

**SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD ANNOUNCES JUNE 9 IMPLEMENTATION DATE
OF "DECISION-FAX" DECISION-ISSUANCE PROJECT**

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**SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
ANNOUNCES JUNE 9 IMPLEMENTATION DATE
OF "DECISION-FAX" DECISION-ISSUANCE PROJECT**

The Surface Transportation Board (Board) announced today that its experimental "Decision-Fax" project--providing facsimile (fax) dissemination of the Board's shorter written decisions in proceedings before it--will become operational on **Monday, June 9, 1997**. If the project proves successful, the Board will take appropriate steps to formalize it and make it permanent.

Under the Decision-Fax project, three attempts will be made to provide, by fax to project participants, copies of Board decisions of 10 pages or fewer in length after the close of business on the date of service (date of issuance to the public). If these attempts are unsuccessful, the Board will serve the decision by first-class mail on the next business day, as is currently the agency's practice. Any Board decisions of more than 10 pages in length will continue to be served exclusively by mail on the next business day. Persons currently receiving copies of Board decisions on the service date through its contractor, D.C. News, Inc., or in the Board's news packages, will continue to receive them that way.

On January 15, 1997, the Board announced its voluntary , experimental Decision-Fax project to facilitate and expedite the service of decisions to persons on service lists (lists of official

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participants) in cases before the Board. In accordance with the law requiring that all parties in

Board cases be served with Board decisions as soon as they are issued, the Decision-Fax project will enable the Board to serve shorter decisions via fax to participants. Instead of receiving a decision by mail, perhaps days after the official service date, project participants will receive faxed decisions after close of business on the service date. While the project was scheduled to become operational earlier this year and continue for 180 days, the Board's mid-March 1997 relocation delayed implementation of the project until June 9.

The Decision-Fax project is intended to reduce the delay between Board service and participant receipt of decisions, and to improve the efficiency of decision service. The Decision-Fax project is one of several steps the Board has undertaken to increase its use of

technology to enhance its efficiency and improve its service to the public. Furthermore, the Board is contemplating expanding the project to the issuance of Board news releases via e-mail.

It is not too late to participate in the Decision-Fax project. To do so, a party must submit a written request, addressed to the Secretary of the Board, Vernon A. Williams, **on or before June 6, 1997**. The written request must include the following applicable information: name of the person to be placed on the service list; address; telephone number; fax number; e-mail address; website address; and name of contact person. Responses may be faxed to the Board at **(202) 565-9004**.

Questions or comments on the Decision-Fax project should be directed to Secretary Williams at **(202) 565-1650**.

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