

information. The agency will summarize and/or include your comments in the request for OMB's clearance of these information collections.

Privacy Act

Anyone is able to search the electronic form of all comments received into any of our dockets by the name of the individual submitting the comment (or signing the comment, if submitted on behalf of an association, business, labor union, etc.). You may review DOT's complete Privacy Act Statement in the **Federal Register** published on April 11, 2000 (Volume 65, Number 70; Pages 19477–78) or you may visit <http://dms.dot.gov>.

Authority: The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995; 44 U.S.C. Chapter 35, as amended; and 49 CFR 1.48.

Issued on: November 21, 2005.

James R. Kabel,

Chief, Management Programs and Analysis Division.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Railroad Administration

Request for Comments

AGENCY: Federal Railroad Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*), this notice announces that the Information Collection Requirements (ICRs) abstracted below have been forwarded to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and comment. The ICRs describe the nature of the information collections and their expected burdens. The **Federal Register** notice with a 60-day comment period soliciting comments on the following collections of information was published on September 16, 2005 (70 FR 54798).

DATES: Comments must be submitted on or before December 28, 2005.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Robert Brogan, Office of Safety, Planning and Evaluation Division, RRS–21, Federal Railroad Administration, 1120 Vermont Ave., NW., Mail Stop 17, Washington, DC 20590 (telephone: (202) 493–6292), or Mr. Victor Angelo, Office of Support Systems, RAD–20, Federal Railroad Administration, 1120 Vermont Ave., NW., Mail Stop 35, Washington, DC 20590 (telephone: (202) 493–6470).

(These telephone numbers are not toll-free.)

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA), Public Law 104–13, section 2, 109 Stat. 163 (1995) (codified as revised at 44 U.S.C. 3501–3520), and its implementing regulations, 5 CFR part 1320, require Federal agencies to issue two notices seeking public comment on information collection activities before OMB may approve paperwork packages. 44 U.S.C. 3506, 3507; 5 CFR 1320.5, 1320.8(d)(1), 1320.12. On September 16, 2005, FRA published a 60-day notice in the **Federal Register** soliciting comment on ICRs that the agency was seeking OMB approval. 70 FR 54798. FRA received no comments after issuing this 60-day notice. Accordingly, DOT announces that these information collection activities have been re-evaluated and certified under 5 CFR 1320.5(a) and forwarded to OMB for review and approval pursuant to 5 CFR 1320.12(c).

Before OMB decides whether to approve these proposed collections of information, it must provide 30 days for public comment. 44 U.S.C. 3507(b); 5 CFR 1320.12(d). Federal law requires OMB to approve or disapprove paperwork packages between 30 and 60 days after the 30 day notice is published. 44 U.S.C. 3507(b)–(c); 5 CFR 1320.12(d); *see also* 60 FR 44978, 44983, Aug. 29, 1995. OMB believes that the 30 day notice informs the regulated community to file relevant comments and affords the agency adequate time to digest public comments before it renders a decision. 60 FR 44983, Aug. 29, 1995. Therefore, respondents should submit their respective comments to OMB within 30 days of publication to best ensure having their full effect. 5 CFR 1320.12(c); *see also* 60 FR 44983, Aug. 29, 1995.

The summaries below describe the nature of the information collection requirements (ICRs) and the expected burden. The revised requirements are being submitted for clearance by OMB as required by the PRA.

Title: Inspection and Maintenance Standards For Steam Locomotives.

OMB Control Number: 2130–0505.

Type of Request: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Affected Public: Railroads.

Abstract: The Locomotive Boiler Inspection Act (LBIA) of 1911 requires each railroad subject to the Act to file copies of its rules and instructions for the inspection of locomotives. The original LBIA was expanded to cover the entire steam locomotive and tender and all its parts and appurtenances.

This Act then requires carriers to make inspections and to repair defects to ensure the safe operation of steam locomotives. The collection of information is used by tourist or historic railroads and by locomotive owners/operators to provide a record for each day a steam locomotive is placed in service, as well as a record that the required steam locomotive inspections are completed. Additionally, the collection of information is used by FRA Federal inspectors to verify that necessary safety inspections and tests have been completed, and to ensure that steam locomotives are indeed “safe and suitable” for service and are properly operated and maintained.

Annual Estimated Burden Hours: 314 hours.

Title: Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing Program.

OMB Control Number: 2130–0548.

Type of Request: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Affected Public: State and local governments, government sponsored authorities and corporations, railroads (including Amtrak), and joint ventures that include at least one railroad.

Abstract: Prior to the enactment of the Transportation Equity Act of the 21st Century (“TEA 21”), Title V of the Railroad Revitalization and Regulatory Reform Act of 1976 (the “Act”), 45 U.S.C. 821 *et seq.*, authorized FRA to provide railroad financial assistance through the purchase of preference shares (45 U.S.C. 825), and the issuance of loan guarantees (45 U.S.C. 831). The FRA regulations implementing the preference share program were eliminated on February 9, 1996, due to the fact that the authorization for the program expired (28 FR 4937). The FRA regulations implementing the loan guarantee provisions of Title V of the Act are contained in 49 CFR part 260. Section 7203 of TEA 21, Public Law 105–178 (June 9, 1998), replaces the existing Title V financing programs. The collection of information is used by FRA staff to determine the financial eligibility of applicants for a loan regarding eligible projects for the improvement/rehabilitation of rail equipment or facilities, the refinancing of outstanding debt for these purposes, or the development of new intermodal or railroad facilities. The aggregate unpaid principal amounts of obligations can not exceed \$3.5 billion at any one time and not less than \$1 billion is to be available solely for projects benefitting freight railroads other than Class I carriers.

Annual Estimated Burden Hours: 2,213 hours.

Title: U.S. Locational Requirement for Dispatching U.S. Rail Operations.

OMB Control Number: 2130-0556.

Type of Request: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Affected Public: Railroads.

Abstract: Part 241 requires, in the absence of a waiver, that all dispatching of railroad operations that occurs in the United States be performed in this country, with a minor exception. A railroad is allowed to conduct extraterritorial dispatching from Mexico or Canada in emergency situations, but only for the duration of the emergency. A railroad relying on the exception must provide written notification of its action to the FRA Regional Administrator of each FRA region in which the railroad operation occurs; such notification is not required before addressing the emergency situation. The information collected under this rule will be used as part of FRA's oversight function to ensure that extraterritorial dispatchers comply with applicable safety regulations.

Annual Estimated Burden Hours: 16 hours.

Addressee: Send comments regarding this information collection to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, 725 Seventeenth Street, NW., Washington, DC 20503, Attention: FRA Desk Officer.

Comments are invited on the following: Whether the proposed collections of information are necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Department, including whether the information will have practical utility; the accuracy of the Department's estimates of the burden of the proposed information collections; ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and ways to minimize the burden of the collections of information on respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

A comment to OMB is best assured of having its full effect if OMB receives it within 30 days of publication of this notice in the **Federal Register**.

Authority: 44 U.S.C. 3501-3520.

Issued in Washington, DC on November 16, 2005.

D.J. Stadler,

Director, Office of Budget, Federal Railroad Administration.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Railroad Administration

Bay Area To Central Valley High-Speed Train Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement

AGENCY: Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement.

SUMMARY: FRA is issuing this notice to advise the public that FRA with the California High Speed Rail Authority (Authority) will jointly prepare a programmatic environmental impact statement (EIS) and programmatic (program) environmental impact report (EIR) for the San Francisco Bay Area to Central Valley portion of the California High-Speed Train (HST) System in compliance with state and Federal laws, in particular the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). FRA is also issuing this notice to solicit public and agency input into the development of the scope of the Bay Area to Central Valley HST Program EIR/EIS and to advise the public that outreach activities conducted by the Authority and its representatives will be considered in the preparation of the EIR/EIS. The FRA and the Authority recently completed a Program EIR/EIS as the first-phase of a tiered environmental review process for the Proposed California HST system, and as part of the selected HST Alternative defined a broad corridor between the Bay Area and Central Valley generally bounded by (and including) the Pacheco Pass (SR-152) to the South, the Altamont Pass (I-580) to the North, the BNSF Corridor to the East, and the Caltrain Corridor to the West. The Bay Area to Central Valley HST Program EIR/EIS will further examine this broad corridor as the next phase of the tiered environmental review process.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For further information regarding the programmatic environmental review, please contact: Mr. Dan Leavitt, Deputy Director of the California High-Speed Rail Authority, 925 L Street, Suite 1425, Sacramento, CA 95814, (telephone 916-324-1541) or Mr. David Valenstein, Environmental Program Manager, Office of Passenger Programs, Federal Railroad Administration, 1120 Vermont Avenue (Mail Stop 20), Washington, DC 20590, (telephone 202 493-6368).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The need for a high-speed train (HST) system is directly related to the expected growth

in population and resulting increases in intercity travel demand in California over the next twenty years and beyond. As a result of this growth in travel demand, there will be more travel delays from the growing congestion on California's highways and at airports. In addition, there will be effects on the economy and quality of life from a transportation system that is less and less reliable as travel demand increases and from deteriorating air quality in and around California's metropolitan areas. The intercity highway system, commercial airports, and conventional passenger rail serving the intercity travel market are currently operating at or near capacity, and will require large public investments for maintenance and expansion in order to meet existing demand and future growth. The proposed high HST system would provide a new mode of high-speed intercity travel that would link the major metropolitan areas of the state; interface with international airports, mass transit, and highways; and provide added capacity to meet increases in intercity travel demand in California in a manner sensitive to and protective of California's unique natural resources.

Background

The California High-Speed Rail Commission, established in 1993 to investigate the feasibility of high-speed rail in California, concluded that a HST system is technically, environmentally, and economically feasible and set forth recommendations for the technology, corridors, financing, and operations of a proposed system. Following the Commission's work, a new nine-member California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) was established in 1996 and is authorized and directed by statute to undertake the planning for the development of a proposed statewide HST network that is fully coordinated with other public transportation services. The Legislature has granted the Authority the powers necessary to oversee the construction and operation of a statewide HST network once financing is secured. As part of the Authority's efforts to implement a HST system, the Authority adopted a Final Business Plan in June 2000, which reviewed the economic feasibility of a 700-mile-long HST system capable of speeds in excess of 200 miles per hour on a dedicated, fully grade-separated state-of-the-art track.

The FRA has responsibility for oversight of the safety of railroad operations, including the safety of any proposed high-speed ground transportation system. For the California proposal, the FRA would need to take