

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**National Highway Traffic Safety Administration****[U.S. DOT Docket No. NHTSA-2005-21318]****Reports, Forms, and Recordkeeping Requirements****AGENCY:** National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), DOT.**ACTION:** Request for public comment on proposed collection of information.

SUMMARY: Before a Federal agency can collect certain information from the public, it must receive approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Under procedures established by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, before seeking OMB approval, Federal agencies must solicit public comment on proposed collections of information, including extensions and reinstatements of previously approved collections.

This document describes one collection of information for which NHTSA intends to seek OMB approval.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before September 9, 2005.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to U.S. Department of Transportation Dockets, 400 Seventh Street, SW., 401, Washington, DC 20590. Docket No. NHTSA-2005-21318.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Alan Block, Contracting Officer's Technical Representative, Office of Research and Technology (NTI-131), National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Room 5119, Washington, DC 20590.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, before an agency submits a proposed collection of information to OMB for approval, it must publish a document in the **Federal Register** providing a 60-day comment period and otherwise consult with members of the public and affected agencies concerning each proposed collection of information. The OMB has promulgated regulations describing what must be included in such a document. Under OMB's regulations (at 5 CFR 1320.8(d)), an agency must ask for public comment on the following:

- (i) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility;
- (ii) The accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the

validity of the methodology and assumptions used;

(iii) How to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and

(iv) How to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submissions of responses.

In compliance with these requirements, NHTSA asks public comment on the following proposed collection of information:

2006 Motor Vehicle Occupant Safety Survey

Type of Request—New information collection requirement.

OMB Clearance Number—None.

Form Number—This collection of information uses no standard forms.

Requested Expiration Date of

Approval—December 31, 2007.

Summary of the Collection of Information—NHTSA proposes to conduct a year 2006 Motor Vehicle Occupant Safety Survey by telephone among a national probability sample of 12,000 adults (age 16 and older). Participation by respondents would be voluntary. NHTSA's information needs require seat belt and child safety seats sections too large to merge into a single survey instrument without producing an inordinate burden on respondents. Rather than reduce these sections, the proposed survey instrument would be divided into two questionnaires. Each questionnaire would be administered to one-half the total number of subjects to be interviewed. Questionnaire #1 would focus on seat belts and include smaller sections on air bags, on general driving (including speed), and on drinking and driving because of the extensive impact of alcohol on the highway safety problem. Questionnaire #2 would focus on child restraint use, accompanied by smaller sections on air bags, Emergency Medical Services, and use of wireless phones. Both questionnaires would contain sections on crash injury experience. Some basic seat belt questions contained in Questionnaire #1 would be duplicated on Questionnaire #2.

In conducting the proposed survey, the interviewers would use computer-assisted telephone interviewing to reduce interview length and minimize recording errors. A Spanish-language translation and bilingual interviewers would be used to minimize language barriers to participation. The proposed

survey would be anonymous and confidential.

Description of the Need for the information and Proposed Use of the Information—The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) was established to reduce the mounting number of deaths, injuries and economic losses resulting from motor vehicle crashes on the Nation's highways. As part of this statutory mandate, NHTSA is authorized to conduct research as a foundation for the development of motor vehicle standards and traffic safety programs.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, more than 50,000 persons were killed each year in motor vehicle crashes in the United States. Diverse approaches were taken to address the problem. Vehicle safety designs and features were improved; restraint devices were improved; safety behaviors were mandated in state legislation (including seat belt use, child safety seat use, and motorcycle helmet use); alcohol-related legislation was enacted; this legislation was enforced; public information and education activities were widely implemented; and roadways were improved.

As a result of these interventions and improvements, crash fatalities dropped significantly. By 1992, total fatalities had fallen to 39,250, representing a 23% decline from 1966. In addition, the resident population and the number of vehicle miles traveled increased greatly over those years. When fatality rates are computed per 100,000 population, the rate for 1992 (15.39) was about 40 percent lower than the 1966 rate (25.89). In sum, heightened highway safety activity conducted over the past three decades corresponds with major strides in reducing traffic fatalities.

Remaining barriers to safety will be more resistant to programmatic influences now that the easy gains have already been accomplished. Moreover, crash fatalities have risen since 1992, totaling 42,643 in 2003. Thus significant effort will be needed just to preserve the gains that already have been made. Up-to-date information is essential to plot the direction of future activity that will achieve reductions in crash injuries and fatalities in the coming years.

In order to collect the critical information needed by NHTSA to develop and implement effective countermeasures that meet the Agency's mandate to improve highway traffic safety, NHTSA conducted its first Motor Vehicle Occupant Safety Survey in 1994. The survey included questions related to seat belts, child safety seats, air bags, bicyclist safety, motorcyclist safety, and Emergency Medical Services.

It also contained small segments on alcohol use and on speeding. The survey has been repeated four times since then, with the survey instrument updated prior to each survey administration to incorporate emergent issues and items of increased interest. The most recent survey was fielded during the first quarter of calendar year 2003.

The proposed survey is the sixth Motor Vehicle Occupant Safety Survey. The survey would collect data on topics included in the preceding surveys and would monitor changes over time in the use of occupant protection devices and in attitudes related to vehicle occupant safety. It is important that NHTSA monitor these changes so that the Agency can determine the effects of its efforts to promote the use of safety devices and to identify areas where its efforts should be targeted and where new strategies may be needed. As in earlier years, NHTSA proposes to make a small number of revisions to the survey instrument to address new information needs. If approved, the proposed survey would assist NHTSA in addressing the problem of motor vehicle occupant safety and in formulating programs and recommendations to Congress. The results of the proposed survey would be used to: (a) Identify areas to target current programs and activities to achieve the greatest benefit; (b) develop new programs and initiatives aimed at increasing the use of occupant safety devices by the general public; and (c) provide informational support to States and localities in their traffic safety efforts. The findings would also be used directly by State and local highway safety and law enforcement agencies in the development and implementation of effective countermeasures to prevent injuries and fatalities to vehicle occupants.

Description of the Likely Respondents (Including Estimated Number, and Proposed Frequency of Response to the Collection of Information)—Under this proposed effort, the Contractor would conduct cognitive testing, a survey pretest, and final survey administration. The cognitive testing would only be performed for Questionnaire #2 as this instrument has changed significantly since previous cognitive testing whereas Questionnaire #1 has not significantly changed. A total of nine in-person one-on-one cognitive interviews averaging 40 minutes in length would be conducted with parents of children under the age of 9 who use a child restraint with their child at least on occasion. These interviews would identify any problems with the most

recently developed questions that need to be addressed. A total of 30 telephone pretest interviews (15 per questionnaire) averaging 20 minutes in length would be administered to test the computer programming of the questionnaires, and to determine if any last adjustments to the questionnaires are needed. Following any revisions carried out as a result of the pretest, the Contractor would conduct telephone interviews averaging approximately 20 minutes in length with 12,000 randomly selected members of the general public age 16 and older in telephone households. The respondent sample would be selected from all 50 States plus the District of Columbia. Interviews would be conducted with persons at residential phone numbers selected through random digit dialing. Businesses are ineligible for the sample and would not be interviewed. No more than one respondent would be selected per household. Each member of the sample would complete one interview.

Estimate of the Total Annual Reporting and Recordkeeping Burden Resulting From the Collection of Information—NHTSA estimates that the cognitive interviews would require an average of 40 minutes apiece or a total of 6 hours for the 9 respondents. The pretest interviews would require an average of 20 minutes apiece or a total of 10 hours for the 30 respondents. Each respondent in the final survey sample would require an average of 20 minutes to complete the telephone interview or a total of 4,000 hours for the 12,000 respondents. Thus, the number of estimated reporting burden hours a year on the general public would be 4016 for the proposed survey (6 for the cognitive interviewing, 10 for the pretest, and 4000 for the final survey administration). This represents an increase of 6 hours over the burden associated with the 2003 Motor Vehicle Occupant Safety Survey. The respondents would not incur any reporting cost from the information collection. The respondents also would not incur any recordkeeping burden or recordkeeping cost from the information collection.

Authority: 44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A).

Marilena Amoni,

Associated Administrator, Program Development and Delivery.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Finance Docket No. 34718]

Ohi-Rail Corporation—Lease and Operation Exemption—Wheeling & Lake Railway Company

Ohi-Rail Corporation (Ohi-Rail), a Class III rail carrier, has filed a verified notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1150.41 to lease and operate, pursuant to an agreement entered into with Wheeling & Lake Erie Railway Company (W&LE), W&LE's line of railroad known as the Cleveland Subdivision, Carrollton Branch, from milepost 0.0 in Canton, OH, to milepost 27.71 in Carrollton, OH, and from milepost 0.0 to milepost 3.00 on the Minerva Branch. The lease will also provide overhead interchange rights from milepost 0.44 in the Canton Yard to milepost 1.7 at Furnace Junction, with no servicing of customers between those mileposts. The total distance of rail lines to be leased and operated by Ohi-Rail is 30.71 miles.¹

Based on projected revenues for the Cleveland Subdivision, Carrollton Branch and the Minerva Branch, Ohi-Rail expects to remain a Class III rail carrier after consummation of the proposed transaction. It certifies that the projected annual rail revenue does not exceed \$5 million.

The transaction was scheduled to be consummated shortly after June 20, 2005, but no sooner than the June 21, 2005 effective date of the exemption.

If the verified notice contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void *ab initio*. Petitions to revoke the exemption under 49 U.S.C. 10502(d) may be filed at any time. The filing of a petition to revoke will not automatically stay the transaction.

An original and 10 copies of all pleadings, referring to STB Finance Docket No. 34718, must be filed with the Surface Transportation Board, 1925 K Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20423-0001. In addition, a copy of each pleading must be served on Brendan Delay, 619 Linda Street, Suite 101, Rocky River, OH 44116.

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

Decided: July 1, 2005.

¹ Ohi-Rail indicated that it will interchange traffic on this line with W&LE at the Canton Yard between milepost 0.0 and milepost 1.7.