''Privacy Act'' heading for further information.

Docket: For access to the docket to read background documents or comments received, go to *http://www.regulations.gov* or to Room W12–140, DOT Building, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

Privacy Act: In accordance with 5 U.S.C. 553(c), DOT solicits comments from the public to better inform its rulemaking process. DOT posts these comments, without edit, including any personal information the commenter provides, to *www.regulations.gov,* as described in the system of records notice (DOT/ALL–14 FDMS), which can be reviewed at *www.dot.gov/privacy.*

Public participation: The *http://www.regulations.gov* website is generally available 24 hours each day, 365 days each year. You may find electronic submission and retrieval help and guidelines under the ''help'' section of the *http://www.regulations.gov* website as well as the DOT's *http://docketsinfo.dot.gov* website. If you would like notification that we received your comments, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope or postcard or print the acknowledgment page that appears after submitting comments online.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Luke Loy, Vehicle and Roadside Operations Division, Office of Carrier, Driver, and Vehicle Safety, MC–PSV, (202) 366–0676, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590–0001.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Section 4007 of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA–21) [Pub. L. 105–178, June 9, 1998, 112 Stat. 401] amended 49 U.S.C. 31315 and 31136(e) to provide authority to grant exemptions from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs). On August 20, 2004, FMCSA published a final rule (69 FR 51589) implementing section 4007. Under this rule, FMCSA must publish a notice of each exemption request in the **Federal Register** (49 CFR 381.315(a)). The Agency must provide the public with an opportunity to inspect the information relevant to the application, including any safety analyses that have been conducted. The Agency must also provide an opportunity for public comment on the request.

The Agency reviews the safety analyses and the public comments and determines whether granting the exemption would likely achieve a level