

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD ISSUES SCHEDULE OF HEARING, SPEAKERS AND TIME ALLOCATIONS FOR MARCH 7, 8, 9 AND 10, 2000 PUBLIC HEARING ON MAJOR RAIL CONSOLIDATIONS AND PRESENT, FUTURE STRUCTURE OF NORTH AMERICAN RAIL INDUSTRY

Surface Transportation Board (Board) Chairman Linda J. Morgan announced today that the Board has issued a decision scheduling a four-day public hearing on major rail consolidations and the present and future structure of the North American rail industry beginning on **Tuesday, March 7, and continuing through Friday, March 10, 2000**, in the Board's **Hearing Room (Suite 760) at 1925 K Street, N.W., Washington, DC**. Given the large number of parties that wish to appear at the hearing and the importance of the subject matter, the Board decided to begin the hearing on Tuesday, March 7, instead of Wednesday, March 8, as originally proposed, and to extend the hearing to four days. The hearing schedule specifying the order of appearance for each day and the time allotted to each participant is attached as an Appendix. Simultaneously with that decision, the Board served a Secretary order providing detailed instructions for participants.

HEARING PARTICIPATION

The Board received approximately 160 requests from parties wishing to participate in the hearing by appearing in person, and a number of additional notices from parties who will not be able to, or choose not to, appear at the hearing but who intend to submit written statements. Each speaker or commenter must file with the Board the text of his/her anticipated written statement, and/or, if speaking, a summary thereof, by **February 29, 2000**. The Board requests that all participants in the hearing submit the name of their speaker for the hearing by **March 3, 2000**, to the Office of the Secretary.

The Board's decision instructed speakers to emphasize the key points of their presentation, rather than read from their statements or summaries, as this would allow them more time for dialogue with, and questions from, Members of the Board. Parties who have similar arguments and/or are represented by the same person are allowed and encouraged to combine their arguments and allotted time in order to use that time more efficiently. If a representative of two or more parties intends to combine the time allotted for those parties, he or she should inform Secretary Vernon A. Williams prior to the commencement of the hearing. Due to the large number of participants and full hearing schedule, the Board indicated that it would not otherwise entertain requests to adjust the schedule of appearances and/or the time allotments, but that any person unable to appear on the day and time specified could submit his/her complete statement in writing for Board consideration.

On each day of the hearing, the statements of witnesses scheduled to appear that day will be released to the public and posted on the Board's website (www.dot.stb.gov) at 10:30 a.m. The filings also will be available for public inspection in the Board's Docket Room at that time. Speakers are free to bring extra copies of their statements to the hearing for distribution by Board staff. The Board will not duplicate the speakers' statements.

FILING REQUIREMENTS

An original and 10 copies of all written comments and/or summaries due **February 29, 2000**, must refer to **STB Ex Parte No. 582**, and must be sent to: **Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Unit, Attn: STB Ex Parte No. 582, 1925 K Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20423-0001**. In addition to submitting an original and 10 copies of all paper documents filed with the Board, parties must also submit, on **3.5-inch IBM-compatible floppy diskettes (in, or convertible by and into, WordPerfect 7.0 format)**, an electronic copy of each paper document.[FOOTNOTE 1: Any party may seek a waiver from the electronic submission requirement.]

Because the Board desires to make available to the public all participants' comments, due **February 29, 2000**, by publishing both an image and a text file of them on the Board's website at www.stb.dot.gov under the "**Filings**" link, participants have been provided the following filing instructions.

Document Scanning. To ensure that the highest quality document image is captured during the scanning process, participants shall submit comments in accordance with existing rules which require that all filings be clear and legible; on opaque, unglazed, durable paper not exceeding 8.5 X 11 inches; and able to be reproduced by photography. More specifically, parties are instructed to use only white paper; to print on only one side of a page; to not employ color printing, but to use only black or dark blue ink; to paginate continuously all pages of filings, including cover letters and any attachments; and to submit the original document unbound without tabs to reduce possible damage to the document during removal of fasteners and to facilitate the use of a high-speed mechanism for automated scanning. Multi-page documents may be clipped with a removable clip or other similar device. All filings, including oversize or other non-scannable items, will be available at the Board's Docket Room.

Electronic Format. As noted above, parties are required to submit their pleadings, including any graphics, on a 3.5-inch diskette formatted for WordPerfect 7.0 (or in a format readily convertible into WordPerfect 7.0). All textual material, including cover letters, certificates of service, appendices and exhibits, shall be included in a single file on the diskette. The diskettes shall be clearly labeled with the filer's name, the docket number of this hearing, STB Ex Parte No. 582, and the name of the electronic format used on the diskette for files other than those formatted in WordPerfect 7.0.

VISUAL AIDS and HANDOUTS

Any party wishing to enhance its hearing presentation by using visual aids, such as maps, is encouraged to do so. Participants are limited, however, to projector-adaptable visual displays and/or handouts. The Board will provide space for handouts participants wish to bring to the hearing for dissemination to the public. Participants planning to use visual aids, such as maps, are advised to inform the **Office of the Secretary, no later than close of business on Wednesday, March 1, 2000.** The staff of the Office of the Secretary will be available to demonstrate the Hearing Room's projection system on **Friday, March 3, 2000, between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon. Please call (202) 565-1674** to make arrangements.

SEATING for the HEARING

All persons attending the hearing are instructed to use the building's entrance located on 20th Street between K and L Streets. For security reasons, upon entering the 20th Street entrance, all persons should be prepared to produce photo identification (such as a driver's license), pass through a metal detector, and submit to an inspection of all briefcases, handbags and any other bags. The Board will issue badges to each participant and one associate for admission to the hearing room for the day of presentation. **Participant badges may be picked up in advance** from the Office of the Secretary, Information Officer, Room 100, beginning March 6, 2000, or may be picked up at the Board's 20th Street entrance each day of the hearing for that day.

Because seating space in the Board's hearing room is limited, the Board will provide an overflow room (the Brick Room) on the first floor of the building with a closed-circuit telecast of the entire hearing. The badges for the balance of the seating in the hearing room and the seating in the Brick Room will be issued to the public each day of the hearing, for that day only, on a "first come, first served" basis. Public admission badges will be available at the Board's 20th Street entrance beginning at 9:00 a.m. on each day of the hearing. The badges will be disbursed one per person. Upon clearing security at the 20th Street entrance, the participants and the members of the public holding badges for the hearing will be escorted to the seventh floor hearing room. Only holders of participant or media badges will be admitted to the seventh floor hearing room. "Line sitters" are permitted, but will not be issued badges. The Board's Hearing Room and Brick Room comply with the Americans With Disabilities Act, and persons needing such accommodation should contact the **Office of the Secretary by close of business, March 6, 2000.**

VIDEOTAPES

The hearing will be videotaped by Blackberry Productions, a contractor retained by the Board. The contractor will sell copies of the videotape of the hearing, if there is a public demand. Blackberry Productions will provide order forms at the hearing for those seeking to order videotapes of the hearing. For those unable to attend the hearing, tapes may be ordered by contacting Blackberry Productions at **(202) 251-0934**.

Both the Board's decision and Secretary order were issued today, Thursday, February 17, 2000, in *Public Views on Major Rail Consolidations*, STB Ex Parte No. 582.

Printed copies of today's decision and order are available for a fee by contacting: Da-to-Da Office Solutions, Room 210, 1925 K Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20006, telephone (202) 289-4357. Today's decision and order are also available for viewing and downloading via the Board's website at **www.stb.dot.gov**.

FOR A COMPLETE LISTING OF PARTICIPANTS IN THE MARCH 7-10 HEARINGS, GO TO THE STB'S HOME PAGE AND CLICK ON "DECISIONS AND NOTICES." WHEN THE NEXT SCREEN APPEARS, LOOK UNDER "2/17/2000" AND CLICK ON "EP 582 0 ENTIRE BOARD."

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