

**SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD TO HOLD NOVEMBER 2 PUBLIC HEARING ON CERTAIN ISSUES RELATED TO RAIL TRANSPORTATION OF GRAIN**

The Surface Transportation Board announced today that the agency will hold a **November 2, 2006** public hearing to examine issues related to the transportation of grain by railroad. The hearing will begin at **10:00 a.m. on Thursday, November 2**, in **Room 760**, the STB's hearing room, on the **7th Floor** of the agency's headquarters in the **Mercury Building, 1925 K Street, N.W., Washington, D.C.**

On October 6, 2006, the United States Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a report on rates, competition, and capacity issues in the American rail freight industry. Although GAO reported that changes that have occurred in the rail industry since the Staggers Rail Act of 1980 are widely viewed as positive--with a healthier industry generally charging lower rates--it stated that grain rates have diverged from industry trends. The STB's November 2 hearing will serve as a forum for interested persons to provide views and information about the market conditions that led to GAO's observations, and about grain transportation markets in general. Because U.S. grain producers compete in a broader North American, and global, marketplace, the agency also invites information regarding the interplay between the American and Canadian wheat markets, how the Canadian regulatory system differs from the American system, and what impact those differences might have on grain production in the U.S.

The STB officially announced the November 2 hearing in its "[Notice in the proceeding entitled Rail Transportation of Grain, STB Ex Parte No. 665](#)", issued on Wednesday, October 11, 2006. That decision is available for viewing and downloading via the agency's Web site at <http://www.stb.dot.gov>. A printed copy of the STB'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 [asapdc@verizon.net](mailto:asapdc@verizon.net).

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