

Public & Media Advisory: Surface Transportation Board To Hold February 27 Public Hearing on Proposed Procedures To Expedite Rail Rate Cases

Surface Transportation Board (Board) Chairman Roger Nober today announced that the Board will hold a public hearing on **February 27, 2003**, at its offices in Washington, D.C., to provide a forum for the expression of views by interested persons concerning the Board's proposal to amend its regulations to expedite the resolution of railroad rate challenges.

The Board has received written comments in response to its proposal in *Procedures to Expedite Resolution of Rail Rate Challenges To Be Considered Under the Stand-Alone Cost Methodology*, STB Ex Parte No. 638 (issued to the public on September 4, 2002), to adopt mandatory pre-filing, non-binding mediation; more restrictive standards under which one party can obtain "discovery" of information that another party has; and an expedited process for resolving discovery disputes in rate cases considered under the "stand-alone" cost methodology. After reviewing these written comments, the Board believes it would benefit from a public hearing on the subject to enable the parties to the proceeding and other interested persons to present their views orally.

The public hearing will begin at **10:00 a.m. EST on Thursday, February 27, in Room 760**, the Board's hearing room, **on the 7th Floor** at the agency's headquarters in the **Mercury Building, 1925 K Street, N.W.** (on the northeast corner of the intersection of 20th and K Sts.), **Washington, D.C.** The parties to the proceeding, other interested persons, and the media will be advised--through a forthcoming official public notice and a Board news release--of procedures for official participation, a hearing agenda, attendance instructions, and other related matters.

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