

Surface Transportation Board Accepts "Canadian National-Wisconsin Central" Rail Merger Application, Finds Proposed Transaction to Be a Minor Transaction, Issues Procedural Schedule

Surface Transportation Board (Board) Chairman Linda J. Morgan announced today that the Board has accepted for consideration the railroad control application filed with the Board on April 9, 2001, by the Canadian National Railway Company, Grand Trunk Corporation, and WC Merger Sub, Inc. (collectively referred to as "CN"), and Wisconsin Central Transportation Corporation, Wisconsin Central Ltd., Fox Valley & Western Ltd., Sault Ste. Marie Bridge Company, and Wisconsin Chicago Link Ltd. (collectively referred to as "WC;" CN and WC are referred to collectively as the "applicants").

Chairman Morgan also announced that the Board has issued a procedural schedule providing for the issuance of the Board's final decision no later than **September 7, 2001**, or **5 months** after the April 9 filing of CN-WC's merger application, unless the Board determines that an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement is required or that an oral argument will be held.

CN operates a rail network consisting of 3,912 route miles in 14 states in the United States, and 11,620 route miles in eight Canadian provinces. WC operates over 2,464 route miles in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Northeastern Illinois, and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, and over 296 route miles in the Province of Ontario. The principal routes of the combined CN-WC rail system would be identical to those now operated by CN and WC, respectively, with the addition of through routes where interchange or haulage is now required. CN's traffic, between Duluth, MN/Superior, WI, and Chicago, IL, is carried under haulage agreements over WC's lines. Major interchange locations on WC's routes are Chicago, Superior, Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN, and Sault Ste. Marie, ON. The applicants have stated that no track redundancies would be created by the proposed merger, and that no rail-line abandonments would result from the combination of the two systems. The Board accepted the merger application, determined the proposed transaction to be a "minor transaction" under 49 CFR 1180.2(c), and found that the application complies with applicable regulations and other requirements.

The Board also has considered the applicants' April 9 petition for a scheduling order. With a modification to provide additional time for public comments, the Board is adopting the applicants' proposed procedural schedule (which, as modified, would result in a decision being issued approximately 28 days prior to the statutory deadline, assuming that no oral argument is held and no unanticipated environmental review is required). The Board's schedule provides for the issuance of a final decision no later than 45 days after the close of the public record. A copy of the schedule is attached.

The Board accepted the CN-WC merger application today in the case entitled *Canadian National Railway Company, Grand Trunk Corporation, and WC Merger Sub, Inc.--Control--Wisconsin Central Transportation Corporation, Wisconsin Central Ltd., Fox Valley & Western Ltd., Sault Ste. Marie Bridge Company, and Wisconsin Chicago Link Ltd.*, STB Finance Docket No. 34000, Decision No. 2. A printed copy of the decision is available for a fee by contacting **D~To-D~ Office Solutions, Room 405, 1925 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20006, telephone (202) 756-1649**, or via [http://Da_To_Da@Hotmail.com](mailto:Da_To_Da@Hotmail.com). The decision also is available for viewing and downloading via the Board's Website at www.stb.dot.gov.

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ATTACHMENT

Attachment

Procedural Schedule

STB Finance Docket No. 34000

"Canadian National-Wisconsin Central" Merger

Date / Material Due or Action Taken

April 9, 2001

Applicants' merger application and Petition for Scheduling Order filed with Board.

May 9, 2001

Board's notice of acceptance of application published in the *Federal Register*.

May 9, 2001

Applicants' Safety Integration Plan (SIP) due.

May 14, 2001

Applicants' distribution of Environmental Appendix and SIP to public and initiation of publication of newspaper notices due.

May 25, 2001

Notification to Board of persons' or parties' intent to participate in the merger case due.

June 13, 2001

All comments on Environmental Appendix and SIP due.

June 25, 2001

All comments, protests, requests for conditions to be applied to the merger, and other opposition evidence and argument due, including filings of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) and U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT).

July 25, 2001

Response to DOJ and DOT comments, other comments, protests, requested conditions, and other opposition due; and rebuttal in support of the application due (conclusion of the public record).

September 7, 2001

Board issues a written decision (if there is no Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement required and there is no oral argument).