

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD ANNOUNCES END-OF-YEAR OPERATIONAL SCHEDULE, PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO SERVICE ISSUES, Y2K MATTERS, AND DOCUMENT PROCESSING IN GENERAL

Surface Transportation Board (Board) Chairman Linda J. Morgan announced today its particular plans for handling transportation service concerns, "Year 2000" or "Y2K" matters, and the filing of lien[FOOTNOTE 1: A claim on rail property as security for payment of a financial obligation.] recordations and other documents.

Transportation Service Concerns. To ensure that shipper service issues can be fully addressed during the entire holiday period, the Board's Office of Compliance and Enforcement (OCE) will be on call at all times and can be reached by telephoning **(202) 565-1573**. This schedule is particularly important given the ongoing rail service issues related to the implementation of the Conrail acquisition. With respect to the possibility of a Y2K event affecting a transportation mode subject to the Board's jurisdiction, senior OCE staff will also be on call around the clock between December 28, 1999 and January 4, 2000 in support of the Department of Transportation's Crisis Management Center (CMC). Information concerning situations that could require Board action will be reported by the CMC to the OCE duty officer, who will coordinate with the Director of OCE and the Board Members.

Board Y2K Compliance. The Board has reviewed its computer hardware, programs, and databases, and all identified sources of error related to the year 2000 have been remedied. Based on this review and remedial effort, the Board's computer network and computer-based systems are Y2K compliant. Although the Board does not anticipate any difficulty related to the rollover of 1999 to 2000, reasonable precautions are being taken to identify and correct any unexpected problems. Staff members will be on hand during the rollover period to verify that building facilities and the computer network are available. A test plan for all computer-based systems has been developed, and it will be executed early in the year 2000 to verify that all systems continue to function properly.

General Business. The Board will remain open daily from 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, for filings and other formal business throughout the upcoming holiday season, **with the exception of the two federal holidays, Friday, December 24, and Friday, December 31, 1999**. The Board's Office of the Secretary will make every effort to process filings as expeditiously as possible during the holiday season. However, the Board noted that its usual receipt of a large number of filings near the end of a year could slow the pace of processing. Regarding railroad equipment lien recordation, the Board will handle such filings, according to its standard practice, in the order in which they are received, and recordation numbers will be assigned to each filing only upon the completion of a thorough staff review of the content of such filings. Accordingly, the Board is encouraging the early filing of these and other documents to ensure the most expeditious handling possible.

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