

**SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD ISSUES NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING
ON SIMPLIFIED STANDARDS FOR RAIL RATE CASES**

The Surface Transportation Board announced today that it has instituted a rulemaking proceeding to revise and clarify its existing simplified guidelines available for those rail rate cases in which a full stand-alone cost (SAC) presentation is too costly, given the value of the case.

The Board continues to pursue changes to the simplified guidelines that would achieve the dual statutory goals of providing captive shippers meaningful access to regulatory remedies for rail rates that are unreasonable, while recognizing the need for railroads to earn a reasonable return on their investments so that they will have the resources to make the investment needed to continue to serve the transportation needs of their customers. Therefore, the Board proposes to: (1) create a simplified SAC procedure to use in medium-size rate disputes; (2) retain the current "Three-Benchmark" method of the existing simplified guidelines, with certain modifications, for small rate disputes; and (3) establish eligibility presumptions based on the maximum value of the case to distinguish between large, medium-size, and small rail rate disputes.

The STB's [decision initiating the rulemaking in Simplified Standards For Rail Rate Cases, STB Ex Parte No. 646 \(Sub-No. 1\)](#), is available for viewing and downloading via the Board's Web site at <http://www.stb.dot.gov>, under "E-Library," then under "Decisions & Notices," beneath the date "7/28/06." A printed copy of the Board's decision also is available for a fee by contacting **ASAP Document Solutions, 9332 Annapolis Rd., Suite 103, Lanham, MD 20706**, telephone **(202) 306-4004**, or via .

###