

Since the adoption of § 535.308 in 1987, relatively few agreements have been filed claiming the waiting period exemption. As the number of filings claiming the exemption has been negligible, repeal of the section will have minimal impact on the shipping industry. Moreover, where agreement parties experience exigent circumstances justifying early effectiveness, the Shipping Act and the Commission regulations allow the parties to seek expedited review. *See* 46 U.S.C. 40304(e) and 46 CFR 535.605.

Even with respect to the three agreements that claimed application of the section 535.308 exemption (FMC Agreement Nos. 201176, 201196 and 201199), it remains subject to some dispute whether those agreements were in fact qualified for the exemption. It appears that the agreements may be ineligible for the waiting period exemption, or could more appropriately be characterized as a marine terminal services agreement subject to an existing exemption at § 535.309 or a marine terminal facilities agreement subject to an exemption at § 535.310. These provisions exempt marine terminal services agreements and marine terminal facilities agreements from both the filing and waiting period requirements of the Shipping Act. 46 CFR 535.309 and 535.310.

To be conferred antitrust immunity, the parties may file such marine terminal services agreements pursuant to § 535.301(b) as an "optional filing." Repeal of § 535.308 thus may benefit the industry by clarifying and streamlining the application of the Commission's regulations and by directing the industry to utilize the exemptions available under § 535.309 or § 535.310.

I. The Proposed Rulemaking

In view of the foregoing reasons, the Commission proposes to make the following changes to 46 CFR Part 535.

First, the Commission proposes to repeal 46 CFR 535.308 by removing it from the CFR.

Second, the Commission proposes to amend 46 CFR 535.309(b)(1) to add the definition of marine terminal conference agreement, which is currently defined in 46 CFR 535.308.

Third, the Commission proposes to correct a typographical error in 46 CFR 535.604(b).

II. Statutory Review and Requests for Comment

In accordance with the Regulatory Flexibility Act, 5 U.S.C. 601–612, the Chairman of the Federal Maritime Commission certifies that the proposed rule, if promulgated, would not have a

significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities. The regulated entities that would be affected by the rule are limited to marine terminal operators and ocean common carriers. Pursuant to the guidelines of the Small Business Administration, the Commission has determined that these entities do not qualify as small for the purpose of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act. The rule would simply require that agreements between marine terminal operators, or between or among marine terminal operators and ocean common carriers, be made subject to the requirements of section 6 of the Shipping Act of 1984, 46 U.S.C. 40304, and Commission agreement rules, 46 CFR Part 535.

This regulatory action is not a "major rule" under 5 U.S.C. 804(2).

List of Subjects in 46 CFR Part 535

Ocean Common Carrier and Marine Terminal Operator Agreements Subject to the Shipping Act of 1984.

For the reasons set forth above, the Federal Maritime Commission proposes to amend 46 CFR Part 535 Subpart C as follows:

PART 535—OCEAN COMMON CARRIER AND MARINE TERMINAL OPERATOR AGREEMENTS SUBJECT TO THE SHIPPING ACT OF 1984

1. The authority citation for Part 535 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 5 U.S.C. 553; 46 U.S.C. 1701–1707, 1709–1710, 1712 and 1714–1718; Public Law 105–258, 112 Stat. 1902 (46 U.S.C. 1701 note); Sec. 424, Public Law 105–383, 112 Stat. 3440.

Subpart C—Exemptions

§ 535.308 [Removed]

2. Remove § 535.308.

3. Amend § 535.309 by revising paragraph (b)(1) to read as follows:

§ 535.309 Marine terminal services agreements—exemption.

* * * * *

(b) * * *

(1) They do not include rates, charges, rules, and regulations that are determined through a marine terminal conference agreement. *Marine terminal conference agreement* means an agreement between or among two or more marine terminal operators and/or ocean common carriers for the conduct or facilitation of marine terminal operations that provides for the fixing of and adherence to uniform maritime terminal rates, charges, practices and conditions of service relating to the

receipt, handling, and/or delivery of passengers or cargo for all members; and
* * * * *

§ 535.604 [Amended]

4. Amend § 535.604 by removing the word "latter" and adding in its place the word "later" in paragraph (b).

By the Commission.

Karen V. Gregory,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. E9–15605 Filed 7–1–09; 8:45 am]

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

47 CFR Part 52

[WC Docket No. 07–244; CC Docket No. 95–116; FCC 09–41]

Local Number Portability Porting Interval and Validation Requirements; Telephone Number Portability

AGENCY: Federal Communications Commission.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking.

SUMMARY: The Federal Communications Commission (Commission) adopted a Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (60 FR 39136, August 1, 1995) seeking comment on what further steps the Commission should take, if any, to improve the process of changing telecommunications providers and discussing any new ideas that reflect and build upon the new one-business-day interval for simple ports.

DATES: Comments are due on or before August 3, 2009, and reply comments are due on or before August 31, 2009.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments, identified by WC Docket No. 07–244 and CC Docket No. 95–116, by any of the following methods:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.

- *Federal Communications Commission's Web site:* <http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/ecfs/>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.

- *E-mail:* ecfs@fcc.gov, and include the following words in the body of the message, "get form." A sample form and directions will be sent in response.

Include the docket number(s) in the subject line of the message.

- *Mail:* Secretary, Federal Communications Commission, 445 12th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20554.

- *Hand Delivery/Courier:* 236 Massachusetts Avenue, NE., Suite 110, Washington, DC 20002.

- *People with Disabilities:* Contact the FCC to request reasonable

accommodations (accessible format documents, sign language interpreters, CART, etc.) by e-mail: FCC504@fcc.gov or phone: 202-418-0530 or TTY: 202-418-0432.

All submissions received must include the agency name and docket numbers for this rulemaking, WC Docket No. 07-244 and CC Docket No. 95-116. All comments received will be posted without change to <http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/ecfs>. For detailed instructions for submitting comments and additional information on the rulemaking process, see the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section of this document.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Michelle Sclater, Wireline Competition Bureau, (202) 418-0388.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This is a summary of the Commission's Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FNPRM) in WC Docket No. 07-244 and CC Docket No. 95-116, FCC 09-41, adopted May 13, 2009 and released May 13, 2009. The complete text of this document is available for inspection and copying during normal business hours in the FCC Reference Information Center, Portals II, 445 12th Street, SW., Room CY-A257, Washington, DC 20554. This document may also be purchased from the Commission's duplicating contractor, Best Copy and Printing, Inc., 445 12th Street, SW., Room CY-B402, Washington, DC 20554, telephone (800) 378-3160 or (202) 863-2893, facsimile (202) 863-2898, or via e-mail at <http://www.bcpweb.com>. It is also available on the Commission's Web site at <http://www.fcc.gov>.

Public Participation

Pursuant to Sections 1.415 and 1.419 of the Commission's rules, 47 CFR 1.415, 1.419, interested parties may file comments and reply comments on or before the dates indicated on the first page of this document. All filings related to this Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking should refer to WC Docket No. 07-244 and CC Docket No. 95-116. Comments may be filed using: (1) The Commission's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS), (2) the Federal Government's eRulemaking Portal, or (3) by filing paper copies. See *Electronic Filing of Documents in Rulemaking Proceedings*, 63 FR 24121 (1998).

- **Electronic Filers:** Comments may be filed electronically using the Internet by accessing the ECFS: <http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/ecfs/> or the Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. Filers should follow the instructions

provided on the Web site for submitting comments.

- For ECFS filers, if multiple docket or rulemaking numbers appear in the caption of this proceeding, filers must transmit one electronic copy of the comments for each docket or rulemaking number referenced in the caption. In completing the transmittal screen, filers should include their full name, U.S. Postal Service mailing address, and the applicable docket or rulemaking number. Parties may also submit an electronic comment by Internet e-mail. To get filing instructions, filers should send an e-mail to ecfs@fcc.gov, and include the following words in the body of the message, "get form." A sample form and directions will be sent in response.

- **Paper Filers:** Parties who choose to file by paper must file an original and four copies of each filing. If more than one docket or rulemaking number appears in the caption of this proceeding, filers must submit two additional copies for each additional docket or rulemaking number. Filings can be sent by hand or messenger delivery, by commercial overnight courier, or by first-class or overnight U.S. Postal Service mail (although we continue to experience delays in receiving U.S. Postal Service mail). All filings must be addressed to the Commission's Secretary, Office of the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission.

- The Commission's contractor will receive hand-delivered or messenger-delivered paper filings for the Commission's Secretary at 236 Massachusetts Avenue, NE., Suite 110, Washington, DC 20002. The filing hours at this location are 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. All hand deliveries must be held together with rubber bands or fasteners. Any envelopes must be disposed of before entering the building.

- Commercial overnight mail (other than U.S. Postal Service Express Mail and Priority Mail) must be sent to 9300 East Hampton Drive, Capitol Heights, MD 20743.

- U.S. Postal Service first-class, Express, and Priority mail must be addressed to 445 12th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20554.

Parties should send a copy of their filings to the Competition Policy Division, Wireline Competition Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, Room 5-C140, 445 12th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20554, or by e-mail to cpdcopies@fcc.gov. Parties shall also serve one copy with the Commission's copy contractor, Best Copy and Printing, Inc. (BCPI), Portals II, 445 12th Street, SW., Room CY-B402, Washington, DC

20554, (202) 488-5300, or via e-mail to fcc@bcpweb.com.

Documents in WC Docket No. 07-244 and CC Docket No. 95-116 will be available for public inspection and copying during business hours at the FCC Reference Information Center, Portals II, 445 12th Street, SW., Room CY-A257, Washington, DC 20554. The documents may also be purchased from BCPI, telephone (202) 488-5300, facsimile (202) 488-5563, TTY (202) 488-5562, e-mail fcc@bcpweb.com.

Synopsis of Notice of Proposed Rulemaking

Through this FNPRM, the Commission seeks comment on what further steps, if any, it should take to improve the process of changing telecommunications providers and discuss any new ideas that reflect and build upon the new one business day interval. The Commission asks parties to address whether there are additional ways to streamline the number porting processes or improve efficiencies for simple and non-simple ports. For example, should the Commission modify the definition of simple ports? Are different or additional information fields necessary for completing simple ports? Is it appropriate to standardize Local Service Request forms and, if so, how should that be accomplished? Is a single standard time interval in which providers must return Customer Service Record requests appropriate? Finally, what are the benefits and burdens, especially the burdens on small entities, of adopting any new rules regarding the porting process?

Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis

1. As required by the Regulatory Flexibility Act of 1980, as amended (RFA), the Commission has prepared the present Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis (IRFA) of the possible significant economic impact on small entities that might result from this FNPRM. Written public comments are requested on this IRFA. Comments must be identified as responses to the IRFA and must be filed by the deadlines for comments on the FNPRM provided above. The Commission will send a copy of the FNPRM, including this IRFA, to the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration. In addition, the FNPRM and the IRFA (or summaries thereof) will be published in the **Federal Register**.

A. Need for, and Objective of, the Proposed Rules

2. The Commission now requires providers subject to its local number portability rules to complete simple

wireline-to-wireline and simple intermodal ports within one business day. The Commission believes that a one-business day porting interval is a much needed improvement over the previous four-business day interval—one that will provide considerable immediate benefits to consumers. It is important, however, that the Commission remains vigilant in its efforts to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the porting process as technological and market developments demand. Therefore, and in light of the actions recently taken, the Commission asks commenters to refresh the record on what further steps it should take, if any, to improve the process of changing telecommunications providers and discuss any new ideas that reflect and build upon the new one-business day interval. The Commission asks parties to address whether there are additional ways to streamline the number porting processes or improve efficiencies for simple and non-simple ports. For example, should the Commission modify the definition of a simple port? Are different or additional information fields necessary for completing simple ports? Is it appropriate to standardize Local Service Request forms and, if so, how that could should that be accomplished? Is a single standard time interval in which providers must return Customer Service Record requests appropriate? Finally, what are the benefits and burdens, especially the burdens on small entities, of adopting any new rules regarding the porting process?

B. Legal Basis

3. The legal basis for any action that may be taken pursuant to this FNPRM is contained in Sections 1, 4(i), 4(j), 251, and 303(r) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, 47 U.S.C. 151, 154(i)–(j), 251, 303(r).

C. Description and Estimate of the Number of Small Entities to Which the Proposed Rules Will Apply

4. The RFA directs agencies to provide a description of and, where feasible, an estimate of the number of small entities that may be affected by the rules adopted herein. The RFA generally defines the term “small entity” as having the same meaning as the terms “small business,” “small organization,” and “small governmental jurisdiction.” In addition, the term “small business” has the same meaning as the term “small business concern” under the Small Business Act. A small business concern is one which: (1) Is independently owned and operated; (2) is not dominant in its field of operation;

and (3) satisfies any additional criteria established by the SBA.

5. *Small Businesses.* Nationwide, there are a total of approximately 22.4 million small businesses according to SBA data.

6. *Small Organizations.* Nationwide, there are approximately 1.6 million small organizations.

1. Wireline Carriers and Service Providers

7. The Commission has included small incumbent local exchange carriers (LECs) in this present RFA analysis. As noted above, a “small business” under the RFA is one that, *inter alia*, meets the pertinent small business size standard (e.g., a telephone communications business having 1,500 or fewer employees) and “is not dominant in its field of operation.” The SBA’s Office of Advocacy contends that, for RFA purposes, small incumbent LECs are not dominant in their field of operation because any such dominance is not “national” in scope. The Commission has therefore included small incumbent LECs in this RFA analysis, although it emphasizes that this RFA action has no effect on Commission analyses and determinations in other, non-RFA contexts.

8. *Incumbent LECs.* Neither the Commission nor the SBA has developed a small business size standard specifically for incumbent LECs. The appropriate size standard under SBA rules is for the category Wired Telecommunications Carriers. Under that size standard, such a business is small if it has 1,500 or fewer employees. According to Commission data, 1,303 carriers have reported that they are engaged in the provision of incumbent local exchange services. Of these 1,303 carriers, an estimated 1,020 have 1,500 or fewer employees and 283 have more than 1,500 employees. Consequently, the Commission estimates that most providers of incumbent local exchange service are small businesses that may be affected by our action.

9. *Competitive LECs, Competitive Access Providers (CAPs), “Shared-Tenant Service Providers,” and “Other Local Service Providers.”* Neither the Commission nor the SBA has developed a small business size standard specifically for these service providers. The appropriate size standard under SBA rules is for the category Wired Telecommunications Carriers. Under that size standard, such a business is small if it has 1,500 or fewer employees. According to Commission data, 859 carriers have reported that they are engaged in the provision of either competitive access provider services or

competitive LEC services. Of these 859 carriers, an estimated 741 have 1,500 or fewer employees and 118 have more than 1,500 employees. In addition, 16 carriers have reported that they are “Shared-Tenant Service Providers,” and all 16 are estimated to have 1,500 or fewer employees. In addition, 44 carriers have reported that they are “Other Local Service Providers.” Of the 44, an estimated 43 have 1,500 or fewer employees and one has more than 1,500 employees. Consequently, the Commission estimates that most providers of competitive local exchange service, competitive access providers, “Shared-Tenant Service Providers,” and “Other Local Service Providers” are small entities.

10. *Interexchange Carriers (IXCs).* Neither the Commission nor the SBA has developed a small business size standard specifically for providers of interexchange services. The appropriate size standard under SBA rules is for the category Wired Telecommunications Carriers. Under that size standard, such a business is small if it has 1,500 or fewer employees. According to Commission data, 330 carriers have reported that they are engaged in the provision of interexchange service. Of these, an estimated 309 have 1,500 or fewer employees and 21 have more than 1,500 employees. Consequently, the Commission estimates that the majority of IXCs are small entities that may be affected by our action.

11. *Local Resellers.* The SBA has developed a small business size standard for the category of Telecommunications Resellers. Under that size standard, such a business is small if it has 1,500 or fewer employees. According to Commission data, 184 carriers have reported that they are engaged in the provision of local resale services. Of these, an estimated 181 have 1,500 or fewer employees and three have more than 1,500 employees. Consequently, the Commission estimates that the majority of local resellers are small entities that may be affected by our action.

12. *Toll Resellers.* The SBA has developed a small business size standard for the category of Telecommunications Resellers. Under that size standard, such a business is small if it has 1,500 or fewer employees. According to Commission data, 881 carriers have reported that they are engaged in the provision of toll resale services. Of these, an estimated 853 have 1,500 or fewer employees and 28 have more than 1,500 employees. Consequently, the Commission estimates that the majority of toll

resellers are small entities that may be affected by our action.

13. *Operator Service Providers (OSPs).* Neither the Commission nor the SBA has developed a small business size standard specifically for operator service providers. The appropriate size standard under SBA rules is for the category Wired Telecommunications Carriers. Under that size standard, such a business is small if it has 1,500 or fewer employees. According to Commission data, 23 carriers have reported that they are engaged in the provision of operator services. Of these, an estimated 22 have 1,500 or fewer employees and one has more than 1,500 employees. Consequently, the Commission estimates that the majority of OSPs are small entities that may be affected by our action.

14. *Prepaid Calling Card Providers.* Neither the Commission nor the SBA has developed a small business size standard specifically for prepaid calling card providers. The appropriate size standard under SBA rules is for the category Telecommunications Resellers. Under that size standard, such a business is small if it has 1,500 or fewer employees. According to Commission data, 104 carriers have reported that they are engaged in the provision of prepaid calling cards. Of these, 102 are estimated to have 1,500 or fewer employees and two have more than 1,500 employees. Consequently, the Commission estimates that all or the majority of prepaid calling card providers are small entities that may be affected by our action.

15. *800 and 800-Like Service Subscribers.* These toll-free services fall within the broad economic census category of Telecommunications Resellers. This category "comprises establishments engaged in purchasing access and network capacity from owners and operators of telecommunications networks and reselling wired and wireless telecommunications services (except satellite) to businesses and households. Establishments in this industry resell telecommunications; they do not operate transmission facilities and infrastructure." The SBA has developed a small business size standard for this category, which is: all such firms having 1,500 or fewer employees. Census Bureau data for 2002 show that there were 1,646 firms in this category that operated for the entire year. Of this total, 1,642 firms had employment of 999 or fewer employees, and four firms had employment of 1,000 employees or more. Thus, the majority of these firms can be considered small. Additionally, it may be helpful to know the total

numbers of telephone numbers assigned in these services. Commission data show that, as of June 2006, the total number of 800 numbers assigned was 7,647,941, the total number of 888 numbers assigned was 5,318,667, the total number of 877 numbers assigned was 4,431,162, and the total number of 866 numbers assigned was 6,008,976.

a. International Service Providers

16. The first category, Satellite Telecommunications, "comprises establishments primarily engaged in providing point-to-point telecommunications services to other establishments in the telecommunications and broadcasting industries by forwarding and receiving communications signals via a system of satellites or reselling satellite telecommunications." The size standard for this industry is \$15.0 million; the NAICS code is 517410. For this category, Census Bureau data for 2002 show that there were a total of 371 firms that operated for the entire year. Of this total, 307 firms had annual receipts of under \$10 million, and 26 firms had receipts of \$10 million to \$24,999,999. Consequently, the Commission estimates that the majority of Satellite Telecommunications firms are small entities that might be affected by our action.

17. The second category of Other Telecommunications "comprises establishments primarily engaged in (1) providing specialized telecommunications applications, such as satellite tracking, communications telemetry, and radar station operations; or (2) providing satellite terminal stations and associated facilities operationally connected with one or more terrestrial communications systems and capable of transmitting telecommunications to or receiving telecommunications from satellite systems." The size standard for this category is \$25.0 million and the NAICS code is 517919. For this category, Census Bureau data for 2002 show that there were a total of 332 firms that operated for the entire year. Of this total, 274 firms had annual receipts of under \$24,999,999. Consequently, the Commission estimates that the majority of Other Telecommunications firms are small entities that might be affected by our action.

2. Wireless Telecommunications Service Providers

18. Below, for those services subject to auctions, the Commission notes that, as a general matter, the number of winning bidders that qualify as small businesses at the close of an auction

does not necessarily represent the number of small businesses currently in service. Also, the Commission does not generally track subsequent business size unless, in the context of assignments or transfers, unjust enrichment issues are implicated.

19. *Wireless Service Providers.* The SBA has developed a small business size standard for wireless firms within the two broad economic census categories of "Paging" and "Cellular and Other Wireless Telecommunications." Under both SBA categories, a wireless business is small if it has 1,500 or fewer employees. For the census category of Paging, Census Bureau data for 2002 show that there were 807 firms in this category that operated for the entire year. Of this total, 804 firms had employment of 999 or fewer employees, and three firms had employment of 1,000 employees or more. Thus, under this category and associated small business size standard, the majority of firms can be considered small. For the census category of Cellular and Other Wireless Telecommunications, Census Bureau data for 2002 show that there were 1,397 firms in this category that operated for the entire year. Of this total, 1,378 firms had employment of 999 or fewer employees, and 19 firms had employment of 1,000 employees or more. Thus, under this second category and size standard, the majority of firms can, again, be considered small. The Commission notes that that the categories of "Paging" and "Cellular and Other Wireless Telecommunications" are now obsolete, and have been replaced with a new category, "Wireless Telecommunications Carriers (except Satellite)." Under this new category, a wireless business is small if it has 1,500 or fewer employees.

20. *Wireless Telephony.* Wireless telephony includes cellular, personal communications services (PCS), and specialized mobile radio (SMR) telephony carriers. As noted above, the SBA has developed a small business size standard for "Wireless Telecommunications Carriers (except Satellite)." Under that SBA small business size standard, a business is small if it has 1,500 or fewer employees. According to Commission data, 432 carriers reported that they were engaged in the provision of wireless telephony. The Commission has estimated that 221 of these are small under the SBA small business size standard.

21. *Broadband Personal Communications Service.* The broadband Personal Communications Service (PCS) spectrum is divided into six frequency blocks designated A through F, and the Commission has held

auctions for each block. The Commission defined “small entity” for Blocks C and F as an entity that has average gross revenues of \$40 million or less in the three previous calendar years. For Block F, an additional classification for “very small business” was added and is defined as an entity that, together with its affiliates, has average gross revenues of not more than \$15 million for the preceding three calendar years.” These standards defining “small entity” in the context of broadband PCS auctions have been approved by the SBA. No small businesses, within the SBA-approved small business size standards bid successfully for licenses in Blocks A and B. There were 90 winning bidders that qualified as small entities in the Block C auctions. A total of 93 small and very small business bidders won approximately 40 percent of the 1,479 licenses for Blocks D, E, and F. On March 23, 1999, the Commission re-auctioned 347 C, D, E, and F Block licenses. There were 48 small business winning bidders. On January 26, 2001, the Commission completed the auction of 422 C and F Broadband PCS licenses in Auction No. 35. Of the 35 winning bidders in this auction, 29 qualified as “small” or “very small” businesses. Subsequent events, concerning Auction 35, including judicial and agency determinations, resulted in a total of 163 C and F Block licenses being available for grant.

22. Narrowband Personal Communications Services. The Commission held an auction for Narrowband PCS licenses that commenced on July 25, 1994, and closed on July 29, 1994. A second auction commenced on October 26, 1994 and closed on November 8, 1994. For purposes of the first two Narrowband PCS auctions, “small businesses” were entities with average gross revenues for the prior three calendar years of \$40 million or less. Through these auctions, the Commission awarded a total of 41 licenses, 11 of which were obtained by four small businesses. To ensure meaningful participation by small business entities in future auctions, the Commission adopted a two-tiered small business size standard in the Narrowband PCS Second Report and Order. A “small business” is an entity that, together with affiliates and controlling interests, has average gross revenues for the three preceding years of not more than \$40 million. A “very small business” is an entity that, together with affiliates and controlling interests, has average gross revenues for

the three preceding years of not more than \$15 million. The SBA has approved these small business size standards. A third auction commenced on October 3, 2001 and closed on October 16, 2001. Here, five bidders won 317 (Metropolitan Trading Areas and nationwide) licenses. Three of these claimed status as a small or very small entity and won 311 licenses.

23. 220 MHz Radio Service—Phase I Licensees. The 220 MHz service has both Phase I and Phase II licenses. Phase I licensing was conducted by lotteries in 1992 and 1993. There are approximately 1,515 such non-nationwide licensees and four nationwide licensees currently authorized to operate in the 220 MHz band. The Commission has not developed a small business size standard for small entities specifically applicable to such incumbent 220 MHz Phase I licensees. To estimate the number of such licensees that are small businesses, the Commission applies the small business size standard under the SBA rules applicable to “Cellular and Other Wireless Telecommunications” companies. This category provides that a small business is a wireless company employing no more than 1,500 persons. Census Bureau data for 2002 show that there were 1,397 firms in this category that operated for the entire year. Of this total, 1,378 firms had employment of 999 or fewer employees, and 19 firms had employment of 1,000 employees or more. Thus, under this category and size standard, the majority of firms can be considered small.

24. 220 MHz Radio Service—Phase II Licensees. The 220 MHz service has both Phase I and Phase II licenses. The Phase II 220 MHz service is a new service and is subject to spectrum auctions. In the *220 MHz Third Report and Order*, the Commission adopted a small business size standard for “small” and “very small” businesses for purposes of determining their eligibility for special provisions such as bidding credits and installment payments. This small business size standard indicates that a “small business” is an entity that, together with its affiliates and controlling principals, has average gross revenues not exceeding \$15 million for the preceding three years. A “very small business” is an entity that, together with its affiliates and controlling principals, has average gross revenues that do not exceed \$3 million for the preceding three years. The SBA has approved these small business size standards. Auctions of Phase II licenses commenced on September 15, 1998, and closed on October 22, 1998. In the first auction, 908 licenses were auctioned in three different-sized geographic areas:

Three nationwide licenses, 30 Regional Economic Area Group (EAG) Licenses, and 875 Economic Area (EA) Licenses. Of the 908 licenses auctioned, 693 were sold. Thirty-nine small businesses won licenses in the first 220 MHz auction. The second auction included 225 licenses: 216 EA licenses and 9 EAG licenses. Fourteen companies claiming small business status won 158 licenses. A third auction included four licenses: 2 BEA licenses and 2 EAG licenses in the 220 MHz Service. No small or very small business won any of these licenses.

25. 800 MHz and 900 MHz Specialized Mobile Radio Licenses. The Commission awards “small entity” and “very small entity” bidding credits in auctions for Specialized Mobile Radio (SMR) geographic area licenses in the 800 MHz and 900 MHz bands to firms that had revenues of no more than \$15 million in each of the three previous calendar years, or that had revenues of no more than \$3 million in each of the previous calendar years, respectively. These bidding credits apply to SMR providers in the 800 MHz and 900 MHz bands that either hold geographic area licenses or have obtained extended implementation authorizations. The Commission does not know how many firms provide 800 MHz or 900 MHz geographic area SMR service pursuant to extended implementation authorizations, nor how many of these providers have annual revenues of no more than \$15 million. One firm has over \$15 million in revenues. The Commission assumes, for purposes here, that all of the remaining existing extended implementation authorizations are held by small entities, as that term is defined by the SBA. The Commission has held auctions for geographic area licenses in the 800 MHz and 900 MHz SMR bands. There were 60 winning bidders that qualified as small or very small entities in the 900 MHz SMR auctions. Of the 1,020 licenses won in the 900 MHz auction, bidders qualifying as small or very small entities won 263 licenses. In the 800 MHz auction, 38 of the 524 licenses won were won by small and very small entities.

26. 700 MHz Guard Band Licensees. In the *700 MHz Guard Band Order*, the Commission adopted a small business size standard for “small businesses” and “very small businesses” for purposes of determining their eligibility for special provisions such as bidding credits and installment payments. A “small business” is an entity that, together with its affiliates and controlling principals, has average gross revenues not exceeding \$15 million for the preceding

three years. Additionally, a “very small business” is an entity that, together with its affiliates and controlling principals, has average gross revenues that are not more than \$3 million for the preceding three years. An auction of 52 Major Economic Area (MEA) licenses commenced on September 6, 2000, and closed on September 21, 2000. Of the 104 licenses auctioned, 96 licenses were sold to nine bidders. Five of these bidders were small businesses that won a total of 26 licenses. A second auction of 700 MHz Guard Band licenses commenced on February 13, 2001 and closed on February 21, 2001. All eight of the licenses auctioned were sold to three bidders. One of these bidders was a small business that won a total of two licenses. Subsequently, in the *700 MHz Second Report and Order*, the Commission reorganized the licenses pursuant to an agreement among most of the licensees, resulting in a spectral relocation of the first set of paired spectrum block licenses, and an elimination of the second set of paired spectrum block licenses (many of which were already vacant, reclaimed by the Commission from Nextel). A single licensee that did not participate in the agreement was grandfathered in the initial spectral location for its two licenses in the second set of paired spectrum blocks. Accordingly, at this time there are 54 licenses in the 700 MHz Guard Bands and there is no auction data applicable to determine which are held by small businesses.

27. *39 GHz Service.* The Commission created a special small business size standard for 39 GHz licenses—an entity that has average gross revenues of \$40 million or less in the three previous calendar years. An additional size standard for “very small business” is: An entity that, together with affiliates, has average gross revenues of not more than \$15 million for the preceding three calendar years. The SBA has approved these small business size standards. The auction of the 2,173 39 GHz licenses began on April 12, 2000 and closed on May 8, 2000. The 18 bidders who claimed small business status won 849 licenses. Consequently, the Commission estimates that 18 or fewer 39 GHz licensees are small entities that may be affected by the rules and policies adopted herein.

28. *Wireless Cable Systems.* Wireless cable systems use 2 GHz band frequencies of the Broadband Radio Service (“BRS”), formerly Multipoint Distribution Service (“MDS”), and the Educational Broadband Service (“EBS”), formerly Instructional Television Fixed Service (“ITFS”), to transmit video programming and provide broadband

services to residential subscribers. These services were originally designed for the delivery of multichannel video programming, similar to that of traditional cable systems, but over the past several years licensees have focused their operations instead on providing two-way high-speed Internet access services. The Commission estimates that the number of wireless cable subscribers is approximately 100,000, as of March 2005. Local Multipoint Distribution Service (“LMDS”) is a fixed broadband point-to-multipoint microwave service that provides for two-way video telecommunications. As described below, the SBA small business size standard for the broad census category of Cable and Other Program Distribution, which consists of such entities generating \$13.5 million or less in annual receipts, appears applicable to MDS, ITFS and LMDS. Other standards also apply, as described.

29. The Commission has defined small MDS (now BRS) and LMDS entities in the context of Commission license auctions. In the 1996 MDS auction, the Commission defined a small business as an entity that had annual average gross revenues of less than \$40 million in the previous three calendar years. This definition of a small entity in the context of MDS auctions has been approved by the SBA. In the MDS auction, 67 bidders won 493 licenses. Of the 67 auction winners, 61 claimed status as a small business. At this time, the Commission estimates that of the 61 small business MDS auction winners, 48 remain small business licensees. In addition to the 48 small businesses that hold BTA authorizations, there are approximately 392 incumbent MDS licensees that have gross revenues that are not more than \$40 million and are thus considered small entities. MDS licensees and wireless cable operators that did not receive their licenses as a result of the MDS auction fall under the SBA small business size standard for Cable and Other Program Distribution. Information available to us indicates that there are approximately 850 of these licensees and operators that do not generate revenue in excess of \$13.5 million annually. Therefore, the Commission estimates that there are approximately 850 small entity MDS (or BRS) providers, as defined by the SBA and the Commission’s auction rules.

30. Educational institutions are included in this analysis as small entities; however, the Commission has not created a specific small business size standard for ITFS (now EBS). The Commission estimates that there are

currently 2,032 ITFS (or EBS) licensees, and all but 100 of the licenses are held by educational institutions. Thus, the Commission estimates that at least 1,932 ITFS licensees are small entities.

31. In the 1998 and 1999 LMDS auctions, the Commission defined a small business as an entity that has annual average gross revenues of less than \$40 million in the previous three calendar years. Moreover, the Commission added an additional classification for a “very small business,” which was defined as an entity that had annual average gross revenues of less than \$15 million in the previous three calendar years. These definitions of “small business” and “very small business” in the context of the LMDS auctions have been approved by the SBA. In the first LMDS auction, 104 bidders won 864 licenses. Of the 104 auction winners, 93 claimed status as small or very small businesses. In the LMDS re-auction, 40 bidders won 161 licenses. Based on this information, the Commission believes that the number of small LMDS licenses will include the 93 winning bidders in the first auction and the 40 winning bidders in the re-auction, for a total of 133 small entity LMDS providers as defined by the SBA and the Commission’s auction rules.

32. *Local Multipoint Distribution Service.* Local Multipoint Distribution Service (LMDS) is a fixed broadband point-to-multipoint microwave service that provides for two-way video telecommunications. The auction of the 1,030 LMDS licenses began on February 18, 1998 and closed on March 25, 1998. The Commission established a small business size standard for LMDS licensees as an entity that has average gross revenues of less than \$40 million in the three previous calendar years. An additional small business size standard for “very small business” was added as an entity that, together with its affiliates, has average gross revenues of not more than \$15 million for the preceding three calendar years. The SBA has approved these small business size standards in the context of LMDS auctions. There were 93 winning bidders that qualified as small entities in the LMDS auctions. A total of 93 small and very small business bidders won approximately 277 A Block licenses and 387 B Block licenses. On March 27, 1999, the Commission re-auctioned 161 licenses; there were 40 winning bidders. Based on this information, the Commission concludes that the number of small LMDS licenses consists of the 93 winning bidders in the first auction and the 40 winning bidders in the re-auction, for a total of 133 small entity LMDS providers.

33. *218–219 MHz Service.* The first auction of 218–219 MHz spectrum resulted in 170 entities winning licenses for 594 Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) licenses. Of the 594 licenses, 557 were won by entities qualifying as a small business. For that auction, the small business size standard was an entity that, together with its affiliates, has no more than a \$6 million net worth and, after Federal income taxes (excluding any carry over losses), has no more than \$2 million in annual profits each year for the previous two years. In the *218–219 MHz Report and Order and Memorandum Opinion and Order*, the Commission established a small business size standard for a “small business” as an entity that, together with its affiliates and persons or entities that hold interests in such an entity and their affiliates, has average annual gross revenues not to exceed \$15 million for the preceding three years. A “very small business” is defined as an entity that, together with its affiliates and persons or entities that hold interests in such an entity and its affiliates, has average annual gross revenues not to exceed \$3 million for the preceding three years. The Commission cannot estimate, however, the number of licenses that will be won by entities qualifying as small or very small businesses under our rules in future auctions of 218–219 MHz spectrum.

34. *24 GHz—Incumbent Licensees.* This analysis may affect incumbent licensees who were relocated to the 24 GHz band from the 18 GHz band and applicants who wish to provide services in the 24 GHz band. The applicable SBA small business size standard is that of “Cellular and Other Wireless Telecommunications” companies. This category provides that such a company is small if it employs no more than 1,500 persons. According to Census Bureau data for 1997, there were 977 firms in this category, total, that operated for the entire year. Of this total, 965 firms had employment of 999 or fewer employees, and an additional 12 firms had employment of 1,000 employees or more. Thus, under this size standard, the great majority of firms can be considered small. These broader census data notwithstanding, the Commission believes that there are only two licensees in the 24 GHz band that were relocated from the 18 GHz band, Teligent and TRW, Inc. It is our understanding that Teligent and its related companies have less than 1,500 employees, though this may change in the future. TRW is not a small entity. Thus, only one incumbent licensee in

the 24 GHz band is a small business entity.

35. *24 GHz—Future Licensees.* With respect to new applicants in the 24 GHz band, the small business size standard for “small business” is an entity that, together with controlling interests and affiliates, has average annual gross revenues for the three preceding years not in excess of \$15 million. “Very small business” in the 24 GHz band is an entity that, together with controlling interests and affiliates, has average gross revenues not exceeding \$3 million for the preceding three years. The SBA has approved these small business size standards. These size standards will apply to the future auction, if held.

3. Cable and OVS Operators

36. *Cable Television Distribution Services.* Since 2007, these services have been defined within the broad economic census category of Wired Telecommunications Carriers; that category is defined as follows: “This industry comprises establishments primarily engaged in operating and/or providing access to transmission facilities and infrastructure that they own and/or lease for the transmission of voice, data, text, sound, and video using wired telecommunications networks. Transmission facilities may be based on a single technology or a combination of technologies.” The SBA has developed a small business size standard for this category, which is: All such firms having 1,500 or fewer employees. To gauge small business prevalence for these cable services the Commission must, however, use current census data that are based on the previous category of Cable and Other Program Distribution and its associated size standard; that size standard was: All such firms having \$13.5 million or less in annual receipts. According to Census Bureau data for 2002, there were a total of 1,191 firms in this previous category that operated for the entire year. Of this total, 1,087 firms had annual receipts of under \$10 million, and 43 firms had receipts of \$10 million or more but less than \$25 million. Thus, the majority of these firms can be considered small.

37. *Cable Companies and Systems.* The Commission has also developed its own small business size standards, for the purpose of cable rate regulation. Under the Commission’s rules, a “small cable company” is one serving 400,000 or fewer subscribers, nationwide. Industry data indicate that, of 1,076 cable operators nationwide, all but eleven are small under this size standard. In addition, under the Commission’s rules, a “small system” is a cable system serving 15,000 or fewer

subscribers. Industry data indicate that, of 7,208 systems nationwide, 6,139 systems have under 10,000 subscribers, and an additional 379 systems have 10,000–19,999 subscribers. Thus, under this second size standard, most cable systems are small.

38. *Cable System Operators.* The Communications Act of 1934, as amended, also contains a size standard for small cable system operators, which is “a cable operator that, directly or through an affiliate, serves in the aggregate fewer than 1 percent of all subscribers in the United States and is not affiliated with any entity or entities whose gross annual revenues in the aggregate exceed \$250,000,000.” The Commission has determined that an operator serving fewer than 677,000 subscribers shall be deemed a small operator, if its annual revenues, when combined with the total annual revenues of all its affiliates, do not exceed \$250 million in the aggregate. Industry data indicate that, of 1,076 cable operators nationwide, all but ten are small under this size standard. The Commission notes that the Commission neither requests nor collects information on whether cable system operators are affiliated with entities whose gross annual revenues exceed \$250 million, and therefore the Commission is unable to estimate more accurately the number of cable system operators that would qualify as small under this size standard.

39. *Open Video Systems (OVS).* In 1996, Congress established the open video system (OVS) framework, one of four statutorily recognized options for the provision of video programming services by local exchange carriers (LECs). The OVS framework provides opportunities for the distribution of video programming other than through cable systems. Because OVS operators provide subscription services, OVS previously fell within the now obsolete SBA small business size standard of Cable and Other Program Distribution Services, which consists of such entities having \$13.5 million or less in annual receipts. The Commission has certified 25 OVS operators, with some now providing service. Broadband service providers (BSPs) are currently the only significant holders of OVS certifications or local OVS franchises. As of June, 2005, BSPs served approximately 1.4 million subscribers, representing 1.5 percent of all MVPD households. Affiliates of Residential Communications Network, Inc. (RCN), which serves about 371,000 subscribers as of June, 2005, is currently the largest BSP and 14th largest MVPD. RCN received approval to operate OVS

systems in New York City, Boston, Washington, D.C. and other areas. The Commission does not have financial information regarding the entities authorized to provide OVS, some of which may not yet be operational. The Commission thus believes that at least some of the OVS operators may qualify as small entities.

4. Internet Service Providers

40. *Internet Service Providers.* The SBA has developed a small business size standard for Internet Service Providers (ISPs). ISPs "provide clients access to the Internet and generally provide related services such as Web hosting, Web page designing, and hardware or software consulting related to Internet connectivity." The new size standard is 500 employees. However, data is not yet available under this new standard. Under the previous SBA size standard, such a business is small if it has average annual receipts of \$23 million or less. According to Census Bureau data for 2002, there were 2,529 firms in this category that operated for the entire year. Of these, 2,437 firms had annual receipts of under \$10 million, and an additional 47 firms had receipts of between \$10 million and \$24,999,999. Consequently, the Commission estimates that the majority of these firms are small entities that may be affected by our action.

41. *All Other Information Services.* "This industry comprises establishments primarily engaged in providing other information services (except new syndicates and libraries and archives)." The SBA has developed a small business size standard for this category; that size standard is \$7.0 million or less in average annual receipts. However, data has not yet been collected under the new size standard, and so the Commission refers to data collected under the previous size standard, \$6.5 million or less in average annual receipts. According to Census Bureau data for 2002, there were 155 firms in this category that operated for the entire year. Of these, 138 had annual receipts of under \$5 million, and an additional four firms had receipts of between \$5 million and \$9,999,999. Consequently, the Commission estimates that the majority of these firms are small entities that may be affected by our action.

5. Equipment Manufacturers

42. SBA small business size standards are given in terms of "firms." Census Bureau data concerning computer manufacturers, on the other hand, are given in terms of "establishments." The Commission notes that the number of

"establishments" is a less helpful indicator of small business prevalence in this context than would be the number of "firms" or "companies," because the latter take into account the concept of common ownership or control. Any single physical location for an entity is an establishment, even though that location may be owned by a different establishment. Thus, the census numbers provided below may reflect inflated numbers of businesses in the given category, including the numbers of small businesses.

43. *Radio and Television Broadcasting and Wireless Communications Equipment Manufacturing.* The Census Bureau defines this category as follows: "This industry comprises establishments primarily engaged in manufacturing radio and television broadcast and wireless communications equipment. Examples of products made by these establishments are: Transmitting and receiving antennas, cable television equipment, GPS equipment, pagers, cellular phones, mobile communications equipment, and radio and television studio and broadcasting equipment." The SBA has developed a small business size standard for Radio and Television Broadcasting and Wireless Communications Equipment Manufacturing, which is: all such firms having 750 or fewer employees. According to Census Bureau data for 2002, there were a total of 1,041 establishments in this category that operated for the entire year. Of this total, 1,010 had employment of under 500, and an additional 13 had employment of 500 to 999. Thus, under this size standard, the majority of firms can be considered small.

44. *Telephone Apparatus Manufacturing.* The Census Bureau defines this category as follows: "This industry comprises establishments primarily engaged in manufacturing wire telephone and data communications equipment. These products may be standalone or board-level components of a larger system. Examples of products made by these establishments are central office switching equipment, cordless telephones (except cellular), PBX equipment, telephones, telephone answering machines, LAN modems, multi-user modems, and other data communications equipment, such as bridges, routers, and gateways." The SBA has developed a small business size standard for Telephone Apparatus Manufacturing, which is: all such firms having 1,000 or fewer employees. According to Census Bureau data for 2002, there were a total of 518

establishments in this category that operated for the entire year. Of this total, 511 had employment of under 1,000, and an additional 7 had employment of 1,000 to 2,499. Thus, under this size standard, the majority of firms can be considered small.

45. *Semiconductor and Related Device Manufacturing.* Examples of manufactured devices in this category include "integrated circuits, memory chips, microprocessors, diodes, transistors, solar cells and other optoelectronic devices." The SBA has developed a small business size standard for this category of manufacturing; that size standard is 500 or fewer employees. According to Census Bureau data, there were 1,032 establishments in this category that operated with payroll during 2002. Of these, 950 had employment of under 500, and 42 establishments had employment of 500 to 999. Consequently, the Commission estimates that the majority of these establishments are small entities.

46. *Computer Storage Device Manufacturing.* These establishments manufacture "computer storage devices that allow the storage and retrieval of data from a phase change, magnetic, optical, or magnetic/optical media." The SBA has developed a small business size standard for this category of manufacturing; that size standard is 1,000 or fewer employees. According to Census Bureau data, there were 170 establishments in this category that operated with payroll during 2002. Of these, 164 had employment of under 500, and five establishments had employment of 500 to 999. Consequently, the Commission estimates that the majority of these establishments are small entities.

D. Description of Projected Reporting, Recordkeeping, and Other Compliance Requirements

47. Should the Commission decide to adopt any rules to further improve the process of changing providers, such action could potentially result in increased, reduced, or otherwise modified recordkeeping, reporting, or other compliance requirements for affected providers of service. The Commission seeks comment on the effect of any proposals on small entities. Entities, especially small businesses, are encouraged to quantify the costs and benefits of any reporting, recordkeeping, or compliance requirement that may be established in this proceeding.

E. Steps Taken to Minimize Significant Economic Impact on Small Entities, and Significant Alternatives Considered

48. The RFA requires an agency to describe any significant alternatives that it has considered in reaching its proposed approach, which may include the following four alternatives (among others): (1) The establishment of differing compliance and reporting requirements or timetables that take into account the resources available to small entities; (2) the clarification, consolidation, or simplification of compliance or reporting requirements under the rule for small entities; (3) the use of performance, rather than design, standards; and (4) an exemption from coverage of the rule, or part thereof, for small entities.

49. The Commission asks commenters to refresh the record on what further steps the Commission should take to improve the process of changing providers and provide any new ideas that reflect and build upon the new one-business day interval. The Commission also seeks comment on the benefits and burdens, especially the burdens on small entities, of adopting any new rules regarding the porting process. The Commission expects to consider the economic impact on small entities, as identified in comments filed in response to the FNPRM, in reaching its final conclusions and taking action in this proceeding.

F. Federal Rules That May Duplicate, Overlap, or Conflict With the Proposed Rules

50. None.

Initial Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 Analysis

This document does not contain proposed information collection(s) subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA), Public Law 104–13. In addition, therefore, it does not contain any new or modified “information collection burden for small business concerns with fewer than 25 employees,” pursuant to the Small Business Paperwork Relief Act of 2002, Public Law 107–198, *see* 44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(4).

Ordering Clauses

It is ordered that pursuant to Sections 1, 4(i), 4(j), 251, and 303(r) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, 47 U.S.C. 151, 154(i)–(j), 251, 303(r), the Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking in WC Docket No. 07–244 and CC Docket No. 95–116 is adopted.

It is further ordered that the Commission’s Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau, Reference

Information Center, shall send a copy of this Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, including the Final Regulatory Flexibility Analysis and the Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis, to the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration.

Federal Communications Commission.

Marlene H. Dortch,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. E9–15131 Filed 7–1–09; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6712–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration

49 CFR Parts 191, 192, 193, and 195

[Docket No. PHMSA–2008–0291]

RIN 2137–AE33

Pipeline Safety: Updates to Pipeline and Liquefied Natural Gas Reporting Requirements

AGENCY: Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking.

SUMMARY: This Notice of Proposed Rulemaking seeks to revise the Pipeline Safety Regulations to improve the reliability and utility of data collections from operators of natural gas pipelines, hazardous liquid pipelines, and liquefied natural gas (LNG) facilities. These revisions will enhance PHMSA’s ability to: understand, measure, and assess the performance of individual operators and industry as a whole; integrate pipeline safety data to allow a more thorough, rigorous, and comprehensive understanding and assessment of risk; and expand and simplify existing electronic reporting by operators. These revisions will improve both the data and the analyses PHMSA relies on to make critical, safety-related decisions, and will facilitate PHMSA’s allocation of inspection and other resources based on a more accurate accounting of risk.

DATES: Submit comments by August 31, 2009.

ADDRESSES: Comments should reference Docket No. PHMSA–2008–0291 and may be submitted in the following ways:

- *E-Gov Web Site:* <http://www.regulations.gov>. This Web site allows the public to enter comments on any **Federal Register** notice issued by any agency. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.

- *Fax:* 1–202–493–2251.
- *Mail:* Docket Management System: U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M–30, Room W12–140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., Washington, DC 20590–0001.

- *Hand Delivery:* DOT Docket Management System, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12–140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., Washington, DC 20590–0001 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

Instructions: If you submit your comments by mail, submit two copies. To receive confirmation that PHMSA received your comments, include a self-addressed stamped postcard.

Note: Comments are posted without changes or edits to <http://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information provided. There is a privacy statement published on <http://www.regulations.gov>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Roger Little by telephone at (202) 366–4569 or by electronic mail at roger.little@dot.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Objective

PHMSA is seeking to improve the use of incident, infrastructure, and performance data in its approaches to improve pipeline safety. As part of PHMSA’s strategy to become a more risk-based and data-driven organization, PHMSA is proposing the following general data and data management improvements to the pipeline safety regulations:

1. Modify the scope of part 191 addressed in 49 CFR 191.1 to reflect the changes made in the scope of part 192 to the definition of gas gathering lines.
2. Change the definition of an “incident” in 49 CFR 191.3 to require an operator to report an explosion or fire not intentionally set by the operator. The proposal also establishes a volumetric basis for reporting unexpected or unintentional gas loss. These reporting changes will more accurately depict the safety performance of gas pipelines over time.

3. Require operators to report and file data electronically whenever possible. The electronic submission of data will increase the accuracy and quality of data collected which, in turn, will improve PHMSA’s data integration efforts. Electronic submission will also reduce the reporting burden on operators.

4. Require operators of LNG facilities to submit incident and annual reports. This data will provide valuable infrastructure information to PHMSA,