

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**Surface Transportation Board****[STB Docket No. AB-468 (Sub-No. 5X)]****Paducah & Louisville Railway, Inc.—
Abandonment Exemption-in
McCracken County, KY**

On March 4, 2003, Paducah & Louisville Railway, Inc. (P&L), filed with the Surface Transportation Board (Board) a petition under 49 U.S.C. 10502 for exemption from the provisions of 49 U.S.C. 10903 to abandon approximately 5,780 feet of rail line extending from station number 17+55, near Caldwell Street, to station number 64+00, near 6th Street, on each side of railroad milepost 1, in the city of Paducah, McCracken County, KY. The line traverses United States Postal Service Zip Code 42003.

The line does not contain federally granted rights-of-way. Any documentation in P&L's possession will be made available promptly to those requesting it.

The interest of railroad employees will be protected by the conditions set forth in *Oregon Short Line R. Co.—Abandonment—Goshen*, 360 I.C.C. 91 (1979).

By issuing this notice, the Board is instituting an exemption proceeding pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 10502(b). A final decision will be issued by June 20, 2003.

Any offer of financial assistance (OFA) under 49 CFR 1152.27(b)(2) will be due no later than 10 days after service of a decision granting the petition for exemption. Each OFA must be accompanied by a \$1,100 filing fee. See 49 CFR 1002.2(f)(25).

All interested persons should be aware that, following abandonment of rail service and salvage of the line, the line may be suitable for other public use, including interim trail use. Any request for a public use condition under 49 CFR 1152.28 or for trail use/rail banking under 49 CFR 1152.29 will be due no later than April 14, 2003. Each trail use request must be accompanied by a \$150 filing fee. See 49 CFR 1002.2(f)(27).

All filings in response to this notice must refer to STB Docket No. AB-468

(Sub-No. 5X) and must be sent to: (1) Surface Transportation Board, 1925 K Street, NW., Washington DC 20423-0001; and (2) William A. Mullins, Troutman Sanders LLP, 401 9th Street, NW., Suite 1000, Washington DC 20004. Replies to the petition are due on or before April 14, 2003.

Persons seeking further information concerning abandonment procedures may contact the Board's Office of Public Services at (202) 565-1592 or refer to the full abandonment and discontinuance regulations at 49 CFR part 1152. Questions concerning environmental issues may be directed to the Board's Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA) at (202) 565-1552. [Assistance for the hearing impaired is available through the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339.]

An environmental assessment (EA) (or an environmental impact statement (EIS), if necessary), prepared by SEA, will be served upon all parties of record and upon any agencies or other persons who commented during its preparation. Other interested persons may contact SEA to obtain a copy of the EA (or EIS). EAs in these abandonment proceedings normally will be made available within 60 days after the filing of the petition. The deadline for submission of comments on the EA will generally be within 30 days of its service.

Board decisions and notices are available on our web site at <http://www.stb.dot.gov>.

Decided: March 17, 2003.

By the Board, David M. Konschnik,
Director, Office of Proceedings.

Vernon A. Williams,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 03-6801 Filed 3-21-03; 8:45 am]

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**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS
AFFAIRS****Vocational Rehabilitation and
Employment (VR&E) Task Force;
Notice of Establishment**

As required by section 9(a)(2) of Public Law 92-463 (Federal Advisory Committee Act), the Department of

Veterans Affairs (VA) hereby gives notice of the establishment of the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) Task Force. The Secretary of Veterans Affairs has determined that establishing the Task Force is both necessary and in the public interest.

The Task Force will conduct an independent review of the VR&E Program within the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA). The Task Force will make recommendations to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs on improving the Department's ability to provide comprehensive services and assistance to veterans with service-connected disabilities and employment handicaps in becoming employable, and obtaining and maintaining suitable employment. The Task Force will also assess independent living services provided by VA.

The duties and responsibilities of the Task Force will focus on training, employment, and independent living services. The Task Force will engage in the following activities: (i) Conduct a functional and organizational assessment of the VR&E Service; (ii) evaluate eligibility criteria, procedures, and processes for determining how a veteran is approved for training, employment, or independent living services as governed by applicable provisions of chapter 31 of title 38, United States Code; (iii) appraise current VR&E processes, information systems, and management controls; (iv) determine consistency in the administration of the VR&E Program across VBA regional offices; and (v) examine clinical rehabilitation practices and employment placement services being utilized by other Federal, state, local or private organizations serving disabled persons, including veterans.

Dated: March 18, 2003.

By direction of the Secretary.

E. Philip Riggins,

Committee Management Officer.

[FR Doc. 03-6902 Filed 3-21-03; 8:45 am]

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